Women’s Political Participation in Bangladesh Parliament: A Case Study Analysis of Women’s Substantive Representation

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by
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved late mother Fatima Zohra and handsome father
Md. Mahbubar Rahman
Abstract of the Dissertation

This dissertation examines the case of women legislators in Bangladesh parliament (Jatiya Sangsad). It seeks to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between descriptive representation of women and their ability to represent on behalf of women (substantive representation of women). While there is a substantial body of research on substantive representation of women in parliament in Western democracies, little is known about the context of developing countries in general and South Asian countries in particular. Hence, this study represents an effort to explore and explain women’s substantive representation in parliament in the Bangladesh context. To date, research connecting women’s numeric and policy representation has generated mixed results. At the same time, such work has often failed to adequately theorise the link between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the political agenda. Inspired by these gaps, this dissertation addresses the question whether women’s presence translates into substantive representation of women and which factors provide leverage on women’s pursuit of substantive representation.

In this dissertation, a novel approach to categorizing women’s issues was used - distinguishing strategic and practical issues - to contextualise women issues in the context of Bangladesh. This dissertation first addresses the assumption that women legislators raise more strategic women issues (pertinent to women’s rights and wellbeing) whilst representing women in parliament, whereas men are more inclined to speak about practical women issues. This dissertation then focuses on the assumption that women can make difference in bringing women related policy changes even within a system where women legislators have limited influence on the process of policy making. The analysis of the case of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act 2010 reveals three lines of connection between women’s presence and the extent of their involvement in supporting women-friendly policy change (a proxy for enactment of substantive representation). The three paths are direct, indirect, and intervening influence. Direct influence occurs when a woman legislator, as an individual, is involved directly in policy-making through women’s increased access to political leadership positions, whereas indirect influence emerges over policy representation when women’s ability to contribute to the process is limited by the formal procedures. The intervening influence is based on the observation that the link between women’s presence and policy representation can be the result of different factors, i.e. shaped by their executive position, the role of external actors, and a women-friendly political atmosphere.

Previous studies concerned with establishing the difference between men and women legislators in speaking on women issues failed to also address variation among women legislators. Thus, this dissertation explored what makes some women legislators promote a greater level of advocacy for women than other women. Acknowledging variation among women legislators, this dissertation theorises the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation assuming that the presence of women in parliament does not automatically translate into substantive representation. Rather, a variety of macro and micro level factors can explain the variation in women’s ability to act for women. Based on its analysis of empirical data obtained from parliament records and interviews, this dissertation offers insights into a number of constraining and facilitating factors on the micro and macro level which can help explain some women legislators’ ability to intervene on women issues. Such factors include the individual choice dimension, socio-democratic characteristics, relations with external actors, different pathways to parliament, formal and informal institutional rules, electoral aspects and political circumstances.

Taken together, the findings presented in this dissertation do not only highlight the importance of women’s presence in parliament but further suggest that the relationship between women’s presence and policy representation on behalf of women is not as simple as often assumed. In order to understand the phenomenon of substantive representation of women within a system where women legislators have limited authority to policy representation, it is necessary to consider different facilitating and constraining factors which influence women legislators’ ability to represent and their behaviour in parliament. By shedding light on such factors, this dissertation contributes to a better understanding of women's substantive representation, showing that while women’s presence is necessary for bringing more attention to women issues on the policy agenda, it is not sufficient to bring women-friendly policy change in the absence of necessary facilitating factors.
Acknowledgements

In my opinion, a research project of this kind is more than an individual success; this is a product of collaborative efforts with some amazing people in Germany, the United States of America and Bangladesh. I wanted to prepare an exhaustive list of all those who have immensely contributed to this rather turbulent journey. I am afraid that I cannot possibly pay proper tribute to all of them as so many people have had such a tremendous impact on my work and life over the last four and half years. However, I would still like to acknowledge certain people and institutions that have helped me throughout this scholarly journey.

Throughout my academic career, I have received excellent mentorship. At the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), I was lucky enough to have three wonderful supervisors. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors for their invaluable support and wisdom during the course of my doctoral study. To begin with, Professor Margrit Schreier has been an exceptional supervisor. Our monthly meetings were essential to the development of the analytical framework and methodological tools that underpin my work. She has helped me to become a better researcher and teacher. I would not have made it to the end of my dissertation without her scholarly guidance. I would also like to thank Professor Matthijs Bogaards who has encouraged me to explore one of the most critical aspects of Bangladesh—women’s representation in parliament—and thus helped me to shape and strengthen the scope of my research. I was also lucky to work with Dr. Mandy Boehnke who offered excellent advice on both the statistical analyses and the substantive impact of the dissertation. The influence of my supervisors has made me a better and more careful scholar and I cannot thank them enough for all that they have done for me over the past years.

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### Abbreviation

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>Alternative Dispute Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Awami League</td>
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<td>ASK</td>
<td>Ain-O-Salish Kendra</td>
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<td>BBS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLAST</td>
<td>Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMP</td>
<td>Bangladesh Mahila Parishad</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNP</td>
<td>Bangladesh Nationalist Party</td>
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<td>BNPS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangstha</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNWLA</td>
<td>Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CiDV</td>
<td>Citizen’s Initiative against Domestic Violence</td>
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<td>CPR</td>
<td>Civil and Political Rights</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>ESCR</td>
<td>Economic, Social, and Cultural rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>Feminist Institutionalist</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIA</td>
<td>Feminist Institutionalist Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPTP</td>
<td>First Past the Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>International Parliamentary Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>JS</td>
<td>Jatiya Sangsad</td>
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<tr>
<td>JP</td>
<td>Jatiya Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSD</td>
<td>Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoWCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women and Children Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSVAW</td>
<td>Multi-Sectoral Project on Violence Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
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<td>PMO</td>
<td>Prime Minister's Office</td>
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<td>PPI</td>
<td>Parliamentary Powers Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualitative Content Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRW</td>
<td>Substantive Representation of Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>STV</td>
<td>Single Transferable Vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAF</td>
<td>The Asia Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>The United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAWG</td>
<td>Violence Against Women and Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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1.1 Introduction

Women’s equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women’s interests to be taken into account (United Nations 1995, paragraph 181).

The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action asserts that political representation of women is instrumental for “redefining political priorities, [and] placing new items on the political agenda that reflect and address women’s gender-specific concerns, values and experiences” (United Nations, paragraph 182, 1995). Since then, women’s political representation has expanded, specifically with greater numbers of women in formal political institutions. As of June 2016, the number of women in office has reached almost 22.8 percent worldwide (IPU, 2016). Though the journey toward greater participation of women has not always been smooth, the pace at which these changes have been achieved is remarkable. These rising numbers of women in office gave rise to an expectation that inclusion of even more women would ensure the enactment of policies which are in the interest of women and which would otherwise be inadequately addressed in a male-dominated political milieu (Ruedin, 2012; Wängnerud, 2009). However, it should be kept in mind that a large variance remains in the average percentages of women legislators in different regions of the world.

The literature on gender and politics has focused on two aspects of women’s parliamentary representation, namely the descriptive (incorporation of women) and substantive representation (promotion of women’s interest). The descriptive form of representation argues for increasing women’s participation to reflect the diversity of perspectives and to ensure the presence of marginalised groups, which tend to be missing from the representative bodies (Phillips, 1995; Mansbridge 1999; Young 2000). Such claims offer hints for an understanding that an increase in the presence of women representatives would facilitate their role in the promotion of women’s interests, i.e., substantive representation of women. However, the relationship between women’s presence and their ability to address women’s interest in national policies remains unclear in the existing literature. The question arises as to what extent and how the sheer presence of women in parliament influences the promotion of women’s concerns in debates and policies. Thus, it becomes critical to gain an in-
depth understanding of how and to what extent women in parliament bring expected policy changes regarding issues of significance to women.

Some studies have investigated the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women in the advanced industrialised democracies, including the United States of America (Bratton, 2005; Cowell-Meyers, and Langbein, 2009; Carroll, 1985; Dodson, 2001; 2006; Duerst-Lathi and Keppy, 1995; Reingold, 2000; Thomas, 1991; 1994; Thomas and Welch, 1991), United Kingdom (Campbell et al., 2010; Childs and Withey, 2004; Mackay et al., 2010), Scandinavian countries (Celis, 2006; Diaz, 2005; Dahlerup, 1988; 1998; Norris, 1985; Wängnerud, 2000; also see Meier, 2000; 2004), Canada (Tremblay, 1998; 2010), and Australia (Sawer, 1998; 2005; Sawer, Tremblay and Trimble, 2006). A few studies also explored some Latin America and African cases (for details, see Chapter 2). However, those attempts remained inconclusive. The causal relations connecting women’s participation and their contribution to policy outcomes have not been the major focus in these studies. Besides, some studies examined mostly how democratisation can result in positive gender outcomes, and thus neither looked directly at the impacts of women’s presence nor provided a comprehensive analysis of factors affecting Substantive Representation of Women (SRW) (Baldez, 2010; Htun and Weldon, 2010; Waylen, 2003; 2007).

As the findings on women’s substantive representation in western democracies have been inconclusive, the study of women’s representation in developing countries does not commence in a void. Very little is known about whether women legislators in South Asian developing countries are effective in addressing issues pertinent to women and how sheer presence of women influences the conditions of SRW in parliament. For example, a study on women representatives from a local council in India showed that women played a crucial role in putting more emphasis on social welfare issues than men (Chattopadhyay, 2004). Another study on quota women in Bangladesh parliament mentioned women legislators’ role in addressing women rights issues in the parliament (Chowdhury, 2015). Yet, on the other hand, studies on factors affecting women’s substantive representation in Pakistan and Afghanistan parliaments have shown how negative attitudes and sheer intolerance might influence substantive representation of women’s rights (Larson, 2012; Mumtaz, 1998). The complexities in Asian contexts such as the small number of women in parliament and substantial gender discrimination make it particularly difficult, if not impossible, to provide a comprehensive account of all the factors underlying women’s substantive representation (Iwanaga, 2008). Childs
advocates, “It is more useful when conceptualizing the relationship between women’s presence and women making a difference, to think of different kinds of women acting in different gendered environments and to explore whether particular political contexts are ‘safe’ for women to act like (and for) women” (2004a, p 14). It is, therefore, important to look at developing country with a different political, socio-economic and cultural context which may capture different factors or mechanisms of substantive representation (Wängnerud, 2009). This would help to go beyond what is known from the Western, secular, industrialised contexts. This can help us to gain an understanding of the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation in the context of a South Asian state, where women experience diverse challenges.

It is with this backdrop in mind that this dissertation offers an exploratory study on substantive representation of women in the parliament of Bangladesh. This dissertation examines the patterns of active engagement of women legislators by discussing their participation in debates and policymaking processes, which are relevant for women, on the floor of parliament. It chooses a broad definition for women issues that reflect the variation among women and women’s condition in developing countries (see Chapter 3 for definition and measurement criteria of women issues and concerns in detail). The emphasis on women issues in this dissertation does not mean that women legislators only concentrate on women once they get to parliament, or that only women are entitled to represent women. Instead, this dissertation explores how the presence of women in parliament might make sure that their concerns are met, or in other words the enactment of substantive representation of women. Furthermore, it investigates different factors that might potentially influence women legislators’ ability to act for women.

1.2. Puzzles and Research Questions

The discussion in the previous section highlighted the importance of more systematic studies in contexts other than Western settings. The discussion also pointed out that findings from studies attempting to establish a relationship between women’s presence and their policy representation from Western context are inconclusive. For example, in some studies, scholars have argued that women legislators pay greater attention to women’s interest areas than their male colleagues (Berkman and O’Connor, 1993; Bratton and Leonard, 2002; Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Childs and Withey, 2004; Gerrity, Osborn and Mendez, 2007; Kittsolson, 2008; Norris 2000; Lovenduski and Norris 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005; Schwindt-Bayer, 2006; Swers, 1998; Taylor-Robinson and Heath,
However, studies also showed that not all women represent women, as they are not a homogenous entity; and on the other hand, some men might represent women (Dovi, 2007; Mansbridge, 1999). In other studies, no clear impact on the political agenda could be observed in the presence of women legislators (Grey, 2002; Tolbert and Steuernagel, 2001). Considering these empirical findings, one of the major unresolved puzzles is to understand why some women engage in women issues and others do not. Another emerging question pertains to identifying other factors influencing women’s active engagement in parliament, apart from the increasing numbers of women. One could further wonder whether or not issues of women’s concerns are at all raised in the parliament. If yes, by whom and how? Do women and men legislators represent similar types of women’s concerns in the parliament?

Based on these critical queries, the main research interest of this dissertation is to understand whether and how women legislators, being a minority in parliament, influence policy issues that have direct impact on women’s lives and wellbeing. In this work, it is assumed that a higher number of women in politics is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition to guarantee substantive representation. It, therefore, calls for identifying different factors (with regards to individual, institutional, and contextual milieus) that affect the ability of women legislators to act for women (Annelyse 2007; Celis, 2006; Childs, 2004; Chaney et al., 2007; Franceschet et al., 2012; Lovenduski 2005; Mackay 2008; Waylen 2011; Wängnerud, 2000). It is important to identify which conditions facilitate SRW in parliament. This interest in exploring why some women engage in women’s issues and others do not is based on the assumption that in the presence of facilitating conditions and the absence of constraining factors women legislators can ensure their advocacy on behalf of women.

Hence, the guiding research questions of this study are as follows:

a) How does the presence of women legislators result in substantive representation in the parliament, i.e., how is substantive representation enacted regardless of the policy outcome?

b) How do different institutional and contextual factors provide leverage (either by constraining or facilitating) women legislators’ pursuit of substantive representation?

1.3 Objectives and Scope of the Study

There are two major objectives of this dissertation, which follows two research questions. The first objective is to address the gaps in the literature identified in the previous section of the introduction,
with an aim of understanding the importance of sheer presence of women (being a minority in the parliament) to influence the policy issues that have direct impact on women’s lives and well-being. Second, this dissertation seeks to add to theories on the relationship between women’s presence and SRW by identifying different individual, contextual and institutional aspects that may shape and influence women’s substantive representation. This is a novel approach which, while called for by many authors, has not been employed before (Chaney et al., 2007; Childs, 2004; Franceschet et al., 2012). In doing so, this dissertation applies Feminist Political Institutionalist and Political Socialization approaches to theorise the relationship between women’s presence and substantive representation of women (for details, see Chapter 2). The contextual and institutional aspects are referred as macro and individual aspects as micro level factors in this dissertation. This operationalisation advances the argument that different factors derived from micro and macro levels may influence women’s ability to represent substantively on women issues (two levels of factors are discussed in detail in Chapter 2). The main assumption is that in the presence of facilitating conditions and in the absence of constraining factors, women legislator can ensure their advocacy on behalf of women.

Bangladesh is considered to be a typical case in this study because it offers important insights in the area of women’s representation in parliament, domination of executives in parliametary system, the pathways women chose to enter into parliament and socio-economic content of gender disparity (for details, see Chapter 3 on Bangladesh Case and Chapter 4 on Research Design). The above-mentioned features can provide a comprehensive account to deepen our understanding of what factors are affecting substantive representation of women. This dissertation, therefore, conducts a systematic analysis of women’s representation on women issues by taking Bangladesh as one of the parliaments in South Asia. The case is used to develop a deeper understanding on how substantive representation takes place in a parliamentary context where gender norms are different from those in Western countries. The scope of the thesis is limited to the parliamentary proceedings of the 9th Bangladesh parliament (2008-2013) comprising 28 legislators (both women and men) from the same parliament. With the purpose of gaining an in-depth understanding of the case, data has been selected across five years of the 9th parliament including standing committee meeting reports, biographic information of women legislators, and records of legislator’s contributions on the floor of parliament. To give additional breadth and depth to the study, special attention was paid to a particular major policy theme affecting women in Bangladesh, the Domestic Violence Act 2010. In addition, representatives of civil society organisations and academics working in the field of gender and politics have been interviewed.
1.4. Relevance of the Study

This dissertation offers four major contributions to the scholarly endeavours of studying gender and politics in general and to understand broader aspects of substantive representation of women (SRW) in the context of a South Asian developing country in more specific. The four major contributions are briefly presented in the following sections. All of these points are discussed at greater length in the conclusion (Chapter 8) and elaborated further in light of the existing literature as well as findings of this study.

Firstly, this study makes a conceptual contribution. This dissertation is relevant for establishing a relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation on women issues by considering two levels of analysis, micro and macro levels, and by using Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA) and Political Socialization (for details, see Chapter 2). Several feminist political scientists and political sociologists have made relevant contributions that contain elements this dissertation can draw on. However, there is no coherent and encompassing framework to examine the relationship between women’s presence and their ability to represent women substantively. By combining inter-disciplinary approaches, valuable new insights can be gained from this typical case. Moreover, the approach of using a two-level framework, i.e. micro (referring to political socialization) and macro (referring to FIA) can be useful to analyse substantive representation of women in both single and comparative case studies.

Secondly, this dissertation contributes to the literature on comparative gender and politics by extending the existing debates on the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation. The findings of this dissertation have not only shown the direct contribution of women legislators (see Chapter 5) but also revealed the indirect contribution where the executives have control over policy making and backbench legislators have limited authority, such as in Bangladesh (see Chapter 6). This research has also revealed the conditions and other associated factors that are necessary to facilitate the process of a successful enactment of women friendly policies (Chapter 7). Such analyses offer support for the argument that the presence of women is a necessary but not the only condition for ensuring women’s substantive representation (Lovenduski, 2005). The discussion on quota policy in Bangladesh and the impact of its uniqueness with regards to distribution of the assigned constituency may provide new insights for the literature on quotas in comparative politics.
Thirdly, this dissertation has significant empirical contributions. As discussed earlier, women’s substantive representation in South Asian parliaments remains an uncovered topic in empirical research. In general, existing academic knowledge seems insufficient to understand the implication of women’s presence on the enactment of their substantive representation in the developing countries. The empirical findings of this dissertation are relevant to context-specific and socially driven operational definitions of women’s issues in the study of substantive representation of the women legislators. Moreover, the study considers diverse issues relating to women regardless of their different backgrounds. Therefore, by taking a broad and diverse understanding of women’s issues, this dissertation adds a contextual value to the framework in measuring SRW.

The final contribution of this study rests in policy advocacy. The framework of analysis and findings of this study could be relevant in the evaluation of women’s political empowerment projects. Many such projects aim to improve women’s representation in the field of politics and political institutions. The analysis in this dissertation provides women’s policy activists a set of tools, which will be instrumental to strengthen women’s participation and their policy representation.

1.5. Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation is made up of eight chapters including this introductory and a concluding chapter. In Chapter 2, this study developed a conceptual framework and introduced major theoretical approaches—Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization. Chapter 3 provides a short descriptive introduction to the Bangladeshi political system, its parliamentary democracy, women’s political representation, and a brief discussion of the overall condition of women in Bangladesh. Thus, it sets the scene for its empirical investigation. Chapter 4 discusses the research design and methods used for collecting and analysing primary and secondary data for the study.

With this, the dissertation makes a transition to its original empirical chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to answering the first research question by taking two distinct approaches. Chapter 5 constitutes the opening of the empirical part of the work and provides a general understanding on how substantive representation on women issues takes place within the floor of the parliament. This chapter compares frequency of men and women legislators’ participation on women issues in relation to their participation on issues other than women issues to examine whether meaningful differences can be found between them. The chapter then goes on to analyse the content of women’s issues which
have been further categorised into practical and strategic issues and thereby explores whether these carry the same meaning for men as they do for women. By observing detailed content of women issues, this chapter investigates whether the presence of women is related to them bringing forth important perspectives and priorities, which would otherwise be under-represented at the policy level.

Building on these findings, Chapter 6 takes a closer look at the relationship between women’s presence and substantive representation. This chapter enhances the analysis of Chapter 5 by zooming into a specific case of a women-friendly policy enactment (Domestic Violence Act 2010) with an aim to trace patterns of women’s engagement in the process. It observes the role of women legislators and the contribution they make in the process within their limited policy-making authority. The analysis presented in both chapters will help to understand the importance of women’s presence in bringing forth issues pertinent to the women of Bangladesh.

Chapter 7 is devoted to answering the second research question by identifying different factors affecting SRW. The purpose is to establish a relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation by analysing the relevance of different factors that positively and negatively influence women’s ability to speak up for women. The underlying assumption is that not all women can act for women. Being influenced by the Feminist Institutionalism approach (FIA) and Political Socialization literature, this chapter broadly classifies the facilitating and constraining factors into two thematic categories: micro and macro, which refer to individual and contextual (including institutional) aspects respectively. The chapter informs the idea that women legislators’ ability to speak up for women can be influenced by different factors (derived from two thematic levels identified in Chapter 2) by comparing between active and not active women legislators (the criteria of being active and not active is discussed in Chapter 7).

Finally, the conclusion summarises the key empirical findings of the study with an outlook that puts the insights gained into a broader perspective and highlights the implications (on conceptual, empirical, comparative literature and policy advocacy levels) of this dissertation. The discussion will offer a synthesis of the empirical findings and the theoretical implications of the study beyond the case of Bangladesh. It ends with a discussion of the directions of future research in the field of gender and politics.
Chapter Two: Women’s Substantive Representation: An Analytical Framework to explain Women’s Representation of Women’s Issues

2.1. Introduction
The gradual increase in numbers of women in parliament raises expectations for women parliamentarians bringing women’s issues forward in politics, an arena which has largely been dominated by men. As discussed briefly in Chapter 1, this expectation has led scholars to examine the consequences of increased representation of women in the parliament and in the broader political context. This chapter draws on the scholarly literature of women’s representation in politics in order to develop the framework of analysis of this study as well as to situate this dissertation within the broader conceptual and empirical landscape. Following two research questions of the study (see Chapter 1), the discussion in this chapter is divided into two interconnected sections. These two sections highlight both the contextual (i.e., empirical) gap on South Asian developing countries and the conceptual gap in theorising the relationship between women’s presence and substantive representation of women (SRW). The discussion in the first section (2.2) builds upon the current debates, concerns and challenges surrounding women’s representation in parliament, and most notably, the relations between women’s descriptive (women’s presence) and substantive (acting on behalf of women) representation. The discussion also argues that a thorough investigation of the contextual milieu – ‘who acts for women’ and ‘what kind of factors impact their actions’—can be useful in understanding the relationship between women’s presence and SRW.

In doing so, this sets the scene for the discussion in the second section (2.3) of this chapter. There, the discussion is not restricted to the features of the mere presence of women legislators, but also tackles the individual, political and contextual aspects that influence their ability to act for women on the floor of the parliament. As mentioned in Chapter 1, not all women can or will act for women; and the second section of this chapter focuses on explaining the variation among women’s ability to act for women (section 2.3). The purpose here is to theorise the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution in parliament by developing a framework that identifies factors which either constrain or facilitate women’s ability to act for women. The discussion brings together the perspectives of Feminist Institutionalist Approach and Political Socialization and shows how they can deepen our understanding of the contextual, political and individual-driven dimensions of SRW. The discussion proposes a framework outlining two levels of factors. These micro and macro levels
of factors are drawn from existing empirical studies based in Western and non-Western contexts alike. The discussion identifies some facilitating and constraining factors from each level, which would help in understanding the variation among women legislators in advancing women’s issues.

2.2. Women’s Presence and Substantive Representation

Various scholars of gender and politics discussed different frameworks of women’s parliamentary representation and importance of women’s presence in public office (Lovenduski, 2005; Mansbridge, 1999; Philips, 1995; Pitkin, 1967; Sward, 2000). They have provided competing perspectives on both the importance of and the justification for women’s presence. Although they framed the necessity of women’s presence in the public offices differently, their assumptions all relied on the idea that women’s presence is important. Most of these scholars have studied women’s substantive representation by paying attention to the gender difference in representing women’s issues.

Pitkin’s (1967) research has pioneered the idea within the field of women’s political representation which claims that representation occurs when political actors speak, advocate, symbolise, and act to advance their constituents’ interests. Her conceptualisation of women’s parliamentary representation features four different types referred to as formalistic, descriptive, symbolic and substantive representation. Formalistic representation focuses on the institutional arrangements through which a representative obtains authorisation and shows accountability to those they represent. Similarly, symbolic representation refers to the way that a representative ‘stands for’ the represented (Pitkin, 1967, p.11). However, the most commonly used aspects of representation are descriptive and substantive representation. Descriptive representation refers to the reflection of demographic characteristics, such as ethnicity, gender, and class, of the represented in the legislature (Mansbridge, 1999). Furthermore, representation here is seen in terms of shared characteristics between the one representing and those being represented. Pitkin contrasts this with substantive representation, defined as an act of representatives ‘for’ or on behalf of those they represent in political platforms. Consequently, more emphasis is given on the actions of representatives, or as Pitkin puts it, “a representative must first of all be capable of effective action” (Pitkin, 1976, p.65).

Such a conceptualisation provides a normative basis for feminist political scientists’ claim that the inclusion of women (being a marginalised group whose interests are often excluded from formal politics) would contribute to the inclusion of a diverse set of issues in parliament and would likely
result in a stance more geared towards protecting women’s real interests (Dovi, 2008; 2009; Krook, 2010a; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003). Mansbridge’s (1999) important insight expanded the understanding of women’s presence to enhance vertical and horizontal representation, i.e., improve quality of group deliberation, increase the sense of democratic legitimacy, and develop leadership capacity (Mansbridge, 1999; Young, 2000). The increased presence of women and their policy representation has given rise to two assumptions. First, it is assumed that if a marginalised group is represented descriptively in political bodies and gets access to deliberation, it is likely that they will translate descriptive representation into substantive representation. Second, it is assumed that women have an intrinsic interest in other women’s wellbeing (Mansbridge, 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005) and that they share a commitment to ‘act for’ women and ensure women’s interests, needs, and concerns in the policy process (Mackay, 2004, p.101).

Studies have examined a potential link between women’s presence and their substantive contribution by comparing differences in policy attitudes and priorities of men and women in public offices. A growing number of research suggests that women legislators have a greater connection to women, identifying with them as a group, and feeling a responsibility to speak out for them (Dobson and Carroll, 1991; Dobson, 2001; Tamerius, 1995; Reingold, 2000). Another group of researchers has identified that women office-holders are most likely shaping the government agenda by giving higher priorities to women’s, as well as to children’s and family issues, than their male colleagues (Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Burrell, 1994; Carroll, 2001; Dobson, 2001; Duerst-Lathi and Keppy, 1995; Reingold, 1992; Saint-Germin, 1989; Thomas and Welch, 1991; Welch, 1991; Wolbrecht, 2002). Others have demonstrated that female representatives are more likely to introduce and cosponsor legislation that pertains to women. Swers (2005) and Jones (1997), for example, showed that female legislators are more interested than their male colleagues to cosponsor legislation on education, children-and-family, and women’s health issues.

In the context of the Nordic countries, scholars have observed that women do have legislative agendas and policy priorities on gender equality issues that are distinct from their male counterparts (Campbell et al., 2010; Cowell-Meyers, and Langbein, 2009; Tremblay, 1998). For example, Wängnerud’s (2005) study showed that female members of the Swedish Riksdag had addressed feminine policy areas, such as social, family, and health care policy, during their electoral campaigns. Other legislative efforts of women legislators include feminist demands like childcare, an end to domestic violence, equal
opportunity (Mackay and Meier, 2003), or more traditional subjects, i.e. health care and children’s welfare (Carroll, 1985; Dodson, 2006; Taylor-Robinson and Heath, 2003). Dahlerup’s (1988) work on women’s distinctive contributions to legislation in Scandinavia is another such exemplary research that shows women politicians have different priorities, values, and attitudes.

Similarly, in the British context, Lovenduski and Norris’ (2003) survey on 1000 national politicians in Britain found that women from all the main parties in Britain claimed to bring a different set of values that would underpin women representatives’ distinctiveness. Similarly, a study on women legislators from the Australian Labour Party in Queensland has shown that women perceive their positions at the public office as a means to pursue women’s interest (Broughton and Zetlin, 1996). Lovenduski and Norris (2003) have also discussed that the entry of more women into Westminster in recent times could make more than just a symbolic difference. These findings are also related to the observation that women representatives are more interested than their male colleagues to engage in women issues.

Studies on systems where legislators have limited authority on policy making showed how they focused on alternative strategies through which women were seen as drawing attention to issues important to women. For instance, women legislators from the Canadian parliament have used parliamentary motions and statements to highlight women’s concerns and give voice to women’s overlooked interests (Childs and Withey, 2004; Tremblay, 1998). Other studies revealed gender variation in participation in legislative debates, where women often were engaged in speaking twice as often as men on women issues (Grey, 2002; Taylor-Robinson and Heath, 2003; Tremblay, 1998). Furthermore, studies showed that women legislators had participated more extensively in debates involving women and families (Taylor-Robinson and Heath, 2003) and on issues of child care and parental leave in New Zealand, compared to debates on masculine policy areas (i.e., budget; Grey, 2002). Another compelling research in the context of British parliament discussed the evidence of gendered policymaking by studying women’s participation in early day motions (Childs, 2004). The study showed how women legislators successfully brought attention to an important concern, such as imposition of value added tax (VAT) on women’s sanitary products and argued for re-establishing the non-VAT status of such sanitary products, a critical need for women (Childs, 2004).

These studies largely support the importance of women’s descriptive representation for promoting pro-women policies and doing so more often than their male counterparts. They also provide
compelling evidence that women in public office make a difference, which ultimately supports a link
between the presence of female legislators (descriptive representation) and the articulation of women’s
issues (in other words, SRW) within the legislatures of different western countries. Higher numbers
of women in office are necessary in order to include a diversity of women’s perspectives in the political
debate, to improve their deliberation, and to enhance women’s representation (Mansbridge, 1999;
Young, 2000). In other words, this argument suggests that once women representatives become part
of the political institutions, they will ‘act for’ women and ensure women’s interests, needs, and
concerns are represented in the policy process and outcomes (Mackay, 2004, p.101). Such
conceptualisation of representation also highlights that “men lack deep knowledge of women’s
‘thoughts, wills and respective situations,’ and so women must represent themselves” (Williams, 1998,
p.137). So far, studies on women legislators’ behaviour mostly overlooked the contribution of men
legislators on the issues pertinent to women. However, a few studies have addressed the contribution
of men (who are women-friendly and sympathetic), while also emphasizing the contribution of women
legislators in representing women’s interest. Dobson (2001) and Klein (1984), in their studies, have
highlighted the significance of the recruitment of gender-conscious women and men who see women
as a political group with legitimate needs and interests. Celis (2006) also advocated the importance of
men representing historically disadvantaged groups’ interest.

The abovementioned discussion largely supported that women’s descriptive representation does
translate into substantive representation. Much of these studies have shown differences between men
and women legislators’ attention to women issues, generally showing a higher rate of intervention on
women issues by women legislators. While existing literature on this topic highlights the way in which
women legislators represent women throughout the legislative process, it has not yet been empirically
established to what extent and how women’s presence matters when it comes to combating women’s
subordination or inequality in society. Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding on the degree to
which both women and men legislators represent women in the parliament. On the other hand,
research has shown that women’s interest originated in the diversified life experiences of different
groups of women, thus, not all women will work for women (Bratton, 2008; Grey, 2992; Mansbridge,
1999; Philips, 1998). In a general sense, women may represent women, but there is also a great deal of
variation among women, both regarding the extent of their activities and their preferences. Likewise,
there are also variations in the abilities of women legislators to speak for women, including whether
they do so at all. The different facilitating and constraining factors that this dissertation aims to identify
to explain variation among women legislators in representation on women issues are not yet clear. In male-dominated institutions, it is of utmost importance to shed light on gender variation as well as variations among women in representation on women issues, hence, it would better help to explain the importance of women’s presence and facilitating and constraining factors in the process of substantive representation.

So far, studies considered literature from the relatively well-researched Western contexts. Only a few studies have assessed women’s substantive representation outside of Western contexts. For example, Jones’ (1997) research examined gender differences in bill initiation in the Honduran Congress during the 1990-93 and 1994-97 terms and found that women placed a higher priority on women and children rights issues and participate in debates on those bills than of bills pertinent to men (Taylor-Robinson and Michelle Heath, 2003). Likewise, Htun, Lacalle, and Micozzi (2013) also showed that women legislators were more interested and active than their male colleagues to submit women’s rights bills in the Argentinean parliament. In the same line, Piscopo (2011) found that women legislators in Argentina were overrepresented in debates on proposals addressing women’s rights. Schwindt-Bayer’s (2006) comparative study on Argentina, Colombia, and Costa Rica argued that women do place a higher priority on women’s equality and family issues. Despite the case where legislator’s attitudes are dictated entirely by the partisanship, men and women legislators in Argentina, Colombia and Costa Rica continued to express their differing opinions on women issues (Schwindt-Bayer, 2006).

Outside of Latin America, Tam’s (2017) recent work on Hong Kong has examined the extent to which Hong Kong’s women legislators have acted for women’s interests. According to his research, women legislators in Hong Kong put higher priorities on issues related to women’s rights and the traditional interests of women (e.g. children and families, health care/public health) than their male counterparts. Research on women legislators in Pakistani parliament found that women drew more attention to women issues and they intervened in issues related to the social sector, public interest and women’s needs and concerns during the 12th national assembly (Bari, 2009; also see, Mumtaz, 1998). Chowdhury’s (2015) study on Bangladesh parliament showed that women legislator’s voiced women issues that included women’s material needs, women and society, women and children, women rights issues, women in politics and violence against women. Studies in non-Western contexts examined substantive representation of women either by looking at gender variation on specific women and children rights issues or by looking at only women legislators’ contribution. However, these studies
do not shed light on how women’s presence matters in representing women issues by comparing men and women legislators’ contribution and largely ignore the variation among women. Furthermore, these studies so far overlooked the contribution of men legislators on the same issues.

The existing studies on non-Western cases raised some concerns about the existing socio-political context. Barker’s (2011) and Yoon’s (2011) revealing research on Africa discussed that most African legislatures had limited constitutional power and limited resources to exercise their power and experienced a high emphasis on constituency service rather than legislative activities. Similarly, Benstead’s (2008) study showed legislator’s activities mostly were dedicated to people of their constituency and that legislators associated themselves more with service centric activities (see also, Benstead, 2016). Research on Indian local women councillors demonstrated that they were more responsive to women’s requests (Kudva, 2003), fostering substantive representation by ensuring the provision of services important for women. For example, the supply of nearby drinking water was higher in the districts headed by women councillors (Chattopodhay and Duflo, 2004). These findings have also demonstrated the structural and institutional challenges (i.e., lack of resources, lack of power, high demands of constituency service) faced by the legislators in the non-Western countries and how that influences their ability to represent constituents in parliament. Such realities suggest the operational definition of women issues must be broadened and contextualised to include not only the rights-based, but also service-oriented concerns of women constituents. This is even more pertinent in the context of developing countries where women experience structural uncertainties and challenges due to their subordination in the patronage-based and patriarchal system. This study, therefore, incorporated both aspects in the categorization of women issues, which is further discussed in the research design (see Chapter 3).

The studies reviewed so far have offered insights into how descriptive representation can translate into substantive representation. However, there also is diverging evidence regarding the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation of women. For example, some studies, in both Western and non-Western contexts, found that increases in the presence of women in public offices had failed to bring a change in legislative outcomes (Childs, 2004; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Franceschet, Krook, and Piscopo, 2012; Grey, 2002; Lovenduski, 2005). In addition, changes in policy decisions did not just take place only due to an increased number of women in office (Grey, 2002). Changes in the legislative agenda sometimes took place with the help of small numbers of female
representatives (Towns, 2003; Welch, 1985; Wolbrecht, 2000). Thus, the proportion\(^2\) of women legislators is not a sufficient condition to account for the attention of women in the policy agenda or in the implementation of pro-women policy. Moreover, the relationship between women’s descriptive and substantive representation is not directly proportional. Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler’s (2005) study on 31 countries criticised the argument of critical mass\(^3\) and stated that the effect of women’s descriptive representation upon their substantive representation is smaller than anticipated (Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005).

A few other scholars termed the relationship as ‘complicated’ (Childs, 2008) and even rejected the existence of a relationship between the presence of female representatives and representing women’s interest (Celis, 2006; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Mansbridge, 1999; Phillips, 1995; 2000; Wängnerud, 2000). Women cannot always act for women just because they are women, as they are not a homogenous entity and even, have lack of commonalities among women’s life experiences and shared goals (Celis, 2006; Mansbridge, 1999; Wängnerud, 2000). Such argumentation also holds true when it comes to representing issues pertinent to women’s interest. Indeed, research has shown that not every women representative will act for women (Bratton, 2005; Childs, 2008; Grey, 2002; Mansbridge, 1999; Trimble, 1997; Young 2000). However, researchers have not moved further investigating what generates such variation among women. By assuming variation among women, this dissertation argues that it is not enough to ask whether women’s presence is correlated with their attention to women issues, but to move beyond by investigating why some women act on behalf of women and others do not. This would help us to establish the possible relationship between women’s presence and substantive representation, if there is any. The present study, therefore, emphasises the fact that not all women will act or can bring changes for women, but the critical act of some women (who are active on women issues)\(^4\) matter more than their sheer presence (i.e., descriptive representation).

\(^2\)The work of Kanter (1977) has become instrumental for such kind of studies, seeking to answer the question of how many women need to be present to address the missing interest in the first place. She used the idea of ‘critical mass’, a metaphor from nuclear physics (Lovenduski, 2005), and her thesis advocated that once certain groups attain a certain size, they thereby transform the culture, norms, and values (Lovenduski and Norris, 2003). The expectation, therefore, is that political behaviours, institutions, and public policy are likely to transform (Studlar and MacAllister, 2002, p234) once women constitute a particular proportion ‘critical mass’ in parliament (Dahlerup, 1988; Kanter, 1977).

\(^3\)The critical mass approach predicts that women’s impact on politics will feel when their presence reaches approximately 30 % (Kanter, 1977).

\(^4\) This argument was influenced by the work of Childs and Krook (2009), who have tried to settle the debate between critical mass and critical acts. They have identified critical actors as “those (women) who put in motion individual and collective campaigns for women-friendly policy change; initiate policy proposals on their own, even when women form a
It therefore seems that women’s participation in the decision-making process could not be taken as a guarantee for substantial change to a larger extent (Dobson, 2006; Wångnerud, 2009). As discussed above, not all women and not only women will bring change for women (Childs and Krook, 2009; Mansbridge, 1999 and 2005; Young, 2000). This in turn has raised questions like ‘what kind of strategies’ or ‘what kind of factors’ might be useful to bring change for women. The existing empirical literature has not yet examined the role of diverse life experiences of different groups of women on the process of substantive representation in detail. Investigating women’s previous experiences might be even more informative in developing countries because diversity of experience tends to be more accented than in the West as women are not only struggling to be included in the public spheres but also to fulfil their basic human needs and still face social and economic deprivation. This dissertation, therefore, finds it important to acknowledge the diversity of women’s life experiences and their role with regards to some women’s (critical actors’) active participation in parliament on behalf of women. The presumption is that diversified life experiences of women (referred to as their Political Socialization in this dissertation) may enable some women or constrain others in the process of enactment of substantive representation. In doing so, the concept of Political Socialization is one of the core theoretical underpinnings used in this dissertation and will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent section 2.3.

The investigation of the role of political institutions and political environment in this dissertation has expanded the conceptual horizon of SRW. The assumption that women’s presence translates into women’s representation may overstate the role of individual political agency and downplay the impact of political institutions, political environment, and other circumstances (Goetz, 2003; Lovenduski, 2005). Mackay (2008, p.210) advocated for a ‘thick’ conception of substantive representation of women and defined it as “contextualized, inter-relational, and requiring a whole system approach to how women’s policy changes occur”. Thus, the characterisation of substantive representation in this thesis is not only limited to the inclusion of women’s concerns in the policy process or in the policy outcomes. Rather, it moves beyond individual factors (Lovenduski, 2001; Mackay et al., 2003; Sawer, 2000) and leaves the investigation open to other supplementary factors, such as contexts—role of political institutions, and political environment (Celis et al., 2008; Escobar-Lemon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Kang, 2014; Lovenduski, 2005). For example, the adoption of a women-friendly
policy could probably better be explained by public support for women’s political participation and
democratic party control rather than women’s numeric representation (Tolbert and Steuernagel, 2001).
Even in an institution where legislators enjoy significant policy-making authority, factors including
public opinion and interest group politics may be better determinants of women’s policy representation
than just the number of female legislators in parliament. This could be more prominently felt in a legislative setting where party discipline is strict. Legislators have limited authority in a situation where party discipline does not allow legislators to vote against their party’s proposed legislation (Ahmed, 2012; Carey, 2009), and thus, comparatively, have limited influence over policy change. In an institution where strict party discipline exists, it is important to look beyond the numbers of women legislators in parliament. So, the presumption used in this dissertation is that the presence of strict party discipline or limited authority in the policy making (referred as feminist socialization in this dissertation) may constrain some women legislators in the process of enactment of substantive representation. Limited policy making authority of women legislators can be one of the potential constraining factors that this dissertation seeks to identify and explore further.

Apart from such formal institutional aspects, the informal attitudes of the male-dominated parliament can influence the behaviour of women. For instance, Mumtaz (1998) in her study showed that male legislators in Pakistan’s parliament have negative attitudes, poor tolerance and biased views which undermine the efforts of women’s rights protagonists (Mumtaz, 1998, p.339). Given the realities of different political institutions, this study assumes that focusing on women’s presence or presence of the critical actors in the legislature only cannot always adequately establish the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation. Rather, it argues for investigating the aspects of institutional factors, political environment, and other circumstantial evidences that can explain the variation among women. This is reflected in the second research question of this dissertation—how do different institutional and contextual factors provide leverage (either by constraining or facilitating) women legislators’ pursuit of substantive representation? The Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA) is adopted to understand the phenomenon of SRW within a developing country’s parliament. The following section outlines how Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization perspectives contribute by identifying different factors such as individual, contextual (including institutional, political) dimension of women’s substantive representation.
2.3. Explanatory Factors Affecting Enactment of Women’s Substantive Representation

The discussion in the previous section has reviewed existing empirical studies which has hinted at factors such as diversified life experiences, political institution and political environment operating at the micro and macro level which might affect the substantive representation of women. This section aims to further discuss different factors from both levels that possibly influence women’s ability to represent women. This dissertation acknowledges the fact that women enter into political life and undergo a process of change and training, eventually coming to parliament with certain resources amassed beforehand, such as their socio-political status and experience. In parliament, women operate within a gendered institution. Here, they face different features of political institutions and political contexts. Moreover, some of them have gained political experience at home, in the workplace, politics, and other public spheres. This experience may influence women legislators to prioritise their agenda and speak up on behalf of other women.

With the aim to understand the relevance of different factors, such as diverse life experiences of women legislators, political institution and political context, this dissertation emphasises both individual and greater institutional and political contexts in developing an analytical framework. This framework seeks to explain variation among women legislators’ roles in substantial representation. It assumes that some representatives are successful in their effort to contribute substantively, while others are unable to do so. This dissertation focuses on individual aspects as micro level factors and greater political and institutional aspects as macro level factors. These two levels of factors reflect variations among women legislators, help to understand their role and ability to speak up for women better and in more depth.

A useful starting point to understand the ability of women legislators to engage in substantive representation is to identify and analyse the factors that positively and negatively influence their role of representing women. Here, the concepts of ‘facilitator’ and ‘constrainer’ are used to label factors that can cause variations in women’s ability to represent women. Facilitators are those conditions and circumstances that facilitate women’s active participation relative to those of their male colleagues and other women legislators. By contrast, constrainers are those conditions and circumstances that mitigate women’s ability to actively take part in debates on women issues. The main assumption is that in the presence of facilitating conditions, and in the absence of constraining factors, women legislators will ensure their active political participation on behalf of women. Facilitating factors can
remove or reduce barriers while constraining factors hinder women’s active representation. Different facilitating and constraining factors can explain the variation among women in representing women issues. Such explaining factors, in turn, add value to explore the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution to women issues further.

In order to understand the factors influencing women’s presence and their ability of SRW, the analytical framework of this dissertation is informed by two theoretical understandings – the Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA) (more specifically, the impact of formal and informal rules of the institution) and the argument of Political Socialization (in this case, the socialization process of women legislators). These two approaches will help to examine the contextual, institutional and political atmosphere within which women legislators perform and which may influence them either positively or negatively.

The framework comprises two levels, micro and macro level, of factors which help to explain SRW. The micro level is tackling the individual dimensions of women legislators, while the macro level pertains to the overall contextual and institutional aspects which could act either as facilitators or constrainers. Both levels include factors derived from existing empirical studies conducted within both Western and developing country contexts, such as demographic characteristics, institutional aspects, political structures, and external actors’ influences. Factors from both levels will inform the analytical framework of this dissertation. Besides these factors, this dissertation aims to identify new sets of factors at both levels, which are pertinent to explaining women’s ability to speak on behalf of women in a developing country. The following sections discuss FIA and Political Socialization, and their relevance in understanding SRW. Furthermore, the subsequent parts present a list of micro and macro level factors derived from different empirical studies as the means of developing an analytical framework to explain the variation among women legislators in their ability of SRW.

2.3.1. Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA)

Being inspired by the New Institutionalist Approach (NIA), which emerged in the 1980s, a group of feminist scholars in gender and politics research suggested the framework of FIA to understand the dynamics of the gendered feature of institutions (Krook, 2013a; 2013b; Mackay and Waylen, 2009; 2017; Waylen, 2011). Unlike in the study of mainstream political science, FIA’s focus is on the institution as it plays a role in shaping the political life of different actors based on their gender. Being
informed by FIA’s claim that gender is deeply rooted in institutions (Chappell and Waylen 2013; Krook and Mackay, 2011; Mackay, Kenny and Chappell, 2010), this dissertation assumes that the gendered nature of institutions is one of the factors affecting women’s representation in parliament. This dissertation refers these institutional aspects as macro level factors that influence women’s ability to act on behalf of women.

The FIA critically investigates different aspects of the institution that may influence women's political life. Moreover, the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution for women can benefit from the FIA in different ways by considering the role of informal and formal institutions and the gendered nature of these institutions. Each of these aspects will be briefly outlined in the following paragraphs.

With regard to the role of informal rules of the institution, we must first recognise the concept of a formal and informal institution. Rules are the most important means for defining an institution and governing the behavior within an institution. These rules are commonly referred to as the ‘rules of the game’ (North, 1990; Peter, 1999). Institutionalist scholars defined the formal institution as rules which determine “what actions or outcomes are required, prohibited or permitted, and the sanctions authorised if the rules are not followed” (Ostrom et al., 1994, p.38). In other words, they can be conceptualised as standard operating practices that structure relationships between individuals in the institution (Hall, 1986, pp.19-20). Such rules in the parliament can be contained by the constitution, by the terms of references of the legislators, by the code of conduct, and various other regulations. Apart from the formally coded rules, Institutionalist scholars introduced other regulations practiced within the institution which are not formally binding, referred to as the informal institution (Waylen, 2017). They claimed that such informal institutions are collectively constructed, practiced, shared, and enforced outside of the official channels (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004, p.727). For example, while convention, charter, and electoral rules refer to formal institutions, informal institutions of a political institution can be informal regulations such as network and patronage politics. Importantly, the latter may encode norms, principles, and expectations which are different from the written and formally codified rules. Both formal and informal institutions become an obvious and immediate basis for choice in daily interaction (North, 1990). Thereby, the responses and actions of actors (legislators) operating within an institution (the parliament) are influenced and guided by both the formal and informal aspects of the institution.
Feminist scholars refered to both formal and informal institutions and claimed those rules of the institution are gendered in character, in other words, they impact women and men differently (Chappell and Waylen, 2013; Kenny, 2007; Lovenduski, 2016; Mackay, 2004; Waylen, 2017). Bjarnegård and Kenny’s (2012) contribution to the Critical Perspectives demonstrated the informal rules of the institution and emphasised the importance of informal rules of the game, such as the network (Culhane, 2017) and patronage politics (Verge and Claveria, 2017). Similarly, Feminist scholars analysed the gendered impact of certain practices and cultural norms of parliamentary procedures, such as the evening meeting of political parties and evening sessions of the parliament. They have shown that how such practices affected men and women differently, privileged some individuals (men) over others (women), and even led directly to different outcomes by constraining the ability of female legislators to represent women (Carroll, 1984; 2001; Childs, 2004; Dobson, 2001, 2006; Franceschet, 2005). For instance, research in the UK and Scotland showed that informal institutions such as de-facto procedural and attitudinal rules undermined the formal institution of the candidate selection (Kenny, 2011; Krook, 2010a; Luvenduski and Norris, 1993; Norris and Luvenduski, 1996; also see Krook, 2010b; 2010c).

Feminist Institutionalists (FI) have not only explored the informal institutions but also the formal rules of the institution. They have argued that informal rules and norms are embedded within a formal institution and play a key role in shaping individual’s political life. Studies looked at formal institutions like the electoral system, political parties and the parliament, and observed the imbedded informal institution and its vital capacity to reproduce gendered cultures. For instance, research in the Latin American context showed how informal institutions underpin the candidate selection, even when formal barriers of recruiting women were removed through quota policies (formal institution). Studies showed that the informal practices involved with quota practices ensured pro-male bias in the political recruitment process (Bjarnegård, 2013; Escobar-lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2008; Hinjosa, 2012). The candidate selection process in political institutions intersects with gendered norms that can facilitate or hinder women’s access to power (Annelyse and Franschet, 2015; Johnson, 2016, p.394) and bolster male privilege in the recruitment while simultaneously undermining the formal rules, such as the gender quota (Krook, 2010). What seems most crucial here is that such interaction of informal practices and formal rules affects men and women differently.
The interaction between formal and informal institutions embedded within produced gendered effect is central to the FI project. The comparative study of women's substantive representation shows the interaction between formal and informal institutions and has argued that their interaction has a gendered effect upon women and men as institutional actors (Franceschet, 2011). In other words, there are complex linkages between the formal and informal institution, which shape patterns of advantage and disadvantage based on gender (Burn, 2005, p.139). Some have identified such interactions as either complementary or contradictory (Hinojosa, 2005; Verge and Claveria, 2017); however, others have acknowledged that the variation in their interactions could also bring a variation in outcomes for relevant actors (Kenny, 2011). Kenny’s work has shown the interaction between formal electoral rules and informal norms, such as combative versus consensual political styles, which shaped the legislative environment and influenced legislator’s behaviour and as well as policy outcomes (Kenny, 2011). The following section offers a more detailed discussion with regard to this aspect.

FIA argues that it is not only the gender norms and gender relations which limit change, but also the patterns of hierarchy operating at the symbolic level (through the daily practicing of gender and power). In fact, the latter may be a “primary mechanism through which institutional reform and innovation can be resisted” (Kenny, 2011, p.40; Kenny and Mackay 2009; see also Mackay, 2010). Consequently, variations in gender practices and gender regimes in different institutional settings may provide a powerful explanation for wider patterns of institutional variance and differences in outcomes (Connell, 2006; Lovenduski, 1998; Mackay, 2008; Sainsbury, 2004). Thus, the pursuit of a gendered dimension of continuity and change suggest that particular configurations or context of institutions may encourage or discourage the articulation of perspectives that advance women’s rights or the development of women’s policy. In other words, an investigation of configuration or context of the political institution and their impact on actor’s behaviour has received attention by FI scholars as well.

Lovenduski (2005) discussed the significance of circumstantial evidence by assessing the evidence of British women politicians who have made a difference in parliament. Lovenduski (2005) argued that women operate within a context that expects them to bring change against considerable resistances. Therefore, women’s presence alone cannot bring about change, given that they are not the only actor in the process of substantive representation. A variety of other factors from greater political context, such as formal and informal rules of the parliament, possible alliances between actors and movements,
the political opportunity structures, and actors outside the parliament, may influence over how actors
within an institution work. The relevance of these factors is discussed in the following sub-sections.

This dissertation attempts to shed light on women legislators’ ability to speak up for women and
investigates how different institutional and contextual aspects potentially explain the variation among
women in relation to whether they speak up for women. Therefore, this dissertation investigates
different institutional and contextual milieus within which women legislators perform, shape their
propensity to speaking up for women and women issues, and ensure the enactment of substantive
representation. It is informed by the argument of FIA that different formal and informal rules of the
political institution and their interaction influence women and men differently, and extends the
argument further by claiming that different factors from the greater institutional and political context
may facilitate or constrain women’s ability to speak up for women. These factors influence legislators
in such a way that some women are more inclined to contribute substantively for women (by speaking
or acting for women) than other women, who have been affected negatively by other or similar factors.

Schwindt-Bayer and Squire (2014) have argued that FIA has rarely been considered as a framework in
researching women’s representation. They call for an empirical investigation that takes into
consideration the combined influence of contextual and institutional factors, along with women’s
mere presence. The following section identifies different factors on the macro level drawn from
existing studies, which may have caused variations among women legislators’ participation on women
issues. This dissertation considers institutional aspects (including formal and informal rules of the
institution), the overall political context (more specifically political opportunity structure), and
relations with external actors as macro level factors which may possibly influence women’s ability to
represent women issues in parliament. Three macro-level factors will be discussed at greater length
and their role as facilitators or constraints will be elaborated in the following sub-sections.

2.3.1.1. Formal and Informal Aspects of the Institution
FIA argued that institutionally embedded power relations and gendered patterns bestowed the actors
with a unique set of constraints (Lovenduski, 2005) and opportunities (Kenny, 2007). These ultimately
influence actors’ (women legislators’) ways of representing women and championing women’s issues.
The purpose of this section is to reveal different aspects of formal and informal institutional
characteristics as they have been discussed in the literature (both in Western and developing countries)
and which might influence women’s substantive representation. This section discusses the possible influences of formal institutions (such as recruitment policies of women legislators and the position they hold) and informal institutions (existing perceptions on quota women, perceptions associated with the recruitment policies) on women’s decision and ability to act for women.

With regard to the recruitment of women legislators, there are two ways women are officially recruited into public office—through selection by quota and through election by popular vote. The first group of women is often referred to as quota women, while the second is referred to as non-quota women. Research on quota and mandates has revealed the long-term effects of various institutional arrangements, electoral systems, and different quota systems on policy outcomes (Childs, 2008; Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2010; Diaz, 2005; Geotz and Hassim, 2003; Sawer et al., 2006; Tremblay, 2007). There is no formal difference between a quota and non-quota woman parliamentarian in relations to their roles and responsibility within and outside of parliament. Nevertheless, differences in the acceptance of quota and non-quota women legislators have already been demonstrated. Brazilian women legislators who enter into parliament through quota systems often find themselves unfairly labelled and associated with less prestige and power (Miguel, 2012). Quota women in the Argentinean parliament were likewise seen as less qualified and were unfairly charged with receiving nominations based on their elite status (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2012). The same prejudice can be found in scientists. For example, it has been argued that the selection of women candidates in quota-based recruitment relies more upon their loyalty towards their respective parties rather than their track record or interest in articulating gender equality and women’s empowerment concerns (Jahan, 2015, p.257). Overall, research on the quota effect within Western and developing countries (e.g. Latin American and African contexts) has shown that the perception and acceptance of quota and non-quota women might differ, despite having no formal difference between the two. People tend to perceive such differences both in terms of women legislators’ experiences and qualification (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008). The impact of such informal perceptions on quota on women legislators’ ability to promote the wellbeing of women may be different for quota women compared to as non-quota women. Interestingly, research has shown that the way in which quota and non-quota women approach women’s policy issues in parliament also differs. In essence, quota women tend to take more responsibility to bring women issues into parliament (Childs and Krook, 2012; Chowdhury, 2015). Similarly, the Brazilian case mentioned before has demonstrated that women coming through quota systems give greater priority to women’s issues, take more effective actions, and feel stronger
responsibility to introduce women's rights bills (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; O’ Brien, 2012a). Such differences might be even more significant in Bangladesh, where more than 70 percent of women use quota as a route to parliament.

Often, quota women are selected by the party first and then are elected by the elected male and female members of parliament after the popular vote has taken place (Chowdhury, 2002). This is the case in Bangladesh, which will be elaborated on in more detail in Chapter 3. Hence, quota women do not have a hold over a constituency. Such a unique mechanism increases operational differences between quota and non-quota women (who are directly elected) with regard to their acceptance, respect (informal aspect), and mandate of work (formal aspect). The formal and informal aspects associated with women’s mode of selection and the perception of their ability to do politics can impede women’s actual ability to promote women’s rights (Larson, 2012). Therefore, it is important to study the relationship between the mode of women candidate’s selection and its effectiveness in influencing their actions.

Studies have shown that the dominance of executives and their control over the policy agenda at the parliament can substantially limit the role of women legislators and leave them without any rank either in the party or in the government (Childs, 2001; Cowley and Childs, 2011; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Htun and Jones, 2002). In such cases, expecting women legislators to single-handedly change patterns in women’s policy representation within such institutions is unrealistic and unjust (Cornwall and Goetz, 2005). In support of this argument, Annesley (2010) claims that actors, women legislators in this case, need to be powerful enough to bring changes within such gendered regimes. The presence of legislators in the right venues is, therefore, a requirement for women legislators to effectively represent women (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014, p 238). Uganda’s experience suggests that ranks and positions within the party enable women to become critical issue articulators (O’ Brier, 2012). In an institution where party domination is evident, this characteristic can be a necessary condition to be able to forward women’s substantive representation. Mayer’s (2003) article is helpful in understanding this process. In this article, Mayer has shown that powerful women legislators of the Bundestag were instrumental behind a series of landmark women’s rights legislations in Germany (Mayer, 2003).
Informed by the discussion so far, this study assumes that the positional power of a legislator within parliament could facilitate her ability to represent women, and thus, influence the process of substantive representation. Women’s access to the right venue and right position is critical in attaining a voice influential enough to represent substantively. This informal aspect of the institution also contains a corollary, operating in reverse—the absence of the right and powerful-enough position might constrain women legislators’ ability to effectively represent women. The influence of this informal aspect of the institution might be more significant within an institution where more than 70 percent of women are backbench legislators without holding a positional power in the parliament, and thus, lack policy-making authority. Drawing upon existing literature, this study expects that the formal and informal aspects of the recruitment and positional power in the parliament provide both constraints and/or boosts to women’s substantive representation.

2.3.1.2. Political Structure/Environment (Party Ideology, Opportunity Structure and Polarised Politics)

Political opportunity structure refers to the political circumstances favourable for active participation of women and supportive to policy changes which promote women’s wellbeing. Understanding the political structures is undeniably an important factor, impacting women’s ability to represent what is expected of them (Galligan, 2007). In the present study, political environment includes various aspects such as party ideology, the nature of the party in power, and the overall polarisation of political systems. This study assumes that a positive political context creates opportunities that stimulate active engagement of women and enable them for policy representation, thereby, providing a facilitating factor for their ability of substantive representation.

The orientation of political parties (whether left or right) also influences the opportunities for women legislators to bring different sets of values, attitudes, and preferences to various sets of women issues. Studies have shown that ideology is the largest predictor of legislators’ support of bills relevant to women's interest (Celis and Erezeel, 2015; Dolan and Ford, 1997; Htun and Power, 2006; Tremblay and Pelletier, 2000). It could be observed that women from progressive parties tend to represent women substantively more than women from conservative parties. For instance, women legislators from conservative parties were less likely to advocate for women than women from the liberal parties (Dolan and Ford, 1997; Htun and Power, 2006; Tremblay and Pelletier, 2000). Furthermore, the
motivation of women legislators to advocate for women can derive from party ideology or party views on feminist consciousness (Celis and Erezeel, 2015).

Simultaneously, a polarised political system can create divisions among women legislators that lead to an unsuitable political environment for collaboration between them and thus hinder any push for a substantial change on women’s issues (Sater, 2012). Findings from Columbia and Costa Rica have shown that even women with influential voices were not enough to enhance the articulation of women’s interest and substantive representation due to the absence of a suitable political environment (Escobar-Lemmon, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson, 2014). Similarly, studies on women’s representation in South Africa during the period 1999-2004 have explained how political realities, such as centralised political parties, can prevent the debate and deliberation of women legislators from advancing women’s interest, resulting in very little legislative change in the course of women’s rights (Walsh, 2012). Similarly, the absence of such positive environments made woman legislators unable to lobby effectively for gender equity policies in parliament (Swers, 2002, p.5).

The impact of ideological orientation of respective political parties could be compromised in a majoritarian government system, where ideology of the party in power matters the most. Against this backdrop, the type of political party in power and policy agenda of the party chief could affect women legislators’ preferences and activities on women issues (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Walsh, 2012). Within a majoritarian political system, such as that of Bangladesh, a women-friendly political atmosphere by the party in power might create an opportunity for women legislators to act substantively on behalf of women (facilitating factor), while a political atmosphere less friendly to women might hinder such attempts and reduce their frequency (constraining factor).

This study assumes that there will be a facilitating impact of a women-friendly political atmosphere on how women behave in favour of women. Women’s greater commitment to women’s issues is more inclined to women’s activism, which is implicitly related to the aspects of political opportunity as well as position on women issues of the party in power (Lovenduski, 2005). Thus, this study, in its empirical chapters, seeks to explore and demonstrate the relevance of positive political circumstances in creating opportunities and a common ground for women legislators to act for women.
2.3.1.3. The Role of External Actors
Existing literature has shown that legislators maintain their contacts with external actors, such as social movements, women’s movements, and civil society groups, to shape their attention to issues pertinent to women (Costa and Cornwall, 2014). Studies have also suggested that those actors were successful in putting pressure on the government for women-friendly policy changes and successful in providing extra-governmental voices for marginalised groups (Carroll, 2001; Sawer, 2000; Sawer and Jamieson, 2014). In the U.S. and Canadian politics, women’s groups are central to the party coalition and female party members often receive benefits from women’s advocacy organisations (Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2006; Maillé, 2015). These benefits can take the shape of political support, capacity building, and knowledge related to different women-related policy adoptions as well as their practical implications. The contribution of external actors is commendable in the process of advocating for women in two ways. First, they play a role in guiding the state and its policies towards certain desirable ends by creating public support for it. Second, they can also work in close collaboration with government institutions and legislators, encouraging them to feel responsibility for such policy areas. However, it is not clear to what extent or through what process legislators’ involvement with external actors can influence their preference or ability to raise their voices for women in parliament or indirectly act for women in other ways.

Many studies have highlighted women’s movements as an instrument for ensuring women’s rights policies and women’s presence in politics (e.g., Costa and Cornwall, 2014). In fact, some give more credit to women’s movement groups or women’s interest group for ensuring women’s rights than they do to the presence of women in the state legislature. Weldon (2002), for example, has argued that women’s rights movements can influence government’s policy response towards violence against women better than the actions of women legislators. In the U.S., women’s groups have been central to the democratic coalition because of the party’s strong association with social welfare issues. Female Democrats often benefit from the strong support of women’s advocacy organizations (Lovenduski, 2005). Women’s ownership of particular issues also depends on its resonance with public opinion. Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers (2007) have suggested that public pressure or opinions influence women’s movements and partially, if not fully, contribute to women’s public policy outcome. Ciazza (2004) has explained the adoption of women-friendly policies through public support for women’s political participation and Democratic Party control rather than women’s presence. Public perception
can also allow women legislators to take up issues and build up ownership around such policy areas (Lovenduski, 2005).

Studies conducted in Bangladesh have emphasised the contribution of women’s movement and women’s rights organizations in facilitating the women-related policy outcomes and improving women’s condition (Nazneen, 2017a; Nazneen, Sultan and Hossain, 2010; Nazneen and Sultan, 2009). Not only women’s movement groups but also different non-governmental organisations and international development agencies have advocated and promoted the women’s empowerment agenda in Bangladesh since its independence (Rozario, 2004; 2006). Their role in civil society groups was acknowledged and seen as part of the political process, guiding the state and its policies towards certain desirable ends (Azim, 2016). So far, they have carried out women’s voices to the public arena and sought approaches to women’s advancement and equality (Chowdhury, 1994). The women’s movement groups in Bangladesh have been active in policy and consultative stages and have successfully played a critical role in promoting gender equity policies (Nazneen and Sultan, 2011; Nazneen, 2017b). Such as, women’s rights organization and civil societies were seen working with women politicians as a part of a coalition-building effort geared towards ensuring the promotion of women’s equality policies.

The purpose of this section has been to demonstrate the role of external actors and their relationship with women legislators as an important factor (both analytically and empirically) to investigate women’s substantive representation. Considering previous work on the relevance of extra-parliamentary actors elsewhere and their vibrant presence, this study assumes that women legislators’ relations with external actors constitute another potential influencing factor on their active participation on women issues. This study also considers the strength of women’s political mobilisation in building public awareness that could influence the propensity of women legislators to represent women. The influence of external actors might be more significant within a context where the status of women in general and the difficulties they face in daily life are more challenging than in the West. This study, therefore, expects that women legislators, who are connected with a network of external actors and actively participate in their programs, would potentially demonstrate substantial representation for women, thereby, making their relations and interactions with external actors another facilitating factor for SRW.
2.3.2. Political Socialization

The concept of Political Socialization firstly assumes that every individual in a society goes through a different socialization process and encounters different agents of socialization that influence them in various ways (Dawson and Prewitt, 1969; Jennings, 2009; Niemi and Hepbum, 1995; Renshon, 1977; Sapiro, 2004). Secondly, it assumes that the socialization process will lead individuals to form a distinctive perspective on many major issues, including politics. Thirdly, such distinct political perspectives can explain an individual’s active or passive political engagement on women issues. These three core assumptions of the Political Socialization concept provide additional perspectives on this study's research questions. Women’s distinct Political Socialization processes can explain variations in individuals’ active political engagement and their interest in addressing certain aspects of women’s interests. Furthermore, this conceptualisation also informs the assumption of gender variation, stating that not every woman will be able and willing to articulate the interests of all women.

Diversity in gendered experiences may generate varieties of gender attitudes and beliefs and reflects gender differences in policy representation (Broughton and Zetlin, 1996; Childs, 2011; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003). Such sociological arguments provide a plausible explanation for gender differences in policy representation (Dovi, 2002). This dissertation is informed by the arguments of Political Socialization that are helpful to explore factors which affect women differently and cause variation in their representation of women.

Lovenduski and Norris’ (2003, p.87) have argued that “due to their life experiences in the home, workplace, and public spheres women legislators prioritise and express different types of values, attitudes, and policy priorities than men”. In addition, they argued that the diversity in the socialization process of women legislators can explain similar variations among women themselves. The argument of Political Socialization can also be useful to investigate the individual dimension of women legislators, which is integral understanding the facilitating and constraining factors of substantive representation. Why do some women legislators have more commitment to the cause of improving the status of women than others? Why do they act politically for women in the gendered institution? Understanding such variations requires further investigation of individual attributes of women legislators, their position in society, and their socialization at home and in public.
Thus, apart from the institutional influence on actor’s behaviour and the differences in their political representation, political socialization of the actor is also identified as a potential factor shaping actors’ political behavior. The current study is, therefore, interested in the individual dimension of the political socialization process, which refers to a learning process through which the individual acquires knowledge, beliefs, and values that help them realise or form interest in politics during their lifespans (Dawson and Prewitt, 1969; Jennings, 2009; Renshon, 1977; Sapiro, 2004). The idea of developing a political self, a sense of personal identification with the political world (Hahn, 1998), is a core aspect of political socialization. It is also believed to account for differences in citizens’ propensity to become politically involved. In short, it comprises the whole of dynamics and processes involved in the acquisition of social norms, values, and political attitudes during a lifetime, with emphasis on the influence of social agencies (Niemi and Hepburn, 1995). In line with this Political Sociology perspective in studying women’s substantive representation, this study assumes that if a woman is willing to represent women issues in order to improve women’s situation, it did not just happen all of a sudden. Rather, over the course of time, this person has developed her political views and certain experiences in her life led her to stand up for women.

Studies have shown that the extent to which these factors influence a person often depends on which phase of life they are in. Developing a political self begins in the family, where children start to feel that they are part of a political community and from there move into the adolescent phase. In the adolescent phase, young adults internalise institutions, rules, habits, and norms from social and political contexts (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). Scholars of Political Socialization examine different socialization agents in early and later phases of life like early childhood in order to analyze broader processes of individuals’ political socialization. Agents are either individuals or a unit of individuals/institions that are responsible for educating an individual—by transferring knowledge on values, motivations, and social roles. The impact of these agents on an individual’s life largely depends on the parameters of time— i.e. different phases of life. Mondak and Halperin (2008) have identified ‘family’ as the means of promoting self-confidence, and Jennings and Stoke (2004) observed ‘peer groups’ as a likely cause of civic orientations (see also Andoline et al., 2003; Campbell, 2006; Smith, 1999; Tedin, 1980). These pieces of literature also suggest that family has the most considerable informal influence on the political beliefs and opinions throughout all phases of childhood. This is because family includes a group of people with whom a person spends the most of his/her formative years in early childhood and this is the time when an individual’s views are influenced primarily by
family members (Jennings and Stoke, 2004) For example, socialization within a politically active family is likely to lead family members to develop a sense of political self. Apart from informal socialization agents, individuals also encounter formal agents, such as school, workplace, or other social contextual aspects, which expose them to new ideas, different people, and belief systems and allow them to get information on the processes of politics, norms, and attitudes (Andoline et al., 2003; Campbell, 2006; Smith, 1999; Jennings and Stoke, 2004; cited in Jennings, 2009). This suggests that a person who has been encouraged to discover their political self during early life and adolescence might be more likely to consider future political engagement, be more interested in politics, and increase their understanding thereof (Metz and Younies, 2005).

When introducing the socialization agents, scholars in this field have also discussed the different phases of life (such as early childhood, adolescent, and adult) during which these socialization agents exert their influence. This dissertation focuses on both the socialization agents and phases of life of women legislators, assuming both to exert impacts that lead to variations in women’s political motivation or engagement. Therefore, the investigation of the processes of women legislators’ political socialization in this study include women legislators’ upbringing, family life, and education, their professional training, and their early involvement in public spheres other than the political work they are involved in presently. Such involvement includes their association with social work, student politics, or trade unions.

Following this reasoning, the concept of socialization, more particularly different socialization agents and life phases of individual women, should enable identifying different factors that may have relevance to women’s motivation on representation of women issues. In this dissertation, special attention is paid to the influence of informal (family, early childhood socialization, peer groups) and formal (schooling, education and professional exposure) agents on shaping personal preferences and a sensitivity towards issues of women’s concerns (discussed in the following sections). This dissertation assumes that these factors hold relevance, either facilitating or constraining women’s ability and motivation to participate in women related issues. Notwithstanding the consensus among scholars, who agree that personal attributes of women legislators, their life experiences, and patterns of political socialization shape their policy preferences and activities; only a few studies have elaborated on what exactly constitutes particular life experiences and socialization relevant to explaining representation of women. The subsequent discussion in section 2.3.2.1 and 2.3.2.2 allows to
investigate the social contextual aspects that might have created divergence of opinions in issue selection and articulation in comparison to male MPs. Finally, this study pays special attention to the extent to which women legislators’ individual experiences in their early life and stories of their journey to politics motivate them to play active roles in women issues. The following sections cover these micro level factors in more detail.

2.3.2.1. Individual Dimension of Legislators
Legislators’ life experiences, social position, sensitivity towards women’s issues and their willingness to engage with these issues can help explain their motivations for intervening on behalf of women (Celis, 2005). A group of gender and politics researchers have discussed the importance of critical actors in the process of substantive representation and identified some women MPs as critical actors who are strongly motivated and more active in representing women’s issues compared to other women in parliament (Childs and Krook, 2006; 2009; Celis and Childs, 2008; discussed in section 2.2). Critical actors are those who are highly active, greatly motivated, and feel responsible to represent women as a group. In this way, women’s individual motivations and their personal attributes become prominent factors in the discussion of substantive representation. Different pathways of political socialization can inspire women’s specific sense of urgency regarding issues relevant to women (Swers, 2002). The individual dimension, in this study, includes individual perceptions and sensitivity towards women issues as well as different socialization processes that can inspire women’s specific involvement in issues relevant to women (Swers, 2002).

Studies have found that pro-feminist women are more likely to intervene and act on legislation that deals with women’s rights and social issues (Chaney, 2006; Jones, 1997; Schwindt-Bayer, 2006; Swers, 2005; Waengnerud, 2000). Another factor has been mentioned by Celis (2006) who brought the accountability argument into the discussion by pointing out that some legislators are motivated to represent female citizen because of the aspiration to be re-elected. Thus, individual motivation in representing women issues can be influenced by one’s political and career ambitions (Iwanaga, 2008). Also, women legislators with previous experience in running a public office, such as those who are holding the office for a second or third time, can contribute more in terms of representation. It is not solely because of the duration and acquisition of intimate knowledge of the rules of the game of the institution that those women might feel more able to represent women, but also might be influenced by career development as suggested by the FIA (Beckwith, 2007). Hence, the argument here is that
career development can be a motivational aspect for women legislators to achieve SRW as a means of making a difference to build and sustain their position in public office.

Individual motivation can also be influenced by institutional and contextual settings (Norris, 1996; 1997). Women legislators may have individual perceptions, preferences or goals, but this cannot fully explain why the presence of women legislators’ sometimes fails to translate to their policy representation. Women legislators need to gain the ability to be an active agent of substantive representation and a legislator can attain such ability from institutional and contextual settings. This study considers individual attributes of legislators as indicators of increased representation on issues pertinent to women, a position informed by Institutionalist and Political Socialization approaches. For instance, studies in the Latin American context have argued for more attention to the resources that women bring to parliament (Franceschet, Krook, and Piscopo, 2012). The authors have claimed that growing up within a political environment seems conducive to internalization of political values that create awareness and provide further motivation to be active in parliament. Relevant here are also the resources that women legislators are bringing along with their motivation. All of these are important factors to consider in research on substantive representation.

Individual motivation can also be influenced by family traditions. For example, Hinojosa (2012), in her comparative research on Latin American contexts, emphasised the importance of kinship ties to women’s political pathways and showed that family connections could be a valuable tool for women gaining access to parliament, as well as learning politics in Latin American countries. According to the study, the impact of women legislators’ kinship ties, particularly the trust and confidence associated with the family, can further provide leverage to women legislators and can translate into political power (Hinojosa, 2012). Considering this argument, the present study considers the significance of such kinship ties in motivating an individual to act on behalf of women. This is especially relevant to examine in the context of Bangladesh, where a large number of women ensure their access to politics almost exclusively through kinship ties (Chowdhury, 1994; see Chapter 3).

Studies on descriptive representation in the Asian context have shown the relevance of resources for women legislators’ motivation to run for election. Such resources often include financial assets, educational qualifications, political and organisational connections (Iwanaga, 2008). However, research on substantive representation hardly considered the relevance of various kinds of resources,
including education and training that women bring along with them to the public office. One of the main reasons is that most of the studies on substantive representation emphasised attitudinal differences between women and men rather than investigating the variation within women. Furthermore, existing studies considered gender differences on the basis of their particular life experiences, but did not look for the contribution of social background to any variation among women (Lovenduski and Norris, 2003). Therefore, this study pays attention to both particular life experiences and social contexts of different women in explaining the variation among them.

As noted above, the literature on women’s descriptive representation has acknowledged women’s educational and professional training as instrumental for greater representation of women in politics (Norris and Inglehart, 2001; Reynold, 1999). For example, professional associations with nurturing community service roles, most notably teaching, allowed women legislators from Ghana and Palestine to become more politically conscious (Jad, 2014; Manuh, 2014). The association with education and a professional environment, which caters to the needs of the community and marginalised groups, were among the most widely cited political learning pathways (Tadros, 2014). Taking that argument forward, this dissertation seeks to explore the relevance of women’s educational and professional training in the process of sensitizing women to act on behalf of women. Such exposure can give them the experience of dealing with excluded or backward communities as well as the opportunity to build a reputation for their interest in helping disadvantaged groups, such as marginalised women.

This section discussed several motivational factors which will be investigated in connection to women’s substantive representation. They are proposed to influence self-motivation, self-identification as feminist, feeling a responsibility to represent women issues as a social problem, re-election motivation, and kinship ties. Studies on substantive representation rarely go deeper to examine legislators’ varied backgrounds. In particular, they have been reluctant to consider demographic characteristics as factors which influence the likelihood of women legislators’ role in improving the conditions for women. They mostly have emphasised the specific gender experiences to explain the attitudinal difference between men and women legislators, but rarely looked at variation among women from the same point of view (Bratton, 2005; Cowell-Meyers, and Langbein, 2009; Carroll, 1985; Diaz, 2005; Dodson, 2001; 2006; Duerst-Lathi and Keppy, 1995; Norris, 1985; Reingold, 2000; Thomas, 1991; 1994; Thomas and Welch, 1991; Tremblay, 1998). Women legislators’ commitment to represent women cannot be explained solely by their gender experiences as women
(e.g., as wives or mothers) or because of their self-interest. Other factors such as their association with their families, educational and professional backgrounds, and previous social work can influence women legislators’ ability to represent women positively or negatively.

In summary, informed by gaps in the existing literature, this study deals with the relevance of individuals’ life experiences such as legislators’ family, educational and professional background, and their exposure to other social activities (which have been already identified in the literature on substantive representation) as prerequisites to make them aware of women’s issues in their societies and motivate them to act on behalf of women.

2.3.2.2. Pathways to Parliament
The factor ‘pathways to parliament’ refers to the routes that women legislators use to get into parliament. Existing studies on women’s routes into public office have examined various factors that inhibit and facilitate women’s descriptive representation (Carroll and Wendy, 1983; Carroll and Geiger-Parker, 1983). This study rather emphasises the relevance of different paths to public office as a factor that potentially influences women’s ability and willingness to stand for women.

Gender and politics researchers have discussed the consequences of candidates’ recruitment and selection procedures on women’s descriptive representation in Western contexts (Burrell, 1994; Kittilson, 2006; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). Similarly, other researchers showed how variation in the recruitment processes in Latin American contexts restricted women’s entry into parliament (Baldez, 2004; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2008; Escobar-Lemmom and Taylor-Robinson, 2004; Hinjosa, 2005; Heath, Schwindt-Bayer and Taylor-Robinson, 2005). In addition, researchers have recognised that the process of candidates’ selection determines the quality of the representatives selected in the office (Gallagher, 1988; Norris, 1997). Apart from the selection process, the role of the political party is important. Studies have discussed the role of the parties in Latin America and in South East Asia, where parties have a monopoly over the candidacies (Hinjosa, 2012; Iwanaga, 2008). Like some of the Latin American cases, the political parties in Asia are also the only medium through which women candidates get nominations for election or selection in the legislature (Iwanaga, 2008). Many of these women (both selected and elected) have been chosen because of their loyalty towards their respective parties rather than their track record or interest in articulating gender equality and women’s empowerment concerns (Jahan, 2015). This reality of being part of an elite
political network or having an elite status is becoming common within specific political contexts.\(^5\) In a way, women’s access to parliament depends upon their relations with the political party, which may limit their power and room to maneuver (Nazneen and Mahmud, 2012).

Apart from party influences, the role of a political family and connections with political elites seems crucial to understanding women’s representation in national politics. The term of ‘political apprenticeship’ has been used by Cornwall and Goetz (2005) to explain the contribution of women candidates’ family to their political participation. A similar pattern of family contribution in the recruitment process has been observed in countries, such as Brazil, Sudan, India, and Bangladesh (Tadros, 2014). Studies on women councillors in Bangladesh have shown that all the women had family members involved in formal politics (Nazneen, Ehsan, and Hasan, 2014). The kinship politics is quite common in parts of Asia (both South East Asia and South Asia) and often becomes a necessary condition for both men and women who aspire to a career in politics. Kinship ties are seen as a convenient opening through which women have an opportunity to get into the political arena (Samarasinghe, 2000, p 195). A closer look at the Sri Lankan parliament revealed that 90 percent of the female parliamentarians serving in the late 1990s had kinship ties (Samarasinghe, 2000, p.200). In post-war Philippines, kinship ties have empowered women (Roces, 1998, p.2). In many cases, women politicians were able to achieve the support of their in-law’s family to participate in politics, just because, they got married into a political family (Nazneen, Ehsan, and Hasan, 2014). Similarly, women’s participation was in some cases restricted by the in-law’s family, which was a key factor limiting their participation in politics (Chowdhury, 1994). The findings have suggested that kinship ties are an important pathway to politics in many developing countries.

Therefore, investigating the trajectories of women’s pathways to parliament is considered a crucial factor in this study to analyse women’s substantive representation. This study assumes that their pathways into politics can either constrain or facilitate women legislators’ ability to represent women. The process of political apprenticeship and political mentoring (women legislators’ pathways to

\(^5\)Findings in Argentina, Uganda and Morocco have shown that all quota politicians were elite (O’Brien, 2012) and benefitted from being members of families with considerable political and economic clout (Sater, 2012). Studies in Argentina, South Africa, and Pakistan raised the concern that quotas benefit women from a particular class, those who have strong ties with male party leaders and come from elites (Franceschet et al., 2012; Piscopo, 2006; Waylen, 2000; Vincent, 2004, Bari, 2009). In addition, an acute criticism or resistance against the introduction of the quota was observed in the discussions on Indian Parliament (Rai, 2000; Nanivadekar, 2006).
parliament), and their status as elected or selected parliament members, is observed to contribute in building their capacity to represent women issues.

2.4. Summary Discussion on Analytical Framework

This chapter has analysed Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization approaches in the prior sections to understand how these concepts can be applied to study women’s substantive representation with a principal focus on individual and contextual aspects influencing women’s substantive representation. The concept of women’s substantive representation and its relationship with descriptive representation requires an understanding of both the gendered life experiences and the way different socialization processes influence women’s representation. Also, the usage of institutional, contextual, and individual dimensions of socialization as analytical tools informs the formation of an analytical framework to conduct further empirical investigation. The thematic categorisation into macro and micro level factors offers a framework for integrating factors proposed in the literature with new factors which are expected to have an impact on women legislators in developing countries.

The first section in this chapter argued that women legislators are central players in this process. However, other considerations must be included in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of women legislators’ abilities and willingness to achieve SRW. For this reason, if policy changes do not happen despite the presence of women, we can hardly argue that this means women legislators are ineffective (Lovenduski, 2005). This study assumes that substantial policy change would not have happened without the work of women legislators, while acknowledging the existence of other associated institutional and contextual factors that can positively connect women’s presence with their substantive representation. This dissertation seeks to show how women legislators act for women directly by addressing/advocating/bringing attention to issues pertinent to women. Furthermore, variation among women legislators and their life experiences are discussed to benefit the policy-making process by providing a richness of attitudes and insights. To make further contributions to the existing debate, this study provides broader insights on the content of women issues coming up on the floor of the parliament, and the variation in selection of women issues. This helps comprehending the importance of women’s presence, compared to that of men, in generating more attention to women issues. Chapter 5 of this study will present empirical evidence on this aspect of the framework.
This study of women’s substantive representation in the context of a developing country offers broader insights into the adoption of legislation benefiting women. It assumes that women legislators use the limited tools available to them in an attempt to influence policy outcomes within a gendered institution. Contextual and institutional factors influence women legislators’ ability to act as ‘critical actors’ in the process of enactment of SRW. Essentially, if women legislators can initiate a policy for women and push it through within their capacities in a certain political context, it can be seen as evidence for an emerging relationship between women’s presence and their policy representation. This relationship might get complicated when women being backbench legislators have limited policy-making authority. Chapter 6 of this study discusses empirical findings concerning this aspect of the analytical framework.

The second part of the analytical framework is focused on explaining women legislators’ engagement in substantive representation by looking at variation among women themselves. While some are successful in their efforts to contribute substantively, others are unable or unwilling to do so. In an attempt to grasp this feature of women’s representation on behalf of women, this part of the analytical framework maps out two levels of factors that are assumed to influence women’s representation in national parliament. Being influenced by the Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization approaches, macro and micro level factors capture the individual and the greater political and institutional dimension. The empirical discussion is elaborated in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

Being influenced by the understanding of FIA, this study intends to examine macro level factors that incorporate formal and informal rules of the institution, formal and informal aspects of the electoral system (directly elected vs. indirectly elected/quota), and political environment (i.e., women friendly political environment). This research also includes other macro factors, such as involvement of multiple external actors and contexts in the process of enactment of substantive representation (Celis et al., 2008; Escobar-Lemon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Hoekstra et al., 2014; Kang, 2014). The external actors, as discussed in section 2.3.1.1.3, might be influential and seem necessary to understand substantive representation. Their activities could involve advocating for more women’s presence in parliament and motivate women legislators to act on behalf of women. On the other hand, the absence of such advocacy groups may reduce women legislators’ participation on women issues in the parliament, hence, influence the process of substantive representation.
The prior sections have discussed informal aspects, such as domination of executives, perceptions about quota women, and the formal aspects, such as position within parliament and its influence on women’s ability to represent (discussed in section 2.3.1.1.1). In addition, the mode of selection of women legislators (under the factor electoral system) was identified as an influential aspect in many regions. The formal and informal aspects of the electoral system, such as the label effect and the mandate effect, are hypothesised to exert more influence in the context of Bangladesh, where women have used two distinct modes of entry into parliament i.e. direct election and selection in quota (see: Chapter 3). Similarly, the types of government/political leaders in power, electoral pressure, partisan politics, and patronage political culture might influence women legislators’ ability to act independently which limit representation for women (see section 2.3.1.1.2).

Table 2.1: Factors Affecting (constraining and facilitating) Women’s Substantive Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Informal aspects: domination of executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Informational aspects: perceptions about women from quota provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electoral System</td>
<td>Formal aspect: position within parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Longer experience as legislator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Atmospheres</td>
<td>The provision of quota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The mode of selection process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Types of political party in power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electoral pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partisan politics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Patronage political culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Individual Dimension</td>
<td>Particular life experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-feminist and pro-equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shared life experience</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pathways to Parliament</td>
<td>Kinship ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of political apprenticeship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on the factors identified by different authors (used in this chapter)

The micro level factors include specific types of individual resources, such as socio-political status, education, training within and outside of the families, and skills developed over time. Women legislators bring micro level factors along with them to political office, where they interact with various external conditions. Together these are analytically categorised as micro level factors. Table 2.1 summarises these factors. The existing literature (mentioned under 2.3.2.1.2), especially on Western
contexts, has shown the relevance of individual or shared life experience and values such as pro-feminist or pro-equality stances, and how these attributes impact women’s level of motivation to speak up for women. Along with these factors, this study on women’s representation considers other associated individual dimensions, such as perception on women issues, education, professional experiences, early involvement with politics (discussed in section 2.3.2.1.1), and the pathways to parliament (discussed in 2.3.2.1.2) as influential factors to understand substantive representation.

This dissertation seeks to demonstrate the relevance of these macro and micro level factors to understand women’s substantive representation. At the same time, it remains open to explore other associated factors or circumstantial evidence that may limit and/or facilitate women legislators in their attempts to achieve substantive representation on women issues.

2.5. Conclusion
In the preceding sections, this dissertation has argued for the necessity to advance our understanding of the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation on women issues in parliament. First, this chapter has shown that most in-depth studies on substantive representation were done in the Western contexts with a few exceptions of studies conducted in Latin American and African contexts. The discussion identified a gap in existing empirical research in terms of including the context of developing countries. This dissertation seeks to address this gap by taking Bangladesh as a case. Bangladesh as a case for this study is unpacked further in Chapters 3 and 4. Second, the discussion so far has shown that expecting all women to speak for women is not plausible. Existing research, reviewed and discussed in this chapter, has demonstrated that some men can also speak for women while some women might not do so. Thus, it is important to remember that the significance of sheer presence of women is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for SRW. Third, the discussion has shown that SRW is a complicated phenomenon; therefore, it requires to look beyond the direct relationship between women’s presence and SRW and to explore factors influencing this relationship. The discussion in this chapter has highlighted the importance of women’s indirect contribution in a system where legislators have limited scope to influence policy outcome (see section 2.2). There seems to be various other factors, such as the political environment and presence of external actors, which can influence SRW. Fourth, this chapter focuses on features of FIA and Political Socialization which have been drawn upon for the development of a two-level framework to understand variation among women (see section 2.3). These micro (individual dimension) and macro
(institutional, political and contextual) level factors, largely informed by existing empirical studies within both Western and non-Western contexts, are assumed to facilitate and/or constrain women’s ability to speak up for women. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of the dissertation analyse and present empirical findings on these two levels of factors.
Chapter Three: Political and Contextual Environment of Bangladesh: An Overview of Women’s Political Representation

3.1. Introduction
This chapter provides a descriptive introduction to the Bangladeshi political system, its parliamentary democracy, and women’s political representation within it. It also gives a brief situational analysis of women’s condition, along with activities of women’s movement actors in Bangladesh. The discussion includes an overview of the political history of Bangladesh after the proclamation of independence and the road to greater inclusion of women in politics. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides an evolution of parliamentary democracy and women’s political representation in Bangladeshi national politics. The objective is to explore two questions: how does the parliamentary democracy function? What were the electoral reform initiatives taken to enhance women’s representation in national politics? The second part of the chapter unpacks the contextual reality of women’s rights and developmental concerns in the society of Bangladesh. Parallel to the main discussion, an attempt is made to analyse women’s movements as significant actors in mobilising women’s rights and their well-being. By discussing these issues, the chapter offers an overview of the political and contextual environment (political context, electoral system, women’s descriptive representation in parliament, and women’s movements) of Bangladesh which may influence substantive representation of women (SRW). The discussion of women’s concerns aims to set up an empirical investigation of patterns of SRW by considering Bangladesh as a typical case. As introduced in Chapter 1, this dissertation is based on the argument that Bangladesh may offer certain typical features on various political and contextual environments to explain women’s pathways to parliament, numbers of women in parliament, executive dominance in the parliamentary system and socio-economic context of gender disparity in the process of enactment of substantive representation of women. This reasoning is elaborated in more details in Chapter 4.

3.2. Setting the Context: Parliamentary Democracy and Women’s Descriptive Representation in Parliament
The section proceeds as follows: first, it describes the evolution, structure, and functions of the Bangladesh parliament, and a general set up of its parliamentary democracy. Alongside, the section adds a discussion of the challenges faced by different actors within this system. Second, this section discusses the government-initiated policy reform of 1971 which aimed to ensure women’s
representation in parliament. The aforementioned quota policy and its impact on women’s participation in political parties, their political decision-making, and public perception will be the focus of subsequent discussion.

3.2.1. Parliamentary Democracy: The Evolution, Structure, Functions, and Challenges

This section provides an account of history of parliamentary democracy and its evolution in the context of post-independent Bangladesh. It also highlights the general framework and functions of the parliamentary system as well as the influence parliamentary practice on the role of legislators.

The Constitution of Bangladesh entrusts all legislative authority to a unicameral legislature and is called *Jatiya Sangsad* (JS), or House of the Nation in English. It was established in 1971. Thus, the *Jatiya Sangsad* is still a relatively young parliament. Yet, it has experienced one and a half decade of military rule (1975-1990) and rotated between a parliamentary and a presidential system of government since its establishment. Although its journey started in 1971, the first parliamentary elections took place in 1973. Before completion of its first term, the elected government was overthrown in a military coup in 1975 and Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed⁶ declared martial law by dissolving the parliament and suspending the constitution. Since then Bangladesh has been ruled directly and indirectly by military rulers until 1990. More precisely, it has gone through alternating periods of the military (1975-1990⁷; 2006-2008) and democratic rule (1971-1975; 1991-2006; 2009-present).⁸

With the shift from presidential military rule to a parliamentary system in 1991 it was expected that the arbitrary role of the head of the government would come to an end. However, the politics of Bangladesh still carries the legacy of presidential military rule, where the Prime Minister is the head of the government⁹. In reality, as Muhith (2006, p.5) claimed, it is the case that the Presidential Secretariat

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⁶ Self-declared president after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
⁷ The politics of Bangladesh from 1975 to 1981 and from 1982 to 1990 are dominated by two Major Generals, Ziaur Rahman and H. M. Ershad respectively. Both of them made attempts to civilian their rule by creating political parties and holding elections to the parliament (Ahmed, 2001, p.14) as well as seeking public approval to their claim to the presidency (Ahmed, 2013). Three parliaments—second, third and fourth were elected during these periods of military regime. Each of these parliamentary elections was intended to legitimise the military rule rather than to provide a source of independent law making and / or a framework for public participation (Ahmed, 2001, p.15).
⁸ This time period suggests that none of the first four parliaments could serve its full five years of term. The first parliament lasted for 30 months, second for 35 months, third for 17 months and fourth parliament for 31 months (Jahan, 2012). Since the restoration of democracy in 1991, parliament could serve its tenure more or less. However, it often has to go through severe violence before, during and after elections.
⁹ Despite of the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh, Article 55 of the constitution vests all executive authority in the Prime Minister rather than the Cabinet.
“was just converted into the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) and it retained the same absolute control over all Ministers”. Thus, the parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh consists of an amalgamation of presidential and parliamentary democracy, somewhat removed from the Westminster system. Consequently, legal experts often described its form of government as “prime ministerial” rather than parliamentary (International Crisis Group, 2015).

As per the constitution of Bangladesh, the Parliament is the centre of the country’s democratic system,10 along with two other arms of government: The Executive (the government); and the Judiciary (the courts) branch. The Prime Minister (PM), who is head of government, holds the executive power of the state and is elected for five-year terms by popular votes. S/he is also the leader of the political party who enjoys majority support in parliament. The PM is in charge of appointing a Cabinet of Ministers, each of whom is in charge of a section of government.11 After forming the government under the leadership of the PM, the President is elected by the PM and acts solely upon written advice of the PM, as per the Article 48 (3) of the constitution.12 Researchers have discussed the lack of power of the President in the parliamentary system. In the words of Ahmed (2015), “the rubber stamp job of president as he/she has to stamp what is being proposed by the prime minister” (p.132). In others words, the PM has total control over the parliamentary system.

Parliament enjoys the power provided by the constitution to frame its own rules and procedures,13 which cannot be questioned by any court or any other outside body (Ahmed, 2006; 2016). According to the Parliamentary Powers Index (PPI),14 the parliament in Bangladesh is declared relatively well-powered15 (Fish and Kroenig, 2009). The PPI focuses on the strength of the legislature in the area of

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10 In every five years in a general election, citizens of Bangladesh elect members to parliament to represent their interests.
11 The Prime Minister and the Cabinet sit in parliament and are collectively accountable to parliament.
12 President is not part of the parliament but s/he has some constitutional functions, such as (a) addressing the parliament at the beginning of each calendar year, (b) dissolving the parliamentary session, and (c) appointing Prime Minister and Chief Justice are some important functions among them. Also, without the approval of President, no bill will become an Act and President can return the bill with a message of approval or with suggestions of any particular provision to be considered.
13 The Article 65(1) of the constitution provides “there shall be a parliament for Bangladesh in which subject to the provision of the constitution shall be vested the legislative powers of Republic”.
14 The PPI is constructed through a perception based Legislative Powers Survey (LPS) covering 32 items that measures the legislature’s way over the executive, parliament’s institutional autonomy, parliament’s authority in specific areas, and its institutional capacity.
15 Bangladesh scores 0.59 in the PPI, where 1 suggest a total parliamentary power over the executives, and 0 is a total parliamentary subservience to the executive. The performance of Bangladesh parliament is above the performance of Parliament in France (0.50) and in Ghana (0.47) and slightly below from India (0.63), Portugal (0.63) and Australia (0.63), but significantly below from established democracies i.e. Australia (0.72), Denmark (0.78) and Germany (0.84).
freedom of parliament and its ability to monitor the president and the bureaucracy. The PPI suggests that the Bangladeshi parliament has sufficient power to call the executives to account and inquire into their activities. Representatives of the Bangladeshi parliament have so far served three main functions—oversight of government, consideration of draft legislation, and representation of the people’s concerns (Appendix 3.1 summarises these three main activities). Through these activities, the parliament fulfills its functions of representing the voice of the people and addressing these concerns to the government. Also, by calling attention of the executive branch to issues of concern for citizens, the parliament is fulfilling its function of overseeing activities of the government. Even though PPI called it as ‘well powered’ parliament, there are only a few mechanisms that exert control over the executive branch in a majoritarian parliamentary system such as Bangladesh. The challenges in the functionality of the parliament are discussed in the following paragraphs.

First, there are limitations concerning parliament’s core functions in relation to legislation, budget, scrutiny, and oversight which lag far behind citizens’ expectations and the global standard (Jahan, 2015). These limitations are due to the constitutional restriction on the rights of legislators to freely vote against their respective parties. As per the article 70 of the constitution, “a person elected as a member of Parliament at an election at which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he resigns from that party or votes in Parliament against the party” (Government of Bangladesh, 1972, Article 70). Such a rule obviously prevents legislators from voting against their respective party policy in the parliament and makes sure that they cannot refrain from voting in defence of party directives (Ahmed, 2015; Jahan, 2015; Jahan and Amundsen, 2012; Jahan, 2012). This obligation of ‘floor crossing’ provides opportunities to consolidate power to a central authority. In Bangladesh, this position is occupied by the chief of the state, and s/he is the chief of the ruling party.¹⁶ Both parties—the Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)—have enjoyed the constitutional provisions that restrict floor-crossing, which do not allow a member of the legislature to dissent against their party line (Ahmed, 2001; 2002).

¹⁶ Since the revival of parliamentary democracy in 1991, the history of Bangladesh’s legislature does not provide instances where the Members of Parliament (MPs) have dissented from the standpoint of the party in the House (Ahmed, 2011). Two main political leaders in Bangladesh parliamentary system: the Leader of the House (AL Chief) and the Leader of the Opposition (BNP Chief), carry enormous respect and power. Any dissent is viewed as a challenge to the leader.
The parliamentary standing committees play a significant role in overseeing the government’s activities and scrutinizing draft legislation. The committee can decide the way it wants to conduct its business and it can also seek advice, if necessary, from any experts in relevant fields. It is common in established democracies to accept decisions made by the committees. For example, “30% percent of the recommendation of the [Department-related Parliamentary Committees] DPCs in Britain are accepted directly and about a quarter of them is rejected” (Rush, 1995, p.125). India has a similar situation with slight different practices. As researchers have presented, India’s government does not have any legal binding to accept committee recommendations, however still, historically, most of them have indeed been accepted (Ahmed, 2001). Yet, there is no specific provision obligating the Government of Bangladesh to respond to recommendations made by the committees. Despite these committees enjoy important status and power as per the Constitution of Bangladesh (Ahmed, 2001; Jahan and Amundsen, 2012).

With regard to law-making, the formal constitutional authority lies with the parliament. Most bills in Bangladesh originate from individual ministries. Rarely, bills are sent to parliamentary committees in the pre-legislative stage and it is a common practice to send the bill to the Standing Committees after its first reading (a detailed discussion on the legislative process is offered in Chapter 6). Researchers have described the extent to which the executives hold power. As noted by Panday (2008), executives are the primary actors in determining the policy content of the legislation and they have ultimate authority to implement policies despite the involvement of other actors in the process. The approval of parliament is necessary for the enactment of any act. Nevertheless, most of the activities involved in the policy process, such as initiation of the act, drafting, legal vetting, and approval of the Cabinet members, take place outside of the parliament (Murphy, 2006). Also, Khan (2006) analysed the constitution and provided numerous examples supporting the conclusion that nothing happens in Bangladesh without the involvement of the Prime Minister.

The influence of the executives, as claimed by Riaz (2016), is more deep-rooted in Bangladesh. The domination of executives or the party leaders in the parliament is partly associated with the basic character of the party leadership in Bangladesh, which is aimed at accumulating all formal political

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17 The parliamentary standing committees are an essentially advisory body that is now widely recognised in all types of parliaments. The standing committees in Bangladesh constitutes for the duration of the parliament. However, the committees in Bangladesh parliament has received importance and visibility since 1991 and referring bills to different standing committees began in 1996 (Ahmed, 2007; Ahmed, 2001; Jahan and Amundsen, 2012).
power. Regardless of which political party or military structure is in power, the basic character of the leadership is similar: “winner-takes-all power struggles” (Bratton and Van de Walle, 1994, p.465). A series of studies has showed the historical trends of power accumulation and influence of party leaders in the decision-making process of Bangladesh (e.g., Ahmed, 2004; 2013; Ali, 2010; Kochanek, 1993; Kukreja, 2008; Jalal, 1995; Milam, 2009; Zaman, 1984; Ziring, 1992).

The domination of executives is also reflected in legislators’ performance in parliamentary discussions. Legislators try to use the opportunity to speak to build their positions within the party hierarchy by “praising the leader and blaming the opposition leader, in terms that were often irrelevant to the subject under discussion” (Ali, 2010, p.241). It creates a confrontational environment, which increases distrust among the parties, and hampers the parliamentary democracy overall. Due to a lack of trust and consensus among the parties, the tendency of boycotting the parliamentary sittings by the opposition political parties is very common in Bangladesh’ parliamentary system (Ahmed, 2002; 2006; 2013; Jahan, 2015; Jahan and Amundsen, 2012; Riaz, 2015). At the same time, the absence of oppositional political parties makes the parliament less consultative before any kind of decision is taken by parliament or before any bill is enacted, which carries less legitimacy than in many other countries (Ahmed, 2002). In more than two decades of the democratic parliamentary history of Bangladesh, popularly elected regimes ruled the country alternatively. However, all periods lacked consensus and mutual trusts among political parties. The challenges discussed above limit parliament’s ability to shape legislation, provide oversight of the executive branch, and respond to public needs. In summary, this section presented the parliamentary system of Bangladesh, including its formal (i.e., general framework, functions of the parliamentary system) aspects and informal (influence of executives, party leaders and its impact on legislators) features.

3.2.2. Women in the Electoral Process and Political Parties
This section discusses the government-initiated policy reform measures from 1971 which aimed to ensure women’s representation in the parliament. This policy has advanced the representation of women by adopting a quota policy for women in 1972. With the analysis of women’s representation

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18 Researchers identified various reasons for parliamentary boycotts in Bangladesh which include: not giving the opposition a fair chance to speak in parliament, partisan behaviour of the speaker, rejection of opposition motions, and breaching the privileges of the opposition (Ahmed, 2002; p.203). Such autocratic attitude of the ruling political party compels the opposition to boycott parliament and to go for general strikes.
in parliament, an effort is made to specify the participation of women in political parties, which is important because it provides a pathway to public office and political decision-making.

Bangladesh follows an first past the post (FPTP)\textsuperscript{19} system for general seats in parliament and a single transferable vote (STV) system\textsuperscript{20} for women’s reserved seats. The Parliament consists of 350 Members of Parliament (MPs), among which the citizens of Bangladesh directly elect 300 of them from 300 single-member constituencies, thus, one from each constituency.\textsuperscript{21} The remaining 50 seats are reserved for women as per the 15\textsuperscript{th} amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh.\textsuperscript{22} The numbers of reserved seats are allocated in proportion to the percentage of general seats won by the party in the parliamentary election. The reserved seats in parliament have never been open for votes because party leaders have nominated only as many candidates as there are available seats for each party.\textsuperscript{23}

Bangladesh first introduced reserved seats policy for women\textsuperscript{24} in national parliament in 1972.\textsuperscript{25} For ten years, fifteen indirectly elected seats for women in the national parliament were constitutionally (article 65) reserved in first national elections of 1973. This number subsequently increased through various constitutional amendments from 1978 to 2011. The number of women’s reserved seats in Parliament was increased from 15 to 30 for the duration of 15 years, from 1975 to 1981. The 10\textsuperscript{th} amendment to the constitution in 1990 included a new provision of 30 seats for 10 years, which ended

\textsuperscript{19} First-past-the-post (FPTP) is a plurality-majority electoral system. In FPTP, the winning candidate is the person who wins most votes in a single-member district. STV is a proportional system. In proportional systems, seats are allocated in proportion to the votes secured by each party. Such an electoral system has created a situation where a political party or an electoral alliance has been able to achieve a huge majority of parliamentary seats despite a narrow or a small advantage in popular votes share (Jahan, 2012).

\textsuperscript{20} It is based on the number of general seats secured by a political party.

\textsuperscript{21} The average size of each electoral district is about 180 square miles; it has a population of about 520,000, of which a half is eligible to vote.

\textsuperscript{22} Currently 23 countries, including Bangladesh, have adopted reserved seats provision of gender quota through reforms to constitution and by changing electoral system (Chowdhuby, 2015).

\textsuperscript{23} The system is innovative in theory. For example, the party presents a list of candidates. If the number of candidates and seats (winning) are the same, there is no election and the reserved seats are filled as per the list prepared by party leaders. If there are more candidates than respective parties winning seats, the elected MPs vote to nominate the candidates in their own party for reserved seats. However, in practice, this system of voting has never happened in Bangladesh (Paasilinna, 2016).

\textsuperscript{24} Three types of quotas are introduced so far: party quotas, legislative quotas, and reserved seat quotas. Party quota systems are most commonly seen in Western countries, where political parties voluntarily allocate certain percentage of women in candidate lists. Whereas, in the legislative quotas system, it becomes binding to all parties to nominate a fixed percentage of women as candidate through laws. On the contrary, the reserved seats talk about allocating a fixed number of seats for women in parliament under which women enter into parliament without participating in national election.

\textsuperscript{25} Quota in national parliament: there are four different ways that women’s reserved seats in Bangladesh are currently filled—one system at the national level, two at the sub-district level, and one at the local level.
in 2000. Thirty women were elected to reserved seats in each of the fifth, sixth, and seventh parliaments. The eighth parliament, elected in October 2001, initially did not have any reserved seats, as the provision for reserved seats for women had expired. The fourteenth amendment passed in parliament in 2004 and further increased the number of seats reserved from 30 to 45. The fourteenth amendment, however, provided for the distribution of the reserved seats among different parliamentary parties according to their respective strengths in parliament (for every six seats the party is entitled to one reserved seat) (Chowdhury, 2013). The fifteenth amendment to the Constitution made in 2011 by the ninth parliament finally increased the number of reserved seats from 45 to the current 50, nevertheless, the mode of elections remained the same (Prothom Alo, 2018).

To date, reserved seats have produced the most favorable results regarding the increase in women’s presence in the legislature through guaranteed positions. Table 3.1 shows women’s representation in national parliament over the years. It shows that no woman was elected through direct election in the first parliament. Two women (1%) were elected in the second parliament. In 30 reserved seats, women thus constituted 9.7 percent of the total members of that parliament. The percentage of women parliamentarians increased up to 10 percent in the third parliament because of the increased number of reserved seats. A similar rate of women’s representation continued in third, fifth, and sixth parliament. However, women’s representation dropped to 1.3 percent in 1988 due to an expiry of the provision of reserved seats. A total of eight women were elected in the seventh parliament (1996), which is a lot higher than the previous parliaments and women represented 11.5 percent of total MPs. In the ninth parliament, with 21 general seats and 50 reserved seats for women, women’s representation increased to 20.3 percent, the highest ever in the history of the Bangladesh Parliament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliament and Term</th>
<th>Numbers of MPs in Reserved Seats</th>
<th>Number of MPs in General Seats</th>
<th>Total number of Women MPs</th>
<th>Total Number of Seats in Parliament</th>
<th>Percentage of Representation in Parliament (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st (1973-75)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd (1979-82)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd (1986-87)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 This amendment expired in 1987, and as a result, there were no reserved seats in the subsequent election.
27 The period of 10 years expires prior to the next scheduled general election in 2019.
28 During the 9th parliamentary election (2008), 19 women were elected to general seats. Due to the resign of one male MP, a by-election was held in 2009 and a woman (the MP's sister) was elected to his seat, resulting in 20 women in general seats.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th (1988-90)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th (1991-95)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th (1996-96)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th (1996-01)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th (2001-06)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th (2009-13)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th (2014-19)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pandy (2008) for first to eighth; Akter (2014b) for ninth parliament and researcher’s calculation for the 10th parliament.

The reserved seats were supposed to be a temporary measure to provide women enough time to acquire the skills, expertise, and resources required to enter and compete in the political sphere (Halder, 2004; Khondoker et al., 2012). However, the number of women in general seats continues to remain low. Even after adaption of reserved seats, ruling parties did not nominate women for direct elections for the first two elections, held in 1973 and 1977 (Chowdhury, 1994). Parties even used this provision to exclude women from general seats (Chowdhury, 1994). For instance, out of 1567 candidates nominated by different political parties, only 64 women (constituting about 4.08 percent of total candidates) contested in the 2008 national elections (Akter, 2014a). When the election commission proposed women’s direct election and reservation of 33% of the seats in parliament and 33% representation within political parties as conditions of party registration, political parties were not ready to accept it (Akter, 2014a). The political parties objected by arguing that women politicians needed more time to develop their political expertise. Due to the request of political parties, the Election Commission extended the projected period of women’s adjustment till 2020 to reach the target of 33% of women’s representation within parties (Akter and Nazneen, 2014).

It is important to understand that the mechanisms for reserved seats are inherently challenging. Directly elected legislators have a constituency which supports their election and which can hold the representatives accountable, if necessary. In contrast, reserved seats in parliament do not have a specific constituency that the members represent as there is no public voting system involved in the selection process. In such a system, the whole country becomes one large district for those legislators holding reserved seats. Since the country is divided into 300 constituencies for 300 directly elected members, this means no constituency is directly allocated to the members of reserved seats. In other words, women in reserved seats do not have to secure popular votes, which mean they do not directly

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20 Representation of people Ordinance 1972 (amended up to 12 November 2008).
represent any constituency. Rather, they are selected by the party leaders in proportion to the winning seats of the respective parties. Therefore, the selection of women for reserved seats only takes place after the completion of national elections and the formation of the national government. These selected/non-elected parliamentarians have to share constituencies with other MPs (Paasilinna, 2016). However, by dividing the country into 50 electoral zones, the existing reservation system ensures reserved seat women legislators’ indirect affiliation with constituencies. This system, therefore, reflects why women’s representation status is severely undermined due to a weaker local hold (Chowdhury, 1994). In a way, reserved seat women legislators are entirely beholden to the party leaders instead to citizens of the constituency (Paasilinna, 2016).

Besides, quota women do not receive the same allocation of the constituency development funds that their general seat counterparts (elected MPs) receive. Thus, the authority and resources available to reserved seat women are not equal to those who are in general seats. The reserved seats, therefore, are often “perceived to be less legitimate than those elected to general seats” (Paasilinna, 2016, p19; Khondoker et.al., 2014). Several researchers have criticised the provision of reserved seats and argued that it has not done much to improve the quality of representation of women (Chowdhury, 2002; Jahan and Amundsen, 2012; Pandey, 2008; Jahan and Kabir, 2012). Some have suggested that women in reserved seats are selected because of their loyalty to their respective parties rather than their track record or interest in articulating gender equality and women’s empowerment concerns (Chowdhury, 1994; 2002). Others, taking the party leadership point of view, have claimed that the majoritarian party system anyway uses the nomination for regular seats to obtain the numerical majority in parliament. Within such a system, reserved seat provision can be used by the political party as a tool to maintain their political control, obtaining the numerical majority in the legislature (Chowdhury, 1994; Jahan, 2014). The reserved seats are not only meant to maintain the numerical majority of the party, but also to ensure that these women remain loyal to the party leadership (Meena 2004; Akter and Nazneen, 2014). Thus, the electoral principle (numerical majoritarian system) and the nomination process somehow encourage the aspiring candidates more (compared to men) to keep good relations with party leaders, which limits their room for manoeuvre (Akter, 2013; Jahan and Kabir, 2012; Nazneen and Mahmud, 2012). All these criticisms show that the reserved seats intrinsically are less prestigious than being elected to general seats by popular votes.
The Bangladesh Constituent Assembly Debates in 1972 considered the provision of reserved seats to safeguard women’s representation given their disadvantaged position in society (Chowdhury, 1994). In the absence of any other mechanism for increasing women’s participation in political parties (or generally in politics), reserved seats are the only strategy to ensure the presence of women in parliament (see the Table 3.1). Women’s representation without the reserved seats would be minimal at best. This indicates the positive effect of reserved seats on women’s numeric presence in parliament. However, as argued above, this does not automatically translate into their substantive representation.

3.3. Women’s Concerns and Women’s Movement Actors in Bangladesh

This section focuses on the contextual aspects of the situation women are facing in Bangladesh. The aim of this section is to help the reader understand the issues pertinent to women, which provides the basis for developing the conceptualisation of women concerns and issues. This section further seeks to discuss the role of women’s movements, rights organisations, and civil society actors working with women legislators to ensure women’s equality and empowerment in Bangladesh.

The aspects covered in this section include legal rights, protection from violence, education, economic independence, concerns like early marriage, health, and fertility; as well as the roles women play in societies of Bangladesh. The discussion helps to understand the issues that women legislators are expected to rise on the floor as part of the enactment of their substantive representation on women issues.

3.3.1. Women’s Condition in Bangladesh

The society of Bangladesh is characterised as patriarchal, where household resources and women’s labour, sexuality, and mobility outside the household are controlled by men (Jahan, 1995; Nazneen, 2016). Men and women are not considered equal, and therefore, they do not enjoy equal benefits, opportunities, and rights in the family, and society in general. Kabeer (1994) rightly explained such domination of men and women’s dependency by the segregation of sexes in public life and a rigid gender division of labor. Women, in general, remain subordinate to men in almost all aspect of their lives.

The Constitution of Bangladesh [Article 28(2)] guarantees equal rights of men and women in all spheres of state and public life. By specifying Islam as the state religion, article 2 (A) of the Constitution
confirmed the use of Shariah laws in the personal life sphere. Thus, the legal status of Muslim women in Bangladesh is defined by the Muslim personal laws, along with other general laws. The Muslim personal laws deal with the issues of marriage, divorce, maintenance, guardianship of children, and inheritance. On the other hand, the general law covers the rights under the Constitution, penal codes, the civil and criminal procedure codes. Since the personal laws, in general, conform to religious provisions, they are often discriminatory between men and women. Government is still maintaining its reservation to articles 2 and 16(1) (c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on the ground that those legal provisions are in direct contradiction with the personal Muslim laws. The existing reservation on CEDAW articles deprives women of Bangladesh of their equal rights in marriage, its dissolution, and inheritance of properties.

Bangladesh is one of the countries with the highest incidents of violence against women (VAW). According to a report of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad\(^3\) (BMP), 3,474 women and children have become a victim of Gender Based Violence (GBV) during January-August 2017 (Steps Towards Development, 2017). The government of Bangladesh has adopted several laws, such as the National Action Plans (NAPs) and other policies to combat VAW.\(^3\) Despite enactment of new laws, the incidents and types of GBV are increasing. At the same time, the enforcement of laws is weak. According to the statistics of BMP, a total of 18,172 GBV cases were reported during 2013–2016. The following Table 3.2 provides a glimpse into the violence against women in Bangladesh.

| Table 3.2. Reports of Violence Against Women (2013-2016) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SL. | Type of Violence | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| 1 | Rape | 696 | 666 | 808 | 840 |
| 2 | Gang rape | 185 | 174 | 199 | 166 |
| 3 | Murder after rape | 94 | 99 | 85 | 44 |
| 4 | Attempted rape | 153 | 115 | 142 | 165 |
| 6 | Sexual harassment | 40 | 44 | 68 | 80 |

\(^3\) It is a Bengali word for ‘agencies’.

\(^3\) The Government of Bangladesh enacted two acid related acts in the name of ‘Acid Control Act 2002’ and ‘Acid Offence Prevention Act 2002’ to ensure justice in acid violence cases. Something is missing in this sentence to make it a real sentence —> Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000. The country has also adapted the Dowry Prohibition Act 1980 and Law on the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children 2000 to prevent violence against women. Recently the parliament approved the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017, which was criticized by the women rights organization because of a special provision. While the government maintained the legal marriage age for children (18 for girls and 21 for boys), there is a new provision in the act which would allow child marriage to take place under “special circumstances” - with parental consent and with permission from the courts, deemed in the “best interest of the underage female or male” (Guha, 2017). See at: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/03/risks-child-marriage-law-bangladesh-170304092243563.html
The rural communities in Bangladesh rely more on the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) system than the general law for settling issues in the private sphere. Despite proclaiming that Fatwas are illegal and that nobody is compelled to obey them, Fatwas are still issued by local religious leaders and are often discriminatory against women (Shehabuddin, 1999). Legal and other initiatives adopted by the government and implemented by women’s rights and human rights organisations have had limited success in combating gender-based violence because their approach is not comprehensive enough. Despite the laws, harmful practice of child marriage and dowry demands continue reinforcing the traditional norms and making women vulnerable to ill health, exploitation, discrimination, and violence. Two major engines of national economic growth, export and remittances, are hugely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burnt by acid</th>
<th>46</th>
<th>51</th>
<th>37</th>
<th>38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Death due to acid burn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Burnt by fire</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Death due to fire burn</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Trafficking of women and</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sale to brothel</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Murder for dowry</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Torture for dowry</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Violence on domestic</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Murder of domestic</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Suicide of domestic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Attempt to murder</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Suspicious death</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Attempt to commit</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Provocation to suicide</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Stalking</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Suicide because of</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>“Fatwa violence”</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Child marriage</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Torture by police</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Forced marriage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4595</td>
<td>4506</td>
<td>4314</td>
<td>4757</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Human Rights Forum Bangladesh, 2017\(^{32}\)

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\(^{32}\) Data is available in the following website: http://www.askbd.org/ask/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/UPR_Report_HRFB_3rd_cycle.pdf
contributed by women. However, major limitations are engendered in women’s poor working environment, exposure to violence in the workplace, and poor investment in appropriate skill enhancement. Having less control over their own income and earnings is another dimension of women’s economic disempowerment. The absence of women-friendly laws for women’s ownership, control, and usage of land makes ensuring women’s economic rights unattainable.

Bangladesh’s achievements in removing gender gaps are remarkable. For the third consecutive year, Bangladesh was ranked 1st among the South Asian countries in Global Gender Gap Report of World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2017). The state has taken various measures and actions as well as shown support for civil societies and women rights organisations, which led to changes in women’s health and increased opportunities for education and economic participation. The achievement is outstanding, however, there is much more to be done to reduce the disparities between men and women. For example, Bangladesh has achieved tremendous success in attaining gender parity in primary and secondary education. Nevertheless, around 1.5 million girls of primary school age are out of school (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2011; Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, 2003). The rates of child marriage and adolescent motherhood are among the highest in the world (UNICEF, 2010). The rate of maternal mortality is also very high, i.e., 176 deaths per 100,000 births (UNICEF, 2014). 33 percent of women get married before the age of 15 (National Institute of Population and Research Training et al., 2009). Early marriage, as well as the lack of access to and use of medical services, has been identified as a main cause of poor maternal health. In short, this section has summarised some key concerns for women in Bangladesh, and indicated scopes for further policy interventions to improve their situation in Bangladesh.

3.3.2. Women’s Movement Actors in Bangladesh

The women’s movement in Bangladesh is a vibrant social movement that has focused on a broad range of issues from political empowerment, economic equality, legal reforms of gendered laws, violence against women, reproductive rights, and the like (Jahan, 1995). Women’s movement in Bangladesh can be traced back to the anti-colonial nationalist movements against the British and the Pakistanis. Women actively mobilised in the anti-colonial struggles during that period. Their activities included protest marches, demonstrations, and picketing. To this day, they have been successfully carrying women’s voices to the public arena and seeking women’s advancement and equality (Chowdhury, 1994; Rozario, 2004).
After 1971, women’s rights organisations focused on a broad range of issues such as political empowerment, economic equality, legal reforms of customary and gender biased laws, violence against women, reproductive rights, etc. (Jahan 1995; Kabeer, 1989). The UN decade of Women in the early 1980s increased awareness among members of women’s rights organisations which was reflected in their level of activity for promoting gender equality agendas. Women’s rights organisations and development agencies were seen working together on issues like violence against women, dowries, and ratification of the CEDAW. Such collaboration was visible in the formation of a coalition of 14 organisations, called the *Oikkyo Baddha Nari Samaj* (United Women’s Forum), which issued a 17-point program in February 1988, demanding equal rights for women (Chowdhury, 1994). This women’s movements platform had collected 17,000 signatures from women who opposed the practice of dowry and submitted to parliament in protest against the eighth amendment bill\(^3\) in 1988 (Jahan, 1995).

The active participation of women movement actors in the pro-democracy movement during the 1980s and in preparing for the Beijing Conference in 1995 gave them visibility. Their successful collaboration among themselves on women’s rights, and effective advocacy with the state, allowed them to receive acceptance from the government as actors carrying women’s voices to the public arena. Therefore, various women’s movements in Bangladesh perceived the 1990s as their ‘golden age’ for raising feminist issues with the state (Nazneen and Sultan, 2010; Nazneen, 2017). Not only women’s rights organisation\(^4\), but also other social awareness campaigns\(^5\) and services have been carried out by various NGOs during this period (Asadullah, Savoia and Mahmud, 2013).

Over the years, women’s organisations took up instances of rape, acid throwing, and murder to create awareness among the general public (discussed some of those women’s concerns in earlier section 3.2.1). In 1990s and the present, the women’s movement has campaigned against violence against women, which includes “fatwa” (religious edicts), violence in police custody, sexual harassment, trafficking of women, domestic violence, acid violence, and the like. These issues are incorporated in

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3\(^3\) This amendment established Islam as the state religion of Bangladesh and many women’s organisations saw the move as a possible symbiosis of state power with religion and the ascendancy of orthodox and fundamentalist forces (Chowdhury, 1994).

4\(^4\) The Mohila Parishad is an old and most active member of the forum. They took a well-defined position in the areas of women’s education, employment, and health and it raised social, economic and political demands designed to remove discrimination and to attain equality for women in Bangladesh.

5\(^5\) For instance, BRAC has had success in reducing the devastating effect of Diarrhoea through spreading the use of oral saline (Zohir, 2004).
the definition of women issues for this dissertation (see Chapter 4). Women workers’ movements in the formal and informal sectors also gained strength during this time. They were seen to exert pressure on the government through mobilisation. The most striking example of such mobilisation took place for the rights of sex workers. This mobilisation was launched in the face of evictions from brothels. Leading women’s rights and civil society organisations advocated for their rights—rights to a home, rights to earn a living wage, etc. They used these arguments to put pressure on the government to provide protection for these women. Another significant collaboration took place between 25 women’s rights, human rights, and legal aid organisations in 2007 to form a policy coalition—the Citizen’s Initiative against Domestic Violence (CiDV) (Nazneen, 2015). The purpose of the coalition was to advocate and put pressure on the government for the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act, which has been a long time demand by women’s movement actors. Chapter 6 of this dissertation discusses the enactment of this act and the contribution of different actors involved in the policy-making process in more detail.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the Platform for Action encouraged the state to engage with women rights and civil society organisations. Such recognition from the government allowed many NGOs and civil society organisations to start working in areas of women’s empowerment. In the post-Beijing period, new energy and interest were created for work on women’s rights. NGOs have shifted from awareness-raising activities of the mid-1980s towards the service delivery-oriented and advocacy related work they do now (Nazneen and Sultan, 2010). Participation, consultation for service delivery, and accessing information are dominant apolitical forms of engagement of these organisations. These NGOs created scopes for feminist and women’s organisations to increase their number of allies and exert pressure on the state (Nazneen and Sultan, 2010). At times, the feminist and women’s organisations along with NGOs were engaged with political parties to incorporate their demands concerning women’s rights, particularly rights of political participation, into the agenda of political parties (Nazneen and Sultan, 2009).

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36 These local and international NGOs have come to the scene under donor trends’ Gender and Development Agenda (GAD). The proliferation of donor funding for GAD created a context where women’s organisations strategically used their links with donors to engage the state on different issues (Nazneen and Sultan, 2009).
37 For instance, the rapid extension of NGOs’ microcredit programs has helped rural women to enhance their mobility, agency, empowerment, and mutual support.
Since 1991, the parliament of Bangladesh has also been receiving parliamentary assistance from development agencies, such as UNDP, the Asia Foundation, DFID/UK, USAID, and the World Bank. These agencies have been working closely with the government to strengthen parliamentary committees, improve executive oversight, develop interaction between public and parliament, and provide necessary support and resources for MPs to effectively undertake their respective roles and responsibilities. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been working with the parliament secretariat since 2003 on enhancing the capacity of parliamentarians and officials to integrate population and gender concerns into national and sectoral plans, policies, and laws. Since 1985, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) has been working in Bangladesh with political parties, civil society and academia to strengthen and promote democratic values. Parliamentary Strengthening is one of their major programs. It consists of awareness programs, seminars and workshops on various issues including the role of the opposition, committees, and their responsibilities in overseeing public hearings, constituency relations and resource development for the members of the parliament. Appendix 3.2 provides lists of projects which have been implemented by the different organisations in cooperation with the parliament secretariat in the 9th parliament, which can be consulted for further information.

In short, the purpose of this sub-section was to demonstrate the importance of women’s movement actors and civil society organisations in the context of Bangladesh. It has also shown that these actors and organisations are accepted due to their contribution on women’s rights issues, which allowed them to work with different governmental and non-governmental actors on various issues of women’s concerns. Specific collaborations have been observed in the field of parliamentary affairs and capacity development of legislators with a special focus on women legislators in Bangladesh.

38 Examples include: a day-long workshop entitled ‘Gender equality in education: beyond numbers’ was held in Dhaka on 4 December 2010, with the Speaker, the Chief Whip and some 50 MPs from Bangladesh and abroad participating. The workshop produced a number of suggestions regarding the role of MPs in order to help girls to overcome some of the barriers from education. The “South Asia Regional Conference on Women’s Political Leadership”, held in Dhaka from 16 to 18 October 2011, was promoted by the Improving Democracy through Parliamentary Development (IPD) project and sponsored by the Bangladesh Parliament and UNDP. The conference dealt with the vital subject of gender equality in public life, especially in countries of South Asia. The main theme of this conference was ‘Power, Voice and Rights’. Another regional conference of women parliamentarians from 8 to 11 July 2012, involving seventy-three women MPs from six countries, was organised by the Asia Foundation with the co-operation of the Bangladesh Parliament, with the aim of promoting a stronger role for women in national governance in South Asian nations and creating new regional networks among South Asian women parliamentarians.
3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a descriptive introduction of the political and contextual aspects of Bangladesh and features of its parliamentary political system. By arguing that women’s descriptive representation in national politics is ensured by a necessary but imperfect quota system, this chapter has offered insights on the challenges faced by quota-women due to a relative lack of acceptance and doubts cast on their legitimacy. Also, this chapter has offered information on the status of women in Bangladesh, in particular, on the state of their civil rights’ attainment and the general conditions of women’s lives and well-being. Finally, this chapter has ended by highlighting the role and contribution of women rights organisations and their collaboration with different national and international NGOs on women issues. The discussion in this chapter sought to provide the reader with some basic information for understanding the dynamics of parliamentary representation, electoral reforms, women’s status and women rights’ actors involved in the context of Bangladesh. At the same time, the discussion presented here will contribute to the analysis presented in the subsequent empirical chapters five, six and seven.
Chapter Four: Methodology of the Study

4.1. Introduction

As stated in the introduction (Chapter 1), this dissertation has two research goals; first, to provide descriptive information concerning the present state of legislators’ representation on women issues and examines how the presence of women influences substantive representation of women (SRW). Second, it aims to identify different factors that can influence women’s ability to substantive representation in establishing relationship between women’s presence and SRW. Two research goals are informed not only by the literature on women’s parliamentary representation on women issues in general (Chapter 2), and the theoretical underpinning to gender and politics on which the analytical framework is based in particular (Chapter 2); but also by the current political and contextual features of Bangladesh (Chapter 3). Thus, this dissertation contributes to fill the gap in understanding the perspectives from developing countries.

The case of woman legislators in Bangladesh parliament as a ‘typical case’ is chosen for this dissertation, which can add rich and important insights concerning the socio-political context of a developing country. The justification of identifying Bangladesh as a typical case is discussed in the following section of the chapter.

The dependent variable in this study is substantive representation of women, which refers to the active legislative engagement on behalf of women as a group (discussed in Chapter 2). For the purpose of its empirical investigation, this dissertation restricts the measurement criteria of substantive representation to advocacy explicitly for women. Justifications for this decision are given in the section 4.3.1. This dissertation of substantive representation of women puts the content of women’s interest at the centre of its investigation, which refers to women issues as any issues or policies affecting women’s life and well-being directly (discussed in more detail in section 4.2.2). Such a general definition requires a set of measurement criteria for operationalising the content of women issues. This dissertation adopts an approach to the categorisation of women issues following the contextual realities of women in developing countries, such as Bangladesh, which is developed based on existing attempts of defining women. The following section gives more information on the holistic approach used to categorise women issues and provide justification of its measurement criteria (section 4.3.2).
This dissertation takes both the Feminist Institutionalist Approach and the Political Socialization perspective of legislative intervention (of legislators) on women issues in the parliament, hence, it is “drawing on analytical strategies and research methods derived from across the social sciences” (Lynggaard et al., 2015, pp. 3-4). The methodological strategy of this dissertation follows combination of particularising analysis (providing description and explanation of the state of practice) and generalising analysis (providing empirical basis of developing general statements). For the purpose of the later type of analysis, this dissertation is based on the assumption that a combination of individual, institutional and contextual analysis can better connect the relationship between women’s presence and their ability to represent women. Following such a methodological strategy, a holistic and inclusive approach to the study of women’s parliamentary representation is used which provide a thick empirical description of legislative intervention on women issues and different factors (macro and micro level of factors) impacting (either by constraining or facilitating) women’s ability to represent women.

Two research goals of this dissertation—describing the significance of presence of women legislators and explaining relevance of different factors in the process of substantive representation—require a methodologically diverse approach. In doing so, a qualitative research strategy is employed, where an explanatory embedded case study approach is used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon through observing actual practice (Yin, 1984). A combination of different sources and strategies were used to answer the research questions (RQ) of the dissertation. For example, sampling documents of parliamentary proceedings and frequency of legislative intervention on women issues were used to answer the first research question. The process of a women friendly policy outcome—the Domestic Violence Act 2010 was traced to complement the analysis of first RQ. On the other hand, semi-standardised interviews were used to understand the motivation of individual, contextual and institutional meaning attached to their actions, which refers to second RQ. Different qualitative techniques are briefly outlined in the following paragraphs.

In order to collect sampling documents and conduct semi-standardised interviews, this dissertation is largely based on extensive field research in the Bangladesh Parliament and concerned institutions. The Bangladesh Parliament, offices of the concerned Ministry, administrative offices of the major international donors, local and international civil society organisations and most of the parliamentarians’ residences are based in Dhaka. The field research was undertaken in two phases: in
2015 for the duration of three months, and in 2016 for the duration of two months. The first phase of field research was used to collect parliamentary proceedings of the 9th parliament, meeting minutes of the standing committees, and biographic information of women legislators. The first phase used to collect these documents from the parliament. During the first phase, the rapport was built with potential key contacts from the parliament and donor communities, and topic led discussions were held with key stakeholders and subject matter experts. The second phase was used to conduct semi-structured interviews of key informants, including legislators, government officials, experts, academics and NGO personnel working in the field. This is discussed in detail in the section 4.5.1 of this chapter. Thereby, the different sources of information (including parliamentary proceedings, standing committee meeting reports, interviews of legislators, experts and personnel working in the field of gender and politics, and the profile of women legislators) were collected using different methods (sampling documents and conducting semi-structured interviews) of data collection. Apart from using different source of data, this dissertation has also employed different tools of data analysis that includes qualitative content analysis using documents (parliamentary proceedings), semi-structured interview analysis, and process tracing by using documents (standing committee meeting reports, and interviews). Thereby, combinations of different data sources and data analysis tools are frequently used in this empirical study of women’s substantive representation.

The concept of triangulation is employed as a validation strategy and as a tool to increase knowledge on various levels through the employment of different perspectives on the studies phenomenon (Flick et al., 2012; Flick, 2007; 2009; also see Jick, 1979). The purpose of triangulation here is to bring together different facets and different perspectives on substantive representation of women by combining different blocks of information gathered from different sources of information and from different people. Different forms of triangulation were employed to increase the existing knowledge of substantive representation of women, such as triangulation of data, and methods triangulation. With regards to data triangulation, the different sources of data drawn from different sources were used in this study (Flick, 2005). The verbal data (interviews) is triangulated with the data from the parliamentary proceedings. In addition to these data, legislators’ biographical information complemented as an independent source of information. Data triangulation is further used by including different observers or interviewees such as women legislators, men legislators, experts, and academics, thus balancing out subjective influences of individuals and providing a concrete narration.
of the subject matter (Flick, 2004). With regards to methods triangulation, this dissertation used different methods of data collection and data analysis in this dissertation.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. Before presenting the research design of this dissertation, this chapter starts with a discussion on Bangladesh as a typical case and discusses the measurement criteria of two key concepts of the study. Then, this chapter discusses the methodological strategy used to answer the research questions, including the selected different qualitative research methods. As a part of introducing the methodological strategy, it describes the selection, collection, and analysis procedure of data used in this study, which follows with the methodological reflections.

4.2. The Case of Bangladesh as Typical

The case of Bangladesh, as discussed in the previous chapters, is typical of many developing countries, where gender norms are different from those of most of the developed countries. First, this case can be representative where women’s entry into parliaments follows two ways: direct elections (elected directly by the constituency people) and indirect elections via reserved seats (selected by the political party and then elected by the elected members of parliament) (discussed in Chapter 3). The legislative quota and reserved seats play a critical role to ensure the descriptive representation of women (on average, this is 23.3 percent) in the unicameral parliaments of the world. Countries, such as China, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Morocco, Niger, Afghanistan, Burundi, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are characterised by approximately 3 to 37 percent of women representation in parliament via reserved seats and indirect elections. Furthermore, in countries, such as Colombia, Congo, Croatia, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Montenegro, Nicaragua, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Mongolia, and Poland, 4 to 28 percent of women came to parliament through legislative quota. As per the statistics of the World Bank, most of these above stated countries are categorised as lower income, lower-middle income, and least developed countries. As a lower-middle income country and the presence of 16 percent of the women legislators in parliament via reserved seats and indirect elections, Bangladesh can be a representative case to understand the patterns of substantive representation of women.

Second, the case of Bangladesh can be representative in a context where the role of legislators is constrained both formally (restriction on floor crossing in the parliament) and informally—most of the activities involved in policy making take place outside of the parliament (discussed in Chapter 3).
Such practice has a stronger impact on women’s representation in parliament than male MPs, as the nomination for reserved seats is dependent on the interest of political parties or party elites. Therefore, the case of Bangladesh can also be a representative in the context of the countries, such as those in Latin America and South Asia, where women’s pathways to parliament are mostly ensured by their direct connections with political elites (Cornwall and Goetz, 2005; Hinjosa, 2005; Iwanaga, 2008; Samarasinghe, 2000; Schwindt-Bayer, 2010).

Third, the social, economic and cultural contexts of Bangladesh can be representative of the states, where patriarchal ideologies and religious norms play a vital role in shaping everyday customs and fighting for the reduction of the global gender gap. Bangladesh scored 0.719 on the gender parity index and was ranked the highest for the second time among South Asian nations in the 2017 Global Gender Gap ranking. It is important to mention that South Asian region is the second lowest scoring region on Global Gender Gap Index in 2017, ahead of the Middle East and North Africa and behind Sub-Saharan Africa (World Economic Forum, 2017). While South Asia as a region is lagging behind in the index, Bangladesh was able to consolidate its position as the region’s top performer and progressed across all dimensions of the Economic Opportunity and Participation index (World Economic Forum, 2017). Bangladesh is observed to be a progressive case in the world on gender parity for legislators, senior officials, and managers, as well as professional and technical roles. The country has performed unimpressively, however, in the economic participation and opportunity creation for women (129th in the world; World Economic Forum, 2017).

4.3. Operationalising Two Key Concepts: Substantive Representation and Women’s Concerns

The purpose of this section is twofold. First, it defines the measurable indicators of the dependent variable of the study, i.e., the concept of substantive representation. Second, it offers a set of criteria of what constitutes ‘women’s concerns and issues’ within the context of Bangladesh.

4.3.1. Substantive Representation

The conceptual discussion in Chapter 2 suggested that substantive representation of women refers to attention to, or promotion of, women’s policy concerns, in other word, it refers to actions on behalf of issues in favour of women’s needs (Celis et al., 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Tremblay 2007). Thus, substantive representation requires deliberative actions of legislators—such as speaking
and acting in favour of women. Such a definition of substantive representation demands measurement criteria for the empirical investigation of this study. The empirical literature on substantive representation in parliament emphasises on two distinct aspects of substantive representation—process-oriented and policy outcome related activities of women legislators (Celis, Childs, Kantola and Krook, 2008; Celis, 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Wängnerud, 2009). In both cases, focus was given to the extent to which women legislators advocate for the interest of women.

Empirical studies on policy outcome related activities examined the influence of women legislators’ on policy outcomes by measuring different aspects of policymaking. A few studies measure impact by looking at rates of legislators’ co-sponsorship of bills focusing women’s interests (Saint-Germain, 1989; Swers, 2005), while some others have looked at the rates at which women’s proposals are enacted into law (Dahlerup, 1988; Reingold, 2000; Saint-Germain, 1989; Thomas, 1991; 1994). Observing policy outcomes to measure the impact of women legislators’ contribution has some technical limitations. There are cases where women legislators are able to introduce the policy but may fail to see it through to a successful completion of the policy. In such cases, it is unfair to say that substantial representation of women legislators did not take place, simply because the policy enactment failed. Enactment of the policy is the highest bar of a policy change, and the process of policy change involves various prerequisite stages, actors, and venues, which together make the process complicated. An overemphasis on successful policy change may overlook the process-oriented activities that women legislators put together behind the scenes, and also overlook the other circumstantial factors which may cause the failure of the enactment. Also, these measures of policy outcome (mentioned above) are more fitting to the context where individual legislators have relative freedom and capacity in initiating legislation in the parliament. They do not fit to the context where legislators have limited roles in the enactment of bills, as policies are mostly initiated by the government, under the leadership of particular ministries responsible for drafting them, such as is the case in Bangladesh (Ahmed, 2012).

Some other studies observed the rates of voting for legislation which has a direct impact on women (Burrell, 1994; Swers, 1998). Observing roll calls to measure impact is the most commonly used tool in Western contexts, however, there is no roll call system used in the Bangladesh parliament for passing any bill. Instead, MPs pass the bill by saying ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ (voice vote), which is not recorded individually. Also, voting behaviour may not capture the real picture in a parliament, which follows
strict party discipline and has constitutional restrictions on the rights of legislators to freely vote against their respective party’s decision, such as in Bangladesh (discussed in Chapter 3). Such realities make it impossible to use the roll calls to measure substantive representation of women. At the same time, research based on legislative voting patterns or legislative policy outcomes do not capture the earlier stages of the process, where ideas are introduced to debate. This dissertation argues that the earlier stages of policy formulation process are an essential factor to consider measuring legislators’ contribution on behalf of women. The earlier stages of policy formulation process range from the articulation of interests to the formation of part of the policy agenda, which is also a crucial phase in the establishment of legislation for women by making certain topics politically acceptable (Walsh, 2002). Tamerius (1995), in her study on women’s substantive representation, argued that earlier stages of policy making are more important to women and other legislative minorities than other stages of policy making.

Some studies have looked at process-oriented activities, which measure women legislators’ contributions to the earlier stages of the legislative process. For example, Childs (2001, 2002) examined substantive representation looking at the content of Early Day Motions in the British parliament. A few other studies looked at the broadening of the political agenda favourable to women’s issues by looking at the number of interventions that women legislators make on behalf of women during the debates (Boughton and Zetlin, 1996; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Walsh, 2012) or in the budgetary debates (Celis, 2006). In all cases, attempts were made to observe the gendered difference in the content proposals and show whether women legislators address women’s interest and incorporated those interests into policy, which would have never been possible without the presence of women.

Considering the limitation of observing women legislators’ influence on policymaking in Bangladesh, this dissertation focuses on the process-oriented aspects of substantive representation. Process-oriented activities, in this dissertation, refer to instances where women legislators undertake activities on behalf of women by raising any urgent needs, support any actions that advance women’s issues, introduce or initiate bills that advance women’s issues, and bring gender perspectives into the legislative debates in the parliament. At the same time, it expands the criteria by including any legislative activity on behalf of women issues, even if they do not lead to a successful policy implementation. Thus, the empirical investigation, represented in this thesis, is not restricted by the effectiveness (or outcome) of policies but is rather interested to observe the process-oriented activities
involved in the process. To conduct the empirical investigation, this study adopts the following criteria—if a woman legislator has never mentioned, recognised, raised the question of, or taken part in the process of policy making on behalf of women, then this woman legislator will be adjudicated as having shown poor or no substantive representation for the women of her constituency. In other words, the operational definition of substantive representation in this dissertation puts emphasis on the conditions for considering a woman legislator to have shown substantive representation of women by advocating explicitly on behalf of women.

4.3.2. Women’s Concerns and Issues
The conceptual discussion presented in Chapter 2 raised the concerns of diversity of women’s interest, because women as a group are not homogenous entity (Mansbridge, 1999), and argued for the understanding of contextual evidence that may impact substantive representation (Lovenduski, 2005). The operational criteria of women issues used in this dissertation is designed based on these arguments and are drawn upon the existing studies in both Western and developing country contexts.

With regards to the diversity of women, existing studies have taken into consideration different aspects of women’s interest as indicators of their empirical investigation. For instance, studies in Great Britain and the United States framed women’s interest as women’s rights and looked at abortion policies (McBride, 2001a; 2001b), whereas, in the Netherlands, Italy, and Finland prostitution was identified as an issue of interest (Outshoorn, 2004). On the other hand, other studies focused on areas of traditional interest including children, health, family, social welfare, etc., when defining women’s interest (Escobar-Lemmon et al., 2015; Osborn and Mendez, 2010; Reingold and Haynie, 2014). These studies emphasised either rights-based women issues or traditional aspects of women issues. The result of these studies also differed as per the indicator they have chosen for their empirical investigation. For example, studies showed that women legislators in the Argentinean Congress and the United States’ Congress were seen putting more emphasis on issues related to women’s rights and childrearing during their floor speeches than men (Htun, Lacalle and Micozzi, 2013; Jones, 1997; Thomas, 1991; 1994). However, such gender differences became less evident in a situation where women’s interests are defined in the areas of traditional issues, such as education and welfare (Osborn and Mendez, 2010).
Diversity in women’s interest is also connected with the identities of women legislators. For example, affiliation with a specific party can also regulate which interest is significant and what legislators articulate it in the parliament. Identities of the legislators influence the extent to which they represent women and their issues. Being progressive or conservative party members, women can identify themselves as advocates of different conflicting interests. For instances, Republican women legislatures in the USA are more active on topics related to education while Democrats are more concerned about women’s health issue (Swers, 2015). Also, there are women legislators who are even more “marginalized among their peer women colleagues” (Smooth, 2011, p.438). She emphasised that many studies fail to cover all women and miss opportunities to explore the implications of representing some interests to the expense of others. It is, therefore, important to consider the critical question of which women (Smooth, 2011), and include them into the investigation of women legislators’ substantive representation.

With regards to the context and socially driven approach, the existing attempts in different studies demonstrated that there exists significant variation in women’s interest across countries and societies. As discussed previously, research in Great Britain and the United States framed women’s interests as women’s rights and included abortion policies as part of the relevant issues facing women in their societies (McBride, 2001a; 2001b). Likewise, studies in the context of the Netherlands, Italy, and Finland identified prostitution as an issue of interest (Outshoorn, 2004). Latin American women were shown to be more active than their male colleagues when the definition of women issues focused on the welfare policy (Reingold and Haynie, 2014) or children/family bills (Escobar-Lemmon et al., 2015). Such examples suggest that defining women’s issues has a significant connection with the context. This is in line with the argument that women’s structural position in a society generates specific perspectives rather than interests (Reingold and Swers, 2011; Young, 2000). Women’s lives are constructed and shaped by different political, social, and economic forces that shape their life options, which are substantially different from those of men. Similarly, within a specific context, similar shaping forces exists, which have similar consequences for women in a wide range of countries (Beckwith, 2014). Thus, living in a particular context can provide women with similar experiences and similar concerns. Similarly, the challenges and realities of women may also vary across countries. Women in developed countries are concerned about the rights of abortion, rights to equal pay or the status of prostitutes, whereas, women in South Asia are still struggling to incorporate their concerns and basic rights issues into the policy agenda.
In short, given the diversity and dynamics of women interests, this dissertation aims to provide an operational definition of women issues by rejecting “the notions of those interests existing along a singular axis, or notions that limit women’s interests to a set of issues that portray a sense of sameness among women” (Smooth, 2011, p.440) for its empirical investigation. The narrow conceptualisation of women’s interest, which excludes certain groups, has significant implications for research on representation. When we are talking about women legislators’ substantive representation, it is expected that they represent the context-driven interests of all distinct groups in her constituency. Thus, the preferences of women constituents operating within a heterogeneous context can be different from women operating in a homogenous context. Hence, it is pertinent to adopt a broad set of criteria for measuring women’s issues in such a way that does not emphasise some interests and miss others. In this work, the operational definition draws upon two general understandings: (a) it includes issues of substantive value to women’s lives and wellbeing inspired by both ‘rights’ and ‘traditional’ aspects of women’s concerns; and (b) acknowledges the country (context) specific needs of women, as they are driven by existing structural inequalities between males and females. In an effort to include all issues relating to all women regardless of their different identities, this dissertation defines women’s issues as issues of presumed importance, which have direct or immediate effects on women’s lives in both public and private spheres, their autonomy and wellbeing. This definition is used to identify women issues in primary documents analysed here.

This dissertation further categorises women’s concerns and issues as strategic and practical in order to investigate the case of Bangladesh by using Molyneux’s (1985) distinction of strategic and practical gender needs. Molyneux’s (1985)\(^\text{39}\) framework aimed to avoid the discrimination against, or misrepresentation of any women (used during formulating third world gender planning policy), which provides a useful framework for this dissertation with a broad set of measurable criteria of women’s concerns and issues.\(^\text{40}\) According to Molyneux, strategic gender needs are related to women’s subordination, existing inequality damaging women’s outcomes in society, and the “goal of women’s emancipation” (Molyneux, 1985, p.233). The objective is to overcome gender inequality and women’s

\(^{39}\)The distinctions are drawn from third world countries, which are different from developed countries because of their ground reality of low-income households and women-headed households, where women’s subordination becomes a natural order and “ideologically reinforced by means of legal and educational system, media, family planning programs, health, without recognition that within it women’s position is subordinate to that of the man’s” (Moser, 1989, p.1800).

\(^{40}\)Her categorisation is recently also used by Waikeung Tam (2017) in his research about the impacts of democratic transition on gender outcomes in Hong Kong and Tam (2017) also used the framework to investigate the representation of women legislators.
subordination by eradicating obstacles to gender equality (Moser, 1989). Examples include the abolition of the sexual division of labour, and the removal of institutionalised forms of discrimination. Being influenced by Molyneux’s conceptual distinction of strategic gender needs, strategic concerns in this study refer to policies related to overcoming women’s inequalities and subordination in all spheres of life by restructuring gender relations and eradicating obstacles to gender equality. On the other hand, practical gender needs are defined based on the concrete conditions’ women experience within a specific context and derived out of their survival rather than “questioning the structure of their subordination” (Moser, 1989, p.1803). Practical gender needs basically reflect the interests that flow from women’s traditional or conventional gender roles. Molyneux included basic human needs, such as childcare, education, health, water, and food as part of practical gender needs, which are needed for every human being. Influenced by Molyneux’s distinction of practical gender needs, this dissertation defines practical needs as policy response to an immediate perceived necessity, which is identified by women within their specific contexts. Thus, it includes concerns, such as shelter, childcare, education, health care, and poverty, which are referred to as practical women’s concerns. Gender discrimination is commonly evident even when it comes to attaining those fundamental needs for women in developing countries, which is why they are considered practical women’s issues.

Such conceptual distinction between these two types of women issues are used further to develop the coding frame for classifying the materials used in this study. This dissertation employs a coding frame with indicators of strategic and practical women’s issues, developed deductively (drawn from existing attempts) and inductively (derived from the empirical documents). With regards to setting up prior indicators, the measurement criteria of women’s strategic issues include economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological dimension (first used by Malhotra et al., 2002). The sub-categories of strategic issues are influenced by the universal understandings of women’s rights as embodied in UN treaties and conventions such as the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of

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41The underlying conceptual rationale behind such distinctions, which Molyneux (1985) identified and later Moser (1989) used as a toll for third world gender planning, is that women and men play different roles in the society. So they have different needs. The attempt was to break the western assumptions in gender planning theory and practice. However, the reality in third world countries are different because of their ground reality of low-income households and women headed households, where women’s subordination becomes a natural order and “ideologically reinforced by means of legal and educational system, media, family planning programs, health, without recognition that within it the women’s position is subordinate to that of the man’s” (Moser, 1989, p.1800). Discussions on this framework continued as it has been explicitly used by national and international policy-planners both in western, developed and developing contexts.
Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).\textsuperscript{42} The CEDAW is used for further categorisation of strategic needs issues. The convention is not only known as the women’s rights treaty, but it is also an international bill of rights that identifies a comprehensive list of women’s interests in equality across a wide range of areas. It also offers a better way to categorise women’s strategic issues (Beckwith, 2011; 2014). The convention considered the eradication of violence against women to be the central to the elimination of discrimination. Women from the South Asian region still face all kinds of discrimination in every sphere of their lives. Domestic violence and the troubles inheriting property are examples of such discrimination in South Asia in general, and in Bangladesh particularly (Baldez, 2011, p.11).

Considering the ground realities of violence committed against women in general and specifically in Bangladesh, violence against women and girls (VAWG) is identified as one of the sub-categories of strategic women issues. Being one of the signatories of the convention, the policy makers in Bangladesh indicate violence against women and women’s rights in the area of civic, social, political and economic spheres as significant areas to intervene through different programmatic policies.\textsuperscript{43} Apart from emphasising the elimination of violence, this dissertation pay attention to rights with regards to civil, political, economic and cultural spheres, which have substantive values for women to be free from the discrimination to pursue any sorts of interest (Dahelrup, 2014). Thus, women's strategic concerns are further categorised into three subsections, those being violence against women and girls (VAWG), civil and political rights (CPR) and economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) (see the detail definition of each subcategory with examples in the following section 4.6). On the other hand, women’s practical issues are categorised further as financial support, technical support, education and training, health care, housing facilities, social support, which emerged from an analysis of immediate needs of women within a specific context (discussed in detail in section 4.6).

All these categories are used to evaluate the extent of substantive representation of women by measuring the gender variation and variation among women. The measurement criteria of women’s

\textsuperscript{42}CEDAW identifies all the ways in which women's identity can lead to discrimination and aims to guide countries in drafting and implementing policies to advance those interests.

\textsuperscript{43}Being one of the signatories of the convention, Bangladesh considers violence against women as a significant area to intervene through different programmatic policies. Examples of such government’s commitment are: Bangladesh, being a member of the South Asian Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC), adopted a regional action plan to end child marriage to be implemented in 2015 – 2018. Also, Bangladesh committed at the Girl Summit in July 2014, to take steps to end child marriage by 2041 (UNICEF, 2014).
issues put importance to those issues that have fundamental and substantive values for women’s life and can bring intergenerational (long-term) effect to women’s well-being. The categorisation of strategic women issues includes policy issues that are dedicated to questioning the fundamental reason of women’s subordination, and ask for improvements in gender equality and eradication of discrimination. On the other hand, practical women issues do not refer to an existential threat to women, but are rather derived from immediate needs and emphasised on the short-term effect. The definition of strategic women issues and its sub categorisations are based on structural understanding of the causes and subjugation of women. When we can address strategic women’s issues, societies can observe intergenerational benefits (long term) in the process of gender equality, whereas practical women issues solve immediate needs, requiring only quick solution in general. Following Dahelrup’s (2014) claim that substantive representation of women makes sense, only when these are embedded in a call to change the status quo of male domination; this dissertation finds strategic women issues helpful for the evaluation of SRW. It does not mean to put less attention to practical women issues, but rather means to consider different degrees of SRW, depending on which specific issues are addressed (see empirical analysis in Chapter 5). There are some practical women’s issues, which have substantive value and also have long-term empowerment and human development effects. Therefore, this dissertation gives importance to strategic women issues and some practical women issues, which have substantive values and fundamental to enhance gender equality, eradicate all kinds of discrimination and support development of human dignity.

4.4. Research Design

The dissertation examines the process of the enactment of substantive representation and its relationship with women’s descriptive representation (women’s numeric presence), which necessitates an internal analysis of the case. The internal analysis allows for the establishing of empirical generalisations by using variations that occur within the system, which may lead to a deeper explanation of the phenomenon of women’s parliamentary representation (Yin, 2004). Therefore, this dissertation seeks to answer two research questions by employing an explanatory ‘embedded case study’ approach (see Yin, 2004) to understand the complex phenomenon of substantive representation of women by taking a typical case of Bangladesh.

This dissertation aims to investigate its research questions by looking at the issue in two distinct steps, each following two separate research questions and two related goals. In the first step, the study
describes the present state of the substantive representation of women in Bangladesh and the dynamics through which it is perpetuated. This descriptive segment is necessary to understand the legislators’ engagement on women issues in Bangladesh (as we know little about women’s political engagement in South Asia, where gender norms are different than those in the West), by using ‘the previously known generalisations’ to make particular statements on the case (Yin, 2004). The aim is to provide a ‘thick description’ of the internal process of enactment of substantive representation by exploring the nature, and scope of the contribution of women legislators on behalf of women. In the second step, this study aims to conceptualise the relationship between women’s descriptive and substantive representation following a two-fold analytical categorisation of contextual and institutional aspects—(a) micro (individual dimension: motivation, social background, education and professional background, early political experiences of the women representatives and the women’s pathways to Parliament), and (b) macro (institutional dimension: formal and informal rules, contextual aspects and extra-institutional dimension: external actors’ influences) levels of analysis. This study concentrates on investigating the relevance of different factors from each level on women’s ability to achieve substantive representation within the parliament in Bangladesh. The independent variables in this dissertation, therefore, includes two levels of factors drawn from the existing empirical studies that have a direct impact on the dependent variable, and which help to establish a causal connection with substantive representation of women (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). On the other hand, the dependent variable of the study is related to the objectives of the study, i.e., the enactment of substantive representation.

This explanatory ‘within case’ study-based design aims to display a maximum variation on the independent variables. Therefore, this empirically driven study is also open to new variables which can be classified as micro and macro factors, and which may have possible effects on substantive representation. The combination of inductive and deductive analytical research (based on factors described in the analytical framework in Chapter 2) is critical to grasp everyday practices of women legislators and dynamics of the institutional, political and social factors under which women legislators’ act for women (Lynggard et al., 2015, p.7).

Taking women’s presence as a starting point, this study establishes its relationship with the enactment of substantive representation as an outcome by using internal analysis among different units and subunits of analysis. The major unit of analysis of this study is the range of legislative intervention or
activities of legislators on the floor of the parliament and their contribution to the agenda-setting process. In addition, it comprises two different sub-units, referred to two in different research questions of the study. For the first research question, the subunit is the individual legislator (both men and women), whereas, only women legislators are taken into consideration for the second research question.

The first research question aims to find out the conditions necessary for a known phenomenon (i.e., legislators substantive representation on women issues in the parliament) to occur. The empirical analysis uses two approaches of describing enactment of substantive representation. The first remains a more general approach of looking at legislators’ contributions (men and women) on women issues on the floor of the parliament, while the second looks through the process of enactment of policies which have relevance to women’s lives (in this case, the Domestic Violence Act 2010). Finally, it demonstrates the importance of women’s presence (either direct or indirect) along with other contextual issues throughout the policy outcome process. The selection of the case and a detailed explanation for it are provided in the section 4.5.2.2 of this chapter.

The second research question emphasises the variation in women’s active participation on women issues. By exploring the variation among women legislators, this study provides important information on the extent to which legislators’ active participation is facilitated or constrained by different micro and macro levels of factors. It allows researchers to recognise the challenges that women might disproportionately face when representing women. In addition, the investigation of such variations in active participation is also a standard prerequisite to establish a relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution.

This dissertation employs qualitative methods to collect and analyse its empirical data with an ambition to provide breadth and depth of understanding of a single case study (Gerring, 2004; 2007). It must be mentioned that this ‘within case’ study approach does not make an absolute proclamation on the generalisability of the outcomes of the study. The findings of the study can be carefully generalised as the case is indeed a typical of the electoral system through which women enter to parliament (directly elected or selected), the typical percentage of women legislators in the parliament, domination of executives in parliamentary system, and socio-economic context of gender disparity. Some significant lessons from the study will allow the readers to reflect broadly on matters regarding both actor and
context-centric explanations of women’s substantive representation. The micro and macro levels of analysis offer an analytical schema that could be utilised to identify different factors, their relevance, and their interaction explaining the relationship between women’s presence and their ability to achieve substantive representation in similar developing-country contexts (Yin, 1994; 2004).

4.5. Methods: Data Selection and Collection

It is noteworthy to mention that the mix of different sources of data was used to increase the existing understanding of an understudied phenomenon of substantive representation of women (Yin, 2004). Different data sources have served different purposes in this dissertation. For example, the status of representation on behalf of women within the parliament will be analysed through five years’ parliamentary proceedings and standing committee meeting reports. Data from semi-structured interviews (with both men and women legislators, experts and personnel working in the development sector) was used to supplement the analysis. In order to identify factors and mechanisms that affect substantive representation, the behaviour of individual MPs, institutional and political contextual aspects were examined from information gathered through interviews and biographic information of legislators. The parliamentary proceedings also helped in verifying claims that interview participants made, and experts pointed out in interviews. Using additional data of standing committee meetings minutes of the 9th parliament supplemented the discussion on the domestic violence policy case, allowing a peek into the substantive representation of women in a specific way. Similarly, profiles of MPs complemented the analysis to gain different perspectives on the phenomenon of political socialization. A different mix of data sources helped to crosscheck the factors affecting women’s ability to contribute significantly towards their substantive representation. The following section presented the process of data selection and collection methods applied in this dissertation, starting with an overview of two phases of data collection used in this qualitative study.

4.5.1. Phases of Data Collection

In two phases of fieldwork in Dhaka, the sampling decisions were made both before and during the field investigation in two steps (see Table 4.1). Fieldwork was conducted in two rounds during August-October 2015 (twelve weeks) and November-December 2016 (six weeks). First, the documents containing parliamentary proceedings and meeting minutes of the parliamentary standing committees of the concerned ministries were collected. Second, interviews were conducted with legislators [both women (23) and men (5)], government officials from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs,
and local experts (personnel from civil society, women rights organisations, donor agencies, and academics). Texts from interviews and primary reports reflect the actual practices including the rationale, justification, and perceptions of the key informants. Third, the profile of women legislators comprised of biographical data of women legislators were used to shed light on the contextual facts, including the women legislators’ demographic characteristics, their pathways to parliament, and their early engagement with the politics. Thus, the first round of data collection included collecting documents from parliament, including parliamentary debates, standing committee meeting reports and biographical data of the legislator. However, the researcher also invested time to build a strong rapport with women legislators and conduct a few pilot interviews with women legislators and experts. In the second round of data collection, the researcher employed a major effort to conduct in-depth interviews.

| Table 4.1: Two phases of Data Collection |
| --- | --- |
| Phase | Outcome |
| First Phase August-October 2015 | Parliamentary proceedings of the 9th parliament (2009-2013) |
|  | - Legislative intervention of men and women legislators under four legislative activities |
|  | - Meeting reports of parliamentary standing committee of women and children affairs |
|  | Collection of Bio-graphical information of women legislators |
|  | 5 pilot interviews with women legislators |
| Second Phase December 2016 - January 2017 | 36 Semi-structured interviews with women and men legislators, government officials, academics, personnel working in women’s rights organization or donor agencies. |

Sources: Researcher’s own table

The following sections offer a detailed discussion on the choice of data sources in each category of data and their data collection techniques.

4.5.2. Documents from Parliament

4.5.2.1. Parliamentary Proceedings

One of the objectives of the study was to examine legislative interventions taken by legislators to understand their substantive contribution on behalf of women. The proceedings of the ninth (9th) parliament are used to analyse legislators’ intervention, which was active from 2008 to 2013. A total of 19 parliamentary sessions during 2008-2013 were selected to collect data on four legislative activities.
This choice of 9th parliament was made on two grounds. First, this parliament had the highest number of women MPs, elected and selected (reserved seats) from different political parties. This makes the 9th parliament highly relevant and information-rich. It gives sufficient variation regarding women’s background and medium they used to enter into parliament (quota and non-quota), thus eventually providing different perspectives to the substantive representation of women. Second, it has been able to adopt a milestone legal framework on the violence against women, which had been in long-standing demand from various quarters of society. This makes the parliament further relevant, (i.e., information wise) as it shows how substantive representation on particular women issues took place. Both aspects make the 9th parliament highly relevant as it allows the researcher to collect diverse information on parliamentary activities and perspectives for the analysis of substantive representation.

Table 4.2: Total Sessions of the 9th Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>End date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>25 January 2009</td>
<td>7 April 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>4 June 2009</td>
<td>9 July 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>7 September 2009</td>
<td>5 November 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>4 January 2010</td>
<td>5 April 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>2 June 2010</td>
<td>22 July 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>20 September 2010</td>
<td>6 October 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>5 December 2010</td>
<td>9 December 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>22 May 2011</td>
<td>7 July 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>18 August 2011</td>
<td>25 August 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>20 October 2011</td>
<td>30 November 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>25 January 2012</td>
<td>29 March 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>27 May 2012</td>
<td>8 July 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>4 September 2012</td>
<td>19 September 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>14 November 2012</td>
<td>29 November 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>27 January 2013</td>
<td>6 March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>21 April 2013</td>
<td>30 April</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>3 June 2013</td>
<td>16 July 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th</td>
<td>12 September 2013</td>
<td>20 November 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s table [Bangladesh Parliament (2009 a-g; 2010 a-i; 2011a-i; 2012a-i; 2013a-i)]

There are four legislative activities selected in this dissertation. They are: (a) question-answer (QA) sessions (falls under oversight); (b) short statements on public interest (Rule 71 A); (c) calling for attention on public interest (Rule 70); and (d) resolution motions (Rule 130) (activities b, c, and d fall under the national debates). These activities were chosen due to their significance and the availability
of documents. These legislative activities fall under the three main categories of activities that take place within the parliament, such as representing the people in government; overseeing the activities of the government; and considering legislation. The first legislative activity was parliamentary question sessions (Q&A) to the executives, including Prime Minister and Ministers from concerned ministries. By asking/raising questions, legislators serve their role in overseeing the conduct of the government by the executives, calling it to account. Thus, it is the main tool of overseeing activities of the government (Ahmed, 2012). The resolution motion of public interest issues is often used by legislators as part of their overseeing activities. The short statements on public interest (Rule 71 A) and calling for attention on public interest (Rule 70) fall under the category of representing people’s interest to government, through which legislators held debates on the major national and international concerns, mostly conveying their constituency concerns and aspirations of the people, interceding with the government on their behalf (Ahmed, 2012).

These four legislative activities are significant, where legislators have a chance to talk about different issues relevant for the people of their respective constituency and for the entire nation. Apart from sharing the public interest, legislators also have a chance to express their viewpoint on urgent public issues. Legislators have limited opportunity to raise people’s concern under the other regular legislative activities. Such regular interventions include a discussion following presidential speeches at the beginning of each session, discussions on the budget, adjournment motions and legislation. Legislators have limited chances to be creative and go beyond the routine activities while participating in these regular legislative intervention (Ahmed, 2002). Therefore, by analysing these four legislative activities allow the examination of the extent to which women legislators can contribute or get involved in discussing, addressing, raising; in other words, setting the agenda on issues relevant to women.

In short, those legislative interventions of the parliamentary proceedings are identified as the substantial intervention of legislators on two grounds: a) legislators get the chance of raising concerns, questions to conduct of the government or advocate for policy intervention to address issues relevant for the public in Bangladesh; and b) legislators get a chance to go beyond government’s routine activities and also to show their creativity in parliamentary activities.
It is important to note that the data collection of parliamentary proceedings was conducted by surveying the hard copies (i.e., summary book, bulletin, and debates book) one by one. The library of the Bangladesh Parliament only keeps hard copies of the proceedings. For example, the motions on the resolution of urgent public interests were recorded in parliamentary bulletins (each bulletin summarises one session), and a total of such 19 bulletins were analysed. Other two motions, such as short discussion on urgent public interest and two-minute statements on urgent public interest, were recorded in a different book called ‘parliamentary summary session’. Unlike parliamentary bulletin, a total of 19 summary books were selected to analyse data. Consequently, parliamentary oral questions and answer sessions were recorded in another volume, ‘parliamentary debates book’. 30 books on such parliamentary debates were also selected by the researcher. The number of books, in this case, is higher than the number of the session due to some longer sessions.

The analysis of the parliamentary proceedings is used to answer the question ‘whether the substantive representation is taking place through the work of legislators’. Keeping this objective in mind, this dissertation follows some key guidelines while collecting data from the above mentioned books of parliamentary proceedings. The key guidelines of collecting data from four legislative interventions are centered around three kinds of informations. These information include total number of interventions by both legislators; numbers of both general and women issues; and patterns of different women issues raised by them in each legislative intervention (see Table 4.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative Activities</th>
<th>Key Guideline Questions for Collecting Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parliamentary Q&A session | a) All the oral questions raised to both prime minister and executives in entire 9th parliament.  
  b) Type of questions raised by both men and women.  
  c) Types of women issues raised by men and women. |
| Discussion in Debate Sort Statement on Public Interest Issue (Rule 71) Calling for Attention on Public Interest Issues (Rule 71 A) | a) All the intervention on urgent public interest issues raised on the floor in entire 9th parliament.  
  b) Type of urgent concerns raised by both men and women.  
  c) Types of women’s concerns and issues raised by men and women. |
| Resolution Motion | a) All the motion proposed on urgent public interest issues raised on the floor in entire 9th parliament.  
  b) Type of issues considered in the motion by both men and women. |

44 Considering large numbers of volumes of the documents, a research assistant was hired for a month to facilitate the process of data collection.
4.5.2.2. Policy Enactment of Domestic Violence Act 2010
As it is discussed earlier, this study considers the Domestic Violence and Prevention Act 2010 as a successful example of a recently enacted policy pertinent to women. The issue of Violence against Women (VAW) remains one of the most persistent infringements of women’s human rights in Bangladesh (Khair, 2013). According to a database prepared by the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA), the number of reported sexual harassment cases in the period January to December 2010 and January to December 2011 were 372 and 556 respectively (Khair, 2013). Reducing violence against women is, therefore, one of the key gender needs that the government of Bangladesh and many human rights organizations are focusing on through different programmatic interventions. In addition, access to justice and improved governance programs (discussed also in Chapter 3). Enactment of the Domestic Violence Act 2010 is one of the significant achievements in the field of women’s equity policies which occurred during the tenure of this parliament. A law that safeguards women from domestic violence has been long awaited, as seen by the frequent and urgent calls for such an act from the civil society and women rights organizations (Nazneen, 2016). Because of its importance, VAW became a critical test case to measure the substantive representation of women parliamentarians in the context of Bangladesh. Considering the objective of this dissertation, the case of Domestic Violence Act 2010 (which aimed to prevent violence against women committed by the members of their own family) was chosen to observe specific ways of enactment of the substantive representation of women.

By taking the case of the Domestic Violence Act, this dissertation aims to illustrate the role of women legislators and to identify the characteristics of the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution. A study previously analysed the Domestic Violence Act in Bangladesh, emphasising the contribution of civil society organisations, and showed how an informal network with key decision makers was instrumental for the successful enactment (Nazneen, 2017b). Studies, however, did not investigate the contribution of women legislators in the successful enactment of the act. To trace the entire policy enactment process, this study selects two types of documents from the initiation of the draft bill on the floor to the enactment with the majority votes. The parliamentary debates on 6th parliamentary sessions in 2010 (from June- September) and a total of 12 meeting
minutes of the parliamentary standing committee (on Women’s and Children’s Affairs) were collected to observe the discussion on the Domestic Violence Act. The meeting minutes of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Children and Women Affairs are selected as an important primary source for this research since the committee has played a crucial role in facilitating the adoption of the laws. Similarly, the specific debates on the law that took place on the floor of the parliament were selected for analysis. Such information can provide evidence on the contribution of individual MPs. Both parliamentary speeches and meeting minutes were collected from the parliament library in Bangladesh as the library only preserved hardcopies of the proceedings. This analysis enriches the understanding of how substantive representation functions and in a way would verify the influence of women’s presence on substantive representation in bringing gender policy change.

4.5.2.3. In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured interview is a prominent technique to gather data on elite political women in feminist research. It is usually difficult to understand the impact of personal and contextual factors upon legislative behaviour of individual MPs through the parliamentary proceedings alone. Therefore, in-depth interviews were conducted with the aim to acquire ‘subjective accounts’ of the subject matter of the study (Richards, 1996, p.200).

The researcher in this study conducted a total of forty-one interviews (5 pilot interviews and 36 interviews for the main data analysis) to extend, compliment and provide supportive evidence to the descriptive observations and generate necessary analytical propositions. A majority of the interviewees were the representatives (both men and women) of the Bangladesh Parliament and have been the key informants of this study. The remainder were individuals from concerned ministries who were involved in the enactment process of domestic violence act, civil society organization (CSOs), donor agencies and academics working in the field of gender and politics (see Table 4.4 for an overview of the list of numbers of interviews conducted in this study). Researcher interviewed twenty-three (23) women legislators and five (5) men legislators in two phases (see Table 4.4 and Appendix 4.1 for detailed list of interviewees).

45Such as Democracy Watch, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Khan Foundation and NariPragatiSangstha.
46USAID, UNDP, UN Women and The Asia Foundation
Table 4.4: Numbers of Interviews Conducted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women legislators in the 9th parliament (including present Speaker, present, and ex-minister)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men legislators in the 9th parliament</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Rights Organizations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor and Development Organizations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

This dissertation used several purposive sampling strategies in order to select several interviewers to increase heterogeneity in the sample. The purposive sampling strategy was supplemented by the snowball sampling strategy in order to get access to the key informants. Different purposive sampling strategies were used to select different key informants. For example, the strategies of selecting men and women legislators were different than that of selecting other key informants from civil society organisations, donor agencies and academics.

With regards to selecting men and women legislators, purposive sampling strategies followed two conditions—analytical and positional conditions. The analytical condition represents different individual, political and institutional factors which may influence substantive representation of women, as identified in the analytical framework. The analytical condition for the selection of interviewees followed two major criteria. These were: (a) legislators’ demographical characteristics (including educational and professional background, early political experience), and (b) their pathways to parliament, their recruitment, i.e., selected vs. elected.

Legislators’ positional power (mostly institutional) refers to their position as executives or their membership in the standing committee (in this case, the standing committee on women and children issues). A majority of the interviewees held a range of top and mid-ranking positions. These positions included the Speaker of the house, Ministers, and ex-Ministers, the general secretary of the party, the chair of the standing committee, and the director of the department of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. They remained critical informants in this study. These combinations of sampling strategies for selecting interview participants were significant as they offered insights to develop one of the claims made in this study; such as, women’s ability to achieve active participation on women issues does not necessarily depend on their presence but on other contextual factors, such as social and political conditions, and institutional aspects.
In addition, a third strategy was used in selecting only women legislators, which was based on their activeness on the floor, meaning participation in the national debates, initiation of an urgent issues discussion, or launching any motion relevant for women. This third aspect helped identifying the participants whose opinion matters in understanding factors constraining or facilitating women’s active participation. All these key informants provided a more realistic account of the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation and contributed to the breadth of the findings in the study.

Apart from interviewing legislators, this dissertation included interviewees who might not have had influence over political outcomes, such as the key informants (legislators and executives) in this study. Nevertheless, they are considered valuable for this study because of their experiences while working with the key informants. Following Meuser and Nagel’s (2009) explanation of expert knowledge as explicit knowledge, this dissertation selected personnel from the civil society organisations, donor agencies and academics those who have explicitly or implicitly worked with legislators. Their expert knowledge on the topic justifies their selection under the category of experts’ interview (Meuser and Nagel 2009; Littig 2008; 2009). This dissertation interviewed senior officials from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs; and members from donor agencies, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), National Democratic Institute (NDI) and The Asia Foundation (TAF). Other interviewees were the senior executives and activists from the CSOs, who were positioned in the decision-making levels of their organisations and worked together with the Government of Bangladesh in the field of women in politics. Some of these organisations were: Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangsha (BNPS), Khan Foundation, and Democracy Watch. Purposive sampling strategy was employed with regards to their involvement either in the process of policy formulation for the Domestic Violence Prevention act, or their direct involvement with different projects designed to build capacities of women legislators. The expertise of academics working in the field of women’s political empowerment was also considered valuable for the subject matter of this study. By using the criteria of working experiences in the field of gender and politics, respondents within the academia were also selected purposively.

In the practice of locating potential interviewees, this study also used a snowball sampling strategy along with the purposive strategy to proceed with in-depth interviews, where one interview partner
was asked to recommend other potential interviewees (Babbie, 2010; Beamer, 2002; Gobo, 2004). Initially, a small group of resource persons were identified (following all the mentioned criteria) and approached. Some of those initial respondents became the key contacts, suggesting names for further interviewees. The preliminary key informants were the personnel in high positions in their respective professional settings. With regards to the process of additional recruitment from those key informants, the primary contacts were asked question like “who else should I talk to about this” and “who else would you say are the main policy experts in this field” (Beamer, 2002).

The interview questions and guide were developed over the course of the first and second phases of fieldwork (see Table 4.1), and drawn upon the analytical assumption, presented in Chapter 2. All the questions were guided by the analytical framework and aimed at acquiring insights under two thematic areas of micro and macro levels of factors (discussed in Chapter 2). By using the language of Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization framework applied in the study, ten sets of questions were formulated to capture the key informants’ self-perceptions and gather their experiences, which would shed light on their ability to represent women substantively. Simultaneously, the semi-structured interview guideline (with open-ended questions) was helpful in offering flexibility, opening new topics, or allowing additional questions to emerge from the conversation, and added value to understanding the subject matter.

The semi-structured interview form was chosen to ensure that a fair list of themes and questions were covered during the interview and the interview topic guide was modified based on the experience from the pilot phase (first phase of the investigation). Interview guides with open-ended questions were chosen to generate narration of the subject that allowed the researcher to understand the context, positions, practices, and perceptions of the interviewee (Meuser and Nagel, 2009). The interview guidelines were also designed based on the professional affiliation of the interviewees (i.e., guidelines for legislators and experts were different). The check-list contained both generic, open-ended questions and also actor and context-specific queries for the concerned experts (Dexter, 1970).

47 Semi-structured interviews were used in order to achieve ‘access to interviewees’ ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words, rather than in the words of the researchers (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003, p 74; 2004).
48 Open ended question allowed interviewer to develop a guided conversation, according to the interest and wishes of the interviewee (Walsh, 2001).
49 Dexter (1970) suggests that the research must follow certain strategies: (a) to be informed about the engagement of the interviewee with the relevant situation, (b) review necessary information to arrive a provisional analysis about his/her role in the process, and finally, (c) produce a tailor-made interview guide on the basis of this prior analysis.
researcher studied the background and context of the respective respondents before conducting the interviews. This contributed to enriching the interview guide and the overall data collection process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.5: Interview Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key sets Questions in Interview Guide for Legislators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Biographical information: Education, politics, family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Background story: Involvement in the politics and the journey to parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Experience within the parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Representation within parliament: issue selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The enactment of legislative outcome: Domestic violence act 2010 and the discussion on women’s property rights issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Women MPs experience at the constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Their position within their political parties: Their relationship with the party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relationship with external actors or civil society organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What motivates them in case they are discussing women issues in the parliament?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What de-motivates them in case they are not discussing women issues in the parliament?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

The first and second sets of questions were aimed to acquire insights into the contextual and individual dimensions, which covered the micro level factors of the legislators (see Appendix-4.2 for the complete questionnaire). The third set of questions looked for insights on legislators’ experiences within the parliament (as an institution) with regards to their gendered experiences. This was aimed specifically to capture how men and women legislators associate with each other, i.e., their between gender and between elected/selected status, and their role within the standing committees. This set of questions focused on the influence of the institution which may have effect their responses to women issues.

The fourth set of questions was aimed at gathering insights from the legislators’ levels of participation in the legislative activities at the floor of parliament, their preferences when it came to issue selection, and their experiences during their tenure in office. This set of questions sought to distinguish those who represent women issues on the floor and who do not.

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50 A detailed interview guideline is included in Appendix 4.2.
The fifth set of questions looked into a specific policy issue, i.e., the Domestic Violence Act 2010, and legislators’ engagement in the entire process of policy making as well as their role conception (on the floor of the parliament and within the standing committee). These questions were also asked in order to reveal the broader contextual and political context (i.e., macro) within which the policy enactment took place. In general, these questions aimed at acquiring insights into the question: whether women legislators were involved in the policy process, if yes, then how relevant was their role in the face of other contextual and political realities?

The sixth set of questions aimed to acquire insights into their experiences at the constituency, their understanding of working with the people, and the challenges they faced while working as a woman. The purpose of asking these questions was to know their personal and professional experiences in representing women. The seventh and eight sets of the questions looked at the representatives’ relationships with their respective political parties and with civil society organisations. The purpose was to learn about the position they hold within the party and the relationship they have with other male and female members of the party, as well as the experiences they have gathered while working with civil society organisations. These sets of questions covered both the institutional and non-institutional aspects of the study.

The last two sets (ninth and tenth) of questions were aimed at gathering insights on the perception and motivation/demotivation of interviewees when it comes to their participation on issues pertinent to women. Questions mostly addressed the reasons for the interviewees’ active or non-active participation in the parliament. This provided a greater variety of answers to be gathered, ranging from the micro to the macro levels of factor, and illuminating their personal opinion with regards to the facilitating and constraining factors in the process of their representation on women issues.

The questions did not follow the order outlined in the interview guideline strictly but were rather shuffled to ensure a natural flow of the conversation. The researcher observed the guidelines, suggested by Harvey (2010), while preparing to carry out the interview: “Providing flexibility when…. conducting interviews…ensuring transparency when communicating with politicians, experts…. maintaining good etiquette with all participants to ensure the highest professional standard” (2010, p 1). In addition to these three elements (flexibility, transparency, good etiquette), the researcher had
invested significant time in building trust and credibility by spending a lot of time talking to the interviewees. The conversation with the interviewee was structured by what the interviewee perceived as relevant and important, with the objective of learning the interviewees’ point of view on the subject matter (Bryman, 2008). The questions largely cover ‘what,’ ‘how’, and ‘why’ in addition to a few ‘when’ and ‘who’ formats in extracting the information. Any direct questions that would produce answers in strictly affirmative or negative form were avoided. Questions with ‘what’ were constructed to identify the positions of the actors in the subject matter of the study and the nature of his/her involvement in the particular institution.

For example, interviewees were asked to provide a detailed narrative of what they (and others from the same or different institutions) have been doing to represent women within their capacities. Such questions helped to determine the position of interviewees, and also offered information on other co-actors’ action embedded in the process. Furthermore, how and why questions revealed the complexity of decision-making and the influence of micro and macro factors on this complex process. For example, interviewees were asked some common questions regarding their participation in a particular policy outcome (i.e., Domestic Violence Act 2010). In particular, they were asked about the factors they perceived as constraints or facilitators within that process.

Request for the appointment for interviews was made by direct phone calls, which needed to be followed up further by two or three more personal requests/reminder phone calls. The communication and scheduling of the interviews took up a significant portion of the time from the allotted research stay in Dhaka. Furthermore, attention was given to demonstrating how valuable interviewees’ inputs are in understanding the subject matter. The guideline for expert interviews was adjusted as required, however, it repeated a major set of key questions for all respondents.

A total of 41 semi-structured interviews were conducted and 30 out of 41 interviews were recorded. Most of the interviews were conducted in Dhaka, mostly at key informants’ residences or offices. The interviews with the legislators were conducted either in the premises of the parliament in Dhaka, in their personal offices, or in their residence. Interviews with key informants from CSOs, donor agencies and academics were conducted in their office premises. All interviews were designed for an hour, but some lasted for more than two hours, while others lasted only half an hour. The shortest one was a 30-minute interview and the longest one lasted for four hours (with a woman legislator). A strict
confidentiality was maintained on the identity of the interviewees and verbal consent was taken with the respective persons before conducting interviews. Thus, all interviewees were offered anonymity in this study.

4.5.2.4. Profile of Women Legislators

This study collected a detailed profile of the women MPs with their demographical information. The profiles incorporate information such as their socio-demographics, political features, their political and social connections, their affiliations with various committees, individual pathways to politics, and their ages. Twenty-three (23) women legislators qualified for the profiling study (Table 4.6 provides an example of the profile).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Edu.</th>
<th>Prof.</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Elected/Selected</th>
<th>Committee membership</th>
<th>Position in Party</th>
<th>Enter into Parliament</th>
<th>Other history</th>
<th>Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“X”</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Niece of PM</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>Sports Library</td>
<td>District committee member</td>
<td>Mentored by PM</td>
<td>Started working with PM during the 1999 flood at her home district area.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

Personal biographical data of women legislators were collected from various sources. One significant source was ‘Bio-data book’, containing demographic information of legislators from the 9th parliament, which was prepared by the parliament secretariat. The second source of data was the ‘Member Directory of Ninth Parliament of Bangladesh’, a database book compiled by the Asia Foundation. Both the sources were helpful in generating some basic information (i.e., the legislators’ political and educational background, age, party membership, social involvement, affiliation with different committees and recruitment criteria [selection/election]). Moreover, additional information, i.e., entry into politics, information on the women legislators’ husbands or fathers information, position in political party, were collected while interviewing key informants. The information generated from the profiles complemented the findings from other sources.
4.5.2.5. Reflection during Data Collection

4.5.2.5.1. Access to Field: Getting Permission from the Parliament

It was not an easy task to get access to the information on the parliamentary proceedings. There were no online documents or soft copies of the proceedings available to the public. The hard copies of parliamentary debates are usually kept in the parliament library and can only be accessed with the permission from the Speaker. In addition, a researcher working on the parliament premises requires a formal permission (locally named as the entry pass) either from the legislators or the staff working at an official level in the parliament. In this case, getting a gatekeeper or getting a hold of the officials for a pass was the only way to get physical access to the parliament library. Therefore, the researcher of this study needed to be flexible and ready to commute to the parliament at any time during office hours, whenever summoned. Another challenge was to manage access to documents from the parliamentary library which required a separate application process with valid documents declaring, among others, the purpose for the study. The authorities also conducted background check of the researcher to allow him/her access to the documents. The entire process of getting permission took nearly two weeks and it continued in the form of regular follow ups with the responsible officials. The Bremen IDEA scholarship supported the first research stay in Bangladesh, which allowed the researcher to stay in Bangladesh for three months. This time was invested primarily in collecting all the primary documents, building rapport for interviews, and carrying out some pilot interviews.

4.5.2.5.2. Access to Parliament Library and other Resources

Desk research at the parliament library constituted a particular challenge. Initially, the researcher planned to focus on the plenary session of the 9th parliament. Two factors – a large volume of hard copies and the lack of an online version of the documents – made it impossible to cover all of this within the available period. With the suggestion of the research officers and guidance of the research advisor, the researcher decided to concentrate on the four legislative activities (mentioned in Section 4.5.2.1). While it took three weeks before the researcher was able to ensure access to the Parliament and then the library, the next issue was connected to hiring research assistants. The researcher had to make another quick decision on whether or not to seek such assistance to expedite data collection process within next two months. Finally, a research assistant was hired for a month. It is noteworthy to say that each type of book on parliamentary proceedings provided information about all legislative activities, which further slowed down the process of data collection as well. For example, the debate books consisted only of parliamentary question sessions and comprised of a total of 23 volumes,
where each volume contained about 2000 of pages. Given the above mentioned logistical and time constraints, the researcher decided only to take note of the frequencies at which different kind of issues were raised in parliamentary question and answer (Q&A) sessions by men and women legislators (see Table 4.1 for the phases of research and lists of data again). In addition, data collection at this phase revealed that records were missing for two sessions in the hard binding copy (discussed in the empirical Chapter 5). However, the researcher managed to take note of the detailed content of women’s issues in the summary book (comprised of 19 volumes) and the Bulletins (comprised of 19 volumes), which covered detailed information under three legislative activities.

4.5.2.5.3. Access to Legislators: Getting in Touch, Scheduling, and Rescheduling Appointment

Access to legislators was anticipated to be a difficult task. As stated by Barker (2011), getting a hold of high-ranking elites presented difficulties, and the researcher had a hard time getting appointments with the legislators, some of whom were ministers, ex-ministers, and the current Speaker of the house. Legislators commonly travel all over the country, more specifically to their constituency, at least once in a week and sometimes for more than that time period. The researcher made phone calls to the respective legislators’ assistants to make an initial contact and fix an appointment. There was no publicly available contact directory with a direct number of the legislators, hence, getting contact details of the legislators were a big challenge. In this case, the strategy of combining a written and oral request was not effective. Most legislators interviewed were not communicative via email. Therefore, an email request was a redundant avenue of communication. Because of the researcher’s previous professional experience with the legislators, she possessed some initial contacts which were helpful as a starting point. On average, the researcher had to make between 7 and 8 calls before being able to secure an interview. In addition, there was always a high chance of cancellation and rescheduling of the appointment on the same day or the day before, to accommodate changes in interviewees’ extremely busy schedules. For example, in one case, the researcher was given an appointment to interview the then Minister of Women and Children Affairs and the interview was scheduled at 9pm at her residence. After waiting at her residence for more than an hour, the researcher was informed that the minister had left her house to attend a television interview. In another case, the personal assistant of another legislator scheduled an appointment for an interview during the same time when the legislator usually meets her constituents at her residence. The researcher had to wait more than four hours in the crowd along with the other visitors. However, the observations gained while sitting
at her office, particularly her interaction with the people, allowed the researcher to cross-check interview statements and validate the credibility of the findings.

In most of the cases, postponement of the appointment and re-scheduling the appointments was a challenge for the researcher, which had implications for the process of data collection. The entire process of getting a hold of the legislators on the phone and then scheduling an appointment were depended on the availability and wish of the legislators, while the researcher had little control over it. This increased possibility of a clash between two appointments. The researcher had to make quick decisions in such situations by selecting one interviewee over the other. Moreover, it is also important to mention that getting an appointment with legislators largely depended on their impression of the researcher during the first conversation.

As mentioned, most of the interviews were recorded. However, in some cases, the interviewee requested that the researcher pauses the recording as s/he wanted to share something off the record, usually on a sensitive topic. However, the researcher was allowed to take notes of those parts and she promised to maintain the anonymity of the informant. The assurance of overall anonymity had encouraged the interviewees to open and keep talking about their own personal, institutional, and political experiences.

The place in which the interview was conducted played an important role, as it either allowed or prevented an uninterrupted interaction. Interviews with legislators and executives which took place at their respective residence were longer than those held in their offices, especially when they were in the middle of their usual work hours. A typical interview with representatives conducted in the office lasted around 45 to 60 minutes, while the longest was about 4 hours (and included having lunch together). It is noteworthy that most of the legislators were skilled speakers. However, it remained a challenge for the researcher to break up the superficial information or discussions (e.g., in most cases, before going to the real discussion, the legislators preferred to give a political speech or liked to provide some additional information), and get to the important information relevant for the objective of the study. The researcher played a role of the moderator to streamline the discussion along the focus of the study. This was also the reason that some of the interviews continued longer than expected.
Despite time constraints for the interviewees in some cases, the researcher made sure to touch upon most of the questions from the interview guide. In one specific case, the researcher had to cut down the interview guideline while having an interview with the Speaker of the house. To compensate for the missing information, the researcher rather emphasised some specific aspects where this particular interviewee could contribute above and beyond, compared to other respondents. For example, it was well known that the sitting Speaker of the house in 2013 was involved in the process of the Domestic Violence Act when she was the minister of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in 2009. In an interview with her, the researcher gave emphasis on questions regarding the process of the enactment of the Domestic Violence act and operational aspects of the parliament as an institution. The researcher made this decision emphasising the specific expertise of the respondent and in recognition of the unique value of her opinion on these aspects.

Most of the interviews with legislators and other key informants were conducted in Dhaka. The interviews with legislators were conducted either at their offices in the parliament or at their residence in Dhaka. Interviews with academics and representatives from CSOs or donor agencies were taking place either at their office premises or at a café. As it is mentioned, all interviewees were offered anonymity during the interview and in the subsequent treatment of the data. Since both the interviews and the researcher, herself are native Bengali speakers, the interviews were conducted in Bengali, transcribed in Bengali, and analysed with a coding scheme. 30 out of 41 interviews were recorded and interviewed in the local language (Bengali). 30 of those interviews were transcribed by the researchers in Bengali and also analysed in Bengali. Relevant parts were translated by the author into English in order to use quotes in this English-language dissertation. The researcher did not translate the full transcription of the interview to keep much of the original meaning of the interview intact.

4.6. Data Analysis

Given the fact that this dissertation is based on the inferences on a variety of data sources, which require different kinds of analysis, each type of data is handled with an appropriate, separate analysis technique. Qualitative content analysis with a coding frame is used for analysing the primary documents (i.e., parliamentary proceedings, standing committee meeting). Descriptive statistics such as simple frequency and inference analysis were used to examine the extent to which legislators represent women issue on the floor of the parliament. Process tracing has also been employed for analysing the case of the ‘Domestic Violence Act 2010’ by using data from the interviews, standing
committee reports and parliamentary debates. The purpose was to identify the contribution of women legislators in the policy process. With regards to the interview data, qualitative content analysis with a different coding frame (other than the coding frame for analysing parliamentary proceedings) was used in the analysis.

Qualitative content analysis (QCA), a recognised form of qualitative text analysis, was employed to systematically describe the primary data (i.e., parliamentary proceedings and standing committee meeting minutes). A coding frame for legislative activities was developed to analyse the parliamentary proceedings, which is aimed at investigating the legislative activities of legislators within the parliament. Both the concept-driven and data-driven strategies were used to develop the coding frame, which followed two steps. During the first phase of the development, the coding frame followed a concept-driven strategy based on the operationalisation of the measurement criteria of women issues (see section 4.3.2 in this chapter) and was drawn from the general condition of women in Bangladesh (presented in Chapter 3). While the first phase took place before going to the field investigation, the second phase took place during the field investigation employing a data driven strategy to include more aspects and examples under each categorization of issues as they emerged from the data set. The coding frame was finalised while going through the data. The data-driven strategy was employed to include more variables and aspects of the phenomenon in an inductive way. Thus, the frame experiences data generated additional themes, which were not anticipated before (Table 4.7 provides examples of themes).

With regards to the first phase, the coding frame resulted in a list of categories and sub-categories of issues legislators were predicted to rise in the parliament. Therefore, the main categories refer to legislative intervention on specific interest issues that take place in the parliament by both men and women. Such interventions were categorised into women issues (that have direct impact over women’s lives and wellbeing) and general issues (that have no direct impact over women). Women issues are categorised into strategic and practical women issues that are classified into different themes (Table 4.7 provides an overview of the coding frame that includes main category and sub-categories).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Category</th>
<th>Sub-categories</th>
<th>Sub-sub categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4.7: Coding Example for Aspects of Legislative activities
| A. Women's Concern Issues | 1.1. Strategic Needs | 1.1.1. Violence Against Women and Girl (VAWG) | 1.1.1.1 Women Migrants Workers  
1.1.1.2. Acid based violence  
1.1.1.3. Fatwas based violence  
1.1.1.4. Trafficking  
1.1.1.5. Dowry based violence  
1.1.1.6. Child Marriage  
1.1.1.7. Tribunal for VAW case  
1.1.1.8. Public awareness against Dowry  
1.1.1.9. Public Awareness against VAW  
1.1.1.10. Domestic Violence  
1.1.1.11. Political Violence  
1.1.1.12. Reporting of violence incident  
1.1.2. Civil and political rights (CPR)  
1.1.2.1. Women’s Development Policies  
1.1.2.2. Rights of Migrants Workers  
1.1.2.3. Rights of workers  
1.1.2.4. Rights of women’s association  
1.1.2.5. Rights of equal payment  
1.1.2.6. Position in public office  
1.1.2.7. Women in politics  
1.1.2.8. Safety of children of women prisoners and sex workers  
1.1.2.9. Maternal Leave  
1.1.2.10. Women’s development bank  
1.1.2.11. Access to justice  
1.1.3. Economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR)  
1.1.3.1. Women’s property rights  
1.1.3.2. Acknowledge of unpaid labour  
1.1.3.3. Respect to house help  
1.1.3.4. Use of mother’s name  
1.1.3.5. Women’s role in language movement  
1.1.3.6. Social recognition of ‘Birangona’  
1.2. Practical Needs  
1.2.1. Financial support  
1.2.2. Technical support  
1.2.3. Education and training  
1.2.4. Health sector  
1.2.5. Housing facilities  
1.2.6. Social support  
| B. General Issues | Issues other than women’s concern |

Source: Researcher’s own table

The analysis based on these categories captured whether MPs express general sensitivity/feelings or comments in support of certain concerns of everyday life, and whether they were willing to talk about policy change in regard to those concerns as part of MPs legislative activities. These categories were used regardless of the gender identity of MPs. The main category refers to descriptions of certain activities undertaken in the parliamentary discussion—activities such as introducing bills, bringing legislative debates and raising any urgent needs for particular groups, pointing out specific public
interest issues and asking questions to executives. The following paragraphs discussed the structure of the coding frame and its application with relevant examples.

A. Women’s Concern Issues: This category refers to issues that are of presumed importance to women’s life in both public and private spheres, and which have a direct or indirect impact on their living condition and wellbeing such as sex discrimination, domestic violence, empowerment, etc. This category will also include women’s traditional areas of concern including child care, education, health, and poverty. In the context of Bangladesh, issue related to labour migration, trafficking, garments workers, providing treatment to burned patients and providing facilities to tea garden workers will be coded as women interest issues. Depending on the needs of various categories of women on account of particularities of their social positioning and chosen identities, this category is to be divided further into subcategories and coded accordingly.

1. Strategic needs (SN): This subcategory was invoked in coding if a statement refers to certain conditions, policies and issues related to overcoming women’s inequalities and subordination in all spheres of life, while urging for policy changes. This category also applies if MPs raised concerns regarding challenges inherent in removing women’s subordination from all spheres of public and private life.

1.1. Violence against women and girl (VAWG): This category applies if a statement of an MP shows that they are sensitive to, or concerned about, different kinds of violence committed against women and girls. This subcategory defines violence against women and girls as “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (General Assembly Resolution 48/104 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993). In the context of Bangladesh, the issue like child marriage is identified as an act that results in physical, mental and sexual harm to a girl will be considered under this subcategory. It is also to be used if an MP shares a story of violence against women of the type mentioned above. Eleven specific themes are distinguished further, presented below:

1.1.1. Violence against Women Migrants Workers

This theme is invoked when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about violence committed against Bangladeshi women workers working outside of the country.
Example: ‘legal steps to stop violence women migrants’ workers at the destination’.

1.1.2. Acid based violence

This theme is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives on acid-based violence committed against women.

Example: ‘Effective rules of laws to stop acid based violence; Implementation of the existing laws.’

1.1.3. Fatwas based violence

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about any kind of violence committed against women due to ‘Fatwas’ issued by the religious leaders, and seek legal steps to stop such violence.

Example: ‘Abuse through the traditional justice system such as salish system.’

1.1.4. Trafficking

This theme is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the victims of trafficking, and seek legal steps to stop trafficking.

Example: ‘Taking steps to stop human trafficking for sex industry.’

1.1.5. Dowry based violence

This theme is invoked when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the occurrence of dowry-based violence, and seek legal steps to stop dowry based violence.

Example: ‘Implementation of Dowry Prohibition laws.’

1.1.6. Child Marriage

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the occurrence of abusive child marriages, and call for policy initiatives to stop child marriage.

Example: ‘Promulgation and Enforcement of Laws against child marriage.’

1.1.7. Tribunal for VAW case

This theme is used when legislators talk about the function of law and order in the prevention and response to overall violence against women, and call for the creation of special tribunals to facilitate quick justice for the reported cases of all kinds of violence against women.

Example: ‘Special tribunal to ensure quick justice for women victim of violence.’

1.1.8. Public awareness against VAW

This theme is coded for when legislators put emphasis on building social and public awareness against any kind of violence committed against women due to dowry-concerns.

Example: ‘Social awareness to stop violence against women.’
1.1.9. Domestic Violence

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the violence against women by their intimate partners and legal steps to stop such violence.
Example: ‘One stop crisis center for victims of domestic violence.’

1.1.10. Political Violence

This theme is invoked when legislators report or express concerns about any act of violence against women in the political sphere.
Example: ‘Physical assault against women in a political demonstration.’

1.1.11. Reporting of violence incident

This theme is coded for when legislators report/talk about any current events in violence against women.
Example: ‘Victim of Rape or victim of gang rape’; ‘Abuse or harass in school or on their way to school.’

1.2. Civil and Political Rights (CPR): This category applies if the legislators are sensitive of and advocating for a change in the civil and political rights of women, addressing the challenges or pointing out the causes any kind of violation to those rights. This sub-subcategory applies to the issues including: ensuring of women’s and girls’ physical and mental integrity, life and safety; promoting measures for protection from discrimination including the right to a fair trial; ensuring women and girls receive all due process; ensuring they are able to exercise their right to seek redress or a legal remedy; and providing women and girls rights of participation in civil society and politics such as freedom of association, the right to assemble, the right to petition, the right of self-defence, and the right to political participation. This category also applies if a statement made by a legislator refers to general concerns about the issues relevant for women’s civil and political subordination, or refers to the causes of the violation, or measures of ensuring civil and political rights of women at all spheres of public and private life. 11 specific themes are further distinguished further here.

1.2.1. Women’s Development Policies

This theme is invoked when the legislator discusses the adoption of women’s development policies to ensure women’s empowerment.
Example: ‘Enactment of women development policy based on the 1997 policy.’
1.2.2. Rights of Migrants Workers

This theme is coded for when legislators raise concerns and question executives about safety, security and rights of women migrant workers abroad.

Example: ‘Ensuring safety and security of female migrants in middle east Provide support to Migrants workers.’

1.2.3. Rights of Workers (including tea garden workers, garments workers)

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the rights of women working in different sectors of the economy, such as garments, tea gardens, rice farms, and in other small-scale industries.

Example: ‘Improved livings of garments worker; Safety and security of garments worker’; ‘Improved facilities to tea garden labour communities.’

1.2.4. Rights of Women’s Association

This theme is used when legislators talk about women’s rights associations, their structural development, and their needs, such as facilities.

Example: ‘Provide technical and human support to grassroots women organization.’

1.2.5. Rights of Equal Payment

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about equal payment structures for both male and female employees working in different fields.

Example: ‘Equal pay to women workers or removal of discrimination in payment’, ‘Ensure payment structure for low skilled women workers.’

1.2.6. Positions in Public Office

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about women’s access to public office, and the removal of institutional barriers in the recruitment process.

Example: ‘Ensuring women’s access to employment’; ‘Incorporation of women in security sector i.e. Police and Army.’

1.2.7. Women in Politics

This theme is to be coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about ensuring women’s equal participation in politics, removal of institutional barriers in party politics, and improving mechanisms for legislative quota policies.

Example: ‘Ensuring political equality; direct election policy for the quota women.’

1.2.8. Safety of Children of Women Prisoners and Sex Workers
This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the urgency of ensuring protection to children of sex workers and female prisoners.
Example: ‘Safe home for children’s’ of women in the jail’; ‘Ensuring safety and security for children of sex workers.’

1.2.9. Maternal Leave
This theme is invoked when legislators raise concerns about the tenure of the maternal leave for women.
Example: ‘6 months’ maternity leave for community health service providers.’

1.2.10. Women’s Development Bank
This theme is used when legislators introduce a proposal for the establishment of banks dedicated to helping women in rural areas increase their economic independency.
Example: ‘Establishing of women’s development bank to ensure women’s economic empowerment’

1.2.11. Access to Justice
This theme is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about ensuring women’s access to justice, and removing of all kinds of systematic constraints from the justice system.
Example: ‘Women’s access to justice or legal system.’

1.3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)
This sub-subcategory applies if a MP speaks up about the need for sensitivity towards women’s needs, or if they advocate for change, address the challenges or point out the causes any kind of violation to women’s economic, social and political rights. This subcategory includes issues like women’s economic independence, reduction of poverty, their right to an adequate standard of living, and the right to culture. In the context of Bangladesh, women’s roles and status are marked by duties as homemakers, and more specifically as mothers. These stereotypes place women at a disadvantage and prevent women from fully enjoying their rights to, among others, health and education. Therefore, if MPs show concerns about the social and cultural construction of gender, this subcategory would apply. Likewise, if MPs urge other to respect, protect and fulfil the economic, social and cultural rights of women and girls, or are expected to take "progressive action" towards their fulfilment, this will be coded for under this subcategory. This subcategory also applies if MPs’ are raising issues relevant for women’s economic, social
and cultural subordination in all spheres of public and private life. Six specific themes are distinguished further.

1.3.1. Women’s Property Rights

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about women’s rights in equal sharing of property.

Example: ‘Women’s equal access to land and other property rights.’

1.3.2. Acknowledge of Unpaid Labour

This theme is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about women’s contribution in the household activities and other nonpaid social activities, or ask for such work to be acknowledged.

Example: ‘Recognition of household work’.

1.3.3. Respect to House Help

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about different incidents of violence against women who work as house help (housekeepers and cook) and urge others to show respect for these women.

Example: ‘Showing respect and provide good treatment towards the house help.’

1.3.4. Use of Mother’s Name

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about adding the mother’s surname along with father’s name in the official documents.

Example: ‘Use of mother name along with father’s in important public documentation.’

1.3.5. Women’s Role in Language Movement

This theme is invoked when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about women’s involvement in the 1952 language movement, and urge for acknowledging their sacrifices for the Bengali language.

Example: ‘Recognition of women’s involvement in language movement.’

1.3.6. Social Recognition of ‘Birangona’\(^{51}\)

This theme is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about the violence (mainly, rape) committed against women during the War of Independence by the Pakistani military regime, and urge others to show them respect for their sacrifices and provide social acceptance.

\(^{51}\)This name was given to victims of the 1971 war of independence by the state.
Example: ‘Violence during liberation war’; ‘Provide respect and recognition to rape victim during War of Liberation.’

2. Practical Needs (PN): The practical needs are formulated from the concrete conditions’ women experience within a specific context. In other words, they are derived from the women’s basic survival needs. Practical needs are, therefore, usually a response to an immediate perceived necessity which is identified by women within a specific context. They do not necessarily question the structure for their subordination (Moser, 1989). In the context of Bangladesh, this subcategory will include issues which refer to women’s traditional areas of concern including child care, education, health services, poverty and etc. This to be coded for if the MP demonstrates sensitivity towards the policies and issues related to fulfilling the basic needs (education, health, food, shelter/accommodation, income) of women, rather than question the gendered structure of society. This category also applies if MPs raise concerns regarding the women face in all spheres of public and private life when attempting to achieve the aforementioned basic survival requirements. Six specific sub-subcategories are distinguished further and presented below.

2.1. Financial Support
This sub-subcategory is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about any sort of financial scheme for providing financial support to women in need.
Example: ‘Access to credit to poor, old, window, divorced women.’

2.2. Technical Support
This sub-sub category is invoked when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about any sort of technical support schemes for women.
Example: ‘Technical support for income generating activities’; ‘Establishment of small-scale business for women.’

2.3. Education and Training
This sub-sub category is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about an immediate need for improving women’s level of education and investing in women’s skill development.
Example: ‘Establishment of schools and colleges for girls’; ‘Scholarship for married women students; Vocational training for low skilled women workers.’

2.4. Health Sector
This sub-sub category is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about an immediate need to ensure treatment and improve health service for women. Example: ‘Community health service for women or pregnant women; Treatment for Acid burning.’

2.5. Housing Facilities

This sub-sub category is coded for when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about an immediate need to provide shelter for homeless women and women in distress. Example: ‘Rehabilitation of poor women in Aila affected areas’; ‘Safe home for girls without parents (died).’

2.6. Social Support

This sub-sub category is used when legislators raise concerns, discuss, or question executives about any sort of social scheme meant to improve women’s living conditions. Example: ‘Infrastructural support for women at the public places, such as women’s toilet facilities at public places’; ‘Facilities to migrant workers at the country of origin and destination.’

B. General Concerns Issues:

This category will be coded for when legislators bring up issues and policies which are not directly related to women or girls’ lives in either the public and private spheres. Example: ‘Infrastructural development’; ‘Supervise local level developmental projects’; ‘supervision of low and order situation at the local level’; ‘seek clarification on administrative lapses’; ‘demand remedial actions.’

By using the coding frame, researcher analysed a total of 21,000 thousand pages of parliamentary debates (a combination of hard copies and soft copies) and standing committee meeting reports (hardcopies only). Moreover, the researcher did not use any software to analyse the data. This study found qualitative content analysis as a method of analysing such large documents appropriate as it allowed limiting the analysis to those aspects that are relevant to the research questions, efficiently reducing the materials.

This dissertation used frequencies for all categories of issues mentioned in the coding frame to provide information on the patterns of legislators’ representation on women issues as well as the associated gender variation. Issues raised by legislators were coded as women issues = 1 and general issues = 0. The
frequencies with regards to gender and types of issues (women issues vs. general issues) were used to
get descriptive statistics. The analysis was complemented by the inferential statistical analysis to
compare men vs. women, women issues vs. general issues, and strategic vs. practical issues. A total of
24,442 oral questions to the Prime Minister and executives; 1979 interventions under the motion of
‘short statement on public interest issues (71 A)’; 488 interventions under ‘calling for attention seeking
on public interest (Rule 71)’; and 119 interventions under ‘resolution on urgent public interest’ were
examined to understand the frequency at which legislators were addressing women issues.

Apart from the frequencies of legislators’ intervention, this dissertation also took a more detailed look
at specific aspects of strategic and practical women issues. More detailed data-driven qualitative
content analysis was employed to observe the focal area of legislators deliberation on women issues
and how distinct they are from each other (men vs. women) while representing strategic and practical
issues significant for women. For example, by taking the thematic area ‘violence against women’, the
analysis in this section aimed to reveal the way in which the intervention on this issue (violence against
women) was described by either men or women. In addition, it would help identify the qualitative
difference in their deliberation processes with regards to the nature of their intervention and focal
areas of the proposed solutions. This dissertation finds detailed qualitative content analysis appropriate
for explaining whether legislators have shared a common understanding of women’s strategic and
practical concerns. The discussion has relevance to unravel the different degrees of women’s
substantive representation (discussed in section 4.3.1). This is also another way of looking at the extent
to which women legislators contribute specific strategic and practical answers to issues relevant to
women in Bangladesh. For the purpose of this analysis, this dissertation had taken into consideration
only those interventions which addressed women issues under the three legislative activities (i.e., ‘short
statement on public interest issues (71 A)’; 488 interventions under ‘calling for attention seeking on
public interest (Rule 71)’; and 119 interventions under ‘resolution on urgent public interest’). With the
combination of different methods of document analysis, the researcher aimed to shed light on the
phenomenon that women legislators’ presence is important for women in general, which is one way
of assessing the enactment of substantive representation (Waylen, 2007). These findings are presented
in chapter five of the study.

In order to complement the general way of looking at the substantive representation of women
legislators, this dissertation expects to provide an illustration of how representation of women’s
substantive cause takes place in the parliament by taking a policy case of ‘Domestic Violence and Prevention Act 2010’. This study applied a case centric process tracing approach, which aimed to explain an outcome or a specific event, in this case, the Act (George and Bennett, 2005). Here, the purpose is not to build a generalisable theorised mechanism. Instead, the aim is to craft a sufficient minimal explanation on the particular outcome such as the enactment of the Act (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p11). Thus, the study adopted the form of detailed narratives—the story presented in the form of identifying the causal mechanism between an independent variable (in this case role of women legislators and other associated contextual factors) with the outcome (enactment of the Act), which can explain how an event came about and under which conditions (George and Bennett, 2005; also see Mahoney, 2010). In order to provide a thick description of the event, the process-tracing approach included parliamentary proceedings (from 2009-2010), standing committee meeting minutes (from 2009-2010) and interviews of the key informants (legislators, government officials and civil society organization) for the purpose of this study.

For the analysis of interviews, this dissertation employed another coding frame and used qualitative content analysis. The entire process of developing the coding frame involved two phases, including a pilot investigation in between the two phases. The first step involved the deductive process (also referred to as concept driven), in which the interview guide was provided. The first version contained the main categories for the coding frame, and was refined later in the second stage by empirical materials (Kuckartz, 2014). In the ‘concept-driven’ strategy, two levels of factors—micro level (individual dimension, pathways to parliament) and macro level (instituional aspects, external actors, and political context) were introduced into the analytical framework (presented in Chapter 2), and were used for identifying themes. The themes included the legislators’ profession; their involvement with politics; their path to the parliament; their experiences in the parliament; selection of issues in the parliament; patterns of legislators activities on women issues; motivation of talking/ not talking on women issues; aspects of the electoral system; legislators experiences at the constituency; experience with the political party; relation with external actors. In addition, themes like adaptation of domestic violence act and property rights issues were included in the coding frame to complement the analysis of women’s involvement in the process of enactment of substantive representation of women (these findings are presented in Chapter 6). Each theme of the coding frame was given a definition, which is presented in the table 4.8. The definition of each theme was given to recognise instances of the
categories and sub-categories from the data and to assign specific segments of the interview script under the appropriate categories (Shreier, 2012).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>The professional affiliation of women legislators, outside of to their affiliation with politics. The categorisation of professions is exclusively done based on their answer to a question of professional affiliation and entirely followed their preference of introducing themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Involvement with Politics</td>
<td>This refers to the legislators’ patterns of involvement with politics in general. This covers aspects before their entry to parliament, and most specifically covers their journey to politics and their early interest in politics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Path to Parliament</td>
<td>This talks about their journey from being interested in politics to getting into the public office. It also included a discussion of different mediums which helped them to make that happen. More importantly, it refers path that were helpful for them to entering into the public office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experiences in Parliament</td>
<td>It refers to different experiences women legislators that they usually have within the parliament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Issue Selection and Participation on the Floor of Parliament</td>
<td>This describes the process of selection and the patterns of issues that legislators are raising on the floor. Also, this further describes the motivation of legislators not raising issues on the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Patterns of Activities of Legislators on Women Issues</td>
<td>This refers to different patterns of legislative intervention on women concern issues which include their participation on the floor, within the parliament and also outside of the parliament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Motivation/not motivated in Talking on Women Issues</td>
<td>This category refers to the legislators’ individual dimension of explanation of their motivation behind talking on women issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Aspects of Electoral Systems</td>
<td>This category refers to individual legislators’ experiences and the challenges they face in relation to the electoral system, more specifically the route they have chosen to take over the public office - through election or selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Experience at the Constituency</td>
<td>This category refers to different types of experiences women legislators gathered from their constituency work and, in particular, in relation with constituents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Experience with Political Party</td>
<td>This category refers to women legislators’ formal affiliation with their respective political parties and their experiences within their political parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Relations with External Factors</td>
<td>This category refers to patterns of women legislators’ involvement with different development organisations and how such relationships helped women legislators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Adaptation of Domestic Violence Act</td>
<td>This category refers to women legislators’ patterns of involvement in the process of enactment of the DV act and their personal experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Involvement in Property Rights Issues</td>
<td>This category refers to women legislators’ patterns of involvement in the process of advocating women’s property rights issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researchers’ own table
A pilot phase in between the first phase and second phase of data analysis complemented the analysis of the interview manuscripts. The initial coding themes (derived from the concepts) were employed to analyse five interviews in a pilot to check the operationalisation of the themes. By applying the themes into the five selected interview scripts, the pilot phase was used to identify the main categories and subcategories of each theme. The following table 4.9 lists a few main categories and sub-categories with regards to each theme and how they came up from the pilot phase. The complete coding frame is presented in Appendix- 4.3. The researcher used this pilot phase to arrive at a set of categories as early as possible in the analysis process. The second phase was used to employ the categories and sub-categories in the empirical materials, and finalise the coding frame based on the data, in this case the interview scripts (Schreier, 2012a; 2012b). The second round of coding included more aspects inductively, while going through the data and generating additional sub-categories that were not anticipated before. At this stage, the categorisation of codes merged into different themes for thematic analysis (Saldafia, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Main Category</th>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
<th>Aspects of Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathways to Parliament</td>
<td>Through Network and Connection with Political Elites</td>
<td>Direct Family Ties</td>
<td>Elected/Selected from husband's Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definition: It refers to different forms of connections or network types, legislators have with political elites- that helped them to enter into parliament.</td>
<td>This refers to direct blood or marriage-based relationship with political elite or elected legislator.</td>
<td>Elected/Selected from Father's Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Mentoring</td>
<td>by direct/extended family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It refers to a process through which women legislators learn how to do politics, prepare themselves for public office and build network with the help of a political elite, with whom legislator has professional or personal connection.</td>
<td>by outside of family members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

While creating and applying the coding frame, the researcher paid attention to the consistency of the coding frame (especially to categories and sub-categories), which is a crucial criteria in qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012a). Apart from ensuring the consistency of the coding frame, the researcher also made sure that the sub-categories within the main categories are mutually exclusive to each other in a way that a given part of the materials can assign to only one sub-category. This was
how the researcher could ensure the quality of overall main categories and sub-categories under each theme.

With regards to both types of primary data (parliamentary proceedings and interviews), this study considered only the relevant part of texts. The relevance or irrelevance of each part of the documents (with regards to parliamentary proceedings and meeting reports) were determined based on the situation where legislators (men and women) referred to a situation or policy issue that directly affect women’s lives. With regards to the interview scripts, researcher determined the relevant parts of the scripts that could connect analytical framework and establish linkages with the research questions.

The researcher transcribed 30 interviews without any help from transcription software, as these were conducted in Bengali. However, a computer-based program MAXQDA was used to apply the initial themes to a limited number of interviews (seven) during the pilot phase, which helped coming up with a set of main categories and sub-categories. Final coding frame was then applied to all interview scripts manually.

4.6.1. Reflection: Authenticity in Data Analysis
The researcher was aware that collecting complementary documents for interpretation of data would enhance the validity of the findings. Second, the researcher was also aware of the fact that she is an ‘insider’ in the sense of knowing the local community, culture, and context. As Herod (1999, p.320) observed, the researcher in this study was in a “privileged position from which to understand process, histories, realities, and events as unfolded”. The familiarity with local knowledge about women and their representation provided an opportunity to secure interviews which would have been inaccessible to an outsider. For example, having a previous connection with some legislators gave some credibility to the researcher, which was invaluable to gain access to legislators. At the same time, the researcher was conscious of the need to ensure neutrality in her views, and to enable gaining specific information. As suggested by Wolf (1992), the researcher had to de-familiarise herself with the cultural understanding by “cultivating an attitude of distance that enables to see the cultural arrangements as worthy of analysis rather than as taken as granted features of social life” (Acker, 2000, p.156). Thus, the researcher took the opportunity by positioning herself as an insider, gaining access to interviewees, using local knowledge, and at the same time, drawing attention to the real life of women legislators without any prejudice.
4.7. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research design and methodological approach used in this dissertation. The beginning of the chapter presented the operational definition and measurement criteria of key concepts of the study. Later, this chapter discussed different sources of data, methods of data collection and different analysis methods employed in this research. This chapter ended with some methodological reflections including the challenges and its consequence in the process of analysis.
Chapter Five: Women’s Presence in Parliament and Substantive Representation:
Evidence from Women MPs contributions on the floor of Parliament

5.1 Introduction
What do legislators do to represent women’s concerns and issues in the Bangladesh Parliament? To what extent can women legislators act for women through their legislative interventions on the floor? What qualitative gender differences exist while articulating women issues and how do such distinctions manifest in parliamentary debates and deliberations? This chapter investigates these related questions, and therefore, begins by examining the legislative intervention of representatives with regards to their selection of issues in general, and more specifically women issues, on the floor of the parliament. The purpose of this investigation is to understand the extent to which the presence of women can ensure substantive representation of women, which is related to the first research question of the dissertation. To reiterate, this dissertation defined substantive representation of women as ‘acting for’ women’s policy issues, specifically those directed towards impacting both private and public spheres of their social life (discussed in detail in Chapter 3). ‘Acting for women’ was operationalised inductively in this study by listing issues of real importance (to women) that brought up by legislators on the floor of the parliament in Bangladesh.

Following the discussion in Chapter 2, the empirical research in Western democracies has confirmed that women legislators express readiness to act for women (Childs, 2001 and 2004) and show greater concerns for women’s interest in comparison to their male colleagues (Bochel and Briggs, 2000; Childs, 2000; Norris, 2000; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003). It was also found that not all women will represent women, while, at the same time, some men represent women too (as discussed in Chapter 2). Most of these studies on women’s representation in parliament focused on advanced democracies. Some significant investigations included Latin America and African state legislators, but little attention was paid to the parliament in the South Asian region. This dissertation aims to fill the gap by bringing the empirical insights from women in Bangladesh’s parliament.

Apart from such empirical expectations, this chapter is designed on two analytical assumptions derived from existing literature, which this dissertation attempts to reproduce in a new empirical setting. The first assumption is based on the expectation that women show greater attention to women’s issues compared to men legislators in the parliament of Bangladesh. The second analytical assumption goes
further. It follows the argument that some men do represent women issues (presented in Chapter 2). The expectation is to demonstrate that SRW is not achieved solely by women, but also by men legislators. Along with such expectation, this chapter is aimed at investigating to what extent men and women act on behalf of women, and what are the kinds of concerns that they bring forward. Following such objective, the conceptualisation of women issues in Chapter 3 included two types of women issues for the purpose of its empirical investigation—strategic and practical. While women’s strategic concerns are aimed at improving gender equality and eradicating all sorts of discrimination, practical women issues are aimed at ensuring immediate basic needs (see section 4.3.2).

The data generated from parliamentary proceedings of the 9th parliament (2008-2013) and interviews with legislators were employed in this chapter. The following analysis used the coding frame developed for legislative activities (see Chapter 4, where the detailed coding frame is presented, which categorised issues raised in the parliament as women issues and general issues). Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the proceedings connected to women issues (see Chapter 4). On this basis of it, the frequencies of legislative interventions (i.e., four legislative activities discussed in Chapter 3) were divided by gender and issues raised (general issues vs. women issues). Inferential statistics were used to analyse variation in gender and issue selection (i.e. general vs. women issues and strategic vs. practical women issues). In addition, data driven qualitative content analysis was also employed to supplement the analysis. It examined different themes of women issues that legislators preferred to raise while engaging on women issues. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, the discussion and analysis in this chapter were also complemented by the data generated from interviews with legislators, which shed light on their preferences (whether they speak up on women issues and what types of women issues) and motivation in addressing women issues on the floor.52

The first section of this chapter examined legislators’ intervention to identify gender variation in issue selection (general issues vs. women issues) under four legislative activities. This would reveal whether or not legislators act for women and gender differences exist in representation. The second section examines the specific range of women issues that women legislators prefer to raise when addressing women’s concerns on the floor of parliament. By further dividing women’s issues into strategic and

52 The interview codes of issue selection and motivated/not motivated were used for the analysis in this chapter (see Appendix-4.3 for the coding frame of the interview).
practical concerns issues, this study investigates what kinds of women issues are represented by men and women legislators which would shed light partially on the second expectation of the chapter. Along with two analytical assumptions, the content specific qualitative analysis allowed examining whether women and men talk about similar aspects when they are referring to strategic and practical concerns for women. The concluding section discussed the overall observations, and subsequently illustrated how representation on women’s substantive cause takes place in the parliament, hereby, the importance of the presence of women in this process of substantive representation.

5.2. Priorities of Women Concerns Issues in the Legislative Activities

Discussions in the parliament could take place in several different ways as legislators perform various activities in the parliament. There are tools available to legislators to perform their roles and functions as representatives, which include raising questions, bringing discussions topics, and moving motions.\(^{53}\) As mentioned in chapter four, this section looks at four different legislative activities for its analysis—parliamentary questions (as oversight activities), discussions on Short Statements on Public Interest (Rule 71 A), Calling for Attention on Public Interest (Rule 70); and Resolution Motion on Public Interest (Rule 130).

Through their participation in these legislative activities, legislators influence the political agenda by demanding immediate responses to urgent policy issues. By analysing these instruments of issue articulation, this section explores the extent to which legislators voiced women’s issues as part of their legislative interventions. To observe which issues legislators prioritise when addressing legislative concerns and the gender differences endemic therein. The analysis in this section followed two steps: first, it investigated legislators’ selection of issues (i.e. general vs. women issues) in relation to their gender by using simple frequency analysis and inferential statistics. Second it looked at legislators’ selection of women issues (strategic vs. practical issues) and displayed the gender variation.

5.2.1. General Issues versus Women issues

With regards to investigating the issue of selection, a total of 24,442 parliamentary questions (including verbal with supplementary questions), 1979 short discussion of public interest issues (Rule 71), 488

calling for attention seeking on public interest (Rule 71 A) and 119 resolution motion (Rule 138) were analysed (discussed in Chapter 4). By providing a brief introduction of the frequency of legislators’ intervention, the rest of the section demonstrates the frequency and statistical patterns of issue selection by gender.

Data gathered under these four legislative activities suggested that both men and women raised both categories of issues, i.e., general and women issues. Concerning the parliamentary question sessions, women raised 13 percent (a total of 3,494) of the total number of questions addressed to both PM and executives, and the number is proportionate to the number of seats in parliament occupied by women (19%) (see Table 5.1). Similarly, men legislators raised 87 percent (a total of 22,212) of the total number of questions, which were again appropriate as men hold 81 percent of the total seats in parliament (see Table 5.1). Concerning the legislators’ participation on women issues, the data showed that women issues have received less attention in the parliamentary question in comparison to general issues. For example, only 2 percent of the total parliamentary questions directly referred to women’s concerns (see Graph 5.1). Graph 5.1 depicts legislator’s selection of issues (divided into two categories i.e. general and women issues) as part of their participation in parliamentary question sessions, based on simple frequency calculation of issues raised.

Similar features were seen while investigating the frequency of issue selection during legislators’ participation in national debates, under the Rule 71 (Short Statement on Public Interest Issues), Rule 71 A (Calling for Attention on Public Interest Issues) and Rule 138 (Resolution Motion on Public Interest Issues). The data generated from these three legislative interventions showed that only 5 percent of the total interventions (under the three activities) were dedicated for issues that directly affect women’s lives, in comparison to general issues (95 percent of the total issues, see Graph 5.2). Graph 5.2 depicts legislators’ selection of issues (divided into two categories, i.e., general and women issues) as part of their participation in national debates based on simple frequency calculation of issues raised. More specifically, only 3.5 percent of interventions (82 times out of 1,976) under Rule 71; 4.14 percent (17 times out of 488) under Rule 71 (A); and 15 percent (18 out of 119) under Rule 138, referred particularly to women’s issues (see Tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4).
Such an analysis suggests that women issues received little attention during these exchanges compared to legislators’ concentration on general issues. The data also highlighted that discussion on women issues were even absent in some of the session. For example, legislators had zero interventions on women issues under the activity of calling for Attention on Public Interest (Rule 71 A) during sessions 7th, 12th, 14th, 18th and 19th (for evidence please see the figure-presented in the Appendix-5.1).

As it is discussed in Chapter 4, the purpose of four legislative instruments is to offer legislators the opportunity to raise concerns for immediate intervention, or exchange their opinions about certain policy options. The data shows that legislators preferred to bring general issues during their intervention under these four activities, in general. Those general issues primarily included matters related to seeking policy benefits, asking for explanations of policy failure/implementation, requesting clarification of administrative lapses, demanding remedial actions, seeking benefits for specific groups and specific areas, seeking policy reversal/modification. Most of those problems are associated with the area legislators belong to or represent. While talking about the service for the constituency, they repeatedly reported their contribution at their constituency in building roads, dams, schools, and colleges.

Representation of the interests of the people of the constituency is a critical function of legislators in parliament. The data suggested that general concerns and issues received almost all the attention of legislators as part of their act of representation. This is partly because of the legislators’ survival
depends on how effectively they perform their function of representation to the people (Jahan and Amundsen, 2012). While talking with legislators, it was also evident in the discussion that they put more emphasis on building up their constituency or building a support system at the local level by bringing development resources from the centre to the local areas. Every legislator receives a fixed amount at the beginning of their term, which they can invest for the development work in their respective constituencies. As per the interview information, most of the local demands were concerned with local development, improvement of infrastructure, establishment of schools and colleges, and other specific local goods and related services. Similar confirmation and justification came from women legislators:

We had to work for the people of the constituency. Majority requests from people are related to schools, colleges, jobs related issues. I need to make them happy by listening to their applications. As a legislator, we get money from the government for the developmental purpose of our constituency. I use that allocation by establishing schools, colleges, roads, and dams (LWE201505, 2015).

Notwithstanding such pressures, women issues received less attention from legislators. The frequency, at which women issues are raised (under the four legislative activities), suggested that it is the women who brought up most of the women issues. When it comes to representing women and their concerns, women legislators brought a higher proportion of women related questions to the table than their male colleagues in comparison to the total number of questions and the total number of women issues they raised in the parliament (see Table 5.1). The data in table 5.1 suggested that women were hypothetically expected to raise only 80 women related questions (with regards to the total number of issues and total number of women issues raised), whereas they have raised 332, which is higher than the expected value. In contrast, men legislators raised only 260 women related questions, which is lower than the expected numbers of question (511) compared to the total number of questions they raised (see Table 5.1) in parliament. Thus, women raise more questions referring to women’s issues than men, and this difference is statistically significant (see the chi square statistics in Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.1: Number of Questions raised by the Legislators during 2009-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Issues by Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Issues by Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chi-square statistics is $X^2 (1) = 931.43$ and is statistically significant at $p<.01$

Source: Researcher’s own table. * it refers expected value.

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With regards to their participation in national debate, 66 out of 82 total women issues under the Rule 71; 12 out of 17 under the Rule 71 (A); and 18 out of 18 under the Rule 131; were raised by women legislators (see Tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4). Women raised more issues than they were expected in comparison to the total number of issues and women issues raised in the parliament. For example, women legislators were expected to raise 25 women’s issues under the Rule 71, whereas they have raised 66 (see Table 5.2). A similar feature was also evident under the Rule 71A and Rule 138, where women were expected to raise three and six women issues respectively, whereas in reality women have raised 12 and 18 women issues (see Table 5.5 and 5.6). Thus, women legislators raised more women issues in relation to the total number of issues and women’s issues raised by the legislators.

| Table 5.2: Numbers of Interventions by Legislators on Short Discussion of Public Interest Issues (Rule 71) during 2009-2013. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Women's Concerns and Issues | General Issues | Totals |
| Issues raised by Women | 66 (25.52*) | 550 (590.48*) | 616 |
| Issues raised by Men | 16 (55.48*) | 1347 (1306.52*) | 1363 |
| Total | 82 | 1897 | 1979 (Grand Total) |

The Chi-square statistics is $X^2 (1)^{55} = 97.2243$ and is statistically significant at $p < .01$

Source: Researcher's own calculation. * it refers expected value.

| Table 5.3: Numbers of Interventions by Legislators on Calling for Attention Seeking on Public Interest (Rule 71 A) during 2009-2013 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Women’s Concerns and Issues | General Issues | Totals |
| Female | 12 (3.41) | 86 (95.59) | 98 |
| Male | 5 (13.59) | 385 (376.41) | 390 |
| Totals | 17 | 471 | 488 (Grand Total) |

The Chi-square statistics is $X^2 (1)^{56} = 27.9954$ and is statistically significant at $p < .01$

Source: Researcher's own calculation. * it refers expected value.

| Table 5.4: Numbers of Interventions by Legislators on Resolution Motions on Public Interest during 2009-2013 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Women’s Concerns and Issues | General Issues | Totals |
| Female | 18 (6.81*) | 27 (38.19*) | 45 |
| Male | 0 (11.19*) | 74 (62.81*) | 74 |
| Total | 18 | 101 | 119 (Grand Total) |

The Chi-square statistic is $X^2 (1)^{57} = 34.8752$ and is statistically significant at $P < .01$

Source: Researcher's own calculation. * it refers expected value.

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56 Degrees of Freedom.
57 Degrees of Freedom.
On the other hand, men legislators addressed a very small portion of women issues. For example, men posed only 1.18 percent\(^{58}\) women related questions during the entire parliamentary session (Table 5.1). Similarly, they have paid little attention to women issues while participating in national debate. Men raised only one quarter of women related issues under Rule 71A and Rule 71 (see Tables 5.2, 5.3), and no intervention was recorded for women under the Resolution Motion Rule 138 (see Table 5.4). In relation to the total number of issues (in both categories of general and women issues) and total number of women issues raised under these three legislative activities, men were expected to bring a greater number of women issues than they were found to do under the Rule 71 and Rule 71A. They were expected to raise 55 under Rule 71, 13 under Rule 71A and 11 under Rule 138 (see expected values for issues raised by men in the Tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4). However, these numbers were not reached. Thus, women raise more motions referring to women’s issues than men in the national debate. This difference is statistically significant at \(p < .01\) (presented in Tables 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4) as because women remain vocal when it comes to bringing women’s issues to the table, however, men underperform in this context.

In summary, the findings in this section suggested that women issues usually do not receive much attention in the legislative interventions and legislators (regardless of the gender) preferred to raise general issues. However, when it comes to representing women, it is the women legislators who were mostly seen bringing women issues either by asking questions or raising concerns in the form of national debate. First the frequency analysis shows women legislators are more inclined to represent women compared to their male colleagues. Later, the inferential statistics of the frequency confirmed such variation in representation of women issues, which is indeed statistically significant. In other way, the findings suggested that raising issues relevant for women significantly depends on legislators’ gender. Such analysis confirms first analytical assumption of the study that women in Bangladesh parliament have showed a greater concern to issues that have direct effect on women than their male colleagues, in general. This is not to suggest that women MPs are the only ones to talk about women issues, as men were also seen raising women issues while women legislators also raised general issues. Such findings also partially shed light on the second analytical expectation that men legislators likewise represent women issues. However, they do so less frequently than the expected value. The next section

\(^{58}\) In comparison to the 22212 numbers of questions men raised in total (see table 5.3).
extends the discussion to examine what kind of women issues men and women preferred to address in parliament.

5.2.2. Strategic versus Practical Women Issues

The categorisation of women issues into strategic and practical women issues allowed this section to investigate types of women issues which had received priority treatment by legislators, and whether or not variation exists in it. While strategic women issues refer to overcoming and preventing women’s subordination in all spheres of life and urging for policy change, the practical women issues are concerned with immediate needs (discussed in Chapter 3). More specifically, strategic concerns included concerns that are aimed to address all kinds of violence against women and girls, and to ensure civil, political, social and economic rights of women in all spheres of public and private life. At the same time, these are the most burning human rights concerns that women in Bangladesh face on a daily basis (see Chapter 4). On the other hand, practical women issues address conditions primarily fulfil the basic needs of a woman in the area of education, health care, social services, shelter, and financial support among others (Chapter 4).

It was evident from the frequency analysis that women legislators pay greater attention to women’s strategic than practical concerns by raising questions, moving discussions, or placing motions in the parliament. The following table 5.5 presents the frequency of women’s strategic and practical issues raised by legislators (men and women) under four legislative activities, used in this study. Women’s participation in both categories was more than it was expected with regards to total number of issues they have raised (see Table 5.5). The data suggested that women raised more strategic women issues (260) than they were expected (187) to raise in relation to the total number of women issues and total number of strategic issues raised by legislators (both men and women) (see Table 5.5). On the other hand, women raised fewer practical women issues (168) than they were expected (240) to rise. This suggested that women were more inclined to conveying or expressing greater support to strategic women issues than practical women issues. On the other hand, men legislators brought more issues addressing women’s practical needs than strategic needs, when they were representing women’s issues (see Table 5.5). Men legislators mentioned less strategic women issues (51) than expected (123) and more practical women issues (230) than they were expected (157) in relation to the total number of women issues raised by both legislators (see Table 5.5). In other words, men legislators preferred to respond to an immediate perceived necessity of women within a specific context (practical women’s
issues) rather than questioning women’s subordination in general (referring to strategic women’s issues). The Chi-square statistics result (see Table 5.5) is significant (less than .01), which suggests that legislative intervention on women’s strategic and practical issues significantly depends on gender of the legislator, where women emphasised more on strategic issues and men more on practical issues (see Table 5.5).

### Table 5.5: Gender difference on Strategic and Practical Issues under Parliamentary Q&A and National Debate (during 2009-2013)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Strategic Issues</th>
<th>Practical Issues</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>260 (187*)</td>
<td>168 (240*)</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51 (123*)</td>
<td>230 (157*)</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>709 (Grand Total)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chi-square statistic is $X^2 (1) = 125.0073$ and is statistically significant at $p< .01$

Source: Researcher's own calculation. * it refers expected value.

Along with descriptive data, women legislators had the opportunity to express their policy priorities in face-to-face interviews, which complemented the analysis. Women legislators interviewed in this study stressed their role in sensitising the agenda-setting stage of the parliament on women’s strategic issues, which is consistent with the data. Almost every woman legislator interviewed in this study claimed that women legislators were more vocal on issues, such as women’s empowerment, particularly women’s political and economic rights, and safety and security of women and girls in private and public spheres. Their apparent confirmation of this fact from the interview also suggested that women are mostly bringing up women’s strategic issues:

> It is us [women] who always stand in support of issues related to women’s rights, violence against women and very vocal about women’s political and economic rights. Our men legislators are mostly talking about providing financial support to poor women in rural areas (LWS201502, 2016).

In summary, the data suggested that both men and women legislators discussed women’s strategic and practical issues on the floor. However, the frequency analysis and inferential statistics (chi-square) demonstrated that women are more likely than man to express attitudinal support and introduce women’s strategic issues (more specifically for women’s rights and against their subordination). On

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59 Sessions 9th, 12th and 18th are excluded due to lack of availability of the data.
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the other hand, men preferred to raise practical issues while representing women issues in the parliament. Such findings shed light on the fact that men and women do not emphasise on the similar topic when they speak up for women. Since the selection of women issues by men and women legislators differed, this dissertation argues that enactment of SRW took place by both men and women legislators, but degrees of SRW varied among them. Women paid more attention to issues relevant for ensuring women’s autonomy and empowerment as it addresses women’s subordination in the society. On the other hand, men paid more attention to solving more immediate practical women needs. Such findings demand further investigation into specific contents under each category of women issues to shed light on a qualitative difference in the understanding of the construction of women’s strategic and practical issues among men and women legislators.

5.3. Content of the Women’s Issues: A Qualitative Investigation

The discussion in the earlier section established the fact that men and women preferred to speak up on different women issues in the parliament. This section investigates the content of women issues raised by both men and women legislators. This section aims to explore whether strategic and practical women issues contain the same content (meaning) for men as it does for women. The analysis of the content, therefore, helped in construction of women’s issues and to understand whether women and men legislators have shown distinct attitudes and preferences while representing strategic and practical women issues and if so, how distinct they are. The data driven qualitative investigation is applied to produce different subcategories of strategic and practical women issues (strategic and practical women issues were further categorised into different themes). The frequency of different themes and interview data would complement the analysis in this section. However, this section does not use expected value and chi-square statistics for the analysis because the frequencies, used in the analysis, would be too small to make the interpretation meaningful.

As it is described in Chapter 4, strategic needs issues were categorised into three subcategories: i.e. violence against women and girl (VAWG), civil and political rights (CPR) and economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR). The definition of subcategories was presented in Chapter 4. Similarly, practical women issues were categorised into different themes, include technical support, education and training, health sector, housing facilities and social support. Such sub-categorisation of strategic needs enabled further explanation of the content of the issues presented on the floor in the parliament. For
the purposes of analysis, this section only focused on the frequencies and contents of three legislative activities i.e. Rule 71, Rule 71 A and Rule 138. The discussion is divided into two subsections.

5.3.1. Strategic Women Issues

The data showed most recurrent strategic women issues that both woman and man legislators addressed pertained to violence against women and girls (VAWG) and the policy interventions eliminating such violence (as per the defined subcategories presented in Chapter 4) (see Table 5.6). The second highest numbers of issues (31), under the theme of civil and political rights (CPR), were linked to ensure women’s physical and mental integrity. Finally women’s economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) – meaning their rights to economic independence, adequate standard of living, cultural rights and human dignity, was least addressed of the three (see Table 5.6). The intervention referring to strategic issues addressed different aspects of issues under each of the sub-categories. Interventions pertaining to each subcategory were examined in the following paragraphs. These illustrate how women and men legislators emphasised women’s issues differently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Needs &amp; Issues</th>
<th>Frequencies by Women</th>
<th>Frequencies by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VAWG</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCR</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own calculation

Interventions referring to VAWG, women legislators addressed different aspects of these issues ranging from violence at public places to violence at home. Women legislators concentrated on the creation/promotion of one-stop crisis centres to legal measurements for stopping any sorts of violence. In total, the intervention on VAWG referred to 11 different themes (see Table 5.7), of which women legislators raised more than 90 percent. Among those interventions, the most recurrent concerns pertained to punishments for child marriage, punishment for Fatwas, acid-based violence

Parliamentary questions are not included in this analysis due to unavailability of detailed data of three sessions of the 9th parliament (as it is mentioned earlier). There is also a practical reason to limit its analysis into three legislative activities is to manage such a large amount of data. The volumes of data (19 volumes, more than thousands of each) are too much to handle for content analysis as I have mostly used hard copies for the purpose of the analysis in this study (can see detail explanation in chapter 4).
and protection of migrants. Women legislators were seen emphasizing more on legal aspects of protection and prevention of any kind of violence (which ranges from the domestic to the public spheres) than men. Conversely, men legislators were raised only 2 women issues and limited to themselves to themes reporting of violence, and public awareness against VAWG, during the entire 9th parliament (see the following Table 5.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Women</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child marriage</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acid based violence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatwas based violence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women migrant workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribunal for VAW case</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowry based violence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political violence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting of violence incident</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness against VAW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher's own table

Women legislators’ interventions under the theme of VAWG, was holistic in a way that they did not only bring diversified strategic women issues to the table, but also suggested dynamic policy options for overcoming the challenges presented by VAWG. For instance, claims like establishing special tribunals for offenders of violence against women cases; laws increasing the age limit with respect to child marriages, safe homes for newly born children inside women’s prisons; ensuring women’s participation in politics (for more examples, see Appendix 5.2). Women legislators highlighted several concerns that made connections to women’s lives and their wider encounters with violence.

Women were also disproportionately found dealing with issues that particularly question the involvement of men in the violation of women rights. Concerns include ensuring punishment for those who commit Fatwa-based violence and prevention of acid-based crime against women. As it is discussed in Chapter 4, legal initiatives were taken by the government but have had limited success in combating gender-based violence in Bangladesh. For example, women still face discrimination and physical assaults because of the local religious leaders in rural Bangladesh. It was only women who were seen raising issues of a lack of a comprehensive approach to stop Fatwa-based gender violence,
which did not only question the patriarchal structure but also pointed out involvement of men in women’s subordination. These concerns directly address women’s subordination as well as the contentious patriarchal nature of Bangladeshi society.

Interventions on CPR were predominantly raised by women legislators who addressed a variety of rights issues ranging from women’s access to justice, child safety for women prisoners and sex workers. Table 5.8 lists legislators’ intervention with regards to CPR classifying them into 11 themes (see Appendix-5.2 for coding frame). Of those interventions the most recurrent women’s CPR issues pertained to the enactment of women’s development policy, rights of migrant workers, and rights of equal payment, which were raised only by women. Women were mostly advocating for rights of women workers, policy options that addresses in equality, i.e., enactment of women’s development policy and establishment of women’s development bank. Women raised a majority of these issues, whereas men legislators’ interventions were limited to two themes—rights of women workers (two times) and maternal leave (one time) (see Table 5.8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Women</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rights of migrant workers (including work permit, salary and protection from violence)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s development policies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of equal payment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of women workers (including tea garden, garments workers, rice mills)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in politics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of children of women prisoners and sex workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of women’s association</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position in public office</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to justice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal leave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s development Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

Women legislators were seen raising issues like safety and security of children of women prisoners and sex workers, and rights of women working in a vulnerable situation (i.e., working in tea gardens, rice mills, and Shundarbans\(^{62}\) forest). These groups of women were not only overlooked by the policy

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\(^{62}\) This is the largest Mangrove forest in Bangladesh.
makers but also showcase controversial issues in a male dominated country like Bangladesh, where sex workers are still fighting for their legal status. Similarly, the concerns about women’s lack of access to justice, public office, and participation in politics which are at the centre of patriarchal nature of the society, were only raised by women. While talking about those issues, women legislators were seen justifying their claims by giving examples of male domination in Bangladeshi society and questioning its patriarchal nature. A few examples are presented in the following paragraph.

With regards to sub-category CSRS, women legislators addressed a variety of issues ranging from women’s property rights and recognition of women’s housework to the use of the mother’s name. The table 5.9 listed legislators’ intervention with regards to CSRS classifying them into 6 themes. Of those interventions the most recurrent women’s issues were women’s property rights and acknowledgement of unpaid labour, both of which were raised only by women. Within the context of Bangladesh, one of the factors which account for the backwardness of women’s rights is their limited access to property such as land (Sourav, 2015). The existing laws are derived from Islamic sharia law which is not conducive to ensure that women enjoy equal rights when it comes to ownership of inherited property (March, Smyth, and Mukhopadhyay, 1999). According to the law, women are entitled to only a half of what a man receives from the paternal property. However, in practice, women rarely get the part they are entitled to receive because of the patriarchal nature of the society. Furthermore, women from the Hindu community do not inherit any paternal property due to the absence of a Hindu family law or a common legal framework in this regard. The lack of access to property, in general, makes women’s position in the family and society very marginal and vulnerable. Thus, the concern about women’s property rights within the context of Bangladesh is very pertinent for women, as well as contentious in the sense that it questions the heart of the patriarchal nature of the society. Another concern related with women’s economic subordination and their subordinate status in the family is the lack of recognition of the unpaid domestic work and care work women disproportionately do for the family. Apart from the lack of access to property, women’s unpaid work or unrecognised household activities are also responsible for their economic dependency on men, which enforces the subordination of women in society. By bringing such concerns women legislators questioned existing patriarchal practices of our society which created sharp discrimination against women in Bangladesh. None of the men legislators were seen addressing this concern at all in their legislative interventions. During the entire 9th parliament, men legislators raised issues only once, under the sub-category concerning the use of mother’s name (once) (see Table 5.9).
Table 5.9: Intervention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CSRS) by Legislators, classified by Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Women</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s property rights</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge of un-paid labour</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social recognition of ‘Birangona’</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect to house help</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s role in language movement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of mother’s name</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own research

While analysing men legislators’ intervention on strategic issues (only six types) under three sub-categories, it becomes evident that they only conveyed concerns related to awareness against dowry based violence, security of women students in the college (under category VAWG); ensuring the salaries of garment and tea garden workers (under category CPR); prolonging maternity leave, and permitting the usage of the mother’s name in official documents (under category CSRS) (see Tables 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9). It is worth noting these concerns matched with some already existing governments’ initiatives to assimilate women’s issues into the government’s policy-making process during their first year. Policy changes, such as the Domestic Violence Act (2010) and increase of maternity leave from three to six months, and the recognition of mother’s name in the official document, were adopted/enacted during the tenure of 9th parliament. Another issue—increasing the salary of garment and tea garden workers—was already a matter of considerable political attention. This was due to the iconic incident of the Rana Plaza, which caused large public outcry in 2013. Such interventions referring to the garment sector also mirrors the government’s aspiration to uphold the national image which was damaged following this incident. Both men and women legislators were seen raising issues on behalf of the government’s existing initiatives, however, men legislators’ representation on strategic women issues never went beyond the government’s approach to women issues.

With regards to women’s intervention, they often went beyond mirroring the government’s approach to improving women’s condition. Those concerns were more in line with the agenda of contemporary women’s movement organisations, particularly those working for gender equity in Bangladesh (for

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63 The name given to victims of the 1971 war of independence) by the state.
64 Rana Plaza collapsed due to a structural failure that occurred on 24 April 2013 in the Savar Upazila of Dhaka District, Bangladesh, where an eight-story commercial building named Rana Plaza collapsed. The search for the dead ended on 13 May 2013 with a death toll of 1,134 (Hopkins, 2015).
some of the recurrent issues emphasised by women’s movement, please see Chapter 4). For instance, in their interventions referring to the protection of victims, women legislators spoke about implementing first track tribunals for solving reported cases of violence and operationalising the one stop centre65 in every district of Bangladesh. These were also the most discussed ongoing demands coming from women’s rights organization. Women legislators not only urged for a reinforcement of the subsequent policies to address VAWG but also suggested the intensity of the vulnerability of women in Bangladesh, which is a matter worth for political attention. Some of the intervention included:

Victims of domestic violence in our country [are] scared of talking or reporting to police. We need to break the silence…….We have some crisis centres in different areas. They are providing treatment, legal and mental support to victims successfully. They are also able to protect victims from further torture by the husband. I would like to know from Hon’ble Minister whether the government has any plan to start more crisis centres. There is an urgent need to spread such centres all over Bangladesh (Parliamentary questions, 2nd Session, June 2009).66

Yet again, these analyses by no means deny the essential role of men legislators in promoting the course of women. However, the evidence presented in the chapter does indicate that men care to a limited extent about things affecting women, and this across a limited range of issues in comparison to the variety of emphasis demonstrated by women legislators on the floor of parliament (see Tables 5.9 and 5.10). As seen from the various lists presented in this section, an attempt was also made by men legislators to raise the issues of violence against women, such as, ensuring the safety/security of girls in public places with one parliamentarian stating: “it is shameful that female students were abused at Lakkhipur College when students were celebrating their Golden Jubilee program”.67 This attempt to address a current danger to female students and to voice the need for intervention can be referred as substantive representation of women (SRW).

65 One stop crisis centre is a model of hospital-based services for domestic violence, burn & sexual assault survivors in Bangladesh, which operates in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations and with a working committee representing the various agencies. Multi-Sectoral Program on Violence Against Women under the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs with collaboration of BNWLA and Naripokkho, established Six One Stop Crisis Centres (OCC) for victims of violence that provides medical, legal and social services to the victims in the six divisional government hospitals (Mia, 2011).

66A sample of intervention (translated) by the women legislators on the floor

Nevertheless, regarding their perspective on violence against women, the interventions of men legislators shifted the focus from addressing the involvement of men perpetrators behind the act of violence against women to framing the concerns as: ‘building public awareness against dowry related grievances’. In other words, men legislators’ intervention under the subcategory VAWG was only limited to talking about dowry, whereas wider varieties of women issues aimed at overcoming women’s subordination in both public and private spheres (which are important in the context of Bangladeshi society) received less attention by men. Ironically, men talk about the dowry-related violence without really discussing the way in which men are complicit in this violence.

Apart from highlighting the subject of violence or protection from violence, women legislators were also seen exploring the connection between women’s subordination and its wider implication for their lives. Examples of some explicit demands included: (a) safe homes or arrangement of safe home for the children born inside women prisons (7th Session, Dec 2010); (b) increasing the minimal age limit of marriage for girls in order to reduce child marriages (12th Session, January 2012); (c) free education for all married women, especially those given away into marriage in early age (15th Session, November 2012; 4th Session, January 2010); (d) equal employment opportunities (5th Session, July 2010); (e) constituency for women legislators coming from reserved seats (10th Session, August 2011); (f) equal pay in the job market (5th Session, July 2010); and (g) recognition of unpaid labour (16th Session, March 2013). For a detailed list of the issues, see appendix 5.2. These issues were brought to the floor for discussion exclusively by women legislators, and were never introduced by their male colleagues. These issues did not only touch a wide variety of areas affecting women on a daily basis in the context of Bangladesh, but also have relevance for ensuring women’s autonomy in the social, economic and political domains.

In addition, these issues highlight the image of the working or career women as opposed to the image of woman as a wife and mother in the traditional patriarchal. This is to challenge the existing portrayal of women exclusively as housewives without agency (due to their lack of financial resources) which increases the possibility of all women encountering subordination. Claiming recognition for women’s household labour (referring to the theme ‘recognition of unpaid household work’), women legislators questioned the traditional notion of womanhood. This was evident from such motions as: “recognition of women’s household unpaid work and their incorporation in the national GDP to
ensure that their economic empowerment can be assured” (12th session, November 2011). Through such interventions on unpaid labour, women legislators sought to echo the policy aspirations of the women rights organization as part of the global women’s movement.

In addition, women legislators often actively engaged themselves in intense debates over fundamental women’s rights, which were seen as contentious issues. For instance, the issues regarding women’s equal property rights or the adaptation of women’s development policies were among the most debated issues. Although the constitution of Bangladesh has provided equal rights to women and men, issues related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, guardianship and custody have generally been guided by Personal Laws. Personal Laws generally have been in conformity with the religious (Islamic) provisions, which are often characterised by gender discrimination. Women’s rights movement groups in Bangladesh have long raised their voice against such unequal provisions in Personal laws which have contributed to women’s subordination in social, economic, political, and legal terms (Nazneen, 2017). Due to the massive protest from the religious groups, Bangladesh maintains its reservation to Articles 2 of CEDAW Convention on the grounds that they are in direct contradiction with the Shariah and other Personal Laws (United Nations, 1996). As a result, it is the women who time and time again brought these issues up to the government’s attention. Women legislators have been clear in their position and claimed that:

It is not easy to bring change on this issue. Not only the religious group but also our male colleagues in the parliamentary and in the Ministry would never let this happen. It is the men in general who will lose if women get equal share of inheritance property (LWS201602, 2016).

This matter is not only religious, it is a political concern for men too (LWS201605, 2016).

Another contentious issue is one of condemning extrajudicial punishment in the name of religion. This, too, was raised solely by women legislators:

[W]omen in rural Bangladesh are still suffering from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment by the local religious leaders. Even though it is illegal, we often see news of such inhuman act on newspaper……government must take strong actions against perpetrators to stop Fatwa based violence” (5th Session, July 2010).

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68A sample of intervention (translated) by women legislators on the floor.
During the same time in 2010, women’s rights organisation, such as, Bangladesh National Women’s Lawyer’s Association (BNWLA), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST), and Bangladesh Mohila Parishad issued a public interest case against the government’s inability to stop illegal punishments such as whipping, lashing or public humiliations in 2009\(^{70}\) (Human Rights Watch, 2011). In response to it, the Supreme Court issued its judgment in 2010, criticising the role of government for not protecting its women citizens from Fatwas.\(^{71}\) Not only do such inhuman acts take away women’s agency but they also violate the constitutionally guaranteed rights to life and liberty. Women legislators raised these issues time and time again on the floor, and requested the concerned ministries to take legal measures to stop such inhuman acts. At the same time, they were seen proposing preventive steps such as promoting awareness campaigns in schools, colleges, and madrasas, which also mirrored the recommendations coming from the civil society organisations. Examples of some such recommendations are calls to create public awareness on violence against women and incite public outcry against the dowry system (see examples in Appendix- 5.2).

Another important, widely discussed issue was in the realm of recognition of women’s contribution in politics, such as women’s participation in the language movement of 1952 and women’s contribution in 1971 during the War of Liberation in Bangladesh. These issues are also widely discussed nationally, specifically during celebrations of the UNESCO International Mother Language Day\(^{72}\) and Independence Day (Babul, The Daily Star, 2014). To provide greater attention to women’s contribution and to give due share of credit to women’s sacrifices, women legislators highlight these matters as a motion on public interest issues. Women MPs asked for appreciation and acknowledgement of women’s as much as men’s struggle in the society by requesting, in particular, that women’s involvement during the language movement against the Pakistani military regime be commemorated (8\(^{th}\) Session, March 2011), and that a national recognition to all the Birangona\(^{73}\) and their sacrifice for the national cause be likewise provided (19\(^{th}\) Session, November 2013).

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\(^{70}\) They challenged the authorities’ failure to address extrajudicial punishments imposed by shalish- traditional dispute resolution methods - in the name of fatwas, opinions that are supposed to be issued by Islamic scholars.

\(^{71}\) ASK has assembled news reports of at least 330 such incidents in the last 10 years.

\(^{72}\) International Mother Language Day has been observed on 21 February annually since 2000 to recognise the 1952 Bengali Language Movement in Bangladesh.

\(^{73}\) A Bengali word used to recognise and show respect to victims of rape by the Pakistani military during the Liberation War of Bangladesh.
In other words, men legislators overlooked issues focusing on women’s economic, political, social and cultural rights and subordination. They never raised concerns, or acknowledged women’s contribution, for the family (being a housewife or mother), or paid tribute to women who have sacrificed their lives for the country and the establishment of its native language. Hence, it could be argued that representation of the above-mentioned strategic concerns may never arrive to the platform in the absence of women.

5.3.2. Practical Women Issues
The following paragraphs will provide information on the practical issues men and women bring through their participation in national debates. The themes of these practical issues, raised by both men and women legislators, are examined to observe the qualitative difference, if there is any. The subsequent analysis will show whether women and men legislators, while addressing similar themes, have different approaches to the issues important for women’s wellbeing and survival.

The practical issues, both men and women legislators have raised, are more generally divided into six themes for the analysis. These included financial support, technical support, education and training, health sector, and shelter/housing facilities and social support (see detailed coding frame in Chapter 4). The following table 5.10 listed the themes of practical issues which included motions under Rule 71A, Rule 71 and Rule 138. Issues regarding women’s health, housing facilities, social support and education and training were more recurrent practical issues raised by both men and women legislators. Financial support themes were in particular raised almost exclusively by men legislators. Men legislators likewise raised issues of women’s health, almost on par with women legislators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Women</th>
<th>No. of Intervention by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Support</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sector</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Facilities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

74 The frequencies are too small to make a meaningful calculation of expected value.
According to the data, men were seen to prioritise providing financial support to women from their respective constituency (see example in Appendix 5.3). Most recurrent issues under this theme included calls for the provision of financial assistance/loans to ultra-poor women such as widows and disabled women, and supporting distribution of sewing machines to poor women (see Appendix 5.2 for additional examples). On the other hand, women legislators’ intervention under the theme of financial support was limited to calls for the provision of interest free loans to poor women (see Appendix 5.3 for additional examples). Women legislators preferred to concentrate on income generating activities (issues under theme ‘technical support’) for improving women’s financial situation rather than providing them loans. Women’s lower access to resources, lack of education and lack of control over the household decision-making are some of the realities women in Bangladesh face, and one of the core reasons behind women’s economic subordination in the society. Nevertheless, women legislators identified financial support to rural women for “initiating small scale business” as “an effective solution to tackle women’s subordination in economic decision-making” (1st Session, January 2009).

Different approaches addressing similar themes were also apparent. For example, content referring to the governments’ existing family planning programs are presented differently by men and women legislators (under the theme of health). While men legislators pointed out the issues inherent in the implementation of the family planning programs, women legislators intervened with a strategy for the successful implementation of the program “by ensuring supply of qualified human resources to the project” (discussed in 6th parliamentary session, July 2010). Likewise, instead of talking about providing loans to poor women in the villages (as suggested by men legislators), women MPs rather urged the need to construct housing facilities to extremely-poor women (see Appendix 5.3). Again, the point here is not to deny the contribution of men legislators. Rather, it is to showcase the greater sensitivity demonstrated by women legislators when bringing practical issues to the floor. For example, women emphasised more on how to reduce poverty of women in rural community. Instead of prescribing financial support to poor women, they suggested more investments into skill development (technical) of the poor rural women. They even came up with the idea of removing economic dependency of poor rural women by financing for a small-scale business. Such policy proposal aimed at bringing long term benefit among poor women than only solving immediate financial need.
A few other practical issues for women under the themes of social support and the health sector were highlighted. For instance, interventions such as calls for poor pregnant women to be able to deliver without cost, the reduction of mortality rates of pregnant women, free treatment for victims of acid burns, burn units in local hospitals and ensuring the presence of female doctors for examining rape victims, were different aspects under the themes of health. These were raised only by women legislators (see a detailed list in Appendix-5.3). These are the recurrent issues women in Bangladesh face on the daily basis as per the gender gaps report (World Economic Forum, 2017). Bangladesh has a very high maternal mortality ratio, where 12,000 women die each year due to pregnancy issues or in childbirth (UNICEF, 2004). Around 3,582 people were victim of acid attacks in Bangladesh during 1999-2014 (Acid Survivors Foundations, 2015). The issues of victims suffering from acid burns, death during pregnancy, and lack of women doctors to perform rape kits, are some practical issues for the women of Bangladesh. Those are the issues women’s movement and women’s rights organisations in Bangladesh, as identified in an interview with a civil society activist, have been highlighting in different platforms with the hope of bringing a policy change (CSO201633, 2016). Similarly, women’s rights organisations involved in providing victim support at the local level report a lack of women doctors to check rape victims for forensic evidence, and provide them with primary treatment. It was women legislators again who brought these burning issues to the floor and discussed the urgency for immediate intervention by the government, whereas men legislators did not refer at all to such issues on the floor of the parliament. A sample question from women legislators raised on the floor during the proceedings is as follows:

Does the health ministry consider of recruiting female doctors in every test centre where victims of rape first go for the check-up to enable them to file their case? (Bangladesh Parliament, 2009a)

In summary, the analysis in this section drew attention to the distinctive contributions that women and men bring to the political process. It is worth clarifying that the qualitative investigation of the content of both categories of women (strategic and practical) allowed a demonstration of the gender difference into the focus of the legislators’ issue representation. Such distinctions reinforced women legislators’ commitment to voicing the fact that gender inequalities exist in all spheres. This section discussed that women legislators were more inclined than their male legislators to refer to a variety of themes under each category of women issues, whereas men legislators fixated on two. Second, whilst addressing a wide range of strategic and practical women issues, women raised issues that are
contentious in nature. They paid more attention to the patriarchal nature of the society, and women’s resulting subordination in all spheres of life. Third, only women were seen paying attention to those women issues currently burning in the Bangladesh society such as support to rape victims, support to acid-victims, and a condemnation of fatwa-based violence. In contrary, men legislators restricted their intervention in practical women issues, mostly under the theme of health and financial support to poor women. Even, while talking about women issues under same theme, gender differences between legislators was prominent. Men selected to talk about the concerns derived from existing government programs, and left out contentious issues which pointed to the patriarchal nature of the society. On the other hand, women placed the removal of women’s political, social, economic, cultural inequalities at the centre of their policy intervention, despite their contentious nature. Thus, the degrees of enactment of SRW by women and men legislators varied.

5.4. Discussion: The Implication of Bangladesh Case for Research on Substantive Representation

Talking about women legislators’ representation in Bangladesh policy process, a limited number of studies looked at the performance of women legislators in parliament. A public perception-based study suggested that women’s presence in parliament is insignificant since women lack the capacities and interest to bring about substantial change (Khondoker et al., 2013). The literature on the policy making process in the Bangladesh parliament indeed highlighted the domination of executives and the limited capacity of legislators in the process (Ahmed, 2012; 2002 and Jahan, 2014). On the other hand, literature which looked specifically at women’s contributions in the policy process argued that women do bring issues relevant for women as a group (Chowdhury, 2015). In light of these competing accounts on the role of legislators, and particularly women legislators, this chapter described the significance of women legislators’ presence in the legislative activities in two distinct ways, aimed to address two analytical assumption of this chapter.

The first analytical expectation in this chapter aimed to investigate the idea that women in the Bangladesh parliament paid greater attention to women issues. The evidence in the first section suggested that legislators in general preferred to bring general issues more frequently. The frequency distribution of legislative interventions suggested that women issues received less priority in comparison with the issues which do not specifically target women’s concerns (general issues). However, it is mostly women legislators who advanced issues pertinent to women at the policy agenda
by raising concerns that directly influence women’s lives and well-being (either by asking parliamentary questions or by participating in motions seeking attention on urgent public issues). This is to say, even though general issues get priority, it is the women legislators who are mostly bringing and projecting issues relevant for women on the floor. Inferential statistical analysis showed that the gender of legislators strongly predicted the ratio of general to women’s issues. When it came to representing women issues, women legislators were more inclined than their men colleagues to advocate for women. The evidence from interviews with both men and women legislators also demonstrated the existence of willingness of women legislators to act for women. These facts support the assertion of a relationship between women’s presence and representation of issues pertinent to women. Such finding also complements the previous findings in different contexts by Childs (2002), Lovenduski and Norris’ (2003), and Saint-Germain’s (1989) studies that suggest women legislators are more interested to share and express concerns for issues linked to women’s issues.

The evidence discussed in this chapter demonstrated the fact that men legislators were also seen highlighting women issues. Men legislators were seen participating in different parliamentary activities where they raised women issues, even if it they did so in a limited capacity, and less frequently than would be expected of their numeric presence in the parliament. Such findings partially confirm the analytical expectation that men do talk of women issues. In other words, men indeed pursue substantive representation of women. This in turn, is consistent with the previous literature highlighting male advocates for women’s issues (Jones, 1997; Young 2000).

By categorising women’s issues further into strategic and practical issues, the discussion helped to investigate the types of women issues legislators preferred to raise. Gender difference in the distinction of women issues is apparent in the legislative priorities. As seen by them raising a higher than expected proportion of strategic women issues, women tend to give priority to strategic issues related to women’s inequalities and subordination. Women legislators gave strong support for issues on women’s rights, violence against women, as well as those policies meant to address social, economic and political inequalities that exist in the Bangladesh society. This is contrary to men, who preferred addressing women’s practical issues, rather than the strategic ones. Inferential statistical analysis suggested that the gender of legislators strongly mattered when it came to representing women issues, where women legislators were more inclined to advocate strategic women issues, and men legislators were advocating practical women issues.
The data driven qualitative analysis of the specific contents of strategic and practical women issues suggested a qualitative difference. When men and women legislators talk about similar issues, they nevertheless concentrate on different aspects within them. With regards to strategic women issues, women legislators have raised a variety of issues that addressed violence against women and girls, women’s civil and political rights, and women’s economic and cultural rights. Women were disproportionately found dealing with issues that particularly question men’s involvement in the violation of women rights. Issues, such as, ensuring the punishment for those who commit fatwa based violence against women, preventing acid based crime against women, providing safe working environments for the women, ensuring rule of law to stop child marriage, taking steps to stop human trafficking, ensuring women’s participation in politics; increasing the minimal age for legal marriage, were the most referred-to challenges women are facing due to a male dominated social structure in Bangladesh. It is the women legislators who have given prominence to the social, economic, political and cultural inequalities acting against women in the society, and asked for remedies. At the same time, they were also seen addressing contentious issues like women’s equal property rights, equal rights over resources, and recognition of their unpaid household activities. All of these issues were raised only by women. On the other hand, men legislators’ intervention on strategic women issues were limited to issues which are already part of the government’s policy plan. It is also evident that men legislators set narrower lists of women’s strategic women issues, did not go beyond existing, government-approved content, and overlooked any issues that aim to address inequalities in the patriarchal society. Of the available data, only six interventions of men legislators focused on strategic issues, which were exclusively guided by the government’s pre-existing approach. They were not keen to intervene in the area of any contentious issues.

With regards to the practical issues of women, it is evident that men brought more practical issues to the floor than women legislators. However, the focus of their issues was narrow. Their emphasis on practical issues was limited to paying the loans of poor, helpless women, and providing technical support in the form of free sewing machines for women. Women raised practical women issues, but the focus of those issues was not limited to providing goods and financial supports to poor women. Rather, women legislators addressed a variety of women’s issues that emerged out of women’s practical needs, which included being able to deliver safely and without cost, a healthy and safe pregnancy, access to free treatment in the case of acid burn attacks, access to burn units in local hospitals, and
access to female doctors when performing a rape kit as well as primary medical treatment after rape. Those are the issues derived from women’s specific conditions in the society of Bangladesh. Acid based violence is a common type of violence committed against women in Bangladesh (data presented in Chapter 3) which requires immediate intervention in the form of service for women victims of such violence. The evidence suggested that only women raise those issues. Likewise, the mortality of pregnant women in the rural community is a phenomenon common to Bangladesh. It was only the women legislators who demanded free delivery service to poor pregnant women, and better conditions which would reduce the mortality of pregnant women.

Even when men and women talk about the same themes of practical women issues, their focus varied substantially. While women talk about introducing burn units to every hospital, female doctors to test rape victims, free treatment to victims of acid-based crimes, safe homes for girls and children without parents, under the theme social support; men talk about increasing social support for pregnant women. A similar distinction was also evident in their intervention under the theme of technical support, where women proposed a policy option that would bring long term financial benefit to poor women, rather than merely solve their immediate financial needs. The focus of women and men legislators on different aspects of strategic and practical issues suggested a qualitative gender difference in the enactment of SRW. This dissertation revealed different degrees of SRW in parliament, where women legislators placed all kinds of social inequalities and subordination at the centre of their policy representation. On the other hand, men mostly represented practical women issues, mostly in the form of financial support, and never brought up contentious women rights issues.

5.5. Conclusion

Focusing upon parliamentary procedures (i.e., oral question to executives, short statement on public interest issues, calling for attention on public interest issues and resolution motion), this chapter examined legislators’ participation on issues pertinent for women. The combination of qualitative content analysis, frequency analysis and critical analysis of the content of women issues, allowed a measurement of the distinct preference of women and men legislators while representing women. The findings largely fulfil the analytical expectations regarding the priorities of women legislators’ selection of issues. Gender of the questioner, as anticipated, is statistically significant in a sense that women contribute substantively on issues pertinent to improving women’s conditions (ensuring rights, overcoming inequalities and removing subordination) in the society of Bangladesh. This
chapter found that women legislators have repeatedly provided their legislative attention to wide varieties of issues affecting women on a daily basis, including issues of women’s equality, rights, dignity, and suffering as a result of the patriarchal nature of the society. Often, they brought up those issues which are considered contentious in the context of Bangladesh. Such issues include recognition of women’s household activities, equal property rights, and paying tribute to women who were victims of rape during the war of liberation. On the other hand, men’s participation on women issues was very limited in number, and less frequent than expected in relation to the total number of issues they have raised in the parliament. While representing women issues, men paid more attention to practical rather than strategic women issues. Men legislators demonstrated an understanding of the issues that affected women mostly in terms of a need for providing monetary support, and community health service. Besides this, women legislators were more likely to express a wide variety of women’s rights issues. Their policy attitudes were consistent with those generally supported by the women’s movement and women’s rights organizations. Those were often contentious in nature.

It appears that even in a setting where legislators have little power to represent and the electoral and quota systems make the task of women in politics difficult; women still represent women differently than men. More particularly, women representatives play an important role in bringing legislative attention to women’s issues. This indicated that women rather than men will act on substantive issues of strategic importance to women. On the basis of frequency, and the inferential analysis of women issues versus general issues, the findings provided in this chapter lend support to the analytical expectation that the presence of women legislators matters in the process of enactment of substantive representation of women in Bangladesh parliament.

This chapter also seeks to address the expectation which stem from the previous normative and empirical investigations (see Chapter 2) that men do also represent women. The findings suggested that men clearly do represent women, more specifically, women’s practical issues. However, they often represent a narrow construction of women issues. This chapter did not want to overstate the differences it found but argued that men and women have somewhat different policy priorities, even in similar thematic areas. On the basis of frequency and inferential analysis of strategic versus practical women issues and a qualitative investigation of each kind of women issues, it is concluded that the degrees of SRW among men and women vary in parliament.
Nevertheless, women’s views from interviews and the descriptive analysis of their legislative interventions suggested a relationship between women’s presence and their representation on substantive women’s issues. In a way, it suggests that the presence of women in Bangladesh’s parliament has the potential to make a substantive contribution to women’s everyday lives, even when they have only a token representation in the legislature. This ultimately confirms the analytical expectation that women’s presence matters in bringing pertinent women’s concerns and issues to the forefront. Certainly, the analysis presented here cannot be generalised to women legislators in the context of all developing countries, but findings may be applied to similar socio-political contexts.


6.1. Introduction
The previous chapter has offered an analytical discussion on how women’s presence matter in parliament more than men in brining diversified issues pertinent to women in Bangladesh, more specifically, why and how women parliamentarians raise contentious issues which had strategic importance to women. The previous chapter used content analysis of four legislative activities of Bangladeshi parliament and examined general contributions of women legislators in discussion. This chapter extends the inquiry further and investigates the patterns of women legislators’ engagement in a women friendly policy making process. This informs the understanding of substantive representation of women (SRW) by examining legislators’ contribution in the enactment process of a specific women friendly policy in the parliament.
This chapter focuses on the process-oriented activities of the enactment of legislation in Bangladesh, which starts with initiating, drafting of a bill and ends with the pass with majority votes in parliament. It is important to be aware of the fact that an individual MP has a limited scope to contribute to the enactment of a law in Bangladesh parliament. Most of the legislation reflects the prerogatives of the government rather than individual representatives as most of the bills passed in Bangladesh parliament have been actually initiated by the government (discussed in Chapter 3). Therefore, measuring substantive representation through outcomes (i.e., numbers of bill passed) is problematic. This is because the policy outcome is dependent more on the institutional settings than on women parliamentarians as it involves distinct stages, actions, and political environment (discussed in Chapter 4). Thus, being influenced by the Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA, discussed in Chapter 2), this chapter also examines the complexity of establishing the relationship of women’s presence and their substantive representation considering the institutional and political realities, which sometimes make it difficult for women to influence policy making.

This chapter traces the process of women friendly policy enactment by taking a case of Domestic Violence Act in order to investigate how women in Bangladesh parliament contribute in the policy formulation process within their limited capacities. The analytical expectation of this chapter is that women can still be involved in the process of enactment in various capacities, even though they have limited authority; their presence becomes instrumental in initiating, following-up, drafting and facilitating the enactment of women friendly policy. Such analysis also allows examining other additional associated factors that may facilitate or hinder the process of enactment.

The Domestic Violence Act 2010, a law relevant for women in Bangladesh, is chosen to illustrate the role of women legislators and to identify the patterns of the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive contribution. The purpose of the act is to prevent violence against women committed by the members of their own family. Domestic violence is a daily reality for many women in Bangladesh. A law that safeguards them from it has long been awaited, as observed by the frequent and urgent calls for such an act from the civil society and women rights organizations (Nazneen, 2016). The ninth (9th) parliament has taken a number of legal steps to improve the situation of women. Enactment of the Domestic Violence Act 2010 is one of the significant achievements in the field of women’s equity policies, which occurred during the tenure of this parliament. Researchers have
analysed the domestic violence act in Bangladesh by emphasizing the contribution of civil society organisations (CSOs), and showed how informal network with key decision makers was instrumental for the successful enactment (Nazneen, 2016). That is an interesting way of looking into policy representation, however, it offers only a partial view. Furthermore, the findings might have overemphasised the role of external actors and overlooked the role of women legislators including other associated macro level factors, such as institutional and political factors, which would better account for policy representation.

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, it unpacks the process of adaptation of legislation that benefits women. The emphasis is given on the scope of influence of women legislators in Bangladesh parliament and the collective actions of different actors in the process of policy enactment. The analysis also reveals the role of men legislators, if there were any in the process. Second, it also reveals the patterns of the relationship between women’s presence and SRW. It examines the type and extent of women legislators’ involvement in supporting women-friendly policy change, hence, observes substantive representation of women. This chapter demonstrates three types of women’s involvement in the process of policy enactment—direct, indirect and intervening. The direct relationship emerges when a woman legislator, as an individual or within a group, plays a critical role in moving forward the bill, building a support base, creating awareness on the issue and pushing the issues to the top of the agenda by subverting the constraints which emerges on the way. The indirect relationship, on the other hand, refers to institutional, formal and informal procedures, and political contexts that facilitate the drafting, legal vetting, attaining Cabinet approval, and finally, approval for the bill from the members of parliament. The third type of women’s involvement suggests that a set of intervening factors along with women’s presence can facilitate the policy representation. The intervening factors include different external actors and women friendly political atmosphere in the parliament, which refer as macro level of factors in this study (see Chapter 2). The purpose of the intervening factors is to facilitate the relationship between women’s numerical presence and their policy representation. Such expectations came from a number of previous studies, and demonstrated that women’s movement and women-friendly political environment were necessary to ensure advocacy of women’s interest and to bring change in policies pertinent to women. These intervening factors would make sense in the context of Bangladesh, where women rights organizations and other development agencies are actively working to ensure women’s political rights (see Chapter 3). The women friendly political environment could also be instrumental to ensure women legislators’ greater commitment to
women issues within a system where executives dominates the arena of policy making (see section 2.3.1.3 in Chapter 2). With this backdrop, the analysis of intervening factor is expected to demonstrate how women in parliament interact with different external actors and women friendly political environment can influence the relationship between women’s presence and their SRW.

This chapter on a combination of primary sources consisting of parliamentary debates from 2010 (year of the enactment of the bill), standing committee meeting reports, and interviews (with Speaker, Ministers, legislators, personnel from ministries, civil society actors involved in the process of policy enactment; and experts). The thematic aspects of Involvement with Domestic Violence Act and participation in parliament from the interview code were used for the analysis in this chapter (see Appendix 4.2 for the coding frame of the Interview). The content of the debates (2010) and standing committee meeting reports were analysed using data driven qualitative content analysis. Case oriented process tracing is used to analyse the data to trace the stages of the policy-making process and identified actors that supported the formulation of a draft bill on domestic violence (Beach and Pedersen, 2013). Such tool for analysing the data is used to develop a comprehensive explanation for one substantively interesting case, i.e., domestic violence act. The discussion here follows two steps: First, it illustrates the adoption story of the Domestic Violence Act (from the policy initiation to passing it through the parliament) to identify different phases, actors, and actions involved in the policy enactment. Second, it discusses three types of possible influence related to the engagement of women legislators in the process of passing the Domestic Violence Act 2010.

### 6.2. The Enactment of a Government Policy: The Domestic Violence Act 2010

Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, the then Minister of Women and Children Affairs, introduced the Domestic Violence (Protection and Prevention) Act in the parliament on 21 July 2010. The parliament of Bangladesh passed the Bill on 5 October 2010. Subsequently, it came into force in December of the same year and criminalised the act of domestic violence. The underlying motivation behind such a bill was to stop all kinds of physical, mental, and sexual abuse suffered by women, which occur within their respective households and are perpetrated by their family members. The law was unique in various ways. First, it includes a definition of domestic violence which was previously unrecognised as an act of violence in Bangladesh. Second, the bill adds urgent and interim protection orders for

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75 The previous laws were not enough or sufficient to criminalise the domestic based violence and also not enough to protect women from the violence they face in their own house.
women and children subjected to such abuse. Finally, it specifies the duties of concerned authorities, including the police, health services, and lawyers, in addressing such violence, which was not discussed before by the existing laws dedicated to stop violence against women.

This section traces the process of enactment of the bill analysing the formal stages involved in the legislation process of Bangladesh. The legal process of the passage of the law occurs in two distinct steps—(a) policy development, drafting and Cabinet approval; and (b) parliamentary discussions. Each stage highlights the role of different actors, motivations they hold, strategies they used in moving forward the bill, creating awareness on the issue and pushing it to the top of the agenda by subverting the constraints.

6.2.1. Policy Development, Drafting and Cabinet Approval

The Domestic Violence Act was a government-led legislation. However, the demand for making such a bill came from the civil society organisations in the first place. As the then Speaker of the parliament noted, the “government’s decision to make a law mostly depends on the need and demands coming from the people” (LWS201502, Sep 2015). The need and demand for a law to stop violence against women by their family members emerged within a specific context. During the 1990s, domestic violence acts were adopted in the neighbouring countries, such as in India, Malaysia, and Pakistan. Following these initiatives, women movement organisations and other civil society organisations took the effort of drafting a potential framework of the legislation in 2002 and kept mobilising the demand to formalise the bill to the government (AC201639, 2016).

In 2006, the Law Commission of Bangladesh took the initiative to explore the relevance of such a law in the context of Bangladesh following the continuous demands from the civil society and women rights organisations (Chopra, 2006). They have tailored contents of the bills from the aforementioned countries and adopted it according to the realities in Bangladesh, such as harassment due to the failure to have a son, violence related to dowries, and acid attacks. In 2007, women rights organisations formed a coalition called Citizen’s Initiative against Domestic Violence (CiDV) to initiate the process of drafting the law. The coalition consisted of 38 human rights and women rights organisations which brought together civil society organisations, government officials, MPs, politicians, and other relevant stakeholders in the county. The objectives of the coalition were to draft the law, maintain advocacy,
and keep lobbying with Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) for their attention and support in this subject-matter (AC201639, 2016).

During the military-backed caretaker government from 2006-2007, the CiDV approached the Ministry and submitted a draft of the Domestic Violence Act. Nevertheless, due to the political uncertainty at that time, the process was halted till the shift of the power to an elected government. After the general elections of 2008, the Bangladesh Awami League formed a new government with a two-third majority in November. Dr. Chaudhury was appointed as the minister of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) at the beginning of 2009. The CiDV approached the then Minister Dr. Chaudhury and some other influential legislators, including a few influential male legislators to expedite the matter. The coalition organised a national dissemination workshop to deliver the rationale behind the law and the relevance of different provisions under a potential act. In an interview with the author, an activist from CiDV shared this journey and observed that the purpose was to get an urgent attention of relevant executives from relevant stakeholders of the government, and create public awareness (CSO 201736, 2017).

The coalition’s draft policy received support from Dr. Chaudhury, who was a lawyer by training and had previously been associated with women’s rights movements. Under her supervision, the ministry took over and decided to use its donor-funded Multi-Sectoral Project on Violence against Women (MSVAW)76 to lead the drafting process. A series of consultation meetings with relevant stakeholders took place in eight months during the whole process of drafting the law. These stakeholders included women’s rights organizations, women members of parliament, national women’s associations, the Ministry of Women’s and Children's Affairs, and the Department of Women’s Affairs. All came together to work for the law. According to a senior official of the MSVAW:

> The whole process of consultation took place around seven to eight months. The civil society organizations submitted a suggested law, which was in English and was also not compatible with our country context. Based on intensive studies on several other bills, we re-drafted the proposal, shared it with all the stakeholders, discussed it clause by clause, and collected

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76 The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs as part of the Government of Bangladesh, has embarked upon a joint effort with the Government of Denmark entitled the “Multi Sectoral Programme on Violence against Women”. The objective of this project is to redress and prevent violence against women. Some components of this project include a public awareness campaign regarding violence against women, a one stop crisis centre for women of domestic or sexual violence, a national trauma counselling centre, and the establishment of the first National Forensic DNA profiling laboratory. For further information, visit at [http://www.mspvaw.gov.bd/](http://www.mspvaw.gov.bd/).
feedback. The draft law was uploaded on our website for general feedback and also sent to different concerned ministries for experts’ feedback (GOM201641, 2016).

A large number of discussion sessions took place and different concerns were raised considering the sensitivity involved in making such a law. One coalition member, in an interview, informed that both government officials and legislators were concerned whether or not this act should influence in the breakup of families (DWRO201529, 2015). In response to such objection, coalition members used to offer arguments that the bill would be a nonbinding act with limited options for penalty, and the purpose of the bill would be to seek remedies and ensure interim protection for women subjected to violence (DWRO201529, 2015).

According to the Secretariat Instruction77, concerned ministry MoWCA and its division (Department of Women Affairs) are responsible for the formulation, execution, and review of the policies within its jurisdiction. MSVAW Project, on behalf of the department, has organised several consultation meetings including an inter-ministerial meeting78 in order to collect the feedback during 2009 (GOM201641, 2016). Senior ministerial officials, joint secretaries (in general) and the Secretary of MoWCA (in some instances) chaired those consultation meetings where civil society actors, women activists, politicians, lawyers were present and again shared their views. Legislative drafters from different ministries, including the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA), attended these meetings and provided their legal advice (GOM201641, 2016). The inter-ministerial meeting was also held after finalizing the draft bill by MoWCA. As per the Rules of Business, MoWCA prepared a note with a summary and significance of the bill and sent that to the Cabinet committee for its approval (CSO201635, 2015). Dr. Chaudhury had to convince the Cabinet members including the Prime Minister on the importance and relevance of the bill in the context of Bangladesh. Finally the bill was approved by the members of the Cabinet.

Following the approval of the Cabinet under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the preliminary/draft bills, in general, are sent back to the concerned Ministry with a discussion note

77 Ch. IV, Instruction 100 of the Secretariat Instruction. The primary purpose of the Secretariat Instructions is to ensure uniformity and efficiency in the observance of administrative practices and procedures. The secretary, who is the senior civil servant within each ministry or division, is responsible for the observance of the Instructions.

78 It is a format of a meeting where representatives from different relevant ministries and related departments come together to discuss about certain policy issues and to provide their valuable feedback.
listing different feedback to finalise the bill. In this case, Cabinet passed the draft bill without any rigorous changes in the text except a few suggestions on further improvement in relation to the use of legal words in the content (GOM201641, 2016). As per the Rule of the Business, the draft bill was also sent to the MoLJPA for legal vetting. The drafting wing of the ministry\(^7\) checked the precision of the draft bill and translated the approved proposal into an acceptable draft through the application of technical legal language (LWS201502, 2015). They were also tasked to review whether the bill complies with the context of Bangladesh.

Usually, in case of any disagreement between the drafting committee and the concerned ministry over the bills’ substantive contents, the ministry can ask for a further consultation meeting. However, interviewees told that no such disagreement was evident in the case of the Domestic Violence Bill. Finally, an acceptable version of the bill was sent to the Cabinet again by the concerned ministry for its final consideration. It then received a final endorsement from the Cabinet and Prime Minister’s Office, and was sent to the Parliament Secretariat to commence the parliamentary phase. The entire process of policy development, drafting, and approval of the bill from the Cabinet took place within 2009.

6.2.2. Parliamentary Phases

The parliamentary phase includes the introduction of the bill to the parliament, scrutiny through the committees and the enactment of the bill by the votes of the legislators. As per the rules of the house, every act has to go through three parliamentary phases, referred to as the first, second and third reading (see Appendix 6.1 for the steps of the legislative process in Bangladesh). The first reading means the introduction of the bill; then it is considered for the second reading, and finally, the bill is passed in the third reading (Ahmed, 2002; 2007). Between the first and the second readings, this bill was sent to the concerned standing committee for scrutiny. Domestic Violence Bill was passed after going through its first and second readings. Therefore, the entire parliamentary phase took only three months. In an interview with the author, a women’s rights activist told that the bill experienced almost no opposition from the parliamentarians and full support from the executive (i.e., government) (DWRO201530, 2015). By going through each phase, this section maps out the stories, discussion, negotiations, and actions which took place within the parliament in relation to this bill.

\(^7\) The drafting wing of the ministry was set up in 2000.
First Reading: Unlike in Canada and the United Kingdom, the first reading in the Bangladesh parliament is only a formal procedure by which the bill is introduced into the house (Murphy, 2002). Dr. Chaudhury introduced the draft bill in the parliament on 6 June 2010, which already received a Cabinet approval. At this stage, the draft bill was presented by her with a summary and objectives of the bill, but no debates took place. The ceremony is meant to garner the approval of the Speaker to send the bill to the standing committee for further scrutiny (see Appendix 6.1). It is a constitutional obligation for the parliament to appoint a committee for further evaluation, and it is a recent practice that bills are referred to standing committee on a systematic basis (Ahmed, 1998; Murphy, 2002). On the very same day of 6 June, the bill was forwarded to the Standing Committee of Women’s and Children’s Affairs following the consent of the Speaker and members of the house (Bangladesh Parliament, 2010b).

Committee Stage: Like any other government-led bill, the draft Domestic Violence Bill was sent to the committee, where the members of the committee reviewed the clauses again. Apart from discussing clause by clause, the committee also discussed the principles and subject matters of the bill. At this stage, it is only the members of the committee under the leadership of the chair of the committee who took part in the discussion. The entire process of scrutinising and collecting feedback from the members of the committee on the draft bill took around three months. The committee consists of ten legislators including the chair of the committee. Two men and eight women legislators (from both direct elections and reserved seats) are appointed in the committee (see Appendix 6.2 for the list of standing committee members). As a chair of the standing committee on Women and Children Affairs, Ms. Meher Afroze Chumki, MP, led the evaluation process in the standing committee and organised various consultations with different stakeholders, including male members of the parliament, and officials from other ministries.

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80 The government bill needs a seven-day notice before its submission to the parliament. In case of private member’s bill, it requires a 15-day notice.
81 At the First Reading the title of the Bill is announced but there is no discussion and no amendment can be moved. The Member-in-charge who introduces the Bill may propose a number of measures. S/he may forward it for consideration by the House, refer it to a standing or select committee or circulate it to elicit public opinion. From the seventh parliament, all government bills are referred to standing committees for detail scrutiny followed by first reading. See: PSCWA 2009, 2011.
82 As per the Rule of Procedure, it carries out oversight, examines legislation relevant to the department and carries out investigations. The activity of the parliamentary standing committee (PSC) of MOWCA during the parliamentary tenure of 2009-2013 promoted awareness and open discussion on various police-related issues.
83 A total of 350 MPs in Bangladesh parliament are serving in the committees with overlapping membership in various committees. There are in total 19 elected women legislators and 50 women legislators from reserved seats that serve in a total of 46 committees. 16% women participate in 47 committees.
Intensive discussion on the proposed bill took place at the committee level consequently at the 13th, 14th and 17th meeting of the committee that was scheduled in between August and September of 2010. 13th and 14th standing committee meetings\(^8^4\) were dedicated to the discussion of the draft bill. The representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) were also invited to be a part of the meeting. In an interview with the then chair of the committee, she told:

I was in charge of further evaluation. I sat several times with my members of the committee and also with a few experts from civil society, lawyers who were involved in this process from the beginning and they were invited to the parliament. The draft law was revised based on the feedback/suggestions from the participants (LWE201503, 2015).

In the first meeting (13th meeting), members of the committee discussed and decided how to proceed on the scrutiny of the bill. Members of the committees decided to invite different stakeholders (mostly civil society organisations who were part of the coalition) to attend the next standing committee meeting. The 14th committee meeting took place on 19 August 2010. Members had intensive discussion and shared their comments on the bill. Along with the chair of the committee, eight members of the parliament (seven women and one man), including Minister Dr. Chaudhury, and another 17 participants from the Ministries, national women’s associations, women's rights organizations and civil society organizations, were present in the meeting. The executive director of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad (member of CiDV coalition), executive director of Bangladesh Women Lawyers’ Association (member of coalition as well), executive director of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Songstha (member of the coalition), secretaries from Ministry of Social welfare, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, and representatives from the political parties participated the meeting. A participant list is attached to Appendix-6.3.

Dr. Chaudhury was present in two of the meetings as a representative of the Prime Minister and participated in the discussion and even responded to queries that came from the participants. While going through the meeting minutes of the standing committee, the content suggested that debates took place among the participants on various issues relating to specific provisions of the bill. Some of the concerns were raised from the male participants about how to maintain the family values. Only two participants: a male legislator and a female managing director of Department of Women Affairs raised concerns of incorporating a provision of ‘arbitration’ in the bill. They discussed how to prevent

\(^8^4\) A total of 40 Standing Committee meetings took place during the entire 9th parliamentary tenure.
any possibilities to file a false case against an innocent man to make him victim of the situation. They argued that victims of domestic violence could fail to prove the abuse took place in some cases because of a lack of witnesses. In response, the participants proposed specifying the distinction between a false accusation and a situation in which the accusers failed to meet the burden of proof. Yet, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs did not support the idea of incorporating the provision of arbitration with words such as ‘mutual understanding’. She argued that any case with ‘false allegations’ or ‘mistakes’ could be resolved under the consent of both parties and with a goal of mutual compromise.

In addition, male participants argued that this bill may influence the family values and/or potentially break the marital relations. They have justified their position with the argument, “complication may increase if a woman goes directly to police and court with a complaint about a simple family problem which may break a family so easily” (PSCWA, 2011, p.142). In response to such criticism, chair of the committee, Meher Afroze Chumki, and other women legislators justified the bill by claiming that the “domestic violence bill is supposed to act as spouse counseling, mediation, and arbitration in the case of violence, and it does not intend to break up the family structure” (DWRO201530, 2015). The then Minister Dr. Chaudhury supported the justification offered by the chair of the committee and continued explaining that:

This act is designed to protect women and children from violence and provide mechanisms so that victims can stay within their family. Women suffered every day in their household every day. We want to stop that. We have different laws where death due to abuse, sexual violence, rape and women trafficking, etc. are criminal act and provision of punishments are provided theirs according to the panel code. But this act does not have the provision of punishment in such incidence. This act aims to provide interim safety to victims within their household; and in case of violation of such interim protection, there is a provision of punishment. But there is no provision for penalizing the perpetrator for domestic violence (LWS201502, 2015).

The committee members also urged for the expansion of the definition of domestic violence, as it has been the case that in the absence of a precise definition, victims frequently received no remedies under the existing laws addressed violence against women. Participants of the meeting advocated for revising the definition by adding ‘any act committed against women which cause physical and mental sufferings.’ Also, they urged to replace words like ‘violation of respect’ to ‘physical and mental abuse’. Similarly, a few others voiced their dissatisfaction at the failure to incorporate marital rape into the
definition of domestic violence. In reply to such suggestions, the chair of the committee responded that “there is no option of adding marital rape as a category of domestic violence at this stage” (Bangladesh Parliament, 2010; p.138). The bill is the outcome of series of discussion with legal experts in the field and was already vetted by the Ministry of Law. Therefore, any significant change in the draft might delay the process of enactment, as opined by Dr. Chaudhury:

The committee has limited chances to bring any substantial changes in the text of the bill as the legal department already reviews it (PSCWA, 2011, p.145).

This statement suggests that bringing change into the existing provision of the bill at the committee level is extremely constrained. The civil society actors and other participants at the meeting could not use the committee system to change the content of the bill or incorporate any additional provision. The committee itself cannot alter the rules of the legislative process. The issue of including marital rape as an act of violence itself is a contentious issue, and may rise to a multitude of criticisms, which would complicate the process of enactment, as claimed by Standing Committee Chair. While interviewing a woman legislator, who was involved at the drafting stage of the bill, she reconfirmed that the coalition members wanted to incorporate the marital rape clause in the first place (LWS201615, 2016).

**Second Reading:** The second reading takes place only after submission of the committee report to the house. At this stage, the principal provisions of the bill are discussed in the House with an emphasis on the consultation of the public opinion. Ms. Meher Afroze presented the bill with key recommendations of the committee on 5 October 2010, after three months of the initial introduction of the bill. Only the general provisions and recommendations were discussed as per the Rule of the Secretariat.

After the presentation, open debate on the bill took place on the floor. Although Ms. Meher Afroze presented the bill in the second reading, the Minister was seen replying to every question. It is important to mention here that the bill did not face any significant opposition in the floor of the

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85 After detailed scrutiny, the committee returns the bill to the House with a report, which may or may not contain proposed amendments. Copies of the report are made available to MPs. At this stage, if the committee rejects the bill, it will not be included in the Orders of the Day. The researcher could not collect the committee report from the archive of the parliament library.

86 One may consult the cases in Canada and Australia (Murphy, 2002).
parliament. A male legislator, Mr. Fazlul Azim MP, had expressed his dissatisfaction for using the term ‘domestic’ as the title of the bill. Mr. Fazlul Azim mentioned in his speech that:

Principally, I support the bill, and it is a great experience that Bangladesh is going to enact such a law, which is recommendable. However, the word ‘domestic’ may have adverse effects in general. Violence against women needs to be tackled nationally and socially, but not domestically (Parliamentary Debate of 6th Session, 2010).

In response to his opinion, Ms. Meher Afroze MP further reminded the house explaining that the procedure of drafting of the bill followed all legal arrangements and went through several consultations with different stakeholders.

In response to the concern of tackling domestic violence against women socially instead of legally, Ms. Meher Afroze argued that the government and civil society organisations together had undertaken several programmatic interventions for the protection of women from abuses. When it is about to protect women within their households, the government could hardly do anything without any legal jurisdiction. She emphasised that “there is a need to provide interim safety and security to women and affected children within their house. She further emphasised the fact that family is not beyond society or state” (LWS201502, 2015).

Mr. Azim MP also recommended on the expansion of the definition of the victims by adding male members of the family along with women and children. However, the then-Minister disagreed and explained that domestic violence against women is acute, and in most of the cases physical, mental, and sexual assaults against women occur inside the house. She claimed further:

The impact of such violence on women is immense, and we (women) do not think men should be part of this act. Every clause of the bill was reviewed, consulted with different experts and the importance of incorporating men in the definition of the victim did not come up.

Therefore, the suggestion cannot be accepted (6th Parliamentary session, 2010).

The Speaker presented Mr. Azim’s proposals on the floor of the parliament for an open vote. The majority of the house voted to reject his proposals.

Usually, third reading phase is required if the bill needs to incorporate major recommendations as feedback. In the absence of any strong oppositions, Speaker submitted the bill to the house for vote in the same day of the second reading. The Amendment Bill passed by the two-third of a total number of MPs on the same day, 5 October 2010. There is no roll call system used in the Bangladesh
parliament for passing any bill. Instead, MPs pass the bill by saying ‘YES’ or ‘NO’ (voice vote). A women legislator, in an interview with the researcher, mentioned that the entire process of enactment—from introducing the bill in the parliament to the end—followed an usual parliamentary procedure; and it took three months, which is shorter than any other government bill (LWS201516, 2015).

This section traced the process of domestic violence act to explore the active role played by the different actors such as the Minister, Chair of the Standing committee, members of the standing committee, civil society coalition, women legislators, and officials from concerned ministries. It demonstrated the fact that women were involved in the policy process at various capacities. Women’s formal and informal presence was instrumental in initiating, following up, drafting and forwarding the bill to its end. The discussion also projected that male legislators played a limited role for the successful enactment of the bill. They were also seen raising some fundamental questions on the importance of having another law addressing violence against women in the private spheres and changing the title of the bill.

6.3. Presence of Women Legislators and their Participation in Policy Adoption
The previous section has provided evidence that women played an important role in drafting and passing the bill of Domestic Violence Act. This section discusses the trajectories of different actions that were involved unifying the energy towards transforming the bill into an act. It also illustrates how the formal procedures, informal practices, and political atmospheres have been crucial to facilitate the drafting, legal vetting, approval of the cabinet, approval from the members of parliament, and containing any opposition of the bill. This section, therefore, examines how women contributed, and what kind of influence they exerted in what roles to pass the bill. The following subsections discuss three distinct types of influence of women legislators and other associated factors (such as direct, indirect and intervening) and provide evidence in support of them.

6.3.1. Direct Types of Influence
As defined earlier, the direct relationship emerges when a woman legislator plays a critical role in moving forward the bill and contributes directly until it passes through parliament. This section provides evidence or examples to support the proposition—women legislators’ direct influence matters in the process of enactment of government-led women-friendly policies. Many interview
respondents of this study repeatedly referred Minister Dr. Chaudhury’s presence among the party elites as instrumental to advance the Domestic Violence Act. Some informants named an ex-foreign minister and the chair of the standing committee who also sought to ensure the representation of women within their respective capacities. Across multiple interviews with legislators from the opposition, it became evident that they had also viewed the presence of these aforementioned women actors as essential for the bill. However, they have expressed their dissatisfaction towards executives’ domination.

Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP and Ms. Meher Afroze MP actively participated in the drafting and parliamentary phase of the bill. Their positional power in the Cabinet and parliament played a significant role in the process. In an interview with Ms. Meher Afroze, she confirmed their involvement in the process, described it, and explained their collaboration. (LWE201503, 2015). Interviews with actors from civil society organisations and officials from Ministry further informed that a close relationship between the Minister of Women's and Children's Affairs and the Prime Minister has been instrumental in expediting Cabinet’s discussion on the law, and the process of legal vetting.

Interview findings also highlighted the formal and informal mechanisms through which women legislators could influence government’s policy and initiatives. Several informants felt that women's presence at the right place can influence the tone of the debate or can defend women’s position better. According to an expert, who was part of the drafting committee and worked closely with the Ministry, the Minister commonly has to sit with the Prime Minister to justify the urgency and specialty of the Act for Bangladesh. A women’s rights activist, in an interview, mentioned that the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA) was not happy to introduce another new law to protect women from violence (DWRO201530, 2015). They were sceptical about targeting only women as the victims of domestic violence and recommended to incorporate men under the provision of the Domestic Violence Act. When asked to recall specific examples of any opposition, chair of the standing committee pointed to discussions of women legislators in parliamentary debates and standing committee meetings where they exert analytical power in the discussion. The inclusion of the word ‘domestic’ in the title of the act was a big concern for a few representatives of the government, most

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87Chapter 4 discussed existing laws for protection from violence against women in Bangladesh.
of whom were men. The similar concern surfaced from men legislators at the parliamentary debate. Mr. Fazlul Azim’s concern was already mentioned in an earlier section. Male MPs’ critic was mostly related to the concern that women may misuse the law against their partners, which would lead to break ups in families.

The Minister played a crucial role in justifying the purpose of the law and influencing the Cabinet and Ministries to understand the importance of having a specific law to stop violence against women, committed by their family members. To reply to their queries and concerns, the Minister had to defend the position of the bill and to justify not incorporating men into the content of the draft bill in the first place. In an interview, she mentioned:

Men can also be victims of violence and women can be perpetrators. Women need to be empowered, however, since men in our country are more powerful economically and socially. Domestic violence is caused to women mostly. The existing Penal Code rules do not address domestic violence. Therefore, it is not often recognised as a crime and remains one of the biggest threats to women’s security (LWS201502, 2015).

Furthermore, she presented facts and figures on violence against women and explained that wife beating in Bangladesh constitutes by far the most common form of violence against women and girls, and also a significant cause of physical injury (Meeting reports of the Standing Committee, 2011). The presence of women mattered in this instance to address the criticisms against the bill and led the enactment process. A member of the standing committee in an interview mentioned, “We handled objections from our male colleagues well” (LWS201502, 2015).

The presence of women legislators also mattered in ensuring support from the different ministries, Cabinet and members of parliament. A majority of the interviewees confirmed that it was Dr. Chaudhury and Ms. Meher Afroze, under the supervision of the Prime Minister, who led the process of the bill. It is also important to note that a previous attempt to pass the bill was not successful, partially because of the lack of interest of the then adviser in charge of the Ministry of the military backed Caretaker Government back in 2007.\textsuperscript{88} GdV coalition members approached to the advisor of

\textsuperscript{88} The Caretaker Government was introduced in the Constitution of Bangladesh in 1996 after a settlement among major political parties in the parliament. For a three-month long tenure in the governmental transition, the caretaker administrations were comprised of politically impartial personalities from the society and were headed by the most-recent retired Chief Justice of Bangladesh. The national elections of 1996, 2001 and 2008 were held under this system. However,
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and tried to convince her to lead the process. An expert, in an interview with the author, discussed “Rasheda K. Chowdhury (ex-adviser of the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh in 2007) supported the bill, however, she was not ready to lead the process. The Caretaker Government was not interested to initiate any bill that may cause controversy as they are not an elected government” (DWRO201530). Therefore, the first attempt did not succeed due to the lack of political interest of the then-government.

A total of 18 small and significant consultations and national dissemination meetings took place before and after the Ministry took over the process of drafting (GOM201641, 2016). The Minister, along with the Chair of the standing committee, co-chaired a few of the drafting consultation meetings and national dissemination workshops. A member of parliament and a member of a civil society organisation mentioned that, without the Minister’s direct intervention, the Domestic Violence Act might have been dropped from the party’s policy agenda. After the successful transition to the democratic government in November 2008, the MoWCA took over the responsibility of finalizing the initial draft prepared by the CiDV coalition. The entire process of enactment of the Act took seven to nine months, as claimed by an official of the Ministry.

Along with the Minister, other influential woman legislators with executive position within the party hierarchy have also discussed their efforts at the party platform to build the support system and convince other male members of the party about the importance of the bill. While talking with an ex-foreign minister, Dr. Dipu Moni, who was also holding an executive position at the central committee of the party in power, she confirmed her own role in convincing the party bringing the policy into the party agenda (LWE201504, 2015). They had to negotiate with the party leaders by explaining the rationale behind such a significant act as part of their party’s commitment to ensuring women’s equity policies.

Dr. Chaudhury, Ms. Meher Afroze, and Dr. Dipu Moni were named as being directly involved in multiple domains of the process. Women legislators, interviewed in this study, emphasised the importance of their activities in the standing committee. Being a member of the committee, they enjoyed comparatively more power than others, who were not members of Women and Children

in 2011, the ruling AL-led government amended the constitution (15th amendment) to remove this ‘Caretaker’ government system by using the pretext of the Supreme Court verdict (Riaz, 2014).
Standing Committee. The researcher interviewed five women legislators who were holding neither executive nor party positions. They confirmed their participation in various consultation meetings where they provided inputs on the bill. While interviewing the members of CiDV coalition and the director of the Multi-Sectorial Project, they reconfirmed the presence of women politicians and legislators in the consultation meetings organised by them. The attendance record further confirmed their presence, and their contribution in the development, drafting, sharing, and revisions of the bill. This evidence, therefore, inform the argument that a few women legislators have played a crucial role in the process of enactment of government-led women-friendly policy.

Almost all respondents uniformly stated that the presence of frontbench women legislators, who hold a position in the relevant ministries, or in the parliamentary committee, or the party, mattered to a great extent. Their positional power allowed them to contribute directly and influence the process due to the policy-making system in Bangladesh. Their role was not limited to the drafting process but also ensured that the policy would reach through the Cabinet, Prime Minister’s office and remain on the parliamentary agenda, as well as the party’s agenda. In another way, it is plausible to argue that women legislators have been better able to influence policy outcomes when they hold institutional positions and/or policymaking authority for women. The direct relationship between women’s presence and their policy-making ability may only occur when the institutional framework allows women to contribute substantively on women policy. Therefore, the advancement of women to the frontbench could be considered as a crucial mechanism through which women’s presence in the parliament remains consolidated.

In summary, the discussion in this section confirmed the significance of direct influence of women legislators in the process of enactment of the Domestic Violence Act. The discussion showed that some women legislators, who are holding relevant executive position in parliament and in the relevant Ministry, had influenced the process directly. Women legislators were also observed using their positional power not only by moving the issues to the top of the agenda list, but also they led the process by subverting male legislature’s opposition in the Ministry and parliament. In addition, women were also observed supporting the policy by raising concerns of domestic violence in the parliament.
6.3.2. Indirect Types of Influence

Women legislators’ presence was beneficial as they also provided moral supports in favour of the bill. An indirect influence, such as moral support became crucial to build a support base and create awareness that facilitated the drafting, legal vetting, attaining the approval of the Cabinet and parliament. Indirect influence has mostly been exercised by the back-bench women legislators. They do not hold any positions in the parliament and have limited scope to participate in the legislative process. This section presents evidence of interactions from the legislators who were not part of the legislative process of the bill, however, have offered their moral support to those women legislators who contributed directly to the process.

The women legislators were also seen speaking about the bill outside of the legislature, mostly at the constituency and the party levels. Several women legislators, who were not involved directly in the process, claimed that they always took the opportunity to talk about the benefit of the bill in any political or public meeting at their respective constituencies. The standing committee members discussed about the importance of the bill with their colleagues in the party and in their respective constituencies. The purpose was to build a support chain informally outside of the parliament and raise awareness among the general public. An UNDP official who worked with the legislators of the 9th Parliament, in an interview with the researcher, confided that the presence of women within the parliament and party in power made a difference for the women executives. A few women legislators claimed that because of systematic constraints, such as lack of positional power; they were not able to involve or contribute directly to the process of policy development and drafting. Even though they were not involved directly, they provided their moral support for its success. Women legislators were also observed highlighting the issue of violence against women through different legislative interventions to seek more public attention. The majority of those interventions took the form of either asking for an immediate response to stop violence against women or asking for the government’s plans for preventing violence at home. Two women legislators confided that they had raised questions (both written and oral) concerning domestic violence and dowry-based violence in the parliament to show their support for the government’s initiative to stop domestic violence. Moreover, they have also asked for updates on the enactment of the bill which enforced the Minister to make regular statements on the issues. Hence, it raised awareness of the MPs on the subject matter. The statements and questions of these MPs were framed in a way that had shown their support to the government’s initiatives to curb domestic violence.
This sub-section highlights women legislators’ indirect influence on the policy process. Indirect influence was catered by those back bencher women legislatures who did not hold executive positions and were not entitled to participate in the legislation process. In addition, some legislators discussed about informal constraints with regards to their presence in the consultation meeting related to the Domestic Violence Act (GOM201641, 2016). Some backbench women legislators were invited to attend the consultation meetings without any designated roles. They were hesitant to participate in such meetings since they were not given a distinctive role to perform in the meetings. It happened in those occasions when an official from the Ministry, such as a Joint-secretary, chaired a session and treated women legislators as passive participants to provide their comments. As per the Warrant of Precedence of Bangladesh, a member of parliament ranks a higher position from that of a joint-secretary. In conversation with a woman legislator and also a member of standing committee, it was observed that:

MPs could only attend those consultation meetings where they have roles as discussants or as chairs along with secretary (LWE201510, 2015).

The similar explanation came from the director of the Multi-Sectoral Project while explaining back bencher women legislators’ contribution and lack of participation in the consultation meetings during the drafting stage. He further commented that legislators usually liked to attend only those meetings where Dr. Chaudhury (Minister) and Ms. Meher Afroze (chair of the standing committee) performed as chair and co-chair respectively (GOM201641, 2016).

Women legislators across all parties were optimistic about the adaptation of the bill. Women legislators from the opposition noted that they had worked together with the coalition in the beginning. However, they left the process since they became an opposition in the parliament and felt that it is not their place to influence the policy enactment, as the formal authority lies with the executives and frontbench women legislators. Instead, they viewed their role “as representing the interest of women on the floor of the parliament” (LWS201520, 2015). A woman legislator from the opposition, in an interview, responded that they were not present in the house on the day of enactment of the Domestic Violence Act. However, the bill received moral support from the opposition as they were not observed showing any dissatisfaction or disagreement with the provision, either at the committee level or in the parliamentary debate.
The discussion presented here suggests that women legislators have participated in policy representation at multiple stages where they utilised the scope to contribute in their respective capacities. The discussion also shows that backbench women legislators’ limited authority to influence the policy representation could hamper their direct involvement in the process. Even legislators, who desired to contribute, were refrained from voicing their concerns and stating their opinions because of their lack of official positions and clash within the hierarchy. However, findings suggest that these backbench legislators tried to influence the policy-making process indirectly by providing their informal and moral support to the frontbench legislators publicly. These findings shed light on the indirect types of influence that women legislators had in the policy making.

6.3.3. Intervening Influence

Intervening influence focuses on different factors that facilitate women’s policy representation. Women with executive positions, including the Prime Minister, exert two types of influence. Direct influence is already described in section 6.3.1. These women legislatures also employ intervening influence by setting a positive vibe to create a favourable condition for women related policy-making in the parliament. The other intervening factor is the contribution or influence of external actors, such as women rights organization in the context of Domestic Violence Act. The following section provides evidence on how such intervening factors facilitate the relationship between women’s numerical presence and their policy representation.

Interviews with experts, civil society actors, and women legislators highlighted that the political will of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the role of women’s rights organisation (or a coalition of such organisations) are undeniable to uphold the cause for an act in Bangladesh. The discussion here demonstrates the role of women’s rights organisations in mobilising the support base during the policy development stage. Civil society organisations, as external actors, were successful in attaining sufficient attentions of the Minister of Women and Children Affairs and several parliamentarians at the first place. An expert, in an interview, suggested that the CSOs managed to create a momentum and urgency for a new law to protect women from domestic violence (AC201639, 2016). They primarily started drafting the bill and mobilising the attention of the Law Commission to conduct further research. The contribution of civil society organisations was also referred by Dr. Chaudhury in an interview with the researcher. She confided, “The Domestic Violence Act was a combined effort” (LWS201502, 2015). She went further explaining the emergence of any laws in general by saying that
the government can lead enactment process of any kind of laws whenever there is a need for it, and a request can arrive from people's side including civil society organizations. The CiDV was also eager to take the credit as they were the first ones who had contributed to the policy initiation stage and drafted an initial version of bill. The civil society coalition and activists were successfully able to carry the movement from 2002 to 2009 and made it to the government’s desk.

The overall political atmosphere and Prime Minister’s political will were instrumental in receiving an approval from the Cabinet members. Her moral support had also influenced the process outside of the Cabinet, i.e., in the house of the parliament. For example, Dr. Chaudhury discussed the positive impact of the women-friendly political attitudes of the Prime Minister that facilitated the enactment process. Being the chief of the Cabinet, the PM had a role in gaining support from the Cabinet and approval from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA). Women legislators interviewed in this study argued that without the support of the Prime Minister and her good political will, the Domestic Violence Act 2010 might have been dropped from the overall policy agenda. The role of the Prime Minister and her election commitment were described as supportive and beneficial to the empowerment of women. In an interview with an ex-Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, she reconfirmed the claim by saying that:

It was not that difficult to convince the Cabinet members, as Prime Minister wholeheartedly supported the initiatives. The Prime Minister wanted this law. Without her command, it was not possible. She wanted to get it through the Cabinet (LWE201504, 2015).

Legislators received a clear signal on PM’s optimism about the bill as it was placed to the parliament after the approval of the Cabinet members, Prime Minister’s Office, and even after it’s (the bill) legal vetting by the MoLJPA. It also delivered the message of urgency to pass the Bill without delay. Indeed, the entire process from introduction to enactment with a majority vote took only three months. The short duration also left little scope for holding any extensive debates or initiating parliamentary scrutiny. Although there were some criticisms about some specific provisions of the bill inside the parliament, no firm opposition was recorded against the enactment of the act. While talking with women activists who were part of the civil society organizations coalition, they stressed the political atmosphere for such type of legal steps (dedicated only for women) to make a successful one. According to one of them,

This kind of change requires a positive atmosphere. We have been trying to adopt such type of law in our country; our neighbouring states have already moved with such law. The elections
of 2008 gave us an opportunity to move forward. The elected governments have shown real sympathy towards women issues during the previous terms, and we were hoping to make this happen again this time (DWRO201529, 2015).

The discussions in this sub-section demonstrates how a set of intervening factors, such as the role of external actors other than women legislators and women friendly political atmosphere have facilitated the enactment process of the Domestic Violence Act. The discussion also reveals how these intervening factors played an important role in the enactment process. This argument does not mean to reduce the importance of women’s presence or their involvement in the process. Instead, it argues that the legislators’ capacity and ability are influenced by intervening aspects, for example, the strength of the Prime Minister and external actors’ interest in campaigning for women’s concern. In a way, it stresses external actors and political context as macro factors, both of which have been useful for the successful enactment of the Act.
6.4. Discussion and Implication of the Domestic Violence Act

This chapter examines the scope of women legislators’ participation and their contribution in enactment of a legislation benefiting women. The analysis here offers an insight in a specific way of looking at substantive representation of women legislators in parliament by taking a case of the Domestic Violence Act 2010. The case was a result of combined efforts of different actors and presence of different factors. The analysis reveals that while women legislators with positional power contribute directly in the policy enactment, women’s policy representation can also be shaped by their indirect or informal involvement with the process. The analysis of the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act also shows a third type of influence—intervening. The influence of favourable women friendly environment within the parliament and mobilisation of women rights organisation contributed in shaping women’s policy representation.

Given the dominance of the executive branch over the parliament, it is unlikely that women’s presence in legislature directly influences women’s policy representation. Rather, the direct relationship is likely to occur through women’s access to key positions. Primarily, only women who hold appropriate institutional position, such as Dr. Choudhury, Ms. Meher Afroze, and Dr. Dipu Moni, in this case, played a critical role by steering the wheel and subverting the opposition within and outside of parliament.

The presence of women legislators among backbench representatives is also necessary because of their indirect influences over policy representation. The concerned Ministry (Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs) and Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs are solely responsible for finalizing the draft and legal vetting. As claimed by Luvenduski and Norris (2003), women legislators will still play an essential role in “developing and debating public policy, shaping and revising legislation, scrutinizing the actions of government department (p.99). The case of the Domestic Violence Act shows similar results, where women other than those in power have offered their support indirectly for the policy by working behind the scene, through advocacy and by supporting women in executive positions. A few women legislators were also part of the coalition and took part in the advocacy to add their support in the initiatives. Women’s presence within the parliamentary standing committee made a difference for the women, even if the impact was not very large. It is essential to have women as representatives not only at the executive position but also at the backbench to indirectly influence women-related policy change.
The act represents a successful case of collaboration among women rights organisations, civil society organisations, women politicians, and the government, who worked together for the bill. In response to the overemphasised contribution of external actors and overlooking role of women legislators by existing studies, this chapter offers plausible evidences to show different types of influence of women legislators on the enactment process. The investigation of substantive representation of women in parliament could be misguided if the focus solely remains on the role of external actors in this particular case. Therefore, the combined efforts of the presence of women legislators, their direct and indirect role, and different intervening factors were crucial for the enactment of the policy. Such explanation also suggested the importance of looking at various factors that might influence the enactment of substantive representation. Unlike the literature in British politics (Annesley and Gains, 2010; Lovenduski, 2005b), this study acknowledges a combination of intervening factors, such as importance of the role of Prime Minister and agenda of her party, which can be considered to understand women’s policy representation. The case is also an example of how the link between women’s presence and their policy representation is informed by the political, contextual aspects as well as the role of external actors in Bangladesh.

Although this chapter added to our understanding of women legislators’ contribution to the process of policy enactment, it constitutes a limitation by not offering an analysis of a failed case or any failed previous attempts of Domestic Violence Act. It influences in a way that the conclusions drawn here are tentative and limited to the legislative intervention on the floor of Bangladesh parliament. At the same time, this chapter possibly manages to provide detailed data which includes parliamentary proceedings, committee reports and interviews of different stakeholders to demonstrate the significance of women’s presence in policy representation. Importantly, the analysis of a specific case in this chapter complements the analysis of the parliamentary debates (see Chapter 5) which shows that women legislators have played a substantive role in speaking up on contentious issues that are pertinent to women in the context of Bangladesh. Notwithstanding, analysis in this chapter will provide the foundation for the final empirical chapter that examines the variation among women legislators in their representation on women issues.
Chapter Seven: Understanding Women’s Substantive Representation: Relevance of Micro and Macro Level Factors

7.1. Introduction
This chapter is designed to address the second research question which attempts to understand the features of different factors influencing women’s legislative representation on women issues. The purpose is to conceptualise the link between women’s presence and substantive representation by mapping various institutional and contextual factors facilitating or constraining women legislators’ ability to speak up for women. A useful way of establishing a relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation is to analyse factors which facilitate or constraint women’s ability and interest for acting on behalf of women. Constraining factors can put barriers, while facilitating factors can reduce obstacles that hinder women’s representation on women issues. Being influenced by the Feminist Institutionalism (FI) and Political Socialization literature, this chapter broadly classifies these facilitating and constraining factors into two thematic categories—micro and macro factors.

The micro-level factors refer to women legislators’ social status, education, prior exposure to politics, and previous personal and professional experiences from within and outside of the family, gathered during childhood and early adulthood (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2). These micro-factors range from the situations women legislators faced during their early development as persons and political actors which impacted their first political engagements, their current involvement with external actors, all the way to their current destination in the parliament. This dissertation argues that women legislators’ ability to represent women can be influenced by their perceptions, their social characteristics, political socialization, and pathways to parliament (pathways that women choose to take in order to enter the parliament; discussed in Chapter 2). The macro level represents the overall contextual aspects faced by women legislators, such as their relationship with external actors, the electoral system and quota mandate, formal and informal rules of the parliament, and the political opportunity structure of the country (discussed in Chapter 2). This dissertation analyses the parliament as an institution, the electoral system, and the overall political environment, with regard to their impact on women’s ability to speak up. The macro level factors refers to the greater political atmosphere of Bangladesh, the aspects of the political institution (parliament) within which women legislators operate, the aspects of the electoral system (selection vs. election), and the connections they establish with external actors. On the other hand, the micro level factors consist of individual resources, such
as the outlook of women legislators on women issues, the demographic background of women legislators, and the political background including the pathways through which an individual woman legislator enters the parliament.

The assumption is that each of those levels consists of distinctive features or factors, derived from both data and the concepts, which might influence women legislators’ ability differently. Overall, these factors can either constrain or facilitate the substantive representation for women politicians and lawmakers. This chapter is based on the argument that the macro level factors mentioned above affect all women in a similar way. It is the specific types of individual resources (described as the micro level) that woman legislators bring along with them into the institution, which, in turn, interact with greater political, institutional and contextual factors (described as macro level). The differences in such interactions can explain individual MP’s ability and inability to act for women. In other words, the interactions between micro and macro levels, as described in this dissertation, are considered to account for variations in the substantive representation of women (SRW).

To understand the variation, this chapter examines two types of women legislators—those who are active and those who are not active on women issues, which would allow the exploration of how different contextual, institutional, and individual aspects influence their role differently. In other words, it examines the relevance of factors (identified in the Chapter 2 and any other factors derived from data) in the process of enactment of women’s substantive representation. The methodological decision of categorising interviewees into ‘active’ and ‘not active’ was done on the basis of the frequencies of women legislators’ intervention on women issues on the floor. A total of 13 women legislators out of the 23 interviewed have demonstrated their active participation in the plenary session, as well as in the policy making sessions pertinent to women. The interventions here included participation in motions on urgent public interests designed to seek attention (Rule 71 and Rule 71A) and in parliamentary question-answer session (discussed in Chapter 5). The second observable criteria of assessing the contribution of women legislators other than participating on the floor include their non-floor contribution, such as, women’s participation at the committee level, initiation of women friendly policy (in this case, Domestic Violence Act 2010), and involvement in the policy draft (see Chapter 6). A median of the frequency of women legislators’ floor participation and their participation in the standing committee was calculated by using all of these types of contributions of women
The findings presented in this chapter are based on semi-structured interviews with both women and men legislators from 9th parliament, experts working on parliament and women legislators, as well as on biographical information of women legislators (see Chapter 3). The interviews were analysed with coding schemes developed both inductively (aspects came from the legislators and not mentioned in the analytical framework) and deductively (used the issues originated from literature reviews and factors used in the analytical framework). Interview coding frame is attached in Appendix 4.3. A case centric process tracing approach is used to analyse variations in women legislators’ representation on women issues with the aim of providing a sufficient explanation on the particular outcome, in this case, variation in SRW among women (George and Bennett, 2005; Beach and Pedersen, 2013). This chapter adopts a form of detailed narratives with an aim to identify different facilitating and constraining factors which can ultimately explain how and in what conditions such variations take place in parliament (George and Bennett, 2005; Mahoney, 2010).

The analyses in this chapter are discussed in three following sections. The first section addressed the relevance of the micro level factors. The second section dealt with both institutional and contextual aspects faced by women legislators inside the parliament, thus informing the macro-level factors. Next, the chapter showed the interaction between two levels of factors, and how and which way the various factors manifest and link to each other throughout women legislators’ lives. Finally, the chapter concludes on how this can explain the variation in woman legislators’ ability in advancing women’s issues.

7.2. Relevance of Micro and Macro Level of Factors

7.2.1. Micro-Level Factors

Mapping of micro-level factors begins with the examination of the women legislators’ perception of women issues, discussion of their socio-demographic characteristics, and finally ends with the analysis of political socialization and political experiences accumulated by women legislators before they enter into parliament. This section acknowledges that the trajectories of women’s pathways to politics and parliament, for instance their association with a political family, education, professions, and previous political experience, may have relevance in understanding SRW. Therefore, questions arise: how do
women legislators see women issues? What is the socio-demographic background of woman legislators? Do they have an association with a political family? Do they have prior political experiences? The subsequent sections discussed these questions.

The discussions in this section are based on the findings derived from the interview data coded under thematic categories of father’s or husband’s profession, women legislators’ profession, involvement with politics, entrance into parliament, and motivation (or lack thereof) to act on women issues. Also, this study gathered data regarding woman legislator’s education, husband or father’s profession, and their connection with political elites from the profile of women legislators, developed for this study to complement the analysis in this section.

7.2.1.1. Perception of Women Issues
This section examines women legislators’ perceptions on women issues. Also, it investigates women’s gender experiences, as well as their wish to improve other women’s status. These factors are identified in the literature as individual motivational aspects (see Chapter 2). All the active women legislators (13), who preferred to act for women, claimed individual motivation as the driving force behind such actions. The active woman legislators mostly reported three types of individual motivations which acted as facilitating factors in the process of SRW. The first type of motivation of women legislators claimed that they see women issues as social problems to which they feel connected. According to them, an urge for improving women’s conditions motivates them to actively participate in the parliament. In an interview with the researcher, a women legislator confided:

The violence and discrimination against women become a social problem in our country. We all know that there are many reported and unreported incidents of violence taking place every day. I feel connected and responsible to raise my voice about these issues (LWS201601, 2016).

This group of women has a perceived understanding of women issues as social problems, and the willingness to improve women’s situation is a prerequisite for their active participation to serve the cause of women.

The second type of motivation is associated with the justification of women legislators’ actions on the basis of their self-consciousness and their empathy towards women’s causes. For a few woman legislators, self-awareness on women issues had emerged from their engagement with different women’s movements. Nevertheless, as it is suggested by some interviewees, being self-conscious may
not be enough for them to act or speak for women. Similarly, others were observed using phrases like “because this is who I am” (LWS201520, 2015); “I feel responsible” (LWS201521, 2015); or, “this is my duty” (LWS201617, 2016) while explaining their motivation behind the active participation to promote women-related issues in the parliament.

The third type of motivation as reported by woman legislators is their gendered political experiences. While having a conversation with a woman legislator, she commented that selected women representatives received limited yearly fund allocations, which are smaller than that of an elected member for the developmental work. She continued by saying that, “this has always been an issue of institutional discrimination to [selected women]” (LWS201601, 2016). According to her, she raises her voice for women who have faced similar discrimination.

In this study, the researcher also interviewed women who were not active on women issues in the parliament. While asking them about the motivations for not speaking on women issues, they justified their position by the argument, “I cannot always talk about women issues” (LWE201511, 2015). In the same line, another woman legislator elaborated her position on women issues:

I am a representative of both women and men. I do not believe that I shall always be vocal about women issues (LWE201507, 2015).

Another woman, in an interview, highlighted that discussing women issues is not her duty as an elected legislator. According to her, quota women (non-elected) are mainly entitled to talk about women issues and concerns. She further observed, “I did not have time to concentrate on parliamentary activities, as I had to travel a lot to my constituency” (LWE201509, 2015). Thus, the role conception she had of herself as an elected woman legislator, in this case, acted as a constraining factor, and caused her to choose not to speak for women. The role conception is also entangled with the demands from the constituency. A group of women claimed their association with regards to constituency work as another constraining factor, preventing them from speaking for women. Content analysis of the parliamentary proceedings has shown general issues received more attention on the floor of the parliament. According to a woman legislator, “being a representative, I receive several such requests every day from my constituents, which I cannot deny easily” (LWE201511, 2015).
While role conception and association with a constituency acted as a constraining factor for some legislators, some claimed to be able to bypass such constraints and act for women. A woman MP, in an interview, highlights this issue:

I try to make a balance between my area of interest [women issues] and the demands coming from my constituency and party personnel. It is me who decides what I should prioritise. Because of the fact that I am a woman and I hold an important position, I feel responsible to raise my voice for women (LWS201505, 2015).

In sum, women preferred to raise their voices for women because of their perceived understanding of women issues as social problems, their self-consciousness and self-motivation to represent women, and their gendered political experiences. These are the aspects which facilitated the decision of a group of women to represent women. On the other hand, a few women preferred not to speak up for women because of their role conception as a legislator and representative of a constituency. This unwillingness to speak on women issues was associated with whether the legislators were self-motivated to overcome the mentioned constraints to act on behalf of women.

7.2.1.2. Socio-Demographic Background (Social Status, Education, Profession)

The category of socio-demographic background included aspects of social status, education and profession of women legislators. In this study, legislators’ social status is measured by the occupations of their fathers and/or husbands, as well as their own professions (if any), without asking them directly about the status of their social class. Legislators in national parliaments all over the world tend to come from the upper and upper-middle classes of their respective societies (Saint-Germain and Metoyer, 2008). This is true also for Bangladesh. Along with wealth, class/family status helps the prospective politicians to gain a greater appreciation or acceptance in the national or local political arena. Most of the interviewee women legislators come from elite political families and social backgrounds (although not necessarily wealth-wise). In most cases, their close or extended relatives, such as fathers or husbands, were politically active; and in two instances, the grandfather (from the birth-family) played a critical role for the women legislators.

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89 This dissertation employed the indicator used by Michelle A. Saint-Germain and Cynthia Chavez Metoyer (2008) in the book *Women Legislators in Central America*. They used father’s occupation as an indicator of social status. In this dissertation, both father’s and husband’s (also grandfathers’ in two instances) occupation were used to measure women legislators’ social status, as many of them got married very early in their life and some of them even entered the parliament due to husband’s direct influence. In only two instances, grandfather’s contribution has also been visible.
Table 7.1: Occupation of Women Legislators (n=23) Fathers, Husbands, and Grand Father

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislators</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Grandfather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active on Women Issues</td>
<td>Legislator/Minister</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private Employment</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Active on Women Issues</td>
<td>Legislator/Minister</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Businessman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Journalist</td>
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</table>

Source: Data compiled from researcher’s interviews with active and not active women legislators in 9th parliament.

Table 7.1 suggests that women legislators predominantly come from political families mostly on the paternal side with only one exception, where the politically engaged relative came from in law’s family. This was true for both active and non-active women legislators. In both cases, substantial numbers of women legislators’ husbands, fathers, or grandfathers happened to be either ex-legislators or still actively involved in politics. Both groups of women legislators seemed to have similar types of upper middle class, well-off families. This fact was also highlighted while interviewing a male legislator respondent in this study. He commented about Bangladeshi women legislators, “Most of the women are coming from socially respectable and financially well-off families. Their fathers and husbands are respectable in their communities” (LME201626, 2016).

As for the educational background of women legislators, 50 percent of the women in the 9th parliament had postgraduate degrees (Ahmed, 2012). This means that their education level is far above the average for the general population of women in Bangladesh, who are about 68.9 percent literate (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2017) which is higher than that of the general population of women in Bangladesh. Thus, the educational achievements of most women legislators far exceeded the national

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average of women’s overall education levels. The table 7.2 demonstrates that the largest share of both active and inactive legislators have postgraduate degrees. Sixteen (three Ph.D. and 13 Masters) out of the 23 women legislators (interviewed) have postgraduate degrees in different area of studies, such as law, natural sciences, social sciences, and medicine. Almost all the active women legislators had graduated with Bachelor degrees, and a few of them had studied abroad. Four among the 13 women legislators active on women’s issues have been reported spending some time abroad while completing their Ph.D. and postgraduate degrees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.2: Highest Level of Education of Women Legislators in 9th Parliament</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary School Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary School Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
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</table>

Source: Data for women legislators compiled from author’s interviews with elected and selected women legislators in 9th Parliament. Also see: Ahmed, 2014.

Two out of 23 interviewees completed primary school education. They did not complete a high school degree at the time of the elections. The analysis of their contributions during parliamentary debates identifies them as not active participants on women’s issues. In interviews with the researcher, they justified their limited education identifying their early marriages as the reason for not completing high schools. One interviewee legislator confided:

My family arranged a marriage very early before the final exams for a secondary school certificate. I got pregnant immediately after my marriage, which stopped me from continuing my studies. My husband was a very active politician and did not have enough time for family, so I had to look after the family and children (LWS201612, 2015).

In another case, the woman legislator got elected as an obvious alternative for her husband, who was a very famous politician in their constituency, after his death.\textsuperscript{91} However, she managed to win the elections in that constituency twice because of the popularity of her husband, as reported by her in an

\textsuperscript{91} The profession of women legislators is identified as they prefer to introduce themselves.
interview. It is an interesting finding that two women, who did not complete high school education, were not active on behalf of women issues. However, this sample is too small to draw conclusions about the impact of education on their inability to speak for women. Therefore, the connection between SRW and education needs to be investigated further.

With regards to the professional background of women legislators (both active and not active), considerable variance exists in this study. Women mostly introduced themselves as politician, lawyers, businesswomen, teachers and housewives. The highest number of women legislators preferred to identify themselves as politicians. Among those who identified themselves as politicians, two groups emerged. The first group of women legislators (five out of twenty-three) had served the party for a long time or had a long political career (which has usually started from an engagement with student politics). They introduced themselves as politicians. Others had a short journey to the parliament, as they became legislators with relatively little political experience. The following section will discuss the patterns of legislators’ involvement with politics in more detail. The second most common professional identities came up in the interviews were business (seven). This group of women were taking care of their family’s/husband’s business ventures. Women legislators’ with legal (three) and teaching (two) professions were the third most common professional identities brought up in the interviews (see Table 7.3). In addition to politics, this group of women legislators also preferred to identify them with their respective professions.

The women legislators who were vocal on women issues have mainly introduced themselves as politicians, lawyers, teachers, businesswomen (see Table 7.3). Among those who introduced themselves as politicians (5), all reported their active involvement with student politics, or membership in women wings of their respective political parties. Women legislators, who had introduced them as either lawyers or teachers, have demonstrated their active participation in parliament. Three and two women legislators (out of 23 interviewed), who were active on women issues, identified themselves as lawyers and teachers respectively. The break-down of women legislators’ professional identities in this study is consistent with what Ahmed found in Handbook on Parliament (Ahmed, 2012). All the respondents who identified themselves as lawyers (with one exception) and teachers, rather than politicians, have demonstrated their active participation on the floor and raised questions. They were observed bringing women’s concerns and issues to the floor and being particularly vocal on women issues (see Table 7.3). One of the respondents introduced herself as a lawyer, and led the process of
drafting the Domestic Violence Act from the initiation to its enactment in the parliament. This was not an uncommon practice. In addition to their responsibilities as members of parliament, legislators involved in the legal profession practiced law regularly at the national judiciary, i.e., in the High Court or the Appellate Division. They have informed the author that they accepted legal cases relevant for women to practice law. Along this line of thought, in an interview, a woman legislator involved in student politics and a lawyer by training, argued:

I studied politics in my entire student life. I know the problems that women face, and I am always ready to bring them up to the floor whenever I get a chance in this regard. Because of my previous experience, everybody on the floor listens to me on the floor. I usually try to bring human rights issues women are facing at private and public spheres (LWS201601, 2016).

This statement indicates that working on human/legal rights issues professionally allowed the women legislators to be well informed and deeply concerned with human rights conditions and regular challenges of women. At the same time, being in a professionally respectable position enhances their status and allows them to earn respect of their colleagues. Knowledge and acceptance provide them a level of confidence in raising issues pertinent to women. This is also true for a women legislator who has been involved in teaching even before joining politics. According to her, “giving a speech or talking on any issue is not a problem for me. I can talk more than an hour, as I spent a significant part of my life in giving lectures and teaching students” (LWS201516). Another women legislator reported that she was respected not only by the constituents but also by the other legislators because of her teaching profession (LWS201617). Thus, it is argued that being a lawyer or a teacher underscores a positive influence on the role of the woman legislators and might influence them to be active on behalf of women. Furthermore, they seem to be more active on women issues than women who introduced themselves as politicians (see Table 7.3). The women legislators who were not vocal on women issues have mainly introduced themselves as politicians, businesswomen, and housewives. Of the three not active women legislators who have introduced themselves as politicians, none active involvement with student politics. Instead, they took up a political career later in their life. On the other hand, five active women who have identified themselves as politicians were involved with student politics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.3: Occupation of Women legislators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data for women legislators compiled from author’s interviews with elected and selected women legislators in 9th Parliament.

Two of the 10 women legislators not active on women issues had identified themselves as housewives (see Table 7.3). The data gathered from the Handbook on Parliament (Ahmed, 2012) suggested that around 10.4 percent of women legislators in the 9th parliament indicated their profession as a housewife. A few who introduced themselves as such also proudly claimed a part of their role was to extend significant political support to their husbands from behind the scene. An interviewee in this study observed, “I have not done party politics. My husband did not like my involvement in the local politics. Being a housewife, I used to support my husband’s political tasks from behind” (LWE201510, 2015). Such observations, further substantiated by another interview statement with a self-identified housewife, indicate that these women were not naturally interested in politics and have become part of the public office by a sudden decision of the party, or their husband’s unexpected inability to participate in the elections. She further elaborated on this by stating that she used to be a housewife after marrying a famous politician, who was elected as a MP for two times. It was the decision of the party and her husband to replace him and prepare her to run for the elections. She mentioned, “I was elected just due to the name of my husband and his family name” (LWE201509, 2015). In reply to the question of professional background, another interviewee responded that she was a housewife first and a politician second. She also stated, “I am a housewife and it’s my husband who does politics” (LWE201509, 2015). She started her national political career much later in her life, only after the death of her husband. She then reconfirmed her statement by adding that she would not be interested in investing time in politics and has no intention to build up a further political career.

Discussion in this section showed the relevance of education and women’s professional background to their ability to speak for women. From the current data, it can be concluded that the practiced profession of women legislators has impacted their ability to speak for women, whereas the effect of

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92 For the purpose of the analysis, respondents’ priority in identifying their profession is acknowledged and registered as their professions.
educational background has been left an open question. However, the combination of education and a practiced profession can exert an influence over whether women speak up on women issues.

This dissertation identified four types of women legislators for the purpose of identifying the combined effect of education and profession. These included women who: (a) have a graduate degree (maximum PhD) and a practiced profession; (b) have a graduate degree but no practiced profession; (c) have no graduate degree but practiced profession; and (d) women who have neither a graduate degree nor a practiced profession. The practiced profession indicated here is any profession that women legislators had been engaged in their lives before entering in the parliament. The combination of professional and educational backgrounds acted as a facilitating factor which had encouraged women legislators’ participation on women issues.

The analysis indicated that women who had graduated and practiced a profession belonged mostly to the group of women categorised as active on women issues (see Table 7.4). Women legislators have postgraduate degrees and practiced professions, such as lawyer, teacher or businesswoman, have demonstrated their active participation on women issues in the parliament. On the other hand, women with post-graduate degrees but no practiced profession fell mostly under category of not active women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.4: Education and Practiced Profession of Women Legislators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women Legislator</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation and practiced profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation and not practiced profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than graduation and practiced profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than graduation and no practiced profession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the social status of ‘active’ and ‘not active’ women legislators looked similar. There was no difference between active and not active women legislators in the context that all of them seemed to come from similar types of upper middle class, well-off and political family background. On the link between women legislators’ educational background and their active and not active participation on women issues, the differences are not immediately visible. The sample and the variance within it are too small to draw reliable conclusions on the impact of education on the willingness to speak for
women. However, this link needs to be pursued further. On the other hand, women legislators with practiced professions in the field of law, teaching, student politics, and business, have demonstrated their active participation on women issues. The combination of professional and educational background demonstrates a significant link with the level of their participation on women issues. For example, women who have higher education (postgraduate and PhD) and a practiced profession, such as a lawyer or teacher, have demonstrated active participation on women issues in the parliament.

7.2.1.3. Political Socialization
The process of political socialization is assessed by understanding patterns of women legislators’ (both those active and non-active on women issues) early socialization within the political sphere prior to them becoming members of parliament (MPs). In particular, this section will focus on initial/early political engagements, such as involvement with student politics, women wings of the political party, or social activities.

7.2.1.3.1. Early Political Experiences
This category includes those women legislators who have been exposed to politics due to being members of a political family (maternal, paternal, or natal), and developed an early interest in politics through the family. The examples of early experiences in politics range from: (a) conversing with guests (father’s political friends) while serving them tea, (b) chatting with brothers or cousins at the dining table, (c) participating in the political demonstration with brothers/cousins, (d) getting involved in school projects, and (e) disseminating political posters among school students. Out of 23 women legislators interviewed in this study, only four woman legislators have come from a non-political family or did not have in-laws involved in politics, whereas the rest of the women had connections with politically elite families.

Among women legislators with political family connections, eight of them have confirmed the influence of their family on their motivation to enter politics. To them, the family became an arena where political skills and interest in politics were nurtured as they were growing up. One legislator who became a minister in the 9th parliament served as the general secretary of the women’s affairs section of her party, and recently started holding an executive position in the central committee of the party. She was among those who played an important role in the legislation of the Domestic Violence Act (see Chapter 6). In an interview with the author, she discussed:
I spent my childhood with all famous politicians who were my father’s colleagues. I used to hear about politics all the time in my home. My father was a presidium member of the party, and all his friends were politicians as well. Our house used to be a place where they often discussed politics and different challenges that they were facing at that time. I began liking politics as I used to hear it all the time (LWE201504, 2015).

A woman legislator reported that she was interested in politics, and even participated in her early life “by helping her elder brother carry and write leaflets.” Later, she became a student activist, then trade union leader. She claimed to have been very vocal about the rights of women. Another legislator who was very active and vocal on women issues and was born in a political family, described the role her first cousin had in motivating her to join politics. Her first cousin was a famous politician and also served as a Minister. According to her,

We grew up together in a joint family and our elder cousins were actively involved in politics. He inspired me in every way. I was always with him, supported him in his both good and bad time. I have learned everything from him and he contributed significantly to what I am today. (LWS201505, 2015).

Many interviewee women legislators argued family influence is an important factor that helped them to grow their early interest in politics. This is often described as ‘politics in blood’ (LWS201502, September 2015). The phrase ‘since I was little’ (LWS201617, 2016) came up more often and demonstrated the source of their initial interest. Another legislator reported that she idealised the Father of the Nation as a little girl, as her father “used to talk about him always” (LWE201504, 2015). Thus, early political experience played an important role to acquire an interest in politics.

Apart from father, the influence of a politically conscious mother was also reported as a significant factor in developing an early interest in politics. This woman legislator belongs to a non-political family background but idealised the leaders from their childhood. She shared the story:

My mother was a big fan of President Ziaur Rahman and his political philosophy. She cried for one month after the assassination of the president. She used to tell heroic stories of him, and how charismatic he was at that time. That was the time when I finished my schooling and started idealising him as my leader. None of my father’s or mother’s family members were directly involved in politics, except it was my mother who was fascinated by Ziaur Rahman (LWS201521, 2015).
Women legislators’ stories suggest that the family members and members of extended family branches can be instrumental in fostering early interest in politics. Notably, those family members did not come only from the paternal but also from the maternal side.

The third set of stories argued for the role of the in-laws in developing sensitivity towards politics. On early interest in politics, women legislators named the contributions of not only their natal family, but also their in-laws, as they were married to a politically active family early in their life. Being married to a man who is directly involved in politics or who is a member of a family active in politics, not only exposed the interviewees to politics but also provided them a real-life opportunity to get involved in electoral politics. According to the data, the connection with a political husband or in-laws might not have motivated this group of women to enter into politics but definitely provided a passage for such an entry. In most of the cases, their entry in the parliament happened incidentally. According to the interview, there are two ways women, married to a political family, joined politics: (a) either by becoming widows of an esteemed legislator/politician, or (b) being wives of an esteemed legislator/politician who is ineligible for re-election. Widows have often been appointed or elected for public office to fill in their deceased husbands’ constituencies. Their exposure to politics happened after their married life was over. Characteristically, they were not politically active or even thought of joining politics, when the husband was alive. On the other hand, wives to living politicians have often been called upon by the husband’s political party if her husband cannot compete for elections. These women were not active in the political party and, in the case of widows, were never nominated for any elected office while the husband was alive. In the case of one interviewee woman legislator who was chosen for office by the party due to her husband’s inability to run the election, it was observed that after finishing her term as legislator, she did not continue her political career as her husband took over the office for the next term (LWE201509).

So far, the discussion showed women legislators’ early experiences with politics and examples of how their sensitivity towards politics grew, and how early exposure to politics took place. The findings suggested that some of them grew up in families where politics was essential. They became aware of politics through family members (father, mother, brother, grand-father, or cousins), some were by their natal family or by idealising a political figure. Even if they were exposed to politics early on in their lives, it is not always the fact that all women went on to become involved in formal electoral politics, as the women legislators interviewed here did. Apart from being motivated by their parental
and maternal family, some women legislators have used their connection to politically active in-laws as a passage to enter into politics. The interviews also presented stories of the influence of the in-law’s family which held politics in high regard. It was the husband who was most often mentioned as the inspirational figure for women joining politics. Having said that, it is yet to explore that whether or not their motivation to join politics had contributed to develop their political awareness on women issues. The following section examined the relevance of early political socialization on women legislators’ representation on women’s issues in the parliament.

The data from women legislators’ participation in parliamentary debates demonstrated that women fall into the category of women active on women issues mostly belong to the type of women who were motivated into politics by the paternal family or by the maternal family (see the Table 7.5). The influence of politically conscious family members was raised as a significant factor in developing the early interest in politics by the few woman legislators who were not only exposed to early politics but also demonstrated their active voice on women issues. Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, who has demonstrated her active and direct participation in bringing women friendly policy change (see Chapter 6), her motivation to join politics was influenced by her politically active father early in her life (LWS201502, 2015). Another active women legislator explained her motivation to be an active politician did not only come from her father, who was the presidium member of Awami League and a legislator, but also from her motivation to work for disadvantaged people, such as the poor people and women (LWS201617, 2016). Thus, women legislators who have experienced their early political socialization by their paternal (with only one exception) and maternal (with only one exception) families demonstrated their active participation in parliament on women issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.5: Motivation in Politics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women Legislators</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Active</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher's own calculation

On the other hand, women legislators’ exposure to politics early in their lives due to their marital relations has limited effect on their active participation on women issues in the parliament (see Table 7.5). The influence of political in-laws may have motivated them and subsequently provided a passage for entering into politics, but this does not mean they had fostered awareness on women issues. The
women legislators, motivated by in-laws, were not active on women issues in the parliament (see Table 7.5). One exceptional case existed, where a woman legislator (LWS201612) who married a politician (husband served as legislator in 1973) at the age of 13 has acquired knowledge about politics after marriage and participated in social work and contributed to the formation of women’s Somobay Somiti (association for cooperative society) that worked for women’s economic development. Later, she became a general secretary of the section of her political party dedicated to women issues. At the age of around 60, she became a legislator in 9th parliament and was observed raising women’s issues in the parliament in her capacity as a holder of a significant position in her party.

By presenting stories of political socialization of women legislators, this section of the dissertation demonstrated the connection between early political socialization and the tendency of these women legislators’ to participate on women issues. For example, women legislators whose early political socialization happened in paternal and maternal families were mostly active in politics, and demonstrated their active participation on women issues later in their political lives. Most of the women legislators active on women issues interviewed in this dissertation cited family influences as crucial factors that developed their interest in politics and had motivated them later in their life to work for women (with one exception). On the other hand, the phenomenon of incidental appearance (by replacing husbands ineligible for election or by taking up the position of a deceased/politically active husband) in politics at an early age did not motivate them to raise their voice on women’s issues. The early childhood political socialization in the paternal and maternal families can be a facilitating factor for women legislators to act for women. This may require a combination of other factors, such as an early engagement in politics.

7.2.1.3.2. Political Engagement
This section examines women legislators’ early political engagement before entering into public office, and the patterns of their participation in politics in their youth. Based on the categories used in the content analysis of interview data, this section discusses three distinct stories of political engagement reported by women legislators, which represent three modes93 of engagement with politics. These modes of engagement attempt to understand the patterns of their participation from their early interest

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93The categorisation was done on the basis of their initial way of joining politics, as they reported it in interviews.
in politics till their selection as candidates. The three modes are: (a) participation in student politics, (b) involvement with social work, and (c) participation in women wings of party politics.

7.2.1.3.2.1. Student Politics
From the discussion with women legislators and based on the information from the profile prepared for this dissertation, two categories of women are identified in terms of their involvement with student politics. The women from the first category (n=8) reported that their involvement in politics began with their interest in student politics during their college and university studies. These women subsequently become involved with party politics through the women wings of their respective political parties or via social work. The second category of women (n=2) reported that, while they were active in student politics, this interest did not continue later in life. Either they left student politics because of marriage or due to a loss of interest after their studies. It is important to note that all women who fall into the first category have demonstrated active participation on women issues in the parliament. Women from the second group were only seen representing women issues once or twice in the entire tenure of the 9th parliament.

Women legislators, active in student politics, shared some key instances. For example, some legislators ran for class president, became student council representatives, joined a student council, or/and led a student movement, which in turn sparked an interest in electoral politics at the national level. Among them, half of the women legislators won their student elections. In an interview with the author, one legislator described her involvement with student politics and her contribution to the rights of student’s mobility in the university:

I was involved in politics during my college and later continued to Dhaka University. I had huge fans and followers, and they wanted me to run the student council election. I competed and won the election. I have led many student movements for the student’s union from the front. One significant achievement was to conduct a protest against a rule targeting female students living in the girls’ hostel. The university authority put an embargo on women students’ mobility after sunset. I led the whole movement and could rule out the return by sunset policy for female students from the campus (LWS201601, 2016).

In her student days, she stood against a discriminatory law enforcing a curfew on women students in her dormitory. According to her, it was unfair that male students from other dormitories did not have to abide by any rules regarding their mobility after sunset. This represents a small-scale example of the
patriarchal social system in Bangladesh. It was this dormitory issue which led her to first think about how to create awareness and organise collective action dedicated to ensuring rights for women. It was through other women in dormitories that she led the whole movement and contributed to the eventual change in the curfew policy restraining women’s mobility. Her successful ability to mobilise fellow students provided her access to student politics, and she was awarded a position as general secretary of the women students’ wing of her party. Later, she also earned respect in her profession as a lawyer and served her political party with dedication. She was not only visible in the parliamentary debates on the floor but also was known as a well-known speaker on social media.

Women with experiences in student politics have been known to challenge the patriarchal underpinnings of political parties and they are often engaged in confronting a male-dominated political sphere. Stories from another two active women legislators who participated in student politics indicated that many of their male political colleagues were jealous of their quality of public speaking and tried everything to push them back just because the male counterparts viewed them as potential threats to their in-party positions. However, let it be noted that such negative gender experiences might not be shared by all women legislators in Bangladesh. This certainly needs to be investigated further. A similar discussion was highlighted in an interview with another woman legislator. Explaining her gendered experience, she mentioned:

> Doing politics in such a challenging atmosphere helped me to learn rules of the game and building my agency. Now I know how to tackle all odds. Such experience helped me later in getting recognition from the party and making a position in the parliament (LWS201601, 2016).

Another active legislator, in her interview discussed that student politics was not an easy task given the patriarchal nature of politics. According to her, it requires political power to survive in politics. The character of politics was very contentious and sometimes dirty which required showing brute force. Such a political atmosphere excludes women by minimizing their participation in formal politics. Women who could survive through such formal and informal signs of the patriarchal nature of politics can move forward with their political career. None of the three women who were in politics but are less active on women issues have any association with student politics (see Appendix 7.2).
The study observed that the interviewee woman MPs, active on women issues, have developed political competencies as representatives of the student unions. These competencies include articulation of knowledge on the subject matter, deliberation, consciousness about women’s rights, as well as a charismatic public persona, and highly developed negotiation skills in public spaces. The process of encountering challenges of the patriarchal political system and gaining competencies provides leverage and confidence, which allowed them to build their empathy towards women’s struggle for rights and encouraged them to speak for women.

7.2.1.3.2.2. The Women Wings of Political Parties
The two largest political parties (Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party) have their women wings to mobilise women interested in politics and to make space for aspiring women candidates at the local level. The purpose is to inspire more women to join politics, as it is still mainly dominated by the male politicians. The woman wings of the mainstream political parties often “side-line women from the centre of the power”, as claimed by an expert interviewed in this study (DWRO201530, 2015). A total of 12 women legislators were interviewed who reported their association with women wings of respective political parties (see Appendix 7.2).

Women involved with the women wing were more likely to affiliate with student groups of their respective political parties during their student life. Among nine women legislatures, active in student politics, eight have reported their affiliation with women wings of their respective parties and had actively participated in student politics. In the above section of this chapter, it was already noted that of the women legislators who were active in student politics (n=8), a large part of them (n=6) continued their political career by joining women wings of their respective parties (see appendix 7.2). Interviewed women legislators, involved with women wings, reported that they hold a position either at the districts, divisional, or at the national central committee. The responsibility associated with their organisational rank provides the possibility to gather knowledge on issues facing women from different parts of the country and the skills to successfully interact with them. In such cases, women legislators became aware of the various needs of women not only locally but also nationally, which ultimately encourages them to bring them onto the floor. A few of them holding such positions have mentioned that their working experiences with women politicians from different parts of the country are enriching and delightful. In an interview, one suggested,
Because of my affiliation, I travelled the entirety of Bangladesh and talked to women at the grassroots level. I know better their problems and issues which require more attention from the policymakers. Even after I became a member of the parliament, more women came to meet me with a variety of problems and requests. I tried to raise these issues on the floor under different motion or question sessions (LWS201601, 2016).

In this particular case, her affiliation with the women wing enables her to respond to the demands of women from both rural and urban areas. The similar reply came from another selected woman legislator who was active on the floor and has served as a general secretary of the Awami League's (AL) women wing for more than a decade. In an interview with the researcher, she observed,

I know the challenges women are facing in their private and public life as a woman. Moreover, it is relatively easy for me to understand as a general secretary of the women wing of a major political party of Bangladesh. I feel responsible for bringing these concerns to the public whenever I have a chance to do so (LWS201502, 2015).

The findings from the interviews of women legislators highlighted the existing tension among legislators (both men and women) on whether they are affiliated with women wings, or with mainstream political parties. It seemed like getting access to the mainstream political party marked an achievement and people value such party position more than having an affiliation with the woman wing of the party, as claimed by a woman legislator (LWS201601, 2016). This viewpoint came from an interview, when an elected woman legislator confidently said, “I do not do women politics, I do party politics” (LWE201511, 2015). Another elected women legislator similarly stated that “I came from the vote of my constituency, directly nominated by the central party, I do party politics, not politics in the woman wing” (LWE201511, 2015). Six out of ten not active women legislatures claimed their membership with mainstream political parties and demonstrated less interest in bringing women issues in the parliament.

7.2.1.3.2.3. Social Work

Previous research has shown that some women consider social work as a platform through which to forge a social image (piety as volunteerism) and build stronger bonds with the community (Mazur, 2002). Thus, the third mode of early political engagement was to gain political power and social consciousness of the community through engagement as a social worker. Most of the women legislators, both active and not active, were involved with some form of social work activities
regardless of whether they represent women or not. The stories of women legislators’ association with social work suggested two patterns of social activism. These patterns can be linked to their representation on women issues. The first story of women’s association with social welfare activities come from the legacies of their families. The women legislators are carrying on a family tradition of social work, and maintaining the pre-established image of social awareness, altruism, and generosity. Several legislators derived their experiences of the poor women through their charity work. Unlike the findings in Latin America (Saint-Germain and Metoyer, 2008), legislators are aware of the dire socio-economic conditions of the poor from the living conditions of their paternal and maternal families and in-laws. As stated earlier, most women legislators come from well-to-do, prestigious families, which have a social obligation to help out the poor in their community. Often poor people expect charity supports from them. One selected woman legislator shared a story about her great-grandfather who was a *jaminder* (landlord), and used to do charity for the poor of his area. In an interview, she further told,

Poor people used to come to our doorsteps every day with their problems and an expectation that my grandfather will help them. My father carried that legacy and became involved with politics. People of this area know us very well. Now my siblings and I are following the path that my grandfather had set a long time ago (LWS201713, 2017).

In another interview, a woman legislator reported that she had inherited this habit from her maternal grandfather. She further said, “My grandfather served as the chairman of our union for 20 years and was a well-known figure who was very active to help people. I continued the same tradition to help other people since the beginning of my political career” (LWS201519, 2016). In these two cases, both women legislators were hardly seen participating on the floor on women concern issues.

On the other hand, a second group of women legislators was observed who did not join social work because of pragmatism or any ties to family tradition. Rather, this habit was built upon their personal interest in helping people in need. This group of women participated in social activities from a desire to improve the lives of vulnerable communities. While explaining their experience, one legislator mentioned her previous engagement in student politics and how she used to help poor and distressed people in her student days. Another women legislator explained she has to work for women as an active member in student:
Under my leadership, we fought against the sunset law, which was announced by the authority of the women dormitory in my university. The rule was about the fact that women would not be able to stay outside of the dormitory after sunsets. This was meant to put restriction on women’s (those who are living in the dormitory) mobility. However, this rule was only applicable to women not for men. We protested against such discriminatory rule and won the battle (LWS201601, 2016).

It is evident that the tendency of raising a voice for women’s rights in the parliament is more common among the women who have an internal motivation for social work, or have experienced working with women in the field. Specially, some women who were involved in student politics did talk about their participation in social activities as part of their student politics. Women active on women issues in the parliament claimed that the participation in social activities was part of their student politics. They have developed the empathy towards women as a group during their involvement with student union. While explaining the experience in an interview with the researcher, a legislator reported that:

Being a student representative, I had to travel different parts of Bangladesh and used to work for improving women’s lives within my capacities. I am actively involved with social activities in my area, in my father’s area” (LWS201617, 2016).

A woman legislator, in an interview, shared her journey to formal involvement with politics and the role of her social activism in this process. She discussed,

I started working with poor women mostly from my area to remove their dire economic condition and form an ‘Association of Collective Savings.’ The purpose was to help women to empower them economically and to make them self-dependent. Later, I was asked to join the woman wing of AL. I accepted the proposal because I wanted to work for all the women in our country (LWS201612, 2015).

Similarly, another woman who has demonstrated her active participation in women issues informed their eternal urge for helping poor and distress community of Bangladesh. She explained,

I worked for the poor, distressed community in different parts of Bangladesh; especially women were my target as a student leader. I travelled almost the entire country to work with female workers, experienced their sufferings and talked about their problems. Later, being a trade union leader, I used to work for their benefits, fight for their rights. Till today, I am working for labour rights” (LWS201617, 2016).

In response to the question of her participation on women issues, she proclaimed her active participation on women issues and justified by saying,
This is not new to me. As a student leader and a women trade union leader, this is what I have been doing for the last forty years. Working for female workers, their economic and social rights are my passion (LWS201617, 2016).

Almost every interviewed women legislator claimed their participation in social activities included building a bond with the community by providing financial support, working on rights issues, and promoting social awareness. Thus, women who have participated in social work and have been working for long mostly due to their early political engagement have been very vocal on women issues in the parliament. Eight out of 13 active women legislators have a history of early political engagement through student politics and also have informed their active social engagement. Four among these nine interviewees have even introduced them as social activists because of their active engagement with women and labour rights organisations (see profiles of women legislators in Appendix 7.2). Thus, the urge and motivation for community or social work acts in these cases combined with previous political engagements and together this becomes a facilitating factor for women legislators to speak on behalf of women. Similarly, a lack of motivation, no desire for social work and lack of early experience in social work may hinder women legislators’ ability to speak for women.

In short, women who have involvement in social activities due to their family legacies, seemed not active on women issues compare to those who were self-motivated and experienced in working for women. Having said that, the next section emphasises women legislators’ pathways to parliament, and how they have chosen to become a part of the public offices. Being interested in politics at an early stage does not confirm their entry into parliament. No matter when they become interested in politics, what their demographic characteristics and modes of political engagements are, it is important to investigate the medium, which these women have used to get into parliament. The paths from being interested in politics to getting a nomination for a public office are more winding than straight.

7.2.1.4. Pathways to Parliament
This section examined different pathways of women legislators to enter into parliament. Based on the categories used in the content analysis of interview data, this section discusses stories of women legislators’ journey to parliament, specifically the network they used to enter into parliament. Two
types of pathways\textsuperscript{94} to parliament were used to understand their relevance on women’s ability to represent women. These two pathways are: (a) direct family ties, and (b) political mentoring.

This aspect highlights individual stories and personal experiences that lead women legislators to the parliament. Nomination for elections or access to reserved seats in the national legislatures can usually be put forth only by recognised political parties, so women who aspire to enter parliament, have no choice than to work for a political party to get there (Akter, 2014). Regardless of the different formal routes they took to the parliament (i.e., selected or elected), the findings presented here identify the importance of a network connecting one with political elites as informal pathways to parliament. These connections can be seen as social resources for women, which provide them with more access to the nomination process. Also, securing nominations for direct election or selection for reserved seats rests on very complex scenarios and processes. This is especially true for women. Both election and selection are equally difficult to attain within a male-dominated political atmosphere. An interviewee observed,

I had to cross a long way to come to this point in my life. So much of politics involved in this process. I felt like passing a sea after I entered into parliament (LWS201601, 2016).

Another showed her dissatisfaction towards the existing political culture where the domination of money and masculinity constitute an integral part of the electoral politics. In the present electoral system in Bangladesh, the measurement of political success is defined by winning an electoral constituency (discussed in Chapter 4). Money and muscle power are two core requirements for getting nominations for elections and winning an electoral constituency, as opined by a woman legislators in a roundtable held in Dhaka (LWE201506, 2015).

Structural constraints, such as the male domination in the field of politics, very much exist in Bangladesh. There are many electoral constituencies where male politicians have dominated the scene for several years. More precisely, they won the elections more than two times for the same constituency. In such cases, the party does not take the risk of trying to replace the tried and tested male candidates with qualified women candidates (LWE201504, 2015). Such things happen because of a party’s win-loss calculation and sometimes due to the pressure of existing male politicians holding the same position for decades. Parties are still not ready to take a risk by nominating women candidates.

\textsuperscript{94} The categorisation, as per the interview findings, was done on the basis of the respondents’ very first way of joining politics.
It is also quite usual that the party would not like to go against the male candidate considering his previous contribution to the party and afraid of losing electoral seats. A legislator, in an interview with the researcher, explained that

I became quite popular after my first term being a selected MP, and people wanted me for the next term. I even asked for the party nomination for direct election. Initially the party thought of trying me from the area, however, due to the pressure from my male opponent [member of the same party and twice-elected legislator] and some members of the central party, the party chief nominated him for direct election and me for the reserved seat instead of choosing for election. That male politician had lots of money, and the party received a lot of money for him (LWS201615, 2016).

Even if the party chief wants to extend an opportunity to a women candidate, often they need to compromise by appointing current male politicians, given expected benefits, such as party financing. Along with such organisational constraints, women candidates, as reported, also have to struggle to get approval from their families, either from parents or from husbands, which is not always an easy task for them. The early literature on gender and politics in Bangladesh claimed the gender division of labour and resistance from the family (particularly husbands and in-laws) as key factors limiting women’s participation in politics (Chowdhury, 1994). However, the recent literature has shown women councillors received wholehearted support from their in-laws including husbands, just because they were married to political families (Nazneen, Ehsan, and Hasan, 2014). Similar findings came up in section 7.2.1.3.1, where the role of the natal family for motivating women in politics was discussed.

In the case of the lack of support systems (both inside the party and family), women must go through a series of informal negotiation processes both in private and public life. Aspiring women politicians need to depend on networking and lobbying with the powerful actors in politics in order to facilitate their path to parliament. In this regard, one legislator in an interview observed,

Lobbying is a necessary prerequisite for women to get something in the party. We cannot afford musclemen; we do not have enough money to run for the elections. Therefore, women need support from the personal and professional networks to pursue their political careers as legislators. Nowadays, it takes two to three times more money to run the elections than before (LWS201615, 2016).

The similar negotiation process took place within their personal lives to convince in-laws and gain the trust of their husbands. An interviewee confided,
My husband was not happy with my decision to seek nominations for elections. I did not have enough money, so I had to ask money from my husband. Although he gave me money, he was not happy with my decision. After my selection in a reserved seat, I used to take my husband along with me on my travels to my constituency area. After experiencing the love and respect of my area, he was very overwhelmed and realised the importance of my decision. Since then he has never discouraged me (LWS201522, 2015).

Notwithstanding such organisational, institutional and structural backdrops, women legislators are entering into parliament and several have managed to get into public offices more than once. An elected woman legislator from the 9th parliament, ex-minister and present central committee member of the party, explained the qualifications criteria for the nomination:

We primarily look for three criteria as requirements for offering a nomination to women for the reserved seats. These are their political hold at the constituency, their contribution to the party and their educational and professional experiences (LWE201504, 2015).

Referring electoral politics as a ‘serious ball game’ (LWS201502, 2015), another woman legislator, ex-minister, and ex-Speaker of parliament, emphasised the importance of money in the process of winning an election. The party will eventually nominate the person who they deem can win the election and has a wider acceptance from the constituency. According to her,

Women do not have enough money to run an election. A man, who is an industrialist, spending money is not a problem for him. He can spend as much as he wishes. He can end up paying more than ten million taka without any hesitation. However, women are not affluent enough to spend that much money for the party. This can be easier for a woman who is also an industrialist. How many women industrialists do we have in Bangladesh (LWS201502, 2015)?

Experts also offer similar observations in this regard. Parties often act very conservatively when it comes to nominating women as candidates, and the parties are still missing enabling factors in this regard. Against this backdrop and facing these constraints, women in Bangladesh are taking their space in politics and trying to get access to election candidature with the help of networking or connections with the political elite. These can be considered a social resource. These social resources can provide a sort of leverage enabling women candidates to attain the attention of the party leaders and can also help them ensuring their entry into parliament.

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95 Three out of 23 women legislators, interviewed in this dissertation, had served in two (8th and 9th) parliaments.
Several informal pathways to the parliament emerged among women legislators who were interviewed in this study. However, the main routes include: (a) direct family ties and (b) political mentoring. Do differences in women’s paths to parliament influence the patterns of their participation on the floor? It is noteworthy to analyse what pathways are more commonly taken by women legislators, and their relevance on women’s engagement with women concern issues (if there is any) to assess the extent to which paths dominate the variation in substantive representation of women (SRW).

7.2.1.4.1. Direct Family Ties
This category is related to those women legislators who have entered the Parliament because of their direct blood or marriage-based relationships with political elites. This group of women mostly represented their late fathers, husbands or grandfathers’ electoral seats. This group of women entered into parliament without any political training or experience, and did so rather suddenly, due to their husband’s inability to run in the election (discussed earlier in section). In the last few decades, there were many examples of such relationships securing the entry of women into politics and later, into leadership positions at the very top of the country. Examples include Indira Gandhi in India; Isabel Peron in Argentina; Corazon Aquiro in the Philippines; Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh; Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan; and Chandrika Kumaratunga in Sri Lanka. It was not only the natal family but also the support of the in-laws that play a role in women’s entry into politics. Eight women legislators out of the 23 interviewed in this study have entered into the Parliament entirely through kinship ties (refers both parental and in-laws).

These women legislators were directly elected (n=3) and selected in quota (n=5) because of their family connections either from the parental or from the in-laws side (see the frequency table in the Appendix-7.2). They were, however, not seen intervening on the floor with women issues (with one exception). All of these women legislators have reported that their husbands had an active role in their nomination for election. One of them was apparently initially nominated to complete the remainder of her deceased husband’s term in the national legislature. In that case, she was the widow of the highly-esteemed founding member of the ruling Awami League (AL), and two-times elected legislator from the same constituency. In three other cases, the women were an obvious choice for the party

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^Studies in Brazil, Bangladesh, Sudan, India and other Central American countries showed how family provides a real life opportunity for political involvement (Tadors, 2014). Many studies claimed women’s entry into politics and then to parliament entirely happened due to their kinship ties to the political elites (Tadors, 2014).
just because of their husbands’ inability to run in the elections for either legal or other political reasons. Women who assume public office via replacement usually serve for one term. In such a case, while explaining her entry into politics and parliament, one of them claimed without any hesitation:

I was elected for one term, and it was my husband’s constituency. I do not know anything about politics and my husband has never liked me doing politics. In this term, my husband is again MP of the area. My husband was participating in the city corporation elections, and the party wanted him to win. Therefore, they asked him to step out from the national election and put me forward to represent my husband’s electoral area (LWE201509, 2016).

In these particular cases, women elected to replace their husbands find themselves in a political post suddenly and incidentally. These women legislators do not actively intervene on the floor of the parliament as they do not see themselves as active political actors and do not remain politically active after the completion of their term as members of Parliament. In an interview, a MP also mentioned, “[After my tenure in the parliament], now, I again became a housewife” (LWE201509, 2016).

One out of eight women legislators who entered to parliament through direct family ties interviewed in this study, used direct family ties but successfully managed to be active on women issues (LWS201615, 2016). She managed to enter Parliament initially thanks to her family ties (as the husband could not make it to the election), but does represent women issues on the floor, stated: “I used my positional power or status (whatever you call it) to work for the community once I made it to parliament” (LWS201615, 2016). She managed to attain political influence even though she became part of the parliament due to their husband’s political power in the first place and entered without having any prior political experiences. She had taken the opportunity to build their careers and use their positional power to work for the community and got selected for second term. She mentioned,

I have worked for women and women’s economic empowerment. I have worked so hard that I got selected for the second term (LWS201615, 2016).

Therefore, within this group of women who made use of direct family ties as pathways to the parliament, only one women legislators was observed raising women’s concerns in the parliament. Only one woman was able to utilise the opportunity and invest into her political career and was re-elected for the next term. Nonetheless, both active and not active women legislators were seen using direct family ties as their pathways to the Parliament. Thus, it cannot be said that all women legislators, not active on women’s issues, entered the political sphere because of their family connections.
Nevertheless, we can identify a pattern of being inactive on women’s issues among those women legislators who have entered into parliament with the help of direct family ties.

7.2.1.4.2. Political Mentoring

This data-driven code refers to the process of mentoring which was experienced by some of the women who have entered into parliament. Understanding the nature of the political mentoring would provide insight into our understanding of the women legislators’ ability and willingness to advocate for women. Preparing for public office requires a process of learning skills that are necessary for political survival. Although this has been addressed in the earlier section about legislators’ consciousness on politics, here the term refers more specifically to actual skill development, training and lending a supporting hand to push women up the political ladder. These women are not in politics by chance. Even though some of them have family ties with political elites, their journey to parliament did not happen suddenly; rather carry aspiration for a political career. Women legislators interviewed have been through a process of grooming, and mentoring either by extended family members, close family friends, or by connections outside of the family. In most cases, the mentor belongs to the political fraternity, and already holds a position which allows them to back others, boasts good connections to the executives, and the mentor is knowledgeable in the field of politics. Stories of 15 women legislators suggested that they have gone through a process of political mentoring, which helped them to enter into parliament (see the Appendix 7.2).

Fifteen women legislators cited the contribution of such mentors in their political life and explained how they have aided their understanding of the way politics play out at the party level, in the Parliament and within the broader system of government. Ultimately, those are the key aspects an aspiring politician needs to know. Women legislators mentioned the name of their mentor during the interview and shared the relevance of the mentors’ presence behind materializing their (women’s) aspiration for public office. They adopt the name of their male mentors and acknowledge their support in their political empowerment process. In one interview, the woman MP who was active on the floor mentioned,

Jalil Bhai (Brother Jalil) made me a legislator. You must know Jalil, right? He is my cousin [not immediate] who encouraged me. I did student politics because of his encouragement. In 1996, when our party came to power, and my cousin got a ministry, he asked me to think about taking politics as a career. Under his guidance and influence, I was selected for the reserved
seat position. God willing, I did not have to look behind, and because of my performance, I was selected for the second time without my cousin [he passed away] (LWS201505, 2015).

In this particular case, she was frequently seen asking questions and raising concerns on various developmental issues; women issues were prominent among them. While explaining the reasons, she cited the inspiration of her cousin:

My cousin was a good speaker. I try to follow him. I still remembered the day I was talking about the violence against women on the floor in the presence of our Prime Minister. While I was speaking, I saw her turning to me with appreciation and later got to know from Jalil Bhai that she was happy with my performance. Since then I am trying to cover different issues with attention to women’s empowerment, equal labour payment, violence, etc. (LWS201505, 2015).

This process of political mentoring gives a potential woman politician or woman legislator informational advantages and enables them to acquire knowledge about legislators’ role as conceived by the broader political society. Both informational advantages and previous political knowledge provide women legislators with the ability to perform in politics. It is important to remember that not all women legislators (n = 15), who have been through a political mentoring process by senior political leaders or by extended family members, have always demonstrated their active participation on women issues on the floor. Among these 15, 8 have reported their political socialization and active political engagement before competing for public office, and 9 of them have spoken up for women in the parliament (see Appendix 7.2). The interview and profile data suggested that women who have capitalised their political knowledge by their respective political mentor, a considerable number (eight) among them had gone through early political socialization. It suggested a connection between two factors, i.e., political socialization and political mentoring. A large number of women who had early political socialization by their immediate and extended family members went through a political mentoring process that led them to parliament. Also, this group of women has demonstrated their active participation on women issues. The discussion shows the positive relevance of political mentoring as a facilitating factor for substantive representation.

In summary, the overall discussion in this section noted the relevance of different micro-level factors (i.e. perceptions on women issues, demographical characteristics of women, early political experiences and pathways to parliament). The findings in this section also allowed a determination of positive and negative impacts of each factor, and came up with a list of facilitating and constraining factors impacting women’s ability to speak up for women (see Table 7.6).
# Table 7.6: Determinant of Micro Level Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Level</th>
<th>Determinant</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro Perceptions</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Observed women issues as a social issue</td>
<td>Being self-conscious as woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Perceptions</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Being self-conscious as woman</td>
<td>Past political or social experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Perceptions</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Past political or social experience</td>
<td>Self-motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Perceptions</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Role perception as a legislator</td>
<td>Not interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-demographic characteristics</td>
<td>Social Status</td>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>No difference is evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-demographic characteristics</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>It matters clearly in combination with experienced profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-demographic characteristics</td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Experienced profession such as lawyer, teaching, and student politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Early childhood experiences</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Childhood socialization by parental family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Early childhood experiences</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Idealised role model effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Early childhood experiences</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>No early political exposure or experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Involvement with student politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Involvement with women wings of the party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Involvement with social work matter with combination of early political engagement of urge of helping the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Lack of early political experience in student politics or with women wings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Perform social work as part of family tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political socialization</td>
<td>Active political engagement</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Involvement with mainstream party politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways to Parliament</td>
<td>Direct family ties</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Direct family ties and without prior political engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways to Parliament</td>
<td>Political Mentoring</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Political mentoring matters in combination of political socialization (concerning early childhood socialization and political engagement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table

To sum up, the facilitating factors in micro level include legislators’ perceptions on women issues, their self-motivation, early political socialization, profession in the field of law or education, and active political involvement with student wing or women wing. Women’s level of participation on women issues is influenced positively by their perceived understanding of women issues as a social problem, and their perceived responsibility as women to better women’s relative standing in society. It has also shown that the challenges that women face in real life allowed them to advocate policies for addressing these challenges. Active women legislators were seen to be involved with social activity out of an
internal urge to support women and the willingness to help disadvantaged communities. Although it cannot stand alone as a facilitating factor, in combination with early political engagement of the woman legislator, the individual-level indicators can become relevant. The pathways to parliament through a process of political mentoring seemed to be relevant in the case where factors like political socialization and engagement with politics were present. Thus, being aware of politics at their early age (coming from politically conscious family, developing a social consciousness about women’s rights, receiving educational and professional training, training in politics through early political engagement and political mentoring, developing the urge for social work) appeared to be the prerequisite for speaking up on women’s issues. Together, these provided them confidence, motivation, as well as communicative and informative advantages in general. These factors can facilitate women legislators’ ability to act for women.

On the contrary, the constraining factors include women’s perceived role conception associated with their electoral position (selected or elected), the lack of motivation, no early political engagement, and absence of a lived profession. All these factors negatively influence women’s ability to represent other women and shape their decision not to speak for women. In this group, those who have become legislators because of their direct connection to influential political elites and those who have no records of previous political engagement prevail. These can be considered micro-level constraining factors. However, there are also a few micro-level factors identified whose effect was not clear. Such factors are social status of women legislator, their education (where education cannot have impacts without its combination with profession) and political socialization in the natal family.

7.2.2. Aspects of Macro-Level Factors
This thematic level includes features referring to the broader political and contextual aspect within which women legislators are operating. The elements related to institutional factors included formal and informal aspects of the political life in the Parliament, the electoral system of the country, and political circumstances. No matter when they become interested in politics, what their demographic characteristics and modes of political engagements or mediums to get into parliament are, it is important to disclose the contextual aspects through which these women have conducted their legislative activities. Moreover, many developmental organizations working at the national level are dedicated to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy, implementing a programmatic intervention for improving the representation of women through training, advocating for women-
friendly policy change and organizing exchange programs for enhancing women’s political representation. In some instances, they build a coalition with the government to facilitate the process of policy change, in this case, of women related policies (addressed in Chapter 6). Women politicians and legislators are the core in many of their functions. The purpose of this section of the thesis is to look beyond legislators themselves, and to focus on other contextual and institutional factors within which they work that may influence how the relevant actors shape their activities for women. Assuming the importance of those factors, the question arises: how does the Parliament, as an institution, facilitate or constrain women’s substantial representation? Do formal and/or informal aspects of the electoral system have any effect? How do external actors influence individual legislators? Does the political atmosphere influence women legislators’ participation? The following sub-sections will discuss these questions.

7.2.2.1. Formal and Informal Aspects of the Political Life in Parliament
This aspect refers to the formal and informal rules and perceptions that affect women’s political lives in the parliament. This section will present data and discuss how the formal rules and perceptions (in the institution) affected the political lives of all the women interviewed in this dissertation. This section first discussed the institutional rules and perceptions that affects all women in general and then moved to the discussion on how those aspects might affect women’s ability to speak for women. The aspects such as the perception on women’s abilities as legislators, informal gendered perceptions, limited time allocation for speech delivery, informal relation with Whips, and quality of the legislators’ speech delivery in the parliament. This discussion starts with gendered perceptions of the women’s ability.

There are only two possible ways women become members of Parliament—election or selection in the reserved seat (which will be discussed in more detail in the next section). Besides, public perception of women’s ability as representatives is that women have less experience in politics (Khondker, et al., 2013). Such perceptions challenge women’s efficiency as legislators. Women legislators have spoken out about such labelling effects by claiming that the majority of the male legislators like to call women (in quota) literally as ‘woman MPs’ instead of calling them simply by their designation as ‘legislator’. In an interview with the author, a woman legislator discussed the ‘label effect’:

We are known as Women MP in generally in the parliament and also in the field level. It does not matter how many qualifications I have or, how good I am as a legislator, does not make
any sense to many male legislators. I will not say that every male legislator is doing that, but most of them. They like to simply distinguish us from elected legislators (LWS201521, 2015). The quota system brought several women into the Bangladesh Parliament with the explicit aim to bring parity into women’s descriptive participation in politics. This positive development came along with informal perceptions that selected women representatives are only entitled to speak for women. Firstly, such perceptions put into question their credibility as a politician who can speak on national politics other than women issues. By questioning their ability as politicians, selected women legislators are unfairly labelled. Secondly, it is taken for granted that woman legislators will only talk about women issues; in a way, they are associated with less prestigious policies.

Woman legislators in reserved seats are embedded in the political institution, yet they are at the same time branded as the “30 sets of ornaments in Parliament” (Jahan, 1987, p.57). The election of women into reserved seats is being used as a ‘ready tool’ or a ‘vote bank’ at hand to the majority party, rather than a true representation in the Parliament (Chowdhury, 2002). Woman legislators often encounter lack of respect and forcefulness from their male colleagues within the Parliament. Men legislators were also seen making public comments questioning women’s ability to represent the people’s interest. In November 2011, a male legislator from the opposition party gave statements in a public rally, pointing at a reserved seat MPs of Chittagong. He proclaimed, “Problems of thousands of youths of Chandanaish cannot be solved by one woman MP. However, youths will benefit if more beautiful women are brought here from Tungipara [Prime Minister’s village home]” (BD News 24.com, 2011).

Although the statement has a political connotation and symbolises rivalries between two influential political parties of Bangladesh, it also shows how a male colleague perceived women legislators’ ability to represent. In an interview with a male legislator on how he perceives the role of women legislators and their contribution as legislators, he discussed:

Women and men have biological differences, and because of such differences, women can work less than a man can. Women cannot do constituency work as we, men, can do, travel the whole night, and work a full day (LME201624, 2016).

Another man legislator, in an interview with the researcher, justifies his low opinion of women’s ability to represent by saying:
Women must take care of the home, their children and their husbands, who are also like children. They cannot give enough time to the parliament; they cannot afford to stay longer in the evening (LME201625, 2016).

Woman legislators are not only treated like that but were also often interrupted while giving their regular speech, as reported by a woman legislator. They often overheard statements like “Women MP - you have spoken enough, you must sit” (LWS201615, 2016). Not only that, it is taken for granted that women legislators will always be in the Parliament whenever the speaker needs them to fulfil the quorums of the session (AC201740, 2016). Therefore, it is observed that the woman legislators’ contributions are often considered in an ornamental sense. Their participation in the legislative affairs remains secondary.

All these formal and informal aspects of the institution inside the parliament discourage women legislators or make them more sceptical of raising concerns that only impact women. Women legislators, regardless of whether they are speaking up for women or not, have confirmed the presence of this informal gendered perception and label affect as constraining factors in the process of SRW (LWS201505, 2015). Being influenced by the label effects and gendered perceptions, women legislators were conscious of their overall performance on the floor. They were observed explaining the challenges of prioritizing women issues and argued by saying: “we cannot afford to talk about women every time we talk” (LWS201520, 2015), or “[we] need to make sure a balance exists while choosing a topic related to women” (LWS201505, 2015), or “I needed to prove that I do have knowledge about national politics” (LWS201521, 2015). Similarly, another not-active elected woman legislator, in an interview, explained why she has not raised women issues in the parliament: “I do not only talk about women issues; women in the reserved seat are entitled to talk about them” (LWE201511, 2015). It was evident from the discussion that selected women legislators tried to make a balance by choosing national and international issues other than women issues. Even though some frequently brought women issues in the parliament, words such as ‘careful’, ‘cautious’ came up in response to the question of whether they speak up women issues in the parliament. Such cautiousness and carefulness, of course, reduced the chances of some women legislators’ intervention on women issue, whereas it leads some others not to bring them up at all.
In the plenary session, both Whips\textsuperscript{97} and the Speaker control the time allocation and selection of issues for parliamentary debates. The parliamentary rules (Rules 25 and 26) suggest that every legislator should submit their topics of interest to the Speaker before the commencement of the session to seek for an approval of the subject. Whips are responsible for allocating time to individual legislators’ speeches. However, the Speaker decides which topics to select in consultation with the leaders of the house. In the case of Bangladesh, this is the Prime Minister (as the leader of the ruling party). In the parliamentary system, every legislator is usually allotted a fixed time for their requested speeches in each session. Being a backbencher women legislator usually means receiving less time to raise concerns or participate in debates. Although there are no written rules about the time allocation, informally, speaking times are distributed based on the seniority. Seniority is decided on the basis of the experience as legislators (number of times serving as MP), and position holding in the ministries. It was reported by the women legislators that senior leaders in the Parliament received priority treatment from the Whips while allocating time slots. A response from a former Whip of the parliament indicates:

There were days when I had received many notifications; more than the time allotted for the discussion session. I have lists of several senior leaders, ministers. I cannot tell them ‘No’, as all of them are my senior. Then I try first to accommodate all seniors and then incorporate women fellows as many as I can (LWE201708, 2017).

Being backbenchers, most of the women legislators in quota often received less time for speech, on top of it, they had to make a balance selecting issues in order to handle the label affect and gendered perception. More precisely, of the women interviewed, only one legislator claimed to be part of the central party committee.

Parliamentary power positions matter in the deliberation, and seniority basically determines the power position at the party level. Most of the women legislators, with their newly elected and selected statuses, remain at the lower end of the seniority list. Author’s observation from parliamentary proceedings suggests that women in reserved seats do not usually get more than five minutes for delivering their speeches. While interviewing an elected woman legislator, who has served as Whip in the 9th Parliament, she explained that they need to maintain the discipline on the floor, where senior leaders will always get priority and more time to talk (in a form of informal discipline). On top, they

\textsuperscript{97} The Bangladesh parliament started with one Chief Whip and two Whips, which later increased to four and then to five in 1979 and 1986 respectively through presidential ordinances. In 2001 the number of whips was increased to six (Ahmed, 2012)
preferred to make a balance in selecting issues between women issues and general issue to overcome the gendered perception.

Besides, the selection of questions to the Prime Minister and executives are decided by the Prime Minister herself and by the concerned ministries (Ahmed, 2014). On many occasions, legislators have had to withdraw their notified issues as the party leadership in the parliament wanted to avoid putting the issues forward. In a majoritarian parliamentary system, a nomination for election is equal to a win in the election, seeing how, before being chosen by the constituency, the legislators are first selected by the party. Therefore, party loyalty becomes prominent in majoritarian democratic system, especially when a party has two third of the electoral seats in the parliament. The pressures of allegiance are there, often increasing when it comes to voting for policymaking and deliberation on the floor. Evidence suggests that legislators need to abide by the party decision taken at the central committee level (LWS201520, 2015). This is underlined by the fact that women legislators have been approached by the senior party leaders to replace their topics of discussion with any urgent political issues that came up on the day of deliberation. It is much easier for them to approach women legislators rather than men, as women in particular must be loyal to party decision. An interviewee suggests, “I had to replace my topic of discussion due to the order from central party. I could not say NO. I did not want to disappoint my party” (LWS201520, 2015).

Thus, the lack of parliamentary experiences and having a junior position in the parliament became a constraining factor for both active and not active women legislators, and especially those who came through quota. Only three out of 23 women legislators interviewed in this dissertation held a position at the mainstream party level during the 9th parliament, and two of them came to parliament by quota, and one by direct election (see Appendix 7.2 for the profiles of women legislators interviewed in this dissertation). Absence of a position at the mainstream party makes most of the women legislators in quota junior.

Even though all those limitations are a reality for backbench women legislators, the consequence of such limitations varied among them. It was observed that certain qualities of women legislators could

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98 Article 70 of the constitution says, “A person elected as a member of Parliament at an election at which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he resigns from that party or votes in Parliament against the party” (Government of Bangladesh, 1972, Article 70).
support them in overcoming those challenges. Such individual qualities included delivering good speeches, boasting prestigious professions, and having a good relationship with the Whips (categories used in the coding). Discussion with some women legislators indicated that the notion of being a good speaker allowed them to demonstrate active participation in the floor, which ultimately facilitated their intervention on women issues. Findings suggest those women legislators who can give a good speech always have better chances to get a slot. While talking to the Whip regarding allocating time slots and the challenges women legislators mentioned in the interview, she also emphasised on the ability of legislators to deliver a quality speech, saying: “A good speaker always gets a chance to speak” (LWE201708, 2017). An active woman legislator who has demonstrated her active participation on the floor of the parliament claimed that she did not face any sort of challenge in getting a slot for delivering her speech as everybody knows and admires her quality of speech. She opined, “My notice always gets accepted. Senior leaders and even the Whip used to ask help from me in case they were not prepared for their speech” (LWS201505, 2015).

Similarly, the lack of a good speaking ability can diminish the chances of women legislators speaking at the floor in general, as well as women issues. Being new within a gendered institution, woman legislators usually lack the parliamentary experiences and confidence that is necessary to establish them as good speakers. According to the data from previous research, more than 80 percent of women legislators were newcomers in the 9th parliament (Ahmed, 2012) and only a few women held an executive position within their political parties. Those elected and selected women legislator (n=4) arrived at the parliament due to their direct connection (discussed in earlier sections) have no early political experience. According to an expert interviewed, giving a speech is an art, and requires practice and confidence (AC201639, 2016). Being new in the parliament and lacking confidence hinders the women legislators’ ability to talk in the parliament in general. Again, it is not the fact that all the new comers in the parliament lack confidence to speak on the floor of the parliament, but certainly it became the fact for some not active women legislators who have had no previous political experience. It is also not necessarily true that only women lack confidence. It was also reported by women legislators that not every man legislator has the ability to deliver a good speech, and that there are also a few men who have not spoken often (LWS201502, 2015).

Along with woman legislators’ quality of speech, a good relationship with Whips might also play a role in getting a slot for speeches approved. The absence of such informal relationships reduces chances
for the woman legislators to get a more extended slot in the first place, thus ultimately reducing their possibility to speak on the floor. In support of such observations, the Whip of the parliament, who is responsible for selecting the topics for discussion, admitted the fact by saying, “The whip can have a good relationship with a women legislator, and when she requests a slot, the whip cannot say ‘no’” (LWE201507, 2015).

In addition, some of the informants pointed out the influence of party leaders in selecting topics of discussion on the floor. It happened that a woman legislator was ready to deliver their speech on the floor, but they had to replace the topic just a day before of the session by any urgent political matter. Such decisions mostly come from the party high command. An active woman legislator from the opposition talked about an incident in which she went to parliament, prepared to bring up women issues. However, the decision was changed on the very day from the higher ups of the party and she had to give up her slot for another leader to talk about some emergency political issues. Another woman complained about a similar incident by saying that, “the topic of my question on women issues was changed by one of our senior leaders” (LWS201520, 2015).

The quality of speech and an informal relationship with Whips or senior political leaders have facilitated active woman legislators’ ability to speak up in the parliament. On the other hand, the informal influence of party leaders hindered their ability to speak up. The system of lottery for selecting the topic of the plenary session similarly hindered the chances of women legislators. The topic of the discussion under the resolution motion, calling for attention and short statements on public interest, got selected through a lottery policy, which minimised the chance of selecting issues submitted by individual legislators. A legislator who has regularly participated in the discussion on several issues, including women issues, reported, “I need to be lucky enough to win the lottery to talk on the floor. I used to submit several notifications to increase the chance of selecting at least one” (LWE201506, 2015). To address the constraint, a few women legislators submit several topics related to women thinking at least one topic will get accepted by the lottery. According to them, such a strategy helped them attain a slot in the plenary.

In contrast to the gendered perception (mentioned earlier in the chapter), few women legislators claimed that they do not remember any such incidence where they were disrespected or faced discrimination as a women legislator. One active woman legislator argued how her background (she is a cousin of a very senior politician) helped her receive acceptance from her male colleagues:
Yes, the fact of having constraints for women MPs is right in a few cases, but these have never happened to my case, as I was always respected because of my background and performance on the floor. Many male MP even often praise my speech and issue selection (LWS201615, 2016).

Similarly, another woman legislator stated, “I was not disrespected. All my male colleagues respect me because of my profession [as a lawyer]. They praised me for my speech; I often receive a request of helping others in writing the speech” (LWS201601, 2016). Thus, the family background (referring here the direct connection with political elite), professional and political background and quality of speech allowed some women legislators to get acceptance from colleagues and helped them to overcome an adverse effect of their performance on the floor. Once a woman has the confidence and control over her speech, she can talk freely on issues she likes to raise, which is a prerequisite for women raising different issues frequently including women issues.

Finally, the discussion demonstrates that the legislative environment is full of informal rules and perceptions which challenge women’s ability as a legislator and impede their legislative behaviour. The informal parliamentary norms such as the label effect, lack of seniority, gendered perceptions, the complicated time allocation process, and being a backbencher, halt opportunities for women legislators to act effectively on women issues. On the other hand, having a good relationship with the Whip, being a good speaker, and having a respectable profession provide leverage to few women legislators for overcoming those obstacles.

7.2.2.2. Formal and Informal Aspects of the Electoral System
Furthering the discussion in Chapter 4, the important features of the electoral system in Bangladesh is the reservation of parliamentary seats for women who are not elected by a constituency but are ‘indirectly elected’ through a system of proportional representation and selected by the 300 elected MPs. This section mainly focuses on the relevance of the electoral system and provisions of the reserved seats, on the women’s ability to speak out in Parliament. More specifically it looks at how the patterns of the quota system and the informal rules associated with the system, constraint and facilitate women’s ability to speak up.
Before looking at the relevance of the electoral system, this section discusses the variation in legislative intervention of women legislators (more specifically, the quota and non-quota women) on women issues. The frequency analysis of three legislative activities such as short discussion on urgent public interest issue Rule 71A and Rule 7, and the resolution motion, suggested that more than 90 percent of the women issues are conveyed by the women coming through quota (see Chapter 5). These three legislative activities are identified as a medium of conveying/raising the concerns of the public coming directly from the constituency. The data revealed that only five elected women MPs raised women issues under these three motions (see Table 7.7). With regards to the resolution motion, women issues were raised only 5 times during the 9th parliament and all of them were conveyed by women in quota. The frequency of women legislators’ interventions on women issues suggested that quota women are more active on women’s issues than non-quota or elected women MPs. This does not, however, mean to say that all directly elected women seemed to be unconcerned with women issues and all women in quota speak up for women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.7: Women issues raised by quota and non-quota women</th>
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<tr>
<td>Motion 71 (N=82)</td>
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<td>Q-W</td>
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<td>79</td>
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Source: Researcher’s own calculation.
The policy of quota for women has three effects on women’s representation in the parliament, which include a lack of an electoral constituency; the provision of sharing constituencies with another elected MP from the opposition, and discrimination at the party level. The following paragraphs discuss these challenges in detail.

The absence of a defined constituency for woman legislators in quota is a major concern for them, when thinking about advancing their political career. Women in quota interviewed in this dissertation were conscious of their inability to deliver the concerns and demands of the people of a particular constituency onto the floor. In the single-member constituency system, an elected member of parliament enjoys absolute control over the decision-making process, and the budget allotted for the development of their respective electoral constituencies. Making the local people happy with some visible development enhances the possibility of winning the next election. The performance of a legislator is measured by the amount of developmental funds s/he was able to bring to the area in a single term (Jahan, 2012). Therefore, legislators, regardless of their genders, feel pressured to fulfil the
requirements originating from the local people. Also, s/he needs to take care of party obligations to consolidate control over rival political opponents. Both of these conditions are very instrumental in winning elections. Therefore, both elected and selected legislators need to face immediate local needs and practical developmental concerns. Lindberg’s (2010) study on members of Parliament in an African context demonstrates that MPs are subject to very different pressures to supply both collective and private goods. This kind of expectation from the locals and pressure of the electoral competition are difficult to change. Thus, it affects women legislators, making them less interested in concentrating on women’s concerns issues. In an interview, an elected woman legislator, who was not active on women issues, explained her inability of bringing women’s issues on the floor because of other pressures originating from the constituency:

So many requests on multiple issues are coming from my constituents and my party people. People do not have proper roads, dams, hospitals, schools, electricity at home, and clean drinking water. Most of their demands are very generic and common in nature. I need to prioritise and concentrate on addressing these issues by working with respective ministries for managing funds. I can not only talk about the particular needs of women, their concerns, or even women’s rights issues. As an elected MP, I cannot afford to ignore the general demands of the people (LWE201509, 2015).

In a different interview, another elected woman legislator mentioned, “I am only forwarding the messages from my people and their demands to the government” (LWE201708, 2017). So, the elected members of parliament feel responsible for the development of their communities and carry legislative authority to implement any developmental policies. Unlike elected women legislators, quota women have pointed out the discrimination and difficulties that they have faced while raising women concerns from their assigned constituency. In an interview, a selected woman MP observed:

Once I was talking about the urgency of building a women’s college in my constituency. The elected MP from the area protested my use of the words ‘my area,’ and I heard him shouting ‘since when did the area become yours’. I have also seen other elected legislators laughing about that fact (LWS201522, 2015).

In another instance, another selected woman legislator cited:

I went to my area to distribute clothes to women and children and to deliver some sewing machine from the development budget I receive every year. I was stopped from doing so….I was not allowed to do so just because my opponent, an elected MP, thinks he has the authority of the area (LWS201521, 2015).
For selected women MPs, the sense of entitlement to a constituency is not common and is associated with formal institutional arrangement directed by the party representatives in the parliament. Therefore, woman legislators are constrained to represent the public, in general, of a constituency in the parliament. Several selected women legislators’ interviewed in this dissertation showed their dissatisfaction with the system of sharing constituencies, which does not offer proper ownership of the area. It might be easier for selected women legislators’ to speak up for women just because they do not have to take the demands from their constituency into account. This might be a reason why women in reserved seats were observed speaking up for women more often. Nonetheless, conducting political activities in this arena, where selected women legislators have no formal authority, creates tension between selected women legislators and elected legislators (in most cases male, with a few exceptions) over the leadership of the constituency.

Selected women legislators repeatedly explained their “double constituency work”, and how it hampers their active presence in the parliament. The “double” here comes from their work simultaneously representing the assigned constituency (which they often share), and the constituency where they aspire to stand for election (usually their home-districts). Taking care of two constituencies is already quite challenging. The unique situation in which selected women legislators have to work in two constituencies simultaneously, make it harder for them to concentrate on women’s cause:

I was assigned to an area which is completely unknown to me and unknown to the people, way far from my district. I had to start working from the beginning in many sectors such as getting to know the area, people, local politics, local actors and earning acceptance among the public, are required more time (LWS201617, 2016).

It requires hard work for selected women legislators to establish a support base and counter the political rivalries both in the assigned and aspired constituencies (mostly their home district from where they intend to run the next election).

The third type of challenges originates from the male counterparts of the women legislators’ own party who are also interested in building the support system and run in upcoming elections. Usually, this male counterpart holds more assets, and can invest in charitable activities on a larger scale within the constituency in an effective demonstration of power. Such rivalries are equally faced by both
selected and elected women legislators. To survive in this adversarial and competitive environment, woman legislators are observed to dedicate more time to the field activities. This, therefore, keeps them away from concentrating on legislative intervention on the floor. In an interview with the researcher, a woman legislator discussed her division of time in preparing for the floor participation:

I need to give my 100 percent in the field, cannot make myself early enough to submit notifications to talk on the floor…….Even when I can manage to submit issues of discussion or parliamentary question, I need to be careful selecting the topic for debate” (LWE201506, 2015).

The quota system has created opportunities for women to pursue their political career. However, as discussed above, the quota policy, in practice, has also constrained their political participation and affected the interest in advocating for women on the floor. Various formal and informal responsibilities and challenges from the constituencies reduce their ability to represent a particular group in parliament. Kabeer (1999) has also discussed the patron-client structure in the national politics as a crucial contributing factor to this crisis. Her study also highlighted how the burden of double constituency work hampers women legislators’ effectiveness in their political participation by constraining their ability to define their political objectives (Kabeer, 1999). Similarly, the commitment of elected women legislators for the development of their respective constituencies hampered their interest on women issues. Women’s ability to represent on issues of concern to women is deeply entwined with their ability to speak. In short, the gendered electoral system, public expectations, and the formal and informal mandate structure associated with quota policy, hamper women’s ability to speak freely and act as active agents of substantive representation.

7.2.2.3. Political Opportunity Structure
This factor refers to overall political environment such as aspect of party ideology, the nature of the party in power, and the polarization of the political system. The political opportunity structure in this dissertation also includes the presence of women-friendly political leader and the impact of religious thought under this category. This section mainly focused on the relevance of the political opportunity structure on women’s ability to speak up for women. More specifically it looked at how the patterns of political opportunity structure constrains and facilitates women’s ability to speak up.
It is mentioned in Chapter 3 that the government of Bangladesh has responded to those concerns of ensuring women’s equality in politics by taking a number of initiatives. Recommendations from the United Nations Platform of Actions (also known as the Beijing platform) have been used by the government as a basis for policy change and have brought several real policy changes in support of gender equality (see Chapter 6). Such a women-friendly political environment encouraged women legislators who are in favour of women’s equal property rights to bring those issues to the floor. Several quotes concerning this issue originated from the interviews, which indicate how the presence of a suitable/supportive political environment can influence women legislators’ attempts to represent women. Positive supports from the government refers mainly to the positive attitude of the Prime Minister. As the head of the executives and the leader of the house, she played a significant role in these changes. The same was also observed in Chapter 6, where it is demonstrated that the enactment of the Domestic Violence act would not have been possible without the support of the Prime Minister. Such women-friendly political environments created opportunities for women legislators, and a common ground for action (discussed partially in Chapter 6). It is also evident from the interviews where active women legislators (mainly from the party in power) consistently gave credit to their party chief, the Prime Minister, and her empathy towards women issues and reported how a women-friendly party leader encouraged them to speak for women. One interviewee mentioned, “The Prime Minister has told us in the first meeting after my selection that as a woman, we have individual responsibility to work on behalf of women” (LWS201516, 2015). Similar statements from interviewees follow:

We have now a women speaker who is a very elegant woman, and everybody respects her. I felt more confident and encouraged to bring more women concerns on the floor (LWS201505, 2016).

We have been ordered by the standing committee and even by the PM to talk about women’s problems, security in public meeting to build awareness in the field level (LWE201510, 2015).

There is no chance for male colleagues to make a disrespectful comment in the presence of the Prime Minister. No one dares to (LWE201507, 2015).

Some active women legislators thought that several bold initiatives of the Prime Minister encouraged them to stand for women on the floor. The contributions of other women-friendly leaders such as the Minister of women affairs and the chair of the women and children standing committee have been critical. Their active participation encouraged The backbench women legislators received moral support from the active participation of executives. Backbench women legislators’ moral and political support was discussed in detail in Chapter 6. Support from the Prime Minister and other leaders
mattered in pushing forward the draft through the ministry of law and the cabinet. The process of policy-making described in Chapter 4 and later in Chapter 6 demonstrates the domination of executives in the context of Bangladesh. A member of parliament usually plays a limited role in the process of drafting a law. In such a system, women-friendly political leaders or executives in the government are not only useful to make policy change but also necessary to encourage women legislators to stand up for women on the floor of the parliament. This is exactly what we have observed in the case of the Domestic violence act (discussed in Chapter 6). Government’s ownership on such crucial women issues creates opportunities for backbench women legislators who are interested in speaking up for women. A few active women legislators have praised for the contribution of the Prime Minister and other executives, particularly for their moral and physical support, saying:

Our Prime Minister is very women-friendly. She has taken many steps to reduce male domination in all sectors. We have now long waited for the domestic violence act, and all credits for this will go to the Prime Minister (LWS201502, 2015).

Even the executives who were directly involved with the policy making, have confirmed the contribution of the party chief and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh by saying, “Without the PM’s direct intervention, it would not have possible for me to lead” (LWS201502, 2015).

The purpose here is not to say that the government’s positive attitude would affect all women legislators equally and that as a result they would all speak up for women. If that was the case, then we could have observed that all the women in the 9th parliament speaking up for women on the floor. That did not happen. Nevertheless, a women-friendly political attitude of government and their ownership on certain policy issues certainly made the policy change easier in the context of Bangladesh. At the same time, such an environment encouraged some motivated women legislators, or provided them with leverage to take up women issues. The motivational aspect of women legislators matters in order to make use of the women-friendly political environment. While talking to some not active women legislators about their role in the process of Domestic Violence act, replies came like, “I was not involved” (LWE201506); “I came to know about it on the day of voting in the parliament” (LWE201509,2015); “I cannot say much about it” (LWE201511, 2015), or “I heard about it” (LWS201519, 2015). Therefore, while the presence of a women-friendly PM was instrumental in helping already-motivated women push through a bill oriented towards helping women, it did not do the same for all women.
Similarly, the motivational aspect of women legislators might not always be successful at attaining the government’s attention to women-specific issues where there is a lack of political will. The purpose is to demonstrate how a women-friendly government can also be cautious about taking ownership on controversial issues like women’s equal property rights or recognition of unpaid labour. Issues like equal property rights, women’s economic empowerment, control over her resources, have always been on the agenda of women rights organizations, and are topics of national debates. Such political realities impede women legislators who are in favour of women’s equal property rights to bring them to the floor. Several quotes concerning this issue originated from the interviews. They indicate how the absence of an issue-specific political will of the government can influence women legislators’ attempts to represent controversial but very important women issues:

It is not yet the right moment to work on property rights issues (I.WE201507, 2015)
Prime Minister has told us that we need to wait for the right moment and time (I.WE201503, 2015).

The government’s cautiousness was related to the risk of losing the popular support of conservative voters. Women development policies were such a policy document drafted back in 1997 by the government of the time (the same party was in power in the 9th parliament). The policy itself drew a lot of attention and criticisms from the rightist and religious political parties and groups, just because it contains proposals about women’s rights that might go against the Islamic norms. The policy includes a clause about equal property rights which contradicts the Islamic family code. Women’s advocacy groups, development organizations, and the government were involved in the process of drafting and initiating the whole process, bringing the issue to Parliament, but finally needed to halt the process due to the protest from the religious extremist groups (DWRO201531, 2015). In the wake of such massive pressures, the government was not ready to risk their electoral politics.99 Such concerns impact women legislators’ motivation to speak up on women-related contentious issues. In this regard, an active woman legislator pointed out,

It is not an easy task to touch in our social context. It is not only about the Islamic sentiment; it is about the patriarchal cultural connotation. I was on the committee of the Hindu marriage act.100 The committee brought together people from different backgrounds, from different

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99 The policy was passed later in 2010 with a modification on the clause where it talks about equal inheritance property rights.
100 It aims to provide legal and social protection to members of the Hindu community, particularly safeguard women from marriage-related cheating. The parliament passed the Hindu marriage registration law keeping the provision of registration optional on July 2012.
groups to have constructive debates and discussions. The representatives from the Hindu religious community challenged the idea and protested by saying that they will put fire to themselves if the government brings the law into their religious beliefs. They justified this by saying that they marry in front of a fire, as a part of their rituals, which cannot be compromised at any cost (LWS201601, 2016).

Religion and the patriarchal culture played a critical role in Bangladesh politics. The aforementioned statement shows how a society is ruled by religious values which become a political reality that can prevent the deliberation of women legislators and constrain the government from advancing women’s interests. The influence of religious dogma is equal in both active and non-active women legislators. Contentious issues, such as equal property rights, which can go against religious traditions, prevent women legislators from raising these issues. The data from the parliamentary debates also indicated such a reality, where woman legislators brought issues of equal inheritance rights only twice during the entire 9th parliament; once in the form of a written question to the Ministry of Law and the second in the form of a statement of public interest motion. Both concerns were raised by two very motivated active women legislators (LWS201601, 2016 and LWS201505, 2015). The purpose of the motion and question was not to initiate a proposal for equal rights. Rather, they listed the challenges women face due to the lack of equal sharing of the property and brought this information to the floor. Many women legislators admitted to the importance of equal property rights as the realizations often came from their own life experiences. Nevertheless, they were cautious in bringing such contentious issues onto the floor. Woman legislators were also seen questioning the role of their male colleagues and their honest intentions, which they did not find encouraging:

> While talking about property rights, most of the men were not in favour of it. This is not because of their religious beliefs. All men become religious when it comes to property. How many men want to give an equal property rights owned by inheritance to their sisters? No one would like to do so (LWS201601, 2016).

Thus, the politics of election, religious customs and the patriarchal nature of the state can affect a women-friendly political environment and compromise the willingness of political leaders to take up certain contentious women issues, even though they are the core of women’s rights. Such cautiousness of the government ultimately discouraged women legislators (in general) and some active women legislators often abstained from speaking up on such contentious women rights issues, and limit substantive representation of Women.
While talking about opportunity structures, most literature pointed out the ideology of the political parties, especially the party in power, as a main factor. The ideology of main two political parties—the Awami League\(^{101}\) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)\(^{102}\) – in parliament are attached to the center left and the center right, respectively. The remaining political parties—Jatiya Party (JP)\(^{103}\), Jamaat-e-Islami\(^{104}\), and Islami Oikyo Jote\(^{105}\), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD)\(^{106}\) and the Communist Party of Bangladesh\(^{107}\) were allied with either AL or BNP before the 2008 election. Both the extreme right and extreme left parties came under the umbrella of an electoral coalition of the two big parties (central right and central left). The ideological division between central right and central left political views on women issues is not that prominent, as is the case with liberal and conservative parties in Western countries. Neither left nor right-wing parties have women representatives in the Parliament. A total of only five women legislators in quota came from the opposition political party, mainly the BNP, which represents a central rights ideology. The ideological differences among women legislators in relation to their party affiliation are minimal and thus, the effect of such variation is not visible in the 9\(^{th}\) parliament. More specifically, women from both the central right and central left parties were vocal when it came to speaking about women’s concerns and issues. The frequency of parliamentary intervention demonstrated that these 5 women legislators were very active on women issues. Even when the party in power took the credit for adopting many policies including the Domestic Violence Act (DV), women legislators from the opposition were not against it. They have even shown their moral support by not protesting the enactment of the bill and provided their physical support by attending some of the inception meetings of the act. In response to the question with regards to their support to DV, replies from opposition women legislators were something like, “much awaited act” (LWS201519, 2015); “it was needed” (LWS201522, 2015).

\(^{101}\) Centrist, believe in role of government in economy, considers limited role of religion in politics, and espouses liberal social values, proponent of Bengali nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{102}\) Centre-right, proponent of open market economy, views Islam as a central element of social and political life, espouses liberal social values, proponent of Bangladeshi nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{103}\) Center right, proponent of open market economy, believes in significant role of Islam in politics, espouses liberal social values, and advocates Bangladeshi nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{104}\) Islamist, right-wing, supporter of open market economy with certain restrictions due to religious factors, espouses conservative social values, supports Muslim nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{105}\) Orthodox Islamist, supporter of restricted market economy, espouses highly conservative social values, supports Bangladeshi nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{106}\) Centre-left, secularist, believes in role of government in economy, espouses liberal social values, supports Bengali nationalism (Riaz, 2016).

\(^{107}\) Socialist, secularist, believes in command economy, highly liberal on social issues (Riaz, 2016).
In short, the discussion here argued that a women-friendly political atmosphere (which included the political will of the party in power, party leaders/executives) implicitly influence some interested women legislators and provided leverage to speak up on women issues. Such a women-friendly political atmosphere definitely has relevance. It is required for bringing women-related policy change, especially within majoritarian political systems where domination of head of the state and other executives is evident. Such an environment can not only encourage women legislators but also facilitate the process of women-friendly policy change (as was discussed in Chapter 6). In order to act as a facilitator to whether women issues will be raised in the Parliament, women-friendly political environment needs to coincide with motivation of women legislators on women issues. Such an environment could influence a group of women who are interested and motivated to speak for women in a positive way. Similarly, a women-friendly political atmosphere could be compromised by the electoral politics, as well as the religious and patriarchal practices of the country. Such compromises could implicitly demotivate some active women in such a way that it constrains them from speaking up certain contentious women issues which go against their party agenda. The religious sentiment can make legislators think twice before advocating for a woman issue which can go against the religious beliefs (in the case of Bangladesh, this is regardless of whether those beliefs adhere to Muslim or Hindu religions). It hinders women legislators’ motivation to speak up on certain contentious women issues. The variation in women party ideology did not bring variation in their representation on women issues as their political ideology on women issues did not differ significantly (Nazneen, 2009). Those who are motivated and interested to take up women issues they spoke on the floor regardless of their political differences.

7.2.2.4. Relations with External Actors
Since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, women’s rights organizations have emerged advocating the inclusion of more women in politics and the promotion of their political empowerment. Many of these organisations are working on how to address obstacles and challenges in women’s political participation and how to train them as critical actors for facilitating women-friendly policies.

Large numbers of national and international donor and implementing organizations are working in Bangladesh in the field of women in politics. Some of these are grassroots women’s movements that work nationally to promote women’s political participation and remove obstacles preventing that
participation. Others work to establish networks among women legislators through national and international women’s gatherings, as well as via transnational women’s networks, dedicated to exchanging information on successful strategies for inspiring women’s representation. The rest are trying to accomplish broader goals of women-friendly policy change in collaboration with women in political parties and the parliament (DWRO201529, 2015). Most of these organizations offer advanced training programs targeting both woman and man legislators as part of good governance and parliamentary democracy projects, such as Asia Foundation, National Democratic Institute, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Also, they have designed training programs which cover topics like gender sensitization, and aspects of skill, building like how to legislate, how to build a constituency, how to raise money, how to run in the elections, and so on (CSO201633, 2015).

Every active woman legislator who was interviewed for this thesis, participated in such conferences/workshops/national dissemination seminars, both nationally and internationally organised by the development actors and women’s rights organization. Receiving skill development trainings before and after taking over the public office is common to all women legislators interviewed in this study. It is mainly found among those who have newly entered the Parliament. Every newcomer went through different skill development training programs organised by both the parliament and by the development actors during their tenure of the parliament. Being a woman legislator, they have attended seminars, national conferences where they acted as women representatives or a specific standing committee member, there to share their experiences (CSO201632, 2015). Often, development actors targeted a few legislators as their focal contacts with whom they can collaborate on certain policy issues towards desirable ends (AC201639, 2016).

Regarding the attendance of national seminars, workshops and skill development trainings, the participation of active and not active women legislators did not vary. All women MPs attended conferences and received skill development training. This does not seem to have had an influence on whether or not they speak out on women’s issues (see Table 7.8). Variation among women legislators was evident when it comes to attending international/transnational networks, or participating in knowledge-sharing international exchange programs, performing as a trainer, holding a membership in women’s movements, or representing the country at a global platform (see Table 7.8). Ten active women legislators have participated in the international conference and part of the global network respectively, whereas only 4, non- active women legislators did the same (see Table 7.8). Seven active
woman legislators have claimed their prior engagement with women’s rights organizations via attending meetings, rallies, and other events on the causes of women’s empowerment (see Table 7.8). This group of women has been involved with women movements and became well known active leaders in the field of women’s rights issues. This was true not only in the field level, as these women have also demonstrated active participation on women issues after entering the Parliament. Four other active women have introduced themselves as trainers of the National Development Institute and Bangladesh Women’s Association. They trained women interested in participating in local government elections (see Table 7.8). Similarly, only active women legislators were part of the global network and represented the country on an international platform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patterns of Involvement</th>
<th>Active Legislators (N=13)</th>
<th>Not Active Legislators (N=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended Conference and Workshops on women issues</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Skill Development Training</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in International Conference and Exchange Program on women issues</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform as Trainer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of Global Network</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active member of the women movement</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data for women legislators compiled from researcher’s interviews with elected and selected women legislators in 9th Parliament.

Development actors and women’s rights organizations usually identify issues that are specific to women, analyse them and highlight them through dissemination to make them more prominent in the national discussion. Discussion, dissemination, national consultation, and training programs are the core of their functions (DWRO201531, 2015). The resources and technical support transferred by the national and international development partners to women legislators are usually valued in the party. In the interviews, an important observation was made by the respondents on collaboration with external actors. It is highlighted in responses, saying the collaboration “helped to generate knowledge,” (LWS201601, 2016), “became aware of women’s needs and security issues” (LWS201505), “learned how to advocate” (LWS201520, 2015), and “learned how to address needs and demands of electoral constituencies” (LWS201615, 2016).

In addition, there are influential and enthusiastic women legislators who have close ties with different women’s rights organizations and development actors, and pursued their advocacy agenda on issues
of their interest. Some legislatures worked as their support agents to pursue women’s rights issues, support gender-sensitive policies in the parliament, and act as lobbying agents with the government. In an interview with the president of Bangladesh Women’s Association, she explained how they have worked closely with women-friendly legislators and concerned ministers in the case of the Domestic Violence act. They helped each other in pursuing the policy and the enactment of the law. She further commented:

Whenever we have issues to rise or suggest improving the situation of women, we approached them. It also happened in the case of the Domestic Violence act. We were successful bringing them in our national drafting committee (DWRO201529, 2015).

One-woman legislator, a professional lawyer, was also approached by the women rights organizations to ensure legal justice to the victims of violence, explained her involvement with Bangladesh Women’s Association and the benefit she attained from such a commitment:

I was working with Bangladesh Women’s Association (Mohila Parishad) since the late 90s. Since then, I work with them on a regular basis, attend their meeting, attend problem sharing meetings with local representatives, and handle legal issues. Other than the Mohila Parishad, I work with many different organisations; participate in many national and international conferences. While working with them somehow, directly and indirectly, I got exposure, learned about many aspects related to women’s rights and deepen my knowledge. I was involved in the process of drafting women’s development policy and represented my party. I know how difficult to make a policy, which is sometimes impossible (LWS201601, 2016).

In conversation with personnel from development actors regarding the nomination process for the role of trainer or exchange program, one observed, “They are already qualified spokespersons and active politicians. We have repeatedly sent some legislators to represent the country because we know that they are active, energetic and dynamic and, most importantly, can speak English” (CSO201736, 2016). Another professional working with an international organization explained their criteria by saying, “Selection criteria were simple. We looked at their qualifications, education, and knowledge about women issues, good speaker, also personality wise respected” (CSO201635, 2016).

The above discussion suggests that external actors’ relationships with women legislators were mutually beneficial with regards to knowledge generation. Often, their collaboration became a successful agent of change in the particular subject-matter. External actors provide a platform for interaction among different groups on women issues and priorities. Women’s perspective is created when women interact with other women to define their priorities (Weldon, 2002). Every woman legislator interviewed in
this study claimed that their association with different organizations is constructive and helpful in many ways. According to active women legislators, their association with external actors (through different patterns of involvement) enabled them to acquire knowledge on current women-specific concerns. This helped them in selecting a discussion topic to bring on the parliament floor. Representing the country in more prominent forums and exchanging experiences are crucial to women legislators when it comes to building self-confidence, and they have utilised it in their capacity as lawmakers.

For woman legislators, acquiring knowledge and building confidence through their involvement with external actors are found to be helpful in various capacities. However, merely attending conferences and participating in skill development trainings does not predict whether or not women legislators are active on women issues. It could just be that women legislators who work for women are also interested in attending workshops, training other women, etc. At the same time, active participation in a women’s movement or a global network, and experience as a trainer, could motivate some women to make a difference in their performance on women issues. In other words, the absence of that kind of involvement can be considered a constraining factor impacting women’s ability to represent women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Level</th>
<th>Determinant</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Relevance to substantive representation on women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Formal and Informal aspects of Institution</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Position in parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Being a good public speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Informal ties with Whips (helps in selecting topic of discussion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>having a respectable profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral aspects</td>
<td>Constraining</td>
<td>Unfairly labelled as women legislator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of positional power in the party level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not meeting criteria of seniority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gendered experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complicated practice of issue selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aspect of patronage politics such as people’s expectation on public goods and service; party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating/Constraining</td>
<td>Pressure to consolidate party control in the field level.</td>
<td>Lack of electoral constituency for women in quota</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overlapping/ double mandate ties to women in quota</td>
<td>Gendered experience at the field level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Women friendly political environment compromised in the presence of lack of political will, religious and patriarchal stands against women’s rights.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political atmosphere</td>
<td>Women friendly government, party chief and executives in combination with motivation of women legislators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>History of being part of women’s movement, part of global network and role as trainer for young politicians’ matter in combination with active political history and empathy to women issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation with External Actors</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own research.

The overall discussion in this section dealt with the relevance of different macro level factors (i.e. informal and formal aspects of the institution, informal and formal aspects of the electoral system, the political atmosphere, and relation to external actors). The findings in this section allowed determining positive and negative impacts of each factor and came up with a list of facilitating and constraining factors impacting women’s ability to speak up for women (see Table 7.9).

The macro level has identified a list of facilitating and constraining factors related to formal and informal aspects of the institution, features of the electoral system, political atmosphere and relation with external actor (Table 7.9). The variation in representation of women legislators cannot be explained only by their individual attributes. Women who enter into the Parliament, and continue their journey within that context, are subjected to more public attention and scrutiny. Much of the real-life political bargaining involved in the process of interaction with broader contexts is often left unnoticed. A list of constraining factors emerged in the discussion which influenced women negatively with regards to their ability to speak up for women. Such aspects include unfairly labelled women legislators; gendered experiences in relation to their capacities as representatives; absence of a position in the parliament or in the party; not meeting the criteria of seniority; and the complicated practice of issue selection for the plenary sessions. These formal and informal rules of the institution directly put women in a disadvantageous position in a way that forces them to diverge from their interest in speaking for women. It was also evident that some women legislators mediated those constraining

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aspects through their essential capacities of good public speaking, as well as a respectable, lived profession, and thus ended up advocating for women issues despite the constraints. In some instances, few women have negotiated those constraining factors better with the help of their position in parliament (being a chair of the standing committee, a member of Cabinet, a member of party’s central committee, and leading the women wings of the party) and having informal ties with Whips. In short, the position within the Parliament or in the party; informal ties with Whips; the image of a good speaker and having a prestigious profession; women-friendly political atmospheres seemed to have perceived benefit to women’s ability to achieve substantial representation. In total all these aspects encourage and inspire women to speak up freely on women issues.

With regards to the features of the electoral system, a list of constraining factors was identified by women legislators. Such constraining factors include the aspects of patronage inherent in the political system, meant to consolidate party control over the constituency by supplying public goods and services to the people; lack of an electoral constituency (which limits women legislators’ control over addressing the needs of people); and gendered experiences at the constituency level, exacerbated by the opposing male politicians. Those challenges became doubled when women in quota have to take care of two constituencies (where one constituency came along with the quota selection and the other is the respective legislators’ home district), as was discussed in detail in Chapter 4. All these constraining factors hamper women legislators’ ability and motivation to speak freely. Apart from all constraining factors, it was evident that women in quota were more vocal on women issues than the elected women legislators. The discussion on features of the political atmosphere suggested that women-friendly political environment, such as having a women-friendly party in power or women-friendly leaders/executives, provided leverage only to motivated and interested women legislators to speak up on women issues. However, women friendly political atmosphere can be compromised in the presence of constraining features such as the lack of political will of the party in power, religious patriarchal stands against specific women issues. These can, together negatively impact women’s motivation and their ability to speak for women.

Finally, women legislators involvement with external actors have been demonstrated as facilitating factors building capacities and expertise on several social issues. Such involvement referred their active participation in women’s movement, being a part of the global network, and performing as a trainer to potential women politicians.
7.3. Interplay of Different Factors

By investigating the variation in legislators’ attitude towards women issues and the explanation given for these attitudes, information on the extent to which micro, and macro levels of factors have relevance to women’s substantive representation was acquired. The findings have provided a list of facilitating and constraining factors (distributed across the two levels) which can be the prerequisites for whether or not women legislators speak out for women in parliament. Each thematic level identified some facilitating and constraining factors which can connect to women’s ability to speak and not to speak on women issues. The assumption is that the individual, micro-level resources women bring with them to parliament influences their ability to represent women, which interacts with macro level factors.

In order to understand the interplay of different facilitating and constraining factors, the discussion here brought together four different interesting cases. In the first case ‘A’, many facilitating factors came together and influenced the legislator to speak up for women. The second case ‘B’ describes a situation in which many constraining factors came together to prevent the legislator from speaking up for women. Conversely, case ‘C’ features a woman who did not speak up for women even though many facilitating factors came together for her. Finally, case ‘D’ describes a situation in which many constraining factors were present, nevertheless, the legislator spoke up for women.

Such similar but different context-specific cases were brought together to trace the ways in which the various factors manifest and link to each other throughout the individual legislator’s lifetime. Concerning the case A, many facilitating factors from micro label (identified in this dissertation) were present in her life which ultimately helped her to tackle the macro label of constraining factors that affect all women equally. Concerning the aspect of political socialization (micro label factors), she was raised up in a political family and her father was a founding member of Bangladesh AL (present party in power). She mentioned the contribution of her father for familiarising her with politics. Her father’s connection brought her close to the present Prime Minister. After finishing her Bachelor in Law degree, she travelled abroad with her husband and acquired a PhD while staying outside of Bangladesh. Though she participated in student politics during her university days early in her life, the motivation to enter into national politics, according to her testimony, was gathered from the Prime Minister. It was upon the PM’s encouragement that she returned home and got involved with politics and practicing law. Finally, in 2008, she entered parliament with the nomination offered by the party chief,
in other word, through legislative quota. Within the next year, she took over the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and brought many significant changes in women-related policies. Her motivations in politics arose due to her early political socialization and the encouragement she received from the Prime Minister as her mentor. However, the urge for standing for the rights of women came from her inherent motivation to improve women’s overall condition. Because of her profession as a law practitioner and the contributions she made due to her practiced profession, she became a prominent name among the women’s rights activists and civil society organizations, even before she entered parliament. Women activists, interviewed in this dissertation, confirmed her involvement and contribution for the cause of women. She has travelled to many countries as a representative of Bangladesh and raised women’s concerns in the international platform both before and after she entered parliament. In this particular case, most of the pre-requisites or characteristics of an active agent for women (discussed in this dissertation) were present in her life even before going to parliament. She has gone through an early political socialization, was involved with student politics, served as a law practitioner, and has also gone through a process of political mentoring in her life. In addition, her involvement with social work and a good relationship with external actors were also explicit due to her profession and urge to improve women’s conditions. Although she was a selected woman legislator (in quota), the family background, education and professional qualification allowed her to overcome the adverse label effect towards quota women and challenge the gendered perception inside the parliament. Also, by acquiring the executive position as well as a position inside the party, she was provided leverage to challenge all sorts of formal and informal institutional norms (respect from colleagues, time slot for delivering speech) that affect all backbench women legislators equally. At the same time, the presence of her positional power inside the parliament provided her opportunity, scope and support of a women-friendly political chief, and thus aided her in bringing changes in women related policies.

In contrast to a positive example of active women, this section brings the case of B, where all the constraining factors were present, and prevented the legislator from bringing up women issues. In response to the question of whether she spoke for women, she argued that she does not believe in talking inside the parliament. She further mentioned that talking about general concern issues (such as construction, and financial support and funding issues) are more important to her than women issues, as those requests are coming from the general public. With regards to the perceived understanding on women issues, she sees issues of violence against women and women’s rights as
social concerns, but she did not think talking about these inside the parliament would make any difference. Although she was an elected woman legislator, her journey to the parliament was a matter of coincidence. She had neither any early political engagement nor was she born into a family that was active in politics. Rather, she was married to a politician/ex-legislator who was elected two times. Being married to an active politician she got to know about politics but was never actively involved with it. However, her decision to run in the election happened due to her husband’s ineligibility for participating in 2008 election. Considering the influence of her husband at the local level, the party decided to nominate his wife to run for election. According to her, she was not at all ready to take the responsibility as she lacked knowledge about politics. She graduated but never experienced a professional life. All the micro level constraining factors (identified in this dissertation) such as the lack of perceived understanding and motivation on women issues; absence of early political socialization and early political engagement; lack of an experienced professional background; and entry to parliament through direct family connection, were present in the case of B. Even though many constraining factors were present, some macro level facilitating factors were observed. She was not a victim of the label effect or gendered perception not only because of her medium of entering into parliament (directly elected), but also because of her marriage to an ex-legislator (also a member of AL central committee). She did not face any challenges of getting a time slot for speaking in parliament. She spoke quite a few times and she covered only general issues, never discussed women issues in parliament. She thought speaking up for women is not her responsibility as an elected woman legislator. Similarly, she was not interested in building connection with external actors, and did not particularly like attending any such workshops or conferences organised by them, even after entering into parliament. Few facilitating factors (position in the parliament, lack of experienced gendered discrimination) could not make her speak up for women due to the presence of many micro and macro-level constraining factors, which were present in her case (with regards to perception on women, early political socialization, involvement politics, practiced profession, direct family link as pathway to parliament, relation with external actors).

In the case of C, many facilitating factors were present but did not result in her speaking up for women in the parliament. Her entry into parliament took place through a process of political socialization unlike many not active women legislators interviewed in this dissertation. She was not only interested in politics but also trained herself for the position by joining in student politics. She has started her professional career as a lawyer and been involved actively with the Bangladesh Awami League. She
was involved in party politics later in her life and did not have political socialization in her childhood. Even after entering parliament, she continued leading the women’s bar association and became chair of the district-level women’s AL committee. It is important to mention here that only very few women legislators held a central position at the district committee level (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). Because of her strong hold inside the political party, she ran for election with the party nomination and successfully got elected. Her journey to parliament did not just happen by incident (like in the case of B) but included a process of political mentoring by a senior politician. Because of her professional background as a lawyer and her affiliation with mainstream AL, she was well respected among her colleagues and did not face any challenges inside the parliament as a woman legislator, as reported by her. Similarly, being an elected legislator, she did not have to struggle for a slot to deliver her speeches, in contrast to the selected women legislators. Also, being active in mainstream party politics (as evidenced by her party position), delivering a speech in public has not been a challenge for her. Even though many facilitating factors from micro and macro levels were present in her life, she did not speak up for women on the floor of parliament. As an elected woman legislator, she gave priority to party politics and constituency work, rather than women issues in the parliament. The few constraining factors were also present in this case. Such constraining factors are related with relation to her motivation to take up women issues and her lack of interest in maintaining relations with external actors. Concerning her affiliation with external actors, she denied having any such close relationships with them. Even though she attended a few conferences, they were related to the environment; none were related to women in general. Secondly, she perceived that women issues should only be raised by women coming through quota as they come to parliament with such a mandate. In other word, she preferred to concentrate more on constituency work than speaking up for women issues in the parliament. Thus, she did not speak up on women issues even though there were many facilitating factors present in her case.

The fourth case D has demonstrated her active participation by raising women issues even though she also experienced many constraining factors originating at both the micro and the macro level. The woman in this case did not go through an early political socialization, nor was she born in a politically active family. Also, she did not have an active political affiliation during or after her studies. She got married after her graduation, with an engineer cum businessman, who had an interest in politics. Her husband and his family had a strong hold on party politics and aspired to get a party nomination for the national election. Unfortunately, it could not happen, as a case was filed against her husband by
his opponents, leading the party to deny him the nomination him because of the allegation. This caused great dissatisfaction among his supporters at the constituency. The chief of his party decided to nominate his wife for quota, instead of him. Thus, her pathway to parliament included a direct family connection. As a selected woman legislator, she faced the label effect and often found herself victim of gendered perceptions. Nevertheless, she was seen addressing women issues and often questioned to executives for the improvement of women. The absence of a position in the parliament means she had little authority over policy making, and thus faced hurdles when getting time slots for delivering speeches. Along with those constraining factors, a few facilitating factors were present as well in this case. For instance, she perceived women issues as a social problem, and felt responsible for improving women’s relative situation in society. After entering into the parliament, she joined the women wing of Bangladesh Awami League and became active in politics. After entering into parliament, she worked hard, studied on different issues women are facing in the country. According to her, she used to watch videos of senior leaders delivering speeches in the parliament to avoid her nervousness and to learn how to deliver her speech. According to her, she used to be a well-known speaker among all the women in quota, thus getting a time slot for her speeches was never a problem for her. It does not mean she did not concentrate on the constituency work. She had to take care of two constituencies because of the complicated system of constituency sharing for quota women (discussed in Chapter 3 and in an earlier section of this chapter). The constraining aspects of electoral system, such as the label effect or the double mandate regarding constituency work, could not stop her bringing women issues into the parliament. She has earned respect and also demonstrated her active presence in parliament, in politics, as well as in the constituency, which all together helped her get a nomination for second term. In between, her involvement with external actors (working for the women’s rights organizations) provided her with the opportunity to gather knowledge about contemporary women issues. The women-friendly political atmosphere has encouraged her to speak up on certain women issues. For example, she has mentioned her first meeting with the PM where she has suggested all women legislators should give more priority to women issues. It was her dedication, hard work, perceived understanding about women, involvement with women wings of the party, and intrinsic motivation to “speak up women issues” (as motto of her work) helped her to overcome all the constraining factors from the micro (absence of political socialization, early political engagement, practiced profession) as well as the macro level (label effect and gendered perception).
These four cases discussed two specific outcomes for those being either speaking for women, or not speaking for women. Different facilitating and constraining factors which emerged from micro and macro levels were at work in these four cases. They together demonstrated how the presence and absence of a few factors in their lives impacted women legislators’ decision to speak up for women. Such variation in representation of women legislators cannot be explained only by their individual attributes, but also by their real life bargaining within the bigger political context, which often remains unnoticed. This would help us to trace the ways in which the various factors manifest and link to each other throughout women legislators’ lives.

The dimension of individual characteristics, such as individual motivation and perceptions on women issues, played a role in determining whether women speak out or not. Women legislators’ participation on women issues was influenced positively by their perceived understanding of women issues as a social problem, and their perceived responsibility as women to better women’s condition in society. These individual characteristics were identified as an important condition to become an active women legislator. Even in a situation, where many facilitating factors from micro and macro levels were present (case C); women did not speak up for women, if they lack self-motivation and an urge to improve women’s situation. On the other hand, in the case of D, where many constraining factors from both the micro and macro levels were present, the legislator still preferred to speak up for women issues only because of her intrinsic wish to improve women’s social, economic and political status. The discussion on relevance of micro level factors in the earlier section suggested that attainment of higher education in combination with the experienced profession (such as law, education, medicine, and politics) provides motivational benefits to women legislators. Case D was exceptional because it featured an educated housewife (woman legislator in question had completed a Masters degree) who proved her dedication for women at the floor of the parliament, only because of her feelings for, and perceptions of, women. On the other hand, A and C represent two cases of woman legislators active and not active on women issues, where both of them have higher education in law and a career as law practitioners. While the former case showcases a legislator dedicated to her work for women, who became a prominent name in the field of women’s movement and was selected in quota, the latter case features an elected legislator who did not see these issues as her core responsibility. The finding suggested that women in quota are more committed to women than the elected women legislators, however, this cannot be generalised to all quota women in the 9th parliament, as it is found in this dissertation.
This chapter argued that the presence of women’s political socialization leads to a higher commitment and the acquisition of more knowledge on the issue. Such political socialization was found in the form of early childhood interest and prior political engagement (in student and women wings, as well as through social work). Accumulation of such individual characteristics would make access to political mentoring as a pathway to the parliament and close ties with external actors. These are very beneficial to women with knowledge on women issues and confidence in public speaking. The blend of individual characteristics and resources acquired before entering into the parliament provides leverage to handle institutional and political challenges. The knowledge acquired in the process of political mentoring may help the women shape their interest to take politics as a career path. The thesis that political socialization which is followed by active participation (early in life) in politics, and later by political mentoring as a pathway to parliament, might provide leverage to some for speaking up for women, did not work in the case of C and D. In case D, the legislator lacked political socialization in her life but still spoke up for women. On the other hand, in case C, the legislator has never spoken for women even though she went through political socialization, experienced early political involvement, and entered into parliament through a process of mentoring by a senior leader. Thus, connecting the pathways to parliament through political mentoring with women’s ability to speak up for women may require a constellation of different factors within each level. One possible combination is the combination of perceived understanding on women issues, political socialization (early childhood socialization and political engagement), and political mentoring. Political mentoring of active women legislators usually starts within their respective political families and begins with gathering knowledge from their association with family members in politics. Another similar combination of active women legislators features those who have become involved in student politics, or worked with women wings or social activists, and went through a process of political mentoring by senior politicians who guided them until they made it to public office (case A). These features facilitate women’s ability to speak up women issues only when they have that urge to work for women. On the contrary, women’s sudden entry to parliament due to direct family ties can act as a constraining factor only if these women have no prior engagement with politics and did not have a chance to acquire self-motivation to act for women.

Another significant factor that played a crucial role in motivating women legislators to act on behalf of women was their relations with external actors. Women legislators’ involvement with external
actors, especially with women’s rights organisations, were shown to be facilitating factors, as such ties could help them building capacities and understanding on contemporary women issues. At the same time, external actors often showed their interest in building a network with women who have already demonstrated active engagement in politics and showed their empathy towards women’s causes with the aim of building an alliance. This has happened in case A. The active participation referred their active participation in women’s movement, being a part of the global network, and performing as a trainer to potential women politicians. Case C suggested that legislators’ close ties with externals helped her acquire knowledge, gather motivation and build expertise to speak for women after entering into. Thus, women having such distinct individual resources (such as political capital and self-motivation), and specific patterns of engagement with external actors, can demonstrate a greater ability to speak for women. In both cases of active women legislators (A and C), their affiliation and close ties with external actor positively helped them in shaping their goals of speaking up for women.

The section on relevance of macro levels factors discussed about some institutional and political challenges that can affect women legislators, particularly women in quota. These challenges included the lack of a position in parliament or in the party, a complicated system of issue selection, the presence of the label effect, the aspect of patronage politics, the presence of gendered experiences, double mandate for quota women, lack of a constituency, domination of executives, and the political environment and presence of religious dogma which go against women’s rights. All of these have been shown to influence women negatively in general, and limit their motivation to speak up on women issues in the parliament. The effect of the constraining factors derived from macro level on women’s ability to speak was varied. For example, both the case A and D entered into parliament through quota, but the institutional and electoral challenges they have faced were different. The case A went through fewer hurdles because of her qualification (highly educated law practitioner), exposure (close ties with external actors), and network (connection with PM, political background). In both cases, a women-friendly political environment has encouraged and motivated them to work for women. Case D demonstrated a legislator who had to prove herself after entering into parliament with her hard work, motivation and enthusiasm. The blend of some individual characteristics and qualities such as good speaking, informal relationship with the Whips and family background (powerful husband) helped her overcome her disadvantaged political situation and get leverage to speak for women. Therefore, the presence of individual and contextual resources gathered before (case A) and after (case D) entering
into parliament allowed some backbench women legislators to overcome those institutional challenges and, in some instances, facilitate their existing interest in speaking up for women.

On the other hand, two elected women legislator (cases B and C) have not faced most of the constraining factors faced by the quota women (such as, the label effect, double mandate, gendered discrimination, problems attaining a time slot for speech). Still, they did not speak up for women because of their role conception as elected women and a lack of motivation to take up women issues in parliament. In both cases C (many facilitating factors were present) and B (a few facilitating factors were present), respective legislators perceived understanding of women issues, role conception as elected legislators, lack of involvement with women’s rights organizations, and lack of interest on women issues prevented them from speaking up for women in parliament.

7.4. Conclusion
This chapter is designed based on the argument that the relationship between women’s presence and their substantive representation on women issues can be explained through a combination of different individual (micro) and contextual (macro) factors. Different micro and macro level factors influence women’s ability and interest in ways that translate into a different propensity to act on behalf of women’s concerns. The purpose of this chapter was to incorporate different facilitating and constraining factors in the analysis of women’s substantive representation. A logical pattern in both the events of “speaking for women” and “not speaking for women” was observed in this chapter. Identifying these patterns resulted in the identification of a set of facilitating and constraining factors from micro and macro thematic levels that affect women’s substantive representation on women’s issues. In doing so, this chapter further revealed different sets of constellations for active and non-active women legislators in an attempt to trace the ways in which these factors manifest throughout their lives.

It is necessary to note that this dissertation does not advocate that women legislators, in order to demonstrate substantive representation, should concentrate solely on representing women’s concerns at the expense of other general interests, such as developmental or communal issues. Rather, substantive representation in this dissertation offers an understanding of an extent to which women legislators can pursue women’s concerns in parliament.
Chapter Eight: Discussion

8.1. Introduction

This dissertation has explored and analysed patterns of substantive representation of women by examining the importance of women’s presence in legislative bodies and exploring the factors under which women legislators can speak up for women. The dissertation has provided a novel analysis on Substantive Representation of Women (SRW) using original, descriptive data of parliamentary proceedings from Bangladesh as well as interviews with relevant actors in parliament. This research has defined women’s substantive representation as advocacy or promotion of women’s policy concerns and women issues. The definition of women issues has included both the strategic issues (concerning removal of structural discrimination and ensuring women’s rights) and practical issues (concerning basic needs of women’s survival). This dissertation has analysed the legislative intervention of both women and men on women issues in order to understand the importance of women’s presence in representing issues pertinent to women. Second, it has investigated the determinants that cause variations in SRW among women legislators, trying to understand why some women are actively engaged in advocacy for women and others are not. Furthermore, the study has evaluated the relevance of multiple different facilitating and constraining factors, derived from macro and micro levels of substantive representation of women. This dissertation has also shown how these different factors of representation are related with each other. In doing so, this dissertation contributes to scholarly debates on women’s parliamentary representation by bringing insights from Bangladesh, a developing country in South Asia, and a country where women’s descriptive representation is promoted by both direct and indirect elections (see Chapters 1 and 3).

Gender and politics studies have acknowledged the importance of the presence of women in the agenda setting of parliaments and suggested that their contribution goes beyond the formulation of the policy agenda (see Chapter 2). In addition, some studies have argued that not only women but also men can represent women (discussed in Chapter 2). So far, there has been a prevalence of literature from developed countries. Yet, the attempt of theorising the relationship between women’s presence and substantive representation by using Feminist Institutionalist and Political Socialization approaches has not yet been explored to the degree it has been done in this dissertation. Not only did this research address this gap, it also has focused on a developing country to add to the existing body of literature which primarily has looked at the developed Western world. So far, it is rather little known that how
the presence of women legislators in developing countries translates into the substantive representation of women’s concerns. This dissertation contributes to filling this critical void by offering insights from Bangladesh’s parliament and by examining multiple factors which influence the relationship between women’s presence and the enactment of substantive representation on women issues.

This chapter first summarises the key empirical findings from each individual section of the dissertation. Second, it discusses the conceptual, empirical, and policy advocacy related implications of this research. Finally, this chapter concludes by discussing some critical issues to be addressed in future research.

8.2. Empirical Findings of the Dissertation

The findings of the dissertation are divided into two parts to answer its two major research questions which, in fact, pertain to two distinct ways of looking at SRW. Following the normative argument which highlights the importance of women’s presence, the first research question has focused on how the presence of women matters even within a system where backbench women legislators have limited authority and women issues tend to receive less priority in legislative interventions. Given the fact that not all women legislators represent women, the second question has been concerned with identifying different factors that facilitate or constrain the potential of women legislators to speak up for women. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this dissertation have addressed these two research questions and presented empirical findings to address both perspectives on SRW.

Chapter 5 investigated the patterns of legislators’ representation on women issues in relation to their label of participation on general issues other than the ones concerning women’s well-being. Furthermore, it explored the importance of women’s presence for SRW in general, by examining the difference between men and women legislators’ participation on women issues. The chapter has further analysed to what extent differences exist between women and men legislators’ representation with regards to strategic and practical issues that women in Bangladesh have to face. In doing so, it examined the frequency of the legislator’s intervention under four legislative activities, such as parliamentary question and answer sessions (Q & A), short statements on urgent public interest issues, calls for attention to public interest issues, and resolution motions on public interest. The inferential statistics presented in Chapter 5 have revealed the importance of the mere presence of women in
parliament with findings supporting the expectation that women legislators focus more on women issues than men. The results have shown that women raised more than 80 percent of total women’s issues in the 9th parliament although they constitute only 18.7 percent of parliamentarians. Nevertheless, the study also demonstrated that men do, in fact, bring up and represent women issues but at a much less frequent rate. This study has found that only a small portion of men legislators presented issues that referred to women and their concerns, representing only 1.18 percent of total questions posed in the parliament. These findings appear to be consistent with previous research findings that claimed women have intrinsic interest in women’s well-being (Mansbridge, 1995; Philips, 1995; Schwindt and Mishler, 2005) and feel a responsibility to speak out for women (Burrell, 1994; Carroll, 2001; Dobson and Carroll, 1991; Saint-Germin, 1989; Wolbrecht, 2002).

The gender variation in legislators’ policy preferences has been a major concern among scholars in gender and politics. It has been assumed that female legislators would have different policy preferences than their male colleagues, connected to the expectation that women legislators put more emphasis on issues related to women’s rights. With the aim of having a comprehensive understanding of women issues, this dissertation provided its own set of indicators to classify women’s issues in Bangladesh. Molyneux’s (1985) analysis of ‘strategic gender interests’ and ‘practical gender interests’ provided a useful framework for analysing which types of women issues are given importance by men and women legislators. The strategic women’s issues in this dissertation referred to women’s subordination in patriarchal structures. In other words, women’s rights, their safety and security are the core of strategic women’s issues. On the other hand, practical issues included all kinds of immediate needs of women for their living and well-being. Such a categorisation of women issues allowed this dissertation to reveal the finding that women and men legislators do not necessarily refer to similar issues (strategic or practical) when they talk about women. The findings of this research suggested that it was the women legislators’ who were raising, questioning, and pushing forward women’s strategic needs more frequently than their male colleagues. Strategic women issues addressed by women legislators in this study were mostly centred on ensuring women’ rights, overcoming inequalities, and removing female subordination from society in Bangladesh, all of which are fundamental concerns in the context of Bangladesh (discussed in Chapter 3). In contrast, men legislators who raised women issues were more likely to address more practical concerns rather than strategic women issues. Such findings are supportive of the existing understanding that women do have distinct priorities, values, and attitudes
compared to their male counterparts with regards to gender equality (Campbell et al., 2010; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein, 2009; Dahlerup, 1988; Tremblay, 1998).

Notwithstanding the evidence of women paying more attention to women’s concerns than men legislators and men mostly speaking out on practical rather than strategic concerns, this dissertation did not overlook the contribution of men who speak up for women in parliament. The evidence presented in Chapter 5 has shown that a few men do represent women on both strategic and practical women issues. However, the number of such interventions was very low. Overall, the findings presented in this dissertation are in line with previous research which has shown that some men do represent women’s both strategic and practical concern issues (Celis, 2006; Dobson, 2001; Klein, 1984).

Unlike these previous empirical works, this dissertation has moved beyond merely identifying the gender difference with regards to gender equality. To do so, this research has explored gender differences with regard to the perceived concerns of men and women to women’s strategic and practical needs. Such analysis has helped to examine whether women and men are talking about similar aspects when they are referring to strategic and practical concerns for women. The extent to which women legislators’ act for women is one way to assess women’s substantive representation, as highlighted by Waylen (2007). The findings of this research have suggested that when men and women were speaking on the same strategic and practical issues, women and men perceived those issues differently. For example, while both men and women prioritised ‘violence against women and girls’, women were more concerned with the patriarchal structure, involvement of men in committing violation of all sorts of women’s rights, and strong rule of law for redressing such violence acts. On the other hand, men were mainly concerned about the traditional way of addressing violence against women and overlooked any concerns questioning male domination. They were not keen to intervene in the area of women’s rights and autonomy. The results have shown that the most frequent topic of women’s intervention was around the issues of women’s equality, rights, and dignity, questioning the patriarchal nature of the society. These issues, however, are often seen as contentious within the context of Bangladesh. Furthermore, women brought wide varieties of key concerns for women in Bangladesh, concerning women’s safety, security, and rights, in the sphere civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres, which are consistent with the issues that are generally supported by the women’s movement and women’s rights organisations. The findings also confirmed that women
preferred to address a different set of practical concerns than their male counterparts. For instance, concerns and issues around the cost of delivery for poor pregnant women, reducing the rate of mortality of pregnant women, introducing free treatment to victims of acid burns, making burn units available in local hospitals, and ensuring the presence of female doctors for testing a rape victim would have been largely absent on the floor of the parliament without the presence of women. The analysis has shown that men shared an understanding of women’s practical issues mostly along the lines of providing service-oriented support, namely financial resources and community health service. It was only women legislators who have demonstrated their greater commitment on social justice issues and demanded concerns derived from the realities of women in the society in Bangladesh. All of this evidence has supported the importance of the presence of women in Bangladesh parliament to highlight women’s fundamental concerns (for women in Bangladesh) and to give a voice to often unnoticed women’s strategic and practical concerns. All those results demonstrated and supported a direct relationship between women’s descriptive and substantive representation. Such a finding is in contrast to some prior research which has argued that the effect of descriptive representation upon substantive is smaller than anticipated (Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005) or even rejected the existence of such a relationship (Reingold, 2000). In line with the assumptions presented earlier, the empirical findings of this research have demonstrated the significance of the sheer presence of women on the floor of the parliament for ensuring legislative intervention on behalf of women. Overall, the analysis of views and behaviour of women and men legislators has confirmed that the presence of women in Bangladesh parliament has the potential to make a substantive contribution, even when they only have token representation in the legislature. This confirmation of the relationship between the presence of women in parliament and SRW has added valuable insights to existing research which has largely been conducted within Western, Latin American and African countries’ contexts (Campbell et al., 2010; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein, 2009; Childs and Withey, 2004; Devlin and Elgie, 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Taylor-Robinson and Heath, 2003; Tremblay, 1998; Wolbrecht, 2002) by adding the perspective of Bangladesh, a South Asian developing country.

The findings presented in Chapter 6 have discussed a specific case of women-friendly policy change. By tracing the process of enactment of the Domestic Violence Act (DV Act), Chapter 6 has explored the assumption of direct, indirect and intervening contributions of women legislators and revealed three patterns of women’s involvement in policy-making.
The analysis of the circumstances surrounding the DV Act provided evidence on how a group of women in Bangladesh played a critical role in moving the bill forward, building a support base, creating awareness on the issue, and pushing the issues to the top of the agenda by subverting the constraints which arose on the way. Crucially, it was only a few women who held the appropriate institutional position to influence the enactment of the bill directly within and outside of parliament. These women included executives, the chair of the standing committee, members of the standing committee, and members of the central party committee. These results suggest that even a small number of women with positional power can be a sufficient condition accounting for the attention to women-friendly policy change. However, the findings also imply that the majority of women had to contribute in indirect ways, having very little influence on policy-making. Overall, this complements previous findings that policy change can already be seen in the presence of small numbers of women representatives (Towns, 2003; Vega and Firestone, 1995; Welch, 1985; Wolbrecht, 2000).

The result of this study’s analysis have also suggested that within a parliamentary structure in which backbench legislators’ involvement was constrained by informal procedures of the parliamentary system, it is likely that the presence of critical actors in legislatures directly influenced women’s policy representation. The formal procedures of legislation can be divided into different phases including drafting, legal vetting, and attaining approval of the Cabinet, with contribution to any of these levels requiring holding an institutional position. A small number of women legislators in Bangladesh parliament hold an institutional position. Within such a system in which the legislator has limited authority over policy-making, the direct link between women’s presence and substantive representation appears to get complicated. However, this study has shown that women in Bangladesh parliament were using the limited tools and ways available to them in an effort to facilitate the policy-making indirectly. The results have shown that backbench legislators could only indirectly ensure their policy representation with moral and physical support to the front bench legislators (involved directly) or by building support systems within and outside of parliament. The evidence from interviews and analysis of the parliamentary documents in this study has indicated that the presence of backbench women legislators could influence women’s policy representation, even if the effect was limited and indirect.

Furthermore, the findings of this research have yielded a set of intervening contextual aspects which, along with the presence of women legislators, have facilitated the process of the enactment of the
Domestic Violence Act. The findings showed that, apart from the presence of women legislators, the broader political contextual aspect had an influence on substantive representation of women. In particular, a women-friendly political environment, including the role of party chiefs, the ideology of the party in power, and the relative influence of external actors such as civil society and women rights organizations played a role in the enactment of the DV act. The purpose of exploring such intervening aspects was to demonstrate that contextual factors could be important for facilitating the relationship between women’s presence and their policy representation.

The discussion in Chapter 6 has highlighted that the initiation of women-friendly policy change would not happen without the work of women legislators, while at the same time acknowledging other associated institutional and contextual factors. In short, it indicated that other influencing factors might better explain the connection between women’s presence and their substantive representation on women issues in the context of Bangladesh. Such findings support existing research by different scholars showing that women legislators’ presence is not the only factor making a difference, but that a variety of circumstantial factors (such as specific context, process, individual agency) may influence how they demonstrate their representation (Annelyse, 2007; Celis, 2006; Childs, 2004; Dobson, 2006; Lovenduski, 2005; Mackay, 2008, 2009; Waylen, 2011; Waengerud, 2000).

Together, Chapter 5 (using a general approach) and Chapter 6 (using a specific approach) allowed for this dissertation to offer a comprehensive description on how the sheer presence of women legislators matters for substantive representation by exploring their nature, scope, and levels of contribution. It appeared that even in a setting where legislators have little control over the legislature, women can still represent women within their capacities and that this process can be facilitated by additional political contextual factors.

The final empirical chapter (Chapter 7) served to further investigate the political and contextual factors to facilitate the process of substantive representation and cause variations among women. Previous studies concerned with exploring and explaining the difference between men and women legislators in addressing women issues have failed to show precisely what it is about some women legislators (and other associated factors) that promote a greater level of advocacy for women than that undertaken by some men and other women. In an effort to address the second research question and being inspired by the FIA and Political Socialization approach, this dissertation has explored the assumption that a
variety of contextual, institutional, and political factors influence women’s ability to achieve political representation, which in turn can explain variations in representation efforts among actors. In order to do so, Chapter 7 has compared two groups of women legislators with one group of women advocating for women and the other group failing to do so. A two-level framework of factors (micro and macro levels) was applied in Chapter 7. The resulting framework showed that each thematic level contained several facilitating and constraining factors which influence whether or not women speak for women, hence, affecting their ability to substantively represent women. The overall purpose of Chapter 7 was to theorise the link between women’s presence in legislation and the substantive representation of women issues by identifying additional determinants of SRW. In sum, the findings offered in Chapter 7 have suggested that quite a few constraining and facilitating factors are embedded within each level (micro and macro), all of which could impact women legislators’ ability to intervene on women issues.

This dissertation investigated the greater institutional, electoral and political context, which constitute the macro level factors. Prior research has shown that formal and informal aspects of the institution have relevance in shaping women’s legislative attention to women (Carroll, 1984; 2001; Childs, 2004; Dobson, 2001; 2006; Franceschet, 2005), which is further supported by the findings presented in this dissertation. The informal parliamentary norms, such as the label effect, lack of seniority, gendered perceptions, the complicated time allocation process, and being a backbencher, impede legislative behaviour by halting opportunities to act effectively on women issues. Following the argument that the informal rules govern the behaviour of the actors (Peter, 1999), this dissertation revealed that the gendered nature of those informal rules of the institution impede the capacity of some women legislators to act as representatives, as well as reduce their interest in speaking for women (as also seen in Chappell, 2002; 2006; Chappell and Waylen, 2013; Lovenduski, 2016; Mackay, 2004; Waylen, 2013; 2017). The gendered perception of women legislators (exemplified by the label effect) influenced women legislators’ decision in selecting the topic of discussion so that they divert their attention from the domain of women issues to general issues. The women legislators who were influenced by the label effect reported that they tried to overcome the label effect by showing their ability to represent issues other than women in parliament.

In addition, women legislators holding an institutional position (e.g., at the Ministry of Women Affairs, as members of the standing committee on women affairs) and holding an organisational position (at
the party level) were more likely to participate on women issues without any additional influence and pressure. Such findings complement the results from Chapter 6 which demonstrated women legislators’ direct involvement in women friendly policy-making, especially of those women legislators who held a position in the parliament. Such results also suggest that expecting backbench women legislators (holding no position in parliament) to bring change is not realistic, showing that actors require to be powerful enough to bring policy change (Annellyse, 2010; Cornwall and Goetz, 2005; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014). On the other hand, some informal norms of the institution, such as having a good relationship with the whip, being a good speaker, and having a respectable profession, act as facilitating factors. They provided leverage to a few women legislators for overcoming the aforementioned constraining elements of the informal rules of the institution.

Overall, this dissertation has shown how formal and informal norms directly relate to the electoral position of women. Specifically, selected and elected women legislators were influenced by formal and informal norms differently, as can be seen in their levels of active engagement in advocacy for women. The findings highlighted that women in quota were more vocal and spoke up for women more often than women legislators coming through direct election. This is in line with previous claims about the substantial difference between quota and non-quota women parliamentarians with regard to introducing women issues in the parliament (Childs and Krook, 2012; Chowdhury, 2015; Diana Z.O’ Brun, 2012; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008). The formal rules of the quota system (in which MPs do have no electoral constituency) limit women’s authority over their constituency in comparison to women legislators who came to parliament due to popular votes from their constituents. The analysis has shown that such lack of authority did not only control women’s legislative attention but also triggered the informal perception of their capability as people’s representatives. The unique systems of sharing a constituency in Bangladesh parliament between elected and quota women legislators often generates a clash of interest on who would represent the constituents and raise demands on the floor. This further impeded quota women’s ability as representatives by constraining their ability and freedom to select relevant women issues. Furthermore, the demands for public goods and the overloaded burden of responsibility (where legislators must care of both the constituency assigned to them as well as their own home district for future election) were identified as conditions that mitigate women’s ability to actively take part in debates on women issues. Such results also strengthen our understanding of formal and informal long-term effects of the electoral system (Childs, 2008;
The aspects of women-friendly political leaders and the ideology of the party in power (i.e., degree of expressed support for women) have likewise shown their relevance in this dissertation. A women-friendly political atmosphere has created opportunities for women issues to be brought up in the parliamentary discussion and for ensuring substantive change in policy making (discussed in detail in Chapter 6). The presence of such an atmosphere has encouraged women to act on behalf of women, as also shown in other studies (Escober-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Walsh, 2012). However, aspects identified in those other studies, such as the ideology of the party woman legislators represent (Celis and Erezeel, 2015; Dola, 1997; Htun and Power, 2006; Trembay and Pellertier, 2000), have been a less significant determinant of legislators’ attention to women in Bangladesh. It is worth noting here again, however, that more than 80 percent of women in parliament (both elected and quota representatives) belong to the same political party and share a similar party ideology.

The association with external actors, such as civil society organisations or women’s rights organisations, was clearly related to women legislators’ ability to speak up for women in this study. Those women legislators with close ties with women’s movement organizations and development actors in Bangladesh have demonstrated more active participation on women issues in parliament in comparison to women with no such connection. This result supplements previous findings highlighting the role of women’s movement and women’s advocacy organizations in facilitating the process of policy enactment (Costa and Cornwall, 2014; Lovenduski, 2005; Nazneen, 2014; Weldon, 2002; 2004). While revealing the role of such close ties, the result have also suggested that both active and non-active women legislators were seen participating in different woman issue oriented conferences and workshops at least once during their tenure. However, the work presented in this dissertation brought to light the fact that women who have close ties with women’s movement, are part of a global network, represent the country on a global platform, or serve as trainers for potential women candidates (on the local level) show their dedication for women’s concerns. This group of women was more active in speaking up for women than those who have only attended a few conferences and workshops as guests. Ties to the organisations concerned with women issues provided women with enough leverage to gather knowledge on relevant problems that women in Bangladesh face and therefore informed the content of their policy advocacy. At the same time,
exposure (through external actors) to both national and international platforms contributed to developing their confidence, knowledge, as well as quality of public speaking. Thus, close ties and active involvement with external actors could be seen as a facilitating factor and absence of such close ties as a constraining factor that lead variations in SRW among women.

The micro level refers to the background conditions of the individual woman legislator, including her motivation, social background, education, and professional background, as well as her early political experiences. With regard to the relevance of micro level factors, the analysis in this dissertation has shown that the motivation for speaking up for women or refraining from it was influenced by individual legislators’ perceptions on women issues. The women who brought up women issues did so because they identified challenges women face as a social problem or because they felt responsible for women. Moreover, women who observed women issues as a social problem and felt responsible to address them were motivated and more active in speaking up than others. This finding advances the analysis of Childs, Celis and Krook’s concept of the critical actor where they defined them (critical actors) as self-motivated and active on women issues compared to others (Child and Krook, 2006; 2009; Celis, Childs and Krook, 2008). The results have also shown that some women were discouraged to act for women by their role perception. Specifically, such women legislators were concerned with whether they belonged to non-quota or quota representatives. This might be related to a few elected women (non-quota) expressing the view that women in quota were the only ones entitled to bring women issues to the floor. Thus, individual role perceptions seem to be associated with informal institutional perceptions among the elected legislators and were shown to be a constraining factor of SRW.

Following the argument of focusing more on the resources that women bring to parliament (Franceschet, Krook, Piscopo, 2012), this dissertation furthermore explored the potential relevance of the political socialization which helped some women in creating awareness and gaining motivation to speak for women. Women with experience of childhood political socialization and early political engagement tended to show more attention to women than those with no childhood political socialization and those whose exposure to politics happened later in their life, such as after their marriage into a political family. Concerning the pathways to parliament, the analysis suggested that women who entered parliament through a process of political training (referred to as political mentoring in this dissertation) have paid more attention to women’s issues than a group of women
who came to parliament because of their direct family connection with no previous political exposure. Overall, the results suggested that early political exposure by the family helped nurture women legislators’ political interest and kept motivating them all the way until they reached the political destination in parliament. The findings also showed how a combination of different factors, for instance, the political socialization in childhood, early political engagement combined with political mentoring (by political elite), were instrumental for women to become active agents in the field of politics. Women went through those individual learning processes via their family or with mentors, allowing them to acquire knowledge on politics, and learn about social issues. Such knowledge helped some to understand the needs of women and form interest on women issues during their lifespans, thus making such aspects salient determinants of SRW.

In addition, women exhibiting those socio-demographic characteristics (sympathetic to women issues, professional experiences, early political engagement, trained by political elite) were likely to motivate other women to act for women as a part of their political commitment. On the other hand, the absence of a practiced profession and political experiences, and the presence of direct family connections, were likely to constrain women’s ability and interest to speak up for women. Although this dissertation revealed that women with direct family connections were not as vocal on women issues as women coming through a political mentoring process, it does not deny the general importance of network and family connections for women to gain access to parliament (Hinojosa, 2012). Such connections and networks have been and continue to be instrumental for women to gain further access to politics, which often is dominated by male hierarchies and money (Iwanaga, 2008).

The findings further suggested that the identified constraining factors at the macro level might interact with the knowledge (both political and social), experience (political, social, and work-related) and resources (exposure, close ties with external actors) women gathered before they entered into parliament. These factors were labelled as micro-level factors in this dissertation and have been shown to contribute to variation among women legislators in representing women issues. For example, even though many of the informal and formal aspects associated with the institution and electoral system hindered women’s ability to speak on women issues, a few women could still make a difference. Those women’s early exposure to politics (early political socialization and active involvement in politics) mingled with their intrinsic motivation to be active on women issues and the knowledge they gained through professional life and from close ties to external actors. Together, these micro-level
characteristics provided leverage for some women to overcome institutional challenges. By revealing constraining and facilitating factors related to SRW from both micro and macro levels, Chapter 7 shed light on the complex and dynamic relationship between the presence of women and their ability to speak up for women in greater detail than has been done before in prior research in this field.

8.3. Conceptual Implications for Women and Politics Scholarship
This dissertation explored the phenomenon of SRW with the aim of theorising the relationship between women’s presence (descriptive representation) and their activities on behalf of women (SRW). This has been the first attempt to address the link between SRW and women’s presence through a framework that combines micro and macro level factors. This dissertation has argued that women’s substantive representation has individual, institutional, political, and contextual dimensions and that studying all four is necessary to gain a complete picture of the consequences of women’s presence in parliament in Bangladesh. Such a comprehensive attempt of theorising the relationship between women’s presence and SRW has not been seen previously in the existing studies from Western contexts (Celis et al., 2008; Celis, 2006; Childs, 2004; Childs and Krook, 2009; Escobar-Lemon and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Franceschet, Krook, and Piscopo, 2012; Hoekstra et al., 2014; Kang, 2014; Lovenduski 2002; Lovenduski, 2005; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Mansbridge, 1999 and 2005; Mackay et al. 2003; Wängnerud, 2000; 2009; Young, 2002).

A theoretical framework with dual focus on both facilitating and constraining factors at the macro and micro levels can thus inform scholars and activists in more depth on a variety of aspects that hinder or facilitate the relationship between women’s presence and their attention to women issues. Only emphasising the facilitating factors shaping attention to women issues may inadvertently ignore the relevance of constraints that women legislators might face, considerably reducing their ability to represent women. The conceptual attempt to combine constraining and facilitating factors from different levels made an important contribution to the theoretical advancement connecting women’s presence and their SRW. Besides, the framework combined core arguments of Feminist Institutionalist Approach (FIA) and Political Socialization theory to explain women’s policy representation (Broughton & Zetlin, 1996; Childs, 2011; Chappell and Waylen 2013; Chappell, 2002, 2006; Dawson and Prewitt, 1969; Jennings, 2009; Kenny, 2007; Krook and Waylen, 2013; Krook and Mackay, 2011; Lovenduski, 1998; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Lovenduski, 2016; Mackay and Waylen, 2009;
The empirical findings in this study have yielded a list of facilitating and constraining factors with potential relevance on SRW and thereby help to advance the conceptual understanding of FIA and Political Socialization. With regard to macro-level factors informed by the FIA, this framework attempted to expand the understanding of structural and circumstantial evidence with the aim to identify factors within the institution affecting women legislators and their ability to speak up for women (Chappell and Waylen, 2013; Waylen, 2006). This dissertation has found support for the argument of FIA identified in prior research in Western and Latin American contexts which states that the label and mandate effects of quota policy and gendered perceptions on ability as legislators affect women and men differently (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2012; Miguel, 2012; Mumtaz, 1998). These findings have thus further supported the argument that political institutions are gendered and can mediate women’s representation (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995; Hawkesworth, 2003).

Much like found for women legislators in many Western countries, a women-friendly political atmosphere and women-friendly political leader in Bangladesh have facilitated women legislators’ ability to act freely on behalf of women (Childs, 2008; Childs and Krook, 2012; Daherup and Freidenvall, 2010; Diana Z. O’ Brun, 2012; Escobar-Lemmon, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson, 2014; Htun and Jones, 2002; Tremblay, 2007). A variety of other factors, such as women legislators’ position in parliament, their formal and informal relations with external actors, and involvement with women’s movement organisations, were identified in this dissertation as macro level factors which facilitate SRW. The connection with civil society organisations and women rights organisations allowed women legislators to build their capacities, gather information and knowledge on several women issues, which proved vital in shaping women’s policy representation. The absence of such contextual exposure among women MPs hindered their ability to speak up for women.

The conceptual advancement of this dissertation did not only consider the political and institutional aspects, but also underscored the need to consider the individual and contextual dimension of women legislators within the context of Bangladesh (Childs and Krook, 2006; 2009; Celis, Childs and Krook, 2008). The individual dimension included a combination of self-motivation, higher education (in the field of law, and medicine), acquisition of a working profession, early political socialization (childhood
socialization), and early political engagement in the form of student politics, women wings, and social work. The conceptual framework of this research further encompassed exploring the extent to which women legislators’ self-motivation regarding women issues might be influenced by the contextual setting (Norris, 1997). Contextual aspects such as career development and experience in parliament were identified as motivational aspects for women in Western settings (Celis, 2006), but this did not seem to apply to the case of Bangladesh. The findings in this dissertation instead revealed the relevance of other socio-demographic characteristics as facilitating and constraining factors of SRW. Early political experience, specific pathways to parliament—such as direct family ties and political mentoring—were identified as possible variables that affect SRW in Bangladesh. Such characteristics allowed women legislators to attain the necessary political knowledge and helped them develop a sense of responsibility for women. The combination of educational and professional background of women legislators in Bangladesh also mattered in facilitating women’s ability to speak up for women.

This dissertation has shown that greater attention to variation among women, including individual, contextual, institutional, and political determinants of this variation, is a valuable line of inquiry to understand the patterns of SRW in developing countries. By identifying facilitating and constraining aspects from each level, this dissertation has added value in theorising descriptive and substantive representation of women, which is an important contribution to research on women’s parliamentary representation.

8.4 Contribution to Literature on Comparative Politics

Women’s presence mattered in highlighting issues and concerns which reflect substantive importance for women’s lives and well-being on the floor of Bangladesh parliament. This core finding of the study has clearly reconfirmed existing evidence in the literature. This study’s broader attention to the content of women issues and identification of factors related to across and within gender variation in selection has provided valuable insights for the broader study of comparative politics. Beyond this empirical contribution, this dissertation has provided additional insights into three types of women’s policy representation—direct, indirect and intervening (see Chapter 6). The analysis has not only shown the direct contribution of women legislators but also revealed more indirect contributions of women as backbenchers. Such an indirect role of women legislators has been observed to be more pertinent within a system like Bangladesh where they have limited authority over the process legislation. Along with such direct and indirect contributions, this dissertation focused on intervening conditions—such
as active women rights organisation, women friendly chief executives and women’s access to executive position—that could facilitate the relationship between women’s presence and their contribution to policy making, i.e. SRW. In a parliamentary system where executives have control over policy-making and backbench legislators have limited authority, women’s access to executive or parliamentary committees or central party position are required for women to contribute directly in policy representation.

This dissertation has provided evidence to support the argument that the presence of women is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ensuring SRW in Bangladesh parliament. This conclusion is similar to that of studies conducted in Canada (Tremblay, 1998) and Rwanda (Devlin and Elgie, 2008). However, the findings have challenged linear accounts of women’s parliamentary representation, which has focused on the numerical presence of women beyond a critical number. Rather, this dissertation has shown the role of specific actors and an enabling individual, structural, and institutional environment for political representatives to commit to an agenda of women’s issues in parliament. The literature in comparative politics can benefit from this study’s finding that it is important for both men and women to be equally represented in politics, but that substantive representation by women legislators further requires a structural and institutional commitment to gender equality. Such an understanding of women’s representation goes beyond the politics of presence in parliament (see Philips, 1995).

This dissertation has highlighted the importance of considering the multifaceted nature of SRW. If it had merely looked at the legislative debates, the conclusion might have been that women are able to represent women and some men do as well. However, by studying the patterns of women issues and detailed content of those women issues more carefully, this research has shown that women legislators focused more on strategic women issues, while men paid more attention to practical women’s issues. At the same time, this dissertation has examined women’s role in the committee work and in the process of policy enactment. Thus, it could draw conclusions about the extent to which women legislators represent women and how effective they are addressing discrimination against women. Furthermore, this dissertation has explicitly acknowledged the variation among women legislators by exploring and identifying determinants of differences among women legislators’ ability to act for women. While this dissertation has focused on women’s parliamentary representation, linking it to the electoral system has highlighted the challenges faced by women in Bangladesh. These challenges are
associated with the specific type of quota policy, which in turn has implications for literature on quotas in comparative politics.

Overall, this dissertation has offered a comprehensive conceptualisation and empirical study of substantive representation that emphasised the diversity of ways in which women legislators act for women and highlighted both gender variation and variation among women. This has produced a much clearer and more complete picture of SRW, allowing this dissertation to offer insights at the forefront of research on comparative politics.

8.5. Implications for Empirical Studies
In addition to this study’s contributions to literature on comparative politics and gender in politics, the empirical chapters of this research have offered rare insights from a South Asian context in the field of women’s substantive representation, making an important empirical contribution. Following the appeal of Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes (2007, p. 275) to concentrate on ‘making more effort to study women’s representation in non-western regions like Asia’, this dissertation has offered the first empirical attempt to study Bangladeshi women parliamentarians and their substantive representation in political decision-making. Thus, the core objective was to understand the phenomenon of substantive representation of women in Bangladesh parliament, which had previously not been systematically investigated.

Apart from taking an empirically insightful case, this dissertation defined women issues beyond exclusively focusing on rights-based feminist concerns or women’s traditional concerns. Much of the previous research on SRW had a rather a narrow framework for measuring women’s interest and issues, often ignoring the diversity among women within and across societies. As Young (1997, 2000) has asserted, women’s structural position in society generates specific perspectives, which can cause women to prioritise certain issues over others, while still conceiving women as a social category. Considering women issues which have ‘fundamental and substantive value’ (as suggested by Bechwith, 2014; p.31), this dissertation aimed to take a context-specific and socially driven operational definition of women’s issues for studying substantive representation of the women legislators in Bangladesh. Keeping this in mind, it included issues relating to all women regardless of their different identities and defined women’s concerns as issues of presumed importance which have direct or immediate effects on women’s lives in both public and private spheres.
Not only in Bangladesh, but also in other developing countries women often face different kinds of discrimination and threats to their autonomy, especially when compared to their counterparts in developed countries. Women in developed countries are fighting for their rights of reproduction and to reduce the gender pay gap, whereas women in developing countries are still struggling to fulfil their basic rights and needs, like the ability to attain education and be protected from violence. Therefore, the argument of contextualisation seems even more pertinent in the context of developing countries, where women have variations in their experience, different levels of uncertainty, and challenges due to their subordination in relatively severe patriarchal societies. For contextualising and broadening the operational definition of women issues, Molyneux’s (1985) classification of ‘strategic gender interests’ and ‘practical gender interests’ has provided a useful framework for the work presented in this dissertation. Being influenced by Molyneux’s classifications and with the aim of contextualizing women issues, this dissertation defined women issues as ‘women’s strategic issues’ and ‘women’s practical issues’. Thus, this dissertation made a maiden attempt to utilise a context-dependent definition of women issues within the context of a developing country. It not only aimed to provide first-hand empirical evidence of Bangladeshi women legislators’ representation on behalf of women in parliament, but also provided a useful operational definition of women’s issues with a list of indicators for measuring SRW, which can be adapted for the context of other developing countries in future research.

8.6. Implications for Policy Advocacy
This dissertation and its findings might also serve policy actors working in the field of women and politics. The existing research on the relationship between women’s descriptive representation and their substantive representation has grabbed the attention of many policy actors. Incorporating more women in parliament has become a priority for many women’s rights organisations. The idea is partially based on the assumption that bolstering the number of female politicians by default generates attention to women and women’s concerns on the policy agenda. The results of the analysis presented in this dissertation have largely relied on the premise that the sheer presence of women in parliament would facilitate a women-related policy agenda, especially with regard to concerns pertinent to women’s life and wellbeing. Indeed, the empirical evidence presented in this dissertation has demonstrated that women’s presence did matter for bringing up issues of strategic importance for women, even if they had limited legislative power. However, this study on women in Bangladesh parliament also illustrated that not all women and only few men legislators out of 350 legislators in
parliament did in fact seek to represent women by speaking on behalf of them. This research further showed that many women in Bangladesh parliament might often be severely constrained in their capacity to do speak on behalf of women because of the institutional and political context they are working in. Women’s inability to represent women does not necessarily reflect the failure of women legislators themselves. Instead, it is a consequence of the realities of the policy-making process in Bangladesh where women are often not able to contribute directly. Even if some women were not able to meet the expectation of direct contribution, such findings should not undermine any efforts of incorporating more women in public office. Instead, the above-mentioned findings on women legislators’ direct and indirect contributions support efforts to include more women in parliament, thereby raising the likelihood that women issues receive more attention. Similarly, the finding that some men speak up for women has highlighted the need to also incorporate more men who support policies for women in parliament or in the party line. Such efforts might then lead to more policy representation on women issues, by both women and men legislators. More women-friendly men legislators would probably also be able to contribute to changes in the formal/informal institutional set up, thus making it easier for their women colleagues to speak up on women issues.

With regard to policy representation, the results of this dissertation have further shown that women’s contributions to the process of women-friendly policy enactment such as the Domestic Violence Act 2010 were influenced by certain conditions beyond the presence of women. Placing women into executive positions, parliamentary or central committees of the party could act as a necessary precondition of women’s direct policy contribution. This has been evident in the case of Domestic Violence Act 2010. For instance, the presence of a female minister has been positively associated with the policy adoption in the case of the Domestic Violence Act 2010. This dissertation has suggested that inclusion of more women in parliament is important—yet merely raising their number does not constitute the only approach to ensure the inclusion of women’s strategic and practical concerns in the policy agenda. Placing women in an executive position as well as their inclusion on the party level have been found to be strategies for advancing women’s policy representation in general. In a system like the one in Bangladesh, in which the executive branch is dominant and policy-making authority is largely centred on the party leadership and cabinet, it seems even more important to advocate for the placement of women in positions through which they can influence the head of government. Though one should be careful to draw definitive conclusions from observational and interview data, Chapter 6 has illustrated that attention to women in policy-making was influenced by the presence of a set of
women politicians and the party leader in Bangladesh, who served as critical actors. Furthermore, the discussion in Chapter 7 has confirmed the role of women-friendly political environments and party chiefs (in a majoritarian parliamentary system) for motivating a group of women legislators and creating space for them to act for women. Thus, promotion of women-friendly politicians to significant posts can be one of the strategies of ensuring more substantive representation of women.

Besides such critical factors, women’s right organisations have provided resources necessary for the development and governmental acceptance of women-relevant policies, such as the Domestic Violence Act 2010. The findings presented in Chapter 6 on the role of the cabinet members and Prime minister have shown that women policy activists might seek to lobby the head of government, cabinet members and party leaders for bringing policy change. Thus, empowering women’s organisations with additional resources and influence on governmental entities would likely further strengthen women’s policy representation. Women rights activists, at the same time, can advocate for ensuring that women politicians have direct access to the policy agenda within the party, thereby influencing the political party’s internal policy agenda. Such findings further indicated that identifying the dominant policy actors and working with them to ensure access of women-friendly politicians to important positions would help SRW.

Advocates of women’s policy representation should continue to support quota for women seeking to increase the proportion of seats held by women. These efforts can take many forms. A first step could be to increase the number of women nominated for the general election. Thus, advocacy for increasing women in the decision-making stage requires nominating more women for participation in the general election. Women’s rights organizations can encourage political parties not only to promote women to leadership positions, but also to nominate more women to run for election in general. At the same time, additional attention needs to be put on improving the selection procedure for quota where women are selected by the elected representatives and not by the constituents. The discussion in Chapter 7 has shown that women in quota face considerable challenges due to such indirect ways of being elected, leading to a lack of authority over their own constituency. So far, quota women in Bangladesh are conditioned to share their assigned constituency with another elected representative, which severely limits their authority over the area. Taken together, the findings from this research have suggested that a direct election system designed for quota women may strengthen their power and thus lead to their greater responsiveness to constituents’ issues, including those of their women constituents.
Providing women legislators with better access to policy-making authority is instrumental for women’s policy representation within a system where the executives dominate. Advocates of women’s policy representation should consider working closely with women-friendly men and women legislators, executives, political parties and their leaders, as well as investing more into mobilizing women on these issues. Drawing upon the analysis of relations with external actors presented earlier, it appears important to enhance the capacity of women legislators, as well as potential women political leaders, to equip themselves with skills in public speaking and knowledge on contemporary women issues. Women’s advocacy should also consider using women legislators as role models for other potential women who aspire to public careers. Taken together, the analysis and findings presented in this dissertation indicate that women’s policy activists should invest in training women leaders, enhancing their capacity to provide leadership, increasing active participation for women and holding the government accountable on women issues, thereby creating an enabling environment for women’s engagement on women issues.

8.7. Limitations of the Study

This section discusses limitations of the study in terms of generalisability of the findings as well as with regard to the scope, details and quality of empirical data used in this dissertation.

First, this dissertation used Bangladesh as a case and examined whether women’s presence matters to bring legislative attention to women issues. In doing so, it identified different determinants of SRW. The selection of a single case study is a challenging task. However, there were good reasons for using a within case study design (see Chapter 4) in this dissertation, as it allows for an in-depth internal analysis by focusing on variations (between men and women, discussed in Chapter 5, and among women, discussed in Chapter 7) in parliament. The tool of internal analysis has led to a deeper exploration of the phenomenon of women’s parliamentary representation (Yin, 2004). Furthermore, to increase the breadth and depth of the case analysis, this dissertation has focused on both the objective side (what happened in parliament as seen in parliamentary transcripts) and the subjective side (perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes as reflected in the interview data) on the subject matter. This exploratory study combined qualitative semi-structured interviews and parliamentary debates as descriptive information to generate original, in-depth and nuanced data. The generalisability and representiveness of findings were not the major concern in this study. Instead, the objective was to
shed light on the understudied phenomenon of women’s parliamentary representation in a developing country. With that focus, the study also aimed to advance insights on the association of women’s presence with their substantive contribution on women’s issues of both strategic and practical concern. This dissertation does not argue that the results are applicable to all developing countries. However, it does argue that certain insights from this research can be used to inform other studies within similar settings. Therefore, one cannot discard this dissertation’s potential to extend its implications beyond the parameters of the case. It is likely that the findings of this dissertation can inform similar cases of SRW in the context of other developing countries, where dominance of executives is prominent in the parliamentary system, women’s descriptive representation is ensured with a legislative quota policy, and where women are still struggling to establish their rights and fulfil their basic needs.

Second, this dissertation has some restrictions concerning the scope, details, and quality of the empirical data presented. With regard to the scope of the dissertation, five years of parliamentary terms was taken into consideration which is a relatively short period. It did not allow looking at the impact of women’s presence over a longer period of time, which is certainly important when identifying determinants of SRW. Looking at longer periods of time would be a costly but worthwhile next step. Getting direct access to parliamentary documents and analysing the data manually have been a major concern and challenge during the field work of this study. At the same time, documents of a few sessions were absent from the data set due to the unavailability of hard copies of the record. It is thus evident that this dissertation could not and did not attempt to examine the longitudinal impact of women’s presence and other influencing factors of SRW. This applies to the frequency analysis used in Chapter 5 and particularly to the determination of independent factors used in Chapter 7. However, this issue has been addressed by the in-depth examination of four legislative activities of five years of parliamentary proceedings to observe women’s contribution in general (Chapter 5) and their role in the process of enacting women-friendly policy in particular.

This dissertation did not discuss the age of women legislators, a factor that might play a pivotal role in structuring the individual choice dimension of representing women issues. Moreover, this dissertation did not discuss an unsuccessful case in addition to a successful case as used in the analysis of SRW in Chapter 6. Analysing an unsuccessful case could have offered some counter factual discussion. However, for the time period of this study, no such data on unsuccessful cases, where
women legislators and executives initiated and worked actively for the policy but failed to experience the outcome, was available. To overcome this potential shortcoming, this dissertation has focused on three types of women’s involvement in the process of successful implementation of a women-friendly policy (see Chapter 6). This has allowed offering a rigorous and in-depth understanding of patterns of SRW in parliament, despite the absence of data on unsuccessful cases.

Concerning the source authenticity of information, some in-depth interviews were used as crucial sources of primary data for the profiling of the women legislators. As such they were extensively cross-checked. For example, information on some women legislators’ connections with their political family and other political elites have been collected from interviews with other legislators and experts. This dissertation has made sure to additionally validate the authenticity of information from local newspapers or by asking similar questions to different respondents. To ensure the quality of data, this dissertation further combined information from various sources (i.e., bio-data book prepared by the parliament administration, local newspaper), all of which has informed the analysis in Chapter 7.

8.8. Future Research Direction

Finally, this dissertation has offered a number of avenues for future research.

First, the analytical framework of this dissertation has offered a two-level framework of factors (macro and micro, see Chapter 7) and an operational definition of women’s concerns and issues (see Chapter 4) which could be used in future research to further investigate SRW. Future studies may aim to combine single and comparative studies of women’s representation across various national parliaments in South Asia (i.e. India, Pakistan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Maldives, and Bhutan) and beyond. Such studies could provide new and additional insights to the analytical framework for studying the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation and to address questions on different mechanisms of SRW.

Second, this study has revealed three patterns of women’s involvement (direct, indirect and intervening, see Chapter 6) in the process of successful implementation of a women-friendly policy change. By considering a reverse case (i.e., an unsuccessful one), future studies could examine whether or not different patterns of women’s involvement would lead to similar or dissimilar results. Furthermore, such studies might explore multiple factors in women’s involvement that influence the
process of policy formulation and women’s representation. This should enable the exploration of how different factors interact within a particular context and produce different outcomes on the policy level. Overall, more empirical studies on SRW are needed that consider different cases within a country and comparative cases between countries across the region.

Third, this study has acknowledged the variation among quota and non-quota women legislators’ role conception on women issues and explored the challenges associated with quota systems—especially looking at whether and how quota or non-quota women legislators speak for women in parliament. Future research needs to continue to study the difference among quota and non-quota women legislators to add to our emerging understanding of their ability to represent women in parliament. This can be done by examining their role in multiple cases within a parliamentary tenure, and/or in multiple parliamentary tenures over a longer period of time. In doing so, such research can further nuance our understanding of the impact of the electoral system of women legislators on substantive representation of women. Furthermore, future studies focusing on the role of quota policies may serve to further complement existing comparative studies from the Latin American context (such as Hinojosa, 2012).

Fourth, empirical evidence from this study has shown that the presence of women in the Cabinet and parliamentary committees mattered for the relationship between women’s presence and their SRW. This study has found that creating a genuine platform for women representatives was critical towards enhancing their substantive representation on women issues. Future studies may further investigate the role of women in other platforms, such as political party committees, local government bodies and public sectors. These are comparatively understudied platforms where women’s leadership and the relationship to substantive representation deserve to be explored in greater detail in the future.

Overall, there is a need for more research on women’s parliamentary representation and on SRW. This dissertation has offered various insights to be picked up and explored further in future research, offering an agenda for future inquiry in the field of women’s presence in parliament and their SRW, especially in the context of developing countries.
Bibliography


(2016). A Seat at the table is not enough: Gender and Political Inclusion. World social science report, 2016: Challenging inequalities; pathways to a just world. UNESCO.


Primary Documents


Appendices

Appendix 3.1: Tasks of a Member of Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The national debate</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Oversight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To convey the concerns and aspirations of the people, and intercede with the government on their behalf, by participating in debates and other proceedings, and introducing motions for debate in the plenary.</td>
<td>To consider the draft laws that the Executive and private members bring to parliament, both in plenary proceedings and as members of parliamentary committees. In doing so, an MP may propose amendments, and vote for or against such draft laws.</td>
<td>To oversee the conduct of the Government by the Executive, and call it to account, through parliamentary questions and in debates, in considering the Budget and through committee enquiries.</td>
</tr>
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Source: Researcher’s own table

Appendix 3.2: Lists of Development Project implemented during 9th Parliament

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<th>Projects Name</th>
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<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight Project (SPO)</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh, DFID, EC, CIDA, DANIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Accountability to Women through the Women Parliamentarians (WP)</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices (PRODIP)</td>
<td>Asia Foundation</td>
</tr>
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Source: Researcher’s own table
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<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length of the Interview</th>
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Appendix 4.2: Interview guide
4.2.1. Interview guide for Members of the Parliament in Bangladesh

0. Introduction

1. Biographical information: Education, politics, family
   Some personal information i.e. education, profession, husband or father's name, name of other family members in politics.

2. Background story: Involvement in the politics and the journey to parliament
   2.1. How do you get into the politics? How long are you involved in politics?
   2.2. How do you get into the parliament? How do you get a nomination for election or for reserved seats?

3. Experiences within the parliament
   3.1. What do you do in the parliament?
   3.2. The Experience of being a spokesperson in the parliament. What are the challenges?
   3.3. Can you please tell me about how male and female MPs (elected and selected) relates to each other in the parliament? Are there any differences towards elected and selected female MPS?
   3.4. Do you see any positional differences between male vs. female MPs?
   3.5. Can you please tell me about the relationship between elected and selected women MPs?

4. Representation within parliament: Issue selection
   4.1. Do you remember any issues that you have raised in the parliament? In case you remember could you please give some examples?
   4.2. What was the reason behind the selection of those issues?
   4.3. How did you usually select issues for your speech in the parliament? Do you usually receive any kind of help or request from anybody?
   4.4. How successful you were raising any issues? Were those issue taken up? Do you think your experiences would have been different if you were a selected or an elected MP?
   4.5. Who decides the topics for the plenary session and how does it work?
   4.6. Did you talk about women issues in the parliament? Could you please give some examples if you could remember? If yes, then what were the reasons behind raising those women issues? If No, then also explain why?

5. The enactment of legislative policy: Domestic violence act 2010 and the discussion on women’s property rights issue
   5.1. Story about the domestic violence act bill i.e.,
      - How does it happen?
      - Who were involved?
      - Where did the demand for the policy come from at the first place?
      - What was the role of women MPs? If there is any, what kinds of role women MP played?
      - Did you play any role?

   5.2. Story about the discussion on women’s property rights i.e.,
      - Were there a lot or less discussion taken place about the property rights issues?
      - Do you remember who have talked about this issue?
- In case, you were a member of women and children standing committee, did members talk about it in the committee meetings?
- What was the response from the government?
- What was the status of the discussion by the end of the parliament?
- Did women parliamentarians follow up with it?

6. Women MPs experience at the constituency
6.1. The district that you were representing – what is the name, and did you share the district with any other elected MPs?
6.2. Did you have any prior connection with the areas you were assigned?
6.3. How does the distribution of the constituency for the selected women take place? Can you, please explain how this usually is done?
6.4. Being a woman MP, do you face any challenges getting a constituency and how do you solve them?
6.5. Has this changed since you were first elected (if the question is relevant to the Interviewee)
6.6. How long have you been working in building your constituency?
6.7. What do people of your assigned constituency things about your presence? Their perception about you?

7. Women MPs position within their political parties: Their relationship with the party.
7.1. How long have you been a member of the party?
7.2. What position do you hold and which level within your political party?
7.3. How did you involve in party politics?
7.4. Was it difficult to get a nomination for direct election or for reserved seats?
7.5. What is your experience within the party? How do other members of the party behave?
7.6. Can you share the story of your getting a party nomination for the election or for the selection?
7.7. Has it ever happened that party officials sometimes draw your attention to issues that you could take action upon? Please share any stories relevant to it.
7.8. If the previous answer is yes, then, how did you react to those requests and What did you do in your case?

8. Relationship with external actors or civil society organizations.
8.1. Have you ever worked or been associated with a civil society organization, women rights organizations, donor organizations, and international organizations? Would you mind sharing their name?
8.2. Do you comfortable sharing about your involvement and relationship with them? Was that helpful for your work?
8.3. In case you were associated with CSOs, would you mind sharing the kinds of supports you have received from them?

9. What motivates them in case they are discussing about women issues in the parliament?
9.1. Why did you decide to talk about women issues at first place? What was your motivation?
9.2. Do you think talking about women issues in the parliament make differences?
9.3. The reality of your work, and how did you cope with them?
9.4. What do you see the most important task of a member of the parliament?
9.5. Did you face any challenges talking about women issues in the parliament? Could you share any stories?
9.6. Do you want to get selected/elected for the second time? What do you need most for that?
9.7. What do you need most in order to run the election next time?
10. What demotivates them in case they are not discussing about women issues in the parliament?
   10.1. What do you see as most important task of a member of the parliament?
   10.2. Why did you decide not to talk about women issues at first place?
   10.3. Did you face any challenges talking about women issues in the parliament? Can you share any stories?

11. Conclusion
   11.1. Are there any points that you would like to add?
   11.2. Do you have questions about my project?

4.2.2. Interview guide for CSOs, Government Officials and Academics

1. Do your organization/department has any project targeting women legislators or women in politics?
2. What are the critical issues that have inspired your organization to target women in politics in general?
3. How do you describe the patterns of participation of both men and women legislators in the parliament?
4. How do you explain legislators’ representation on women issues in the parliament?
5. What are the challenges that women legislators are facing within and outside of the parliament?
6. What are the major obstacles to the substantive representation of women in parliament?
7. Can you tell about the process of enactment of Domestic Violence Act 2010 which was adopted by the parliament in 2010?
8. How do you observe the role of parliament, it’s standing committee, men or women legislators and other external actors in the enactment process of Domestic Violence Act?
9. What are the major achievements and how would you like to explain the success in achieving project goals of your organization/department?

4.2.3. Interview guide for Academics

1. What are the critical issues that have inspired many organizations to target women in politics in general?
2. How do you describe the patterns of participation of both men and women legislators in the parliament?
3. How do you explain legislators’ representation on women issues in the parliament?
4. How do you evaluate women legislators’ ability to represent women issues in the parliament?
5. What are the challenges that women legislators are facing within and outside of the parliament?
6. What are the major obstacles to the substantive representation of women in parliament?
7. Can you tell about the process of enactment of Domestic Violence Act 2010 which was adopted by the parliament in 2010?
8. How do you observe the role of parliament, it’s standing committee, men or women legislators and other external actors in the enactment process of Domestic Violence Act?
9. Any suggestions on how to improve SRW?
## Appendix 4.3: Coding Frame for Interview

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<th>Coding Frame</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>The professional affiliation of women legislators other than their affiliation with politics. The categorization of profession is exclusively done based on their answer to a question of professional affiliation and entirely followed their preference of introducing themselves.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through Network and Connection with Political Elites</td>
<td>It refers to different forms of connections or network legislators have with political elites that helped them to enter into parliament.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Family-ties</strong></td>
<td>This refers to direct blood or marriage-based relationship with political elite. This specific group of women legislators</td>
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<td>Elected/Selected from husband's Constituency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elected/Selected from Father's Constituency</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political Mentoring/grooming</strong></td>
<td>It refers to a training process through which women legislators learn how to do politics, prepare themselves for public office and build network, with the help of a political elite who has either professional or personal connection.</td>
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<td>by direct/extended family members</td>
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<tr>
<td>by outside of family members</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Through Active Political Participation</strong></td>
<td>This category refers to them who entered to parliament due to their previous involvement with politics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Professional Affiliation</td>
<td>This refers to special situation when a woman from specific profession (most commonly in law profession) serve the party and contribute a lot in the crisis moment. Party extend their support in return of their contribution.</td>
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<td><strong>Experiences in Parliament</strong></td>
<td>It refers to different experiences women legislators' usually have within the parliament</td>
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<td>Relations between elected and selected women</td>
<td>This aspect refers only how elected and selected women legislators are associated with each other within the parliament.</td>
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<td>Relevant</td>
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<td>Helpful to each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception about each other</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Aspects</strong></td>
<td>This refers to legislators’ experiences in relation to different formal and informal aspects of the parliament.</td>
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<td>Lack of freedom</td>
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<td>Lack of time for speech preparation</td>
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<td><strong>Enabling Aspects</strong></td>
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<td>Receiving Supports from the Seniors/Speaker</td>
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<td>Women friendly Prime Minister</td>
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<td><strong>Relations between men and women legislators</strong></td>
<td>This aspect refers only how men and women legislators are associated with each other on the floor of the parliament.</td>
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<td>Workshop on women issues</td>
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**Miscellaneous**

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<td>This category refers to legislators' individual motivation in whether they speak or not speak on women issues. It also includes legislators’ perception on women issues.</td>
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<td>Women friendly atmosphere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not being able to talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This refers to the factors that limit legislators’ ability in speaking on women issues in the parliament.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systematic constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overloaded Constituency work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenging opinions about gender roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This includes other relevant information came up during the discussion of active and non-active participation of women legislators on women issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Electoral Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This category refers to legislators' individual experiences and challenges they face in relation to the route they use to be in the parliament i.e., election or selection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal aspects of the system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This refers to the informal rules and norms associated with selection/election mode of women legislators' in parliament.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to mainstream politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No complete control over constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandate more than one constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience at the Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandate of one constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal aspect of the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gendered perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation with respective political party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation with opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation with local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with Political Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation with Main stream party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women wings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour Party</th>
<th>Central Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divisional Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in mainstream party</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gendered experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominatio n of older politicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victims of dirty Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficult to enter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relation among women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in mainstream party</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gendered experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominatio n of elder politicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in Women Party</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominations of elder politicians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of dirty Politics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to get a position</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation between party members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in Labour Party</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
<th>Gendered experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Factors:</td>
<td>This category refers to patterns of women legislators’ involvement with different development organisations or women rights organization. It also includes the aspects on how such relationship can help women legislators’ to perform their tasks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of organizations</th>
<th>UN/International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IPU</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful to</th>
<th>Issue selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence/knowledge build up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patterns of involvement</th>
<th>Participation in conference and workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participate as a trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participate in training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation of Domestic Violence act</td>
<td>This category refers to women legislators’ patterns/types of involvement in the enactment process of domestic violence act and their personal experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of involvement</td>
<td>Discussion on the Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work at the committee level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involve with the drafting process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lobbying Executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk at the field level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lead the process of enactment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges from Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reality-social and support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support from Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion on Property Rights Issues</td>
<td>This category refers to women legislators’ patterns of involvement in the process of advocating for women's property rights. It also includes women legislators’ individual experiences in the process of advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Involvement</td>
<td>Discussion on the Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges from Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reality-Religious and Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessions</td>
<td>Intervention on Women issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteen</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventeen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighteen</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nineteen</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher's own table
Appendix - 5.2: Summary of the concerns under Women’s Strategic Concerns raised by Men and Women Legislators
Source: Researcher’s own table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-categories</th>
<th>Raised by Women</th>
<th>Raised by Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAW)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Women Migrants Workers</td>
<td>Ensure security of women migrants; Seeking protection for migrant workers living outside of Bangladesh.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Acid based violence</td>
<td>Effective rules of laws to stop acid-based violence; Implementation of the existing laws; Prevention and protection for victims of acid-based violence;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Fatwas based violence</td>
<td>Ensure punishment to authorities who issue ‘Fatwas’ (a ruling on a point of Islamic law given by a local authority) against women.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. Trafficking</td>
<td>Taking steps to stop human trafficking;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5. Dowry based violence</td>
<td>Implementation of Dowry Prohibition Laws.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6. Child Marriage</td>
<td>Promulgation and enforcement of Laws against child marriage; Increase the age limit for child marriage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7. Tribunal for VAW cases</td>
<td>Tribunal for VAW cases.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8. Public awareness against Dowry</td>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness against Dowry;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9. Public awareness against VAW</td>
<td>Demanding the embarking of Public awareness on preventing VAW.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10. Domestic Violence</td>
<td>One stop crisis center for victims of violence.</td>
<td>Policies against domestic violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11. Political Violence</td>
<td>Requesting a formal apology from persons who committing violence against women during the tenure of previous government; Physical assault against women in a political demonstration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Civil and Political Rights (CPR)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Women’s Development Policies</td>
<td>Implement of women development policy which was adopted on the 1997 policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. Rights of migrant workers (including work)</td>
<td>Provide work permit to migrants in Malaysia;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permit, salary and protection from violence)</td>
<td>Increase the salary of domestic women workers including migrant workers; Ensure rights of migrants’ workers; Ensure security of women migrants; Ensure support base by the respective embassies for migrant workers living abroad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3. Rights of tea garden workers</td>
<td>Improved life style of workers in tea garden.</td>
<td>Increase salary of tea-garden workers in Maulovibazar (an area in north-east of Bangladesh);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4. Rights of Women’s association</td>
<td>Formation of committee for national women’s association; Provide technical and human resource support to grassroots women organizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5. Rights of equal payment</td>
<td>Bridging inequality in payment structure; Increase salary of the employees working at the women technical training institute.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6. Rights of garments worker</td>
<td>Increase salary of garment workers.</td>
<td>Ensure salary of the garment workers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7. Position in Public office</td>
<td>Make the position of 672 women ANSER (Civil security force in Bangladesh) permanent; Increase numbers of women in police force;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8. Working condition for women workers</td>
<td>Provide a safe working environment for the women working at Sundarbans (the mangrove forest);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9. Women in politics</td>
<td>Provide separate constituency for Quota women; Increase women's participation in national politics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10. Women in Local government</td>
<td>Ensure provision of equality in the terms of references (ToR) of the representative at the local level.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11. Rights of women prisoners</td>
<td>Providing safe homes for children born inside women prisons.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12. Scholarships for married women students</td>
<td>Provision of Scholarships for married women students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13. Maternal leave</td>
<td>6 months of maternity leave for community health service providers.</td>
<td>6 months instead of 4 months of maternity leave policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14. Women Development Bank</td>
<td>Establishing of women’s development bank to ensure women’s economic empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CSRS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Social recognition of ‘Birangona’</td>
<td>Provide recognition and respect to all the ‘Birangona’ (a name given to victims of 1971 war of independence) by the state.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Women’s property rights</td>
<td>Women's equal access to land and other property rights.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Acknowledge of unpaid labour</td>
<td>Recognition of women's household work for the economic empowerment of women.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Respect to house help</td>
<td>Showing respect and provide good treatment towards the house help;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5. Women’s role in language movement</td>
<td>Recognition of women’s involvement in language movement;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6. Use of mother’s name</td>
<td>Recognition for the adoption of mother’s name in official documents;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 5.3: Summary of the concerns under Practical Concerns raised by Men and Women Legislators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
<th>Men Legislators</th>
<th>Women Legislators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Financial Support</strong></td>
<td>Financial support schemes for widows and single mothers; Financial support to disable women; Provide loans to women.</td>
<td>Loan without interest to rural poor women;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Technical Support</strong></td>
<td>Free Sewing machines to poor village women.</td>
<td>Small and medium scale industries for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Education and Training</strong></td>
<td>Establish schools; Establish women college in Raipur (a district of Bangladesh); Establishment of Women Colleges; Establish a technical training center for migrant workers; Establish of nursing institutions; Introduce bachelor course in women college; Transform a hospital to a women medical college in Chittagong (a division of Bangladesh).</td>
<td>Establish a vocational training academy for women in Chapainababganj (a district from Nord Bangladesh); Build Girls college; Governmentalise the new women college; Establish nursing institution Governmentalise the girls’ college in Maulabibazar (a district from South of Bangladesh);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Health Sector</strong></td>
<td>Establish more mother care center; Ensure community health service for mothers. Family Planning; Steps to demolish mortality of pregnant women.</td>
<td>Governmentalise the child care center; Free delivery service for pregnant women; Provide human resource for the successful implementation of family planning programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Housing Facilities</strong></td>
<td>Establishment of more hostels for working women.</td>
<td>Hostels for working women; Housing facilities for old women; Safe home for girl child without parents; Increase the number of hostels for women students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Social Support</strong></td>
<td>Increase the number and amount of social support for pregnant women.</td>
<td>Provide separate transportation system in university and college for women students; Increase burn units in local hospital Ensure mainly female doctors test rape victims in every local hospital Facilitate Skilled and safe migration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table
Appendix- 6.1: Legislative process in the Bangladesh Parliament

**Government Bill**

**Step 1 First Reading:** Introduction in the House by the Member in Charge (by Minister or by Private Member)

**Step 2:** Motion in the House for taking up the Bill for consideration or reference to Standing Committee or Special Committee or eliciting public opinion

**Step 3 A:** Bill is referred to standing/select committees for detailed scrutiny.

**Step 3 B:** Publication of the Bill in the Gazette for general information of the Public.

**Private Member’s Bill**

**Step 4:** Committee consideration and report to the house.

**Step 5 (second reading):** Unless recommitted to Committee or for eliciting public opinion again, the bill is discussed in the House; the members may propose amendments and discuss in support of the bill or reject it

**Step 6 (Third Reading):** The Member-in-Charge moves that the Bill be passed. The Speaker then submits the Bill to the House clause by clause or schedule by schedule for a vote, with no discussion. Passing of the Bill as a whole; (bills need to be passed by majority of members present and voting. Constitution amendment bills are passed by two thirds of the total number of members of the House).

**Step 7 A:** The President assents to the Bill within fifteen days of its presentation to him. Failing this, the Bill is deemed to have been assented to.

**Yes**

**Step 7 B:** Passed Bill is submitted to the President of the Republic for assent.

**No**

**Step 7:** Bill is returned by the President for reconsideration by the House.

**Step 8:** The returned Bill is passed by the House with or without amendments and submitted to the President for assent.

**Step 9:** The President assents to the reconsidered Bill within seven days of its presentation to him. Failing this, the Bill is deemed to have been assented to.

**Step 10:** Bill assented to, or deemed to have been assented to, by the President is published in the Gazette and becomes an Act.

Source: Researcher’s own graph
## Appendix 6.2: The list of Committee members of Women and Children Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Member</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.</td>
<td>Meher Afroz (female)</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>198 Gazipur-5</td>
<td>18.02.2009-18.06.2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begum Fajilatun Nessa, (female)</td>
<td></td>
<td>346 Seat-46</td>
<td>18.06.2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Sheikh Hasina (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>217 Gopalganj-3</td>
<td>Whole term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Mr. Muhammad Serajul Akbar, (male)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>91 Magura -1</td>
<td>Whole term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04.</td>
<td>Prof. M.A. Mannan, (male)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>163 Kishoreganj-2</td>
<td>Whole term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05.</td>
<td>Begum Rebecca Momin, (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>160 Netrokona-4</td>
<td>Whole term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06.</td>
<td>Begum Sultana Tarun, (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>78 Kushtia-4</td>
<td>Whole term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.</td>
<td>Begum Hasina Ahmed, (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>294 Cox's Bazar-1</td>
<td>18.03.2009-till end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Begum Zinatun Nesa Talukder, (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>311 Seat-11</td>
<td>07.07.2009-till end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mrs. Asma Zarin Jumu, (female)</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>304 Seat-4</td>
<td>07.07.2009-till end</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PSCWA, 2009
Appendix-6.3: List of Participants at the Meeting of Standing Committee (Apart from the members)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Md. Ashraf Hossain (male)</td>
<td>Managing Director, The Department of Women Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begum Momtaz Begum (female)</td>
<td>Chairman, National Women’s Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salma Binte Kadeer (female)</td>
<td>Joint Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Shah Kamal (male)</td>
<td>Joint-Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Tayabul Islam (male)</td>
<td>Deputy-Secretary, Ministry of Social welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustafa Monowar (male)</td>
<td>Chairman, Bangladesh Academy of Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Amir Hossain Khan</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Bangladesh Academy of Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate Salma Ali (female)</td>
<td>Executive Director, Bangladesh Women’s Lawyer Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begum Rokeya Kabeer (female)</td>
<td>Executive Director, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangstha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazilatunnesa Indira (female)</td>
<td>Secretary of Women’s Affairs, Central Committee of Bangladesh Awami League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayesha Khanoom (female)</td>
<td>Secretary, Bangladesh Women’s Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranjan Karmokar (male)</td>
<td>Executive Director, Steps Towards Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rina Rai (female)</td>
<td>Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Magfera Begum (female)</td>
<td>Director, FPB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina Goshammi (female)</td>
<td>Lawyer, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PSCWA, 2009

Appendix 7.1: Categorization of Women Legislators & their Contributions on Women concern Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Number of Contributions on the floor of Parliament (10 is the minimal threshold, the median)</th>
<th>Contributions Outside the Floor of Parliament (Women &amp; Children Standing Committee, Policy drafting committees among others).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Attention seeking Motions</td>
<td>Liaisons, mobilizing consensus behind the scenes, initiation of policy objectives within the Executive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active on Women Issues</td>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>Involved and Participated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Active on Women Issues</td>
<td>Less than 10</td>
<td>Not participated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher’s own table
## Appendix 7.2: Profile of Women Legislators (interviewed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Active/not active</th>
<th>Edu.</th>
<th>Prof.</th>
<th>Early Socialization by</th>
<th>Political Engagement</th>
<th>Social Status</th>
<th>Pathways</th>
<th>Medium of selection</th>
<th>Early Political engagement</th>
<th>Member of</th>
<th>Involve with Social Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2016 01</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Without family influence</td>
<td>Student politics, later women wing</td>
<td>Father Government official</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Women wing</td>
<td>Social activist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 02</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Lawyer, Politics</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student politics</td>
<td>Father - ex legislator</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Political mentoring</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 03</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Social work, politics</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Father - presidium member of AL</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Political mentoring</td>
<td>Women wing</td>
<td>Social activists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 04</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>PhD /Doctor</td>
<td>Doctor, politics</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student politics, later party politics</td>
<td>Father - presidium member of AL</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 05</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Parental /cousin</td>
<td>women wings</td>
<td>Cousin - ex minister</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Women wing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 06</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>8TH</td>
<td>Actress</td>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Brother in law-legislator</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>No position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 07</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>BSS</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>party politics</td>
<td>Niece of Prime Minister (natal side)</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>District committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2017 08</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Without family Influencer</td>
<td>party politics</td>
<td>Father - businesman</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>District committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 09</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>BSS</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Husband - ex legislator</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>No position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWE 2015 10</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>BSS</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Husband - ex legislator</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>District committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 11</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>MS/ LAW</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Without family influenc e</td>
<td>Party politics</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>Secretary of district committ ee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2016 12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Social work, politics</td>
<td>In-laws</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td>Husband-ex legislat or</td>
<td>Direct connec tion</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Secretary of women wings</td>
<td>social activists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2017 13</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>MSS</td>
<td>Business s</td>
<td>Materna l</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td>Grand father</td>
<td>Direct family connec tion</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2017 14</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Business s</td>
<td>In-laws</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td>In laws</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2016 15</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>Business s</td>
<td>Natal</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Direct connec tion</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 16</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Women wings/labour wing</td>
<td>In laws</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Labour wings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2016 17</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student wing/Labour wings</td>
<td>Father-ex legislat or</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Labour wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2017 18</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student politics, then women wings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 19</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>PHD</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Business s</td>
<td>Materna l</td>
<td>Party politics</td>
<td>Grand father</td>
<td>Direct connec tion</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MSS, LLB</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Without family influenc e</td>
<td>Student politics, then women wings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 21</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MSS</td>
<td>Business s</td>
<td>Materna l</td>
<td>Student politics, then women wings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2015 22</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Private job and politics</td>
<td>Parental</td>
<td>Student politics, then women wings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Politic al Mentoring</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Student Politics</td>
<td>Women wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS 2016 22</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>In-laws</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>In laws</td>
<td>Direct connec tion</td>
<td>Selected</td>
<td>Mainstream party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7.3: Statutory Declaration

Statutory Declaration
(on Authorship of a Dissertation)

I, Marufa Akter, hereby declare that I have written this PhD dissertation independently, unless stated otherwise. I have used only the sources, data, and support clearly mentioned and described in the text. The intellectual property of other authors used in the dissertation text is credited to them and properly referenced. This PhD thesis has not been submitted for conferral of degree elsewhere.

I confirm that no rights of third parties will be infringed by the publication of this thesis.

Bremen, February 18th, 2019

__________________________________________________________
Marufa Akter
Appendix 7.4: Selective Samples of Interview Transcript

108 Two transcripts are provided here. More transcripts can be made available upon request.
I am really sorry for any inconvenience caused. If any further assistance is required, please don't hesitate to contact me.

I hope this clears up any misunderstandings. Thank you for your understanding.

Best regards,

[Signature]
Motivation to talk about women:

As Aristotle argued, the consciousness of women must be awakened to enable them to realize their full potential. This is necessary for the betterment of society as a whole. Women are often subjected to various societal norms and expectations that limit their personal and professional growth. To overcome these limitations, it is essential to discuss women's issues openly and honestly.

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and acceptance of diversity and inclusion. Women from different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences are being encouraged to participate in discussions and contribute to societal advancements. This has led to a shift in the perception of women from being viewed as mere participants to becoming active agents of change.

Several organizations and initiatives have been launched to promote women's empowerment and rights. These efforts have not only highlighted the importance of gender equality but also provided a platform for women to voice their concerns and share their experiences. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the participation of women in various sectors, including politics, business, and academia.

However, despite these advancements, women continue to face various challenges, such as gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination. It is crucial to continue these discussions and work towards creating a society where women are treated with the same respect and opportunities as men.

In conclusion, the motivation to talk about women is rooted in the recognition of their potential and the need for a more inclusive society. By fostering open communication and understanding, we can work towards creating a world where women can thrive and contribute to the betterment of society.
পরিদর্শন করেন। এটি আমার অন্যতম প্রচেষ্টায় একটি অন্যতম উপকারিতা। এটি আমার সমস্ত দিন পর্যালোচনার মাধ্যমে অন্যদিকে হিসেবে সাইন প্রদর্শন করে। এটি আমার সমস্ত দিন পর্যালোচনার মাধ্যমে হিসেবে সাইন প্রদর্শন করে। এটি আমার সমস্ত দিন পর্যালোচনার মাধ্যমে হিসেবে।
याचा वाचन -

विशेष वेळ, मजबूत अनुभव घेतलेली नुसार किंवा यासाठीचे अंजिंयंत्र म्हणजेच मनस्थ्री, तपासणी अंधकार - जागा, यासारख्या अंधकारात हे अनलोकित होतात. याच्या वाचनाच्या वापराने याची स्वास्थ्य होते. नृत्याची गाने, नृत्याच्या गानाच्या लागू केलेल्या वाचनाच्या वापराने याची स्वास्थ्य होते. प्रत्येक वाचनाची गाने, नृत्याच्या गानाच्या लागू केलेल्या वाचनाच्या वापराने याची स्वास्थ्य होते.
Central & Suburban Areas (Ottî)
Election

How important the Network——

The Myitkyina Office was not to have
an assembly until the next year. I had
second thoughts on "my" turn and the
next year.
The exercise of the clean lines of the gold teapot is difficult. I imagine
the gentle rocking of the glass marbles

...
My English teacher was very strict and made me a slave in class.

I tried to do my best, but I couldn't understand the English language. I failed many exams and my teacher was very angry.

I decided to study harder and improve my English skills. I read books, watched English movies, and practiced speaking.

Slowly, I started to improve and I was able to pass my exams. My teacher was happy and encouraged me to keep going.

I learned that with persistence and hard work, anything is possible.
Issue Celestini:


Standing Committee on Works, Transport and Public Works.

Inquiry into the prevention and control of domestic violence and the providing of services to victims and witnesses. The Committee submitted its report.

Committee:

On the report of the Committee.

Resolved that the report be printed, and that the Committee be thanked for their labours.