Whither the Political Woman:
The Political Underrepresentation of Women in Sarawak

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science in the University of Canterbury

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University of Canterbury
New Zealand
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This thesis is concerned with women’s political underrepresentation, which is still a problem in most parts of the world. The primary objective is to investigate the reasons for this phenomenon. It is maintained that the problem is due to a dearth of political women. This lack of political women is attributed to various factors that derive from a gendered public and private ordering within societies. One major aspect of this thesis is the explication of the significance of the asymmetrical public and private distinction in relation to the lack of women in political office particularly in Southeast Asia. In this respect, the first objective is the reformulation of Rosaldo’s original “public and domestic” distinction to include asymmetrical gender processes. Women’s domestic roles, men’s superior status, gendered stereotypic characteristics and behaviour, and gendered institutions are explicated as manifestations of the public and private divide. The second objective is the empirical evaluation of two sets of hypotheses derived from the public and private divide. One is related to societal perception of women and political office, and societal attitudes on gender roles and gender asymmetry. The other is related to political parties as gendered institutions.

Empirical evidence from two studies carried out in Sarawak, Malaysia largely confirms the pervasiveness of the public and private divide within society, and within the political party as a gendered institution. First, it was found that people from diverse cultures exhibit similar attitudes on asymmetrical gender relations. Second, it was found that people have generally moved away from negative stereotypes of women, but there is still a strong belief in male superior status, the need for women to prioritise domestic roles and conformity to proper gender behaviour. Third, it was found that the highly gendered nature of political parties is not conducive to the development of political women. All these findings suggest that the culturally sanctioned public and private divide is an impediment to women’s attaining political office. Based on these findings it is suggested that societies would have to move away from culturally prescribed gender asymmetry to egalitarianism before equality in gender representation can be achieved.
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the kind assistance of a large number of people. My sincere thanks must go to my two supervisors, Dr. James Ockey and Professor Martin Holland. To Jim, my indebtedness for his guidance, support and patience, and for keeping me motivated. To Martin, my gratitude for his encouragement and faith in me.

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My special thanks and love to my family, Anthony for his unwavering support and love, Adrian and Maurice for not minding having a mum who is forever a student.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my late parents, Dennis Mowe and Bong Kuik Fah.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Women, Politics and Representation

This century has seen a marked increase in the political rights of women. Only a few nations legally bar women from participation in politics. In many parts of the world democratic systems ideally constitute institutions which provide both men and women equal opportunities for political involvement. At the same time, women’s rapid progress and leadership roles in professional fields such as law, medicine and commerce is proofs of their equal competence and indicates their potential for leadership in politics. Yet nowhere in the world is women’s political representation equal to that of men, nor is their representation proportionate to their number in the population.

The most pernicious failure of democracy is the political underrepresentation of women who make up a majority of the population in most of the societies professing democratic institutions. Starting with New Zealand where women were enfranchised in 1893, women around the world (at various points in time after that) have had the right to vote for a long time. Enfranchisement in some places was further followed by feminist demand for representation for women as a group in addition to representation as individual citizens (Sapiro 1981: 702). However, as Kirkpatrick noted, although it was from the sixties that women acquired a political identity and emerged as a group with its own political demands, such consciousness has had a very limited concrete reality. Unlike other mobilizing identities based on, for example, ethnic, regional or economic identification, women’s gender identity does not exact phenomenal influence on their political behaviour. Very few women have endeavored to pursue
Almost half a century ago, Duverger, in his four nation report on the political role of women compiled for UNSECO, observed that with regard to voting in elections, the number and make up of women who participated did not differ substantially from that of men. Although it was generally true that women were more conservative, more influenced by religion and more likely not to vote, these differences were not important. In contrast, noted Duverger, when it came to government and political leadership, there had been a progressive decline in women’s role each step up the ladder to become “extremely small” within decision-making bodies and at the political leadership level (1955: 75-76, 122-23). This was confirmed in an observation made three decades later by Clark, Hadley and Darcy who noted that, in the United States it was the imbalance in public office holding that was the most widespread gap between American men and women (1989: 194).

Substantial inroads into the political arena had not materialize regardless of the form of government in place, the extent of women’s emancipation, or the strength of women’s movements (Moore 1988: 150). This would hold true in a third world authoritarian regime that “rests on gendered foundations, relying particularly on the construction of masculinity and femininity which assigns particular ‘traditional’ roles to women” (Waylen 1996: 114), or in the United States - the self-proclaimed example of the democratic free world as well as the country with the largest and most active women’s movement. In the 2002 incoming US congress, for example, there were 13.8% women in the House and 13% in the Senate. In China, where women’s equal rights is constitutionally guaranteed and made popular by the slogan “Women hold up half the sky”, there are only 5 women out of the 198 members of the 2003 Communist Party Central Committee, the ruling power group. At the 1989 Inter Parliamentary Union Symposium, the Chinese delegation reported that women’s full participation is hampered by centuries of feudalism and traditional customs that to the present day favour a ‘respectful gentlemen, humble women’ ideal (Abzug and Kelber 1994: xii, 36).

---

1 France, the German Federal Republic, Norway and Yugoslavia.
Broadly speaking, except for the Nordic countries, in most parts of the world the situation has not progressed much from Duverger’s earlier observation. The following tables show the proportion of males and females within the legislatures of the world as of January 2003.

### 1.2 Women in National Parliaments

#### World Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Both Houses Combined</th>
<th>Single House or Lower House</th>
<th>Upper House Senate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total MPs</strong></td>
<td>40,819</td>
<td>35,664</td>
<td>6,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender breakdown</strong></td>
<td>37,803</td>
<td>32,400</td>
<td>5,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>32,130</td>
<td>27,487</td>
<td>4,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>5,673</td>
<td>4,913</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of women</strong></td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Regional Averages (Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Single or Lower House</th>
<th>Upper House or Senate</th>
<th>Both Houses combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nordic countries</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe - OSCE member countries</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including Nordic countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe - OSCE member countries</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excluding Nordic countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab States</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
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*Source: IPU*
Women in National Parliaments from 1945 to 1995

<table>
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<td>Number of Parliaments</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Women MPs</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Women Senators</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
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Source: IPU

Based on a survey of 180 countries in 1998, it was found that within executives, women made up only 8.7% of 3,486 cabinet ministers. Thirty-eight of the 180 states did not have a women cabinet minister (Reynolds 1999: 557-8). Also significant is the continuance of what Duverger called a “special qualitative bias” in male and female leadership roles. In his report Duverger noted that,

In party leadership, in senior administrative posts, in parliaments and in governments, the few women included concentrate on specialized matters, such as health, education, motherhood, family welfare, housing, etc.- that is, on all problems which, in general opinion, are considered to be of special interest to women. (1955: 123-4)

In 1998, women were still predominantly found in these portfolios. A breakdown based on regions gives the following spread as regards the Ministries of Women’s Affairs, Culture, Family Affairs, Sport and Tourism. In Oceania - 44% of all women ministers; in Africa - 43%; in Asia - 37%; in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Central and Eastern Europe - 33%; in North America and the Caribbean - 35%; in Western Europe 29 %; and in South and Central America - 25% (Reynolds 1999:565).

With such discouraging showing, it is not a surprise that the debates surrounding women’s underrepresentation have been largely marked by disillusionment with status quo politics. Within the context of contemporary academic literature, the perspectives on the issue of women and politics have developed in parallelism with gender perspectives within social science.
1.3 Women and Politics

1.3.1 Shifting Perspectives in Studies on Women

The focus on women within social science began long before the feminist movement of the nineteen sixties. Sociologists were interested in family life, educated women and role conflict, and women in the work force. From the sixties, studies on women took on a more specialized focus. Social scientists examined issues such as sexual behaviour, birth control, child-care, careers, and division of labour within the family (Angrist 1975: 176-7).

Current works on women have taken on a new dimension from the days of “women’s studies” when women were studied as women in isolation. More contemporary notions of women as subject of analysis have been influenced by the concept of gender and by the realization for the need to analyze women within interactive and relational contexts. Gender introduces the incorporation of cultural determinants into what constitute male and female. This cultural definition is distinct from the natural differentiation of male and female based on sex. Gender as a cultural artefact is a product of interaction and is essentially tied to male and female relations and roles. This in itself would seem inevitable or even natural except for the fact that the process of gender ascription involves an inherent asymmetry. Almost everywhere, women are regarded as relatively subordinate to men.

Gender perspectives have brought to the surface new issues and related concepts. Phillips’ reference to three concepts – inequality, oppression and subordination – which are frequently used to describe women’s situation provide a good idea of the prevailing mood. Inequality carries a sense of injustice. Women have been denied much that has been granted to men. For example, women were not originally given the vote and are still given lower status, lower pay work or not allowed certain jobs. Oppression goes further than inequality. Not only are women excluded, they are kept in their place by a combination of ideological, political and economic constraints. And finally, according to Phillips, women’s subordination is a conscious act of

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2 Firth (1996) comments that thirty years ago the word gender was not found in any works on women, females or sex roles. The distinction was initially made by Marilyn Strathen in 1973.

3 This is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.
subordinating on the part of those in possession of power, that is men. Accordingly, within feminist language, another shift occurred, from an emphasis on women’s “emancipation” to women’s “liberation” (1987: 1). Those developments manifested a political dimension as adherents of the women movement became more vocal and visible on issues regarding women.

Within the realm of conventional politics, a parallel development was taking place. What is regarded as “for women the most glaring of democracy’s sins” became a point of contention. The right to vote had given women formal political equality with men but this had not been accompanied by actual political influence as evidenced by the continuing low representation of women in elected offices (Phillips 1991: 18, 19). This resulted in the women movement’s rejection of party politics and a de-emphasis on participation in parliaments or representative assemblies. Instead, there was a move to seek the realization of participation and democracy within other arenas (Phillips 1991: 61).

The search for more meaningful alternative participation in politics was accompanied by a critical appraisal of literature on politics, particularly within the field of political science. One of the most discriminating earlier examples of the disregard for women’s relevance to politics was the classification of states as democratic even though their female citizens did not have the right to vote (Walby 1988: 215). Feminists objected to a number of practices within political science. Leading the list was the complaint regarding the absence of women in political writings. Women were mainly subsumed under neutral categories such as “humanity”, “mankind” or “man” (Randall 1987: 2) which worked to mask their exclusion as a subject matter that deserved attention in their own right (Scott 1999: 84). Where analyses of women’s participation did take place political science was accused of engaging in “male-centred” or “male-stream” analysis that was largely defined by male experience. Within such analyses interpretations were made based on the male as the standard of measurement. Women’s participation in politics was held to be inferior to men’s in that it was lacking in intensity and sophistication. Women were also seen as more conservative, and tended to personalize and moralize politics (Siltanen and Stanworth 1984). Consequently research methods within the discipline had long been shaped by this assumption of female inferiority (Jenkins 2000: 469). Finally political science was
faulted for the definition of politics that systematically excluded women. There was dissatisfaction with the manner the political was designated, and the way politics was assessed within mainstream or perhaps more accurately male stream analysis. Siltamen, for example, claimed, “... women can never be full participants in politics as presently defined by political science....” (1984: 104). This was particularly true with the traditional preoccupation with “high politics” involving wars, treaties and institutional politics such as parties and government that were all dominated by males (Waylen 1996:7). The lack of recognition of women’s role in and contribution to politics was seen as depriving women of the “dignity of political life” (Siltamen and Stanworth: 1984: 189-190). It was increasingly argued that in order not to marginalize women’s contribution, more had to be done than just including women in studies of conventional politics. Women’s participation and contribution in activities that lay outside the conventional space, or that did not fit the usual definition of politics should be taken into account (Waylen 1996: 10). It was pointed out that “women’s experience” needed to be incorporated in order to transform the way politics was conceptualised (Ackelsberg and Diamond 1989: 505-7).

The dissatisfaction with the conventional construction of politics led to feminists’ preoccupation with the prior question of what constitute “politics” and the “political” (Phillips 1991: 92). Consequently, within feminist literature concepts such as “politics of connectedness” that elevated women’s connection to family, work and community were advocated. Women’s public accomplishments were measured on their advocatory and community work (Flammage 1984a: 12-3).

1.3.2 Women’s Political Representation

With the low number of women representatives as shown in the table earlier, the disillusionment with conventional politics is not baseless. It is also hardly surprising that many within the women’s movement across countries lost faith in conventional politics in the seventies and early eighties. Phillips captured the feminist mood in relation to women’s representation succinctly with the following comment. She noted

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4 Analysis of women in terms of conventional politics mainly took the form of women’s relationship with the state, particularly the welfare state, and the implications of state policy on women (see Ackelsberg and Diamond 1987: 510-14).
that, "getting women into politics where politics meant parliament or national assembly was very low down the list." (1991: 16) Feminists were more interested in taking unfettered control of emerging social movements and organization (Lovenduski 1993:1). Meanwhile, as Phillips noted,

In more academic circles, the literature on 'women in politics' (more accurately women not in politics) operated close to the threshold of boredom. For those who knew that women were oppressed, the dreary statistics lacked any element of surprise. The common sense explanations for women's low profile held little appeal for minds still buzzing with the latest theoretical positions. (1991: 61)

So emerged a period of feminist literature that contained among other things, criticisms of established maxims and conventions; attempts at changing paradigms by theorizing “difference” in connection with women’s participation; incorporation of women as political actors, and as object of politics. There was also a strong interest in scrutinizing the relationship between women and the state (Ackelsberg and Diamond 1987).

Despite the flurry of new ways of scrutinizing the relationship between women and politics, many were also mindful of neglecting the importance of conventional politics. For example, Phillips, an outspoken critic of male dominated political thought, was critical of the idea that just because women had been unable to make substantial inroad into conventional politics it should cease to matter. As she lamented, “A democracy may require the policies on equality before the equality of representation - and yet, without the second, what hope is there of the first.” (Phillips 1991 92)

Moreover, it is no longer acceptable to believe that males who hold the majority of public offices everywhere in the world are able to represent women adequately. History has shown that the interests of a nation had, and still are primarily defined and expressed by men. It is still assumed that women will tacitly agree and accept whatever men decide. Such perceptions ignore the fact that the two genders do not have identical interests, nor do men and women always agree (The Parliamentarian, Jan 1995: 69). These two factors appeared to have been forgotten in the rush to reconceptualize politics or to bring about change from outside, rather than from within existing political establishments. Nevertheless, it soon dawned on some feminists that “separatism” was not vastly effective in terms of empowering women or in bringing about change. Consequently there was a reversion to mainstream politics on the part
of some feminists. These activists focused on establishing their power bases and getting their voices heard within political parties (Lovenduski 1993: 6). In tracing the return to status quo politics and the issue of women’s representation it is pertinent at this point to look at the prior question of the need for women’s representation.

1.4 Women’s Political Underrepresentation

1.4.1 The Need for Women’s Representation

In terms of Pitkin’s conceptualization of representation as “acting in the interest of the represented in a manner responsive to them” (1976: 209) it is obvious that women’s political underrepresentation, or more radically, the systematic exclusion of women, is indefensible. This is based on, at the most fundamental level, the basic notion of justice, or the principles of democracy. The underrepresentation of women in most societies professing democracy poses a problem for democratic theory particularly in the light of emerging evidence that, in terms of process and outcomes, women legislate differently from men (Berch 1996: 171). Scholars have advocated various arguments on the need for women’s representation based on the tenets of democracy. Most fundamental is the idea of “descriptive representation” which argues that all groups within society must be represented and included in governance as the exclusion of any groups would have an impact on political decisions and policies (Pitkin 1976: Chp.4). Closely related to this is Sapiro’s argument that women form an interest group whose interests require representation (1981). Having more women may also result in the introduction of more “women-friendly” policies (Reynolds 1999: 549). Apart from this, it has been pointed out that politics in general would benefit from women’s representation because they provide different perspectives and experiences. The practical advantages of a larger representation by women stem from their different views and attitudes in relation to political and social issues. Moreover, women might be more inclined towards less confrontational politics, and might inject compassion into policy decisions. In the process they may transform politics (Chou, Clark & Clark 1990: 12-5). Democracy and policy implications aside, an increase in the representation of women would bring about what Sapiro called “powerful
symbolic changes in politics.” The presence of more women will erase the image of politics as a male domain. Given the chance, people will get used to women holding public office thereby making political roles for women more acceptable (1981: 712, see also Thomas 1994: 153). Views in support of more representation by women abound but evidence from all over the world show women’s political underrepresentation is and continues to be a universal phenomenon. Arguably, there have been some improvement but as the reports mentioned earlier show, in many places there has not been any substantial increase.

1.4.2 Theories Explaining Women’s Underrepresentation

As with the arguments for women’s representation, various arguments have been advanced as explanations for women’s underrepresentation. The factors commonly proffered are usually classed under the following sets of explanations. The socialization explanation focuses on the demarcation of male and female roles and behaviour. Adherence to societally prescribed gender roles and behaviour discourages women from pursuing political activities which are deemed inappropriate for women. The situational explanation places emphasis on the circumstances within women’s life space that affect their ability to participate in political activities. Women’s child-caring and domestic responsibilities, for example, confine and isolate them. The structural explanation, concentrates on the inequality in opportunity and access to resources that usually characterise men and women’s political activities. For example, women are usually disadvantaged by lack of education, experience and finance from participating equally with men. The gatekeeping explanation points to male dominance of politics as the cause of women’s low representation. Males in position of power are reluctant to accept women into their ranks. Finally, the environmental explanation draws attention to the effects of factors such as the political culture (i.e. traditional or non-traditional), political institutions and electoral systems on women’s participation.

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In a study on women's participation in politics in Taiwan, Chou, Clark and Clark reviewed and evaluated the strength and plausibility of four broad theories. First, it is argued that there are innate physical, biological and psychological differences between men and women. Women are said to lack the personality traits that are necessary for success in politics. The second theory stresses socialization effects. The socialization of male and female into the roles of “public men and private women” hinders women’s participation in politics. The third theory sees women’s low representation as a “male conspiracy”. Women are unable to achieve equality because men discriminate against women. Party gatekeepers, particularly, control the path to political life. The fourth theory focuses on political structures as institutional constraints. For example, election systems such as first-past-the-post work against women, while multi-member proportional representation work in favour of women (1990: 15-24).

Chou, Clark and Clark (1990) dismissed the validity of the first theory, supported the plausibility of the other three, but concluded that none gave the whole explanation. The idea that there are innate biological differences between men and women that affect political life has lost credence among many scholars but each of the sets of explanations has had its share of the limelight as the most plausible explanation for women’s underrepresentation. A common feature of the various studies that were undertaken was the tendency to focus on particular aspects resulting in mixed or debatable findings. Take for example the recent strong interest in the effects of electoral systems on women's representation. It has been argued that women perform best within systems where there are multi member constituencies with a high number of seats (Phillips 1995: 193). While it is highly likely that such systems would benefit

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6 See also Phillips who listed broadly similar explanations (1991: 79-83).

women, it has also been pointed out that a society must have reached the stage where women are actually running for office before the positive effect of the electoral system is possible (Matland 1998: 23). In other words, the existence of “women friendly” systems benefits women, but it does not address the more basic question of the lack of women running.

1.4.3 Women and Electoral Politics: A Framework of Analysis

The above exemplifies the weak spot in most attempts to explain women’s underrepresentation. The problem lies with relying on deterministic mono-causal explanations when, as Phillips noted, in reality the focus needs to be on “multi-causal” explanations (1991: 83). This echoed Welch’s earlier observation that the various explanations for women’s underrepresentation, rather than being contradictory or mutually exclusive, were simultaneously working and reinforcing each other (1977: 712). It should not be a matter of one explanation being more valid than another but the recognition that the various explanatory factors are related (Bennet and Bennet 1989: 110). A more comprehensive explanatory model would require integrating elements of the various explanations. Having said that, it is interesting to note that the majority of empirical studies on women’s underrepresentation have tended to focus on explanations that are based on institutional or social factors, without making any attempt to explore and conceptualize the causal origins of these factors. A close examination of the preceding explanations reveals one common factor. Within each explanation, including those which blame institutional barriers, the underlying factor is gender differentiation between male and female. This manifests as varied forms of the subordinate nature of women’s place in electoral politics relative to men. Although not always explicit this can be linked either to women’s gender roles and behaviour (actual or perceived), or institutionalized conventions that can be traced historically to these two factors. This pattern accords strongly with the concept of the public and private distinction - an asymmetrical ordering that locates men in the public space and women in the private space.
1.4.4 The Public and Private Divide

In this thesis, the public and private distinction, theoretically termed the public and private divide (to distinguish it from the earlier usage of the concept) is used as a theoretical framework for investigating the reasons for the political underrepresentation of women. For reasons that are explained in detail in the next chapter, it is proposed that the concept provides the most comprehensive explanatory model for understanding the scarcity of women in political office. Most other identifiable factors generate from, or are manifestations of this basic ordering. The adoption of the public and private framework, however, is not a simple matter. Many writers object to the demarcation, branding it as damaging to women. Saxonhouse referred to the concept as a “powerful paradigm” originating from ancient Athens that assigns men to the superior public world of abstraction, creativity and choices. Women, on the other hand, belong to the inferior private world of “natural instincts” concerning the body and needs. This world places women alongside “the beast and not with the gods.” As a result, through the ages to the present scholars have been influenced by this thinking in their interpretation of women’s actions. Historical accounts abound with depictions of women who crossed the boundary from private to public world as “perversion of good women”, or as “domineering or scheming concubines.” Such interpretations, said Saxonhouse, inform and perpetuate the ideas we use in making sense of our existence (1992: 4-5). Within the Western political tradition, this is most obvious with liberal democracy’s designation of a public and private sphere as the basis for defining society. This fundamentally gendered conceptualisation that underpinned earlier androgenous maxims such as excluding women from the right to vote and to run for office continues to have adverse implications for women. Even now women are not fully rid of the public and private dichotomy that had deprived women of political relevance (Waylen 1996: 6-7).

Notwithstanding the objections raised against the use of the public and private distinction, a strong case can also be made for accepting it as important and useful for understanding women and politics. Randal, for example, had this to say,

Despite the cogency of feminist criticism, I shall not completely discard the public-private distinction. This is because it refers to a convention that, however regrettably, does influence political practice and in particular the relationship between women and politics. I shall try to show the negative
implications for women of this conception of politics: how it has been used to reinforce and justify male dominance and women’s exclusion from public power ... Used in this manner, the dichotomy provides a useful analytical tool... (1987: 14).

This is the position adopted in this thesis. The use of the framework requires firstly, explaining why it is better than other approaches, and secondly, justifying its use amidst the controversy and debates surrounding it. The process essentially entails reassessing and reconceptualizing the distinction to take into account insights from relevant studies. This task is undertaken in the next chapter.

1.5 Goals of Study

The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine the gender gap in political representation and the reasons for the problem. It is maintained that women’s underrepresentation is due to the lack of political women. The lack of political women is attributed to various factors which derive from a gendered public and private ordering within societies. These factors take both social and institutional dimensions. Theoretically, the study aims to reformulate and recapture the centrality of the public and private divide for understanding women and electoral politics, particularly in Southeast Asia. These goals entail four specific tasks - two theoretical and two empirical.

At the theoretical level the first task is, on the one hand, to re-conceptualize the public and private division, and on the other hand, to justify its use as the framework of analysis within the context of current theoretical literature on women. This also involves establishing the relevance of the public and private division as the theoretical framework for understanding women’s representation in Southeast Asia. The second task is to formulate, based on available literature, theoretically driven hypotheses for empirical evaluation. Research at the empirical level comprises a case study to evaluate two sets of hypotheses on women’s political underrepresentation. One is framed within a social dimension and evaluated based on quantitative survey data. A survey of the public was used for this part of the research because a key objective was
to gauge the prevalence of the attitudes and perceptions under study. Quantitative data provided a large part of the picture that would not have been adequately elicited in interviews. The other set of hypotheses is framed within an institutional dimension and is evaluated based on qualitative interview data. In this case the objective was to elicit in-depth information from members of political parties. Both sets of field data were collected in Sarawak, a state in Malaysia.

1.6 Rationale

One may understandably ask why there is a need for another study on women’s political underrepresentation. Ask anyone and they would provide a few explanations as to why so few women hold political office. Moreover, there have been numerous studies on the issue. There are several reasons why such an undertaking is not passé, either from an academic, practical or policy point of view. In fact in this thesis it is argued that precisely because there has been so much complacency there needs to be a renewed and relentless scrutiny of this social fact that has remained largely constant in most parts of the world despite the occurrence of other changes and transformations within societies. The rationale for this study is fourfold.

1.6.1 The Imprudence of Sidestepping Numbers in Women’s Representation

The first reason for undertaking this study is the direction the focus on women’s participation in politics has taken. There is presently an inclination to advocate moving on from the emphasis on increasing women’s numbers in legislatures to improving the quality of women’s representation. This development appears to be a response to “scepticism” by some people on the extent of women’s contribution to politics. For example, there is doubt as to whether women who made it into the political arena have made a difference. As a result the crucial matter of gaining increased representation for women has eased because of the perceived need to “ensure that the attention to equality in decision-making goes beyond formal representation…and focuses on actual impact on the political process.” (Karam 1998:
In a recent publication by IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) it was asserted that,

Previous effort related to increasing the number of women in politics, particularly in the context of women in some parts of the world not even having the right to vote, were a feature of those particular times and conditions. Though still crucial to contemporary endeavours towards equality and representation, it is now essential to look beyond numbers to enhancing the quality and effectiveness of women politicians. (Karam 1998: 11)

This agenda is undoubtedly of benefit to women, but in the haste to move on two things must not be ignored. First, it must be remembered that women have to be present before their performance can be evaluated, or improved. At present in most places, the number of women in office is not adequate to undertake meaningful analysis of their effectiveness. Secondly, within the context of an agenda for change through women’s participation and representation, it is important to create a critical mass (Tickner 1999: 10). Without underplaying the importance of quality, numbers is important in creating a critical mass.

The present position in relation to numbers may have been influenced by the huge gains made in the Nordic countries. Critical numbers are not easy to achieve. The impressive gains women made in the Nordic countries have been due to the adoption of quotas by political parties. But as these countries show, societies must have developed socially to a certain stage of egalitarianism before imposed strategies such as quotas can achieve enduring benefits for women (Matland 1998: 29). Examples from places like Egypt and Bangladesh have shown that quotas do not always provide permanent solutions. In most countries the issue of improving women’s numerical representation must continue to be given urgent attention. Two decades ago Githens made the following comments:

Getting SOME women elected to public office is clearly not the panacea for rectifying the problems faced in society. Unless enough women get into office to change the present political ground rules applied to women in the political elite and to alter the stereotype about women, the nature of power and appropriate leadership roles, their recruitment into the political elite cannot be expected to produce any profound changes. (1984: 59)
1.6.2 The Folly of Sidestepping Culturally Prescribed Gender Asymmetry

Having pointed out the dangers of sidestepping numbers, it is fair to press home that women’s political underrepresentation has not lacked attention and concern especially on the world stage. The International Parliamentary Union, for example, has been particularly vocal. Most notable has been the IPU sponsored Beijing Declaration and the “Plan of Action to Correct the Present Imbalance in the Participation of Women in Political Life” in 1995. This was followed up in 1997 by the New Delhi Declaration on the theme “Towards Partnership between Men and Women”. At the New Delhi meeting it was commented that, “what is at stake is democracy itself”. It was asserted that present day democratic societies require, “nothing less than a new social contract in which men and women work in equality and complementarity, enriching each other from their differences.” It was felt that to “address the current deficit, a major shift in the mind set of both men and women is needed” that “would generate a positive change of attitudes towards women and lead to a new balance in society at large and in politics in particular” (Pintat 1998: 170).

These are potentially beneficial proposals, but there is an inherent internal inconsistency within the project. Most inconsistent with the above goal of “partnership between men and women in politics” is the emphasis on a sort of necessary condition in the Plan of Action. For example, it is maintained that, Although cultural and religious values of civilization tend to assign roles and tasks to men and women, limiting women’s participation in public life; nonetheless, without destabilizing cultures or imposing values foreign to the national culture, it should be possible to enhance women’s dignity at the social level to allow a more balanced image of the capacity of men and women to participate in the management of public and private business. (The Parliamentarian, 76:1, 1995: 70, citing from “Plan of Action to Correct Present Imbalances in the Participation of Men and Women in Political Life”, 91st IPU Conference, March 1994)

Consistent with this kind of reasoning other international bodies such as the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians have, within their own agenda, adopted the stand that “Action for change to give women open access to politics and power must be appropriate to nation and culture.” (The Parliamentarian, 76:1, 1995:71) The incompatibility of these two objectives is undoubtedly the reason for the lack of
progress. Asymmetrical gender relations prescribed by cultural beliefs and practices are the most potent barriers to women gaining access to political office and power. Other factors such as electoral systems or financing become of relevance only after these social and cultural obstacles have been negotiated. As long as societies hang on to asymmetrical gender relations corresponding to a public, private ordering, significant changes in their mindset on political equality between man and women will not be forthcoming and calls for equality will merely be rhetoric. In this thesis, the public and private divide encompassing its various manifestations is emphasized as the fundamental cause of women's underrepresentation. A key objective of the study is to revisit and re-emphasize the significance of this culturally sanctioned ordering that exists in all societies.

1.6.3 The Folly of Rejecting the Significance of the Public and Private Divide

Within the western world, the division of society into the public realm of men and the private realm of women goes as far back as Plato and Aristotle who clearly contrasted the public world of politics and the private world of the household. Liberalism and civic republicanism both accepted the distinction and elements of the concept exist ideologically and institutionally within both traditions. In the early 1970s, feminist scholars made use of the concept - popularly termed “public and private dichotomy” - as their framework for social analysis in anthropology. This concept was later strongly opposed by other feminists and scholars of varied disciplines who contended that the dichotomy is, in reality, inaccurate and serves to justify the subordination and exclusion of women. In their attempt to find alternative or new ways to analyse women in society, feminists and other scholars have tended to either oppose or de-emphasize the division. In this thesis the public and private divide is advocated as the framework of analysis based on the ground that, comparatively it provides the strongest explanation for women's underrepresentation.

The adoption of the public and private divide goes against the current grain of academic debates on women. Extensive interest and controversy surrounding the use of the public and private dichotomy as a framework of analysis began in reaction to
Rosaldo's proposition that it “provides a universal framework for analysing the activities of the sexes” (1974: 23). Although the model initially commanded wide appeal, scholars soon began to question its strength and universality. A survey of the literature on the subject reveals that the problem lies not on the distinction per se but on the inconsistency in defining and setting its parameters. Although the public and private dichotomy cannot claim to provide a “universal framework for conceptualizing the activities of the sexes”, when appropriately defined it provides the most useful framework for analysing certain aspects of societies - in the case of this thesis, for explaining women's underrepresentation. This endeavour has the advantage of tapping the rich insights provided by works that adopted the dichotomy in the early nineteen seventies, as well as insights from subsequent attempts at discrediting and deconstructing the dichotomy. The concern in this thesis is not that of rejecting one and accepting the other, but of benefiting from the insights of both.

1.6.4 Rejecting the Relevance of the Public and Private Divide in Southeast Asia

The validity of the public and private distinction has also been disputed by scholars in Southeast Asia who highlighted the more egalitarian nature of gender relations in Southeast Asian society. In Southeast Asia, the nature of conventional politics and indigenous culture strongly suggest the suitability of the public and private distinction as the framework for analysing women's underrepresentation. Such a proposition is contrary to popular theoretical assumptions on gender relations in the region. Southeast Asia is widely regarded as an area where women enjoy high social status. Rejection of the distinction is based mainly on the ground that as an ordering construct which generated from conditions in western societies, it is not applicable elsewhere. The distinction has also been criticised on the ground that it is further evidence of western academic hegemony. The proposition that the public and private distinction is an appropriate framework is based on the fact that regardless of their higher social status compared to women in other parts of the world, women in Southeast Asia are subordinate to men, and conventional politics is mainly regarded as a male activity.
1.6.5 The Situation in Malaysia

Evidence of the subordination of women and male domination of politics can be seen in Malaysia. Noraini (1986: 213) commented:

Malaysian society, as elsewhere, subscribes to the idea of a sharp division of labour between the sexes, with men as the principle breadwinners of the families, main persona in public activities and founts of authority, while women care for the home and nurture the children....An argument can be made that the state, in fact helps to maintain and reinforce private gender divisions in public life.

Considering the subordinate status of women in Malaysian society, it is not a surprise that out of the present 192 members of the Malaysian Federal Parliament, only 15 are women. The same is the case at state level. The average for the whole country is one woman to 30 men in the state legislatures. The picture is not much better at local government level where women make up around 15% of local council members.

The notion of a distinction between a public role for men and a private one for women is evident in Malaysian society. The use of the public and private dichotomy as a possible framework for exploring the political behaviour of Malay women has been suggested by Manderson who undertook studies on WANITA UMNO\(^8\) (Manderson 1991: 53).

1.7 Research Focus

This thesis focuses on women in Malaysia. Empirical evaluation of two sets of hypotheses is based on data on women in Sarawak, a state in East Malaysia. There were three reasons for choosing Sarawak as the empirical case study. The first concerns contribution to literature. There have been very few studies on politics in Sarawak and almost nothing on women in general or in politics. Studies on women in Malaysia focus on women in peninsula Malaysia. This thesis is primarily an empirical study that involved extensive field research. It is the first of its kind on Sarawak.

\(^8\) Women’s section of UMNO (United Malay National Organization).
The second reason concerns research data. Sarawak represents a political and social entity in miniature. Politically, although it is a state in a federation, its internal politics carries its own dynamics. Some political parties are part of the federal government coalition, but, with the exception of one party, all are local parties which are not branches or part of larger national parties. The nature of Sarawak society also provides an interesting case for study. The state’s population is made up of a number of ethnic groups, the largest of which are the Dayaks, Malays and Chinese. As a developing society, there is wide variation in educational attainment among the people. There is also a distinct urban and rural divide. All these serve as a potential source of rich comparative data. The crux of it is that overall data can be more comprehensive and manageable, and consequently more meaningful.

The third reason concerns data collection. Being a Sarawakian myself, undertaking research in Sarawak presented obvious advantages. Familiarity with, and knowledge of local political and social conditions would benefit both the process of data collection and the research data. Another advantage concerns accessibility to data. Knowledge of local languages and personal acquaintance with local people would allow easier access, as well as vastly enhance the quality and scope of data.

1.8 Methodology

This study utilizes both quantitative and qualitative empirical data analyses. Data for the case study on societal perceptions and attitudes was obtained through a survey of 537 males and females from four ethnic groups - Iban, Chinese, Malay and Melanau. The survey was carried out in seven localities in Sarawak, Malaysia. The survey sample was obtained through a non-probability sampling method. Participants had to complete an anonymous questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part was on factual information; the second comprised eight questions subsuming 48 statements (items) on gender and politics, gender roles and gender inequality. The questionnaire was in one of three languages - English, Malay and Chinese. Methodological details on questionnaire construction, survey method, ethical issues and statistical method used in data analyses are provided in Appendix A.
Data for the case study on political parties was obtained through face-to-face, in-depth interviews with 45 male and female members of two political parties in Sarawak. Each interview was conducted in one of four languages - English, Malay, Iban and Chinese. Interviewees were asked one of two sets (one for male and one for female) of structured but open-ended interview questions. This method provided room for further elaboration and clarification, and for interviewees to respond in their own ways. In addition, it gave the interviewer some flexibility in managing the interviews as participants varied in their educational and cultural background, and in their language or communicative competence. Adhering to loosely standardized, structured questions was to ensure the responses could be categorized and compared for analysis. Further details on methodology are provided in Appendix A.

1.9 Organization of Study

Chapter 1 has provided an overview of the issue of women’s underrepresentation as a worldwide phenomenon. Also included are a brief overview of the literature on women and political representation, the rationale and goals of the present study.

Chapter 2 comprises the first part of the theoretical component of this thesis. The chapter begins by justifying the adoption of the public and private distinction as a framework for analyzing women’s underrepresentation. Following that, an attempt is made at reconceptualizing Rosaldo’s public and domestic distinction. By extracting and incorporating ideas from various disciplines such as gender studies, anthropology, sociology, psychology and political science, the original public and domestic distinction is reformulated as a more integrated framework that includes gender processes. Termed the public and private divide, this reconceptualization encompasses an interactive and dynamic dimension. The chapter concludes by advancing five postulations on women’s participation in political life.

Chapter 3, expands on the postulation from chapter two. Based on previous published studies two sets of hypotheses on women’s involvement in politics are formulated.
The first set, framed within a social dimension, concerns societal perceptions and attitudes on gender relations and women's participation in public life. The second set, framed within an institutional dimension, concerns women's participation in political parties.

Chapter 4 provides the contextual background for the empirical evaluation of the hypotheses postulated in chapter 3. The first part of the chapter comprises a review of literature on gender in the region in order to justify the use of the public and private as a framework for analysing gender relations. The second part provides background information on Malaysia and Sarawak.

Chapter 5 and 6 constitute the empirical component of the thesis. In chapter 5, quantitative data from a survey conducted in Sarawak is used to evaluate the first set of hypotheses which is on societal perceptions and attitudes. In chapter 6 qualitative data from interviews with members of two political parties in Sarawak is used to evaluate the second set of hypotheses which is on women participation in political parties. The concluding chapter comments on, and draws conclusions from the findings of the study.
Reconceptualizing the Public and Private Divide

In her book on women in political thought, Elshstain declared that the "Distinctions between public and private have been and remain fundamental, not incidental or tangential, ordering principles in all known societies save, perhaps, the most simple"(1981:6). It is an expression of a common understanding that most people accept. Even those who do not agree with the statement would find it hard to defend an absolute rejection of the existence of the ordering. Yet, the idea has been at the center of long-standing debates and controversies in the academic and political world.

2.1 The Separation of the Public and the Private

Within political intellectual thought and academia in general, the public and private division exists on three overlapping planes. The first relates to the division of society into a public sphere and a private sphere, which loosely correspond to the state and civil society division\(^9\). This separation stems mainly from political considerations. Within the second plane, the public sphere is expanded to include the state and that part of society characterized by social, economic, and political activities and discourses. The private sphere is reduced to encompass matters that relate to the individual, the personal and the domestic. Over the third plane, the division concerns

\(^9\) The comparison here denotes the more contemporary usage of the public and private. As the following paragraphs show, within the history of democratic thought there have been some differences in the way the public and the private have been conceptualized. The concept "civil society" has also been explained and interpreted in different ways. Here it is used broadly to refer to that area of society which is made up of the domestic, cultural, social and economic activities. The "state" refers to the area involving government and public affairs.
the structuring of activities and roles into a public and private (or domestic) area. It is the gendered nature of this third plane of division and its reciprocal relationship with the other two planes that has had persisting ramifications for the issue of women and politics. This is largely due to the gender asymmetry in defining roles and activities in favour of the male within the public, and consequently the political segment, and the confinement of the female within the private. This chapter is concerned with elucidating this realm of ordering. It is argued, first, that however undesirable the existence of the division might be, the gendered ordering is a useful analytical tool for explaining the current relationship between women and electoral politics. Second, it is herein maintained that it has wide applicability and relevance although its usage as an ordering construct for understanding society took roots in the west and, as some have claimed, it originated from conditions in the west.

Theoretically substantiating these positions would have been a straightforward and uncomplicated process had it not been for the fact that the recognition of the significance of the ordering has been counteracted by adverse reaction and objection to its application. Without denying the usefulness and the positive consequences of the counter reaction, one thing also stands out - these responses have succeeded in causing widespread negativity (sometimes indiscriminate) and some confusion in relation to the ordering. There are even those for whom the ordering is almost taboo as a mode of viewing and understanding society. The issue becomes a question of whether the existence and significance of the ordering should be downplayed because of its potentially undesirable implications for women. The need to address this negativity and confusion is essential both in arguing for the need to recognize the significance of the ordering, and in theoretically conceptualizing it as an analytical tool. This chapter serves the dual purposes of first, providing a systematized overview of relevant literature as a means of sorting out the complexity of the subject. In the process it serves the second objective of providing the theoretical basis for the ordering as the analytical framework adopted in this thesis. This chapter is organized into three parts. It commences with a brief look at the philosophical and theoretical basis for the political division of society into the public and private spheres, and at misogyny in political tradition. This is followed by an examination of social and anthropological notions of the ordering. Finally, an attempt is made at reconceptualizing the division by incorporating gender processes.
2.1.1 The Public and Private Spheres and Misogyny in Western Political Tradition

One significant epistemological contribution contemporary scholars on women have made is their debunking of established political thought and tradition in gender terms. Interpretations from a women's perspective reveal the inherently misogynist nature of historical political thought. The world of democracy and representative politics evolved from western political doctrines and practices. Within these traditions and strands of thoughts, ideas on democracy are based on differing underlying principles. As the following overview of three major democratic traditions shows, the designation of a public and a private sphere is not simply a matter of pragmatic classification of society into that which concerns the wider public and that which does not. Each school of thought upholds different principles for the need to have designated spheres, but doctrinal differences have not affected a common misogynist stand on women’s position. This has had two major consequences for women. First, it justified the exclusion of women from political participation. Second, it set the trend in ignoring and excluding women as subjects in political discourses. The legacy of these thoughts persists as an enduring subterranean existence within the political thought, practices and institutions of contemporary democracies.

A central concern, which created the distinction of the public and private spheres, was the issue of the relationship between the individual and society. The first theoretical implications surfaced with classical Greek political philosophy. Classical Greek democracy was fundamentally geared towards “civic virtue”. Public matters and the “common good” took priority over private life, as civic virtue was a necessary condition for the fulfillment of one’s human capacity. The individual’s virtue was the civic virtue and this quality was only attainable within the political community (Held 1996: 16-17). The individual, consequently, was inseparable from the public but this public sphere was counterbalanced by a non-public sphere of the private household, the site of economic production and domestic family life.

Classical democracy subscribed to the view that the household was indispensable but must be removed from the public sphere because it was not conducive to the qualities
such as wisdom, rationality and spirit required in public life (Phillips 1991: 29). Aristotle maintained the interdependence of the public and private by insisting on the necessity of the private in the continued existence of the city, but gave higher importance to the public (Saxonhouse 1983: 380). He was forthright in his elimination of women from the public sphere with his conviction that they were, due to their nature and their activities, more fit for in the private (Elshtain 1981: 44-47, Jones and Jonasdottir 1988: 1). Women had no political roles and their confinement to the economic production function of the household allowed men the freedom to pursue their public duties. Classical democracy thrived on the labour of women and children (Held 1996: 23).

Republicanism created a distinct public sphere by emphasizing citizens’ commitment to a common public good. The interest of the community transcended that of the private or individual and active citizen involvement in public affairs for the common good was obligatory. The public was an elevated sphere of glorified political activities that contrasted sharply with the private sphere of the everyday. Women did not fare better with the republicans. Classical republicans, notably Marsilius, Machiavelli and Rousseau were united in excluding women from citizenship. Marsilius, following the Aristotelian concept of politics as the pursuance of the common good, likewise excluded women by reason of their nature which he thought was incompatible with such goals (Held 1996: 49). Machiavelli was no less adamant in justifying the exclusion of women. Raising the question of morality, he reasoned that moral conduct, deemed desirable within “private morality” such as Christian womanly virtues, was not compatible with the morality of politics, which was about possessing and exerting power. Consequently, a morally good woman within the private sphere cannot make a good citizen within the public, nor can a good citizen be a good woman. Morality aside, his distrust of women is clearly shown by his view that power, which exists within the private sphere, took the form of “covert manipulation, deceit and cunning”. This is contrasted to the “public power” “justice” and “systems of law” of the public sphere. (Elshtain 1981: 94-95) More generally, Machiavelli limited citizenship to those with independent means who could participate and have an interest in public matters. By this definition women who, together with children and animals, are “dependents”, did not qualify (Pitkin 1984: 7, 22). Rousseau, on the other hand,
disqualified women due to their lack of “capacity for sound judgement” rendering necessary “male protection and guidance” (Pateman 1985: 157-8).10

A more recent statement of the republican view was made by Hanna Arendt who constructed the public as the place of reason, equality and freedom, where “excellence”, “glory” and “immortality” can be pursued. This is differentiated from the private household which is characterized by dominance, inequality and activities connected to the “necessities” and “maintenance” of life11. Women “who with their bodies guarantee the physical survival of the species...” must be confined to the private (1958: 17-21, 26-32, 58, 62, 180).

In contrast to the emphasis on the common good and the interest of the public above that of the individual, liberalism’s core notion of individualism underpins its public and private distinction. Its emphasis on the individual, freedom, and equality promises deliverance from the shackles of long-standing bonds and tyranny. In safeguarding the individual’s autonomy, liberalism is the “... doctrine par excellence that tries to keep things separate, to demarcate the personal from the political sphere.” (Phillips 1987: 13) Government exists to protect the rights and liberties of the individual. It has no role beyond this and consequently it must be strictly limited from interfering in the private world of individuals who are free to live their life in pursuance of their own interests (Held 1996: 81)12. The public world of government and politics is made up of the institutions and related activities which facilitate the execution of this central tenet. Whereas within classical Greek and classical republican political thought the idea was to exclude the private sphere from the public sphere, liberal democracy bars the public sphere from the private sphere. Regardless of these basic differences the liberal designation of the public and the private, like the other two traditions, has had

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10 Rousseau, according to Phillips, stands out as the one who viewed women, with their attributes of love and affection, as “naturally” not suitable for involvement in politics and “best kept safely at home” (1991: 30).

11 At the same time, Arendt pointed out that the division, which was distinct in the ancient world, is more fuzzy in the modern world because of the emergence of the “social” or “society” which is “neither private nor public, strictly speaking”. A sense of the truly public has diminished because the social has permeated the public (1958: 28, 38, 41).

12 This originated from Locke’s ideas on the “social contract” and “consent”. Subsequent strands of liberalism have in varying degree deliberated on the best way to achieve this goal. This fundamental goal has generated the principles of legalised rights, liberties and equality through legal constitution, government accountability through the separation of power and regular elections. It is also the reason for liberalism’s advocacy of the free market as the best mechanism for individual freedom (Held 1996: chapter 3,5 and 6).
the same effect in subordinating women and confining them to the private. Liberal democracy, for all its progressive ideas on emphasizing the individual and equality, has, in the same way as the other democratic traditions, disadvantaged women.

At the most general level, early liberal theorizing pushed the private household and women into almost total insignificance. With liberalism there are two separations. The first arises from the abstract conceptualization of civil society which broadly demarcates the public civil society from the domestic or family. The second separation derives from liberalism’s notion of the rights and liberties of individuals that were largely tied to rights and liberties in relation to property. The liberal conception of the private and individual as being primarily concerned with the economic and social created a public sphere of government and a private sphere of consenting individuals within civil society\(^\text{13}\) (Pateman 1987: 107). This shift in what constitutes the private sphere from the household to the economic and the social meant the private sphere ceased to be represented by the household. Liberalism’s preoccupation with civil society entirely removed the domestic from the picture.

Theoretically, liberalism’s conceptualization of individuals as the same and equal before the law transcends the prescribed demarcation within society. However, this did not in any way ameliorate women’s situation, as equality in abstraction ignores the bases of power and power relationships (Phillips 1987: 7). Until the 19th century liberal civil society was made up of consenting men, and women were subsumed and represented by men. The liberal individual was for all purposes a patriarchal category - a male (Pateman 1988: 184-185). The subsequent extension of rights, freedom and suffrage to women did not adequately provide for women’s inclusion as women were hampered from fully exercising these rights because of gender differences. A major criticism directed at liberalism is that, in advocating formal equality (that is, equality before the law) as sufficient, it fails to take into account the actual inequalities arising from difference\(^\text{14}\). Where sex is concerned, liberalism’s “abstract citizen” or “gender neutral individual” within its public/private scheme of things is unmistakably male (Phillips 1991: 30, 141).

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\(^{13}\) Civil society here denotes society after the formation of a social contract in contrast to society in a state of nature.

\(^{14}\) Socialists point to inequalities due to class, and feminists point to the inequalities arising from the differences between men and women (Phillips 1987: 10-11).
2.1.2 The Public Man, Private Women Dichotomy

Within early political thoughts and writings, the public and the private spheres and misogyny went hand in hand. The exclusion of women occurred on three fronts. First, the designation of the public and private sphere confined the household and women to the private sphere. Second, there was a deliberate and explicit exclusion of women from public or political participation based on assumptions concerning their nature. The belief that the female nature is either less compatible or incompatible with public or political life underlies all the writings of early political thinkers. According to Coole, for the more conservative, this male and female difference is part of a natural order. Being natural, the female place at the lower level of the hierarchy is not seen as subjugation. Even those with more equality in mind harboured the view that women’s nature is the problem. Equality was seen as contingent on the need and ability to discard female characteristics and acquire those of the male (1988: 3). Third, as a consequence of the general attitude that women have no place in public and political life, women have been conveniently ignored and left out of scholarly work.

The debates within mainstream democratic thought and academia have also focused on the exclusion of women even by modern thinkers. Later thinkers and writers, building on the works of their predecessors, exhibit misogynist characteristics which were never erased by modernization nor progressively more egalitarian ideals. Phillips comments,

"Early theorists developed a variety of explicit arguments to justify their misogyny, but later writers seemed to take women’s unworthiness so much for granted that they did not notice they were leaving them out. (1991:3)"

Jones and Jonasdottir pointed out that modern theorists, on inheriting and adopting an existing “conceptual framework”, never “...seriously challenged the idea that political action and femininity were antithetical” and “...this heritage has continued to shape the research parameters and methodological principles of contemporary political science...” (1988: 2).

Criticisms, particularly by feminists, of democratic theory, tradition and practices have been directed mainly at liberal democracy, the most dominant and prevalent form in contemporary practice. In more concrete terms, the criticisms have manifested
in several ways against existing political thought, mainstream political practices and political science. Underpinning these broad accusations are the notion of the public and the private and the systematic exclusion of women.

The public and private spheres discussed so far correspond to the first plane of ordering mentioned earlier. The implications of this distinction between the public and the private for women take several forms. Apart from the more obvious confinement of women in the private, liberalism’s barring of the public from the private means that, affairs which bear on women are not a concern of the public. Liberal democracy’s public and political comprise institutions of government with their particular class of activities. This gave rise to disillusionment with conventional politics and a call for alternative ways of looking at politics and what should constitute the political. Thus, the rallying appeal of the declaration that “the personal is political”; the search for alternative forms of power relationships and activities which will accord women more significance in the order of things; and the dissolution of the public and private distinction through participatory democracy.

The public and private distinction, as laid out, is seen as the root of many of the problems affecting women’s situation. The discontent with the division has led to a tendency to either downplay or reject it. The feeling is that it is a false division, and if it is not accorded significance it will not have significance. This attitude has unfortunately spilled over to works on the third plane of the public and private ordering as reflected by gendered social roles and activities. It is unfortunate in the sense that while the division along the first plane is prescribed and predicated on highly ideological theorizing, the division along the third plane is self-structuring based on intrinsic characteristics within society. The next section focuses on this third plane in an attempt to demonstrate the importance and usefulness of this ordering as a means of understanding social action and behaviour within the context of gender.

The generally misogynist attitude exhibited within established political thought and scholarship, no matter how unjust and unwarranted, may not be without reason. While most of the influential earlier thinkers can be dismissed as misogynist without need

\[15\] See chapter 1 for a discussion of these arguments.
for further elaboration, the paradoxical nature of J.S. Mill’s argument for formal equality for women reveals the dilemma inherent in determining women’s position. Mill, a prominent liberal advocate of the enfranchisement of women, argued that women’s roles as wives and mothers should not prevent them from partaking in public affairs. At the same time, he expected married women to undertake,

...the management of a household, and the bringing up of a family, as the first call upon her exertions, during as many years of her life as may be required for the purpose; and that she renounces, not all other objects and occupations, but all which are not consistent with the requirements of this. (Mills 1970: 179)

In “Vindication of the Rights of Women” Wollstonecraft strongly called for democratic rights and liberty for women, but admitted her belief that women could not participate effectively as citizens when she blamed circumstances and education as the cause of their degraded state.16 Both these theorists exemplify the difficulty of reconciling women’s situation with the public and political. Circumstances surrounding women have changed drastically in many respects from Wollstonecraft’s and Mill’s time, but some of the conditions for the notion of public man and private women continue to be of relevance and have adverse ramifications for women. More to the point, the notion of a public and private distinction based on normative presumptions of maleness and femaleness has been a key factor in creating, justifying, and perpetuating gender inequality. The ensuing exposition on the public and private dichotomy in relation to gender will attempt to elucidate the significance of the ordering.

2.2 Rosaldo’s Public and Domestic Framework

The starting point in putting the picture together is an acknowledgment of the fact that the essence of a society is its norms and mores. Geertz pointed out that cultural patterns are of vital importance to human beings because without them, a human is

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16 See chapter 4, “Observations on the state of degradation to which women are reduced by various causes” her description of women as “confined in cages like the feathered race, they have nothing to do but to plume themselves, and stalk with mock majesty from perch to perch …” (pg. 30), and chapter 6 “The effect which an early association of ideas has upon the character” where she laments that women “have not sufficient strength of mind to efface the superinductions of art that have smothered nature….Educated then in worse then Egyptian bondage, it is unreasonable, as well as cruel to upbraid them with faults that can scarcely be avoided.” (pg. 201-2) For a similar discussion on the plight of women see Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex*. Translated and edited by Howard Madison Parshley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1993.
“functionally incomplete...a kind of formless monster with neither sense of direction nor power of self control, a chaos of spasmodic impulses and vague emotions.” (1973: 99) Likewise, Elshtain, in reflecting on human life, observed that,

Each way of life will embody within its social forms a cluster of basic notions as the moral grounding required, in the first instance, for the creation and sustenance of any way of life. Without such a set of moral rules and prohibitions, basic actions and symbolic forms, no human society can exist. (1981: 319-20)

The public and private dichotomy is part of this cluster of characteristics exhibited within most human societies. The first to draw widespread attention to it was Michelle Rosaldo who advocated her public and domestic division as a “universal framework for conceptualizing the activities of the sexes.” (1974: 23)

In the wake of strong criticisms and objections to the “universal framework” claim, Rosaldo modified her stand in a later work. This, however, should not detract from an appreciation of the fact that her ideas on the public and the domestic, and how it relates to gender asymmetry show the implications of the ordering on women. More importantly, as the following explanation of her conception of the dichotomy and other related literature show, with some refinement based on later critical comments, the distinction continues to be of relevance and remains useful as an analytical tool.

Rosaldo’s framework is based on an opposition of the domestic, namely that area of human activities which evolve around mother and child, and the public, which refers to the “activities, institutions, and forms of association that link, rank, organize, or subsume particular mother-child group.” (1974: 23) First advanced in Women, Culture and Society (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974) and reiterated with some modifications in “The Use and Abuse of Anthropology” (Rosaldo 1981), the structural model was founded on the premise,

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17 Rosaldo uses the term domestic instead of private. In terms of the sexual division of labour, the two terms have generally been treated as having similar referents. Scholars have referred to Rosaldo’s public/domestic dichotomy as the public/private dichotomy. For example, see Ryan (1990: 6,7), Glen (1987: 359), Helly and Reverby (1992: Introduction), Bradley and Khor. (1993: 349) As will be seen later, this interchange in usage is the source of much confusion and ambiguity.

18 “The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-cultural Understanding” (pg. 399-401).

19 The papers in this volume address the question of what aspects of the make up of all known societies have enabled them to create and perpetuate sexual inequality.
...that all contemporary societies are to some extent male dominated, and although the degree and expression of female subordination vary greatly, sexual asymmetry is presently a universal fact of life. (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974: 3)

This acknowledgment of male dominance is neither an acceptance of female subordination nor an endorsement of women’s relatively lower status. From a feminist perspective, the gist of her argument is that women’s subordinate position is not “biologically determined” but a “cultural product that can be altered”. Biology has provided both the conditions and the rationale for female subordination but the “sexual asymmetry is not a necessary condition of human society” (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974: 13, 14). Consistent with the feminist goal of locating sources of power for women, the public and private division framework is formulated and geared towards the analysis of “a number of very general characteristics of human sex roles and to identify certain strategies and motivations, as well as sources of value and power that are available to women in different human groups.” (Rosaldo 1974: 18)

For our purposes here, the focus lies with her more generalized claim that the dichotomy “provides the basis of a structural framework necessary to identify and explore the place of male and female in psychological, cultural, social, and economic aspects of human life.” (Rosaldo 1974: 23)

A deeper appreciation of Rosaldo’s conceptualization of the public and private division requires recognizing that,

Human activities and feelings are organized, not by biology directly, but by the interaction of biological propensities and those various and culture specific expectations, plans, and symbols that coordinate our actions and permit our specie to survive….biology constrains but does not determine the behaviour of the sexes…differences between human males and females reflect an interaction between our physical constitutions and our patterns of social life. (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974: 5)

From this phenomenon, has emerged another significant feature of human societies – an “asymmetry in cultural evaluation of the sexes”. Rosaldo pointed out that “Women may be important, powerful, and influential, but it seems that, relative to men of their age and social status, women everywhere lack generally recognized and culturally valued authority.” (1974: 17) Biological differences may account for differences in male and female roles and activities but more baffling,
is the fact that male, as opposed to female, activities are always recognized as predominantly important, and cultural systems give authority and value to the roles and activities of men....This observation has its corollary in the fact that everywhere men have some authority over women, that they have culturally legitimated right to her subordination and compliance. (Rosaldo 1974: 19, 21)

Rosaldo attributed this asymmetry to the “near-universal fact of human experience” that a large part of women’s adult life is given to reproduction and childcare (1974: 23). “Women become absorbed primarily in domestic activities because of their roles as mothers. Their economic and political activities are constrained by the responsibilities of child care, and the focus of their emotions and attentions is particularistic and directed toward children and the home.” (1974: 24) This domestic orientation is “the critical factor in determining her social position.” It is “contrasted to the extra-domestic, political, and military spheres of activity and interest primarily associated with men. Put quite simply, men have no single commitment as enduring, time consuming, and emotionally compelling – as close to seeming necessary and natural – as the relation of a women to her infant child; and so men are free to form those broader associations that we call ‘society’, universalistic systems of order, meaning, and commitment that link particular mother-child groups. (Rosaldo 1974: 24)

To elaborate on her framework Rosaldo drew on the various factors given in the other chapters of the book to account for women being universally the “second sex”. The first concerns the development of “personality”\textsuperscript{20}. Boys and girls develop personalities which reflect the consequences of the fact that women shoulder the responsibility for raising children. Young girls, emulating their mothers, enter womanhood with ease and seemingly “naturally”. Within the confines of her own family a young girl is able to get an idea of what is in store for her throughout her future life, and to learn her role. She acquires a “feminine” psychology – nurturing, responsive and kind. Boys, on the other hand “must learn to be men” as male activities outside the home are not accessible to young boys. On top of that, “the status, power, and sense of worth” associated with male activities are difficult to achieve. Manhood is about abstract “rights and duties”, “formal role”, “status” and “authority” (Rosaldo 1974: 25-26).

\textsuperscript{20} For an extended discussion of this see Nancy Chodorow’s “Family Structure and Feminine Personality” in Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974, pp.43-66.
“Authority”, which Rosaldo identified as the second factor in the subordination of women is an important component of manhood. Being outside the mother-children nucleus impacts on the adult male in two ways. It gives him, first, the freedom to develop status and authority within male hierarchies. Second, it removes him from the intimate interaction within that nucleus and thereby allows him to control it (1974: 26-27). These two factors jointly give rise to the third factor, which is, that women have “ascribed status” and men have “achieved status”. Females are subject to what is seen as a “natural criteria that uniquely determine membership, order relationships, or establish chains of command.” Males, in contrast, create “elaborate systems of norms, ideals, and standard of evaluation that permit them to order relationships among themselves.” (1974: 28) Within this world of “articulated social relations” and “elaborated institutions”, males, who are seen as “intellectual, rational, or instrumental” signify “culture”, while females, who are characterized by “fertility, maternity, sex and menstrual blood”, exemplify “nature”21. Standing as “nature” females represent disorder and consequently are “anomalies” (1974: 30-31). The asymmetry is accentuated further by the placing of males and females in economic life. Admittedly, Rosaldo observed, the economic activities of women in different societies vary greatly, but generally, it appears that women’s economic activities are of a less prominent nature compared to men. Usually either individual, or within small scale less complex organizations, women’s production is mainly for the home and family, or in support of male status (1974: 34).

The preceding account explains the culturally legitimated authority of males, and underscores her argument that,

in all human societies, sexual asymmetry might be seen to correspond to a rough institutional division between domestic and public spheres of activity, the one built around reproduction, affective and familial bonds, and particularly constraining to women; the other, providing for collectivity, jural order, and social cooperation, organized primarily by men. (Rosaldo 1981: 397)

It is a convincing argument which provides an explanation, says Rosaldo, as to why, even though societies undergo enormous changes over time, and present social life

21 For an extended discussion of this, see Sherry Ortner’s “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture” in Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974, pp.67-87.
bears little resemblance to that of earlier times, successive generations have perpetuated male dominance (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974: 7).

2.2.1 Criticism of Rosaldo’s Public and Domestic Framework

Causing a stir when it was first advocated, Rosaldo’s argument soon drew criticisms for claiming universality\(^{22}\) and for perpetuating dualistic notions\(^{23}\). Critics are justified in objecting to her “universal framework” claim. Although on the surface it appears to take diversity into account, it is nevertheless perceived as being too generalized, assuming too much uniformity, and ignorant of “cross-cultural diversity, transhistorical variation and change…” and “different classes and races within a given society.” (Sharistanian 1986a: 3-4)\(^{24}\) Rosaldo’s subsequent criticisms of her own framework summarize succinctly the essence of the various objections. It is, however, important to bear in mind that Rosaldo, as a feminist anthropologist, may feel compelled to adhere to feminist goals\(^{25}\). In so far as her criticisms draw attention to the fact that the framework is inadequate as a means of understanding women’s place in social life because it ignores the actual social interactions and relationships women partake in, as well as social context (1981: 400), she has a point. Thus her revised stand that “woman’s place in human society is not in any direct sense a product of the things she does (or even less a function of what, biologically she is) but of the meanings her activities acquire through concrete social interactions” augers well in refining her model. On the other hand, her insistence that her framework is flawed because it “preserved the 19\(^{th}\) century division into inherently gendered spheres” (1981: 407); or that it perpetuates a conceptual tradition “of understanding social

\(^{22}\) See, for example, Gailey’s (1993: 45-8) and Moore’s (1988: 23-41) criticisms of this universalism.

\(^{23}\) See Moore who points out that the division “owes much to the pervasive influence of nineteenth-century social theory” (1988:22).

\(^{24}\) For an overview of specific works which make this argument see Sharistanian (1986: 4-7). For a critical overview of the development in the use of the public and private among historians, see Reverby and Helly (1992: 8-16).

\(^{25}\) The goal of feminist scholarship is “first of all to render women’s experience visible.” In doing so, it has to demonstrate that “‘adding in’ gender is not just a matter of making social or cultural analysis ‘more comprehensive’. Such interpretation tends instead to revolutionize it, posing many new questions, as well as rendering suspect pre-existing ‘knowledge’ deriving from established views’” (The Polity Reader in Gender Studies, 1994:1). These goals are part of the broader feminist goal of exploring possibilities for change. As Chapman points out, from the feminist point of view, “if human relations as we know it are the product of our gender roles, then changing gender is the way to change societies. Thus feminist gender theory is never a purely academic exercise; it actually has in view a social-engineering project on the grandest scale.” (1993: 199)
forms as the creation of the lives and needs of men” (1981: 409); and that it deflect the examination of women’s situation from other possible avenue of analysis, do not justifiably invalidate the framework. Rosaldo’s concluding statement betrays the contradiction of her stand when she declared,

My earlier account of sexual asymmetry in terms of the inevitable ranking of opposed domestic and private spheres is not, then, one I am willing to reject for being wrong. Rather, I have suggested that the reasons that account made sense are to be found not in empirical detail, but in the categories, biases and limitations of a traditionally individualistic and male-oriented sociology. (1981: 415)

The staunch feminist rejection of opposing gendered division is spelled out most clearly by Scott who emphasized,

We need a refusal of the fixed and permanent quality of the binary opposition, a genuine historicization and deconstruction of the terms of sexual difference. …this criticism means analyzing in context the way any opposition operates, reversing and displacing its hierarchical construction, rather than accepting it as real or self-evident or in the nature of things. (1986: 1065-1066)

Admittedly, as we have seen earlier, the dichotomies within western philosophies have been sexually biased. As far back as ancient Greece, women have been defined not in their own right but relative to men as the standard measure or norm. Consequently, they are not measured in terms of their own qualities but of male qualities for which they are found wanting (Gatens 1994: 101). Philosophers who prescribed such dichotomies as necessary for their ideal society deserve feminists’ condemnation, but ultimately, human social life and behaviour are the products of cultural, social and political practices, ideologies and myths. As human activities in most societies are male centred and dominated, it is difficult to know where to draw the line. To a large extent, the feminist stand is due to the fear or realization by many feminists that a male dominance thesis would become self-confirming (Randall 1987: 17). However, by refusing to recognize the prevalence of male dominance, feminists are ignoring a crucial aspect of the bases of power and the power relationship between women and men.

26 One counter-reaction to the male dominance and female subordination approach is the emergence of works which emphasized women’s power and autonomy. See Miller (1993: 11-2).
2.2.2 The Usefulness of the Public and Private Distinction

As seen above, the association of the public and domestic division with late nineteenth and early twentieth century social and political theory’s emphasis on the public and private sphere dichotomy (Moore 1988: 22) has been a major factor in creating an adverse view of the division. In spite of this, some scholars are not prepared to discard the notion altogether. In Women in Public (1990), Ryan, commenting on Rosaldo’s model from a western standpoint, pointed out that,

> By virtue of their power in the creation of meaning, those categories are still deserving of feminist attention. As long as these concepts retain such resiliency in modern Western culture, their theoretical obituaries are premature. The power of the terms public and private in language and in our imagination is reflected in their continuing ability to shape and comprehend social behaviour, albeit in very untidy, historically specific ways. (1990: 6-7)

A similar view was given by Sharistanian in Gender Ideology and Action (1986). Citing as examples influential works by Elshtain, Okin, Dubios, Eisenstein and others, she said, “the domestic/public paradigm continues to be of value, when it is given precise definition and tested by a specific context.” (1986: 7) The usefulness of the concept as an analytical tool when applied within “local and specific forms of social relationship” is further demonstrated by the studies in her volume. By using the concept, it was possible in these studies to reveal the “discrepancies, paradoxes, and ironies” which show the “interconnectedness” between the two domains. Sharistanian concluded that, “the public and domestic domains exist in complex, multileveled, highly variable, and frequently shifting relationship to each other rather than in fixed, dichotomous opposition.” (1986: 229, 234–5)

This last point on the fluidity of the concepts is underscored by Reverby and Helly in Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women’s History (1992), a volume in which “multiple voices” examine the “meaning and usefulness of the analytic conception” of separate domains (1992: 17). Helly and Reverby pointed out that “our public and private lives are integrated and take their meaning from historical

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circumstances, cultural contexts, individual identities, and actions.” (1992: 23) Also significant is Helly and Reverby’s comment that in spite of the continual change in the meaning of the concepts over different cultures lives and histories, they “reflect enduring forms of human need and purpose.” (1992: xi-xii)

Both of the above ideas are consistent with Rosaldo’s revised position. Interestingly, although these works are attempts at deconstructing the public and private dichotomy, the authors were opposed to an absolute rejection of the dichotomy as an analytical tool.28 Their findings and their warnings on the follies of conceptualizing the public and the private as a rigid dichotomy contribute much to a better understanding of real life situations and lived experience. However, fluidity does not preclude existence of opposition, or constants.

Undoubtedly, as Rossi and Rossi pointed out, analyses which examine women in relation to men underestimate and obscure women’s strength and abilities (1990: 14), but no analysis of social dynamics and relationships between the sexes can conveniently avoid or omit some sort of opposition between male and female. What has been the case, usually, is that scholars have given any arising opposition an implicit existence, by not drawing attention to it. While the opposition between a public world of men and a domestic world of women is deficient as a framework for studying women in social life, its merit rests with it providing the most plausible explanation for current gender asymmetry, and the culturally legitimated superior status of men. It is useful because of its recognition of the biases in the relationship between the sexes. The structure should be seen and employed as revealing the dynamics of sexual difference, rather than creating or accentuating sexual differences. It is a dichotomy that takes shape within society rather than one which is prescribed in abstraction for society. Its strength lies with its recognition that women shoulder the burden of childbearing and nursing, a basic fact of human existence which no feminist or postmodernist can denounce as deriving from western society or grand intellectual tradition. As pointed out earlier, although constructed on differences between male

28 For a strong argument against feminist attacks on the private, which constitute the family as its core, see Elstain 1981 Chapter 6.
29 Rossi’s point is that, in the case of a women who is wife and mother, “...once the wife role is differentiated from the mother role, it seems clear that it is not as mothers, but as wives that women are dependent, timid, and submissive...as mothers women have to be and are active, productive and strong (1990: 14).
and female in relation to the division of labour in reproduction and child-care, the division is not imperative to the survival of human societies. This is evidenced by the fact that in many societies the line of division has blurred in real terms. Also, different societies exhibit differing degrees of gender asymmetry.

Most human societies have moved a long way from the simple but strict division of labour and roles contained in Rosaldo’s framework. Nevertheless, the emergent public domestic construct has been perpetuated culturally as practices, beliefs and ideas, and given continuity and substance by the fact that women everywhere give birth and are primarily responsible for looking after the young. As such, it is a human social phenomenon which has both an ahistorical quality, and a historical and cultural specific quality. As Smock pointed out, “Women partake of the advantages and disadvantages conferred by their class, regional or ethnic origins but still face the special problems intrinsic to being female.” (1977: 409) Theoretically, the question of historical, cultural, spatial and class location need not be an irreconcilable issue as conceptualization can be carried out at different planes and points of location.

Such assumptions deviate from the general feminist stand. And, while acknowledging Sharistanian’s sound advice that,

among the most productive contributions to the study of women are those which have looked at definitions of and interaction between public and domestic not in universalist, biological, and ahistorical terms but in terms of social and political interpretations of women’s and men’s activities in specific historical contexts. (1986: 9),

it must also be argued that to fail to recognize and give due regard to the existence of certain constants and the significance of elements of gendered opposition would merely be doing a disservice to scholarship on women. As a compromise which takes into account both sides of the argument, it is more appropriate to refer to the separation of the domains as a “divide”, a term which is more fluid, than a “dichotomy”, which projects an opposition.
2.3 Reconceptualizing the Public Private Framework

The preceding discussion of Rosaldo’s public and domestic division shows the mixed reception of it from scholars, particularly feminists. The objections to its use, however, have not succeeded in removing its significance for some. For example, Elshtain said that as a “political thinker” she shared Rosaldo’s insistence that the public and private provide the “necessary framework” for assessing the roles of males and females in society (1981: 338). In more general terms, that is, in terms of cross-cultural or cross-national applicability, the importance and usefulness of the concept is underscored by Bradley and Khor who emphasized the need to incorporate the public and private domains (as defined by Rosaldo) in the analysis of women’s status. They noted, however, that there is permeability between the domains, and that the precise boundary of each domain varies in time and in place (1993: 351-355). It is on this point that most of the problems with the concepts lie. Feminist and postmodernist deconstructionist approaches aside, the problems with the framework arose mainly because most of its usage had been within a western context and within that context it has been conflated with the public and private spheres ideology of western intellectual thought and history. This has lead to two consequences. First, the framework had acquired a “Eurocentric” image that resulted in the general tendency to think of it as a western concept. The second is the indiscriminate use of the “public and private” distinction as a broad term which can either refer to Rosaldo’s public domestic division, or to the public and private sphere as defined in political philosophy, or to an ambiguous combination of the two.30 Within the context of the present goal of formulating a revised theoretical framework, the wider use of the term “public and private” within relevant literature renders it more prudent to make use of the term.

Consequently, within this thesis, the term public and private divide will be adopted in order to maintain a connection with what has been written, and to retain a sense of the significance of the ordering.

Rosaldo had proposed her public and domestic division as a framework which would help us to make sense of, “male dominance”, which,

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30 See for example Elshtain (1981) and Bradley and Khor (1993) cited in this paragraph, who referred to Rosaldo’s framework as the “public and private”.
though apparently universal does not in actual behavioural terms assume a universal content or a universal shape. [nor] ...inhere in any measurable set of omnipresent facts. Rather, it seems to be an aspect of the organization of collective life, a patterning of expectations and beliefs which gives rise to imbalance in the ways people interpret, evaluate, and respond to particular forms of male and female action. (1981: 394)

Actual application of the revised public private divide as an analytical tool within a specific context entails two things. First, the public private divide should not be taken as synonymous with the public and private sphere of western intellectual thought. Second, operationalization requires giving the framework a more substantive content.

At the empirical behavioural and interactive level within society, the culturally constructed public private divide is best understood in conjunction with the concept of gender which at present, is widely recognized as an axiom of social interaction and organization. In theoretical terms, this requires incorporating relevant gender ideas into the public, private framework in order to build a more comprehensive theoretical position of gender asymmetry within societies. Such an integrative formulation, encompassing a multi-layered exposition on male and female asymmetry, takes into account important ideas including recent work and findings on gender which correspond with the public private divide. It is, however, necessary to maintain the conceptual distinction and importance of the public private divide which is developed as a tool for understanding the basis of male female asymmetry. Gender processes reflect this asymmetry. The need to emphasize the importance of the divide is largely due to the failure of scholars on gender to give recognition to it. In this thesis it is argued that the public and private divide is crucial to understanding certain social behaviour, social structures and institutions. The incorporation of ideas on gender contributes to the present theoretical framework in two ways. As a thought construct which helps make sense of male/female asymmetry, gender is integrated with the public private divide. As theoretical constructs on social behaviour, interaction, relationship and organization, gender ideas serve as manifestations of the public private divide.

31 Rosaldo's formulation of the model was, after all, based on her studies of tribal societies.
2.4 The Public and Private Divide and Gender Processes

2.4.1 Conceptualizing Gender

In its broadest linguistic application within current usage, the term gender is used to denote socioculturally constructed distinctions between male and female. Biological distinctions based on the male and female chromosome, hormones and physiology are referred to as sex (Chafetz 1990: 28, Scot 1997: 650). This sex/gender distinction which appear clear-cut and useful is one the most contentiously debated issues among scholars. The term gender was adopted by feminists as a means of shifting ideas on sexual difference away from the natural, biological, and thus essentialist, ahistorical and inevitable sex (Glen 1999: 4).32 Along with this shift is the premise that the more important differences between the sexes are the product of culture rather than biology (Rhode 1990: 2). So far, as Scott in her review of this issue observed, the result of this endeavor has been mixed.33 The attempt to rid the term of its “natural connotations” and the promotion of its use as a “social construction” has been plagued with the difficulty of isolating “social designations from their physical referents.” This is because social constructs will not represent bodies and sex adequately. In fact, “Gender will not replace sex in discussions of sexual difference; instead, gender will always refer to sex as the ultimate ground for its meaning.” (1999: 71) Adding to the difficulty is the observation made by some feminists of the influence cultural practices have on the evolution of biological differences, and how these then affect social relations (Rhode 1990: 2).34

Intertwined with this debate concerning the sex/gender distinction runs another theme. Hess and Ferree referred to three phases in the development of studies on gender over

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33 See also Eagly who commented that the matter is “far from settled and should be left open for investigation” (1987: 5).
the previous two decades. The first focuses on the degree to which sex differences are based on the biology of the individual. In the second phase the focus shifted to social and cultural factors, particularly the primacy of sex roles and role socialization in determining an individual's gender. In the third phase, the focus shifted from the individual to the pivotal place of gender as an organizing principle in society (1987: 14-16). In the past decade, gender has become a key analytic concept in studies on women. The proliferation of scholarly works has resulted in gender becoming a highly contested concept, attributed with a multiplicity of meanings. The reference to the above problem is not to engage in the debate but to establish the terms on which the term gender is employed within this thesis. As regards the sex/gender distinction, the less problematic stand would be to agree with Rossi and Rossi that it is, a useful convention, but also a misleading one, because it bypasses the connections between sex and gender, i.e., the extent to which social and psychological differences between men and women, while largely independent of sex dimorphism, are nevertheless linked in some ways to the basic physiological differences in reproductive functioning between males and females. (1990: 16)

With this premise, the term is broadly conceptualized, in this thesis, as encapsulating gender as an individual quality as well as a component of social interaction and organization within society at large. Such an integrated conceptualization starts with Chafetz's usage of gender as "sociocultural definitions of, and reactions to, biological sex that produce and reinforce inequality between males and females." (1990: 28)

Gender within this usage embraces a relational and unequal notion between male and female. Along the same line but at a more generalized level is Scott's influential definition of gender as "a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes" and "a primary way of signifying relationships of power" (1986: 1067). Gender, according to Scott, "provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interaction." (1986: 1070) As such it is also an analytic category. But it needs to be pointed out that Scott's concern is with "meaningful explanations" which are

35 Lorber 1994, pp. 30-31 gives a categorized list and definitions of the various components of gender. For a list of works adopting various approaches and usages of gender see Hawkesworth 1997: 650-651. For an overview of the development in the use of gender in feminist sociology see Franklin 1996: xiii-xxix. For an overview of the development of the use of gender among historians see Scott 1986.

36 Based on this definition, Chafetz formulated her theory of stability and change in gender equity.
removed from "universal, general causality" (1986: 1067). Thus, to Scott, the use of
gender must involve a "genuine historization and deconstruction of the terms of
sexual difference" (Scott 1986: 1065).

Scott's position is representative of the emancipatory project of feminist scholarship
which characterizes the tendency among many scholars to detach gender from the
"natural attitude" essentialism, dualism, and from any linkage to ahistorical,
universal association. The result has been the formulation of numerous useful and
insightful propositions and postulations on gender processes that avoid reference to
the possible causes and origins of gender asymmetry. A specific example of this is
Chafetz's qualifier - "the theory to be developed presupposes a system of gender
stratification but does not address how that comes into existence" - in her formulation
of a theory of stability and change (1990: 38). Asymmetry is then vaguely attributed
to "gender social definitions" (1990: 90-91) which is defined as "beliefs, values,
stereotypes, and norms that are widely shared by societal members." (1990: 34) Such
omission calls for the need for a theory on male and female asymmetry such as the
public private divide to inform the understanding of gender processes.

2.4.2 The Sexual Division of Labour and the Public and Private Divide

Consistent with the trend of avoiding opposing dualism, there has generally been no
specific application of a public and domestic division, apart from quick passing

37 For an interesting recent debate on this issue see Hawkesworth's "Confounding Gender" and the
ensuing "Comments and Reply" by Wendy McKenna and Suzanne Kessler, Steven G. Smith, Joan
38 The "natural attitude" regards "sex as the determinant of gender identity that flows naturally into a
particular mode of heterosexuality and that mandates certain rational gender roles embraced happily by
individuals with uniformly positive gender role identities." (Hawkesworth 1997: 657)
39 Note that these issues are similar to the issues raised against Rosaldo's public and domestic
framework. An unchanging theme would mean attempting change is futile. It would also ignore
historical and cultural specificity. At the same time the resilience of such problems as the "natural
attitude" has plagued feminist scholarship with paradoxes and contradictions. Feminist aversion to
taking reproductive differences or biological determinism as core considerations stems from their fear
that such an approach would fail to provide any avenue for change. In it extreme form, such a rejection
by some feminists went as far as considering "motherhood" as "politically incorrect" (Chapman 1993:
196, 197) But as Chapman points out, currently few feminist would disagree that biology holds crucial
answers to gender asymmetry (1993: 198-9).
40 For compilations of short articles adopting this approach see, for example, Ferree, Lorber and Hess
references. For example, Archer and Lloyd began their chapter on the family by referring to "the worlds of home and work" as "the domestic and public spheres of social life" (1985: 192) and left it at that. Similarly, Connell pointed out "...the contemporary urban family/household is constituted by a division of labour that defines certain kinds of work as domestic, unpaid and usually women's and other kinds as public, paid and usually men's." (1994: 31), without further elaboration.\(^{41}\) Works on gender, however, have emphasized the centrality of a sexual division of labour in gender processes. In a very recent articulation of this Glick and Fiske wrote, "...the origins of gender constructs lie in a sex-segregated division of labour and status difference between men and women." (1999a: 372) It is this reference to the sexual division of labour which provides the linkage to the public and private divide.

It is widely recognized that in almost all human societies, there are some types of work that are allocated primarily to men and others primarily to women. The exact nature of these tasks varies, depending particularly, on differences in technology and economic bases. But it is widely recognized that cross-culturally, and within most societies a male/female division of labour exists in which women shoulder the responsibility for bearing children as well as the bulk of child caring and other domestic activities (Chafetz 1990: 31, see also Glick and Fiske 1999a: 372, Eagly 1987: 21, Williams and Best 1990: 17 Afshar 1987: 3).\(^{42}\) The extent to which women participate in extradomestic work varies. Men, on the other hand, universally partake in extradomestic work, and the extent to which they participate in child rearing and other domestic tasks varies (Chafetz 1990: 31). The existence of a division of labour in itself does not necessarily mean inequality between males and females. But the involvement of men in the extradomestic work, which Chafetz defines as tasks which lie in the "economic, political, religious, educational and other cultural producing

\(^{41}\) See also Harris (1993) who uses the public and domestic merely as adjective nouns. An exception is Bose (1987) who undertakes a critique of the "public/private split" and its related ideology of domesticity. Her definition of the division, however, is limited to "a male sphere in the labor force and a female sphere at home", and her analysis is based on the labour force in America. Christine E. Bose. "Dual Spheres". In Analyzing Gender. Bess B. Hiss and Myra Marx Ferree (eds.). Newbury Park: SAGE Publications. 1987.

\(^{42}\) Compare Deere and de Leal who distinguish between a sexual division of labour in "productive activities" and a sexual division of labour between "productive and reproductive activities. The former, being to a large extent determined by "material conditions of production" is consequently heterogeneous cross-culturally. The latter, on the other hand is biologically determined and, therefore, "most homogeneous cross-culturally (1982: 65-6).
spheres of activity” (1990: 31), and which Rosaldo (1974, 1980) refer to as the public, has invariably accorded men superior status and power over women.

The abundance of work on gender has provided a rich insight into the implication of this division of labour, which accords with the core of the public and domestic divide, on male/female activities, interaction, relationships, and on societal structures. Within these contexts, most significant, in terms of women’s continued exclusion from the public sphere, are the implications of the division on social behaviour, power and status, and social organization.

2.4.3 Gender and Behavioural Enactment

*Doing gender,* according to West and Zimmerman, is the behavioural enactment of being a man or a woman as an activity that is ongoing and part of day-to-day interaction. It involves “managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category.” (1991: 14, 18) It is engaging in behaviour “at the risk of gender assessment” (author’s emphasis), and entails more than a rigid or disciplined employment of sets of behaviour in different situations to produce appropriate manliness and womanliness. It requires ongoing effort and work on the part of the individual, within each and every interactional situation, to produce the expected appropriate behaviour, and conversely to expect that others are doing the same. Accordingly, within any activity, an individual is assessed as a man or a woman in his or her participation in that activity. Any activity can also be assessed as to whether it is more appropriately a man’s or a woman’s activity (1991: 22, 23). The broader implication is that any social situation becomes an occasion for the evocation of the “essential” differences, or the “essential” natures of being man or women (1991: 24-25).

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4West and Zimmerman’s theoretical formulation drew on a number of previous works, particularly that of E. Goffman, 1976, “Gender Display”, *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* 3:69-77; E Goffman 1977, “The Arrangement Between the Sexes”, *Theory and Society* 4:301-31; and H. Garfinkel, 1967, *Studies in ethnomethodology*, Engelwood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. Their conceptualization of gender marks a turning point from the previous focus on “gender role” and “gender display” which, although concerned with male and female behaviour, do not take into account the work involved in engaging in gendered behaviour in interaction. It is a shift in emphasis from the individual to interaction. West and Zimmerman’s core argument is that gender is formed through interaction (1991: 14-16).
West and Zimmerman, being more concerned with the theoretical formulation of doing gender, elaborated little on what constitute the "essentials" of being a man or woman. For a clearer notion of what the "essential" natures and differences are, it is pertinent to start with Holter's earlier reference to differences between the sexes as a "distributive system" which "directly" (author's emphasis) allocate certain tasks and personality traits to each sex. There are two facets to gender differentiation, as a distributive system. One aspect comprises the norms, ideologies and beliefs which exact on individuals, with their given male or female attributes, the performance of certain tasks and the exhibition of behaviour consistent with these norms. The other aspect constitutes actual exhibition of behavioural and attitudinal characteristics, actions and interactions. As some tasks and some personality traits allow more access to resources than others, gender differentiation encompasses an asymmetry in terms of power, authority and prestige between the sexes (1970: 17, 18, 22, 33).

2.5 The Public and Private Divide and Gender Asymmetry

Substantial studies on gender lend strong support to the proposition that conforming to a composite of inherently asymmetrical gender differentiated tasks and roles, behaviour and traits which accord with the public and private divide constitute the essence of being male or female. The rest of this chapter elaborates on these asymmetrical tasks, roles and behaviour in terms of the public and private divide and concludes with the implication of the divide on women.

Gender (or sex) differentiation as a distributive system arises from the fact that the human infant's need for breast-feeding constrains the mother to the home. Consequently the responsibility for child-care, family care and other domestic tasks falls on her and limits her participation and experience in other activities. Where there have been moves away from breast feeding, these have occurred within a situation where sex role differentiation are entrenched (Holter 1970: 45-6). This has

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44 Where there have been a move away from breast feeding, these have occurred within a situation where sex role differentiation are entrenched (Holter 1970: 45).
two implications for women. First is the possession of traits and behaviour conducive to successfully carrying out these responsibilities. Second is the assignment of women to a domestic role. These two implications underscore a third implication, an asymmetry between man and women in favour of men.

2.5.1 The Public and Private Divide, Gender Roles and Gender Stereotyping

An influential contribution to the understanding of behaviour and personality, particularly of adult males and females, is provided by Eagly’s theory on social behaviour. Employing a social psychological perspective,45 Eagly’s main argument is that differing social behaviour between the sexes are grounded in gender roles.46 She defines gender roles as “those shared expectations (about appropriate qualities and behaviours) that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified gender.” (1987: 12) This definition is based on empirical evidence from a wide number of studies on gender stereotypes which confirm that people have gender-stereotypic expectations about their own and other people’s characteristics and behaviour. People are in agreement as to what is appropriate and desirable for each sex, and are aware that they are in agreement. Gender-stereotype studies, Eagly maintains, have also shown that most of the characteristics and behaviour that people hold as stereotypically male or stereotypically female can be classified, respectively, as “agentic” or “communal”47 (1987: 13-15, 16).

The “agentic” attributes which are believed to be more strongly exhibited by men pertain to an “assertive and controlling tendency”. Qualities which are believed to be manifested by men include; self-assertion (such as aggressiveness, ambitiousness, dominance, forcefulness, leadership), independence (such as self-reliance, self-
sufficiency, individualism), characteristics relating to personal efficacy (such as self-confidence, feeling of superiority, decisiveness), and qualities relating to personal style (such as straightforwardness, persistence, adventurousness). The communal qualities which are believed to be exhibited more strongly by women illustrate a “concern with the welfare of other people”. Women are perceived to be caring and nurturing (that is, affectionate, consoling, helpful, kind, sympathetic, love children and capable of devotion to others), sensitive to others, emotionally expressive, and have a gentle and soft personal style (Eagly 1987: 16). 

Eagly identified the basis for these sex related behavioural characteristics as the different roles that men and women have within the family and within society. A division of labour which allocates a substantially more domestic role for women is the reason for the communal stereotype for women. Communal qualities are essential and important for child raising and other domestic activities. Men on the other hand require agentic qualities to carry out the activities more commonly carried out by men outside of the home and family. As prescriptions for proper male and female qualities, stereotypes are gender roles. For each sex, the distinguishing communal and agentic qualities become desirable, positive personal attributes. The members of each sex, consequently, ought to, and are expected to possess their appropriate qualities. The persistence of such an arrangement derives from its reciprocal nature. Exposed to a division of labour, young people learn, and comply with expectations of their appropriate gender roles in order to accomplish the prescribed roles for adults of their sex. In doing so, they maintain the division of labour (1987: 19-21).

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48 Studies on stereotypes generally confirm these perceptions. But, as Eagly pointed out, the findings on gender stereotypes as regards communion and agency do not show that men and women are perceived as clear and distinct categories. There is some overlapping as people are believed to have differing levels of the various attributes. The general conclusion is that the sexes are perceived to be different but not acutely different (1987: 17-18).

49 In adopting this position, Eagly drew primarily from Williams and Best (1982) who covered a thirty nation, cross-cultural study on sex stereotypes. This study took on and refined the original functionalist ideas of T. Parson and R.F. Bales. 1955. Socialization and Interaction Process. New York: Free Press.

50 Eagly’s account of sex differences utilizes what she called a structural approach which emphasizes situational constraints on behaviour. This is compared to the cultural approach which emphasizes the acquisition of beliefs and values through socialization from childhood. The two approaches “are not entirely incompatible” as Eagly noted (1987: 9), but in bringing in “learning” as a factor, she incorporated an element of socialization into her argument. Eagly’s “lapse” here shows the difficulty in separating the cultural from the structural which are in reality reciprocal and inseparable.
This last point underscores the significance of learning or socialization into the appropriate gender roles, personality and behaviour. Socialization involves the cultural transmission and social control of what constitute male and female to children from an early age. Parents, family and society, particularly societal institutions such as school, religion, mass media, are agents of socialization, serving to transmit gender norms as well as exert conformity (Holter 1970: 183-214). Although socialization from early childhood into adulthood plays a crucial part in the maintenance of gender roles and behaviour, it has been argued that an additional psychological process is even more crucial in the maintenance of a mothering role for women.

Chodorow, from a psychoanalytic point of view pointed out that mothering ... is not something that can be taught by giving a girl dolls or telling her she ought to mother. It is not something that a girl can learn by behavioural imitation, or by deciding that she wants to do what girls do. ...Role training, identification, and enforcement certainly have to do with the acquisition of an appropriate gender role. But ...feminine development as explicit ideological instruction or formal coercion, cannot in the case of mothering be sufficient. In addition, explanation relying on behavioural conformity do not account for the tenacity of self-definition, self-concept, and psychological need to maintain aspects of traditional roles which continue even in the face of ideological shifts, counter-instructions, and the lessening of masculine coercion .... (1978: 33-4)

Chodorow argued instead that mothering by women is reproduced in women primarily because it is women who mother. The fact that it is the woman who mother results in a mother-daughter relationship in which the daughter develops “mothering capacities and the desire to mother” within her psychic structure (1978: 7). Mothering is a psychological role which “requires certain relational qualities which are embedded in personality and a sense of self-in-relationship.” (1978: 33) Because it is the mother who mothers and provides primary care, daughters are able to “relocate themselves in a primary mother-child relationship, to get gratification from the mothering relationship, and to have psychological and relational capacities for mothering.”51 (1978: 206) This happens in the case of daughters because their

51 The reproduction of mothering, it is argued, starts from the first mother-infant contact in the early period of the child’s development.”(1978: 57) Chodorow’s stand is based on the “object-relations” theory which proposes “that the child’s social relational experience from earliest infancy is determining for psychological growth and personality formation.” (1978: 47) This, she said, explains women’s cyclical mothering better than socialization through learning and internalization which implies a one way transfer of social reality to psychic reality and ignores the various other intervening psychic processes (1978: 47).
identification is continuous with their mothers. Men on the other hand have a different experience in that “they are early treated as opposite by their mother and because their later attachment to her must be repressed.” (1978: 207)

Findings from psychological research have confirmed that gender is the primary way people identify others. For an individual, the process is automatic and simultaneously evokes gender stereotyping (Glick and Fiske 1999a: 366). Despite the fact that human societies evolve and all aspects of social life have been or are potentially subject to change, the general basic stereotypes held of men and women have defied social change. Glick and Fiske pointed out that adjustment to changes, and to men and women who are exceptions, is effectuated through the creation of added gendered categories or “subtypes”. For example, a woman may be a “homemaker” or a “career woman” but will primarily be stereotyped as a woman (1999a: 382-83). The tenacity of gender stereotypes parallels another component of gender – gender roles and the asymmetry in status and power between men and women in favour of men.

2.5.2 Gender Roles and Gender Asymmetry in Status and Power

Gender asymmetry stems primarily from the fact that gender differentiation is justified by beliefs and ideologies. As a distributive system, gender differentiation is maintained through a complex interplay between ideologies and power relations at the economic, social, and psychological level which were initially produced by that same distribution (Holter 1970: 19). At the individual level, distribution extends beyond a division of labour in household work and occupation to almost all other aspect of a person’s life. From the point of view of both the maintenance of the system and the effects on a person’s life, most significant are the unequal “access to knowledge, time, political power, resources, economic social contracts, contact with children, and economic, political and familial responsibilities.” (Holter 1970: 33)

The significance of gender asymmetry in favour of men is spelled out most clearly by Miller who declared it as “one of the most persistent, pervasive, and pernicious forms of inequality in the world.” (1993: 22) The inequality in status and power prevailing and subsisting within the context of a functional differentiation or sexual division of
labour takes two forms. One is a state of male dominance. The other takes the form of male and female differences that are grounded on intrinsically hierarchical evaluation of male and female. The two forms derive from practical and ideological sources, and manifest within economic, political, and social dimensions. In practice, the different forms and dimensions are interrelated and fused, each reinforcing the other. For analytical purposes and clarity, it is necessary to distinguish each as a separate force.

Male dominance, as used here, means male possession of superior status and power in relation to females. Status denotes a ranked position. People with low status generally do not command deference from those with a higher status. They are also deprived of such things as material comfort, emotional satisfaction, and the liberty to make their own choices. The person with low status is also very often the object of anger (Giele 1977: 3). Power is the exercise of some form of control or influence which is complied to. Power derives from resources which the power wielder possesses, and employs, to obtain compliance (Chafetz 1990: 32). Practically any thing that can be utilized to exert control or influence is a potential power resource. Power may constitute authority, which denotes a right to an action, for example, to make decisions or to demand compliance. Authority is distinguishable from power per se in that it encompasses a notion of legitimacy (Perelberg 1990: 41). Status and power are closely related. More power usually brings higher status and vice versa. Status ranking can prevail without the actual exercise of power. Broadly speaking, power and status generate from two dimensions of sources -- the symbolic, cultural, ideological dimension, and the practical, material dimension.

2.5.3 The Public and Private Divide and Patriarchy

Women's lower status generates largely from their subordination, which in turn is derived from the public and private divide. Women's subordination exists in almost every society, albeit in varied degree and forms. Systematic male dominance is usually associated with the term "patriarchy" which refers to the structures and

52 Compare Perelberg who defines status as "an ideological perception of ranking" (1990:54).
53 These notions of power and authority are adopted from Max Weber's.
54 Also equated with the suppression of women (Stewart and Winter 1977), oppression of women (Frye 1983).
practices of domination, oppression and exploitation (Walby 1996: 20-1). Societies with a division of labour where women are primarily responsible for child rearing and housework display strongly patriarchal features (The Polity Reader 1994: 2). Brittan, in his examination of masculinity and power, said patriarchy emerges because men believe that women are unable to partake in economic and political activities due to the time and energy they expend on child-care. As men take responsibility for economic and political activities they assume the dominant positions in the kinship system. This becomes the fundamental principle of social organization and is the key factor in the creation of male dominance. This ordering, gradually seen as natural, becomes entrenched in peoples' minds and in society (1989: 17).

Patriarchal societies are stratified societies which accord men a higher status then women of the same class and race (Lorber 1994:32). Most patriarchal sites are low status locations for women. In a recent article, Walby demarcated between patriarchy that takes a public form and patriarchy which takes a private form. Private patriarchy centers on the household where the patriarch, who is either the husband or the father, controls and effectuates the subordination of women. An important feature of private patriarchy, which serves as both a form of control and a strategy for its maintenance, is the restriction on women from activities outside the home. This constraint is bolstered by public patriarchy that acts to exclude women from activities in the public domain and executes its own subordination structures. Private and public patriarchies exist side by side. Women who have access to the public arena find themselves subject to both forms of patriarchy. The main difference between the two is that, subordination exercised by an individual impacts on the individual woman within private patriarchy, and subordination exercised collectively impacts on women collectively (1996: 29).

Patriarchy is a concept that is being debated extensively. Earlier views tend to see it as one form of gender hierarchy, for example, the authority of the father or husband in the family (see Gailey 1987: 32). More recent views have postulated patriarchy as widely pervasive in society (see Walby 1996). For a comparison between Marxist feminist and radical revolutionary feminist interpretation see Veronica Beechy. 1996. “On Patriarchy”, in Sarah Franklin (ed.). The Sociology of Gender. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. For a discussion of differences in definitions of patriarchy see Walby (1996: 20-24). For a discussion of the problems associated with the concept patriarchy see Dahlrup (1992: 91-103).

For an overview of other theories (such as, “man the hunter”, “warfare and population control”, sociobiology, cultural), and a “historical process” perspective on the development of gender hierarchies, see Gailey 1987. Explanations which emphasize “anatomy as destiny”, culture and economy as the basis for male dominance are also discussed in Randall (1987: 21-43). See also Harris (1993) who attributed female dependency and subordination to the development of plow agriculture.
Within the two forms of patriarchy, Walby identified six patriarchal structures which have a bearing on the subordination of women.\(^{57}\) The household comprises the most primary structure of patriarchal relations. Fathers and husbands expropriate women’s domestic labour, and women, if not engaged in paid labour, receive maintenance in return. In paid work, women partake in another set of patriarchal relations, particularly their exclusion from better and higher paid jobs, and their segregation into less paid, low skill work. The state, by being partial to patriarchal interests in its policies and practices, is itself patriarchal. It has also not been effective in curbing other structures of patriarchal relations such as male violence, and patriarchal sexuality as evidenced by prostitution, pornography and the practice of a sexual double standard where women’s sexuality is restrained and men’s is not. Finally, patriarchy in a society persists through patriarchal cultural institutions maintained by religion, education and the media which represent women within a “patriarchal gaze” (1996: 24-5).\(^{58}\)

Women’s subordination and lower status have been effectively maintained through an interaction of practical circumstances and an ideology of male dominance. At the practical level, the basis for women’s subordination derives from the economic and material disadvantage they experience within everyday life situations. Chafetz, in explaining men’s superior resource advantage, maintained that for many women, being primarily responsible for domestic duties prevents them from acquiring material resources. Men, on the other hand, shoulder the main responsibility of providing for the material resources required for the survival of the family. In return, women care for the husband, home and other family members, and are dependent on the husband for money and material goods. Where women partake in paid work, they do not give up their domestic duties but undertake a double workload which again disadvantages them. Retaining domestic responsibility means that they are, firstly, more likely to take up jobs, such as part time work, which allow them the flexibility to continue

\(^{57}\) Although this model was developed based on the UK over the last 150 years, Walby maintained that the main points have global relevance (1996: 25). For a more in depth discussion of each structure, see Walby 1990, chapters 2 to 7.

\(^{58}\) See also Lorber who described patriarchy as “Men’s emotional and sexual exploitation of women, their objectification of women in culture and devaluation in the world’s main religions, their rendering women invisible in standard histories, and their ideological justification of legal controls over women’s bodies…” (1994: 290).
carrying out their household duties. Secondly, because theirs is a double workload, women are less able to compete for or hold jobs that are more demanding but better paid. Either way, when women do take up paid work outside the home, their income is not likely to be more then men’s. Where men are the main providers, wives reciprocate with deference and compliance to the needs and requirements of their husbands (1990: 46-8, 51).

2.5.4 The Entrenchment of Gender Ideologies

Under the preceding circumstances, pragmatism logically confers on men superior status and dominance over women. In real terms, as Chafetz observed, men need not use this power to enforce their dominance. Within societies, most men and women undertake to uphold the status quo division of labour and to maintain women’s subordinate status. This conformity derives from ideological bases.59 Gender ideologies, like all ideologies direct people towards particular worldviews. Chafetz defined gender ideologies as “belief systems that explain how and why males and females differ; specify on that basis different (and inevitably unequal) rights, responsibilities, restrictions, and rewards to each other; and justify negative reactions to nonconformists.” (Chafetz 1990: 35) To this can be added Holter’s point that ideologies incorporate conceptions of reality (1970: 81). Gender ideologies are usually founded on wider belief systems, particularly religion, which give them their permanence and endurance. Most significantly, the major world religions confer men’s dominion over their wives and family members. On the whole, gender ideologies tend to legitimize men’s authority over women60 (Chafetz 1990: 65, 66). For individuals, the force of gender ideologies is mostly enacted through adherence to gender norms and gender stereotypes.

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59 Chafetz referred to this as the “voluntaristic bases” of gender inequality in contrast to the above practical, “coercive bases” of gender inequality. For the purpose of distinguishing between the two types, Chafetz’s usage of the term “voluntaristic” serves a useful and clear distinction, but strictly speaking, actions stemming from doctrinal adherence are hardly voluntaristic.

60 See also Glick and Fiske (1999a: 375).
2.5.4.1 Appropriate Gender Behaviour

Gender ideologies prescribe gender norms that define the appropriate behaviour of individuals of each sex. Very often, gender norms are explicitly part of an ideology. For example, as regards proper sexual conduct, almost all gender ideologies in societies which are gender stratified demand female chastity. Norms regarding male behaviour, for example, demarcate the extent of men’s dominant position by prohibiting or limiting certain male behaviour. Gender norms generally stipulate behaviours in accord with the gender division of labour. Women are directed to be dedicated mothers and homemakers who give their families priority. Should they pursue work outside of domestic activities, these should preferably be work suitable for females, especially work which reflect women’s wifely and motherly duties. Men, on the other hand, are almost everywhere expected to be ready to fight for their countries and to be committed to their work. Gender norms may be codified into law, in which case they become more forceful in maintaining the existing gender system (Chafetz 1990: 35, 66-68).

2.5.4.2 Gender Stereotyping

Gender ideologies and norms encompass gender stereotyping. Beliefs that people should behave in particular ways concur with believing that they actually do behave in those ways (Chafetz 1990: 70). At the same time, as Frye, in her discussion of the “molding” of men and women into “dominants” and “subordinates,” commented, “We do become what we practice being.” (Frye 1983: 34) More importantly, in connection with gender asymmetry in status and power, gender differentiation or stereotyping is intrinsically gender inequality in action.

With regard to inequality, most obvious is the fact that men are associated with status and power related characteristics. In contrast, gender norms and gender stereotypes mostly prescribe the opposite behaviour for women. For example, norms for women such as “ladylike” speech show a lack of strength or assertiveness (Chafetz 1990: 68). In addition, stereotypes of women are more prescriptive. Women are not only expected to conform to their stereotypes but are highly desired to do so (Glick and Fiske 1999b: 208). Eagley, pointed out that stereotype beliefs stem from observation and experience of women’s relatively lower power and influence in natural settings.
The concept of these natural settings may be expanded through cultural productions such as film, literature and folklore. Consistent with their higher status in these settings, people, for example, expect men to be authoritative and dominant while women are expected to be compliant and submissive (1987: 23-5). Glick and Fiske summed up gender stereotypes as founded on essential realities pertaining to differences in men’s and women’s behaviour which stem from differences in their roles and power. At the same time, gender stereotypes maintain the division of labour and patriarchal power from which they are derived (1999a: 381).

2.5.4.3 Gender Status and Power

Admittedly, the generally higher power and status enjoyed by men is not absolute in all sense. Women possess varying degrees of what is referred to as “dyadic power” which mainly derives from men’s dependence on, or attachment to women as mothers, wives and romantic partners (Glick and Fiske 1999b: 210). Dyadic power is usually indirect and takes a more personal, psychological and emotional nature. Women’s dyadic power may take “negative dominance positions” where, for example, women get their way by withholding love, or evoking guilty feelings in men (Holter 1970: 49). Men’s power over and their simultaneous dependence on women often lead to an ambivalent attitude toward women. This ambivalence usually manifests as “hostile sexism” and “benevolent sexism”. Hostile sexism underscores men’s higher status and is consistent with “patriarchal dominance, derogatory stereotypes of women, and an aggressive form of heterosexuality in which women are viewed as sexual objects.” (Glick and Fiske 1999a: 376) On the other hand, benevolent sexism entails having a concern for women’s interest and attributing them with favorable qualities. Thus the “feelings of protectiveness toward women, the belief that men should provide for women, and the notion that women are men’s ‘better half,’ without whom men are incomplete.” (Glick and Fiske 1999b: 211) This paternalism may be positive for women but it is, nevertheless, patronizing and justifies women’s subordination. In reality, benevolent sexism “provides a powerful

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61 Such behavioural expectations may be stored as “knowledge structures”, sometimes referred to as scripts in social cognition literature (Eagley 1987: 25).
62 Men also possess dyadic power. The point here is that it is a resource available to women.
ideological justification for traditional gender roles and patriarchy.” (Glick and Fiske 1999a: 376)

2.5.4.4 Maintenance of Gender Asymmetry
The significance of gender ideology in maintaining the continuity of gender inequality must be emphasized. Chafetz pointed out that, as prescribed gender behaviour is regarded as “natural”, “normal” or divinely sanctioned, any digression would not be tolerated, or would be penalized. Women, consequently, would wish to give priority to family obligations. In cases where it is financially possible, the choice may be to give up all other work. Findings from studies on gender division of labour have shown that many women choose to express their feminine self-identity by carrying out women’s customary duties (1990: 74-6)

The forcefulness of ideology and its resistance to change is clearly shown by the fact that even when women’s situation undergoes huge changes in some societies, for example, through their wider participation in paid employment, women continue to shoulder the burden of household work (Chafetz 1990: 65). A decrease in the economic dependence of some women may reduce men’s bargaining capacity but they maintain their position in social and psychological terms (Holter 1970: 51). Women also continue to have unequal status even though they work alongside men in production (Perelberg 1990: 54). Moreover, considering that the nature of women’s work has changed, it would be expected that stereotypes of women would change. But this has not happened. There has been little change in overall stereotyping (Eagley 1986: 32-3). Broadly speaking, the prescribed gender norms for women’s roles are more classless than for men. Married women are expected to carry out their domestic roles no matter what social class they belong to. Women who are wealthy enough to employ domestic help, for instance, would still be responsible for ensuring that all household chores are accomplished. For women, their gender is their “master status”. For men, gender norms may vary according to, and exist alongside their class position (Chafetz 1990: 68-9).

As Frye said, for subordination to be realized effectively and have permanence, it must appear to be natural and “beyond the scope of human manipulation or revision”, rather than culturally produced (1983: 33-4).
2.5.5 The Public and Private Divide and Gendered Institutions

The importance of gender processes that accord with the public and private divide in human behaviour, roles, status and power, underscores the significance of the divide as an organizing principle within societies. Gendered interaction and gender relations extend beyond the level of the individual to institutions and organizations. Connell contended that gender relations exist in all (author’s emphasis) kinds of institutions and that in most cases they are a major part of the organizational structure. He referred to the gender relations in a given institution as its “gender regime”.64 The actual configuration may be specific to an institution or organization but there exist the gender structures which reveal the usual gender processes of division of work, power hierarchy, gender norms such as proper sexual behaviour, and various gender practices which construct femininity and masculinity (1994: 30-7).

Connell’s gender regime exemplifies recent feminist emphasis on the gendered nature of organizations. This stands in contrast to previous and current theories of organization and management which advance gender-neutral or asexual approaches (Martin and Collinson 1999: 285). The recognition that a gendered culture exists within institutions has increasingly influenced research and analyses into adopting this approach.65 One such study is Kenney’s interpretation of gendered political institutions.66 Kenny began with the observation that everyone occupying a place in a political institution has a gender. Consequently, there is no “universal category” job, as women are taken as women bearers of their respective positions (for example, woman lawyer, woman legislator or lady MP), and men, as men bearers of theirs. Jobs, according to Kenny, have gender. In some cases, the institutions themselves may have gender. For example, some work is kept distinctly male and used as the means to preserve and create maleness. The reluctance on the part of some men to

64 In his analysis, Connell used a school as an example of a formal organization exhibiting a gender regime, and “unpacks” three other gender regimes – the family, the state and the street.
accept women in traditionally male roles such as legislation, judiciary and diplomatic service seem to be due to the fear that it would undermine their masculinity. Such political institutions, said Kenney, “are in a very real sense constructed on the basis of women’s exclusion.” Within an institution of this kind a “ceiling” is in place which informally delimits the number of women which can be taken in without its identity being threatened (1994: 455, 460, 462).

Apart from the fact that jobs and institutions have gendered identities, within gendered political institutions, men and women go through different experiences. Women for the most part, will have lesser opportunities and rewards. They will also have a different conception of the environment. For example, men do not perceive the existence of as high a degree of stereotyping and sexism, nor feel that women need to prove their ability, as much as women do. Gendered institutions, Kenney concluded, are arenas where gender is constantly being produced, reproduced and negotiated. The construction of “masculinity and femininity are intertwined in the daily culture of an institution rather than existing out in society or fixed within individuals which they then bring whole to the institution.” (1994: 456) The presence of women in these institutions do not lead to their liberation but to continued subordination as the gender division is perpetuated. Neither would increases in the number of women erase gendering because change is adjusted to by creating new divisions (Kenney 1994: 461, 462). This last point captures most saliently the enduring permanence and pervasiveness of gender division.

2.5.6 The Public and Private Divide and Women: Assumptions and Postulations

The review of literature supporting the usefulness of the public and private distinction highlights the variable and shifting relationship between the two domains. Exhibiting cultural and historical specificity the ordering has remained resilient to change.

67 Studies on work organizations refer to a “glass ceiling” which prevents women from moving up the corporate ladder or power hierarchy in an organization.

68 Note that in making this point, Kenney is emphasizing gendering “as a continuous, variable, and tenacious process that, while usually leading to women’s disadvantage, is challenged, negotiated, subverted and resisted.” (1994: 463) For the purpose of this chapter, the main point is that organizations and institutions possess their own gender dynamics.
Despite its fluidity it is sustained by some constants and continuities. The insights on gender processes contribute enormously to our understanding of the ordering within societies. As shown in the preceding discussion “doing gender”, stereotyping, conformity to cultural ideological prescriptions and practical constrains, and the prevalence of gender regimes helps us to make sense of the fluidity of the divide. In terms of reformulating the concept of the public and private divide, incorporating these components of gender processes provides the scope for an integrated theoretical framework that extends beyond a purely domestic/extra-domestic division. Their inclusion also provides the framework with an interactive and dynamic dimension. From this integrated framework, the following four sets of factors that underscore the public and private divide in gender relations as a key organizing principle within societies are advanced.

The first set of factors concerns women’s domestic role. In almost all societies women bear the burden of childbearing and undertake a larger share of child-caring and domestic work. This has three consequences on women. First, due to this constrain women are less able to either partake or partake fully in extra-domestic or public activities. Second, since domestic work is unpaid and women are unable to partake or partake fully in extra-domestic paid work, many women become dependent, materially, on men. Third, in many societies women adhere to cultural ideologies and practices whereby the prescribed proper behaviour for women is a conformity and dedication to a domestic role.

The second set of assumptions concerns men’s superior status. Within the context of shared class, ethnic, spatial and other such boundaries, in almost all societies, men are generally accorded a higher status than women are. This ensues from one or a combination of three possible reasons. First, men partake in paid work and provide for material needs more than women do. Second, men partake in status yielding work and public activities. Third, in some societies, cultural ideologies and practices confer on men a higher status or legitimize men’s authority either in the domestic domain, the public domain, or both. The preceding factors create situations where women usually have to defer to men.
The third set of factors concerns social behavioural characteristics. First, the distribution of roles between men and women creates a corresponding division in gender appropriate behaviour and personality. This is due to psychological development from infancy and reinforced by social cultural learning. In most societies people conform to gender norms which prescribe the appropriate social behaviour and characteristics for women and men. Accordingly men exhibit power and status related agentic qualities, and women exhibit "communal" qualities that befit their domestic role, but which lack strength and assertiveness. Second, as a consequence of the first factor, people generally have stereotypical expectations of their own and other people's behaviour. Consequently, any behaviour or characteristic is subject to stereotypic evaluation. Third, any activity is potentially subject to stereotypic gender evaluation. Thus, an activity may be assessed as to whether it is more appropriate for men or for women, or, a person may be assessed as a man or a woman in their participation in an activity.

The fourth set of assumptions concerns gender regimes in institutions and organizations. In most institutions and organizations, gendered divisions are part of the organizational structure. This occurs in a number of ways. First, work is gendered in that it is divided into male appropriate or female appropriate work. Second, due to their domestic roles, women are generally regarded as less fully committed to their work. Third, a gender asymmetry is reflected in the power hierarchy, as male agentic qualities and perceived full commitment are deemed more appropriate for top jobs. Fourth, as a result of the first three factors, men generally have a dominant role and women a supporting role within institutions and organizations. Fourth, in these institution or organizations, male and female conduct conform to gender norms on appropriate male and female behaviour. Fifth, within such environments, an individual is conscious of a gendered individual identity. Sixth, some institutions and organizations have gender. They may be male or female exclusive, or more male or female appropriate.

The closely interacting factors listed above aggregate firstly, into a condition of subordinate status for women individually and collectively, and secondly into a limited capacity for women to participate in public activities. Such a gender culture within general social life translates into a corresponding gender culture within public
and political life. Based on the preceding factors, the following postulations on women’s involvement in political life are advanced.

1. Ideologically and culturally, women are constrained by the general perception that they conform and be dedicated to their domestic role.

2. Pragmatically, women are constrained by the practical demands of their domestic responsibilities.

3. The general perception that women must exhibit communal qualities constrain women from exhibiting agentic qualities.

4. Women’s highly communal qualities contribute to their lack of agentic qualities which are required for active political participation.

5. Women are disadvantaged in political institutions and organizations which are gendered sites.

In summary, the combination of women’s domestic role, personality traits and status standing have significant adverse implications on women’s propensity for effective political life, particularly in leadership and governance. The relationship between these postulations and the making of the women who partake in such political activity, that is, political women, is discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

Whither the Political Woman: Theory and Hypotheses

In Geneva, November 1989, the Inter-Parliament Union (IPU) Symposium on the Participation of Women in the Political and Decision-Making Process issued the following statement:

The political space belongs to all citizens; politics belongs to all citizens; politics is everyone’s business and affects the lives of each of us.... There is no doubt that the more women are associated, in numbers corresponding to their percentage of the population, in the political decision-making parties, in elected bodies in Governments and in international bodies, the more they can be associated with this process as protagonists and the more they can change the modalities and outcomes of politics. Only then will the concept of democracy find concrete and tangible expression. (cited in Abzug and Kelber1994: 18)

Similar calls were made by the IPU within the Beijing Declaration in 1994 and within the New Delhi Declaration in 1997. In 1997 in Cairo, the IPU Council adopted the Universal Declaration on Democracy in which it was stated that,

The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences of many occasions of international forums and meetings which call for the need to ensure wider participation by women in decision-making processes. (IPU 2001)

The issue of women and politics is also a regular part of the programme of the Commonwealth Parliamentarian Association Conferences, especially its

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69 This was adopted by the participants to the Parliamentarians’ Day held during the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing on 7th September 1995. For details on the declaration see http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/beijing.htm
70 This Specialized Inter-Parliamentary Conference on the theme “Towards Partnership between Men and Women in Politics” held in New Delhi in February 1997 was the first worldwide meeting on the follow-up to the Beijing Plan of Action. For details see http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/nd-conf.htm
Commonwealth Women Parliamentarian Group. Such agendas, well received and applauded when articulated as ideals, lose reality closer to ground. Characteristic of most forums on the issue, united calls for equality are invariably accompanied by a highlighting of the problems faced by women. From a world perspective, women have progressed a long way from when they were first enfranchised but they remain a long way from achieving equality with men in political life. The 1991 United Nations “WOMEN Challenges to the Year 2000” report said that,

Women politicians, not to mention female prime ministers, are rare. Women who try to succeed in the world of politics discover the hurdles they face, whether based on tradition, finances, ethnicity or organization, are compounded by the hurdles that are theirs by birth - that of gender. Thus women’s increased participation in mass politics over recent years has been predominantly concentrated in the lower echelons of public administration, political parties and trade unions and has not been matched by the same presence at higher level of policy and decision-making. (Abzug and Kelber 1994: 15)

Everywhere in the world women’s routes to political life are strewn with barriers - from those encountered within everyday life right through to the top level of the political spectrum. This is true regardless of the fact that wide differences in circumstances, status and culture exist for women in different societies.

In chapter 2 the public and private divide was advanced as the best explanatory model for understanding the subordinate role and status of women in social life. The chapter concluded with five postulations which, in summary, maintained that in most societies women’s gender role, personality traits and status are not congruent with the pursuance of political life. This chapter expands on that theme and explores the environment which surrounds the pathway of women into political life in societies with democratic representative systems. From the literature, two categories of factors that affect the realization of political women are advanced based on the premise of the public and private divide. Derived from these factors, which manifest a social and an institutional dimension of the public and private divide, two sets of hypotheses on political women are postulated.
3.1 Political Women

Duverger’s comment that “The laws establishing the civic equality of men and women are in advance of the customs of society” aptly describes the reality within most societies professing democracy some fifty years later (1955: 129). Put another way, democracy has not and does not pave the way for a more extensive political role for women because democratic institutions do not exist in a vacuum. Lee, commenting on the situation in the United States (which professes the most liberal democratic system in the world), said that the assignment of sexual roles “built into the American social system” has the effect of putting “into question the feasibility of our democratic system.” (1976: 298) The advocates of alternative ways of defining power and politics and of empowering women may convincingly play down conventional politics, and politics and power may be extensively played out elsewhere, but the making of decisions and legislations that affect all societies are located within conventional politics. For women, the reality is that they must act within this arena in order to have a stake in the decisions affecting society. Herein lies the main avenue to effectuate change concerning their roles. That this arena is male dominated is undeniable. Since changing the game, at least in the immediate future is not possible, women have to be able to play it as it is. That such political women exist has been established by Kirkpatrick in her study on women legislators in America. She called them “leaders, and they conform in all crucial respects to the male model.” (1974: 217)

Kirkpatrick defined “political women” as those women who,

1. desire to influence public events;

2. possess skills necessary to exercising influence;

71 Kirkpatrik’s political women as the counterpart of political men differs from Seymour Martin Lipset, Political Man, New York: Doubleday, 1960 which is concerned with the human political activities, or Robert E. Lane, Political Man, New York: Free Press 1972. Here the term is used to refer to power and personality type in connection with elite behaviour. This political personality is adopted and adapted from Harold D. Lasswell’s ideas in “Psychopathology and Politics” and “The Democratic Character” in The Political Writings of Harold D. Lasswell (New York: Free Press, 1951), and is similar to Robert E Lane’s democratic leaders in Political Life (New York: Free Press, 1959), (Kirkparick 1974: 23 nn 1, 240 nn 1&2). This concept of “political women” is more “prescriptive” and defined more narrowly than Kelly and Boutilier’s reference to political women as “political wives, elected political women who supported the regimes in their country, and the revolutionaries who opposed their governments.” (1978: 4) Other works which employed the term broadly and without definition are Flammang 1984 and Currell 1974.
3. seek influence
4. wield influence; and
5. desire to preserve influence. (1974: 218)

This conception of the political individual encompasses the "multi-value types" usually found within democratic politics. This type of political personality, characterized by the pursuance of power necessary to carry out political objectives while at the same time maintaining other interests and activities, are distinguished from those who place the acquisition of power above all else (1974: 217-220).

Apart from such political characteristics, these women, like most of their male counterparts, also possess,
- Strong egos;
- High self-esteem;
- A high sense of personal effectiveness and political efficacy;
- Broad identifications;
- Habits of participation;
- A persistent need for achievement;
- Realistic expectations; and
- Pragmatic orientations. (1974: 220)

Kirkpatrik claimed her finding poses a challenge to the reluctance to accept that political women exist and are comparable to political men. Noteworthy in this respect is her conclusion "that "normal" women can and do have an interest in politics, government and power strong enough to motivate sustained activity, and/or that

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72 "Multi-value types" of political activism comprises varied dimensions of motivations. For a discussion of these motivations see Constantini 1990 who did a study of the gender gap on motivations he classed as, "Political ambition: The desire for political power, prestige and profit.; Sociality: An interest in the opportunities that politics offers for friendship, fun, and conviviality.; Purposive: A concern for policy issue and the state of the society.; Allegiance: An obligation to fidelity or loyalty to party, party leaders, and the community in general.; Personalist: The importance of particular individuals – proximate (friends) or remote (candidates) – in inducing political activity." (1990: 746)

73 Kirkpatrick claims her findings have proven wrong those who discounted women who have held public office as, 1) "extraordinary exceptions so unlike other women that they should hardly be considered women at all."; 2) "some sort of surrogate" and "not genuine political actors in their own right."; 3) not having "real" power or influence (1974: 218-19).
“normal” women can in fact develop the skills necessary for effective functioning in institutions oriented to power.” (1974: 218)

From the point of view of political activity, the defining criteria for political women requires possession of a high degree of political ambition in terms of a desire to be part of governance and decision-making, as well as the competence to participate effectively. The latter requires possessing personal characteristics such as self-confidence, pragmatism and involvement, which are compatible with, or essential to the political personality. In sum, these political women possessed highly agentic personal qualities. Equally significant, for the purpose of this chapter, is Kirkpatrick’s observation that the realization of political woman is contingent on the woman successfully overcoming certain constraints, described broadly as cultural constraints, role constraints and male resistance, influencing their path.

In terms of the public and private divide, Kirkpatrick’s political women appear deviations from the prevalent conception of women. As can be seen later these political women exhibited highly agentic qualities, managed to combine their domestic with their public roles and succeeded in making their way in male dominated institutions. The fact that these women attributed their position to their ability to overcome the limitations exacted by their gender roles and their disadvantaged social positions affirms the public and private divide as the key to understanding the scarcity of political women. These political women transcended to a certain extent, but not absolutely, the public and private divide as they exemplify not the obliteration but the successful fusion of the public and private divide. By the same token, they provide evidence of the potency of the divide.

In the previous chapter it was pointed out that the combined consequences of the public and private divide which manifest as gender processes lead to a subordinate status for women individually and collectively, and to a lesser capacity for women to engage in public activities. The postulations on women’s gender roles, personality traits, and lower status relative to men suggest two types of implications for women. First, women are commonly perceived to be less appropriate for political activity by society in general, by women themselves and by men. Within the context of the political, this is an asymmetry between men and women. Second, within gendered
political institutions, such as male dominated political parties, there is an asymmetrical relational and interactive status standing between the genders that disadvantages women. Evidence from studies and literature on women’s involvement in political activities largely supports these two assumptions and provides a strong basis for the continuing relevance of Kirpatrick’s findings of the early seventies. The literature on the subject indicates that regardless of the fact that ideas on gender equality may vary, for example, between traditional and modern societies, the core problems are gender related. Having emphasized this, it is necessary to stress that this does not ignore or deny that societies do undergo change. Although instances of renewed conservatism in some places have worked against women, changes have mainly taken on a progressive trend globally. The problem is that alongside the changes are the continuities which consistently hamper real progress. The following brief look at what gains have been achieved by women within the political arena will illustrate this.

3.2 Change and Continuities

In chapter one it was pointed out that in the most fundamental ways things have changed little from when Duverger published his findings on the political role of women in the 1950s. Overall, in terms of numbers, women’s political representation, compared to men, still leaves much to be desired. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there have been improvements in many places - progressing from no representation at all to a few women representatives to vast improvements in some places such as the Scandinavian countries. The 1970s and 1980s were transitory times for women worldwide in the sense that awareness of the desirability of gender equality was spreading - either harboured as ideals or implemented in varying degree in different societies. Even in places where there were no overt efforts at women’s liberation, women were starting to get more involved in different aspects of social life (Lovenduski 1993: 5). While women’s entry into hitherto male dominant areas such as higher education, professional occupations, businesses, and the workforce have

74 See, for example, Karam 1998, a recent publication by IDEA which identified the obstacles to women’s participation from a global perspective, and Ascott 1995 on women’s participation in Canada a developed, highly modernized society with a strong women’s movement. In both contexts the obstacles are gender related.
shown vast improvement, women’s involvement in political life has, overall been sluggish and, from a comparative view, shown wide contrasts between the few countries where women have gained marked increases and those where they have not. From the point of view of understanding women’s under-representation, the failure to achieve marked increases are particularly interesting in those developed countries where the women’s movement has been strong and demands for increased representation for women have been expressed.

In most places, the women’s movement’s effort to increase women’s political representation has been mainly directed at political parties, the principle vehicle for entry into political office. In their examination of eleven countries where women have struggled within political parties to increase political representation Lovenduski and Norris showed that parties responded by adopting three kinds of strategies. Firstly, some parties undertook “rhetorical strategies”. They ostensibly accepted and declared the need for more women but made no real effort to actually do so. While this is not of immediate benefit to women, it can be said that an obligation, even a rhetorical one, could be the start of a process to incorporate more women. Secondly, some parties have realised their commitment to women by taking “positive action” or “affirmative action”. This usually involves internal party reorganization to allow more women to participate in party activities such as committees and delegation, and/or the implementation of policies and programmes to encourage or assist women. Thirdly, some parties have gone further and employed “positive discrimination” by implementing mandatory quotas, or a projected target approach to achieve gender inclusion. The projected target approach is usually better received within parties than the former which is considered ideologically unfair. Discriminatory mandatory quotas may be softened as temporary quotas that are more acceptable (1993: 8-11).

On the whole, the adoption of these various strategies has tended to improve women’s position and status within their respective parties more than their holding of elected

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75 Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and U.S.A.
76 Parties of the right and centre are more likely to display a preference for fairness and openness (Norris 1993: 320).
and other public positions (Lovenduski 1993: 7-8). This notwithstanding, highly significant (particularly from the point of view of the effectiveness of the women’s movement) is Lovenduski’s comment that in all cases efforts by parties to nominate more women have only come about as a result of women’s demands (1993: 14). Such reports on evidence of changes tend to signify the effectiveness of what has been termed women’s “electoral project.” While it is not the intention here to discount the gains made, there is a wide disparity between individual countries in what have been achieved.

In comparative terms, the percentage of women holding Lower House seats in 1992 in Western democracies ranged from a high of 38.1 percent in Sweden to a low of 5.7 percent in France. Also dismally low - below ten percent - were the number of women in national legislatures in Britain, Ireland and Australia (Norris 1993: 310). In this “year of the women”, women made up 13 percent of the candidates and held 10.8 percent of seats in the US House (Welch and Studlar 1996: 866). Increased women’s representation has been most successful in Scandinavia. In 2001, women made up 42.7 and 36.4 percent of parliamentary seats in Sweden and Norway respectively (IPU 2001). In Norway, women have represented at least 40 percent of each government cabinet since 1986 (Lovenduski 1993: 2). In both these countries, success has been attributed to concerted efforts made by women within political parties to push parties into taking positive action (Sainsbury 1993, Skjeie 1991, Skard 1981). In Sweden, for example, various means of coercion - including the threat to demand quotas - saw parties set a target of 40 percent nominations for women (Lovenduski 1993: 14). This accommodating response on the part of parties in Sweden and Norway is largely due to the highly egalitarian attitude in the two countries (Ascott 1995:235, Lovenduski 1993:5). In Norway, political parties are able to capitalize on the presence of women in their candidate lists as a means of demonstrating to the public their “fairness” and “democratic spirit” (Ascott 1995: 234). The Nordic

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77 The Labour Party in Britain, for example stopped short of placing quotas on women MPs, implementing instead, quotas for women in committees and councils at all levels of the party hierarchy. A target of 40 percent women within the Parliamentary Labour Party by 2000 was also planned (Norris and Lovenduski 1993: 52).

78 Defined as “The organized efforts of women’s movement to achieve the goal of getting more women elected to Parliament and Legislatures.” (Arscott and Trimble 1997: 361)

79 Finland had 36.5 percent and Denmark had 37.4 percent.

80 Elsewhere, Phillips comments that the homogeneous nature of society in the Nordic countries highlights women’s exclusion as the most pressing democratic problem. (1995: 113)
“passion for equality” (Ascott 1993: 235) combined with a compatible electoral system has proven highly advantageous for women.

Norway and Sweden are exceptional and have been exemplary cases of the substantial gains women have made.\(^{81}\) Elsewhere women’s situation is more typical.\(^{82}\) The extent of women’s success depend on how well parties respond. This is determined by each party’s computation of the appropriate course to take based on various contingent factors. Above all else, parties are primarily concerned with winning seats and decisions are governed by each party’s electoral imperatives. The priority is to be in tune with voters appeal in order to get support. Thus if fielding more women would benefit a party’s electoral fortune, the party would do so (Galligan 1993: 158, Young 1997: 100). Either way, parties do have to adhere to their respective ideologies and the practical dictates of their party organization. A party’s response is also subject to external factors such as the type of electoral system in place.\(^{83}\) Women fare better in multi-member constituencies where there are a large number of seats in each constituency\(^{84}\) (Norris 1993: 313).

The above discussion approaches the issue by treating a party’s response in absolute terms. Parties are, however, organizations internally characterized by structural and interactive dynamics among members. Commenting on the situation in Canada, Erickson pointed out that party internal workings have not been encouraging for women. Compared to men, there have been fewer women willing to come forward for selection (1993: 83). This is understandable, considering that candidacies and seats are the ultimate prizes and men have mostly held them. This is the stage at which opposition to women’s advancement will likely be strongest (Lovenduski 1993: 12). But the reluctance to include women is not limited to sharing access to selection or seats. Galligan commented that in the case of Ireland, the campaign for increased representation has not met a genuine attempt on the part of political parties to advance

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81 German parties also have positive action policies to ensure women are at all levels of party hierarchy and quotas for women on their candidate lists. In 2001 women have 30.9 percent representation but the increase have been slower. In 1990 at 20.4 the number was not as impressive as the Nordic countries (Lovenduski 1993: 10).

82 An exception is New Zealand. After the 1999 women numbered 30.8 percent in parliament.

83 The type of electoral system may advantage or disadvantage women, but is not in itself a determinant of the size of women’s representation. This is discussed in chapter one.

84 For a discussion of the potential effects of different types of electoral systems on women, see Matland 1998.
women. In Fianna Fail traditional gender attitudes pervade at all levels. Women in the party are mainly regarded as serving the primary purpose of giving support to male candidates (1993: 152, 161).

Undoubtedly quotas and targets benefit women, but as Phillips cautioned, this should not lead to too much optimism. The imposition of quotas, especially, is not always well received and has been a point of contention among politicians (Phillips 1995: 58, see also Dahlerup 1998: 94). In some places, mandatory inclusion of a small percentage of women constitutes a mere token presence for women. Moreover, as was pointed out in the case of Sweden, it is not enough to rely simply on quotas to improve women’s representation in real terms. The process requires a change in attitude and effort by all concerned - women, society, and institutions.

For most places it can be said that continuity is still the order of the day. In the forward to a recent volume on women in parliament, Frene Ginwala made this comment,

> In many countries, women continue to have difficulty in exercising their right to vote due to cultural, religious, patriarchal and economic impediments. Women have and continue to face difficulty in entering institutions of governance, political parties fail to choose them as candidates and the electorate reflects and acts on the gender stereotypes in society by choosing men. Once in the institution, women have faced new obstacles that constrain their capacity to function. (1998: 2)

The sombre truth of her words is heightened by the fact that there is global evidence that conservatism towards women’s traditional role is on the increase; taking the form of movements in some societies to state policies in others (Karam 1998: 10). For example, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan had, during its time, deprived women of any form of rights. In Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, women do not have the right to vote let alone stand for election. In the United States, there exists a “pro-family” movement that calls for a return to the traditional family model of male provider and female carer of home and family (Ciabattari 2001: 588).

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85 Here the discussion has mainly been concerned with quotas initiated by political parties. Quotas have also been enacted through constitution or legislation. This has primarily occurred in Third World countries. For example, women are given 30 out of 330 seats in Bangladesh, 10 out of 105 in Eritrea and 15 out of 225 in Tanzania. (Dahlerup 1998: 97) For a comprehensive discussion of quotas, and the types used, see Dahlerup 1998.


87 Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa.
The very fact that quotas, targets and positive actions are necessary is a stark reminder that women have difficulty getting into office. Nonetheless, there appears to be a sense of "satisfaction" with the gains made and this finds sustenance within a general perception that women are progressing well. The feeling that gender inequality is a thing of the past is a common tendency particularly when it is possible to see examples of women achieving office. Women constitute a substantial part of the work force; they are in the professions, in business, and some hold top positions both in the public and private sector. The presence of a few successes can easily obscure the still widespread pervasiveness of gender inequality. Within gendered institutions such as political parties, changes, no matter how small, or attempts at changes to address gender imbalance, attract attention and are emphasized. Meanwhile, the maintenance of the status quo is little noticed (Epstein 1981: 6). In the same way, at societal level, changes in certain aspects of women’s lives tend to mask the continuity in other aspects. In terms of participation in political life, women are still faced with both social and institutional constraints.

The rest of this chapter is concerned with the formulation of hypotheses on the social and institutional elements that influence the development of political women. The main objective is to develop, from previous studies and findings, theoretically driven hypotheses for empirical evaluation. Prior to that, a few clarifications on the nature and use of these sources are in order.

Firstly, it must be pointed out that most published empirical studies on female participation in politics have been on the United States and Western Europe; consequently, the following discussion draws heavily on works on these societies. This should not, however, negate the broader application of their findings. In spite of the strength of the women’s movement and wider presence of egalitarian and democratic values in such societies there is still widespread evidence of conservatism concerning gender relations. This provides strong reasons for believing that more traditional societies or societies where the women’s movement is weak would adhere even more strictly to culturally prescribed gender relations. A discussion of gender relations in Southeast Asia is undertaken in chapter 4.
Secondly, it is essential to bear in mind that most of the influential and insightful studies on women in public life were carried out in the sixties and seventies when it was a major issue and new area of research. Later studies have relied heavily on previous observations and built on these earlier works. In the following overview of the nature of the problems women face, it has been necessary to refer to these influential earlier sources for clarity. Reference to these studies reflects the enduring nature of the problems. This approach echoes and stands by the relevancy at present of a comment Githens made twenty years earlier. Although there have been wide and innovative research endeavours in this area,

... today as in the 1960's when the body of literature on women's political participation first began to appear, the effects of cultural constraints - especially those arising from socialization - role constraints, "male conspiracy", and situational and structural factors stemming from these constrains are central to both the empirical investigation and explanation of female public officeholders' patterns of recruitment and performance. (1984: 43)

3.3 The Social Dimension

3.3.1 Gender Stereotyping: Gender Behaviour and Gender Roles

That women are innately as intelligent and as capable as men is no longer in question as evidenced by the presence of women in all areas of intellectual disciplines and professional fields. However, the issue that does arise is why so few women have actually undertaken to realize the full potential of their ability (Epstein 1971: 16). This situation, which generally holds true across all social life, is, however, most conspicuous in relation to holding public office. In a study carried out in the United States published in 1976, Lee made the following statement. "The regrettable but straightforward conclusion of this study is that the percentage of women holding office is unlikely to increase by a substantial amount in the future unless radical changes occur in current sexual role assignments." (Lee 1976: 297)

Sexual role assignments or gender roles lead to significant differences in attitudes between men and women, and these are most marked in relation to politics. Empirical evidence in the 1970s revealed that in comparison to men, women "tend to be less
politically efficacious, less politically interested, have less political information, and
are less likely to participate in politics.” (Tedin, Brady and Vedlitz 1977: 448) Since
these observations were made, other studies have reported changes in women’s life
and shifts in attitudes to gender roles (see for example, McLaughlin 1988, Mason and
these changes within society, within the area of politics, attitudes to gender roles play
a major part in maintaining the present gender gap in political representation (see
Arceneaux 2001).

The root of this pattern is traceable to women’s adherence to their perceived
appropriate social behaviour and gender roles that conform to a public and private
divide. It must be emphasized that in reality these roles and behaviour exist as
complex interacting forces. For the purpose of clarity, the following sections will
attempt to treat each factor as a distinct force.

3.3.2 Conformity to Stereotyped Gender Behaviour

In relation to gender behaviour and personality, in the previous chapter it was
postulated that:
1. The general perception that women must exhibit communal qualities constrain
women from exhibiting agentic qualities.
2. Women’s highly communal qualities contribute to their lack of agentic qualities
which are required for active political participation.

In most societies people are clear on what they consider to be appropriate, and
consequently preferred, personality and behaviour traits for men and women. These
are cultivated from a young age. This tends to be more stringent for girls who are
instilled with personal qualities that are mostly directed at preparing them for their
domestic role of wife and mother. Epstein pointed out that for American girls, a

88 Reference made, in their study on sex differences in political attitudes and behaviour, to data from a
previous study by Marjorie Lansing, “The American Women: Voter and Activist,” in Jane S. Jaquette,
1975, New York: John Wiley and Sons. For a similar earlier statement see Almond and Verba who
described women, compared to men, as “being somewhat more frequently apathetic, parochial,
conservative, and sensitive to the personality, emotional and esthetic aspects of political life and
electoral campaigns.” (1963: 338)
personality of "compliance and willingness to please" was most desirable and they were "sensitized generally to the opinions and preferences of others." Girls were also tuned to a nature of dependency while aggression was encouraged in boys (Epstein 1971: 52, 53). Consequently, girls and women often either lacked confidence and ambition, which were regarded as highly desirable male attributes, or refrained from displaying such characteristics because they were constantly aware that doing so would go against societal expectations.

This situation was compounded by the often unquestioned acceptance of a primarily domestic role for women in adulthood. Unlike boys, who later as men were evaluated by their occupations, girls were not nurtured to develop a work-related identity. Epstein described work for women as occurring "within a contingency spectrum". Women mostly either work to supplement their family's income or to fill in time when their children are grown. The bottom line is that, at least until the 1970s in the US, as a result of their socialization and their acceptance of what was designated for them, most girls did not have high aspirations in terms of work (1971: 51, 63, 74). As the following section shows, the consequence of societal expectation of appropriate social behaviour and acceptance of domestic roles for women does not stop with dampening ambition, but also inflicts on many women the quandary of conflicting roles.

3.3.3 Conformity to Gender Roles

In connection with gender roles, in the previous chapter it was postulated that,
1. Ideologically and culturally, women are constrained by the general perception that they conform and be dedicated to their domestic role.
2. Pragmatically, women are constrained by the practical demands of their domestic responsibilities.

Most societies emphasize marriage for both men and women but there is a qualitative difference in the requirement. Epstein commented that, for men, marriage may be regarded as a part of achieving manhood, but it was not seen as the primary objective or a priority over other possible roles (1971: 62). In fact, for a man the commitment to
productive work was most important as his main responsibility in marriage was largely related to this. As long as “he earns an a adequate living for his family, he has nearly fulfilled society’s demands on him and, depending on his social rank, he has a wide range of acceptable behaviour (sic) within which he may fulfill his other husband-father roles…” (Epstein 1971: 99). In contrast, for women, the primary goal was to become “a wife first and foremost” (Epstein 1971: 62).

Conformity to this “wife and mother” role has been historically enduring because in almost all societies, growing up within the family environment is in itself a complete socialization into the appropriate gender roles. The overall tendency of this kind of socialization is generally for continuity between progressive generations rather than change (Merkl 1976: 752-3)\(^{89}\). Studies across societies have invariably shown that regardless of their social or occupational status, women are mainly responsible for domestic chores and child-care. Studies over time have shown women devote the same amount of time and effort to domestic tasks and caring for children as women did at the turn of the 19\(^{th}\) century. The modernization of the family with the newfound value of “sharing” and “democratic” has not removed the division of labour nor changed gender relations\(^{90}\) (Sapiro 1981: 704). A similar pattern is observed in a recent study on the “male breadwinner” in Britain (Lewis 2001: 165). In spite of shifts to more liberal and flexible attitudes toward gender roles, it is still mainly the woman who has to make concessions in order to accommodate family commitments. Presently, conformity to gender roles does not require that women confine themselves to domesticity, but it is expected that “whatever else they do, their domestic responsibility not be decreased.” (Sapiro 1982: 277) This development can be said to signify a decline in the significance of the family in that women are no longer expected to make rigid choices between career and family. On the other hand, women’s endeavour to “have it all” (McLaughlin et al. 1988: 201) also signifies their continued acceptance of their gender roles.

The resistance to change even in the face of extensive social and technological transformation is most evident in places such as the United States where, in spite of a strong women’s movement it was observed during the eighties that, “marriage and

\(^{89}\) Merkl made this observation in a review of the study of women in comparative politics.

\(^{90}\) Sapiro concluded this from evidence from various studies.
family including children remain the essential element of the ‘good life’” (McLaughlin et al. 1988: 6, 201). In developed societies, the male as the sole breadwinner model of the family is declining (Sapiro 1982: 266, Lewis 2001: 165), but studies have found that, although most men approve of women working outside the home, for many men, the ideal is still the male breadwinner and female homemaker family (Wilkie 1993, Ciabattari 2001). It was also noted that the American woman was “prepared to put marriage and children ahead of her career and to allow her husband’s status to determine the family’s position in society.” (Simon and Landis 1989: 269)91 Earlier studies in Europe, revealed that elite European women may, on the one hand, be trying hard to get out of the wife and mother at home ideal, but on the other hand, being a wife who was able to afford staying at home was “a most desirable ideal to most European working class women” (Merkl 1976: 753). This push or pull situation marks the difficulty numerous women face in all types of societies – developed, developing, traditional or modern. Women who docilely accept and conform to their domestic roles are less likely to experience role conflicts, but for others, particularly those with training and skills, it is a continual dilemma.

Women face two sorts of problems. The first is one internal to the individual. This stems primarily from the fact that women, having been socialized into fulfilling their appropriate sex roles, are either more inclined toward seeing work as extensions of these roles, or oriented toward types of work which are extensions of these roles. Epstein noted that in the United States, a woman worked mainly to supplement the family income, or as a female duty in the sense of helping out, or as a fulfillment of her role if the work was part of that role (1971: 84-5). Any work that digressed from these expectations, for example, a career for personal fulfillment, would most likely result in the woman having to negotiate a conflict with her domestic role. Even if she managed to resolve the conflict, she would find herself continually having to reassess her decision. Unlike men who took financial rewards, status standing and job satisfaction for granted, for women these were issues to be resolved (Epstein 1971: 17). This leads to the second problem. As Epstein pointed out, in contrast to men who, because work took a high priority in their lives, could depend on their families and

91 Simon and Landis’ conclusion from a survey on men’s and women’s attitudes concerning a women’s place and role carried out in the United States.
those around them for encouragement in their endeavor, women could not expect much support from society. Women, Epstein said,

...face a normless situation in that no formal structure of expectations exists to aid them in apportioning time and resources between their two major responsibilities. Ability to deal with the complex role of wife, mother, working woman, especially at the professional level, is still largely a matter of individual adaptation, compromise, and personal arrangement, often characterized by strain. (1971: 98)

Almost twenty years after Epstein wrote the above, Mclaughlin commented that women are progressively gaining more control over their lives, but there is often a limit to a person’s versatility in terms of conflicting roles. The balance of commitment will inevitably be of one at the expense of the other (1988: 201). The American example shows that compliance with societal expectations from childhood through to adulthood may have long-lasting implications on a woman’s perception of what possibilities and what potentials are in store for her and on her world-view, particularly her attitude to politics.

3.3.4 Effects of Gender Socialization on Attitude to Politics

In most societies, politics is not a major concern for the individual nor the majority of the population. People are more likely to be occupied with more immediate personal concerns such as work, family, health and lifestyle (Jennings 1983: 368). Nevertheless, people do have interest in politics and hold political opinions. People’s political attitudes largely ensue from a process of political socialization which can be defined as the “interaction between the social system and the individual, whereby both predisposition for, and skills relating to participation in the political sphere are internalised.” (Flora and Lynn 1974: 51 cited in Randall 1987:83) Gender differentiation socialization inherently encompasses a political socialization process. An influential advocate of this argument is Greenstein who pointed out that there are many ways in which seemingly non-political cultural and gender personality

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92 In this chapter political attitudes refer to people’s disposition to and opinion of, politics as an activity; participation in political activity; or involvement in governance. The term and other interchangeable terms adopted are not used to denote people’s political values, for example, authoritarian or liberal.

93 Greenstein’s argument on the effects of early socialization has been refuted by studies that stress the influences of later life circumstances. However, this does not mean that early socialization is not important but that it may be subject to changes. For a discussion see Epstein 1988: 170-1.
socialization affect politics by instilling sex differences which are "political and politically relevant" (1969: 10, 111). At the core of Greenstein's argument is that political socialization begins from a very young age when aspects of gender norms, especially those which "associate girls with the immediate environment and boys with the wider environment" are internalized. It is not then a simple matter of telling girls politics is not for them (and consequently they think politics is not for them) but an ingrained predisposition to sensing what activities are appropriate for male and for females (Greenstein 1969: 125). Consequently, compared to men, women are much less likely to participate in the various activities accessible to people who take an interest in political matters (Greenstein 1969: 108).

Greenstein's position is strongly supported by observations made by other writers. Research on political participation has shown that women do not see themselves taking on a substantial role in what is considered the political world of men94 (Rapoport 1981: 35). Literature on gender socialization has identified women's mothering role, which gives rise to "a population of women who are attuned to caring, empathy and nurturance", as a key factor in determining women's political awareness95 (Ackelsberg and Diamond 1987: 516). In his study Conway noted that women, being less likely to follow political issues in the media and less likely to understand matters of government and politics, are consequently less politically informed than men96 (1985: 28). The political implication of this characteristic is accentuated by the practical realities of the mothering role. Jennings found that motherhood dampened political interest, especially among young adult women (1979: 757). Notwithstanding the suggestion Lane made in the early sixties that the influence of traditional culture on women's attitude to politics would diminish with time (1965: 212), the reality is that change has been slow. For the most part, changes that occur in some aspects have been tempered by continuity over other aspects. For example, in the United States, the percentage of men and women who vote are now the same, but


96 A similar argument was made by Lane (1965: 210-15).
women are still less interested in politics than men (Conway 1989: 105). In a survey of high school activists in New York City, high school girls who were politically active indicated that they thought their political participation in future would be hampered by marriage and motherhood (Romer cited in Bennett and Bennett 1992: 95). In a more recent study which assessed the extent of change in public perception of gender roles in the United States, Bennet and Bennet observed that while it is quite clear that people are increasingly acquiring modern views, it is also true that “...people’s private realities are still dominated by more traditional values implanted by the socialization process.” According to Bennet and Bennet, “It is the tension between the two worlds that may be emerging in changing opinions about gender equality.” (1992: 108)

Within the field of political science, numerous studies on women’s political behaviour and participation have in their own ways verified the significance of childhood socialization for adult behaviour. In a study carried out in the United States which tested the linkage between pre-adult political knowledge and adult political behaviour such as expressing political interest, attitudes and beliefs, Rapoport concluded that early socialization on sex roles continues as a “structuring principle” of adult attitudes (1981:33, 44, 46). In an eight nation study97, Jennings also confirmed a positive relationship between pre-adult socialization and adult behaviour by testing the linkage between socialization within the home environment98 and adult political participation (1983: 382-3)99. As Kraus noted in her review of literature on the political implication of gender roles, women “learn supportive and affective roles, internalize politics as a masculine domain, set their aspiration to marriage and motherhood....” (1974: 1707)

Empirical research findings have provided evidence of the negative impact of these three tendencies on women’s propensity for pursuing political office or roles.

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97 Austria, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States.
98 The proposition here is that children develop ideas about gender and political participation through interaction with their parents and observing their political practices (Jennings 1983: 366).
99 Childhood socialization may work in two ways. A home environment of traditionalism would produce conservative attitudes but a politically active home environment would stimulate political activism. The latter situation has been referred to as countersocialization, that is, a “socialization experience that countered the prevailing norm of female political quiescence” (Clark, Hadley and Darcy 1989:195). In their study of party leaders in the United States, Clark, Hadley and Darcy found that childhood experiences do not provide significant countersocialization (1989: 203,204). The point being emphasized here is that childhood socialization is more pervasively a conservative influence.
3.3.5 Women and Political Office

Given the strong influence gender socialization has on the way women perceive and conduct themselves, it is understandable that most women would be more removed from an interest or involvement in politics than men. But compared to the earlier half of the twentieth century the situation presently is one where there is relative rather than absolute disinterest in political matters. In most countries women vote\textsuperscript{100}, are members of political parties, participate in party activities such as campaigning and fundraising, and are involved in other non-partisan political activities. However, a qualitative difference exists between male and female participation particularly in relation to roles. Women’s participation and roles within the context of political parties is discussed later in this chapter. Here the concern is with the implication of gender differentiation socialization which comports with the public and private divide on women’s attitudes to leadership roles and political office.

Within the general population of any given society very few men or women are interested in politics, or politically involved to the point of seeking public office or positions in political parties. Having made that qualification, the objective here is to look at the circumstances surrounding women’s pathways to political careers. Given the fact pointed out earlier that women need to be strongly motivated in order to succeed in the world of work and career, it is inevitable that when it comes to active political involvement such as assuming leadership roles or pursuing public office women face an even harder choice. A political career would, more than any other activity, contradict the customary concept of a woman’s place and role in society. Although politics is no longer taken as an exclusively male preserve it is still widely accepted as a male activity in most societies. Apart from that, it is an activity that requires behavioural characteristics and aptitude which many women may be constrained from exhibiting. Furthermore, politics is an activity that requires qualities which many women may be constrained from acquiring. These factors make up a complex interplay of constraints whereby if not one then another would hold sway.

The most telling evidence of the resulting implications for women have been revealed

\textsuperscript{100} In the United States, the gender gap in voting behaviour is no longer on voter turnout but on policy preference. Women give stronger support to social welfare provisions, environmental preservation, non-violence and peace. These are issues which are strongly linked to “maternal thinking” (Howell and Day 2000: 859).
by studies on female political ambition, the most significant factor in the political office holding equation.

In their analysis of women in pursuit of political office Bledsoe and Herring pointed to an obvious if obscure fact. Women who seek elected or public office “are in a position unlike that of women in other area of endeavor.... Electoral politics is about the only place where there is direct competition between men and women in a public forum.” (Bledsoe and Herring 1990: 213) Presently, the question with such a state of affairs is not whether voters will discriminate against women. Research in the United States and Britain has shown that when women actually stand for election, their chances of winning are not impaired by their gender (Fowlkes, Perkins & Rhinehart 1979: 779, Rule 1981: 62, Bledsoe and Herring 1990: 213). A recent study in relation to congress has found evidence that there is a preference among women to vote for women candidates (Smith and Fox 2001: 206). The problems lie further back, strewn over the pathway to elected office.

Generalized broadly, female political underrepresentation is largely due to the paucity of women candidates (Fowlkes, Perkins & Rhinehart 1979, Bledsoe and Herring 1990). The key to understanding why there are so few women in political office lies with the reasons for this dearth in women who are willing or able to run. At the forefront is the manner through which elected political office is achieved and maintained. Within present systems the “highly individualized and competitive” requisites of attaining elected political office are incompatible with women’s perceived or actual roles and behavioural characteristics. Political aspirants need to possess a “driving ambition for personal advancement that disregards or discounts other social responsibilities and personal relationships. Women with their more balanced system of values and priorities, are at a distinct disadvantage in this competition.” (Bledsoe & Herring 1990: 221) The reality, as Bernstein pointed out in his analysis of why there were so few women in the House in the United States, is that “…the number of women in the House is unlikely to increase rapidly until women show the same kind of drive for personal advancement now shown by men.” (1986: 163)
That women are less politically ambitious than men has been confirmed in numerous studies (Clark, Hadley and Darcy 1989, Jennings and Farah 1981, Constantini 1990, Fowlkes, Perkins and Rinehart 1979, Sapiro 1983). Within the context of politics, political ambition can be described broadly as an interest in pursuing public office or more narrowly as an “interest in an ascendant political career and in using politics as a vehicle for personal self-advancement (Constantini 1990: 741). The comparatively weaker ambition of women has been attributed to a number of factors. Bledsoe and Herring, for example, said that for women, political ambition is not only influenced by career preference and family responsibilities, but is also a function of gender socialization (1990: 214). Such a categorization of factors, while useful for distinction purposes, may also be somewhat deluding because career choice and family obligations are in their own way primarily a function of gender differentiation socialization for women. The various ways in which the influences of gender socialization affect women also affect their ambition. This in turn affects the potential realization of political women.

3.3.6 The Effects of Gender Role Assignments and Role Expectations:

3.3.6.1 Child-caring

In all fairness, it is also true that political ambition involves costs in terms of family commitments for both men and women. But according to Sapiro men and women do not assess their costs and benefits in the same way. While men are more able and willing to pay the price, women tend to deflect role conflict by giving priority to family commitments. Unless they are able to achieve compatibility between their political and domestic commitments, women more are likely to forego political ambitions (1982: 266, 274).

At the most practical level, the low number of women aiming for public office is due to the limited mobility experienced by those with children. In her study on roles verses political ambition among party activists in the US, Sapiro observed that the presence of children was the main source of role conflict women experienced (1982: 270). As we have seen earlier, women are still mainly responsible for child-care and
although there is increasing evidence that this may not limit women’s ability to participate in political activities generally (Epstein 1988: 166-7), it is a major limitation in relation to holding public office. The irregular working time and myriad unscheduled activities associated with public office holding are particularly discouraging. For married women with children, the more appropriate time to think about pursuing political office is after their children were grown or had left home (Sapiro 1982: 272, Lee 1976: 297, 304, 306, see also Currell 1974: 158-160). In the United States, research findings reveal that shouldering the main responsibility for child-care deprives women of the ability to compete equally with men for political office and elite positions. Lee noted that,

> Because of children, women may fail to gain the experience in their twenties, thirties and early forties that their male counterparts are acquiring. When at last they are free, they may lack the political know-how and connections to effectively compete against the more experienced men. In short, most men interested in politics get a head start and it is very difficult for women to catch up. (1976: 306)

### 3.3.6.2 Employment Outside the Home

Child-care responsibilities mean that it is more difficult for women to exercise flexibility over their time. The situation worsens for women with employment outside the home because they have the dual burden of work and child-care. Working women with families are less able to be actively involved. A number of studies carried out in the U.S have shown that of the women involved in middle level participation in parties the majority are not in paid employment (Randall 1987: 127-8). This reveals the paradoxical nature of the employment factor for women participating in politics. On the one hand, being unemployed or employed part time can make women more available for participation. On the other hand, the experience and capability necessary for advancement and for elite roles essentially require a background of employment that can foster such qualities. Paid employment has been found to correlate positively with elite political participation (Randall 1987: 127-8). However, evidence in the US showed this is not just any sort of employment but high status, mainly male occupations such as business, law, or medicine, that are compatible with elite forms of participation. Women are disadvantaged as not many of them would be employed in such occupations. The overall effect is that only a small number of women qualify for
inclusion in the eligibility pool. And it is mostly from this eligibility pool that potential candidates for office are recruited (Welch 1983: 373).

3.3.6.3 Politics as a Men’s Activity:

For women, apart from having their participation curtailed by the practical demands of child-care responsibilities, the added burden of paid work, and the lack of certain qualifications, there was the omnipresent perception of politics as a male activity. In her study carried out in the United States, Lee found that most of the women she surveyed regarded holding public office as “improper” for women. One reason for this, as revealed in the survey, was that others would not approve of women assuming such a role (1976: 306-7). Lee’s findings confirmed an earlier finding by Harris that a large number of women thought “women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country to men” (Harris 1972: 16-19 cited in Lee: 307). A large part of this perception stemmed from what Lane described as “the assignment of ascendant, power-possessing role to the man and the dependent receptive role to the woman”. Politics was, according to Lane, “precisely such an area of power, and a woman enters politics only at the risk of tarnishing, to some extent, her femininity” because she may be seen as having “moved from the properly dependent role of her sex to the masterful and dominant role of men.” (Lane 1965: 213) As can be seen from the discussion in chapter two and in this chapter on gender differentiation corresponding to the public and private divide, two trends of thought bear upon this perception. One, the notion that politics is properly men’s concern, is ideological in relation to role assignment. The other, that political activities are more suitable for men is related to the communal and agentic (or expressive and instrumental) behavioural assignment. The consequences of gender role assignments on female ambition and involvement in politics have been pointed out in the preceding sections. The following discussion focuses on the consequences of behavioural assignments

With regard to the point being established here, this finding was particularly significant because the women surveyed were described as “political participants”. This means that for a woman to hold public offices was deemed inappropriate even by women who were participating in political activity. Lee defined a political participant as “a person who is a member of an organized group whose primary objective is to elect people to office or to influence the policies of the government in the manner it sees fit, or a person who holds public office by election or appointment.” (1976: 300)
The difference in male’s and female’s ambition as a function of behavioural assignment is fundamentally linked to women’s communal qualities to which they have been socialized. Their lesser ambition may be due to a conscious effort to contain displays of ambition or it may be simply a matter of having lesser ambition. In the case of the former, women, in conformity with their expected communal nature, may not want to show ambition even if they do in fact harbour some ambition. This may be because people usually see women who are ambitious as “pushy”, a characteristic which though admirable in men is regardless unbecoming in women (Bledsoe and Herring 1990: 218). Women who are assertive or have high aspiration are viewed with disapproval (Conway and Vartarian 2000: 194 citing Geis 1993). Epstein, for example, reported that the professional women she interviewed indicated they were unwilling to do anything that may be seen as “self promotional” because they thought it was not appropriate for women to be assertive\footnote{informal interviews with women in academic life, science, law, and medicine.” (Footnote, Epstein 1971: 181)} (1971: 181). It may also be the case that women avoid showing ambition because doing so would spoil interpersonal relationships which women, more often then not, are keen to maintain (Bledsoe and Herring 1990: 214).

The importance of relational bonds not only causes women to contain their ambition but may also dampen women’s ambition. According to Bledsoe and Herring, women’s high concern for family, friends and interpersonal relationships complicates their motivation. Considering that “men tend to devote single minded attention to achievement and performance, women combine achievement needs with concerns about the effect of achievement and personal relationships.” (Bledsoe &Herring 1990: 218)\footnote{In their analysis of this condition, Githens and Prestage used the concept of social “marginality”. The marginal individual is “a person who seeks to change his identification from one stratum to another but is unable to resolve the related choices between value systems and organised group ties”. Women are more susceptible to these pressures because, compared to men, they are more dependent on positive evaluation from others. The prospect of marginality will discourage women from going for political office and will also influence the actions of those who are holding office (Githens and Prestage cited in Randall 1987: 123).} The effect of conflicting roles and clashing motivations on weakening women’s ambition is further accentuated by women’s perception of their capability. Lee’s finding, for example, showed that women indicated a “lower sense of political competence” in relation to dealing with political responsibilities. Moreover, the majority of people think that most men are emotionally more suitable for political
activities then most women (Lee 1976: 307). Women’s identification with a primarily communal nature may prove pernicious to their actual capacity. Epstein pointed out that very often a woman “decides against a career without actually testing reality. Rather she anticipates consequences and accepts limitations or a defeat which may not be inevitable in her case.” (Epstein 1971: 76)

The reality is, as Clark, Hadley and Darcy declared, women “lack the necessary political ambition to seek out and hold public office”, and women’s lack of ambition compared to men existed even among political party activists in their study (1989: 194, 204). On this point Jennings and Farah in an earlier study noted that, “Despite growing equality with men, women elites continue to lag far behind in terms of political ambitions and expectations.” (1981: 462) It has also been found that even some form of counter-socialization, such as involvement in business groups which would enhance leadership skills and professional self confidence, and involvement in women’s rights groups which would cultivate a desire to act, do not substantially increase women’s ambition (Clark, Hadley and Darcy 1989: 203, 205). Costantini underscored this point further with his finding over a twenty year period that the women in his study “prove less politically ambitious than the men and less likely to be motivated by a desire for the rewards of power, profit, and prestige generally associated with ascendant political careers…” (1990: 765) Kraus, in her review of the literature on the political implication of gender roles on women, described the situation concisely when she said,

on the average, women behave politically in the way we expect them to, given the nurturing of passiveness, expressiveness, supportiveness, apoliticism … and home orientation, time constraints, less prestige and authority in the occupational hierarchy, lack of political resources and network critical to political leadership… (1974: 1710)

Kraus’ comments indicate characteristics that are symptomatic of the public and private divide.

At this juncture it is necessary to return to the main purpose of this chapter and re-establish the connection between what has been learned from the empirical studies discussed so far, and the public and private divide. One clear observation from the literature is that very few women are in public or political office because very few women reach the point where they get to be selected or elected. In other words there
are few prospective political women. For more insight into this, it is pertinent to take a further look at Kirkpatrick’s political women.

3.3.6.4 Overcoming Social Constraints

One crucial fact to be learned from Kirkpatrick’s examination of personal characteristics is that success as political women was largely due to the fact that some sort of “winning combination” in terms of the public and private divide was achieved. Put simply, these women possessed certain qualities which enabled them to take their place in the public dimension while remaining firmly entrenched in their sense of belonging within the private. With Kirkpatrick’s political women, this is discernible in a number of ways.

At the forefront is the fact that these women’s idea of femininity is different from the usual way femininity is perceived. Firstly, they do not think “persistence, dedication, aggressiveness, objectivity are male characteristics” nor do they believe that women should not be “serious, persistent and achievement oriented”. Secondly, they do not think other people perceive femininity as entailing “lack of aggressiveness, lack of personal involvement and egotism, lack of persistence...lack of ambitious drive.” (1973: 224) Consistent with this conviction, the women did not feel the need to be “accepted” and “approved”, but were instead more “concerned with their own goals and purposes than with the evaluation of others.” (1973: 226) Put simply, these women had no inhibitions about their capacity for assuming a public role, and as Kirkpatrick commented, this “understanding of femininity is crucial to the unconflicted pursuit of a political career.” (1973: 225)

In contrast to their ambitious drive and possession of highly agentic qualities, there was an equally strong conformity to their gender roles of wife and mother. The political women in Kirkpatrick’s study placed top priority on home and family. Firstly, their strong obligation to their families and their role as mothers was indicated by the fact that they ran for office only after their children were grown and thus had less need for their mother’s care (1973: 227, 230). Secondly, the women conformed to the belief that the “husband’s wishes should be dominant.” Most said they would not have run for office if their husbands had not approved. In fact, it appeared that the
wives were “expected to shield their spouse’s egos especially from possible damage due to the wife’s prominence.” Getting the husband’s cooperation was reportedly the foremost requirement (1973: 227, 231, 233).

There are several conclusions that can be made from the information drawn from these women. First, they transcended the gender personality trait constraint by possessing and exhibiting the personal characteristics deemed necessary for taking on a public office.104 Second, the potential conflict of such a public role with expected female characteristics and female roles was moderated by a dedication to the prescribed gender role of wife and mother. Third, the potential constraint on the performance of a public role that would arise from a dedication to motherhood was avoided by waiting until the children had left home or until they were older.105 Fourth, the constraint on a public role that would arise from their conformity to their role as wife was overcome by getting their husband’s consent.

Broadly, from a societal point of view, a significant observation to be made from the above conclusions is that these women managed to dilute the potential repercussion from breaching certain societal cultural norm expectations by conforming to other expectations. At the more personal level, these political women had to resolve an internal dilemma. Kirkpatrick commented that they,

...emphasize their acquiescence in conventional values....assure themselves that in all fundamental respects they are what women ought to be. Their success derives from the fact that they have respected conventional norms, have been good wives, mothers, homemakers as well as office-holders....Their conformity to fundamental cultural requirements may be a prerequisite to their unconventional political careers. (1973: 229)

They have not, in other words breached the public and private divide beyond reconciliation. Their crucial balancing between what are conventionally regarded as incompatible roles was managed in Kirkpatrick’s words, “By an unusual amount of empathy, flexibility and self-knowledge.” (1973: 239)

104 The presence of this characteristic has been confirmed by a number of other studies. It is a characteristic which was said to distinguish elite women from women in the general public. See Githens (1984: 45) for an overview.
105 This has also been noted in various studies. See Githens (1984: 44) for an overview.
3.4 The Social Dimension: Hypotheses

What can we learn from Kirkpatrick’s observations of these women? Firstly, they do not exemplify the dissolution of the *public and private divide* but rather its continuing relevance to their lives. Their digression into the public had to be ameliorated by a firm commitment to the private. Secondly, their success as political women hinges on their ability to harmonize the public and private within them. Thirdly, measured by what is commonly held about women, these women are deviations from societal expectations. A key assumption which can be derived from what was revealed by the political women in Kirkpatrick’s study and from the other studies discussed, is that women are still very much governed by their sense of the public and private which subsists at both the individual and societal level. This provides strong grounds to expect that in societies where the *public and private divide* is defined by prescribed gender roles and gender related behaviour women are more constrained from assuming an active political life than men. In such societies, women would be highly underrepresented. Based on this premise the following hypotheses and sub-hypotheses in relation to societal attitudes on women’s gender roles, gender asymmetry and women’s place in politics are advanced.

3.4.1 Hypotheses

Political Office: Public Men, Private Women

3.4.1.1 Hypothesis I:

Firstly, it is postulated that in societies where women’s representation is low:

*Very few women seek political office.*

This is attributed to four factors:

i. *Women are discriminated against in politics.*

ii. *Women do not actively pursue political life.*

iii. *Women think they are not suitable for politics.*
3.4.1.2 Hypothesis II:
Secondly, it is postulated that in these societies:

It is believed that men should hold political office.

This is attributed to the following beliefs:

i. Gender equality in political representation is not necessary.

ii. Politics is a male activity.

Hypotheses III to V each incorporates three dimensions - cultural beliefs, stereotyping and practical imperatives.

Gender Roles: Public Man
3.4.1.3 Hypothesis III:
Thirdly it is postulated that in these societies:

It is believed that men should dominate politics.

It is hypothesized that people think:

i. It is not proper for women to be active in politics. (Cultural belief)

ii. Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life. (Stereotyping)

iii. It is not convenient for women to be active in politics. (Practical imperative)

Gender Roles: Private Woman
3.4.1.4 Hypothesis IV
Fourthly, it is postulated that in these societies people believe:

A woman’s place is in the home

This is attributed to the following factors:

i. Women’s main concern should be the home. (Cultural belief)

ii. Women are better homemakers and caregivers. (Stereotyping)

iii. Women have to fulfill domestic tasks. (Practical imperative)
Gender Asymmetry: Subordinate Women

3.4.1.5 Hypothesis V

Fifthly, it is postulated that in such societies:

*Men are accorded more status and power than women.*

This is attributed to the following beliefs:

i. *Men are superior to women.* (Cultural belief)

ii. *Women possess weaker characteristics.* (Stereotyping)

iii. *Women are materially dependent on men.* (Practical imperative)

In taking the above position one risks the accusation of putting the blame largely on women and implying that all will be well if only women were to change. As Constantini concluded, "To the extent that it can be said that politics has been a men's game, presumably this is at least in part because women have chosen not to play." (1990: 770) In view of such suggestions, it must be emphasized that even though the main burden of seeking office falls on women's shoulders, they should not be cast as the root of the problems, nor can they, on their own, change the situation. Women's lives are usually experienced within circumstances beyond their control. Taking this point further, it is also true that even if a woman is able to resolve a conflict of the public and private at the personal level there is still society at large to contend with. Epstein, for example, referred to,

...the exclusionary behaviour of male politician who undermine women's motivation to participate and who are inhospitable to women with political aspirations...the institutionalized bias against women's engaging in visible roles in the public sphere, and the discrimination and prejudice they have faced. (1988: 167)

Within the political arena, apart from women's attitude and ambition, it is necessary to look at the political opportunity available to women.
3.5 The Institutional Dimension

In their study on the social roles and political resources of men and women who are party elites Jennings and Farah commented that,

The restrained ambitions of women were seen as flowing from social role prescriptions that fostered feelings about the inappropriateness of high female ambitions and that also guide the actions of mass and elite bodies having control over the gateways to political power. (1981: 479)

Within most contemporary political systems, political opportunity lies mainly within the political parties which, as Norris said, “are the crucial gatekeepers to elected office.” (1989: 309) This takes us to the last postulation advanced in the previous chapter that,

“Women are disadvantaged in political institutions and organizations which are gendered sites.”

Before proceeding further, it is necessary at this stage to reiterate a constant theme. Within social life most women experience an asymmetry in opportunity, capacity and liberty relative to men. The asymmetry is so dispersed and so much part of life that for most people it is the natural state of things. This inequality, inherent within a culture of differentiated gender roles and behaviour within society in general, translates into a gendered culture within political institutions, particularly political parties. Within gendered sites such as a political party the asymmetry manifests itself more openly within a specific interactive and relational environment. This allows for a more “microscopic” type of analysis towards revealing more concrete evidence of asymmetry.

3.5.1 Political Parties

It was argued in connection with gender socialization that compared to men, women lack political confidence and ambitions. The political contexts within which women find themselves fundamentally exacerbate rather than ease their disadvantages. As Thomas observed, for women in legislatures up to the late 1980s “societal acceptance
of women in public life, while much higher than it was in the past, did not afford them the same opportunity as men.... Women still felt, as did their sisters in the seventies, that politics was a place that was, in many respects, hostile to women.” (1994: 48)

The same can be said of women’s experiences in political parties.

In many places political parties function as an important link between government and society (Norris 1993: 309.). Attempts at defining parties have been problematic because parties differ in their make up, goals and activities in different places, and over different time frames (Graham 1993: 54). On the other hand, in relation to representative systems, several influential scholars on political parties have identified the function of fielding candidates in elections as a key defining criteria for a political party. For example, Lapalombara and Weiner described a party as an organization that is locally articulated, that interacts with and seeks to attract the electoral support of the general public, that plays a direct and substantive role in political recruitment, and that is committed to the capture and maintenance of power, either alone or in coalition with others. (1966:29)

Similarly, Sartori’s view that a party “presents at elections, and is capable of replacing, through elections, candidates for public office.” (1976: 64) Riggs saw a party as “any organization which nominates candidates for election into a legislature.” (1968: 51) All these definitions recognize the fundamental objective of a political party - to achieve political influence through winning seats.

To achieve their electoral goals parties need one of the most visible features of political parties - members. This is because members are required to create a collective of individuals with shared goals or ideology. A broad membership also enables a party to spread its ideology, if it has one, or give the party more legitimacy within the wider society. At the more practical level, members are needed to perform tasks and to assist in generating income for the party (Ware 1993: 63-64). Party members may be activists who are actively involved in the activities of the party, or individuals who merely pay membership fees. This support base may be bolstered by party supporters - non-members who consistently vote for the party and sometimes

106 For a discussion of the problems in defining parties see, for example, La Palombarat Weiner 1966; Ware 1996 “Introduction”; and Maor 1997 chapter one.

107 For an attempt to define a political party that is also applicable to non liberal regimes see Ware 1996: 5-6).
assist with party tasks (Ware 1996: 66). Each party has its own organizational structure for the maintenance and management of its activities, members and resources. This varies between parties. Within a particular structure, decision-making may follow formal or informal procedures (Lovenduski 1989: 12). Generally speaking, few, if any, parties are truly democratic as regards their internal proceedings. Some can be said to be very undemocratic, but most fall somewhere in between (Ware 1996: 269).

Participation in political parties is no longer a purely “sex-typed” activity in the sense that the majority of members are men and there is a normative acceptance of this fact. Most present day political parties have substantial numbers of active women members. Modern political parties, according to Norris, “provide a range of opportunities for women to participate in political life from the polling booth to local meetings, the conference platform, legislature and cabinet.” (1989: 309) While this is true in some places and technically possible in others, parties have retained an image of being sex-typed as a consequence of gendered task differentiation that maintains male dominance and a continuing discriminating stereo-typical perception of women.

3.5.2 Women’s Subordinate Roles in Political Parties

3.5.2.1 Gendered Task Differentiation

Research on group behaviour has revealed that gendered task differentiation within a group generates largely from perceptions relating to agentic and communal qualities. Eagley and Kurau maintained that consistent with male agentic nature and female communal nature, men are expected to be more concerned with controlling, managing and getting things done, and women are expected to be more concerned with social well-being within the group. Groups comprising both males and females display, basically, two kinds of group behaviour. Men undertake “task-activity” which entails

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108 For an influential earlier attempt at a conceptual understanding of parties as organizations, see Duverger’s identification of 4 types of units within parties - the caucus, the branch, the cell and the militia. These units are linked to three types of parties - cadre parties, mass parties and devotee parties (Duverger 1964). For a discussion of other models of party organization see Graham (1993: chapter four), and Maor (1997: chapter four) and Sartori (1976).

109 The term is adopted from Epstein who used it based on Robert K. Merton’s definition of sex-typed occupations (1971: 152 footnote).
directly contributing to the group’s objective. Women undertake “social activity” which contributes to the preservation of interpersonal relations and harmony within the group (1991: 686). Research on group behaviour which confirmed evidence of such a pattern, is further important for the purposes here in that these studies indicated leadership is closely related to task performance. Men were more likely to become leaders because there was strong evidence that those who take on task oriented behaviour were more likely to emerge as leaders (Eagley and Kurau 1991: 687). Ample empirical evidence for this is provided by the internal workings of political parties.

Fowlkes, Perkins and Rhinehart characterized the internal organization of a political party as analogous to the family. Among party activists, women are expected to be expressive (i.e. communal) and concerned with things internal. Men are expected to be instrumental (i.e. agentic) and concerned with things external. This distribution of roles is identifiable over four areas of party life: the pursuance of public office, motivation for activism, party roles signification and discharge of party responsibilities. Overall, a gender demarcation is most evident in relation to the way men and women are utilized. For example, support functions, such as attending meetings and telephoning are mainly carried out by women. On the other hand, the responsibility for attaining important party goals such as recruitment of candidates and election to office falls mainly on men (1979: 773, 779). Comments along the same line were also made by Constantini who pointed out that,

Students of women and politics have frequently noted the special contribution that women make to the organizational maintenance of their party, a special contribution reflected in exceptional loyalty to it and everyday attention to its internal affairs.... If the pursuit of political careers into the external world tends to be more characteristic of political men, political women tend to specialize in functions associated with their party’s internal affairs and with roles variously characterized as “supportive,” “nurturing,” “helpmate,” and “cheerleader”. (1990: 763)

Kirkpatrick remarked that even at the upper level of the parties women’s positions “had more to do with public relations than with power” (1973: 21). This sort of arrangement is consistent with the point emphasized in the previous chapter that people “do gender” with men acting dominance and women acting deference. Such phrases as “men made policy, women make coffee” have been used to described
women's role in political office (MacIvor 1996: 253). With many political parties, the most concrete evidence of such a division of labour has been the establishment of a women's section as an appendage to the main party. The establishment of a women's section serves as a device that enables a party to include women and at the same time ensures the maintenance of gender inequality within the organization. (Desserud 1997: 271 citing Brodie 1991: 62)

Parties have shown eagerness to recruit women as volunteers and to assign them clerical work, but have been reluctant to give them positions of influence or to choose them as candidates\(^{110}\) (Flammang 1984a: 15). Considering that political parties more than any other organization constitute the gateway to political office, how women fared in them is crucial to the issue of women's election to political office. This is particularly true in view of the fact that women, because of their general station within society, actually depend on the parties more than men in their pursuance of a political career. But as can be seen in the following sections, parties precisely in their role as gatekeepers have been "a crucial barrier to women's representation in elite politics" (MacIvor 1996: 241).

3.5.2.2 Party as Platform

Parties are unquestionably the most practicable mechanism to political life for women. As a full fledged organization the political party has a lot to offer by way of objectives, roles, and responsibilities (Randall 1987: 149). Unlike men who are able to build up their political capital from their professional or business background and experience, women are more likely to be dependent on numerous years of service to their party or voluntary work on which to build their political aspirations (Bernstein 1986: 158). It has been observed that women who have held public office usually have homemaker and volunteer background while men have professional and business background (Flammang 1984a: 13). Parties serve as the crucial medium for women who lack "business and social connections" (Bledsoe and Herring 1990: 220). As an arena

\(^{110}\) It has been suggested that, because parties are so reliant on women's services, any change in the situation such as women achieving parity with men, will being about the decline of the party as an organization (Constantini and Bell 1984: 138).
which provides high potential for nurturing women members into political women, political parties have in the main not delivered.

According to Randall, it is still the case that “Women do the lickin’ and stickin’, while men plan strategy” in political parties (1987: 136). Task differentiation, as shown above, is unquestionably a major impediment to women gaining the same political experience and skills as men. In addition to the more obvious formalized gendered task differentiation which relegates women to a secondary status within parties, women experience gender asymmetry through other forms of exclusion which usually characterize male-female relations and interaction within an organised situation.

3.5.2.3 The Exclusion of Women from Men’s Power Space

Within the context of parties, where power is the gist of the game and women are potential contenders for position and office, women’s political development and advancement is hampered by exclusion from men’s power space. In itself task differentiation is a way of excluding women from men’s space. Less visible but equally forceful as the gender role differentiation which is often entrenched within a party’s organizational structure are the male conventions and practices which maintain male interests. There are several facets to this mode of behaviour but underlying them all is the notion of male superiority as well as the belief that politics is more appropriate for men. The following discussion will highlight two reasons why men exclude women from their space.

The first explanation is the male stereotypical perception of women. Gender stereotyping as with all group stereotyping, serves as “an information short cut” and “a proxy measure” of an individual (Norris and Lovenduski 1995: 124). As has been pointed out throughout the previous chapter and in this chapter, in many societies people have been socialized to think that politics is more appropriate for men. This perception may have an ideological basis, or may generate from the conviction that women, due to the various gender prescriptions, are less able to participate adequately. Furthermore, as men have traditionally been associated with high status roles and are currently assuming these roles more frequently than women, they generally are regarded as more competent than women (Wood and Karten 1986: 341, 345). Male
chauvinism or men’s stereotypical perception of their superiority to women lead to male reluctance to accommodate the inclusion of women. Some men have difficulty interacting with women at an equal level. According to Epstein,

There are few norms relating to interaction with women “achievers” outside the traditional female-defined areas – few enough to make for discomfort and to make necessary a new set of ground rules. Many men would rather see women retreat from the realms where they do not know how to act with her than make adjustments to her presence. (1971: 75)

By keeping women out of their space men need not “have to treat women as equal or as serious competitors for positions of power.” (Lorber 1994: 234)

The second explanation is men’s desire to preserve their dominance. Chapman points out that when women “compete for entry to political elite, they do so within systems which have been set up by men for their own purposes and which reflect their values” (1993: 9). One core common factor is that, within most political systems the political elite is also dominated by members of the socio-economic elite. The indicators of socio-economic status such as occupation, education, income and property are qualities most commonly associated with political elites. Apart from the fact that these attributes satisfy the more practical demands of political participation such as access to time and funds, and commanding respect and deference, people within this stratum may find politics relevant to their lives in the sense that they “have a stake in society”. The maintenance of power space is a function of self-preservation which is sustained by a self selection bias. Understandably, preference would be for the inclusion of people who share similar attributes, motives and values (Chapman 1993: 15). This behaviour is similar to an exercise of homosociality. This is the bonding of men with similar social backgrounds who have “the economic, political, professional, and social resources to do each other favours” (Lorber 1994: 231).

Evidence of men’s attempts to exclude women from their power space manifest as prejudice and discrimination, implicit or explicit, which mark women’s involvement in higher level political activity. A crucial consequence of the exclusion of women from male power space is women’s diminished capacity for networking. Networking has been noted as an important factor in providing opportunity for upward mobility.
For women the problem exists within both formal and informal contexts. For example women are unable to be part of any “old boy” network (Epstein 1981a: 11, see also Currell 1974: 166). Neither can women join in drinks or informal chats “with the boys”. Women would be no less out of place within situations of actual interaction. Within a group situation, men and women behave in a way consistent with the general belief that men are more competent than women (Wood and Karten 1986: 346). For example, men and women differ in the way they communicate. Sapiro noted that, “men can effectively—even unintentionally—freeze women out of conversations and debates, or simply render their communication ineffective” (1981: 711). Within such a male dominated environment, it is not surprising that there has been evidence of women preferring their usual “traditional role” in the party (Constantini and Bell 1984: 136). They would have difficulty proving their capability. Within political parties, as within other gendered organizations women would, as Lorber observed, “have to bend over backward to prove not only their competence but their trustworthiness” (1994: 230). This is no easy feat particularly where parties take the view that women are not interested in pursuing office and are content with the way things have been (Lovenduski 1993: 8).

3.5.2.4 Male Gatekeepers.

Positions of importance within parties are scarce, but even more scarce and valued are legislative seats. Considering that for each political office taken up by a woman a man is missing out (Randall 1987: 131), it is understandable that strong efforts will be made to exclude women from being selected. Allowing women access to these positions would likely cause contention within the party (Ware 1996: 81).

Numerous studies have noted that political parties discriminate against women. For example, Hill pointed out that within a traditionalistic political culture, “female participation in legislative politics is apt to be discouraged by elite opinion leaders who seek to maintain a male status quo” (1981: 161). Based on research evidence, Sapiro noted that the “perceptions of women among the politically elite are shaped in part by stereotypes, and that sexism plays a role in elite recruitment and promotion.” (1981: 711). In their study on opposition to women holding public office Welch and
Studler found that it was not the public but the local selection committee which is the "key roadblock to women's advancement" (1986: 139).

Overt discrimination is avoided by employing "exclusionary mechanism" such as emphasising women's deficiencies. So a woman is deemed as not suitable not because she is a woman, which is overt sexism, but because she lacks a necessary quality which is covert sexism. Women are usually categorized as less qualified or limited by their sex roles. This view is usually based on women as a group regardless of the fact that this may not apply to the individual (Epstein 1981a)\textsuperscript{111}. Indirect discrimination may also occur through the selection criteria used. The qualities expected of a candidate such as education, professionalism and other social status are usually those associated with men. The way the role of the candidate is defined usually makes the job more suitable for men. For example, selectors look for candidates who are well educated, articulate speakers, who must be able to devote a lot of time and commitment to their constituency work. These expectations can penalize women (Lovenduski and Norris 1989: 559).

The question of whether parties are willing to encourage and allow women to be candidates has been identified as a crucial factor in relation to women's representation (Welch and Studlar 1996: 871). Male resistance eventuates as party resistance. In all the instances described above, men have been able to both capitalize on and have their position sanctioned on the grounds that women lack the requisites to share men's power space. Ironically, it is the culture of male predominance in political parties that largely deprive women members of party roles which would have provided the experience for political advancement. For the most part, the party environment is not amiable in terms of serving as a forum for grooming political women, nor as a platform for launching political women.

Presently, it is common for political parties of all kinds to incorporate a women's section in order to provide women their own forum and organizational structure. This

\textsuperscript{111} Gatekeepers' discriminatory attitudes are exemplified most clearly by the usual excuses made against positive action or quotas for women. There are, it is argued very few eligible women. To include less experienced or qualified women would on the one hand be against the principle of meritocracy, and on the other hand, result in a fall in the "overall calibre of politicians" (Phillips 1995: 60).
would undeniably benefit women but usually this development is less for the benefit of change but rather for the purpose of co-opting and pacifying women (Sapiro 1981: 712 citing Mossink 1980). Although having a separate women’s section would provide a hierarchy of roles for women to fulfill, it is also true that such an arrangement would segregate women even more from core party policy and decision-making, in other words, from men’s space. As things stand, any improvement in women’s representation in public office would largely depend on the gender attitudes of male party leaders. A change toward gender equality must come from the party elite as women with political ambition must be convinced that they stand a chance at getting selected and elected (Welch & Studlar 1986: 150).

3.5.3 Overcoming Institutional Constraints

It is evident that parties have been, as Flammang noted, “problematic for women” (1984: 11). The adverse implications of male dominance as well as male attitudes within parties were confirmed by Kirkpatrick’s political women. They reported a need for the support and assistance of men for their candidacy and election to office. Even within the legislature, there was a need to rely on the cooperation of men in order to perform effectively (1973: 223). Despite the fact that only some of the women actually came across opposition from party leaders when they sought to run, nearly all experienced scepticism from their male counterparts on first entering the legislature. Those who managed to move up to leadership positions reported encountering male attempts to block their advancement. The women felt that their performance overcame these obstacles, but most of them believed that women would be excluded from the top offices (1973: 222). On the whole, the women in the study did not report, in Kirkpatrick’s words, “concerted effort or conscious conspiracy of males” (1973:223). There was, however, “a tendency to resist sharing power with women” (1973:223). This was revealed by evidence of some resistance to nominating or voting for women, and, as pointed out earlier, an unwillingness to grant them leadership posts or accept them as co-legislators. Certainly, the fact that Kirkpatrick’s political women required and received male support in order to perform effectively showed that there was also some willingness to share power (1973: 223). For the purpose of this chapter the key point is that the women encountered male resistance and they reported having to
overcome this. Male resistance generates from and is possible because of male dominance.

3.6 Institutional Dimension: Hypotheses

The information from available literature on women’s participation and experience in political parties largely confirms the existence of inequality in status and asymmetry in relations and interaction between men and women members. As the above discussion has shown, the different facets of inequality to which women are subjected are not conducive to the creation or advancement of political women. Based on the observations and findings from earlier research, the following hypotheses and related sub-hypotheses on the realization of political women within the context of political parties are advanced.

3.6.1 Hypotheses

3.6.1.1 Hypothesis I:
Political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions.

   i. Party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women.
   ii. Party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills.

3.6.1.2 Hypothesis II:
Women's party participation underscores the dominance of men.

   i. Women are perceived as lacking commitment and ambition.
   ii. Women are perceived to be less able to carry out the responsibilities of political office.
3.7 Broader Application of the Hypotheses

The distinction into a social and an institutional dimension adopted in this chapter corresponds with the “demand and supply” distinction widely used in analyses on the process of recruitment into office (Norris and Lovenduski 1995, Norris 1997). The difference is in emphasis. In this thesis it is argued that gender is the key issue in both the supply factor and the demand factor. On the supply side, most crucial are the social factors which determine the extent of women’s availability for participation. On the demand side are the institutional factors, particularly male dominated political parties which determine the extent of participation required from women. The distinction into social and institutional dimensions is also compatible with Chapman’s framework for explaining the universal pattern of gender recruitment. Chapman’s theory, emphasizing on one hand the “male dominated order” and on the other “women’s situation”, is based on the premise that there is a need to “look at both the general character of gender relations and the common properties of the systems in which women are seeking to advance, recognising that the common denominator for both is the dominance of men…” (1993: xiii, 10).

More importantly, from a theoretical standpoint, the assumptions underlying the classification and their respective hypotheses have broader applicability beyond the western context from which they have been primarily derived. Jennings, for example, had this to say,

...Based on the secondary and often oppressed status occupied by women in great parts of the world, the answer is apparent, even in the absence of data of the type with which we are working. Political participation as male gender role is an inevitable lesson of political socialization in nations where socially, religiously, and often legally women are invested with less worth, as being less fit, able, or destined for fully active political lives. Therefore it seems

112 More specifically, the “supply and demand” model assumes on the demand side that party selectors choose candidates based on “their perceptions of the applicants’ abilities, qualifications, and experience.” (Norris and Lovenduski 1995: 14, 108) In this case, “the attitudes of selectors control the demand for candidates and determine the criteria which are seen as appropriate to select political leaders.” (Norris 1997: 12) On the supply side, are the aspirants and their “political capital” (i.e. resources such as funds, “political connections, party experience, career flexibility, educational qualifications and legislative skills.”) and motivation for pursuing political office. (Norris 1997: 13)

113 As with the supply and demand model, the point of departure from Chapman’s model lies with different emphases. While Chapman focused on treating women as an out-group similar to any other out-group (based, for example, on race or socio-economic status) to the group in power (i.e. dominant men), the emphasis in this thesis is on gender as the basis for women’s exclusion.
likely that the impact of socialization in creating participation inequities is as strong or stronger in non-Western as in Western nations. (1983: 383)

The factors which have been advanced as the basis for women’s underrepresentation would have relevance beyond the western context, in this case in Southeast Asia. The difference in social and cultural conditions may project an impression that things are different but the reality is that gender differences embedding gender inequality take on a similar substance with different hues. The second part of this thesis undertakes an empirical evaluation of the hypotheses formulated in this chapter within a Southeast Asian context. The case study is based on data collected in Sarawak, a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious state in the Federation of Malaysia. The next chapter attempts an overview of a number of perspectives on gender in Southeast Asia and places the purpose of this thesis in context. One of the primary goals of this thesis is to argue that contrary to the commonly held view that Southeast Asia is exceptional as a region where gender complementarity is widely practiced, gender inequality is prevalent and as in most other places is the root cause of women’s political underrepresentation. In chapter 5 the first set of hypotheses formulated within the social dimension are empirically evaluated based on data from a survey carried out in Sarawak. In chapter 6 the second set of hypotheses formulated within the institutional dimension are evaluated based on data from interviews carried out among members of two political parties in Sarawak.
CHAPTER 4

Women, the Public and Private Divide, and Politics in Southeast Asia

4.1 The Public and Private Divide: Beyond the Western Context

In the previous chapter a number of hypotheses on political women were formulated based on the public and private divide as advanced in chapter two. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the relevance of using the public and private divide beyond a western context. A reference to and defence of the broader use of the public and private divide is necessary because the applicability of the concept beyond the western context has been widely rejected. In chapter two it was explained that the main causes for such a view was firstly, the tendency to perceive the concept as an ordering derived from western conditions; and secondly, the indiscriminate use and loose reference to the term which has resulted in a confused conception and usage. The first part of this chapter considers these points with respect to Southeast Asia. It is maintained that spatial, historical, cultural and economic factors may vary the form but not the substance of gender asymmetry derived from the public and private divide in social life. Underlying this emphasis is the contention that the public and private divide serves as the most useful explanation for women’s underrepresentation. The second part of the chapter focuses on Malaysia. Here an overview of the literature on the situation of women in Malaysia is provided, followed by brief contextual background information on Sarawak. This serves as an introduction to the following two chapters and lays the groundwork for further testing of the validity of the hypotheses advanced in chapter three against data collected in the locality of Sarawak.
4.2 Pan-Cultural Stereotypes and the Public and Private Divide: Similarities within Diversity

The case for postulating the wide applicability of the *public and private divide* is fundamentally that it accords with the pan-cultural or generalist view which gives emphasis to the similarities in human existence. Williams and Best made a strong argument for this view in their influential multi nation study of sex stereotypes. Crucial to this view is the acknowledgement that humans share a lot in common in experience and behaviour because “biologically, all humans are of the same species; socially, all human groups face certain basic survival problems; and ecologically, all must adapt to a limited range of environmental conditions.” (Williams and Best 1990: 28 citing Lonner 1980: 146) This social reality gives rise to the existence of certain specie wide roles and behaviour deemed necessary for survival. As the problems faced are similar their similar resolution is highly probable. Within each human group, the most basic ordering is differentiation in sex roles and behaviour in relation to reproduction and childcare. “Who bears the children...” said Williams and Best, “is not subject to negotiation, and all societies must adapt to this immutable fact.” (1990: 234)

The prevalence of cross-cultural similarities in the assignment of roles and behaviour between males and females has been confirmed by numerous studies. However, because differences are usually more interesting, comparisons between cultures have tended to highlight differences and downplay similarities. According to Williams and Best, there are now more studies confirming that many aspects of human characteristics display wider cross-cultural similarities than differences (1990: 29). In their thirty-nation study, Williams and Best found that similarities in sex stereotypes between cultures outweigh the differences. They suggested that the prevalence of

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115 The observations were made based on, firstly, an “item-level analyses” which showed strong evidence of “cross-cultural generality in the psychological characteristics differently associated with men and women”. Secondly, an “affective meaning analysis” which showed “a cross-cultural tendency for the male stereotype to be more active and stronger than the female stereotype”. Thirdly, a “transactional analysis ego states” which showed a psychological “division of labour” between the
these similarities justify classifying these shared stereotypical features as what Lonner (1980) called “variform universals”, that is, “species wide behaviour showing only minor variations as a result of cultural influences.” (1990: 231) Recently data from this study was re-evaluated in terms of the Five Factors of personality - extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, and agreeableness. The findings, which found the male pan-cultural stereotype to be higher on the first four and the female pan-cultural stereotype higher only on agreeableness, strongly indicate a pan-cultural male dominance (Williams, Satterwhite and Best 1999: 522-3).

4.2.1 Women’s Political Underrepresentation in Southeast Asia

The confirmed prevalence of cross-cultural similarities in gender related roles, personality and behaviour supports the expectation of a linkage with another almost universal phenomenon, women’s underrepresentation in political life. This issue is of particular interest in relation to women in Southeast Asia because of the contradictory interpretations and images of gender relations emanating from the region.

4.2.1.1 Representative Politics and political parties in Southeast Asia:

Contemporary politics in most of the countries of Southeast Asia is the product of the adoption and adaptation of western political ideas on the part of western educated indigenous elites on setting up their independent states in the mid twentieth century.116 The initial establishment of political parties, organizations, and movement had, therefore, taken place in the context of their struggles for independence (Frings 1998: 36, 40). Nevertheless, post independence political institutions, conception and practice of politics have also been highly influenced by worldwide political experiences.

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sexes based on five ego states. And fourthly, a “psychological need analysis” which confirmed cross-cultural evidence of a higher male need for dominance, autonomy, aggression, achievement and endurance, and a higher female need for abasement, deference, succorance and nurturance (1980: 226-9).

116 Thailand was never colonised, but was subjected to British influence.
Party based politics, is a feature of formal politics in almost all the states of Southeast Asia. Within the region’s representative systems these mainly take the form of competitive multi party-systems, which in some cases are more accurately described as dominant competitive systems. A consequence of this is that politics in Southeast Asia have been characterized either by instability, brought about by the frequent occurrence of shifting coalitions, rise and demise of parties, or stability through the protracted dominance of one party (Sachsenroder 1998: 3, 16).

Another notable feature of party politics in the region is that although politics had been highly influenced by European colonizers, present day political parties do not subscribe to clear ideological maxims, such as the liberal, socialist, social democratic, conservative or green ideologies evident within the European context. As relatively new independent states with development and modernization as high priorities, local elites have had different priorities to resolve. The consensus appears to be that there is a need to have stronger and stricter government control for the benefit of development. The benefits of “efficient”, “benevolent” authoritarianism over the “chaos” of democracy, and the preference for “Asian values” over western liberal values are often used to justify authoritarian governments (Sachsenroder 1998: 2, 4, 14).

Notwithstanding the type of political system in place a feature of political life which will remain resilient to change (going by evidence from other parts of the world) is women’s lack of participation in political office.

4.2.1.2 Women and Politics in Southeast Asia

The adoption of universal adult suffrage and the establishment of representative government on independence meant that women in Southeast Asia have been able to enjoy the fruits of Western women’s struggles for political rights. Women in Southeast Asia are not legally barred from voting, running for or holding public office.

117 The only exception are, Brunei where the Sultan is “the paramount ruler in all matters”, heading a government of appointed cabinet ministers (Mani 1998: 85); and Burma which is ruled by a military junta, (Khin Muang Win and Alan Smith, “Burma” in Sachsenroder und Frings 1998, pp. 98-156). Vietnam is ruled by the Vietnam Communist Party (Carlyle A. Thayer, “Vietnam” in Sachsenroder and Frings 1998, pp. 449-548).

118 As the concern is with representative systems, this discussion refers mainly to political activities in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

119 These are competitive party systems in “which one party has dominated national politics over several general elections.” (Randall 1988: 5)

120 Communist parties existed earlier but these have not survived due to widespread outlawing of their activities and consequently their loss of appeal.
Like women in other parts of the third world, they were actively involved in the struggles for independence. But the political energy displayed in the independence movements dissipated as they were removed from political activities after independence (Jayawardena 1986: 259, Richter 1998: 532, 540). Southeast Asia is part of the wider Asia region where, by a 2002 count, women’s representation in national parliaments made up an average of 15.7% (Single or Lower House), 14.8% (Upper House or Senate), and 15.5% (both Houses combined) (IPU 2002).

In her analysis of women and political involvement in the Third World, Waylen identified two factors of major significance on women’s involvement. The first is the nature of women’s life. Employing a public and private interpretation, she claimed “Many women are constrained by their roles in the private sphere which prevent them from participating in the public sphere on the same terms as men and gaining the experience deemed necessary for a career in politics.” (1996b: 8) A similar observation had been made earlier on women in Southeast Asia. In 1968, Raksasataya reported the following finding:

... the political role of women in Southeast Asia is limited, not legally, but by other factors such as substantial domestic duties limiting the time available to participate in politics. Significant changes in the political role of women in Southeast Asia are not foreseen. Their direct influence in the legislative process will continue to be secondary, but they will increase their influence in other phases of political processes, perhaps behind the scenes. (1968: 89)

According to Waylen, the other significant factor is the nature of formal politics. Women are discouraged or prevented from participating by such things as, activities at times inconvenient for women, the confrontational manner of dialogue and discrimination against women particularly within political parties. (1996b: 12, citing Caldeira 1986) Women in political parties in the Third World are commonly confined and relegated to insignificance in women’s sections. Their role is primarily that of providing a support base with no effort to include their representation (Waylen 1996b: 11, citing Staudt 1986). This is not surprising particularly within the Third world context where political parties usually serve as the venue and provide the structure for the distribution of patronage (Randall 1988: 184). These observations would suggest that in Southeast Asia one likely reason for the decline in women’s participation after independence is the establishment of gendered political institutions under male control (Jayawardena 1986: 260).
Like most of the rest of the world, women in Southeast Asia are highly underrepresented. Paradoxically, there have also been a relatively high number of women leaders\textsuperscript{121} within the wider region. In her influential analysis of female leadership in South and Southeast Asia, Richter drew attention to this phenomenon which at first glance casts doubt on the generalizations concerning women’s lack of representation in national politics in the region. Closer examination reveals a common pattern in their rise to prominence that is neither reassuring nor hold high prospects for women in general. Richter identified links to prominent male relatives who had been political martyrs as the most crucial factor in women’s ascendance to leadership roles (1991: 526-28, 539). Assessed within patriarchal cultures and a “gender-based public and private sphere”, these women have not been seen as behaving inappropriately by their involvement in politics because “they are perceived as filling a political void created by the death or imprisonment of a male family member.” (1991: 526) Women’s holding of leadership position is therefore temporary, both because they are mainly considered as merely substitutes and also because they do not command established power bases\textsuperscript{122} in their own right (1991: 533). From the point of view of gender asymmetry a significant observation was that the women who assumed leadership roles invariably belong to the elite class within their respective societies. As Richter said, this superior social status is important as a condition for acceptability in a region where women’s status is low (Richter 1991:258). In Southeast Asia, said Raksasataya, women “are oriented toward domestic affairs. They are taught to follow, to depend on, and to respect men.” He expressed his own conviction that “owing to Asian women’s traditional and cultural background, they will not rival men in direct political competition…This, again, does not mean that they are any less influential in political processes than men; for they are at their best behind the scenes.” (1968: 90)

From the above discussions on Southeast Asia, women’s position with regard to political participation and holding public office within society at large and within

\textsuperscript{121} Richter’s list includes Indira Gandhi, Maneka Gandhi (India); Benizir Bhuotto (Pakistan); Sheik Mujibur Hasina Wajed, Begum Khalida Zia (Bangladesh); Sirimavo Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka); Aung San Suu Kyi (Burma); and Corazon Aquino. Also to be included in the list are Gloria Arroyo (Philippines); Megawati Sukarnoputri (Indonesia); and Wan Aziza (Malaysia).

\textsuperscript{122} These may be “an institutional base, a regional constituency, an administrative track record, or a military niche.” (Richter 1991: 533)
political parties appears to be extremely similar to the situation of women within a Western context as discussed in chapter 3. Within both contexts, women's involvement in politics seems to be mainly a function of gender asymmetry consistent with the *public and private divide* expounded in chapter 2. Yet a claim to similarity is problematic in view of the recent shift in theoretical allegiance on the part of scholars of the region. In fashion with the repudiation of theories with universal claims\textsuperscript{123}, and the adoption of "difference, plurality and multiplicity", works on women have moved from treating women as a global unitary category to an appreciation of "diversity and difference between women" (Waylen 1996b: 8). One of the most contentious issues within this development is the applicability of the public and private distinction. The following section critically reviews literature on women in Southeast Asia and argues for a retention of the *public and private divide* for understanding gender asymmetry. It must be emphasized that it is not an endeavour to undermine the merits of recognizing plurality and diversity, but a reminder of the fallacy of ignoring fundamental similarities.

### 4.3 Revisiting the Public and Private Divide in Southeast Asia

In chapter two it was pointed out that the perception of the public private distinction as a western concept has been the main reason for the reluctance to accept the public and private distinction in non-western contexts such as Southeast Asia. But, as is argued in the discussion in chapter two, this perception, which flowed from equating Rosaldo's division with the public and private sphere ideology, is flawed. An example is Stivens' argument in *Why Gender Matters in Southeast Asian Politics* (1991).

Stivens, an authority on gender studies in Southeast Asia, focused particularly on the public and private sphere dichotomy and raised two objections. First, she blamed the strong influence of western thought with its dominant public and private sphere ideology for the exclusion of women from political analyses in Southeast Asia. In other words, scholarship in the field of politics in Southeast Asia exhibits western misogynist tendencies. Second, she questioned the suitability of the public and private

\textsuperscript{123} This was discussed extensively in chapter two.
dichotomy in Southeast Asia. Naming Rosaldo specifically as a feminist who advocates such a position, Stivens said,

"It is patently clear that the way the private sphere is conceived of in much contemporary social theory is a product of western modernity, an ideology that reflects ideas about gender divisions formed and elaborated during the modern era in Europe....the relevance of the schema to social relations outside the transatlantic centres of knowledge production must be doubted." (1991b: 14, 15)

She illustrated this by pointing to the problem of defining the private domain in Southeast Asian agrarian societies such as Malaysia and Indonesia in which “there are many areas of social relations characterised by non-capitalist relations where, empirically, it is very difficult to identify a private sphere.” (1991b: 16) The quarrel with Stiven’s argument is not with her rejection of the liberal conceptualization of the public and private sphere, but with her quick dismissal and unqualified relegation of Rosaldo’s framework into the liberal definition. Ironically, the difficulty with totally discarding the relevance of the public and the private division is evident with a number of the writers in the said volume, who by Stiven’s own admission, “differ among themselves about how far they wish to retain the central scheme of public and private that all agree has been a key ordering construct in western political thought.” (1991a: 8)

Questioning the importation and applicability of western paradigms underlies most recent works on gender in Southeast Asia. This is largely due to a long time belief that emanates from earlier writings that Southeast Asia is a region of “longstanding egalitarian tradition” (Krauss 1974: 1717) where “women enjoy high status” (Esterik 1996: 1). Several features of Southeast Asian societies have been identified as evidence of this. At the forefront is the existence of social structures such as the bilateral kinship system, matrifocal organization, and indigenous cultures which underrate differences and emphasize complementary between male and female. Another distinguishable feature generates from the fact that subsistence economy, particularly wet rice cultivation, gives women access to productive labour and marketable surplus. Consequently, women in the region are able to have financial independence, contribute to family sustenance, and to exercise control over finances (Errington 1990: 3-4, Ireson 1996: 21-23). Notwithstanding the prevalence of such perceptions among current researchers in terms of arguing for indigenous analyses, a
review of more recent literature shows that these same scholars are themselves engaged in debates as to the extent of these features.

An expressed questioning of the established opinion was voiced by Esterik in Women of Southeast Asia, an edited volume first published in 1982 and revised in 1996. The declared goal was to “stimulate problem-oriented research in this area in order to expand or qualify generalizations about Southeast Asia as an area where women enjoy enviable power and status....If this generalization is not valid, then it must be corrected before it becomes an unquestioned assumption about Southeast Asia.” (1996: 1) Adopting an approach which emphasizes the interplay of religious ideology, with the domestic and economic facets of women’s lives, the message from some of the chapters is a warning against seeing women in Southeast Asia as living in an immutable world. More poignant is Esterik’s advice that research on women in the region “should not be hampered by an idealized view of the past” which may have the effect of deterring other investigations into exploitation and discrimination (1996: 2, 10-11).

An insight into the gender complementarity and equality which constitutes a large part of the “idealized past” is contained in Atkinson and Errington’s influential volume, Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia (1990). In this volume, Island Southeast Asia124 is projected as exemplification of the existence of “cultural worlds in which the rules are different” (1990: viii). Here hierarchy is established “not by gender but by rank, birth order, and spiritual potency. In scant evidence are sexual antagonism, misogyny, and similar social practices that mark gender relations in many other parts of the world.” (1990: vii) Here also “women are said, traditionally to have ‘high status’ (enjoying economic opportunities, suffering few legal restrictions or damning stereotypes; participating in cultures where the sexes are construed in terms of complementarity and balance rather than differential worth).” (1990: vii) Based on data on Indonesia, Errington’s introductory chapter described culturally instituted gender systems in Java and among tribal groups in Borneo which dilute both physical and social differences between male and female. Within these systems, two kinds of male/female connections are discernible. Firstly, in comparison with other societies

124 This comprises the Malay Peninsula, Borneo, Sulawesi, the Philippine Islands, Java, Bali, parts of Sumatra and the islands of Eastern Indonesia (Atkinson and Errington 1990: viii).
where gender stratification is one of the most fundamental social divisions, the most important hierarchical differentiation here is based on rank and not gender. Thus, one’s position is determined by how one stands according to age - that is elder verses youth - sibling ordering, generational seniority, and possession of power and prestige. The noteworthy significance of the last criteria is that both male and females are eligible for attaining power and prestige. Secondly, instead of distinct gender divisions and asymmetry, in the islands, the worldview is one of gender complementarity. This takes two forms. One form derives from and emphasizes “sameness”, “openness” and “unity”. The other form derives from an emphasis on “fractured pairs” which essentially form wholes (Errington 1990: 50-55). Male and female differences are seen as complementary differences. The male and female are different but form a complete whole (Errington 1990: 41-56). Important as the volume is in providing an exposition on gender systems which exhibit a lack of marked gender differences, it is unable to verify gender equality in the region. A crucial point raised was the observation that in spite of their culturally sanctioned sameness, women do not achieve the same power and prestige as men. This is attributed to the practical circumstances surrounding women, such as their activities and tasks, which disadvantaged them (Errington 1990: 40, 54-5). Cultural and ideological prescription of high status is not then a guarantee of equality in practice.

Studies such as Atkinson and Errington’s, which reveal a “difference”, have skewed the general perception of gender relations in Southeast Asia. As much a part of the whole picture is the strongly patriarchal Confucian culture in pre-revolutionary Vietnam (White 1982: 229-30) or the Buddhist ideology of the superior male in Burma (Spiro: 1993: 316-24) and Thailand (Kirsch 1996: 20-3) The Philippines was for more than three centuries under the influence of Spanish rule which was marked by women’s subordination in most aspects of live (Szanton: 1996: 99-102). Also noteworthy is that higher level of female economic activities may not be a sign of

125 This power as locally understood is different from the common usage of power as an abstract relationship. Anderson (whom Errington cited for an explanation of this notion of power) describes it as actually existing in the form of some cosmic energy which intersperse and sustain everything, living and non-living within the universe. (Benedict Anderson. 1972. “The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture” in Claire Holt, Benedict Anderson and James Siegal (eds.). Culture and Politics in Indonesia. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pg.7, as cited in Errington 1990: 41-2) Errington, for the purpose of clarity, calls it “potency” or “spiritual potency” (1990: 42)

126 Other examples are the various studies by Michael Peletz on the Malays in Negri Sembilan, Malaysia, and studies by Maila Stivens on the Malays in Rembau, a district in Negri Sembilan.
power and status. Kirsch, for example, pointed out that "the involvement of Thai women in economic activities might also be seen as conditioned by a Buddhist devaluation of economic endeavors in general and the relative disadvantaged position of women in relation to Buddhist values and roles." (1996: 22)

On the whole, an unqualified insistence on women’s high status in Southeast Asia has become increasingly problematic. Research on women in Third World countries such as Southeast Asia have revealed that economic development and postcolonial politics, the two key dynamics in these societies, have had a widely negative impact on women. The key factor here is that postcolonial states have undertaken the responsibility for instituting social and economic transition from the experience and legacy of colonialism (Rai 1996: 33). In carrying out "national development" governments and their bureaucracies define the objectives of development, formulate laws and policies, and oversee their implementation (Moghadam 1996: 11).

Consequently, as Ahsfar pointed out, as the role of the state expands, the enforcement of policies extend beyond macro economic development planning at the national level to influencing the lives of individuals at the micro level (1987: 2-4).

State policies impact on women in two ways, as the direct effects of economic policies and activities, and as the effects of policies related to a state’s achievement of its nation building objectives. Contrary to the optimistic predictions of modernization theories that economic development would bring forth emancipation, liberalization and general betterment for women, women have suffered a lowering in status due to their loss of access to productive work (Jaquette 1982: 268-71). Regardless of the kind of traditional culture in place - male dominated authoritarian systems or egalitarian systems – numerous area and sector specific case studies have revealed that women in the Third World have been systematically disadvantaged.127 In her review of studies128 which focused on the effects of economic developments129, Ireson

127 For example, the edited volumes Beneria 1982, Van Esterik and Van Esterik 1991, and Moghadam 1996 For various themes on the effects of industrialization on the sexual division of labour in rural societies, see Beneria 1982: xii -xvii. For the effects of development in Southeast Asia see Van Esterik and Van Esterik 1991 particularly Bell’s chapter “Gender and Economic Development in Thailand” which identifies various forms of gender oppression broadly classified under domestic industrialization, new international division of labour, and consumerism. Bell’s study may have broader application in Southeast Asia.
observed that development “seems to strike at the heart of women’s power” by, firstly, taking away “women’s economically productive functions without enabling them to develop new and valued activities”. Secondly, by “redefining customary law and political relationships to women’s detriment”, and thirdly by “altering economic systems”, which curtails women’s “control over their own labor and production.” (1996: 16-7)

Ireson’s point derives from a stand that sees economic power as the main determinant of women’s power which, arguably, does not provide the whole picture. Writers have also drawn attention to other aspects of state policies which affect women’s power and status. Analyses of the gender implication of state behaviour reveal the existence of “patriarchal states” promoting “patriarchal interests”. Dahlerup described three ways to identify the patriarchal state. First, it is any state in which men dominate the state apparatus. Second, it can be “any state or superstructure that functions mainly in the interest of men”. Third, it can be “a state that maintains or actively supports the oppression of women.” (1992: 103) Empirically, a major facet of a patriarchal state is its ideological prescription of gender, and the role assigned to women. Agawal pointed out that most policies of the modern state hold the “assumption that women are (or should be) primarily housewives and mothers and secondary workers”. Various institutions such as the family, education, religion, law, and media function to maintain a gender ideology which exhibit, particularly, a concern with “the domestication of women and control over female sexuality.” (1988: 14) In Indonesia, for example, a government-sponsored “Family Welfare Education Program” designates the “duties” of a women as, first, “Producers of the nation’s future generations”; second, “Wife and faithful companion to her husband”; third, “Mother and educator of her children”; fourth, Manager of the household” and fifth, “Citizen” (Hull 1996: 95). Likewise in Malaysia, “there is a drive to emphasize the roles of


For example, the shift to modern technologies and mass-produced goods, result in women losing their traditional economic activities or finding themselves working in male controlled economic activities. Agrarian reforms often remove women’s traditional right to land ownership because of the granting of legal titles to male heads of households. Relatedly, women are deprived of access to cooperatives, credits and other schemes. The only opportunities available to women would “most commonly include domestic work, prostitution, and factory work...” (Ireson 1996: 16).
women as wives and mothers, encourage them to forgo employment ... tailor their reproductive choices to state directives, and curb their sexual independence” (Agawal 1988: 18). Ingrained in such expectations of women is their role as “cultural transmitters” or “ideological reproducers” for the nation (Yuval-Davis and Anthias: 1989: 9).

More recent works such as Ong and Peletz (1995) indicate recognition that indigenous cultural conceptions of gender are being reshaped by political, economic and other social forces within postcolonial contexts. Taking a postmodernist approach, Ong and Peletz argued for an understanding of gender as highly fluid, and continually contested and negotiated. The construction, understanding and experience of gender as lived are products of the effects of transitory features of postcolonial Southeast Asia. On one hand is the development of capitalism with its accompanying labour market, new middle class, new consumer culture and urbanization. On the other hand are “cultural struggles” arising from ideologies of nation building, religion and ethnicity. On top of this, the state, in its pursuance of a modern nation is implicated in what Ong and Peletz called “body politics” which refer to the way the politics of the state are intertwined with the state’s prescription and control of the human body. All these are changing the nature of societies and the workings of gender. Gender relations, consequently, are not molded into fixed systems, but are continually being constituted, resisted and reconstituted into hybridity (Ong and Peletz 1995: 1-4, 8-9).

Wazir (1995) objected to the contentions that patriarchy is gaining a foothold in developing Southeast Asia. Questioning the extent and structural permanence of the emerging patriarchal trends, Wazir raised two issues. First, she said such a view ignores the resilience of indigenous gender relations. Wazir emphasized the need to focus on female exercise of informal power. The emerging trends are not so much a threat to female power and status as providing “alternative paradigms of power and prestige complementing those they already have.” (1995: 14) Stressing the effectiveness of power weapons such as non-cooperation, hostile harmony and friendly animosity which would break men to “behave like whipped dogs” she called for an anthropology of informality (1995: 18). These strategies she said, are not connivance and manipulation on the part of the weak but come from the “deferment, patience, spirituality, invisibility, transference and other social intangibles” which are
“intrinsic features of a Southeast Asian social system”. (1995: 19) In using these methods, the people are “operationalising their culture in a constructive and productive form” (1995:21)

Inherent in the above argument is the second issue Wazir raised, the inapplicability of western modes of thinking to the Southeast Asian situation. The “structural transformation over time” according to Wazir has been explained by researchers who use “an external view of women’s power in society, usually defined in terms of formal and public venues of decision-making where autonomy and personal freedom is safely guarded.” (1995: 12) No more applicable are frameworks which are based on hierarchies and binary thinking (1995: 14). “As long as biology and sex are not used as a criterion for ‘power’” Karim argues “women can continue to generate activity which will bring them visibility and prestige”. (1995: 15)

Wazir’s arguments recapture the essence of the debates surrounding studies on gender relations in Southeast Asia: first, an insistence on difference which essentially requires a different mode of analysis, and second, a rejection of the western mode of thinking. These aims are easier advocated than undertaken. Taking Wazir’s women’s informal power as example, the strategies used are by no means peculiar to Southeast Asia. Women everywhere employ these methods. In fact these are the usual methods employed by any minority or oppressed groups against dominance (Billson: 1995: 7). Looking at women’s informal power from another angle, it can be argued that it is unrealistic to view this power as having the same standing as formally sanctioned power or power of the dominant. As Miller said, “One must always keep in mind that the power of the oppressed is just that and cannot be equated with the power of those in dominant positions.” (1993: 12) The use of the notion of complementarity in gender roles as evidence of non-asymmetrical gender relations is also problematic. As Holter pointed out,

...complementarity of roles is not a sufficient condition for equality. Task differentiation between men and women, like other types of specialization, contains the germs of status differentiation as well as equality. One cannot on the grounds of complementary, dismiss the idea that sex differences in relative prestige and power are fundamental to the interactions between men and women. (1970: 49)
On the matter of the inapplicability of western modes of thinking, it is difficult to take a stance. Like everything else in the social realm, the mode of thinking and scholarship are conditioned by history and experience and do not exist in a vacuum. The influence of western thinking in thought and practice in Southeast Asia is part of the history of the region. Knowledge has been conditioned by western ideas, and as long as scholarship on Southeast Asia remains a part of knowledge in general, an attempt to reject related concepts would as Mies said, leave us “without a language to express our ideas”. (Mies 1982: 3) The reality of this difficulty is most evident in a very recent volume on gender in Asia of whom Stivens is one of the two editors. This brief literature review on gender relations in Southeast Asia began with Stiven’s objection to the use of western paradigms particularly the public and private dichotomy. It ended with a reference to her most recent publication in which the stated aim is to link “gender and the making of affluent classes by focusing on the reworkings of so-called public and private spheres, especially the reworkings of ideologies of ‘family’ and domesticity and their relationship to women’s work outside the home.” (1998: 3) By emphasizing “shifting, “reworking”, “redefining” Stiven adopted an approach which she said avoid the “pitfalls of ‘positionalities’ given the difficulties in reconstructing theory within a world dominated by Euro-American scholarship”. Like the other writers in her 1991 volume, which was discussed earlier, Stiven was faced with the difficulty of having to retain the public/ private notion. In the light of widespread cross-cultural evidence of a sexual division of labour corresponding to the public and private distinction, one wonders whether Stiven’s use of the reality of a Euro-American scholarship as a justification for her approach, is in fact an avoidance of social reality. In this thesis the public and private divide is conceptualized as an ordering that is fluid and shifting, and has cultural specificity.

Current scholarship on Southeast Asia strongly indicates a tendency and an advocacy of rejecting western paradigms. The millennium issue of the Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science gave special focus to the matter of “alternative discourses”, which is described as “referring to attempts at social science theorizing and conceptualisation in Asia and elsewhere that emerged as a result of dissatisfaction with mainstream Euro American-oriented models, research agendas, and priorities.”

Alatas listed seven characteristics that have been problematic for social science (2000: 1-2). Other articles on the question of alternative discourses in the special issue include Hans-Dieter Evers’.
On the other hand, there are also analyses like Wazir’s which described the present situation as “this mad scramble to contribute to the deconstruction of Western Social theory.” (1998: 13), or Khoo who said that present scholarship “has resulted in a healthy and needed evaluation of received wisdom. But it has also resulted in some silliness, often under the guise of paying due respect to the integrity of other cultures and intellectual traditions.” (1990: 103)

4.3.1 The Gender Debate in Malaysia

The literature on women in Malaysia tends to align roughly into three categories. Within the first category are the reports designed for various official or policy audiences. As a nation in transition characterized primarily by efforts at development and modernization, studies on women in Malaysia since the 1960s have often focused on demographics, socio-economic, socio-cultural, legal, health and welfare issues. Rohana commented that most studies on women had not taken on a gender study approach, and this trend “indicates that the analysis of gender has not been generally accepted as essential to sociological research in academia.” (1991: 53)

The second category corresponds with the “different” and “egalitarian” portrayal of women in Southeast Asia as discussed earlier in this chapter. With strongly post modernist leanings, these studies emphasize gender equality and women’s high status by stressing complementary between males and females, highlighting women’s participation in production, their economic independence and the fact that women have been “shrewd traders and holders of the purse string” within peasant society.


For a more recent bibliographic classification of research and studies on women in Malaysia see Jansilah Ariffin, 1991. Women’s Studies in Malaysia: an Overview and a Reference Bibliography, National Planning and Family Planning Board.


Much have also been made of the existence of egalitarian matrilineal customs and bilateral kinship communities in the country. There has also been an influential body of research on the female power nexus that focuses on the female power of resistance through withholding labour, affection, and acts of defiance, silence and hysteria. Because they are basically about the exploitation of women, some of these works may also be placed in the third category, which comprises attempts to show women’s subordination. Within this category the main concern has been discrimination against women in the labour force, particularly in relation to capitalist industrialization. Apart from brief mention of the existence of some laws which discriminate against women, very little attempt has been made to analyse gender asymmetry within a more radical mode.

Granted that as a developing society most of the available literature would be linked to the “women and development” and “women in development” genre, there are several other things which have characterized research efforts. First is the fact that the focus of almost all studies has been on Malay women. On the one hand this is due to the fact that Malay cultural dominance over other ethnic groups has resulted in more Malays in academia (Stivens 1992: 215). The preference for studying one’s own race is understandable from the point of view of interest, ease and feasibility. (Rohana 1991: 50) On the other hand, this is due to the fact that state endeavor in the political, economic and scholarly sectors have been skewed towards the Malays and consequently, a lot more is written about Malay women (Stivens 1992: 215). This is understandable as part of the bid to define the Malaysian citizen based on a Malay-Muslim identity (Healey 1999: 57).

The focus on Malay women has given rise to a second characteristic, which is, an avoidance on the part of researchers to undertake what they consider to be “controversial” subjects. This is not only because they know such endeavours are not

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134 See Stivens 1996.
136 See also Rohana 1986; and Rohana 1999.
encouraged and therefore less likely to be published, but also because of the fear of upsetting the official status quo. (Rohana 1991: 54) In her discussion of the difficulties associated with writing on women in Malaysia, Stivens pointed out that tension is raised “by even mentioning the issues of sexuality and Islam in feminist writing.” (1994: 215) Under such circumstances, she said, for some academics, “it is safer to write about women within the framework that does not challenge the dominant way of knowing. Empiricist accounts of ‘women’ do not have to disturb either hegemonic powers or paradigms: women can be slotted in, but kept marginalized, and gender relations as an object do not emerge.” (1992: 217)

Finally, scholarship on Malaysia, like scholarship on other parts of Southeast Asia, is at a crossroad particularly in relation to gender analysis. The current trend of breaking away from, and deconstructing “androcentrism”, “eurocentrism”, and the inability, so far, to come up with indigenous solutions have made it problematic to theorize gender. For those who have attempted such paths by focusing on difference, there has been a need to substantially move back in time to a “better” past to support their arguments. Such a resort to a “romanticization” of what had been is not without value but ultimately does not reflect reality (Khoo 1990: 103).

4.3.2 Women in Malaysia

As mentioned above, most literature and data on women in Malaysia are written with reference to women of the Malay community which, as the largest ethnic group, makes up 60% of the population. The unfortunate consequence of this focus on Malay women as “the” Malaysian women is that women of other ethnic communities have been rendered invisible.


For the benefit of appreciating the importance of both continuity and change in social life, a depiction of Malaysian women must start with pre-colonial feudal Malay society which was divided into a ruling class and a commoner class. Women were either aristocrats or peasants, and their roles particularly in relation to economic life differed accordingly. Aristocratic women by and large did not engage in economic activities, concerning themselves with "social reproduction", that is the bringing up of children and the care of adults who would take their place within the social structure. In contrast, peasants partook directly in the peasant economy. In addition to their domestic role, peasant women were involved in subsistence production. In agriculture, fishing and other productive activities, men and women worked jointly, and a sort of complementarity existed (Jamilah 1992: 2-8, 29). But women's role as economic contributors in addition to their childbearing responsibilities never insulated them from the deprivation commonly associated with such dual roles (Kaur 1994: 5). This underwent change for the worse under British colonization (1874 to 1957) which brought in commercial agriculture and a capitalist economy. Most of women's economic participation began to be viewed as of lesser value. Women became housewives\textsuperscript{139} and a "housewife ideology" became more distinct (Jamilah 1992: 29).

Prior to the effects of colonization in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century which brought about a change in gender relations and women's status within an economic production context, a change over a different dimension had evolved from the influence of Islam. Early Malay society practiced two forms of customary laws of significant relevance to gender relations. One was the adat temenggong, which was patriarchal in nature but nevertheless allowed women equal access to land. The other form, adat perpatih, was practiced in matrilineal communities and provided for women to have exclusive right to land\textsuperscript{140} (Jamilah 1992: 3). The customary laws maintained the principle of a bilateral kinship system. Under Islam, these principles, and especially adat perpatih were eroded by other Islamic principles of land-ownership and inheritance. For example, under adat, sons and daughters inherit equal shares but under Muslim laws

\textsuperscript{139} In 1970, 25\% of the female population were housewives. In 1980 the figure had increased to 51\%. (Rohana 1986: 141).

\textsuperscript{140} It must be pointed out that, this significant right did not provide absolute autonomy and independence as women were strictly confined to their homes, their fields and their villages. (Rohana 1986: 136) This matrilineal custom of the Minangkabau people is to be in just a small part of the country. (Rohana 1986: 135) But as Stivens cautioned, it has assumed a disproportionate significance in people's mind (1996).
daughters are entitled to half of what sons are entitled. The Islamic *Shariah* law instituted a patrilateral slant in the control of economic and political matters within the family and the community. (Wazir 1983: 720). On embracing Islam, Malay society veered towards patriarchal doctrine, but in practice the continuation of bilateral kinship and flexibility in the observance of conjugal locality led to a condition that was not rigidly patriarchal (Jamilah 1992: 3). This changed in the 1970s when adherence to strongly patriarchal structures took hold through an Islamic revivalism advocating fundamentalism among younger Malays (Rohana 1999: 419).

The patriarchal aspect of Muslim Malay society combined with the highly patriarchal Chinese and Indian communities made for an overall patriarchal society. Chinese women immigrants had arrived in large numbers from early in the nineteenth century on the encouragement of the British colonial government. This was undertaken in order to solve the sex imbalance problem among the Chinese community as well as a means of increasing the labour supply. The women who came were mostly from the lower strata of feudal Chinese patriarchal society. Over this same period, Indian women were also encouraged to immigrate as laborers. Like the Chinese women, the Indian women came from a strongly patriarchal-caste society (Jamilah 1992: 13-4).

### 4.3.2.1 Women and Nation

After independence in 1957, women in Malaysia, like other women in most postcolonial states, became part of the “women and development” rhetoric as the state undertook a planned national development strategy for modernization. The attempts at effective management of economic resources included integrating women’s productive and reproductive roles in development (Jamilah 1994: 92). Initial “Women-in-development” planning primarily concerned women’s family related responsibilities. Women’s social reproduction roles were to be enhanced by policies elevating women’s literacy, education and participation in the workforce (Jamilah 1994: 101). In 1991, on the implementation of the Sixth Malaysia Plan there was a shift in focus to women themselves by recognizing their various roles in the social, economic and political domains. More effort has been made to incorporate women
related issues. Broadly speaking, women in Malaysia are making progress. The country’s record on improved education, employment and health, the three most crucial areas of development, has been good. But gender inequality is still prevalent (Jamilah 1994: 168-71). Closer scrutiny of some aspects of women’s lives will reveal the realities of women’s status and inequality.

4.3.2.2 Laws and Women’s Status

Under Article 8, clause 1 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, it is stated that “all persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law”. However, this provision for the equality of all persons is illusory for women due to the existence of other laws which reflect women’s lesser status. As Noraini observed, “As legislative draftsman par excellence the state, through its legislation or lack of legislation (as the case may be), can operate to maintain the subordination of women.” (1986: 215) Most notorious is the law which appears to condone the discrimination of women. Following clause 1 of Article 8 which guarantees equality, is clause 2 in which it is stated that

...except as expressly authorized by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground only of religion, race, descent or place of birth in any law or in the appointment to any office or employment under a public authority or in the administration of any law relating to the acquisition, holding or disposition of any property or the establishing or carrying on of any trade, business, profession, vocation or employment.

The omission of “sex”, which is interpretable as not prohibiting discrimination against women in the stated areas (Mehrun 1993, cited in Jamilah 1994: 120) can also be said to encompass an acceptance of discrimination against women. The fact that Malaysia has as yet not ratified, acceded or been a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women strongly supports this interpretation. The necessity of such an omission becomes clear in view of the existence of other laws that discriminate against women. These discriminatory laws

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141 The Sixth Malaysia Plan states that: “the government also recognizes that specific strategies must necessarily be formulated to effectively incorporate women in the process of development. Towards this end, concerted effort will be made to progressively reduce existing constraints and facilitate the assimilation of women into the mainstream of social and economic activities.” (Jamilah 1994: 102-2)

142 There has been suggestion “to study the convention from the point of view of current laws and policies to ascertain whether it may be feasible to accede to and ratify it with reservations. Motion for its accession and ratification have been moved by non-governmental organizations under the wings of the National Council of Women’s Organizations....” (Mehrun Siraj 1993, cited in Jamilah 1994: 119)
are the most concrete legal indicators of women’s lesser status. One obvious example of women’s unequal status under the constitution concerns citizenship provisions. While the foreign wives of male Malaysian citizens have the right to obtain citizenship, the foreign husbands of female Malaysian citizens are not accorded the same privilege. Similarly, with regard to social security benefits, the widow of a male worker is entitled to all benefits but the widower of a female worker is entitled only if he is mentally or physically disabled at the time of the wife’s death (Mehrun 1993, cited in Jamilah 1994: 120). Other examples can be found in the country's family laws. Women do not have equal rights to guardianship of children. The father is the guardian of a child and the mother assumes guardianship only on the demise of the father. Even then another person may be appointed as joint guardian by the court. Laws on inheritance also favor the male. While a husband inherits all the wife’s property on her death, a wife is only entitled to a portion of her husband’s property on his death. The preceding are all instances whereby women’s subordinate status is defined in legal terms (Mehrun 1993, cited in Jamilah 1994: 126). Not many women are aware of this implication, nor would it be expected to be of serious concern. Within Malaysia’s multiethnic context, the main concern has been with racial discrimination (Noraini 1986: 215).

4.3.2.3 Women and Education

Scrutinized in terms of its impact on gender relations, education in Malaysia has been a primary agent for gender role enforcement. The Malaysian education system, according to Kaur, is a legacy of colonial policy and practice through which male policymakers “perceive women’s vocation in terms of running their households”. The school curriculum stresses women’s “nurturing and domestic roles” by teaching them domestic science, sewing and needlework, while boys did woodwork and metalwork (1994: 15-6). What may have existed within society as a fact of everyday life became formally institutionalized as a value of superior social life. This idea is then reinforced within society in general by public media portrayal of the ideal woman. Prominent women whose status derived either from their husbands’ position or their own attainment are usually portrayed as excellent homemakers. Such ideals exacted

\[143\] For a discussion of gender roles and the modern Malay middle class in Malaysia see Stivens 1998b.
other consequences for women. As Rohana observed, the idea that “the noble and expected role of a woman is to be a good housewife ... have invariably affected women’s education, their choice of courses in schools and universities, as ultimately related to their choice and credibility for certain occupations.” (1986: 145-8)

Having made the point that education works to reinforce gender divisions, it must also be emphasized that, like elsewhere, higher education has been a means for upward social mobility. Post independence economic progress and the government’s emphasis on education as the key to the nation’s human resource development has on the whole been beneficial to women’s emancipation. Officially, females are not discriminated against and both genders are given equal educational opportunities (Jamilah 1992: 29, 81). The number of women who received formal education has steadily increased since colonization and currently there is gender parity at least as regards the acquisition of formal general education (Jamilah 1994: 81). Although this is the case, females are still lagging behind males in a number of ways. Firstly, one of the consequences of earlier widespread reluctance to allow girls an education is the existence of a majority of women in their late thirties and above who are illiterate or only have primary education. In addition to their small number very few literate women of that age group managed to get higher education. Secondly, although there have been marked increases in female enrollment in the country’s universities, it is still the case that, in the traditional way, there are those who are adversed to letting women acquire higher university education or similar access as men to all fields of study. In spite of concerted progress, the flow on effect of earlier attitudes and practices are still evident, and overall there is generally a perception that women are not as well educated or qualified as men (Jamilah 1994: 81,87, 90).

4.3.2.4 Women in the Labour Force
One of the most obvious manifestations of Malaysia’s failure to sign the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women is the treatment of women in the labour force. According to Jamilah, “There is no equal right legislation guaranteeing equal opportunities in recruitment, career development, promotion,  

144 In 1980, more than 70% of women above 35 years old were illiterate. (Rohana 1986) For an overview of how attitudes to education evolved see Wazir (1993: 89-93, 99-100)
social security and working conditions.” (1994: 127) Half of Malaysia’s population consists of women and out of this, in 1984, 44% were involved in the labour force as compared with 87% of men. (Jamilah 1994: 33). The occupational breakdown for women, as shown in 1986, indicated 22.5 in manufacturing, and 47.5 in services. In terms of occupation status, only about 11% were professional, technical, administrative and managerial workers (Jamilah 1994: 39, 40).

The high number of women in the labor force and their concentration at the bottom of the labour hierarchy is due to the nature of Malaysia’s post-independence industrialization. Most industries are export oriented manufacturing enterprises requiring intensive labour (Kuar 1994: 17). Women have provided almost all the labour for the electronic and textile industries, the country’s two major industries. This is not a totally undesirable situation except for the fact that women, “are still the most abused section of the formal labour force with minimum protection for work, benefits and wages.” (Kaur 1994: 3) The role of the state as the protagonist in the exploitation of women’s cheap labour is undeniable. In an attempt to attract foreign investment the Malaysian government made this claim,

The manual dexterity of the Oriental female is famous the world over. Her hands are small and she works with extreme care. Who, therefore, could be better qualified by nature and inheritance to contribute to the efficiency of a production line than the Oriental girl? Women workers are considered to have naturally nimble fingers; they are docile and compliant; they do not get involved in trade union activity and are reluctant to go on strike. They are good workers, tolerant of routine, repetitive and monotonous tasks which men abhor and shun. (Kaur 1994: 17)

The exploitative nature of women’s employment in such industries reflects the view that the woman is not the main provider in the family. Low wages for women are justifiable because they are merely “secondary workers” whose wages contribute extra income for their families (Kaur 1994: 17). Being at the bottom of the wage ladder in both the private and public sectors, most working women are unable to afford domestic help. A 1975 report showed that women in paid work also had to do housework and worked an estimated 112 hours a week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. It is not surprising that these women are unable to find the time for other activities which would enrich or improve their lives (Rohana 1986: 150-1). On a more positive note a likely future trend is that Malaysia’s industrial development will continue to depend
highly on female labour but under changed circumstances. Malaysia's goal of being a part of the high-technology information age will increasingly require skills and "brains" not "brawn". This will open up opportunities for women who have had the benefits of education and training (Jamilah 1992: 170).

4.3.2.5 Women, Religion and the State

In recent decades, conformity to Islamic prescriptions of appropriate gender roles and behaviour has been bolstered by a strong region-wide Islamic revivalism. In Malaysia this revivalism has been reinforced by the contention between UMNO and PAS the two major Malay-Muslim based parties. In order to ward off the challenges posed by a strongly fundamentalist opposition PAS, UMNO, the dominant party within the ruling coalition has had to embark on it own Islamization policies in order to affirm its legitimacy as an Islamic party (Freedman 2001: 416). Consequently, Muslims have to conform to an insistence on more religious commitment and religious practices as guides to people's everyday life, and stricter adherence to prescribed moral values (AgawaI1983: 17). Since it is the mothers and daughters (more than the males) who are expected to maintain Malay Muslim tradition, and as women are more subject to criticism for any deviation, women are obliged to conform as much as they can (Wazir 1983: 728). Islam has played a big part in shaping Malay women's femininity for all strata of Malay society during the last few decades (Healey 1999: 52).

It is not surprising that, critically speaking, the change has been directed at strengthening patriarchal structures, subjugating and increasing control over women. For example, quoting Wazir,

...a women's contribution to Islam is perceived not so much in her ability to achieve self-development through seeking and acquiring greater technical and social skills, knowledge and experience, but in her ability to perform and improve upon her domestic role and to co-operate in community ventures organized by religious and political specialists. (1983: 729)

This emphasis in Islam has been a major impediment to women's leadership potential. This is clearly revealed by the way the increasing control exerted by religious movements has expanded the scope of women's subordination. While the growth in religious movements and organizations has opened opportunities for male leadership,
women are being further and further removed from the power hierarchy. Women essentially serve as the life support bases for the expanding male leadership and control (Wazir 1983: 728, 729). According to Wazir, Malay Muslim women “forgo personal autonomy and constrain personal freedom” because they do not distinctly express a separation “between personal and social, that is, they see themselves as closely interlinked with other more visible, public institutions, like the family, community and state, which in their list of priorities stand above personal freedom and autonomy.” (1998: 10)

In Malaysia, the recent Islamic reassertion of women’s role is supported by the state and coincides with the state’s own patriarchal tendencies. For rural women, their role as economic producers had been eroded by post-independence use of modern technology in the rural sector. The mechanization of agriculture, extensive use of fertilizers and pesticides, removed the need for women’s labour. The creation of organizations such as farmer’s cooperatives and government officials’ policy of dealing with male heads of households meant that economic resources came under the control of the male of the household (Kaur 1994: 7). For all women, official policy consistently advocated “women’s place’ being primarily in the home, complementing the work of husbands and fathers as financial providers.” (Healey 1999: 53)

### 4.3.3 The Modern Malaysian Women

The situation of the Malaysian women today is, as Healey described succinctly, one where “Recent political, religious, government, and bureaucratic discourses …have clearly associated women with their functional role as wives, mothers, and breeders of the next generation of workers, consumers and Muslims.” (1999: 52) Women’s domestic responsibilities, adherence to religious and communal commitments, have all been turned into means as well as measures of women’s femininity, virtue and modernity. Such images have permeated all sections of society particularly through the local media.\(^{145}\)

Urban socially mobile women aspire to “Muslimness” and modernity by properly carrying out their female roles and by the acquisition of consumer products deemed necessary in a modern Muslim home. For the village women, work in the public service or a factory, and being a good housewife is modern (Healy 1999:53).

4.3.4 Feminist Orientation

It can safely be assumed that the popular perception of the modern woman as one who properly adheres to appropriate female roles and behaviour would serve to dampen the emergence of any strong emphasis on women’s rights. The question of women’s rights has never been of central concern in Malaysia. As the country focuses most of its effort on industrialization toward its Vision 2020 goal, social issues such as women’s right will continue to remain secondary (Rohana 1999: 422). This lack of urgency has to a large extent been due to the lack of any strong women’s movement with more radical agendas. Women in Malaysia are not keen to be labeled feminists because the term is mainly associated with white western women and has an anti-male connotation. This perception has been aggravated by the domestic portrayal of feminism as “part and parcel of the evil and decadence that came from the west.” (Rohana 1999: 417) Women’s oppression is either rarely acknowledged, or is expressed differently. Efforts against discrimination and violence have been expressed as calls for reforms in these areas. The subdued nature of debate has been deemed necessary by all concerned because of the delicate nature of the ethnic and religious composition in the country. Anything resembling a challenge to the social, cultural and religious status quo is best avoided (Rohana 1999: 417-8). There are about 150 active women’s NGOs out of 250 in the country. By and large these organizations have gone about pursuing their goals carefully through official channels. Any communication with the establishment will first confirm a commitment to “respect the sanctity of the state, religion and the family.” (Rohana 1999: 421)

For most women in Malaysia, said Nagaraja, “marriage is still viewed as an achievement for oneself, womanhood and respect. The propagated ideology to sanctify and uphold the two parent male-female family, upholds among other things:

146 The goal is to turn Malaysia into a developing country by 2020 (Hussin 1993: x)
the naturalness of heterosexuality; monogamy (for women); and good parenting.” Consequently, “A feminism that question the basic core of gender inequality, patriarchal ideology, and structure, would take root only in the far distant future for feminists in Malaysia” (Rohana 1999; 422, citing Nagaraja 1995).

4.3.5 Women and Politics in Malaysia

4.3.5.1 The Malaysian Political System:

The Federation of Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy with a Westminster style bicameral Federal Parliament. The head of state is the Yang Di Pertuan Agong (the king) who is elected every five years based on a rotation system by a Council of Rulers. The 69 appointed members of the Senate (Dewan Negara) and the 192 elected members of the House of Representative (Dewan Rakyat) comprise representatives from all the thirteen states of the federation. The head of the federal government is the Prime Minister who leads a Cabinet of Ministers and Deputy Ministers. At state level, each state has its own local head of state, a unicameral state legislative assembly (Dewan Negeri) of elected members and a state government. The state government headed by a Chief Minister and a cabinet of State Ministers and Assistant Ministers. Constitutionally, within the Malaysian federal system power is divided between the central federal government and the thirteen state governments, but in practice the power balance is tipped in favour of the central government. Nevertheless, each state has its own constitution and substantial powers. The principle of constitutional equality between the individual states and between the states and the central government is strongly upheld (Gomez 1998: 226).

Malaysia practices universal adult suffrage. Elections to parliament and the state assemblies are held every five years through a single member plurality system based on territorially defined constituencies. At both federal and state level politics in Malaysia has been characterized by multi-party systems, and government by multi-party coalitions. This is primarily due to the fact that the multiethnic populace have evolved politics and political parties that are ethnic and communal based. This has necessitated cooperation among the various groups and Malaysia is often described as
practicing consociationalism.\textsuperscript{147} The culture of consociationalism among the leaders of the nation goes back to the first alliance among the leaders of three political parties representing the three main ethnic groups (Malay, Chinese and Indian) prior to independence from Britain. Indeed British departure was conditional on an understanding being reached between the groups (Ahmad 1989: 352, 354). Given the realization that a wide-based support could not be achieved by a single multiracial party, the benefits of continuing with such an arrangement are obvious. Coalition politics has so far managed to deflect ethnic and class barriers\textsuperscript{148} (Gomez 1998: 251). Malaysia is presently governed by the Barisan Nasional (National Front), which is a coalition of 14 parties. Since independence the Prime Minister has been the leader of UMNO (United Malay National Organization) the coalition party which holds the highest number of seats in Parliament. The other two major ethnic parties of the coalition are the MCA (Malaysian Chinese Association) and MIC (Malaysian Indian Congress). Opposition parties are, the Islamic based PAS (Parti Islam SeMalaysia), the ostensibly multi-racial but mainly Chinese DAP (Democratic Action Party) and Keadilan (Justice Party).

4.3.5.2 Political Culture
One of the most distinct features of Malaysian society is the predominance of communal politics. Most political parties are either formally declared ethnic parties, or draw their support primarily from one particular ethnic group. Communal politics is most evident among the parties of the ruling coalition. These parties do not profess strong ideological leanings\textsuperscript{149}, striving instead for an across the board appeal among their respective groups\textsuperscript{150} (Gomez 1998: 246, 154). Of the opposition parties, PAS is an Islamic party firmly rooted in Islamic religious ideology with the primary goal of establishing an Islamic state. Although it is a party for all Muslims, within the Malaysian context this essentially means it has its support base among Muslim Malays (Gomez 1998: 239, 248). The other opposition party, DAP, aims for “a free, democratic and socialist Malaysia, based on the principles of racial equality, and

\textsuperscript{147} See, for example Gomez 1998.

\textsuperscript{148} This is primarily because the priorities of ethnic consciousness transcend class differences.

\textsuperscript{149} Of the fourteen parties of the ruling national coalition only one - GERAKAN - has a pro-labour, highly socialist philosophy (Gomez 1998: 247), but while it is officially a multiracial party, its support base is mainly Chinese (Freedman 2001: 419).

\textsuperscript{150} It has been argued that the ethnic nature of politics has served to conceal the dominance of the political parties by the capitalist class (Brown 1994: 216).
social and economic justice, and founded on the institution of parliamentary democracy.” (Means 1974: 393-4) DAP is a party for Malaysians from all ethnic communities, but has its support base primarily among Chinese (Gomez 1998: 238, 249). In Malaysia, ethnic based support is the most common feature of almost all political parties regardless of their ideological orientation.

As regards governance, in its “Vision 2020”, Malaysia aims to establish “a mature, consensual, exemplary democracy”. By this is meant not the Western conception of democracy, but a supposed “Asian” democracy151, although it is not clear how this is defined. The Malaysian populaces’ experience of democratic parliamentary rule since independence has been based on the government (that is, the National Front) enjoying a two-thirds majority in Parliament. The consequences are, on the one hand, the existence of “a political culture with rather modest expectation of democracy, civil rights and public accountability.” (Gomez and Jono 1999: 3) On the other hand, unchecked executive dominance has fostered “political patronage, abuse of power and conflict of interest.” (Gomez and Jono 1999:3) A patron-client political culture pervades Malaysian politics starting from the elites of the executive, the legislatures and the political parties, through to the grass-root level.

Patronage politics involving resources does not stop at national elite level. At the state level, elected representatives have access to federal and state government allocations and other development funds for their constituencies. It is part of the rewards of office that elected representatives have the power and influence to determine the distribution of the allocated resources (Shamsul 1986: 226, 227). Distribution of resources may be directed at gathering and maintaining support, or may reward loyalty, but is also a means for self-enrichment. For many political aspirants, political office is “a passport to riches and power” (Shamsul 1986: 229). The use of the term “money politics” aptly describes the Malaysian situation. It is even common for politicians to resort to vote buying for positions in parties (Gomez 1998: 260). For others, connection to governing parties may provide access to jobs, contracts and various other benefits (Freedman 2001: 420).

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151 The term was used by Dato Sri Dr. Mahathir bin Mohammed the current Prime Minister of Malaysia. (Gomez 1998: 246)
While, as seen earlier, certain explicit discrimination against women exists particularly with regard to employment, in politics there are no formal rules which discriminate against women. Women’s right to vote was provided for in the constitution when Malaysia attained independence. However like most other places, men’s and women’s equal right to vote and to hold public office have not meant equality in reality.

Since pre-colonial times politics has been a male activity and women’s place was in the home in spite of their economic activities. Even for aristocratic women, who by virtue of their birth have the potential to be in some ways connected to politics, there is no any direct or substantial political influence (Jamilah 1992: 2-3, 8). Currently in Malaysia high politics is still a male domain. Within the country’s national and state legislatures women are extremely underrepresented, and within political parties women’s political participation is clearly secondary to men’s participation because of their relegation to women’s auxiliaries. Certain “selective inclusion” into positions of power has tended to hide this asymmetry to a certain extent (Manderson 1991: 51). Women have been appointed to the Senate, municipal councils and various state agencies and bodies (Siti 1996: 20) But as Manderson pointed out the inclusion of a small number of women to positions of power is mainly for the purpose of fulfilling the obligation to integrate women into the process of development. In no way is it an attempt to remedy inequality (Manderson 1991: 51, 58).

Almost all selection processes, particularly candidate selection, within the ruling political parties are elitist and are far from being democratic processes. Although nominations require broader party support, the selection of candidates is up to each party’s leadership. Links to party elites is consequently very important (Gomez 1998: 257-8). The pervasiveness of patronage politics, as pointed out earlier, serves to show the Malaysian political arena as one that is very conducive to the practice of homosociality. This has been confirmed by Manderson who commented that political parties in Malaysia serve as the “forum for male sociality, pursuit of ambition, and exercise of power.” (1991: 58) Women, on the other hand, have not been politically assertive, docilely accepting their role of giving service rather than being involved in

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152 The same can be said of opposition parties.
decision-making. For all concerned, this manner of participation is within the parameter of acceptable female behaviour (Noraini 1994: 97).

Broadly speaking, Malaysia is a society where ethnic and communal interests and sentiments have produced political complexities with far higher priorities than a general issue of women's representation (Wazir 1991: 123). Despite claims of including women through appointment, the dearth of women in public office is clearly shown by the small number of women in the various representative bodies in the country.

4.3.5.3 Women's Representation

Male dominance of local authorities is clearly shown by the fact that throughout the country roughly not more than 15% of municipal council members are women (Jamilah 1994: 136). Likewise, women's representation in the state assemblies have seen a very slow growth, beginning with no women in the state assemblies in the 1950s, to 4.8% in the 1980s, and 6.3% in the 1990s. In the general elections in 1990 no woman was nominated or elected in two states - Penang and Terengannu (Jamilah 1994:140-1). In 1995, there were no women in the State Assemblies in Kelantan and Tengannu. In 1997 the average figure for the whole country is one woman to 30 men in the state assemblies (Wanita SUPP 1997: 35).

With respect to representation in Parliament, in 1990, 11 were elected which accounted for 6.1% out of a total of 180 MPs (Jamilah 1994: 141-2). In 1995 there were 15 women out of a total of 192, and in 1999 only 20 were elected. This accounts for 10.3% out of a total 193 seats. Women in Malaysia are still unable to break out of the 10% mark (Borneo Post, 16 Dec. 1999: 8). Appointment to the Senate (Dewan Negara) is made by the King on the recommendation of the Chief Minister of each state. Members are appointed for a term of six years. In 1994 there were 13 women senators out of a total of 69. This increased to 18 (26.1%) in 1998 and remained the same as of 2002.

In Malaysia the Prime Minster has the prerogative to choose his cabinet. The first women minister was appointed in 1969. In 1994, there were 2 women full ministers
and 3 deputy-ministers. There has been no real attempt made to increase women’s representation, despite other women leaders waiting to be admitted (Jamilah 1994: 142). After the 1995 elections, there were 2 women full ministers and one deputy minister. This was reduced to 2 women full ministers and one women parliamentary secretary after the 1999 elections.

Official portrayals of the imbalance in representation, for example, to an international audience have been diverse, if not contradictory. In a special supplement on Malaysia in the July 1996 issue of *The Parliamentarian*, an article entitled “Wanita Power” (Women Power) claimed “women are emerging from behind the scenes politically to make an impact on the governance of Malaysia.” Written by a women deputy minister153 (one of three women who held ministerial posts at that time), the article described the tradition of female political activism and women’s leadership positions (Siti 1996: 19). In contrast, in a Commonwealth Parliamentarian penal session on gender politics that took place in August 1996, another women minister154 highlighted the dismally low number of between six and seven percent women members in the Federal Parliament and State Assemblies. This situation, she said, was “despite of the overwhelming participation of women as party members, voters in elections and canvassers…” (The Parliamentarian, October 1996: 342).

The aftermath of the 1999 parliamentary elections provided a good example of the dialogue on women’s place in public office in Malaysia. After the announcement of his cabinet line-up the Prime Minister was asked why he had reduced the number of women Ministers from three to two. His response was,

> We looked around, but it was not easy to find a woman who would fit in with the needs of the party, the proportion in terms of parties, from the States and the relevant ministries and all kinds of other considerations. I regret very much that I cannot have three. I had wanted to have three or more but it was not possible. We’ll make it up in some other way. (New Strait Times, 11 Dec. 1999: 2)

Women’s groups expressed their disappointment at his decision. A news report quoted the deputy chairman of the Women’s Institute of Management who said that “Malaysia should encourage political awakening and not take 1,000 steps backwards

153 Hon. Dato Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman, Deputy Minister of Health, Malaysia.
154 Hon. Datin Paduka Zaleha Bt. Ismail, Minister of National Unity and Development, Malaysia. She was dropped from the cabinet line-up after the November 1999 general election despite retaining her seat in Parliament.
in the area of advancement and equal opportunities for women.” But typical of the approach usually taken by women’s groups that dare to make a comment but do not wish to upset those in power, the report noted that she “also emphasized that this was not a criticism but merely an appeal to point out that there are capable women candidates out there and there is still time to put things right.” (Borneo Post, 16 Dec. 1999: 8) Speaking at a forum on Women, Politics and the Media a few months later she was more forthright in her criticism of women’s docile attitude over the situation saying,

I’m stunned by the almost deafening silence from Malaysian women and women organization over the recent reduction of women ministers in the cabinet. We should be courageous enough to take ‘the way forward’ by expressing ourselves on women’s issues. (Borneo Post, 3 March 2000: 5)

Speaking at the same forum, the Chairman of the National Advisory Council for the Integration of Women in Development also expressed her shock at the lack of reaction to the Prime Minister’s action describing the issue as “not a good legacy to be brought into the new millennium”. She also strongly criticized women politicians who appear to be merely toeing the party line:

...women politicians should be more issue oriented to gain credibility and visibility within the political hierarchy...adopt a higher level of professionalism and be more aware of global issues concerning them...They should not be just waiting around to be picked to assist their male counterparts. (Borneo Post, 3 March 2000:5)

A similar criticism was expressed by a representative from the National Union of Journalists. In response to accusations that women politicians are not given adequate exposure by the media, she said that “…the media’s job is made difficult by women MPs who refuse to participate actively in Parliament debates and shy away from giving comments on statements made by certain politicians.” (Borneo Post 3 March 2000:5)

The preceding criticisms of women politicians seem to give credence to the common reasons for excluding women from positions of power - “lack of administrative ability and managerial skill, indecisiveness and too emotional.”(Borneo Post 3 March 3003:5) The lack of public reaction to the obvious unfairness decried is not difficult to comprehend. The apathy reflected societal perception of women’s roles in politics. It
is a state of affairs that apparently exists throughout the country at both federal and state level politics, given the similar low level of representation.

The following two chapters comprise an empirical evaluation of the environment surrounding women's underrepresentation in public office at state level in Malaysia. This is based on primary data collected in Sarawak. Before moving on to this task, it is necessary at this point to take a brief contextual background look at Sarawak.

4.3.6 Sarawak

Sarawak is one of thirteen states which make up the Federation of Malaysia. Sarawak joined the Federation in 1963 on independence from Britain. The historical background to this political arrangement began in 1840 when Sarawak, then a dependency of the Brunei Sultanate, was given as a reward to James Brooke, an Englishman who had helped to suppress a local rebellion against the sultanate. In 1864, under James Brooke rule, a much larger Sarawak (through more cession by the Sultan of Brunei) was recognized as an independent state by both Britain and the United States. Rule under the Brookes, also known as the “white rajahs” lasted until 1941 when Sarawak was invaded and briefly occupied by the Japanese army. Sarawak was liberated by the Allied Forces in 1946, and soon after, the last Brooke to rule Sarawak indicated his wish to cede Sarawak to the British Crown. In spite of strong objection from the people particularly the natives, Sarawak was made a British colony in 1946. An anti-cession movement, marked by native men and women demonstrating and marching in protest, followed the handover (Our Sarawak 1983, Peryertaan Kita 1983)

The discontent with British rule, albeit taking a more subdued form, continued until the idea of Sarawak joining the newly independent Malaya gained popularity among the natives. In 1963 Sarawak gained independence and joined the Federation of Malaysia. In the Malaysian Parliament, Sarawak is represented by 28 members of parliament elected by the people of Sarawak. At state level, Sarawak has a written constitution and a one chamber state legislative assembly - the Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN). Sixty-two elected members sit in the assembly. The present DUN
historically dates back to 1867 when James Brooke first established and presided over
the General Council comprising native community leaders and British officers. In
1903 this council was renamed the Council Negeri. This was replaced by the present
DUN through a constitutional amendment in 1976 (Our Sarawak 1983, Peryertaan
Kita 1983).

Before proceeding with the task of analyzing data and evaluating hypotheses, it is
necessary at this point to give a brief overview of Sarawak society as a contextual
background for some of the comparative analyses to be undertaken.

4.3.6.1 *The People of Sarawak*

Sarawak is situated at the northwestern part of the island of Borneo. To the south lies
Kalimantan (Indonesia) and to the east the Malaysian state of Sabah. With a land area
of 124,449, it has an estimated population of 2.02 million in 1999 (Majlis Wanita
1999: 10). Most of the land is covered by jungle and the majority of the population are
rural dwellers. In legal terms, the people of Sarawak are divided into two broad
categories. The “bumiputras” comprises the various indigenous groups, namely,
Malay, Melanau, Iban, Bidayuh and the Orang Ulu. The “non-bumiputras”
comprises the immigrants or descendents of immigrants. They are mainly Chinese and
Indians. The most distinctive feature of Sarawak society is its ethnic diversity. The
following is a brief description of the significant features of the ethnic groups that
were the subjects of this research.

4.3.6.2 *The Iban*

The Iban are the largest indigenous group making up 28.4% of the population. Most
Iban are rural, lowland dry paddy cultivators, rubber tappers, and pepper planters.
They can be found in most parts of Sarawak living in longhouses along rivers (Walton
1990: 132). Usually between ten to fifty families live in a longhouse. Each family
owns an apartment called *bilik*, and together the *bilik* families make up a longhouse

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155 A 1991 population estimate showed that about 63% were rural dwellers. The 1980 figure was
around 82% (Majlis Wanita 1999:12).

156 Orang Ulu is a collective term for the various groups of up river people.
community. Life in the longhouse is governed by Iban adat or customary law. Within each longhouse an elected tuai rumah (head of the house) presides over matters relating to their longhouse. Ranking above the tuai rumah are the chiefs of progressively higher ranking and wider jurisdiction - the Penghulu, the Pemanca and the Temenggong. A large number of Iban have adopted Christianity but most of those who live in the more remote interior regions retain traditional animist beliefs (Roziah 1983: 485, 488).

Consistent with the general perception of gender relations among indigenous people in the wider Southeast Asia region, the Iban have been said to be “thoroughly egalitarian” by some ethnographers (Sutlive and Appell 1991: xix). This is probably because both male and female are involved in the procurement of sustenance. On closer scrutiny Iban society is marked by gender inequality particularly with regard to the task of looking after the family and farm work, mobility, and the attainment of prestige. In terms of work, men will undertake tasks such as felling trees and other heavy work on the farm but will leave the work of weeding and looking after the field to women, children and the elderly. During the period between planting and harvesting men often head off travelling. Prolonged absences, in search of work or adventure cause much hardship for women and children left on their own (Sutlive and Appell: xix, xx).

Freeman, an authority on Borneo societies, described Iban social life as “dominated by male values... through the attainment of prestige in a series of male activities...” (1968:334 cited in Sutlive and Appell 1991: xix). Egalitarianism may apply in some domains and some positions. For example, women, like men may represent their families at community meetings, engage in property transactions or enlist the services of a shaman (witch doctor). Women can be (and some are) leading personalities in their longhouses, but they can never be part of warfare and the highly ritualized male prestige system (Sutlive and Appell: xix).

Within daily life, the symbolic separation of the ruai, a long covered corridor that runs the length of the longhouse, and the bilik manifests the designation of a public and private space. The ruai is the epitome of the communal aspect of Iban life. During ceremonies, meetings and discussions, male elders sit along the outer wall of the ruai, which is the most prestigious place (Sutlive 1978:55 cited in Mashman 1991: 252). In
the discussion of public matters, men take the dominant roles. Women are present albeit merely within a consultative role. By their presence women are exposed to community discussions and are able to exert influence (Sutlive 1978: 52 cited in Mashman : 252), but it is the bilik, located off the ruai, which is the women’s domain. Traditionally the bilik is just one room that serves as kitchen, dining, nursery and sleeping quarters. Nowadays, a bilik is like an apartment with a number of separate rooms. Women’s place in the bilik does not take a symbolic significance but the bilik is clearly the female space (Mashman 1991: 252).

The preceding description generally holds true for all Iban communities, but it must be pointed out that the Iban are a society in transition, rapidly modernizing because of education and urbanization. There are, however, vast differences in the extent of change. At one end, Iban communities in remote inaccessible areas are unlikely to change much. At the other end, Iban living in urban areas have adopted other values and lifestyles (Sutlive and Appell: xlii). Among such Iban, the division of roles between male breadwinner and female homemaker is the norm.

4.3.6.3 The Chinese

Twenty nine percent of the population of Sarawak is of Chinese ethnic origin. Mainly from the southeastern provinces of China, they belong to various dialect groups. The main ones are Hakka, Foochow, Teochew and Hokkien. These dialects share a common written form universally understood by all groups, but the spoken forms are not mutually intelligible. Language uniformity is achieved through the use of Mandarin, the language used in Chinese education. Group cohesion is primarily a sharing of a broad and loose repertoire of cultural-religious facts. A large part of Chinese traditional culture is based on Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. But, like other Chinese immigrants in other parts of the world, living and interacting with people of other cultures have exposed the Chinese to other values and practices, and many Chinese have adapted beyond their traditional cultural-religious practices (Ackelman and Lee 1988: 120). In Sarawak, quite a large number of Chinese are Christians. Chinese adaptation to local conditions and adoption of other values into Chinese culture make it difficult to describe any uniform Chinese culture. Nevertheless, despite its diverse and fragmented nature, there is a Chinese culture that the Chinese identify with (Ackerman and Lee 1988:126).
The Chinese in Sarawak are mainly town dwellers. Others engage in agricultural production in the proximity of towns or trading centers. The Chinese dominate economic activities in Sarawak. They control the trade and commerce sector, and the strong emphasis they place on education has seen their dominance in the professional sector. Compared to the other ethnic groups, the Chinese community can be said to be the most progressive and modern. They are less subject to religious fundamentalism, or rural backwardness.

Despite their flexibility and openness to social cultural change, gender relations among the Chinese are still ordered within a patriarchal structure. Male dominance is an unquestioned feature of Chinese social structure. This is most clearly exemplified by the traditional “three devotions” expected of a Chinese woman - devotion to father before marriage, devotion to husband after marriage and devotion to son during widowhood (Lee 1986: 87). Although these tenets are no longer strictly adhered to, they remain strong as guiding principles. Desirable virtues include having high moral values (e.g. chastity), and being proper and ladylike in behaviour, speech and appearance. Motherhood is of paramount importance because of the emphasis on lineage. Divorce among the Chinese is uncommon because of the importance of “face”. Chinese wives are more likely to tolerate their husband’s extramarital exploits than risk a family breakup (Lee 1986: 53-4, 88). A high number of Chinese women are educated and in paid work, but a gendered division of labour defining women’s and men’s roles is still the norm. The prevalent view is the generally traditional one of men taking primary responsibility for matters outside the home and women for matters within the home.

4.3.6.4 The Malays

The third largest group are the Malays (21.4%). They can be found all over Sarawak in kampung (villages) usually along riverbanks. Those living in rural areas engage in primary production such as rice, rubber, fishing and coconuts (Walton 1990: 132). A large number live in villages close to urban centers. In some bigger towns, Malay villages, which in earlier days were outside a town, have been engulfed as the town expands and now exist as enclaves of traditional wooden houses on stilts amid multi storied concrete buildings. In many cases, villages were relocated to make way for
expansion. Malay villages, urban or rural, maintain the traditional structure of having a Ketua Kampung (village head), and regional chiefs. A significant feature of the urban Malay community is that most of them continue to live in distinctly Malay localities. Urban Malays are mostly in paid work. A large number are in public service.

Within the Malaysian constitution a “Malay” is defined as one “whose religious faith is Islam, who subscribes to Malay custom, who speaks Malay, and who habitually lives a Malay way of life.” (Mohamed 1993: 1) By this definition, being a Muslim is a necessary condition for being Malay. Malay culture is a mix of Malay adat (customary laws), which is a mix of customs and oral tradition of Islamic and Hinduistic origin, and Islamic principles and values (Hussin 1993: 19).

Among the more fundamentalist Muslim Malays, gender relations is marked by a belief in male superiority over female. It is believed that men’s wishes should prevail because women are more emotional, weaker and lacking in reasoning compared to men. More liberal Muslims are unlikely to be dogmatic on this perception. However, within the wider Muslim Malay community, there is strict conformity to appropriate gender roles and behaviour. Females are conditioned into proper feminine behaviour and deportment, and taught to be good wives and mothers from a young age. Women are not prohibited from working as long as their self-respect, and their obligations to God, husband and family are not compromised (Roziah 1994: 14-5). Notwithstanding the earning capacity or status of the women outside the home, the Malays adhere to a strong Islamic tradition of deference to the husband as the head of the family. It is not unusual to see women prominently managing the affairs and upkeep of the family but submitting to the authority of their husbands. A woman may be earning money but the husband is seen as the one who provides for her and the family. (Lie and Lund 1994: 32) Divorce is frequent within Malay society because Muslim laws allow a man to have four wives and provide for easy divorce. A man has only to repudiate his wife three times to divorce her. Consequently, in Malay society, divorce and remarriage is morally acceptable (Strange 1981 cited in Lie and Lund 1994: 34).
4.3.6.5 The Melanau

The Melanau are among the earliest inhabitants of Sarawak. A coastal people, they live in kampungs along river-banks making their living from fishing and rice cultivation. Like the Malay village, the Melanau village has a headman and beyond that the regional chiefs. Melanau society is stratified into 3 hierarchical status levels. For the individual, a status marker is a title before the individual’s name. Difference in status is more evident during ceremonies such as weddings and funerals where rituals are different for each stratum.

Three fourths of Melanau are Muslims. As Islam, which means “total submission”, is a religion as well a way of life (as prescribed in the Koran), there is wide similarities between the beliefs, customs and practices of the Muslim Melanau and Muslim Malay (Sarawak Yearbook 1999: 13). Some Melanau are Christians and some remain likow, a traditional custom and belief system.

4.3.7 Religion, Ethnicity and Group Solidarity

In Sarawak, as in the rest of Malaysia, ethnicity and religion are the most important components of a person’s identity. Intermarriages take place but are not common. Particularly in the case of intermarriages involving Malay, since all Malays are Muslims, marrying a Malay means compulsory conversion to Islam (Lie and Lund 1994: 31). Social relationships among the people are highly influenced by ethnicity and religion. Ethnicity in Malaysia is not simply a matter of adhering to a culture or of defining oneself in relation to others. Ethnicity is the key factor in the state’s allocation of resources and political power. In this regard, the Malays’ control of political power has ensured Malay social and political privileges. As all Malays are Muslims, the direct consequence of this asymmetry is the division of society into a Muslim and a non-Muslim population. The division is maintained by the fact that the Malays recognize the need to uphold the Muslim domain in order to preserve their privileges in such areas as employment, education and business. The Malay-Muslim identity thus has material benefits. Among the non-Muslims there has developed a sense of solidarity as non-Muslims (Ackerman and Lee 1988:5). This is not just due to state sanctioned inequity but also due to the realization that the promotion of Islam
and Malay-Muslim culture will result in the erosion of other cultures (Winzeler 1997b: 226, 227). In Sarawak, both the Chinese and indigenous groups have placed strong emphasis on the preservation of cultural traditions. Particular aspects of their cultures have been promoted as public ethnic heritage (Winzeler 1997a:15, 25).

4.3.8 Sarawak as a Case Study

Sarawak boasts the oldest and biggest state legislative assembly in Malaysia. Women, particularly native women, had from the commencement of public political consciousness in the state, shown their political consciousness and their willingness to participate in politics. This was most evident during the anti-cession period. Yet, at the time the present research was conducted, there were only two women among the 28 Members of Parliament representing Sarawak in the Federal Parliament. Out of 62 members in the State Assembly only two were women. The situation was no better at local authority level. In each local council, women members never exceeded 15% of total members.

In the following two chapters, data collected from Sarawak is used to evaluate the hypotheses on women’s underrepresentation that were formulated in chapter 3. Chapter 5 examines data collected through a survey of the public. Chapter 6 examines data collected through intensive interviews of political party members from two political parties.
CHAPTER 5

Women, Society and Politics in Sarawak

In Chapter 3, two sets of hypotheses on the environment surrounding women's underrepresentation were postulated. The first set was framed within a social dimension and was related to societal attitudes on women's gender roles, gender asymmetry, and women and politics. The second set was framed within an institutional dimension and was related to political parties as gendered institutions. This chapter uses survey data collected in Sarawak to evaluate the validity of the first set of hypotheses through an examination of people's opinions and attitudes. The following is a restatement of the hypotheses advanced in Chapter 2.

5.1 Hypotheses

Political Office: Public Men, Private Women

Hypothesis I:

Very few women seek political office.

i. Women are discriminated against in politics.

ii. Women do not actively pursue political life.

iii. Women think they are not suitable for politics.

Hypothesis II:

It is perceived that men should hold political office.

i. Gender equality in political representation is not necessary.

ii. Politics is a male activity.
Gender Roles: Public Man

Hypothesis III:

*It is perceived that men should dominate politics.*

i. *It is not proper for women to be active in politics.* (Cultural Belief)

ii. *Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life.* (Stereotyping)

iii. *It is not convenient for women to be active in politics.* (Practical imperative)

Gender Roles: Private Woman

Hypothesis IV

*It is perceived that a woman's place is in the home.*

i. *Women's main concern should be the home.* (Cultural belief)

ii. *Women are better homemakers and caregivers.* (Stereotyping)

iii. *Women have to fulfill domestic tasks.* (Practical imperative)

Gender Asymmetry: Subordinate Women

Hypothesis V

*Men are accorded more status and power than women.*

i. *Men are superior to women.* (Cultural Belief)

ii. *Women possess weaker characteristics.* (Stereotyping)

iii. *Women are materially dependent on men.* (Practical imperative)

5.2 The Nature of the Data

5.2.1 The Data Source

The data derives from the responses of 538 (43.8% male and 55.6% female) participants in a survey carried out in Sarawak. Participants belonged to four ethnic groups - Iban, Chinese, Malay and Melanau from seven localities classed as urban or rural. Apart from ethnic and spatial groupings, the sample varied in other
characteristics such as age, marital status, education, occupation, religion, and party affiliation. These variables enable comparative analysis between subgroups within the sample. Table 1 shows the sample profile.

Table 1: Sample Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Dato/Hilir Sibu</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aup Sibu</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bavang Assan</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beruit</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saribas</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>538</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>532</strong></td>
<td><strong>98.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Missing                       | 6      | 1.1 |         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18–24</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–34</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–44</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–54</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–64</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and above</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>509</strong></td>
<td><strong>94.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Missing                       | 29     | 5.4 |         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow/widower</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>518</strong></td>
<td><strong>96.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Missing                       | 20     | 3.7 |         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>443</strong></td>
<td><strong>82.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Missing                       | 95     | 17.7|         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium of Education</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa Malaysia only</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese only</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and Bahasa Malaysia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and Chinese</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>355</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Missing                       | 183    | 34.0|         |
Participants were asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire written in one of three languages - English, Malay (Bahasa Malaysia) and Chinese. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part required participants to provide factual information. The second part comprised 8 questions subsuming 48 statements. See Appendix B for the three versions used.
(items) on gender roles, gender inequality, and gender and politics. The items are described in more detail later in the section on measures.

Further information on the survey method and statistical procedure employed in the analysis of data are provided in Appendix A. For the present purpose, one key feature of the survey that needs to be pointed out is the non-probability sampling of the survey sample. Ideally a representative sample is achieved through a random or probability sampling whereby every member of a population has the same chance of being included in the sample. Probability sampling enables an estimate of the degree to which the results derived from a sample would differ from the results if every member of the population were surveyed (Judd Smith and Kidder 1991: 133 and 139). Notwithstanding the desirability of a probability sampling, the use of a non-probability sampling in the present instance is justifiable for two reasons. Firstly, as an individual endeavour constrained by limited resources, a non-probability sampling was more feasible. Secondly, the method was deemed suitable on the grounds that the data collection, analyses and evaluation carried out in this case study are directed primarily at an analytical objective. This means that the focus is on discovering, gaining insights and understanding the subject studied, rather than an attempt at representativeness or the capacity to generalize findings to the wider population (Oppenheim 1992: 22, Judd, Smith and Kidder 1991: 139).

The specific non-probability sampling method adopted is a mix of accidental sampling and quota sampling. The use of accidental sampling, a procedure whereby people were approached and willing participants surveyed, was for convenience. This was combined with the need to have a sample that mirrors as close as possible the actual population in terms of two crucial factors: gender and ethnicity. For this purpose there was an element of quota sampling as an attempt was made to include, firstly, the proportion of males and females; and secondly, the proportion of each ethnic group that corresponded with the respective proportions within the general population.

The final sample did not replicate precisely the wider population in terms of gender and ethnicity, but it was not wide off the mark. As regards gender, the sample comprised 43.8% males and 55.6% females while the population was made up of
51.6% males and 48.4% females. In the case of ethnicity, the following figures show the comparison between the proportion of each ethnic group within the sample and the proportion within the wider population (the latter in parenthesis): Iban 20.8% (28.4%), Chinese 32.5% (26.8%), Malay 24.9% (21.4%), Melanau 14.3% (5.5%). The disparity of 14.3% to 5.5% in relation to the Melanau group was, strictly speaking, too wide. However, within a sample of 538 respondents, 5.5% constitutes a number which would have been too small to analyze adequately.

5.2.2 Measures

The validity of each hypothesis is tested through the evaluation of a number of sub-hypotheses subsumed under each hypothesis. Each set of sub-hypotheses concerns different aspects of the concept encapsulated in each hypothesis. In theoretical terms, the preceding hypotheses encompass nesting concepts. The broadest constitutes the public and private divide. Within this are located notions of gender roles and gender asymmetry, which in turn subsume the concept of stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperatives. The concrete representation (operationalization) of these abstractions or constructs takes form as people's expressed perceptions or attitudes. Each concept is measured through multi-items indicators representing different facets of the concept. This is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it enables a more comprehensive perspective. Secondly, rather than reliance on a single response, it allows conclusions based on a set of related responses. Finally and most importantly, it facilitates the fundamental goal in this chapter, that is, the dual objective of gauging the validity of each hypothesis and mapping the significance of contributing factors.

The measurement method adopted is drawn primarily from Likert's multiple-item scaling. Each construct is measured through a set of items (statements) to which respondents indicate they "disagree", "strongly disagree", "agree" or "strongly disagree". Respondents may also choose "no opinion" position. The exception to this is the procedure used for Items 1 and 2 in relation to Sub-hypothesis II i. In this case respondents choose responses graded as "less than now", "same as now", "a few more" or "many more". Graded responses add to the comprehensiveness of the measurement. In conformity with Likert's scale, all items in the item pool are
monotone. This means that all items are definitely either favorable or unfavorable in direction. For the purpose of clarity and ease in categorization and summation, in the calculation and presentation of findings the responses “less than now”, “same as now” and “a few more” in terms of *Items 1* and 2 are classed as “agreement”. The response “many more” is classed as “disagreement”.

The questionnaire in this study was constructed to generate responses that constitute two types of measures. One set of responses measures people’s perception of women and political activities. This applies to *Hypothesis I*. The second set measures people’s attitudes on gender roles and gender asymmetry within a gendered division of labour ordering. This applies to *Hypotheses II to V*. Both sets of measures simultaneously tap societal orientation to a public and private divide in gender relations.

### 5.2.3 Perception of Women and Political Office

*Hypotheses I and II* are concerned with societal perceptions of women and political office. Fifteen items are used to evaluate *Hypothesis I*. Unlike the items used in the evaluation of the other hypotheses to follow, these items are not a measurement of respondents’ attitudes. They relate to respondents’ perceptions and explanations of why very few women seek political office. All items measure the prevalence of the public and private divide. *Hypothesis I i* attributes the dearth of women seeking political office to the fact that women are discriminated against in politics. *Hypothesis I ii* attributes the lack of women to the fact that women are not interested in pursuing political office. *Hypothesis I iii* attributes the problem to the fact that women think it is more suitable for men to be in politics. The items measuring each sub-hypothesis elucidate differing aspects of each postulation.
Hypothesis I: Very few women seek political office.

I i. Women are discriminated against in politics.
Measurement:
- Political parties do not pick women as candidates. (*Item 4a*)
- The public prefers men. (*Item 4b*)
- There is a lack of trust or confidence in women. (*Item 4c*)
- Men control the political parties. (*Item 5d*)

I ii. Women do not actively pursue political life.
Measurement:
- There are too few women to choose from. (*Item 4d*)
- Women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector. (*Item 4e*)
- Women place their career or family above community involvement. (*Item 4f*)
- Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough. (*Item 4g*)
- Women are not interested in politics. (*Item 5a*)
- Women have no time because of family or work. (*Item 5b*)

I iii. Women think they are not suitable for politics.
Measurement:
- Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious. (*Item 4h*)
- Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics. (*Item 4i*)
- Women feel they lack education. (*Item 5c*)
- Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women. (*Item 5e*)
- Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics. (*Item 5f*)

In contrast to Hypothesis I, the evaluation of Hypothesis II is based on measuring people’s attitudes through their responses. Hypothesis II concerns people’s opinion on women’s representation and participation in politics. It is postulated that men should hold political office. Five items are used to measure two sub-hypotheses. Sub-hypothesis II i postulates that it is not necessary for women to have equal
representation. This is measured using two items on the number of women representatives. Sub-hypothesis II ii postulates that politics is a male activity. It is measured using three items, each relating to cultural belief, gender roles and gender status.

Hypothesis II: Men should hold political office.

II i. Gender equality in political representation is not necessary.
Measurement:
- Should there be many more, a few more, same as now or, less than now, women representatives in the state legislature. (Item 1)
- Should be there many more, a few more, same as now, or less than now, women Councilors in local councils. (Item 2)

II ii. Politics is a male activity.
Measurement:
- Men should dominate politics. (Item 3a)
- A woman’s place is in the home. (Item 3b)
- In our society women do not command the same status and power as men. (Item 3c)

5.2.4 Attitudes on Gender Roles and Gender Inequality

Hypotheses III to V concern attitudes on gender roles and gender inequality. They expand on Sub-hypothesis II ii through the evaluation of each item measure (i.e. Items 3a, 3b and 3c) as a separate hypothesis. Each hypothesis constitutes three dimensions-cultural belief, stereotyping and practical imperatives - expressed as three sub-hypotheses. Each sub-hypothesis is in turn measured using items that capture different aspects of the dimension under examination. Twenty-nine items were used to tap people’s attitude in relation to the three hypotheses.
Hypothesis III: Men should dominate politics.

III i. Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life. (Stereotyping)

Measurement:

Men are more competent in making larger and more important decisions. (*Item 6Aa*)

Men are more aggressive and forceful. (*Item 6Ab*)

Women lack confidence. (*Item 6Ac*)

Women are soft hearted. (*Item 6Ad*)

Women are not knowledgeable. (*Item 6Ae*)

III ii. It is not proper for women to be active in politics. (Cultural Belief)

Measurement:

Politics is an activity which should rightly be carried out by men. (*Item 6Ba*)

Women's main concern should be with the well being of their families. (*Item 6Bb*)

It is not appropriate for women to be ambitious and dominant. (*Item 6Bc*)

It is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men. (*Item 6Bd*)

III iii. It is not convenient for women to be active in politics. (Practical imperative)

Measurement:

Women have no time because of children and housework. (*Item 6Ca*)

Women need to contribute to their family's income. (*Item 6Cb*)

Activities such as frequent traveling and meetings at night are not convenient for women. (*Item 6Cc*)
Hypothesis IV: A woman’s place is in the home.

**IV i. Women are better homemakers and caregivers.** (Stereotyping)

*Measurement:*

- Women can do housework and take care of the family better. *(Item 7Aa)*
- Children need their mother’s love and care. *(Item 7Ab)*

**IV ii. Women’s main concern should be the home.** (Cultural belief)

*Measurement:*

- The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family. *(Item 7Ba)*
- It is woman’s duty to take care of her husband and family. *(Item 7Bb)*
- A woman must always place her husband and family first. *(Item 7Bc)*
- It is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home. *(Item 7Bd)*

**IV iii. Women have to fulfill domestic tasks.** (Practical imperative)

*Measurement:*

- Women have to carry out all of household work. *(Item 7Ca)*
- Pregnancy, lactation, and caring for children confine women to the home *(Item 7Cb)*
Hypothesis V: *Men are accorded more status and power than women.*

V i. *Women possess weaker characteristics.* (Stereotyping)

*Measurement:*
- Women are weak and deferential. (*Item 8Aa*)
- Women lack education. (*Item 8Ab*)
- Men are generally more capable than women. (*Item 8Ab*)

V ii. *Men are superior to women.* (Cultural Belief)

*Measurement:*
- Men should lead and women follow. (*Item 8Ba*)
- The husband is rightfully the master of the house. (*Item 8Bb*)
- A woman must defer to her husband. (*Item 8Bc*)

V iii. *Women are materially dependent on men.* (Practical imperative)

*Measurement:*
- Most women are full time housewives. (*Item 8Ca*)
- Very few women have high status, or high-income jobs. (*Item 8Cb*)
- Being dependent on their husbands financially, women have to defer to their husbands. (*Item 8Cc*)

5.3 Analysis

5.3.1 Statistical Method

The evaluation of the hypotheses/sub-hypotheses requires analyzing data through three statistical processes. The first is mainly statistics describing the frequency distribution of responses to each item. The spread of agreements or disagreements over the items prove or disprove the hypothesis. As mentioned earlier, the items are monotone, that is, the items elicit responses that are favorable or unfavorable in direction. Items are either worded in the positive or negative. Either way the items have been constructed such that agreements support the validity of the hypotheses/sub-hypotheses. The range of responses to the items are each given a
value corresponding to, 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for no opinion, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. In the following analysis these values will only be used in the description of central tendencies to satisfy the requirement for statistical rigor. Aggregate values will not be used in the analyses and findings because an aggregate value may derive from differing combinations of values, and thus will not be an accurate representation of the data. The focus, therefore, is on patterns of responses. Likewise, through all the analytical processes in this chapter, the emphasis is on the substantive significance of observations and findings rather than statistical significance. The latter is primarily for the purpose of establishing the reliability of the data.

In order to gain a more in-depth substantive interpretation of the results from the frequency distributions, the second process involves examining the relationship between items (dependent variables) and sample factors (independent variables). This explores the features of a particular pattern or outcome through cross-tabulation. For example, is an observed result due to more males or more respondents of a particular age group responding in a certain way? The strength of relationship between an item and a factor in the cross-tabulation analysis is established through Cramer’s $V$ measure of association. The third process carries the examination of the data further through multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression looks at the relationship between a dependent variable (item) and a group of independent variables (sample factors) simultaneously. This procedure examines the relationship between an item and a particular factor while statistically controlling other factors. The aim is to find the factors that have strong correlation with a particular item after controlling for other factors. In this instance, a stepwise selection method is used, whereby independent variables entered are systematically added or removed one by one to determine their relationship with the dependent variable. The measure for this relationship is the $b$ coefficient.

For each analysis, relevant findings will be reported first followed by analysis of the findings. The following analyses are presented in two parts. The first part gives the result of the frequency distribution of responses. Note that as the frequency distribution of responses is the preliminary part of the analysis, only a brief report of the outcome in relation to each hypothesis will be given. A more in-depth
interpretation of the data will be undertaken in the second part based on the results of the cross tabulation and multiple regression analyses between items and independent variables. The chapter rounds off with concluding observations and evaluation of the hypotheses postulated.

5.4 Frequency Distribution Analysis

The frequency distribution is the number of responses that agree or disagree with each item. The distribution on responses in agreement or disagreement that follows shows the aggregated number of items that recorded a particular response (i.e. agree or disagree). It will be recalled that the hypotheses encompass nesting concepts, the broadest of which constitutes the public and private divide. This divide is an intrinsically asymmetrical gender ordering that underscores the subordination of the female. Within this are located notions of gender roles and gender status, which in turn subsume the concept of stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperatives. In connection with the evaluation of the hypotheses postulated, it will be recalled that responses that are in agreement with the item statements support the validity of each sub-hypothesis and related main hypothesis.
A preliminary overview of the responses to the 49 items shows the following distribution on responses in agreement or disagreement\(^{158}\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement (i.e. agree and strongly agree):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A majority (i.e. above 50%) agreeing with 21 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A higher number (i.e. a higher number but below 50%) agreeing with 7 items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagreement (i.e. disagree and strongly disagree):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- An absolute majority (i.e. above 50%) disagreeing with 12 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A greater number (i.e. a higher number but below 50%) disagreeing with 4 items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unclear outcome:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- An almost equal number of agreements and disagreements over 5 items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above result shows a majority or greater number agreeing with 28 out of 49 items, a majority or higher number disagreeing with 16 items, and an unclear outcome on 5 items. The lack of a clear majority in a number of cases arises from the proportion of those who chose “no opinion”. The number of “no opinion” responses ranges from 7.9% to 23.8% over the 49 items\(^{159}\). A preliminary examination in relation to the 14 sets of measurements for the 14 sub-hypotheses subsumed under Hypotheses I to V shows the following distribution:

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\(^{158}\) The statistical description of central tendencies such as median, mode and skewness are provided in Appendix E

\(^{159}\) Note that the focus here is only on responses that indicate agreement or disagreement and omit for the moment the “no opinion” responses which do not, in any instance, account for a majority.
Agreement:
-2 sets registered a majority agreeing with all items in each set.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis II i* - Gender equality in representation is not necessary.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis IV i* - Women’s main concern should be the home.

-3 sets registered a majority or higher number of respondents agreeing with all items in each set.

  *Sub-hypothesis I i* - Women are discriminated against in politics.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis IV iii* - Women have to fulfill domestic tasks.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis V ii* - Women possess weaker characteristics.

-4 sets registered a majority or higher number of respondents agreeing with the majority of items in each set.

  *Sub-hypothesis I ii* - Women do not actively pursue political life.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis III i* - It is not proper for women to be in politics.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis III iii* - It is not convenient for women to be active in politics.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis IV ii* - Women are better homemakers and caregivers.

Disagreement:

-1 set registered a majority or higher number of respondents disagreeing with all items in the set.

  *Sub-hypothesis Vi* - Men are superior to women.

-3 sets registered a majority or higher number of respondents disagreeing with the majority of items in each set.

  *Sub-hypothesis I iii* - Women think they are not suitable for politics.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis II ii* - Politics is a male activity.
  
  *Sub-hypothesis III ii* - Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life.

Unclear outcome:

-1 set registered an even number of items with a majority or higher number of responses in agreements or disagreements.

  *Sub-hypothesis V iii* - Women are materially dependent on men.
In brief, 9 sets reveal a stronger orientation toward a public and private divide, 4 sets an orientation away from the ordering and one shows an unclear result. A more detailed examination of how this works out in relation to each hypothesis is the next task. For this purpose, the distribution of responses is presented in graph form for visual clarity. In the following, each set of graphs is followed by a listing of item responses categorized according to alignment, that is, items displaying more in agreement—which is a composite of “agree” and “strongly agree; or disagreement—which is a composite of “disagree” and “strongly disagree; or an even distribution. The proportion within each category is stated as a majority or a higher number. A breakdown of each composite percentage is given in parenthesis for clarity. In addition, for each item, the percentage of “no opinion” responses and the composite percentage of the category with the lesser number (either agreement or disagreement) are included in order to provide an idea of the overall spread for that item. The evaluation of each sub-hypothesis, and by implication the hypothesis under which it is subsumed, is based on the number of responses in agreement, that is, responses indicating agree and strongly agree, or disagreement, that is, responses indicating disagree or strongly disagree.

5.4.1 Perception of Women and Political Office

5.4.1.1 Hypothesis I: Very few women seek political office.

Sub-hypothesis I i:
Women are discriminated against in politics.

Figure 1 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis I i
Responses:

**Agreement:**

**Majority:**

**Item 4b** - The public prefers men.

64.0% (46.6% + 17.4%)

(Disagreement: 22%, No opinion: 14%)

**Item 5d** - Men control the political parties.

60.4% (41.1% + 19.3%)

(Disagreement: 23.6%, No opinion 15.9%)

**Higher number:**

**Item 4a** - Political parties do not pick women as candidates.

49.3% (41.0% + 8.3%)

(Disagreement: 29%, No opinion 21.8%)

**Item 4c** - There is a lack of trust or confidence in women.

44.4% (36.5% + 7.9%)

(Disagreement: 39.5%, No opinion: 16.2%)

**Result:** *Sub-hypothesis I* postulates that women are discriminated against in politics. The measurement items link the lack of women in political office to the discriminatory attitude of political parties and the public. All items recorded a majority or higher number in agreement. There appears to be a perception among respondents that the actions of political parties and public preference do not favour women’s involvement in political office.
Sub-Hypothesis I ii:

*Women do not actively pursue political life.*

Figure 2 Frequency analysis – Sub-hypothesis I ii

<p>| 4d. There are too few women to choose from |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 4e. Women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 4f. Women place their career or family above community involvement |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 4g. Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 5a. Women are not interested in politics |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 5b. Women have no time because of family or work |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item 4e:</strong> Women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.7% (45.7% + 9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Disagreement: 27.85, No opinion: 17.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Item 4f: Women place their career or family above community involvement. |
| 60.8% (48.4% + 12.4%) |
| (Disagreement: 22.6%, No opinion: 16.6) |

| Item 5b: Women have no time because of family or work. |
| 53.9% (45.8% + 8.1%) |
| (Disagreement: 30.6%, No opinion: 15.6%) |

| Greater number:                  |
| **Item 4d:** There are too few women to choose from. |
| 46.1% (38.0% + 8.1%)            |
| (Disagreement: 36.2%, No opinion: 17.7%) |

| Disagreement:                  |
| Majority:                      |
| **Item 4g:** Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough. |
| 62.6% (20.1% + 42.5%)         |
| (Agreement: 23%, No opinion: 14.5%) |

| Item 5a: Women are not interested in politics. |
| 43.2 % (4.3% + 38.9%) |
| (Agreement: 34.4%, No opinion: 22.5%) |

**Result:** *Sub-hypothesis II* postulates that women do not actively pursue political life. The items in this set pertain to the reasons why this is so. The result shows strong support in favour of the hypothesis. Of the 6 items, 4 recorded a higher number of respondents in agreement. *Items 4d, 4e, 4f* and *5b* indicate more respondents were of the opinion that women are constrained by priorities such as their families and paid work from actively pursing political life. On the other hand, more respondents disagreed that women lack ambition and confidence, or are not interested in politics.
Sub-hypothesis I iii:

*Women think they are not suitable for politics.*

Figure 3 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis I iii

- **4h. Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious**
  - Percentage distribution for responses to the statement 'Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious'.
  - Strongly agree: 2.8%
  - Agree: 24.1%
  - Disagree: 39%
  - Strongly disagree: 14.1%
  - No opinion: 20%

- **4l. Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics**
  - Percentage distribution for responses to the statement 'Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics'.
  - Strongly agree: 9%
  - Agree: 36%
  - Disagree: 32%
  - Strongly disagree: 6.2%
  - No opinion: 17.7%

- **5c. Women feel they lack education**
  - Percentage distribution for responses to the statement 'Women feel they lack education'.
  - Strongly agree: 1.9%
  - Agree: 15.5%
  - Disagree: 63.3%
  - Strongly disagree: 21.9%
  - No opinion: 12.1%

- **5e. Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women**
  - Percentage distribution for responses to the statement 'Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women'.
  - Strongly agree: 4%
  - Agree: 32.6%
  - Disagree: 32.3%
  - Strongly disagree: 9.2%
  - No opinion: 21.9%

- **5f. Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics**
  - Percentage distribution for responses to the statement 'Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics'.
  - Strongly agree: 4.3%
  - Agree: 34.1%
  - Disagree: 30.7%
  - Strongly disagree: 23.4%
  - No opinion: 7.5%
Responses:

Agreement:

Higher number

Item 4i: Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics.

44.0% (35.0% + 9.0%)

(Disagreement: 36.2%, No opinion: 17.7%)

Disagreement:

Majority:

Item 4h: Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious.

53.1% (14.1% + 39.0%)

(Agreement: 26.9%, No opinion 20%)

Item 5c: Women feel they lack education.

75.5% (21.8% + 53.3%)

(Agreement: 12.8%, No opinion 12.1%)

Higher number:

Item 5e: Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women

41.5% (9.2% + 32.3%)

(Agreement: 36.6%, No opinion: 21.9%)

Even Distribution:

Item 5f: Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics.

Agreement: 38.4% / Disagreement: 38.2%

(No opinion: 23.4%)

Result: Sub-hypothesis 1 iii postulates that women think they are not suitable for politics. Based on the spread of responses, it can be seen that a higher number of respondents were not in favour of the postulation. Only one item (Item 4i) recorded a higher number of respondents agreeing that women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics. A similar number of respondents agreed and disagreed that women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be politics. Interestingly, on the other hand, a higher number disagreed that women think politics is not appropriate for women. When considered in conjunction with the high percentage (75%) who did not agree that women think they lack education (Item 5c), and the
majority who disagreed that women do not want to appear aggressive and ambitious (Item 4h) it seems that the majority of respondents think women see themselves as suitable for politics. However, the responses in relation to Item 4i seem to suggest that although women think they are suitable for politics they also think that it is more appropriate for men to be in politics.

5.4.1.2 Findings in relation to Hypothesis I

*Hypothesis I* is concerned with societal perception of women and political office. More specifically, it relates to respondents' perceptions and explanations of why very few women hold political office. In this it differs from the other hypotheses which are concerned with people's attitudes. *Hypothesis I* postulates that few women seek political office, and three sub-hypotheses on the reasons for this situation are advanced. The data supports *Sub-hypothesis I i*. A higher number of respondents thought women are discriminated against in politics because the public and political parties are biased against women. The data also largely supports *Sub-hypothesis I ii* which stipulates that women do not actively pursue political life. In this case, the data reveals that people thought this is because women give priority to work and family. They disagreed, however, that it is due to women not being ambitious or confident enough, or that women are not interested in politics. In contrast to *Sub-hypotheses I i* and *I ii*, the data does not support *Sub-hypothesis I iii*. A larger number of respondents disagreed that women think they are not suitable for politics.

The findings in relation to *Hypothesis I* suggest that people generally agreed that few women seek public office. This was attributed to, firstly, discrimination against women by the public and the political parties; and secondly, to women not pursuing political office because they prioritize family and paid work. People did not think it is because women see themselves as not suitable for politics.
5.4.1.3 Hypothesis II: Men should hold political office.

Sub-hypothesis II i:

There is no need for women to have equal representation.

Figure 4 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis II i

Responses:

**Item 1:** Should there be many more, a few more, same as now or, less than now, women representatives in the state legislature.

**Majority**

“a few more”: 51.8%

(“same as now”: 17.6%, “less than now”: 3%, “many more”: 27.6%)

**Item 2:** Should be there many more, a few more, same as now, or less than now, women councilors in local councils.

**Majority:**

“a few more”: 52.2%

(“same as now”: 19.3%, “less than now”: 3.25%, “many more”: 25.3%)

**Result:** Both items under Sub-hypothesis II i recorded an absolute majority preference for just a few more women representatives. Only 27.6% (Item 1) and 25.3% (Item 2) wanted many more women. People wanted more women, but not many more. This shows the majority were not for egalitarianism.
Sub-Hypothesis II ii:

*Politics is a male activity.*

Figure 5 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis II ii

**Responses:**

*Disagreement*

**Majority:**

**Item 3b:** A woman’s place is in the home.

68.7% (26.2% + 42.5%)

(Agreement: 17.4%, No opinion: 13.9%)

**Item 3c:** In our society women do not command the same status and power as men.

53.0% (18.5% + 34.5%)

(Agreement: 30.3%, No opinion: 16.7%)
Even distribution

Item 3a: Men should dominate politics.

Agreement: 42.5% / Disagreement: 40.2%
(No opinion: 17.3%)

Result: The majority of respondents disagreed that a woman’s place is in the home (Item 3b) or that women do not command the same status and power as men (Item 3c). There is an unclear outcome as regards Items 3a. Respondents are equally divided between those who agreed and those who disagreed with the statement that men should dominate politics. Notwithstanding, the overall result does not support the sub-hypothesis that politics is a male activity.

5.4.1.4 Findings in relation to Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II postulates that men should hold political office. The outcome of the analyses in relation to Hypothesis II presents an interesting inconsistency. The data in relation to Sub-hypothesis II i shows that most respondent did not favour having many more women representatives. On the other hand, the data does not appear to support Sub-hypothesis II ii which states that politics is a male activity. The majority of respondents did not agree that a woman’s place is in the home or that women are of lower status and power compared to men. These are factors commonly associated with the acceptance of politics as a male activity. The analysis of the following three hypotheses, which are concerned with gender roles and gender inequality, sheds some light on the puzzle.
5.4.2 Attitudes on Gender Roles and Gender Inequality

5.4.2.1 Hypothesis III: Men should dominate politics.

Sub-hypothesis III i:

Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life. (Stereotyping)

Figure 6 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis III i

6Aa. Men are more competent in making larger and more important decisions

6Ab. Men are more aggressive and forceful

6Ac. Women lack confidence

6Ad. Women are soft-hearted

6Ae. Women are not knowledgeable
Responses:

**Agreement:**

**Majority:**

**Item 6Aa:** Men are more competent in making larger and more important decisions.

57.6% (41.7% + 15.9%)

(Disagreement: 27.4%, No opinion: 14.8%)

**Item 6Ab:** Men are more aggressive and forceful.

63.4% (47.4% + 16.0%)

(Disagreement: 20.3%, No opinion: 16.4%)

**Item 6Ad:** Women are soft hearted.

56.6% (49.3% + 7.3%)

(Disagreement: 30.6%, No opinion: 12.8%)

**Disagreement**

**Majority:**

**Item 6Ac:** Women lack confidence.

62.5% (11.7% + 50.8%)

(Agreement: 25.1%, No opinion: 12.5%)

**Item 6Ae:** Women are not knowledgeable.

81.9% (32.1% + 49.8%)

(Agreement: 6.4%, No opinion: 11.7%)

**Result:** Three items out of five recorded a majority in agreement. Although it cannot be said that the data clearly supports *Sub-hypothesis III i*, it does confirm the stereotypical image of men as possessing characteristics which are required in dominant and leadership roles. A majority also endorsed the stereotypical image of women as soft hearted. However, most respondents did not agree with the stereotype of women as lacking in confidence, or knowledge. An overwhelming 81.9% disagreed with the latter.
Sub-hypothesis III ii:

It is not proper for women to be active in politics.

(Cultural Belief)

Figure 7 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis III ii
Responses:

**Agreement**

*Majority:*

*Item 6Bb:* Women’s main concern should be with the well being of their families.

56.6% (46.1% + 10.5%)

(Disagreement: 29.5, No opinion: 13.9%)

**Disagreement**

*Majority:*

*Item 6Ba:* Politics is an activity which should rightly be carried out by men.

51.9% (9.6% + 42.3%)

(Agreement: 33.8%, No opinion: 14.4)

*Item 6Bc:* It is not appropriate for women to be ambitious and dominant.

73.5% (24.4% + 49.1%)

(Agreement: 10.5%, No opinion: 15.0%)

*Higher number:*

*Item 6Bd:* It is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men.

49.3% (13.5% + 35.8%)

(Agreement: 29.8%, No opinion: 20.8%)

**Result:** *Sub-hypothesis III ii,* stipulates that it is not proper for women to be in politics. Three out of four items recorded a majority in disagreement. The majority of respondents did not consider it inappropriate for women to be ambitious and dominant (*Item 6Bc*) or to interact freely with men (*Item 6Bd*). Neither did a majority think politics is an activity that should be right carried out by men (*Item 6Ba*). The majority, however, agreed that women’s main concern should be their families.
Sub-hypothesis III iii.

*It is not convenient for women to be active in politics.*

(Practical imperative)

Figure 8  Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis III iii

| 6Ca. Women have no time because of children and housework |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion |
| 9.4 | 42.8 | 26.1 | 4.5 | 17.3 |

| 6Cb. Women need to contribute to their families' income |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion |
| 4.1 | 34.2 | 33.1 | 5.8 | 22.7 |

| 6Cc. Activities such as frequent travelling and meetings are not convenient for women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion |
| 12.8 | 40.2 | 23.1 | 5.3 | 18.6 |
Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Majority:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 6Ca: Women have no time because of children and housework.</td>
<td>52.2% (42.8% + 9.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Disagree: 30.6%, No opinion: 17.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6Cc: Activities such as frequent traveling and meetings at night are not convenient for women.</td>
<td>53.0% (40.2% + 12.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Disagree: 28.4%, No opinion: 18.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Even distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 6Cb: Women need to contribute to their family’s income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Result:** The result shows a general agreement with *Sub-hypothesis III iii* - that women are disadvantaged by practical constraints. The majority of respondents agreed that women have no time because of children and housework, and that some activities are not convenient for women. But, interestingly, equal numbers of respondents agreed and disagreed that women have to contribute to their families’ income.

**5.4.2.2 Findings in relation to Hypothesis III**

*Hypothesis III postulates* that people believe men should dominate politics. The data largely confirms the hypothesis in terms of *Sub-hypotheses III i* - that people believe men possess characteristics more appropriate for political life; and *Sub-hypothesis III iii* - that it is not convenient for women to be in politics. The data, however, does not support *Sub-hypothesis III ii* - that it is not proper for women to be in politics. Also interesting is the outcome in relation to *Sub-hypothesis III i*. Respondents adhered to stereotyping men as more competent in making decisions, are more aggressive and forceful, but they strongly disagreed with stereotyping women as lacking confidence and knowledge (*Items 6Ac, 6Ae*). Women, however, were seen as soft hearted (*Item 6Ad*).
5.4.2.3 Hypothesis IV: A woman’s place is in the home.

Sub-hypothesis IV i:

Women are better homemakers and caregivers.

(Stereotyping)

Figure 9 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis IV i

Responses:

Agreement

Majority:

Item 7Aa: Women can do housework and take care of the family better.

75.8% (45.5% + 30.3%)  
(Disagreement: 14.8%, No opinion: 9.4%)

Item 7Ab: Children need their mother’s love and care.

83.7% (42.8% + 40.9%)  
(Disagreement: 8.4%, No opinion: 7.9%)

Result: Sub-hypothesis IV i, states that women’s main concern should be the home. Both the items in relation to this postulation recorded very strong majority agreement. The intensity of respondents’ opinion on the issue is evident with the high number who strongly agreed, particularly with Item 7Ab (40.9%). The responses are highly indicative of the fact that women were considered to be indispensable in the home and in bringing up children.
Sub-hypothesis IV ii:

*Women’s main concern should be the home.*

(Cultural belief)

Figure 10 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis IV ii

![Bar chart](image)

7B(a). The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family

![Bar chart](image)

7B(b). It is a woman's duty to take care of her husband and family

![Bar chart](image)

7B(c). A woman must always place her husband and family first

![Bar chart](image)

7B(d). It is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home
Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Majority:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 7Bb: It is woman's duty to take care of her husband and family.</td>
<td>65.7% (53.0% + 12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Disagreement: 22.1%, No opinion: 12.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7Bc: A woman must always place her husband and family first.</td>
<td>74.3% (53.8% + 21.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Disagreement: 21.7%, No opinion: 12.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher number:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7Ba: The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family.</td>
<td>43.9% (34.0% + 9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Disagreement: 35.3%, No opinion: 20.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Disagreement: | |
| Item 7Bd: It is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home. | 54.0% (42.4% + 11.6%) |
| (Agreement: 29.1%, No opinion: 16.9%) | |

Result: Sub-hypothesis IV ii postulates that women’s main concern should be the home. The data largely supports the postulation. There was high agreement with Items 7Bb and 7Bc, confirming that respondents thought women should put home and family first. In contrast, the number of those who agreed with Item 7Ba - that the most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family - did not make up a majority even though their number (43.9%) was higher than those who disagreed (35.3%). Twenty percent chose to give no opinion. The responses to these two items suggest that, for some people, it is not absolutely necessary for women to get married and have a family, but when the choice is made priority must be given to the home and family. Even more interesting is the data in relation to Item 7Bd. A majority (54.0%) disagreed that a wife should stay at home while the husband works. This is indicative of people’s expectation of women’s dual roles as homemaker and paid worker.
Sub-hypothesis IV iii:

Women have to fulfill domestic tasks.

(Practical imperative)

Figure 11 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis IV iii

Responses:

Agreement

Majority:

Item 7Cb: Pregnancy, lactation, and caring for children confine women to the home.

52.1% (38.5% + 13.6%)

(Disagreement: 30.6%, No opinion: 17.3%)

Higher number:

Item 7Ca: Women have to carry out all of household work.

47.4% (36.0% + 11.4%)

(Disagreement: 34.4%, No opinion 18.2%)

Result: Although the percentages are not remarkably high, the responses in relation to Sub-hypothesis IV iii confirm that practical constraints, such as domestic tasks, tie women to the home.
5.4.2.4 Findings in relation to Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV postulates that a woman’s place is in the home. Except for one item (7Bd) all the items in terms of Sub-hypothesis IV i, V ii and V iii recorded a majority or higher number in agreement. This gives a strong indication that stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperatives all contribute to the perception that a woman’s place is in the home. On the other hand, the majority disagreement with Item 7Bd - that it is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home, provides an interesting contradiction. People expected women to conform to their roles as wives, mothers and homemakers but did not insist that they remain at home.

5.4.2.5 Hypothesis V: Men are accorded more status and power than women.

Sub-hypothesis V i:

Women possess weaker characteristics.

(Stereotyping)

Figure 12 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis V i
Responses:

*Disagreement:*

*Majority:*

**Item 8Aa:** Women are weak and deferential.

56.6% (12.8% + 43.7%)

(Agreement: 26.1%, No opinion: 17.4%)

**Item 8Ab:** Women lack education.

82.9% (26.5% + 56.4%)

(Agreement: 7%, No opinion: 10.2%)

*Higher number:*

**Item 8Ac:** Men are generally more capable than women.

47.1% (13.1% + 34.0%)

(Agreement: 36.2%, No opinion: 16.8%)

Result: The data does not lend support to the postulation that women possess weaker characteristics. All items registered a majority (*Items 8Aa* and *8Ab*) or a higher (*Item 8Ac*) number in disagreement. Most noteworthy is the large majority (82.9%) who disagreed that women lacked education.

Sub-hypothesis V ii:

*Men are superior to women.*

(Cultural Belief)

Figure 13 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis V ii
Responses:

Agreement:

Majority:

**Item 8Bb:** The husband is rightfully the master of the house.

76.8% (46.5% + 30.3%)

(Disagreement: 14.8%, No opinion: 8.4%)

**Item 8Bc:** A woman must defer to her husband.

65.1% (41.5% + 23.6%)

(Disagreement: 23.1%, No opinion: 11.8%)

Higher number:

**Item 8Ba:** Men should lead and women follow.

49.5% (40.1% + 9.4%)

(Disagreement: 34.6%, No opinion: 15.9%)

Result: *Sub-hypothesis V ii* postulates that men are superior to women. All items recorded more respondents in agreement. The high percentages of respondents who agreed with **Item 8Bb** - the husband is rightfully the master of the house (76.8%); and **Item 8Bc** - a woman must defer to her husband (65.1%), indicate a strong support for the concept of male superiority. Not less noteworthy and interesting is the comparatively lower number of “no opinions”. Respondents appear to be more willing to express their opinion on these matters.
Sub-hypothesis V iii.

Women are not materially independent.

(PRACTICAL IMPERATIVE)

Figure 14 Frequency distribution analysis – Sub-hypothesis V iii
Responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8Ca: Most women are full time housewives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.3% (42.1% + 11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Disagreement: 29.4%, No opinion: 17.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Almost even distribution:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 8Cb: Very few women have high status, or high-income jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement: 40.9% / Disagreement 45.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No opinion: 12.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Even distribution:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 8Cc: Being dependent on their husbands financially, women have to defer to their husbands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement: 36.8% / Disagreement: 38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No opinion: 23.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result: The responses to the 3 items in relation to Sub-hypothesis V iii do not give a clear indication of the majority stand. Although more agreed that most women are full time housewives, respondents appeared to be equally split on the idea that women have lower status jobs, or that women have to defer to their husbands because they are materially dependent on them.

5.4.2.6 Findings in relation to Hypothesis V

Hypothesis V postulates that men are accorded more status and power than women. The data does not show a distinct outcome as regards the postulation. There is mostly disagreement with Sub-hypothesis V i - that women possess weaker characteristics. Then in contrast, there is mainly agreement with Sub-hypothesis V ii - that men are superior. Finally the data does not show a clear leaning towards either side as regards
the idea that women are materially dependent. Perhaps the most significant observation in terms of Hypothesis V is the strong cultural belief in male superiority.

5.5 Concluding Observations in Relation to Hypotheses I to V: Frequency Distribution Analysis

The frequency distribution analysis produced a number of interesting and noteworthy observations. At this stage most significant are the inconclusive findings in relation to the evaluation of the five hypotheses. This is due to the mixed responses in connection with the different aspects incorporated in each hypothesis. Having said that, it is nonetheless possible to deduce roughly the extent of support. Figure 15 shows the total number of majority agreements in relation to the total number of items within each sub-hypothesis.

As a preliminary observation, it can be said that overall the findings affirm Hypothesis IV, mainly affirm Hypotheses I and III, and only partly affirm Hypotheses II and V. The support for Hypothesis I derives from respondents’ agreements with the majority of items under Sub-hypothesis Ii and III. The data suggests that most people attributed the small number of women seeking political office to discrimination by political parties and the public, and to women not actively pursuing political life. They did not think women are not suitable for politics. The data in relation to Hypothesis II is less clear. On the one hand there is overwhelming evidence that people did not think it necessary for equal gender representation. On the other hand, there is strong evidence that most people did not think politics is a male activity. This notion is explored further in relation to Hypothesis III - that men should dominate politics. Support for Hypothesis III stems from respondents’ agreement with Sub-hypothesis III i - that men possess characteristics more suitable for political life, and Sub-hypothesis III iii - that it is not convenient for women to be in politics. Note, however, the scant support for Sub-hypothesis III ii - that it is not proper for women to be active in politics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis I: Very few women seek political office.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I i: Women are discriminated against in politics. 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ii: Women do not actively pursue political life. 4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I iii: Women think they are not suitable for politics. 1/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis II: Men should hold political office.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II i: Gender equality in political representation is not necessary. 2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II ii: Politics is a male activity. 0/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis III: Men should dominate politics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III i: Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life. 3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III ii: It is not proper for women to be active in politics. 1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III iii: It is not convenient for women to be active in politics. 2/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis IV: A woman’s place is in the home.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV i: Women are better homemakers and caregivers. 2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV ii: Women’s main concern should be the home. 3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV iii: Women have to fulfill domestic tasks. 2/2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis V: Men are accorded more status and power than women.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vi: Women possess weaker characteristics. 0/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi i: Men are superior to women. 3/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi ii: Women are materially dependent on men. 1/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the five hypotheses, the data most clearly affirm Hypothesis IV. The postulation that a woman’s place is in the home is underscored by Sub-hypothesis IV i - that women are better homemakers and caregivers, Sub-hypothesis IV ii - that women’s main concern should be the home, and Sub-hypothesis IV iii - that women have to fulfill domestic tasks. In contrast to Hypothesis IV, the data reveals an interesting pattern regarding Hypothesis V - that men are accorded more status and power than women. There is weaker support for Hypothesis V as most respondents disagreed with
Sub-hypothesis $V_i$ - that women possess weaker characteristics, and Sub-hypothesis $V_{ii}$ - that women are materially dependent on men. Notwithstanding this, equally interesting is the strong support for Sub-hypothesis $V_{ii}$ - that men are superior to women. This suggests that most respondents adhered to cultural ideological prescriptions of men’s superior status.

Overall, a majority or higher number of respondents agreed with 28 items and disagreed with 16 items. The outcomes were unclear for 5 items. Of the 5 items with unclear outcome, 3 related to women’s income, and 2 to women and politics. Respondents tended to disagree with items that underlined women’s weaker characteristics and lesser capability. These make up 9 of the 16 items. Respondents also tended to disagree with those items which propose that politics is not an activity for women (3 items), and those that stress women’s place as in the home (2 items). Close to half (49.3%) disagreed that it is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men. In this case, it is also interesting to note the substantial number of respondents who agreed. A total of 29.8% agreed it is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men, and 20.8% would not give an opinion on the matter.

The above results confirm an orientation to a public and private divide but do not indicate an unequivocal adherence to the ordering. There is convincing evidence of egalitarian tendencies over certain matters, and some distinct patterns exist. To find out in more details the nature of respondents’ attitude, the data is further scrutinized for possible connection between the respondents’ characteristics and their responses, and how this might have influenced the pattern of responses revealed in the above distribution. The next task analyzes the responses to items - the dependent variables, in relation to respondents’ particulars, the independent variables. The procedure involves firstly, running cross-tabulation analyses between items and independent variables to ascertain their relationship. This is measured as a correlation value. This is followed by a further scrutiny of the data through multiple regression analyses to confirm the existence and strength of any correlation.
5.6 Correlation Analysis

The first task in the correlation analysis is the cross-tabulation of the 49 items with each of the 10 sample variables namely, gender, age, marital status, education, medium of education, occupation, religion, ethnicity, place of residence and party membership. The measure of association used is *Cramer’s V* correlation coefficient. The following is a crude scale of the strength of association used in the analyses - between .150 and .200 - weak; between .200 and .300 - moderate; between .300 and .500 - fairly strong; and above .500 - very strong. The aggregates of cross-tabulations registering moderate to strong association, that is, *Cramer’s V* correlation coefficients of .200 and above are shown below. All are statistically significant at 0.005. Details on items are provided in Appendix F.

- Item and ethnicity: 38 items
- Item and gender: 34 items
- Item and religion: 32 items
- Item and party membership: 17 items
- Item and occupation: 10 items
- Item and place of residence: 4 items
- Item and education: 2 items
- Item and medium of education: 2 items
- Item and age: none
- Item and marital status: none

The results from the cross-tabulation process reveal no significant association between items and two of the variables - age and marital status. Another five variables - medium of education, education, residence, occupation and party membership - have significant associations with a range of between 2 to 17 items. Ethnicity, gender and religion each has moderate and above moderate association with a high number of items - 38, 34 and 32 respectively. It must be noted that cross-tabulation correlation values indicate the relationship between items and variables without taking into account the possible simultaneous effects of other variables. A more accurate picture of the strength of relationship between items and variables requires the effects of other variables to be controlled or corrected for, through multivariate processes. As
expected, a series of stepwise multivariate regression analyses result in regression (or $b$) coefficients that give a slightly different picture of the strength of relationship between items and sample variables. Only gender registers a noteworthy relationship with a significant number of items. Ethnicity has significant a relationship with a few items\textsuperscript{160}. The correlation between these two variables and items provide vital insight into the pattern of responses which cannot be ignored in the interpretation of the data.

5.6.1 Gender and Item Correlation:

Of the two variables, gender and ethnicity, gender has a high number - 38 $b$ coefficients- with statistical significance of .05 and below. Of these 38 $b$ coefficients, 25 registered coefficients values of .200 and above. Moving on from the issue of statistical reliability of the data, the next task is the substantive significance of the correlation between items and gender. The examination of relationships between responses to items and respondents' gender highlights a most important issue - the existence of considerable difference in responses between male and female. This essentially leads to another important consideration - when do male and females differ, and when do they concur. There are consequently, two implications on the interpretation of the data. The first is the effect on the overall pattern of responses. The second is the need to take gender into account in the evaluation of the hypotheses.

The following examination of hypothesis I to V incorporates the relationship between gender and items. The data on the cross-tabulation outcomes are presented in the form of bar graphs. It will be recalled that 38 of these outcomes register statistically significant (at .05 and below) $b$ correlation values in the multivariate regression analyses. Each graph shows the percentile distribution of responses by male and female to an item, the Cramer's $V$ correlation value, $b$ coefficient value (where applicable) and the respective statistical significance values. The graphs are ordered according to related hypotheses, and summary comments follow each set.

\textsuperscript{160} Note that the lack of a statistically significant relationship does not prove there is no relationship.
5.6.1.1 Hypothesis I: Very few women seek political office.

Sub-hypothesis I i:

Women are discriminated against in politics.

Figure 16 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis I i

**4a Political parties do not pick women as candidates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer's V = 0.176 sig. 0.003

**4b The public prefers men**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer's V = 0.155 sig. 0.013

**4c There is a lack of trust or confidence in women**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer's V = 0.099 sig. 0.418

**5d Men control the political parties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer's V = 0.234 sig. 0.000

Responses:

**Agreement:**

Male: Item 4a (54.2%), Item 4b (64%), Item 4c (44.8%) and Item 5d (70.5%).

Female: Item 4a (41.6%), Item 4b (63.9%), Item 4c (44.9%) and Item 5d (52.2%).
Findings:

None of the above set of items within Sub-hypothesis I (very few women seek political office) registers a statistically significant $b$ coefficient with gender. Two items (Item 5d - men control the political parties and Item 4b - the public prefers men) show a clear majority agreeing with the statements. Of the other two items, both indicate a higher number of males and females in agreement. However, note that in the case of Item 4c (there is a lack of trust or confidence in women) the margin between agreement and disagreement within each gender is quite narrow resulting in a less than majority (44.4%) outcome in the combined (male and female) aggregate. In the case of Item 4a (political parties do not pick women as candidates), the number of women who agreed were higher but were far short of a majority. This may be attributed to the substantial number (27.3%) of women who chose not to give an opinion. This could have caused the less than majority (49.3%) outcome in the combined aggregate. Overall, it can be concluded that there is a consensus among the majority of both males and females that political parties and the public discriminated against women in politics.

Sub-hypothesis II:

*Women do not actively pursue political life.*

Figure 17 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis II
Responses:

**Agreement:**

**Male:** Item 4d (57.9%), Item 4e (57.7%), Item 4f (65.2%), Item 5a (43.2%) and Item 5b (68.0%).

**Female:** Item 4e (55.2%), Item 4f (56.9%) and Item 5b (43.0%).

**Disagreement:**

**Male:** Item 4g (57.7%).

**Female:** Item 4d (40.7%), Item 4g (66.4%) and Item 5a (45.1%).
Findings:

Four items, Item 4d (There are too few women to choose from), Item 4g (Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough), Item 5a (Women are not interested in politics) and Item 5b (Women have no time because of family or work) display statistically significant b coefficient in relation to gender but none has b coefficient value above .200. Out of the six items, a majority of males agreed with 5 and a majority of females agreed with 3 items. Female responses show the majority thought women are not actively pursing political life because they give priority to their families and their jobs (Items 4e - women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector, 4f - women place their career or family above community involvement, and 5b - women have no time because of family or work) and not because they are not capable or not interested (Items 4d - there are too few women to choose from, 4g - women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough, and 5a - women are not interested in politics). On the other hand, the majority of males thought women give priority to their jobs and families and are not interested in politics (Items 4d - there are too few women to choose from, 4e - women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector, 4f - women place their career or family above community involvement, 5a - women are not interested in politics and 5b - women have no time because of family or work). In brief, male and females concur on their agreement with Items 4e (women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector), 4f (women place their career or family above community involvement) and 5b (women have no time because of family or work), and their disagreement with Item 4g (women themselves are not ambitious and confident enough).

But a division in the opposite direction exists between the genders over Items 4d (there are too few women to choose from) and Item 5a (women are not interested in politics) that resulted in the narrow margin and lack of a majority between the two sides seen earlier in the combined distribution. These responses suggest that both genders thought women do not actively pursue political office because women prioritized family and paid work and not that women did not lack ambition and confidence. However, the responses to Items 4d (there are too few women to choose from) and Item 5a (women are not interested in politics) suggest that women unlike
men did not think women do not pursue political office because they are not interested in politics.

Sub-hypothesis I iii:

*Women think they are not suitable for politics.*

Figure 18 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis I iii

4b Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.229 sig. 0.009
Standardised coefficient beta 0.251 sig 0.000

4i Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.300 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.287 sig 0.000

5c Women feel they lack education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.265 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.165 sig 0.003

5d Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.332 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.266 sig 0.000

5f Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.179 sig. 0.002
Responses:

**Agreement:**
- **Male:** Item 4i (59%), Item 5e (53.8%) and Item 5f (48.1%).
- **Female:** none

**Disagreement:**
- **Male:** Item 4h (46.5%), Item 5c (75.1%).
- **Female:** Item 4h (58.6%), Item 4i (45.6%), Item 5c (75.0%), Item 5e (48.0%) and Item 5f (41.2%).

Findings:

Four items, Items 4h, 4i, 5c and 5e display significant $b$ coefficient in relation to gender and three of these have $b$ coefficient values of above .200. Three items; Items 4i (women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics), 5e and 5f show a clear division between the two genders in opposite direction. In brief, a majority of females disagreed with all the 5 items while males disagreed with only two (Items 4h - women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious, and 5c - women feel they lack education). This reveals an interesting pattern. Consistent with the female respondents, a majority of males disagreed with Items 4h (women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious)\(^{161}\) and 5c (women feel they lack education) that relate to women’s lesser personal qualities, but agree with Items 4i (women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics), Item 5e (women personally think politics is not appropriate for women) and Item 5f (women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics) that suggest the view that it is inappropriate for women to participate in politics. The disagreement with all the items among the majority of females indicates they do not think women see themselves as not suitable for politics. The pattern of responses strongly suggest that males support male dominance in politics because they did not think politics is appropriate for women. As regards the combined distribution, the difference in male and female responses resulted in the narrow margin and lack of a clear majority between agreement and disagreement as regards Items 4i, 5e and 5f.

\(^{161}\) Note that 37.3% males agreed with the statement.
5.6.1.2 Hypothesis II: It is perceived that men should dominate politics.

**Sub-hypothesis II i:**

*There is no need for women to have equal representation.*

**Figure 19 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis II i**

**Responses:**

**Agreement:**

**Male:** Item 1 and Item 2.

**Female:** Item 1 and Item 2.

**Findings:**

The responses to Item 1 and Item 2 show an interesting contrast between males and females. A higher number of respondents from both genders thought there should be a few more women, but Items 1 and 2 register fairly strong b coefficient values. This is due to the distinct difference between males and females as regards two the response categories “many more” and “same as now”. Both items recorded around 35% females and 10% males chose “many more”, while around 30% males and around 5% females chose “same as now”. The fact that, compared to females, a lower number of males wanted many more women and a higher number wanted the number to stay the same suggests that males were less inclined to support equality in representation.
Sub-hypothesis II ii:

*Politics is a male activity.*

Figure 20 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis II ii

**3a Men should dominate politics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>32.9</td>
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Cramer’s V = 0.332 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.281 sig. 0.000

**3b A woman’s place is in the home**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.364 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.308 sig. 0.000

**3c In our society women do not command the same status and power as men**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cramer’s V = 0.293 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.215 sig. 0.000

**Responses:**

**Agreement:**

**Male:** Item 3a (58.6%).

**Female:** none

**Disagreement:**

**Male:** Item 3b (57.8%) and Item 3c (48.5%).

**Female:** Item 3a (47.8%), Item 3b (77.8%) and Item 3c (56.4%).
Findings:
Responses to the items in Sub-hypothesis II show a majority or higher number of females rejecting all three items and males agreeing with one. The majority of both genders disagreed with the notion that a woman’s place is in the home (Item 3b), and the notion that women do not command the same status and power as men (Item 3c). However, note the substantial number of males (30.9% and 39.4% respectively) who agreed with the two items. The egalitarian attitude most males displayed over these two items did not extend to the statement that men should dominate politics (Item 3a). The difference in male and female opinion on this issue caused the unclear outcome for Item 3a in the combined analysis.

5.6.1.3 Hypothesis III: Men should dominate politics.

Sub-hypothesis III i: 
Men possess characteristics that are more appropriate for political life.

(Stereotyping)

Figure 21 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis III i
Agreement:

Male: Item 6Aa (74.0%), Item 6Ab (81.6%) and Item 6Ad (65.5%).
Female: Item 6Aa (44.3%), Item 6Ab (50.0%) and Item 6Ad (49.4%).

Disagreement:

Male: Item 6Ac (51.8%) and Item 6Ae (80.3%).
Female: Item 6Ac (70.3%) and Item 6Ae (83.3%).

Findings:

There is male and female congruence on the responses to all five items in Sub-hypothesis III i. The majority of both males and females agreed that men are more competent, aggressive and forceful (Items 6Aa, and 6Ab), and that women are soft-hearted (Item 6Ad). The majority of both genders disagreed with the stereotype of
women as lacking confidence (Items 6Ac) and not knowledgeable, (Item 6Ae). Despite the consistency in the responses between the majorities of both genders, all the items register significant $b$ coefficient values. There are three reasons for this. The first is the difference in the number of responses, for instance, 74% male verses 44.3% female agreement on Item 6Aa, and 81.6% male verses 50% female agreement on Item 6aB. The second reason is the differences in responses in the opposite direction, for example, the higher number of males (37.7% verses 15.9% females) who agreed with Item 6Ac. The third reason is the difference in the strength of agreement or disagreement between the genders. Note, for example, the number of males who strongly agreed with Item 6Aa (26.4%males verses 8.1% females) and Item 6Ab (26.8%males verses 8.1% females), and the number of females who strongly disagreed with Item 6Ae (38.3% females verses 24.6% males). Despite these differences, the overall outcome is clearly one of consistency between the two genders.

Sub-hypothesis III ii:

_It is not proper for women to be active in politics._

(Cultural Belief)

Figure 22 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis III ii
Response:

**Agreement:**

**Male:** Item 6Bb (64.2%)

**Female:** Item 6Bb (50.6%)

**Disagreement:**

**Male:** Item 6Bc (71.9%)

**Female:** Item 6Ba (57.1%), Item 6Bc (74.8%) and Item 6Bd (55.3%)

**Even distribution:**

**Male:** Item 6Ba (46.1%/46.1%) and Item 6Bd (42.8%/42.4%).

Findings:

The responses to the items in *Sub-hypothesis III ii* show the majority of females and males agreed that women’s main concern should be with the well being of their families (*Item 6Bb*). Both genders also disagreed that it is not appropriate for women to be ambitious and dominant (*Item 6Bc*). However, while the majority of women disagreed that politics should rightly be carried out by men (*Item 6Ba*), or that it is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men (*Item 6Bd*), the men were evenly divided over each of these two items. Women’s responses clearly influenced the high number of disagreements to the items in relation to *Sub-hypothesis III ii* as shown in the combined frequency analysis.
Sub-hypothesis III iii:

*It is not convenient for women to be in politics.*

(Practical imperative)

Figure 23  Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis III iii

Responses:

*Agreement:*

**Male:** Item 6Ca (64.7%) and Item 6Cc (66.5%).

**Female:** Item 6Ca (42.7%) and Item 6Cc (42.4%).

*Even distribution:*

**Male:** Item 6Cb (42.5%/42.5%).

**Female:** Item 6Cc (35.2%/35.2%)
Findings:
Sub-hypothesis III iii registers consistency between male and female responses. The majority of male and female respondents agreed that women have no time because of children and housework (Items 6Ca), and that certain activities are not convenient for women (Item 6Cc). Both genders were almost evenly divided between those who agree and those who disagree with the statement stating that women need to contribute to their families’ income (Item 6Cb). Note, however, the much higher majority of males (around 65%) compared to females (around 42%) in relation to Items 6Ca and 6Cc. This is clearly brought about by the substantial number of females who expressed no opinion.

5.6.1.4 Hypothesis IV: A woman’s place is in the home.

Sub-hypothesis IV i:
Women are better homemakers and caregivers.
(Stereotyping)

Figure 24 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis IV i
Responses:

**Agreement:**
- **Male:** Item 7Aa (83.8%) and Item 7Ab (89.2%).
- **Female:** Item 7Aa (69.2%) and Item 7Ab (79.6%).

**Findings:**
The items under *Sub-hypothesis IV i* do not register significant correlation with gender. A high percentage of both genders agreed with *Item 7Aa* - that women are better homemakers and caregivers (83.9 males / 69.2% females), and *Item 7Ab* - that children need their mother’s love and care (89.2% males / 79.6% females).
Respondents appear to be more willing to express their opinion on these matters as evidenced by the lower number of “no opinion” responses.

**Sub-hypothesis IV ii:**

*Women’s main concern should be the home.*

(Cultural belief)

**Figure 25 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis IV ii**

- **7Ba:** The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family
  - Cramer's $V = 0.291$ sig. 0.000
  - Standardised coefficient beta 0.273 sig. 0.000

- **7Bb:** It is a woman’s duty to take care of her husband and family
  - Cramer's $V = 0.194$ sig. 0.001
  - Standardised coefficient beta 0.221 sig. 0.000
Responses:

**Agreement:**

**Male:** *Item 7Ba* (57.4%), *Item 7Bb* (74.7%), *Item 7Bc* (85.3%) and *Item 7Bd* (49.1%).

**Female:** *Item 7Bb* (58.5%) and *Item 7Bc* (67.4%).

**Disagreement:**

**Female:** *Item 7Ba* (40.1%) and *Item 7Bd* (64.9%).

Findings:

The majority of males agreed with all of the four items on women’s gender role. The majority of females concur with the males that a woman’s priority and duty is to her husband and family (*Items 7Bb and 7Bc*), but a majority (64.9%) disagreed that it is preferable the wife stays at home and the husband works (*Item 7Bd*). A higher number (40.1%) also disagreed that the most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family (*Item 7Ba*). But note, however, that quite a substantial percentage (33.1%) agreed, and even more interesting, 26.8% expressed no opinion. Also notable is the much higher percentages (74.7% and 85.3%) of males who agreed to *Items 7Bb* and *7Bc* compared to females (58.5% and 67.4%). Also interesting is the substantial percentage of males (39.5%) who disagreed with *Item 7Bd*, which suggests that some males thought women should place their husbands and families first, but do not need to stay at home.
The above pattern of responses explains the distribution of responses for Sub-hypothesis IV ii shown in the combined frequency distribution. Recall that the majority of males agreed to all 4 items, but women’s majority disagreement with Item 7Bd led to a majority disagreement outcome for that item and their disagreement with Item 7Ba led to a lack of majority for that item.

Sub-hypothesis IV iii:
Women have to fulfill domestic tasks.
(Practical imperative)

Figure 26 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis IV iii

Responses:

Agreement:
Male: Items 7Ca (53.5%) and Items 7Cb (64.2%).
Female: Items 7Ca (43.5%) and Items 7Cb (43.4%).

Findings:
There is male and female concordance in relation to Sub-hypothesis IV iii in that the majority of males and a higher number of females agreed that domestic chores (Item 7Ca), childcare and childbearing confine women to the home (Item 7Cb). A notable
feature is the substantial number of females who disagreed (about 33%) and gave no opinion (about 23%), resulting in a lack of majority outcome for women.

5.6.1.5 Hypothesis V: Men are accorded more status and power than women.

Sub-hypothesis V i:
Women possess weaker characteristics.
(Stereotyping)

Figure 27 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis V i
Responses:

**Agreement:**
- **Male:** Item 8Ac (56.7%).
- **Female:** none

**Disagreement:**
- **Male:** Item 8Aa (48.7%) and Item 8Ab (82.1%).
- **Female:** Item 8Aa (63.3%), Item 8Ab (83.8%) and Item 8Ac (55.9%)

Findings:
Both genders disagreed with Item 8Aa - that women are weak and deferential, and Item 8Ab - that women lack education. A substantial number of females (35%) disagreed strongly with Item 8Ab. However, the two genders did not concur on Item 8Ac, with a majority of males agreeing and a majority of females disagreeing that men are generally more capable than women. The distribution of responses suggests that women did not think they are weaker, less educated or less capable than men. Men, on the other hand, did not see women as weaker or lacking education, but nevertheless they saw men as generally more capable than women.

**Sub-hypothesis V ii:**

*Men are superior to women.*

(Cultural Belief)

Figure 28 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis V ii
Responses:

Agreement:

Male: Item 8Ba (66.7%), Item 8Bb (82.7%) and Item 8Bc (74.7%)

Female: Item 8Bb (72.1%) and Item 8Bc (57.2%)

Disagreement:

Female: Item 8Ba (41.1%)

Findings:

The items under Sub-hypothesis Vi display interesting response patterns. A high majority of both males and females agreed with Item 8Bb - that the husband is the master of the house, and Item 8Bc - that a woman must defer to her husband. Particularly noteworthy is the number of male respondents who strongly agreed with Item 8Bb (35.3%) and Item 8Bc (30.4%). Another interesting observation relates to Item 8Ba. A good majority (66.7%) of males agreed with Item 8Ba - that men should lead and women follow. In contrast, among women, only 35.7% agreed and 41.1% disagreed with that item. This suggests that while most women agreed that the wife is subordinate to the husband, they did not think women should just follow men.
Sub-hypothesis V iii:
Women are materially dependent on men.
(Practical imperative)

Figure 29 Gender-item correlation – Sub-hypothesis V iii

Responses:

Agreement:
Male: Item 8Ca (65.3%), Item 8Cb (51.5%) and Item 8Cc (49.1%).
Female: Item 8Ca. (44.8%)  

Disagreement:
Female: Item 8Cb (47.9%) and Item 8Cc (41.1%).
Findings:
While the male respondents agreed with all items, the female respondents agreed with only one. The majority of both males and females agreed with Item 8Ca - that women are full time housewife, but are divided over Items 8Cb - that very few women have high status or high income job and Item 8Cc - that being dependent on their husbands, women have to defer to their husbands. The different responses between male and female as regards Item 8Cb and Item 8Cc explain the unclear outcome on these items in the combined frequency analysis.

5.6.2 Concluding Observations: Gender and Item Correlation Analysis

The item and gender correlation analysis reveals a number of differences between males and female responses that are significant in the interpretation of the data. An initial classification of responses according to gender shows that a majority or higher number of male respondents agreed (i.e. agree and strongly agree) with 36 items, disagreed (i.e. disagree and strongly disagree) with 10; and were closely divided over 3 items. A majority or higher number of female respondents agreed with 24 items, disagreed with 24 items and were closely divided over 1 item. Overall, males and females responded to 12 items in clearly opposite directions. In other cases, differences occur in intensity of agreement or disagreement. On the whole, in terms of assessing the strength of support for each sub-hypothesis by looking at the total number of items recording a majority or higher number in agreement, it can be said that there is no wide variation between the male, female and combined outcome. The following table shows a summarized comparison of the three categories.

\[162\] Including Items 1 and 2.

\[163\] Including Items 1 and 2.
As can be seen above, there are only two instances where the outcome in the combined aggregate is affected by the stance of one gender. These are Sub-hypothesis I iii and Sub-hypothesis V iii where the combined outcomes reflect the female position. Having said that, there are a number of significant qualitative differences between male and female responses as revealed in the correlation analysis.

Firstly, a most conspicuous characteristic shown in the data is the substantial percentages of “no opinion” responses from female respondents. While the percentages of male “no opinion” responses range from 3.5% to 17.9%, the percentages for females range from 11.1% to 29.3%. Of the latter, 25 items display above 20%. A possible result of these high percentages is that the said items show a lack of majority (i.e. merely a higher number) responses from women. A run through the 25 items with more than 20% female “no opinion” responses reveals that 17 of them display 40% to 49% (i.e. below 50%). A further effect is the large number of low majorities or lack of a majority shown in the combined aggregates.

Apart from their effects on numbers, the “no opinion” responses reveal another significant characteristic in the nature of the data by showing which items respondents were more prepared to give an opinion. The following Table 3 shows the distribution
of “no opinion” responses that, in relative terms, are low (below 5% for males and 15% for females) and those that are high (above 15% for males and above 25% for females). For the purpose of comparison, for each of the selected high/low, male/female “no opinion” percentage, the corresponding male/female percentage for that item is given.

Table 3 Comparison between male and female “no opinion” responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Male No Opinion (%)</th>
<th>Female No Opinion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-hypothesis I i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4a</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>27.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-hypothesis I ii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 5a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 4b</td>
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<td>Item 5c</td>
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<td>Item 5e</td>
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<td>27.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-hypothesis III i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6Aa</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Item 7Aa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 7Ab</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 7Ba</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Sub-hypothesis V i</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 8Ab</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Sub-hypothesis V ii</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8Bb</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
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<td>Item 8Be</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-hypothesis V iii</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Item 8Cc</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows 6 instances of female “no opinion” responses rising above 25% and 8 instances of falling below 15%, and there is a discernable pattern in the nature of the responses. The percentages above 25% reveal that a substantial number of women avoided giving an opinion on discrimination by political parties and the
appropriateness of women's involvement in politics (Items 4a, 5e, 5f); women's financial situation in the home (Items 6Cb, 8Cc); and women giving priority to marriage and having children (Item 7Ba). On the other hand, the 8 instances when percentages were below 15% show that there was more willingness to express opinion on women's personality traits and capability (Items 5c, 6Ac, 6Ae, 8Ab); women's indispensability in the home (Items 7Aa, 7Ab); and male superior status in the home (Items 8Bb, 8Bc). As regards men, there are 5 instances above 15% and 5 instances below 5%. Although there are fewer cases, there is also a discernable pattern. Men were less willing to express their opinion on women's enthusiasm for politics (Items 4h, 5a, 5f) and women's financial status in the home (Items 6Cb, 8Cc). On the other hand, they were more willing to give their opinion on male superior personality traits and capability (Items 6Aa, 6Ab), women's indispensability in the home (Items 7Aa, 7Ab), and male superior status in the house (Item 8Bb). Except for Items 6Aa and 6Ab (on male superior character and competence) which show very low male but high female "no opinion" responses, there is mostly parallelism in the types of statements males and females choose to give or not to give their opinion. Undoubtedly, the decisions were strongly linked to their position in relation to each statement. This leads to the next observation.

The second observation derived from the gender and item correlation analysis pertains to the pattern of male responses. As was stated earlier, the majority of males agreed with 36 items, disagreed with 10 items and were evenly divided over 3 items. The much higher instances of agreements are indicative of a stronger leaning towards gender roles and gender inequality. This is particularly evident in the very high majority percentages (above 70%) agreeing with items that emphasize women's indispensability in the home (Items 7Aa and 7Ab), women giving priority to home and family (Items 7Bb and 7Bc), and male superiority in the home (Items 8Bb and 8Bc). The rejected items in themselves reveal a significant point. Certain stereotypical images of women did not hold sway among the majority of males. Eight of the 10 items rejected highlight women's weaker personality traits and lesser capability (Items 4g, 4h, 5c, 6Ac, 6Ae, 6Bc, 8Aa and 8Ab). At the same time a high majority of men believe in men's stronger character and higher competence, as shown by the large number (over 70%) who agreed with Item 6Aa and 6Ab.
The third noteworthy observation concerns female pattern of responses. A majority of female respondents agreed with 24 items, disagreed with 24 items and were evenly divided over one item. Female majority responses concur with male majority responses on a number of issues. In terms of responses in agreement, females agreed, firstly, concerning political participation, females agreed that women are discriminated against in politics; and that they are constrained by familial responsibilities, their jobs and lack of time from active political participation. Secondly, they agreed that women are indispensable in the home, and that their priorities should be to family and home. They also agreed that the husband is the master of the house, and that women must defer to their husbands. In terms of responses in disagreement, most females disagreed, as did most males, with the negative stereotyping of women.

Noteworthy differences between the pattern of male and female responses relate, firstly, to women and political activities. Despite agreeing that women are constrained from participation, females did not think women are not interested, not suitable or that it is not appropriate for women to be in politics (Items 4i, 5a, 5e and 5f). Neither did they think politics is a male activity or that men should dominate politics (Items 3a and 6Ba). Secondly, in spite of having confirmed the subordinate status of the wife versus husband, most females did not think males are more capable (Item 8Aa), or that husbands should work and wives stay at home.

In considering the influence of respondents' gender on the spread of responses, it is evident that the effects of gender are crucial in the interpretation of the data. Women exhibited more egalitarian attitudes and this affected the spread of the combined aggregate particularly those items where they differ from the male responses. One consequence is the narrow margin between the agreement / disagreement categories in the combined aggregate. Another is the lack of a majority response for a number of items. In the case of the latter, 12 items record male and female responses in clearly opposite direction. Eleven of these items exhibited less than 50% in the combined outcome.

The item and gender analysis enables a number of significant observations that provide more depth in the interpretation of the data. Recall that gender and ethnicity
are the only two variables that exhibit noteworthy item correlation values. But, whereas gender has a wider spread of item correlation that can potentially impact on the nature of the data, the same cannot be said of ethnicity. Nonetheless, a brief look at those items that have noteworthy correlation with ethnicity would provide some interesting observations.

5.6.3 Correlation: Item and Ethnicity

A correlation analysis through cross-tabulation of responses to items and ethnicity shows 38 items registering Cramer’s $V$ correlation values of $0.200$ and above. However, further analysis through multiple regressions shows 17 items displaying $b$ correlation coefficient values. Out of this, only 7 have $b$ correlation coefficient values of $0.200$ and above, and 2 have values close to $0.200$. Compared to gender, the occurrence of significant relationships between ethnicity and responses to items is weaker and less prevalent. The following graphs show the 9 cross-tabulations that registered the presence of noteworthy correlation between item and ethnicity.

Figure 30 Ethnicity – Item correlation
49 Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough

Cramer's V = 0.252 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.251 sig 0.000

5f Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics

Cramer's V = 2.35 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.200 sig 0.000
6Bd It is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men

7Ba The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family
7Bc A woman must always place her husband and family first

Cramer's V = 0.190 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.263 sig 0.000

8Ba Men should lead and women follow

Cramer's V = 0.281 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta 0.237 sig 0.000
88b. The husband is rightfully the master of the house

- Strongly Agree: 60.0%
- Agree: 60.3%
- Disagree: 14.5%
- Strongly Disagree: 9.8%
- No opinion: 10.0%

Cramer’s V = 0.295 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta = 0.296 sig. 0.000

88c. A woman must defer to her husband

- Strongly Agree: 48.1%
- Agree: 54.5%
- Disagree: 33.9%
- Strongly Disagree: 6.7%
- No opinion: 9.2%

Cramer’s V = 0.0316 sig. 0.000
Standardised coefficient beta = 0.427 sig. 0.000
Comments:
The occurrences of correlations as shown in the graphs do not exhibit a distinctive pattern. Except for Items 8Ba, 8Bb and 8Be that make up the full set of measurements for Sub-hypothesis V ii - men are superior to women, the notable b correlation coefficient values in terms of the other six items (Items 3c, 4g, 5f, 6Bd, 7Ba and 7Bc) occur at random. On the whole, there do not appear to be a significantly strong relationship between ethnicity and the pattern of responses that would warrant a separate interpretation of the data in relation to the hypotheses. This in itself is significant in that, contrary to a demonstration of differences in beliefs and attitudes expected of such culturally diverse groups, there appear to be similarities in opinion. Having established that, there are, however, a number of interesting observations that merit mention. For example, the Chinese is the only group where a majority (52.9%) agreed with Item 3c - in our society women do not command the same status and power as men, and a majority (57.4%) disagreed with Item 7Ba - the most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family. The agreement with Item 3c may be due to an awareness and willingness to voice the fact that gender inequality exists within patriarchal Chinese society. The disagreement with Item 7Ba, on the other hand seems to indicate a break from traditional beliefs. This is most interesting especially viewed in connection with the majority agreement with Item 7Bc - a woman must always place her husband and family first (68.6%) and Item 8Bb - the husband is rightfully the master of the house (70.1%), among the Chinese. The responses appear to suggest that whether or not a woman wishes to get married and have a family is a negotiable choice. However, when the choice is made, the status and role of wife and mother is not negotiable.

In contrast to the Chinese, the majority of respondents from the other three groups disagreed with Item 3c. The Melanaus and the Malays appear to concur in their responses as shown by the high percentage from both groups who disagreed strongly with Items 3c (in our society women do not command the same status and power as men - 81.9% and 54.9% respectively), and the high percentage that agreed with Item 8Ba (men should lead and women follow - 71.4% and 46.2%), Item 8Bb (the husband is rightfully the master of the house - 94.8% and 82.1%), and Item 8Bc (a woman must differ to her husband - 94.9% and 77.2%). This similarity may be due to fact that
both groups are Muslims. Even more notable is the fact that their disagreement with Item 3c (in our society women do not command the same status and power as men) is inconsistent with their agreement with Item 8Ba (Men should lead and women follow), Item 8Bb (the husband is rightfully the master of the house) and Item 8Bc (a woman must defer to her husband). This response pattern accords with the Islamic paradoxical projection of male and female as equal, while prescribing female obedience to male authority. In the case of the Ibans, the majority disagreement with Items 3c (in our society women do not command the same power and status as men - 59.1%) is also inconsistent with the majority agreement with Items 8Bb (the husband is rightfully the master of the house - 70.9%) and 8Bc (a woman must defer to her husband - 62.7%). The pattern of the responses may be attributed to the Iban perception of gender asymmetry as a complementary ordering rather than an inequality in status and power.

A further interesting finding obtained from the correlation analysis is the conspicuously high number of Malays who chose the “no opinion” response. The percentage ranges from 16.4% to 51.5% in the graphs displayed. From what is found earlier in the gender and item correlation, it can be assumed that most of these respondents were female. It is difficult to comment on the cause of the reluctance to express an opinion. One possible reason is that, as Muslims, they were either cautious about portraying the highly patriarchal nature of their culture, or are reluctant to appear as going against Muslim practices should they express liberal and egalitarian attitudes.

### 5.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the first of two sets of hypotheses (postulated in chapter 3) on the environment surrounding women’s underrepresentation. Framed within a social dimension, the hypotheses, each subsuming a number of sub-hypotheses, are related to societal attitudes on women’s gender roles, gender asymmetry, and women and politics. The theoretically driven hypotheses encapsulate nesting concepts, the broadest of which is the public and
private divide. Within this lie gender roles and gender asymmetry that in turn incorporate stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperatives. The item measurements used in assessing the hypotheses are monotone, that is, they drew responses that were either favorable or unfavorable. Each item was constructed such that a response in agreement supports the validity of the hypotheses/sub-hypotheses and vice versa.

The data, comprising the responses from a survey sample of 538 males (43.8%) and females (55.6%) belonging to four ethnic groups, is analyzed through three statistical processes. First, a frequency distribution analysis maps the distribution of responses in relation to items. This is followed by cross-tabulating items and sample variables, namely: gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, education, occupation, religion, residence and party affiliation, to investigate for possible relationships between items and variables. Finally, a multiple regression analysis is used to confirm the presence of any correlation. Of the various variables, only gender registered noteworthy correlations with a substantial number of items. This outcome is in itself significant in that ethnicity does not.

The broadest conclusion that can be drawn from the examination of the data is the lack of definitive results in relation to the hypotheses. This is primarily due to the varied responses in connection with the different aspects incorporated in each hypothesis.

An assessment of the data purely in terms of aggregating the frequency distributions of responses by the sample respondents produces findings that affirm Hypothesis IV, mainly affirm Hypotheses I and III, and only partly affirm Hypotheses II and V. An examination of the data in relation to gender as a variable generates a slightly different outcome. But more important than the issue of establishing with certainty the validity or invalidity of each hypothesis by aggregating items is the manifestation of a number of significant characteristics in the data. The analysis draws attention to the need to incorporate gender in the interpretation of the data, the need to ascertain significant patterns, and the need to map out the emergent observations in relation to the objectives of this chapter.
The data in relation to Hypothesis I reveals that most respondents attributed the lack of women seeking political office to discrimination by the public and political parties, and to the fact that women do not actively pursue political office because they prioritize family and paid work. It was not attributed to women lacking education, ambition or confidence, or that they do not want to appear aggressive and ambitious. While the two genders concurred on the preceding, they differ on other points. In contrast to males, females did not agree with the statements that implied women are not interested in politics or see themselves as incapable. Neither did they think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics. This difference between male and female views, suggests that in addition to attributing the dearth of women seeking political office to discrimination by others, and to women's domestic and work priorities, males also place the blame on women.

The findings in relation to Hypothesis II - that men should hold political office - present an interesting contradiction with respect to the two sub-hypothesis it subsumes. In Sub-hypothesis II i, the majority of males and a higher number of females did not think it is necessary to have gender equality in political representation. Most respondents expressed the opinion that an increase of a few more\textsuperscript{164} women representatives in legislatures and local councils\textsuperscript{165} would suffice. This concordance between males and females being the case on the one hand, there is also, on the other hand, some evidence of discord. This is evident with the substantial number (around 35%) of females and the much smaller number (around 12%) of males who thought there should be many more\textsuperscript{166} women representatives. The males' pro-men attitude was again evident with the substantial number (around 30%) of males and the much smaller number (around 7%) of females who thought the existing number of women representatives were adequate. From these differences in responses, it can be surmised that compared to females, males were much less in favour of achieving gender equality in representation.

\textsuperscript{164} 5 more.
\textsuperscript{165} Note that these responses were made in the context of only 2 women (out of a total of 62 members) in the state legislature, 2 women (out of a total of 28 representative from Sarawak) in the federal legislature, and less than 15% in local government councils.
\textsuperscript{166} 10 to 20 more.
Notwithstanding the difference between males and females on the point of many more women representatives, or the same number of women representatives, it is clear that the general perception amongst both genders was that there only needed to be a few more women representatives. The preference for males underscores the majority perception that the public prefers men, mentioned earlier in connection with Item 4b, Sub-hypothesis I i. This pro-male attitude, however, is somewhat countered by a display of egalitarianism in relation to Sub-hypothesis II ii. The postulation that politics is a male activity, is negated especially by the majority of female respondents who disagreed that a woman’s place is in the home (Item 3b), or that women do not command the same status and power as men (Item 3c). A higher number also disagreed that men should dominate politics (Item 3a). Egalitarian attitudes on the part of males were demonstrated by the majority disagreement with Items 3b and 3c. But more significant perhaps than the male display of equality as regards gender roles and status was their majority agreement that men should dominate politics. This is in contrast to the female response, and further affirms male preference for men to be in politics. Further scrutiny of the issues contained in each of the three items pertaining to Sub-hypothesis II ii is carried out through the evaluation of Hypotheses III, IV and V. Each hypothesis subsumes sub-hypotheses that expand on the stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperative aspects of each issue.

Hypothesis III, subsumes three sub-hypothesis pertaining to the postulation that men should dominate politics. The goal here is to undertake a more in depth examination of the concept contained in Item 3a (Sub-hypothesis II ii) referred to above. Overall the results are mixed and do not decisively support the postulation that men should dominate politics. Firstly, the distribution of responses partly confirms the stereotypical perception that men possess characteristics more appropriate for political life (Sub-hypothesis III i). Men were seen as more competent in making decisions, and were more aggressive and forceful while women were seen as soft hearted. But, although respondents viewed men as possessing qualities required for political life, women were not seen as lacking confidence or knowledge, which are characteristics commonly associated with women and regarded as incompatible with political activities. This positive view on women’s capability is given a further boost by the lack of majority agreement to the items on Sub-hypothesis III ii - that it is not proper for women to be active in politics. Except for Item 6Bb - that women’s main concern
should be the well being of their families, there was no majority support for the other three items. But such progressive responses were offset by responses to *Sub-hypothesis III iii* that affirmed practical constraints render it inconvenient for women to be in politics. The results in relation to *Hypothesis III* suggest that an opinion favouring men’s dominance of politics would be underpinned by the view that men possess characteristics more appropriate for political life, and that it is not convenient for women to be active in politics.

The response pattern in connection with *Hypothesis IV* - that a woman’s place is in the home, is at variance with the response to the similarly phrased *Item 3b (Sub-hypothesis II ii)*. In contrast to the majority disagreement among both males and females to *Item 3b* - a woman’s place is in the home, the responses to all three sub-hypotheses under *Hypothesis IV* - a woman’s place is in the home, are mainly in favour of the postulation. In the case of females, the only exceptions were *Item 7Ba* - that the most important thing for a women is to get married and have a family, and *Item 7Bd* - that it is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home. Subsumed under *Sub-hypothesis IV ii* - women’s main concern should be the home, these two items recorded more disagreements among females. Considering that most females agreed with all the other items, this suggests female respondents preferred that women adhere to their roles as wives, mothers and homemakers but did not think they should just stay at home. In other words, it is acceptable for them to go out and work. This perception may have influenced the high number of females who disagreed with *Item 3b (Sub-hypothesis II ii)* - a woman’s place is in the home. The inconsistency between male majority disagreements with *Item 3b* - a woman’s place is in the home, and their agreement with all the items advocating women’s place in the home is more difficult to fathom. More certain is the strong evidence, amongst both genders, that stereotyping women as more nurturing, cultural beliefs in women’s roles in the home, and practical imperatives all contributed to the perception that a woman’s place is in the home.

The data in relation to *Hypothesis V*, which stipulates that men are accorded more status and power than women, exhibits a response pattern that is again mixed particularly in terms of male and female responses. The responses from women are more consistent with the majority disagreement responses to the similarly phrased
Item 3c (Sub-hypothesis II ii)- in our society women do not command the same status and power as men. Females disagreed to statements stereotyping women as deferential and less capable, and statements on women’s material dependence on men. But interestingly, at the same time there was agreement to statements that propose the husband as the master of the house and the need for the wife to defer to her husband. While the responses from females do not fully support the postulation, males are largely in favour. Apart from the disagreement with two items that negatively stereotype women, males agreed with all the other items proposing male superior status.

The responses in relation to Hypothesis V - men are accorded more status and power than women, reveal a significant insight on gender inequality. There is a very strong adherence to a cultural belief in male superiority in the home. A high 82.7% of men and 72.1% of women agreed that the husband is rightfully the master of the house. Furthermore, even though the number for males was higher, the majority of males (74.7%) and females (57.2%) agreed that a woman must defer to her husband. This finding presents an interesting inconsistency particularly in connection with female respondents. In terms of the other aspects of the male/female relationship, there was largely rejection of the idea that women do not possess the same status and power as men, but it is evident that this did not extend to the culturally sanctioned superior status of the male in the home.

In comparing the findings on Sub-hypothesis II ii with the findings on the nine sub-hypotheses subsumed under Hypotheses III, IV and V, it seems that respondents expressed more egalitarian attitudes when the issues - men’s dominance of politics; women’s place in the home; and women’s subordinate status, were put to them as broad notions or convictions (as per item measurement for Sub-hypothesis II ii.). Translating and advancing each idea as specific matters experienced in everyday life (as per item measurement for sub-hypotheses subsumed under Hypotheses III, IV and V) drew responses that reflected attitudes closer to reality. These were much less egalitarian particularly among males.

A clearer picture of the significance of the pattern of responses that ensued is gained by looking at the spread of the responses in terms of which types of items registered
more responses in agreement and which in disagreement. Due to the difference in male and female responses, it is necessary to categorize according to gender. In the case of males, agreement with 36 items, disagreement with 10 items and equal division over 3 items indicate an orientation favouring men’s dominance in politics, women’s adherence to gender roles, and gender inequality in status and power. This attitude is made more obvious by the high percentages (above 70%) of males who agreed with items that stress women’s indispensability in the home, women prioritizing home and family, and male superior status in the home. High percentages of males also affirm men’s stronger character and higher competence. Also worthy of note is the fact that, of the 10 items males rejected, 8 were on women’s weaker personality traits and lesser capability. The pattern of responses suggests that male display of egalitarianism was in terms of rejecting negative stereotypes of women.

In the case of females, a majority or higher number of females agreed with 24 items, disagreed with 24 items and were evenly divided over one item. Compared to males, there was some degree of ambivalence in female responses. Nonetheless, it is still possible to discern a pattern. Firstly, in connection with women’s involvement in politics, females agreed that women are discriminated against, and are constrained by their duties and responsibilities from active participation in politics. They did not, however, think that women are not interested, not suitable, or that it is not appropriate for women to be in politics. Neither did they view politics as a male activity or that men should dominate politics. Secondly, regarding gender roles and gender equality, females agreed that women are indispensable in the home, and should put family and home first. They also affirm the husband as the master of the house and the need for women to defer to their husbands. But, despite having confirmed the superior status of the husband versus wife, females did not see males are more capable, or that wives should stay at home while their husbands work. Thirdly, concerning women’s character and personality, females rejected all statements that stereotype women negatively.

Overall, males and females responded to 12 items in clearly opposite directions. All instances stemmed from female disagreement and male agreement to items. Firstly, concerning women and political activities, females did not think women are not interested, not suitable or that it is not appropriate for women to be in politics.
Neither did they think politics is a male activity or that men should dominate politics (Items 4i, 5a, 5e and 5f). Secondly, concerning gender status, females did not think males are more capable, or that they should lead and women follow (Item 8Ac, 8Ba). They also did not think women are materially dependent on their husbands (Item 8Cb, 8Ce). Thirdly, concerning gender roles, females disagreed that the most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family, or that husbands should work and wives stay at home.

Apart from the relationship between types of items and responses, another feature of the data that merit mention is the occurrence of significantly high majorities (in agreement or disagreement) in some of the items. High majority percentages usually coincide with low "no opinion" percentages indicating that respondents were more prepared to express their opinion on the items. But more importantly these responses highlight a number of important points on women and political activities. Among males, there are 13 items that recorded majority percentages of above 70%. Among females there are 9. For both genders, almost all instances are either disagreement with statements on women’s personal characteristics, or agreement with statements on women’s subordinate status, gender roles and duties in relation to their husbands, families and homes. The finding suggests, firstly, that people were more prepared to express their opinion on these matters. Secondly, it can be seen that most respondents did not stereotype women as less educated, capable or less knowledgeable. Thirdly it is quite clear that most respondents adhered to a patriarchal structure and the belief that women are indispensable in the home. As regards the latter, the stereotyping of women as more nurturing and better at carrying out domestic tasks prevailed.

The mixed findings that accrued from aggregating measurements render it difficult to make a definitive summation in relation to each of the hypothesis examined. However, the revelation of certain salient characteristics in the data justifies focusing on their significance in relation to the broader objectives of the hypotheses, which is, to gauge the prevalence of the public and private divide. It is evident from the responses to the item statements that most males were still strongly attached to the traditional conception of defined gender roles and gender asymmetry, which uphold the public and private divide. Understandably, as the data demonstrates, they were in favour of males dominating politics. The only area where males appeared to have
moved away from a traditional position was their rejection of negative stereotypes of women’s personality traits and abilities.

While it is evident that most males were attached to ideas that uphold the public and private divide, most females demonstrated more progressive tendencies as shown by their rejection of a considerable number of item statements. Notwithstanding, it is evident that females adhered to certain crucial aspects of defined gender roles and gender asymmetry. First, most females hung on to the stereotypes of women as soft-hearted, nurturing and caring. Second, most females hung on to the conviction that it is women’s duty to prioritize home and family. Third, most females still believed that the husband is the master of the house, and that a wife should defer to her husband. It does not take much to see that despite all the indications of progressiveness and egalitarianism, most women remain faithful to these pillars of the public and private divide.

Furthermore, as the data reveals, there is no significant difference in the responses to items between the different ethnic groups. The only notable observation is the high number of “no opinion” responses among the Malays on some items. This reluctance to express an opinion, although interesting, is not so extensive as to set the Malays apart. On the whole the data suggests a high degree of similarities between the four groups of distinctly different cultures concerning gender relations.

Among all four ethnic groups male and female perceptions of women’s political activities reflect their attitudes discussed above. There is general agreement that the public and political parties discriminate against women. But in contrast to the males, females did not think women do not have the necessary qualities, or that it is not proper for women to partake in politics. Their only concession was that women are constrained by lack of time, family and work from participation. How far these perceptions hold true in reality will require looking at women’s actual participation in politics. That task is undertaken in the next chapter which focuses on women’s participation in political parties.
CHAPTER 6

Women and Political Parties in Sarawak

Based on the data examined in the previous chapter, it is evident that there is a fairly strong presence of the public and private division within Sarawak society. The orientation away from the public and private division occurs mainly with regard to stereotyping women as lacking education, knowledge and confidence. There is also evidence particularly among women that most people do not have a problem with women participating in politics. This of course has to be seen in conjunction with the overwhelming view that women must conform to their gender status and roles as regards husband and family. This strongly suggests that it is acceptable for women to participate in politics as long as they also perform their gender roles.

Chapter 5 concerns the social dimension. This chapter concerns the institutional dimension and undertakes the next stage of the investigation into the situation surrounding the realization of political women, namely, the environment within political parties. The focus is on women's participation in political parties for the purpose of evaluating the two hypotheses postulated in chapter 3 and restated below. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part relates to Hypothesis I - that political party structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions, and the second relates to Hypothesis II - that women's party participation underscores the dominance of men. The final part comprises a discussion and conclusion.

In chapter 3 an examination of various literatures on women's participation and experiences in political parties revealed an inequality in status and an asymmetry in relations and interaction between men and women members. These inequalities are
not conducive to the realization or advancement of political women. Based on these observations the following hypotheses and sub-hypotheses were postulated.

6.1 Hypotheses

Hypothesis I:

Political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions.

i. Party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women.

ii. Party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills.

Hypothesis II:

Women's party participation underscores the dominance of men.

i. Women are perceived as lacking commitment and ambition.

ii. Women are perceived to be less able to carry out the responsibilities of political office.

6.2 The Nature of The Data

6.2.1 The Data source

In contrast to the quantitative data used in the evaluation of the hypotheses in chapter 5, in this chapter qualitative data is used in order to capture in more detail the interactions and relational dynamics between men and women within political parties. The sample respondents were drawn from the two main political parties in Sarawak. The data takes the form of responses to two sets of structured but open-ended interview questions. The interviews, conducted in four languages (English, Malay,
Iban and Chinese) were carried out among 45 (34 female and 11 male) members of two political parties in Sarawak. Their positions within the parties ranged from ordinary grass-root members to party leaders, public office holders and elected legislators. All the male interviewees hold high level, middle level or local branch level leadership positions in their respective parties. A brief profile of each interviewee is provided in Appendix D. For convenience, in the following analyses, each interviewee is given a coded identity that indicates gender, party, party position and number within his or her sub-group.

6.2.2 Measures

The objective was to elicit information on respondents’ opinions and experiences in their respective parties. The interview questions were designed to elicit information that would be used to evaluate the hypotheses postulated. Two sets of standardized interview schedules - one for males and the other for females were used. Each schedule contained sections that could be included or omitted based on their relevance to the interviewees in terms of their positions in their respective parties or their public offices. Specimens of the full interview schedules are provided in Appendix C. As the objective is to map the interactive, relational and structural dynamics of gender differentiation, the interview questions were constructed to tap as much as possible interviewees’ own account of their experiences and perceptions. This was undertaken by using “open ended” questions, that is, depending on how a question was initially answered, further “probes” led to more discussion or clarification. This method was essential in two ways. Firstly it avoided the problem of “leading questions” - questions that are phrased such that respondents are led into answering in a certain way. As the “open ended questions” in the interview schedule were mostly general in nature, respondents were able to respond in their own way. Secondly, the method gave the interviewer flexibility in dealing with interviewees who differed in lifestyle, level of education, communicative fluency and participation within their parties. The adherence to a standardized interview schedule was to ensure that the information collected was manageable for the purpose of categorization and comparison. This was easier said than done. As the questions were open ended, the interviews generally took
form as discussions rather than consecutive questions and answers. Some information was provided without the related question being asked. At the same time, due to the emphasis on fluidity in relation to the interview process that allowed interviewees some control over what they said, there were instances when interviewees spoke at length or overemphasized certain aspects at the expense of other aspects. On the whole, responses were diverse and revealed particularism on the part of respondents. To a certain extent this renders the analysis less systematic; however, it is, in its own way, important and desirable as it reflects what each respondent saw as significant.

6.2.3 Data Analysis and Evaluation of Hypotheses

The objective of the interviews was to elucidate respondents' perceptions and experience within their political parties that would shed light on the issues under scrutiny.

Analysis is undertaken by examining the information provided by interviewees through categorization and inference according to the goals of the task. Broadly speaking, the focus is on respondents' account of actual experiences as well as perceptions on women's roles and activities, and the problems they faced. The resulting observations are used to assess the validity of the hypotheses. The analysis and presentation of data is mainly by summarizing patterns observed and quoting 167 respondents.

For the purpose of clarity and to enable comparison, data from each party is treated separately within each analysis. A comparative analysis is deemed warranted because the two parties differed primarily in their ethnic make up and historical development. Consequently, the internal dynamics within each party would likely be influenced by these two factors. A possible indication of this was the fact that one party had four elected female legislators (two at state and two at federal level) while the other party had none. The next section gives a brief description of the two political parties concerned to serve as contextual background for the data.

167 Translated into English.
6.3 The Political Parties

The interviewees were members of Parti Pesaka Bumiputra (PBB) and the Sarawak United Peoples’ Party (SUPP), the two major parties in Sarawak. Both parties are part of the ruling coalition at the state and federal levels, but differ in support base and historical development.

6.3.1 Parti Pesaka Bumiputra

Parti Pesaka Bumiputra (PBB) was formed in 1973 through the merger of Dayak based Parti Pesaka, and Malay and Melanau based Parti Bumiputra. PBB has its support base from a number of indigenous ethnic groups and the party is distinctly identifiable as an indigenous political party. From the start PBB has had a women’s section with a membership, particularly among Malay and Melanau women, that could be traced through the previous Parti Bumiputra to the women’s movement against British rule in the 1940s (Jong 1983: 61). PBB carries on the tradition of political activism on the part of Malay women. Most of the Dayak women members, however, were newcomers to the political scene.

PBB is the biggest political party and the dominant party in the governing coalition in Sarawak. The president of the party is the Chief Minister of the state. At the time this fieldwork was undertaken (between November 1999 and March 2000), PBB held 29 of the 62 seats in the State Legislative Council, and 8 out of the 28 parliamentary seats from Sarawak. The party had between 250,000 to 300,000 members, and women were estimated to number 100,000. All the elected women representatives, 2 Members of Parliament and 2 State Legislators in Sarawak, were from PBB. Despite this impressive record of including women, a noteworthy factor as regards the four female representatives was that only one was a member of the party at the time of she was selected as a candidate. She was the leader of the women’s section. The other 3 women were graduates holding senior civil service positions, handpicked to stand for the party.

168 An estimate given by the PBB Resource Center, March 2000. A definite figure was unavailable because memberships were in the process of being computerized.
6.3.2 Sarawak United Peoples’ Party

The Sarawak United Peoples’ Party was formed in 1959 as a multi-racial party advocating parliamentary democracy. It was founded by a number of Sarawak Chinese and from the time of its inception the party has had a mainly Chinese leadership. For a time after its formation the party was viewed as having communist leanings.\(^{169}\) It was an opposition party in the State Legislative Council until it joined the ruling coalition in 1973. Presently the party has a substantial number of Dayak members and a few Dayaks among its leadership. However, the party remains dominated by Chinese leaders and Chinese membership. As a coalition partner its president is allocated the post of the Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak. At the time of this fieldwork, the party was the second largest party in Sarawak with a membership of 86,066 (SUPP Handbook 1998). It held 14 state seats out of 62 in the State Legislative Council, and 7 parliamentary seats out of 28 from Sarawak. There was no elected female representative in SUPP although it has a strong female support base.

SUPP formed a separate women’s section in 1978 primarily as an attempt to gather more support after a bad election defeat. It was also thought that the creation of a women’s section was appropriate as other political parties in Malaysia had women’s wings. From initial social activities such as cooking demonstrations and flower arrangements, the women’s section progressed into a women’s movement fighting for women’s rights (SUPP Wanita). In 1999 the membership in the women’s section stood at 18,608\(^{170}\), making up a quarter of the total membership of the party. This figure, however, represented only slightly more than half of the total female membership in the party. The other half remained as members of the main party.

\(^{169}\) Based on personal observation and from comments by party members.  
\(^{170}\) Figure provided by SUPP Resource Center, March 2000.
6.4 Gendered Party Organizational Structure

6.4.1 Hypothesis I:

Political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions.

i. Party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women.

ii. Party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills.

Hypothesis I postulates that political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions. This is attributed, firstly, to party structures prescribing a subsidiary role for women as stipulated in Sub-hypothesis Ii, and secondly, to party structures preventing women from acquiring political experience and skills as stipulated in Sub-hypothesis Iii.

It was mentioned earlier that both parties had established a women’s section specifically for their female members. Women’s participation was consequently mainly confined within the role envisaged for the women’s section. The assessment of the postulation that party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women focuses on women’s party activities, differences in participation between male and female members, and perception of women’s contribution to the party. Respondents were asked questions touching on each of these issues. Sub-hypothesis Ii which postulates that party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills, is evaluated by examining how far the party provided a platform for women to acquire experience and develop useful skills - particularly leadership skills. The interviewees were asked to comment on gender equity, women’s participation in high-level policy and decision-making, and the opportunities for women to demonstrate as well as develop skills within their parties. They were also asked to give their opinion on the women’s section in their party.
6.4.2 Women's Party Activities

Parti Pesaka Bumiputra

Interviewees’ descriptions of their activities within PBB reveal women’s participation was mainly within the confines of the women’s section. For the majority, regular activities were attending branch meetings, seminars and talks. Some of these were of a political nature, but most were on domestic matters such as cooking and home economics. Women were responsible for the preparation of food for various occasions such as party gatherings, food fairs and festival food parcels for the armed forces. They visited hospitals, old folk homes and were usually the welcoming party/reception for dignitaries. Some Muslim women conducted Koran reading classes, and non-Muslim women organized sports, for example, badminton practices.

For many women in PBB, the highlight of party participation was campaigning for party candidates during elections. Among those at the higher echelon, the biannual general convention, a grand occasion held in the capital city, was eagerly awaited. On the whole, for most ordinary members, party activities were social occasions. For some, party tasks such as cake making for food parcels and campaign work during elections \textsuperscript{171}, were opportunities to earn some income.

There were some variations in activities depending on position and rank in the party. Generally the distinction was between having to plan and organize activities or merely participating. Those in leadership positions also had advisory or supportive roles, but there was some ambiguity concerning activities that were purely party related and activities that were related to public office. For example, because local council appointments were by parties based on the seats each party was allocated, these office holders tended to see their responsibilities as party responsibilities. Thus their reference to tasks such as talking to community organizations; listening to people; giving advice and relaying peoples’ problems to the appropriate authorities \textsuperscript{172}. There was also a tendency to view such party tasks as social welfare responsibilities rather than political responsibilities or constituency work. A high-ranking party member

\textsuperscript{171} Party members were paid for turning up as supporters on nomination day, for door-to-door campaigning and for helping on election day.

\textsuperscript{172} FGA III, FGA II2 and FGA III2.
described her party activities as social worker and counselor for the people in her husband’s constituency\textsuperscript{173}.

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Women’s party activities in SUPP were similar to those in PBB. Depending on party position, activities differed between those who had leadership responsibilities and those who mostly merely participated. Particularities based on positions aside, women’s party activities mainly constituted attending meetings and talks, campaigning, visiting hospitals and rural villages, and attending gatherings for dignitaries. Party functions would find women members preparing food and providing entertainment, for example, song and dance performances. They took part in educational programs such as training camps on jobs, home economics and political awareness. There were also cooking classes and traditional dance classes. Sometimes public relations activities such as singing competitions were organized for public showing.

In both parties, women were mainly engaged in activities that were considered more appropriate for females, and it can be surmised that there would be vast differences between men and women’s participation. Interestingly, when asked whether there were any differences between male and female participation in their respective parties, there was a qualitative difference in the responses from the two parties.

6.4.3 *Differences in Male and Female Participation*

In both parties most of the respondents thought there were differences between male and female participation. However, while most of the interviewees from PBB pointed to the different ardour males and females employed in carrying out their tasks, most of those from SUPP spoke about gender inequality and complained about the lack of recognition of women’s work.

\textsuperscript{173} FGA III. Her husband was a senior state minister.
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Most of the PBB members (11 out of 17) thought there were differences between male and female participation. The main difference given was that women worked more and were more conscientious in carrying out their tasks. The following comment reflected the general view:

“A lot of difference. Women care about responsibilities and task more than men do. Men put less weight on women’s activities. They are less concerned and gave less support, for example, funding.”

A high-ranking woman member also admitted that there was:

“A lot of difference. Most work is done by women, but the thinking is done by men.”

The interviewees who viewed the difference in participation in gender terms mainly attributed it to constraints on women, such as the fact that men were more able in terms of time and commitment, and that unlike men, women must have their husbands’ permission before they can do anything. Only one interviewee explained the inequality between males and females in terms of inequality in status and power in the party.

“Men are more opportunistic and are not restrained by moral values. Women are disadvantaged and oppressed by men’s higher view of themselves.”

A possible reason for the majority view that the difference between male and female participation was in performing tasks rather than in male dominance was given by a male local branch party leader who said:

“Women in PBB are loyal to the party. The majority of women are content with their situation. As long as their participation is recognized they are happy.”

This attitude differs from that shown by the female interviewees from SUPP who were more forthright in expressing their opinion.

174 Respondents: FGA I 1, FGA I 3, FGA II 1, FGA II 2, FGA III 3, FGA IV 2, FGA IV 3, FGA V 1 and FGA V 4.
175 FGA IV 2.
176 Respondent FGA I 2.
177 Respondent FGA V 1.
178 Respondent FGA V 2.
179 Respondent FGA IV 4.
180 MGA III 1
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The majority of the female interviewees from SUPP thought male and female participation differed. The few who did not share this opinion said women were as active as men, and there was a lot of cooperation and working together between the genders. Of those who said there was a difference, most referred to differences that stemmed from male dominance in the party. It is noteworthy that the most critical comments were from women holding high party positions. For example, a high-ranking woman member pointed out:

"Male chauvinism exists. The more important posts are for men. Women are usually allocated the responsibility for 'reception'. This is considered a natural thing for men and women. Women do not have the charisma."181

Other similar comments by women in leadership positions were:

"There is a huge gap. There is no equality between men and women members"182

"Men make the decisions, women only follow"183

"There is more attention on men. Even though women provided most of the labour and worked hard during campaigns, positions were given to men."184

Despite recognizing the fact that males dominate the party, some respondents also attributed the difference in participation to women. Women were seen as unwilling, lacking qualification, constrained by time or by norms governing appropriate behaviour.

"There is no equality. But we cannot put the blame on men. It is because of we ourselves. Even when the chance is given, women are not taking it up."185

"Women are not up to it. Married women have their families. Those in work must work. Because of time, women cannot be fully committed."186

"Women are less qualified. The men’s attitude is that women should realize and accept this. It is also more convenient for men. They can attend everything go everywhere. Women are faced with the problem of interaction. They have to be careful on how they talk and act."187

181 Respondent FGB II 1.
182 FGB III 1.
183 FGB II 6.
184 FGB II 2.
185 FGB III 1.
186 FGB III 2.
187 FGB IV 2.
Perhaps most interesting is an interviewee’s revelation of the lack of trust in women as regards confidential information.

"According to ..., women must not be told some things because women talk."

The situation in SUPP was best explained by a male leader, who pointed out that societal perceptions of gender relations influenced the view of women in the party.

"The party reflects the general environment in the society. In the past SUPP was left wing. There was no difference between men and women... everyone was to be equal ... but in reality they were not equal at the higher level. Over the party history men have always been at the front. It is part of the social structure ... Chinese men go out. Men do the work, women help. This division is reflected in the party... men the ‘gotong royong’ [voluntary community activities], women provide the food, cultural activities, singing etc. The difference is obvious ... especially leadership ... only one woman is in the central committee. Women face more obstacles. They need the consent of their spouses and general family support. They also face extra social pressure. Women must be very interested to overcome these."

Although some women members in both parties did not see any difference between male and female participation, most responded in the affirmative. In both parties there were some who thought women were constrained from participating as fully as men. More noteworthy is that most interviewees from PBB seemed to see the difference more in terms of women working harder rather than in terms of task differentiation or gender inequality. In contrast, in SUPP there was an expressed awareness that women’s roles in the party were based on asymmetrical gender relations in the wider society. Despite this acknowledgement of a subordinate role in SUPP, when asked in what ways women contributed to their party, women in both parties appeared to think that women contributed substantially to the party.

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188 A reference to a former top leader of the party. FGB IV 1.
189 MGB II 2
6.4.4 Women’s Contribution to the Party

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Only two of the female members from PPB did not think women contributed much or at all to the party.

"Women are not given real roles. They are only wallflowers. Only during campaigns do they matter."  

The majority, however, thought differently; maintaining that women contributed through grass root party activities and/or campaigning. As one high-ranking female member pointed out:

"Women are most important to the party. They are important for carrying out party activities."

This opinion was echoed by the two male members from the party who said:

"Women are loyal and active. They are the strength of PBB. But we need more leaders. We need the younger generation to come in. Support from women is most obvious during election."

"Women are loyal, dependable and do not demand much. They provide numbers as voters and are part of the party machinery."

The party’s expectation of its women’s members is clearly expressed in the following comment by the head of the PBB women’s section.

"It is support for what is proper and right; a recognition of the struggle, concept and vision of the party; and possession of the spirit to strive, open mindedness and decisiveness. One must not be too aggressive and must work for the interest and preservation of the party, not ourselves."

In other words, women in PBB should not think of their participation as anything more than labouring for and upholding the interest of the party. Personally they should be docile and not harbour self-ambition. Coming from the leader of the

190 FGA IV 4.
191 FGB IV 6.
192 FGB IV 4.
193 FGA III, FGA II 2, FGA III 2, FGA III 3, FGA IV 1, FGA IV 2, FGA IV3, FGA IV 5, FGA IV 6, FGA V 2, FGA II 1.
194 MGA II 1.
195 MGA III 1.
196 FGA I 3.
women’s section, the above would be the official stand within the PBB as regards its women members. Respondents also noted women members’ loyalty and the crucial role they play in rallying support for the party.

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Like those from PBB, most of the women from SUPP who responded to this question felt women contributed through their work at the grass roots level. Women assisted in recruiting members, and rallying women through activities that appealed to women and were of benefit to women. One interviewee mentioned women’s fight for the Women’s Inheritance Law. The party also benefited from women’s campaign work during elections. According to two women leaders, this contribution was crucial as women were viewed as better campaigners than men.

“Women campaigners achieve more. They can talk to families. They also have more time.”

“It is easier for women because they do not get doors slammed on them.”

In a broader sense, as another women leader pointed out, women’s most important contribution was their loyalty.

“Women’s unconditional support for the party without any wish for reward. Politics is a number game - women fill the gap.”

This was echoed by an ordinary member who said:

“Women are strongly loyal to the party. Everything else flows from this.”

Women’s contribution to the party was recognized in differing ways by the male leaders interviewed. As the following comments show, some were more appreciative of what women were doing for the party than others.

198 FGB II 2, FGB II 3, FGB II 5, FGB II 6, FGB III 1, FGB III 2, FGB III 3, FGB IV 1, FGB IV 2 and GBVI 1.
199 FGB II 6.
200 FGB II 1, FGB II 3, FGB IV 5 and FGB IV 5.
201 FGB II 1.
202 FGB II 5.
203 FGB II 1.
204 FGB VI 2.
"The women have taken part since the inception of the party. They fought with male comrades for independence. Like men they rally support for the party."\(^{205}\)

"The women's section organizes activities, such as functions, exclusively for women. Election time, they are part of the machinery."\(^{206}\)

"The women's section is very helpful during election campaigns. Members update women's knowledge on their rights, organize civic training and talks on various topics, for example, child upbringing."\(^{207}\)

Two of the male interviewees viewed women's contribution in terms of their input to policy.

"The most important role is the presence of one representative at the supreme council. They get the right to contribute to policy this way."\(^{208}\)

"A woman is in the Central Working Committee to reflect women's interests. A few are at the branch and service center levels."\(^{209}\)

An older senior member who was plainly more conservative said the following,

"They do nothing. Like it or not, our society is not open like the west to accepting women. They contribute in a small way during campaigns."\(^{210}\)

These words show the general view within SUPP. Both male and female respondents, said women contributed in a significant way as supporters, and in rallying support for the party. Male leaders also mentioned women's input into policy. Interestingly, none of the female interviewees mentioned this, perhaps demonstrating that they had not seen it as significant.

### 6.4.5 Gender Equality in the Party

*Parti Pesaka Bumiputra*

Of the 16 female interviewees from PBB who responded to the question on whether there was equality between men and women, only 4 said there was equality\(^ {211}\). Those who said there was no equality between men and women pointed to the lack of trust.

\(^{205}\) MGB I 3.  
\(^{206}\) MGB II 3.  
\(^{207}\) MGB II 1.  
\(^{208}\) MGB I 1.  
\(^{209}\) MGB I 2.  
\(^{210}\) MGB II 4.  
\(^{211}\) FGA III 3, FGA IV 6, FGA V 2 and FGA V 3.
and confidence in women\textsuperscript{212}, the fact that the male members did not see the female members as their equal\textsuperscript{213}, the fact that women were not selected for important positions\textsuperscript{214}, and the fact that women were not given equal representation\textsuperscript{215}. One respondent mentioned the fact that women were not involved in the selection of candidates\textsuperscript{216}. The following are comments made by two women leaders:

"There is no equality. There is a lack of confidence and trust in women, in what they can do."	extsuperscript{217}

"Men and women are equal as members in the party. But when it comes to things that matter there is no equality. For example, representation is not equal. Some people blame this on the women members themselves, but I think the leadership is not pushing and supporting women’s status enough. Usually, women’s contribution is not appreciated or recognized."	extsuperscript{218}

"Men get all the opportunities and the responsibilities. Women who struggle for the party do not reap the rewards. Women have made a lot of sacrifices, but because they lack qualifications they have been left out. There is no monetary reward for women. Remunerative positions such as memberships on boards of directors are given to men. Rewards are based on patronage and not on merit within the party. People with lesser qualifications work harder in the party, but the allocation of important and prestigious responsibilities is not fair. As a woman I must fight, otherwise I cannot achieve."	extsuperscript{219}

Ordinary members shared the same view as the following comment shows.

"There is no equality. In the men’s view, women lack qualifications. Women who are more capable are not active in politics."	extsuperscript{220}

The overriding view among the PPB women members interviewed was that there was no equality. A senior male member from the party confirmed the inequality, but stressed the importance of the party over the matter of women’s equality.

"There is no equality for now. Women must fight but not at the expense of the party."	extsuperscript{221}

\textsuperscript{212} FGA II 2, FGA IV 1, FGA IV2.
\textsuperscript{213} FGA V 4.
\textsuperscript{214} FGA II 1, FGA V 1.
\textsuperscript{215} FGB III 2.
\textsuperscript{216} FGA IV 5.
\textsuperscript{217} FGB II 2.
\textsuperscript{218} FGA III 2.
\textsuperscript{219} FGA II 1.
\textsuperscript{220} FGA IV 1.
\textsuperscript{221} MGA II 1.
All the 14 women interviewees from SUPP said there was no equality between males and females when it came to important positions and participation at the higher level.

"There is only one woman at the top level committee in Sarawak. Women never head committees."  

"There is no equality when it concerns allocating posts such as councilors and board members. The leaders seem to think lower of women."  

The frustration with gender inequality is exemplified by the following comment on women's roles in the party.

"Mostly cooking. Women work backstage whenever the men need supporting. There are no important things to do - we more or less entertain. We need the men's permission for everything. Our activities are scrutinized by the males."  

While it is true that all the interviewees from SUPP pointed to an obvious gender inequality, the reasons given for it varied. Three attributed the inequality to women's lack of capability and ability. For example, one female interviewee had this to say,

"...equality would be possible if the women are more aggressive. The leaders are actually intending to have more women. They encourage them, but they [the women] cannot deliver."  

A longtime women member of the party described the situation in the following way:

"In the party the men dominate. The Chinese tradition is still very strong and this dictates men's and women's actions. The idea of men going out and women staying at home is still very strong in Chinese tradition. The party leaders have to think about tradition. They cannot have equality straight away. But there is equality in fairness. Members need to trust the party leaders are fair. Chinese virtue is still strong, but it all depend on the person - whether they want a reward."  

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222 FGB II 1.
223 FGB IV 1.
224 FGB II 6.
225 FGB II 3, FGB IV 1 and FGB III 3.
226 FGB IV 1.
227 FGB IV 2.
Senior male members acknowledged the existence of gender inequality in SUPP but said that the situation was changing:

"We would like to work towards that seriously... but equality must also be equality in caliber."\(^{228}\)

"Now yes ... but not five years ago. Men have become more liberal. Women are now more educated and as good as men in doing voluntary work and political leadership. A lot is due to women themselves, they are less passive."\(^{229}\)

The responses from both parties show there was a strong feeling that women were not accorded equal status. Those from PBB mainly complained of male discrimination against women that deprived women of opportunities and responsibilities in the party. Similarly, most of those from SUPP complained about male bias, but some blame traditional gender inequality and female inadequacies rather than men's attitudes. Male members pointed out that the situation had improved. The presence of inequality was further examined by asking respondents whether women were part of high-level policy formulation and decision-making.

6.4.6 High Level Policy Formulation and Decision-Making

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Of the 14 female members from PBB who gave their comments on this issue, only three\(^ {230}\) thought women were privy to high-level policy formulation and decision-making. Those who thought women were excluded pointed to the fact that men controlled high-level activities\(^ {231}\), and women were not treated as equal\(^ {232}\) or given opportunities\(^ {233}\).

\(^{228}\) MGB II 3.  
\(^{229}\) MGB II 1.  
\(^{230}\) FGB III 1, FGB III 2 and FGB IV 6.  
\(^{231}\) FGA III 3, FGB IV 5, FGB V 3.  
\(^{232}\) FGA II 2 and IV 2.  
\(^{233}\) FGA II 1 and FGA IV 4.
The following comment by women leaders provides a sense of the situation.

"Women are not part of decision-making or given responsibilities and positions. There are no consultation processes."\textsuperscript{234}

"Women are not separated from the main party activities. There has not been anything important when they have excluded women. But women are excluded from decision-making. In their minds women are not knowledgeable enough to be included, but women are capable."\textsuperscript{235}

In contrast to the dissatisfaction shown by women as exemplified in the above comments, the two male respondents who spoke on the matter did not think that women were excluded from high-level policy and decision-making.

"Women are involved in higher level politics, for example, the elected representatives."\textsuperscript{236}

"There are a number of women in the KMT"\textsuperscript{237}

This view was perhaps due to the fact that, in addition to the head of the women's section, the 4 elected female representatives\textsuperscript{238} were automatic members of the party's central high council - the KMT. The presence of these women at the highest level was seen as proof of women's participation.

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Only two of the female respondents\textsuperscript{239} from SUPP felt that women were part of high-level policy and decision-making. For the rest, the bases for the dissatisfaction were varied; some placed the blame on men. A woman leader said:

"Women are unable to get to the higher level. Men are not comfortable with having women even for appointments such as 'Kapitan' [community leader]. One women in the Central Working Committee is not enough."\textsuperscript{240}

\textsuperscript{234}FGA II 1.
\textsuperscript{235}FGA IV2.
\textsuperscript{236}FGA II 1.
\textsuperscript{237}Party central executive. MGA III 1
\textsuperscript{238}PBB had 4 elected women legislators - two in the federal parliament and two in the state legislature.
\textsuperscript{239}FGB II 3 and FGB IV 1.
\textsuperscript{240}FGB II 2.
Yet others identified women as the problem. According to one woman leader:

"This is changing a little but the effort is not strong. The number of women who are willing to fight for more important roles for women is small. The majority relies on the male leader to bring about change. Women themselves feel they are not strong enough. They see themselves as good workers, not politics [sic] makers."\(^{241}\)

A former branch leader recounted her personal experiences:

"Women are unable to come out. Take myself, for example, I was the chairman of wanita SUPP, but my language ability was inadequate and I didn't have the time. My family was young then. Unless one is able to undertake the responsibility, one should not go for it."\(^{242}\)

Similar opinions were expressed by ordinary women members:

"Men are more capable in making big decisions. Women are less confident."\(^{243}\)

"Women are not really excluded. It is not deliberate. The truth is, women are not qualified enough. If they are they can be involved, but they cannot do much otherwise."

"This is true in terms of numbers. There is only one woman at the central committee. But it also has to do with the mindset. In the case of the native women, they are very concerned with community welfare, and can be very aggressive. But Chinese women are more conservative, in the sense that they become quiet when men are around."\(^{244}\)

There were also specific references to party structure as an obstacle by some leaders:

"Even though we have the numbers, we still need the men to nod their heads. I wish to see more women in the central body. Women must be part of the decision-making. At present, I am 'the lone voice'. No one will support you."\(^{245}\)

"There is a lack of positions for women at the higher level. This is due to a number of factors. One is the nature of the women the other is the structure of the party. I have thought about it - how restructuring will involve women. I feel the party is trying to a certain extent. There are a few obstacles that must
be overcome. We cannot blame the leaders. At present we are trying to put forward at least one women candidate, but there are objections from other women. Women cannot come together.  

Opinions among the male respondents on the issue were mixed. Those who indicated some acknowledgement women were excluded, tried to explain the matter away.

"We need to recruit more professional women. We want to groom more women, but women have no inclination. They are indifferent to politics. All they want is to get a job and have a family."  

"The party traditionally has male leaders. It is changing now."

"Membership in the central committee, which is the most important, is selected from branch leadership. Only one woman, the head of the wanita section, is on the committee. Yes, obviously (women should be given the opportunity to be involved), but it cannot be done by choice. It is not a matter of choosing a woman - more important is whether it is acceptable to the public."

Others appeared to think that women were not excluded. Their case rested on the fact that one woman sat in the Central Working Committee, the highest body in the party.

"The head of Wanita Sarawak sits on the CWC. She is also a political secretary to the Chief Minister. Ladies are councilors and board members in statutory bodies where they are involved in policy decisions."

"The head of Wanita is a member of the Central Working Committee. She would fully represent whatever has been decided at the wanita level. In my opinion the number is immaterial."

The responses show that women were deemed as excluded from high-level participation in the two parties. However, opinions differed on the bases for the exclusion. Female respondents from PBB mainly mentioned male bias. Those from SUPP pointed to male bias and women’s incapacities. There was also reference to the fact that the party structure allowed only one woman in the central committee. Male respondents from SUPP pointed out that women needed to be interested and

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246 FGB III 2.
247 MGB I 2.
248 MGB I 1.
249 MGB II 2.
250 MGB II 3
251 MGB II 1.
committed to political work in order to be acceptable to the public. Another male respondent, however, said that the party’s traditional male only leadership was changing. In the following section, respondents spoke on their experience regarding opportunities for women to demonstrate their abilities.

6.4.7 Opportunities to Demonstrate Skills

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When the female interviewees were asked whether women had opportunities to demonstrate their skills, almost half said they did. The times when women were thought to have had the opportunities were when they undertook tasks for the party$^{252}$, when they held positions$^{253}$ and when they participated in meetings and dialogues$^{254}$. There was also the view, as expressed by a woman leader, that women were not taking up the opportunities available.

"Yes and no. The opportunity is there, no one can deny that, but there are no women at the forefront. The educated ones are too comfortable in their jobs. Politics gives no assurance that their families will be taken care of. They prefer to keep their jobs."$^{255}$

On the other hand, other female interviewees were of the opinion that women were denied the opportunity. Two women leaders said the following:

"Women have some, but not much chance to demonstrate their ability. There is not enough trust in women."$^{256}$

"Women do not get the chance to demonstrate their abilities because they do not get the support from above. There has been no candidate who had gone up the ranks. The new people in top positions are not experienced in what had gone on in the party."$^{257}$

Ordinary members shared similar views:

"No, because of the inability to go beyond the authority above. There is a hierarchical structure, and directives are strictly followed."$^{258}$

$^{252}$ FGA III 3, IV 3, and IV 5.
$^{253}$ FGA V 2.
$^{254}$ FGA V 3.
$^{255}$ FGA III 2.
$^{256}$ FGA II 2.
$^{257}$ FGA II 1.
$^{258}$ FGA IV 2.
"No, I would like to be more active but there are not many opportunities in the party." 259

"No, because there are not enough activities for them to demonstrate their abilities." 260

The following explanation given by one of the male members from PBB gives an idea of the situation:

"Unless women themselves come to a certain degree of awareness of their own importance they do not have a role. People [i.e. women] at the upper level want to maintain their status and would not want to undermine their own positions. For example, during recruitment drives they would not really welcome well qualified women. They would prefer a large number of less qualified ones. A lot of the senior positions in the party are occupied by the wives of top politicians. They are more likely to protect their husbands' interests and submit to the existing hierarchy. This blocks or hinders others from progressing. A few veterans have been bypassed in the allocation of party positions, but grudges are not displayed." 261

The above comment reveals an aspect of women's participation that was not openly talked about. The women's section was dominated by women leaders who were either maintaining their positions for their own self-interest, or their husbands'. Either way, it benefited the women leaders to have compliant followers who would do party work but would not challenge their hold on the leadership of the section. It further demonstrates the fundamentally supporting role women play in the party. Despite that reality, the respondents from PBB were clearly divided in their opinion on whether women had the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. There was a similar situation among the members from SUPP.

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About half of the members from SUPP said that women had opportunities to demonstrate their abilities during meetings and when carrying out tasks for the party. Some said that women generally did, but in a limited way 262. For example, one women leader said:

259 FGB IV 4.
260 FGB V 1.
261 MGB III 1.
262 FGB II 2, FGB V 2 and VI 1.
"Generally yes. But like all organizations internal politics become obstacles. One needs a patron to advance."

The following remarks were more critical.

"It is a problem. The only place where women can participate is the women's section. This is not adequate."

"Positions are allocated and there are not enough to go around. Even though women work during campaigns, there are not enough places for men let alone giving women a share."

Most interesting, perhaps, is the following comment by a senior female member that differs from the others above, but that lays bare one aspect of the reality on women's participation - that they should not harbour any personal ambition. It seems to suggest that women were there to assist the party to win seats for men, with the ultimate aim that the elected men be appointed ministers.

"It is difficult to say. In my opinion, women are here to do work, not to aim to be ministers."

Women's position as described by senior male members of the party shows the various ways women were viewed as unable to participate in the same way as men. The responses were not apologetic but expressed a justification for the parties' treatment of women.

"There is no favouritism. I always tell party members we are human being first before male or female.... You have to earn what you get."

"One way or another men tend to be more involved. Men are actively leading. There is a large number of women but...maybe it is due to time, family."

"There is nothing women can do. There is male dominance in the family and also in the political party."

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263 FGB II 5.
264 FGB VI 1.
265 FGB II 2.
266 FGB III 3.
267 MGB I 4.
268 MGB I 2.
269 MGB II 4.
"Women have a complementary role in the party. They provide and gather support at the grassroots. The party has not been successful in attracting successful and qualified women."\textsuperscript{270}

"Society, community and country are prepared to accept anyone. It is on women's part now to show their worth. The ball is in their court."\textsuperscript{271}

In both parties, a slightly higher number of female respondents thought there were opportunities for women to demonstrate their skills when they partook in party activities and carried out party work. Ironically, even though a higher number of responses held this view, responses from male members revealed otherwise. The comments made by male members were either defensive of male dominance or contained an underlying assumption that females were subordinate; consequently their reference to the gender imbalance as the status quo, and their reference to the need for women to take up the challenge. The female respondents who did not think women were afforded the opportunity, especially the members from PBB, were more critical, complaining that men were accorded more importance while women were not given support. On the whole due to the mixed nature of the responses the data is not clear-cut on the matter. However it must be noted that the positive views on opportunities were made within the framework of the roles envisaged for women in the women's section. Women would have little access to opportunities beyond those roles. Further insight on the issue was obtained by asking respondents whether women had the opportunity to develop skills.

\section*{6.4.8 Opportunities to Develop Skills}

\textit{Party Pesaka Bumiputra}

The general opinion of most of the female respondents from PBB was that women had opportunities. Some respondents gave "yes, but" answers\textsuperscript{272} and others said there were opportunities\textsuperscript{273} or some opportunities\textsuperscript{274}.

\textsuperscript{270} MGB I 1.
\textsuperscript{271} MGB II 3.
\textsuperscript{272} FGA II 2, FGA III 2, FGA IV 2 and FGA IV 5.
\textsuperscript{273} FGA III 3, FGA IV 1, FGA IV 3, FGA IV FGA V2, FGA V 3 and FGA V 4.
"Women sometimes have the opportunity to develop skills and experience. But there is also the problem of there being too few women. Qualified women are in professional work. Politics is only possible for women who are not in public service. In the case of married women, their family commitments are a problem."275

"There are opportunities, but they do not arise because nothing happens that will allow a demonstration of abilities. Things are too settled."276

"Women take part in the grand convention as representatives of the women's section. But this can be improved by allowing more women to be observers or to participate in the proceedings of the men's section."277

Only 2 said there was no opportunity for women to develop their abilities.

"Women do not get the chance to develop their skill because they are not given support. Women must be given the opportunity by giving 'veterans' the chance to take part in party processes like men."278

"No, women do not have the chance. The women in the party should get together and speak out without being afraid of the consequences. We should create a new women agenda."279

The remarks given by the two male members from PBB were also indicative of the lack of opportunities for women.

"No, the party is not putting them at par with the men. Take, for example, the way the party is represented at the top - only the head of the women's section has a place, plus the four female elected representatives. This participation is restricted."280

"Women have the opportunity to show their abilities, but this depends on the women themselves. It is also true that older leaders do not want to be overshadowed by younger more able women."281

In contrast to the mixed responses from female members of the PBB, responses from members of SUPP were all in the positive.
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All the 12 women from SUPP who commented on this issue said women had the opportunity to develop skills. However, it was evident from the following comments that this was a recent development.

"Yes, women have now been given the chance. We are no longer fighting for the right. From now on, we are accepting the challenge."\textsuperscript{282}

"Yes, women the chance now. It was not automatically given. Women fought for it."\textsuperscript{283}

"In my experience, women are able to develop their skills. But, to a certain extent, the party structure prevents women from the higher level."\textsuperscript{284}

While the responses from the male members of SUPP to preceding queries have so far tended to show an acknowledgement that women were disadvantaged, on this issue they were of the opinion that the party accorded women the opportunities to develop their skills.

"Joining the party has given women the opportunity to organize and to assume leading roles. They are part of the Central Working Committee through the presence of the head of the women's section. There is only one seat for women because the council is small and there are already a large number of assemblymen who are entitled to seats."\textsuperscript{285}

"Women now have opportunities in the party. However, the structure of the party requires that one must start at the grassroots. Campaigns provide the opportunities."\textsuperscript{286}

"The party set up gives them the opportunity to organize things. From these assignments it is possible to identify the talents. Forums, especially, provide the opportunity for all to show their capabilities."\textsuperscript{287}

Alongside the conviction that women were not deprived of opportunities was the belief that evidence that showed a lack of opportunity was not the party's fault but
was the consequence of women’s failure to take up whatever the party accorded them. According to a male youth leader:

"We encourage women but they tend to compromise. This is due to upbringing and social constraints. There is a notion that if women are too assertive they are not feminine enough. The party gives women the free will to organize what they want."  

A high-ranking male leader made the same point and explained the situation thus:

"The party does not constrain women. It is mainly due to social factors, such as women’s role in the family and feminine roles, and biological factors. Women themselves think that they should not join politics because it is men’s world. They are some exceptions. Some agree to participate but many agree to other social organization and activities but not politics. To deprive women of a political role is not an accepted norm in the party. We give every encouragement to women. They are free to do what they want so long as they function within the constitution. There is a provision in the constitution that the head to the women’s section sits on the Central Working Committee."  

Comparatively, there was again a slight difference in the overall responses between the two parties. In the case of members from PBB, although most female respondents said that women had opportunities to develop their skills, there were some who were highly critical of the lack of opportunities. The two male members of the party supported the latter view. On the other hand, the prevailing opinion among female members of SUPP was that women were able to develop their skills in the party. The male party members shared this opinion.

The responses from members of SUPP, and to a certain extent those from members of PBB suggest that women had opportunities to develop skills but it was up to them to make it possible. Further information on women’s experience, skills and status within the party was gathered by asking respondents whether having a women’s section in the party benefited women.

288 MOBI 2.
289 MOB 14.
6.4.9 The Women’s Section

The most obvious gendered structure within the political parties was the women’s section. Within the confines of the section women’s roles and activities differentiated women’s participation from men’s. Despite the fact that the section formally demarcated a subsidiary role for women, a higher number of the respondents from both parties thought the women’s section in their respective parties was useful and beneficial for women.

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The women’s section of the PBB was described by one respondent as:

“A dependable support for the party in carrying out work for the benefit of the party. The women’s section must inform and acquire the approval of Pihak Bapa for some activities, for example, fundraising and sports. Ordinary branch activities do not require approval.”

Notwithstanding the obvious reference to its subsidiary role in the comment above, most of the female members spoke positively about the women’s section. Eleven out of 15 responses said that it was good to have a women’s section. As shown by the following remarks, there were varied reasons for the positive view of the section such as the opportunity to participate, organize, to work together and to undertake tasks suitable for women.

“Having a separate women’s section is good. Separation allows women to have a chance to play a part, to have positions. Without that women will lose out.”

“It is good to have a women’s section. There is give and take among women and a united effort in achieving objectives.”

“Within the women’s section, women know what they have to do. Women have their tasks - tasks that any woman can do. More women will be involved. If there is no division, women will not talk. This is because there will be more men and women will have no chance, or because women, unless they were told

290 Men’s section.
291 FGA IV 5.
292 The other three were: FGA IV 4, FGA IV 6 and FGA V 2.
293 FGA II 2.
294 FGA III 3.
to, are shy or afraid to talk. With our own section we have the independence to organize ourselves. We have the chance to discuss, without reservation, issues relating to women."\(^{295}\)

Highly significance within the context of PBB is the following comment that could well be a major consideration in male and female participation within the party.

"Having a women’s section is better because of the Muslim view on interaction between male and female."\(^{296}\)

Muslim law forbids free interaction between a male and female who are not married to each other. The separation into the women’s section would be most compatible with the Muslim norm of segregating females from males that prevailed over other aspects of social life such as during prayers, during gatherings for weddings, funerals or other occasions.

Despite the prevalent view that the women’s section was beneficial to women, as the following comments demonstrate, there was also some skepticism.

"It is good to have the women’s section. Organizing is easier. The women’s section has its own setup. This gives women the chance to assume office and responsibilities. However, these do not really provide opportunities for women to demonstrate their abilities, to develop skills and to participate equally."\(^{297}\)

"The problem with a having a women’s section is that it is harder for women to get their voices heard."\(^{298}\)

"Working together is better. There will be more consultation and discussion between men and women."\(^{299}\)

The opinions of the female respondents from PBB were mostly in favour of the existence of the women’s section as an arena for women to participate actively. However, beneficial or not, the following comment by a male member of the party was a reminder that the women’s section was merely a support base for the main party.

"The women’s section not only support, they contribute in a sense by providing useful information. They have the time as housewives."\(^{300}\)
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The views among female members of SUPP differ slightly from those from PBB. The following is a description of the women's section given by the head of the women's section:

"There were women in the party prior to the establishment of the women's section. SUPP set up a women's section because other parties had them. In 1974 SUPP suffered badly in the election. The women's section was set up to help the party. The women wanted to be independent but it was difficult. It was difficult to be prominent because the men dominated. After I took over in 1987 I started to move away from this. I took on human resources development. The image of the women's section has moved from a subordinate one to a more vocal one. Previously, the women were wives of members or original members. These did not reach the people. We have now become more vocal - actually criticizing party leaders. Also, the image of the women's section has changed. At one time women were afraid of joining the party. Women were scared of talking about politics. Now there are more women coming in especially educated ones. Women had been conservative, but now they get training from listening to dynamic performances. There was a time when the party was afraid of the women's section that was radically changing. I do not just fight for women all the time. I also represent the general."

The preceding comment indicates a concerted effort by the women's section to assume a more prominent role. It had also taken on the responsibility for the development and training of it members. Views expressed by interviewees from the party mainly confirmed this. More than half of the 14 who gave their opinion said the section was useful, while the rest said it was not. Those who viewed the section positively gave a number of reasons such as, providing unity, responsibility for specific tasks, opportunity for decision-making and a platform to voice their opinion.

"A division is good. Women can concentrate on looking after our own members. Some activities are more convenient for women to carry out."

"Having a women's section is good, because there is now a collective thinking among women. When the women's section first started, the women were Chinese educated and communists."

"Having the women's section is better because women have the chance to get together and fight. We would be less able to do this if we are together with the men."

301 FGB II 4.
302 FGB II 2, FGB II4, FGB II 6, FGB III 1, FGB III 2, FGB III 3, FGB IV1 and FGB VI 1.
303 FGB II 1, FGB II 3, FGB II 5, FGB IV 2, FGB IV 3 and VI 2.
304 FGB II 2.
305 FGB II 6.
"It is better to have a women’s section. If placed together with men, the women would be slower compared to the men who would be more decisive."\textsuperscript{307}

"It is good. Now the women’s section can specifically deal with women, their problems, and with recruiting women."\textsuperscript{308}

"In SUPP’s case it is good. The women are conservative. They only talk when spoken to. Someone has to be responsible for airing their views."\textsuperscript{309}

"In the case of women in Sarawak, we need to be given more time before we can abolish the women’s section. But I would not want the women’s section to be there forever. It does separate us, but give us time. It is required for the older generation to give them confidence."\textsuperscript{310}

Those who doubted the usefulness of the section gave the following remarks:

"I prefer to work as one party; not two ways of doing things."\textsuperscript{311}

"The women’s section is limiting the women. It is deliberate. This has to do with the historical background of the party. I feel an awakening among women now. As for me, I feel the need to make life more meaningful by contributing more, than just being mother and wife."\textsuperscript{312}

"Working together with responsibilities based on ability is better."\textsuperscript{313}

"It is better to combine. Now each work separately. A joint effort by both sides would be better as there would be more opportunities for women to work in projects."\textsuperscript{314}

Male respondents’ perception of the women’s section varied. Some viewed it in terms of the benefits it provided women members.

"They are members. Unlike more advanced countries where activities between male and female members are more equal, here it is basic things like childcare..."
and cooking. These are to attract them for a start. Slowly we introduce politics such as national issues, state issues, current affairs.¹³¹⁵

"It is good to have the women's section because only women know women's problems and men should not interfere. They can carry out whatever activities are suitable for women."¹³¹⁶

Others acknowledged the party's dependence on the section.

"The women's section was set up to rally the support of women. They can organize themselves in a more active way in assisting to strengthen the party. There is sufficient room for them to develop."¹³¹⁷

"It was created in order to attract more women. Whether this is achieved is something else. The section is for them to organize activities more specifically for them. It caters to the social needs of members."¹³¹⁸

One male respondent spoke of the women's section as evidence that the party include women in the party.

"The party is liberal. There is the women's section"¹³¹⁹

According to the respondents from both parties, the women's section was beneficial for women. This was in spite of the fact that it functioned primarily as a support for the party. The women's section gave women a role within the party as well as provided the opportunities for women to organize and assume responsibilities.

6.4.10 Evaluation: Sub-hypothesis I i:

Party structures prescribe a secondary role for women

Apart from hierarchy, the other key structure within the two political parties is the division into the women’s section. The responses from those interviewed clearly show that the nature of women’s membership and participation in the parties were determined by the role prescribed to the women’s section. The section was primarily concerned with female oriented activities. In addition, as shown by the responses on differences in participation between male and female, women within their respective

³¹⁵ MGB II 3.
³¹⁶ MGB II 1.
³¹⁷ MGB I 3.
³¹⁸ MGB I 2.
³¹⁹ MGB I 5.
women's sections saw themselves as playing a subordinate role. This was particularly the case in SUPP. Women in SUPP were very critical of the gender imbalance that accorded more weight to male participation. The general feeling was that women's roles in the party were founded on gender asymmetry within the wider society. Comments by male leaders from SUPP affirmed women's subsidiary role. In the case of PBB, only a few of the female respondents openly spoke about gender asymmetry, nonetheless, women's party activities attest to the subsidiary nature of women's place in the party.

In relation to women's contribution, the perception among the majority of interviewees from both parties was that women were important to the parties albeit within the supportive role assigned to the women's section. Women in both parties were seen as loyal, hardworking, and as playing a crucial role in terms of supporting, rallying support and carrying out party tasks. It was generally acknowledged that women's most important contribution to the party was campaigning during elections.

The data on women's party activities, differences between male and female participation, and women's contribution to the party mainly confirm Sub-hypothesis I that party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women. Women's participation was largely confined to the women's section that had a supportive role in both the parties. Most of the women interviewed participated actively in their parties. Considering that women's participation was of a subordinate nature, did they acquire skills and experience that would enhance their capability for leadership and nurture their political development? Sub-hypothesis I ii focuses on the effects of party structures on women's political experience and skills.
6.4.11 Evaluation: Sub-Hypothesis I ii:

Party Structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills.

Before attempting an assessment of Sub-hypothesis I ii, a brief background information on the women interviewed would assist in the understanding the implications of women’s party participation. The majority of the women interviewed were aged between 30 and 50, and married with children. Only a few had tertiary education, most had secondary or primary education. Very few had professional jobs or held high positions. All the interviewees were active members of their parties, but most did not have prior interest in political matters when they joined the party. Of the 14 women respondents from SUPP, only 4 joined the party on their own initiatives\(^\text{320}\). Others were either approached or invited by party officials\(^\text{321}\), or were encouraged by friends or relatives to join\(^\text{322}\). Eight\(^\text{323}\) said their decisions to join the party were influenced by the fact that they had relatives\(^\text{324}\) who were members. Only five of the SUPP women members had prior interest in political matters on joining the party. It is noteworthy that 4 of the 5 were the 4 who joined the party on their own accord. It is also noteworthy that the 4 of the 6 women who were approached by party officials were related to party leaders\(^\text{325}\). The other two were approached because they were well known within the community - one as a public servant and the other as a volunteer\(^\text{326}\).

Unlike those from SUPP, of the 17 women respondents from PBB, 14 said they were interested in political matters before they joined the party\(^\text{327}\). However, only 3 joined on their own initiative\(^\text{328}\), while the others were invited to join, or joined through the encouragement of family or friends. Of these, two were invited to join because of

\(^{\text{320}}\) Respondents FGB III 2, FGB III 3, FGB VI 1 and FGB VI 2.
\(^{\text{321}}\) Respondents FGB GB II 1, FGB II 2, FGB III 1, FGB II 4, FGB II 5 and FGB II 6.
\(^{\text{322}}\) Respondents FGB II 3, FGB IV 1, FGB IV 2 and FGB IV 3.
\(^{\text{323}}\) Respondents FGB II 1, FGB II 2, FGB III 1, FGB II 5, FGB III 2, FGB III 3, FGB VI 2 and FGB IV 1.
\(^{\text{324}}\) These were either their husbands, siblings or parents.
\(^{\text{325}}\) FGB II 1 whose husband was a senior party member and MP; FGB II 2 whose husband was a political secretary to a state minister; FGB II 5, whose father was a former speaker of the state legislature; and FGB III 1, whose husband was a local government councilor, well known for his leadership roles in various organizations;
\(^{\text{326}}\) FGB II 6 was a senior nurse in a community maternity clinic, and FGB II 4, whose husband was the head of a state department, was active in women’s organization.
\(^{\text{327}}\) The 3 members who were not interested were, FGA II 1, FGA III 1 and FGA VI 1.
\(^{\text{328}}\) FGB II 1, FGA II 2 and FGB IV 6.
their connection to high-ranking party leaders\textsuperscript{329}, and three joined when male siblings needed their support in setting up local branches\textsuperscript{330}.

Although most of the respondents from both parties said they had no prior interest in politics, and were in one way or another persuaded to join the parties, they were no strangers to organized activities. The majority of those interviewed were members of formal social organizations. In the case of those from SUPP, eleven belonged to organizations such as clan associations, the Women’s Institute\textsuperscript{331}, church groups, chamber of commerce and Lioness club. Eight were members of various organizations prior to joining the party. Five of these held or previously held leadership positions in their respective organizations\textsuperscript{332}. Two top women leaders of the party attributed their decision to join the party to their work in charitable organizations.

"I was one of the first batch recruited when SUPP establish its women’s section in 1978. At that time I was helping women, but it was difficult without political connection. So when they approached me, I agreed."

"There is a strong connection between the two activities. Because of the social status I gained from these organizations, I was invited to join the party. Not many women are willing to offer themselves for these kinds of work."

Fourteen of the 17 interviewees from PBB said they were members of other organizations such as church groups, ethnic groups or the Women’s Institute. Ten of the 14 were members before they joined the party. Of the other four, three maintained that their participation in the party brought about their membership in other organizations. One interviewee\textsuperscript{335} said, she was asked to set up a local branch of an

\textsuperscript{329} FGA III 1 whose husband was a senior state minister, and FGA IV 2 whose brother-in-law was a state minister.

\textsuperscript{330} FGB IV 4, FGB IV 5 and FGB V 1.

\textsuperscript{331} The Women’s Institute, commonly called the WI is a state sponsored organization for the benefit of women across all sections of Sarawak society. With branches throughout the state, the organization’s goal is to educate women and to bring women together within the context of a developing society.

\textsuperscript{332} FGB II 1, FGB II 4, FGB III 1, FGB IV 1 and FGB IV 3.

\textsuperscript{333} FGB II 4.

\textsuperscript{334} FGB II 1.

\textsuperscript{335} FGA IV 2.
ethnic women’s group because of her membership in the party. Another said that she
joined other organizations because the activities tied in with her party activities.336

The fact that most of the female interviewees from both parties were members of
other organizations (some in leadership roles) demonstrates that they were actively
interested and involved in organized activities. However, most were housewives
lacking high qualifications. Moreover, as was noted earlier, most were not interested
in politics on first joining their respective parties. In order that these women and
others like them could experience meaningful participation, the party must provide an
environment that would nurture their development as party members and for some,
their aspirations.

There was generally a strong impression among female members of both parties that
women were not accorded equal status and that women were excluded from high-
level policy formulation and decision-making. In the case of PBB female respondents
commented that male bias excluded women from positions and responsibilities. The
male respondents, on the other hand, pointed to the presence of the elected female
representatives as proof that women were not excluded from policy formulation and
high-level decision-making.

Respondents from SUPP did not entirely place the fault on men. Some believed that
women were excluded because of their incompetence. Women leaders were more
critical of the fact that only one woman, the head of the women’s section sat on the
central committee. Those from PBB did not mention the latter probably because in
PBB four elected women legislators had seats in the central committee in addition to
the head of the women section, who was the sole representative from the women’s
section. This would have given the impression that women are well represented in the
central committee. The opinion expressed by the two male respondents that women
were part of the party’s central committee reflected this point. There was a similar
opinion among some males from SUPP. As there was no elected women legislator in
SUPP; only the head of the women’s section sat on the central committee.
Nonetheless this was seen by male SUPP leaders as demonstrating women’s

336 FGA IV 4.
participation in policy formulation and decision-making. This was best illustrated by the male respondent who pointed out that the number did not matter, as one representative for women was sufficient. However, a few males also felt that things had changed in recent years and efforts were being made to improve the situation.

Despite the general opinion that women were excluded from policy formulation and high level decision making most of the female respondents from both parties were of the opinion that women members had opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Women were able to do so when participating in party activities or carrying out party tasks. Some from PBB were less positive, saying that men were given more importance while women were not given support. Similarly, on the question of whether women members were able to develop their skills some members from PBB were critical of the lack of opportunities. Those from SUPP were more positive.

In contrast to the female respondents who thought women had opportunities to demonstrate and to develop their skills, male members from both parties tended to expressed the opposite opinion. Male members from PBB were forthright in their view that women were not treated equally to men. Perhaps most revealing was their view that women in the party would find it difficult to progress within the party because the women’s section was under the control of female relatives of male leaders who would not find it in their interest to advance or promote other women. Male respondents from SUPP did not overtly indicate that women were deprived of the opportunity, however, the idea was implicit in their comments that gender inequality was traditionally the way things were in the party and that it was up to women to change their situation.

It is highly possible that the view that women had opportunities to demonstrate and develop their skills stemmed from the positive way most women viewed the women’s section. In both parties most interviewees saw the women’s section as a place where women could have a meaningful and useful role within the party. It was also a place that gave women the opportunities to assume responsibilities within a non-intimidating environment. According to the female respondents from SUPP it was also a platform whereby women could assert their rights. There were, on the other hand, comments from women from both parties that the women’s section limits
women's participation. In the case of SUPP, responses from the male leaders depicted the women's section as a place for keeping women members busy and useful. Overall, in both parties the women's section simultaneously enhanced and impeded women's participation.

The data on gender equality, policy formulation and high-level decision making, and opportunities to demonstrate and develop skills do not clearly support nor disprove Sub-hypothesis I ii - party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills. Although the data strongly suggest that there was no equality between male and female members, and that women were excluded from policy formulation and high-level decision-making, it is also the case that women were able to develop some experiences and skills as they participate within their parties. Having said that, it must also be pointed out that whatever opportunities women had for developing their experiences and skills, they were limited to the activities defined for the women's section. Considering the kinds of activities that were prescribed for the women's section, women would not acquire real political experience and skills.

6.4.12 Conclusion: Hypothesis I:

Political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interaction.

In varied ways, the information gathered demonstrates the limited input and responsibilities expected of women in the party. Some respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the situation, but there was generally an acceptance that female participation was of a secondary nature.

The responses on women's activities, the difference in participation between male and females members, gender inequality and the exclusion of women from most mainstream party decision-making mainly confirm Sub-hypothesis I i.- that party structures prescribe a subsidiary role for women. The party structure, especially that of separating women into the women's section maintained and formalized gender inequality within the parties.
The data in relation to Sub-hypothesis III - that party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills, is less clear. An examination of the responses on the circumstances surrounding women’s recruitment indicates that most of the female respondents were not interested in politics - in the sense of partaking in political discourse or pursuance of political positions - when they first joined their respective party. However, the fact that most were members of various organizations (some in leadership roles) shows they were individuals who were interested in participating in organized activities for a cause. In other words, most of them would have the capacity for active roles within their parties. The onus was on their respective party to nurture their interest, and develop their political experience and skills. The question was whether the parties afforded their women members these possibilities.

The data generally confirms the strong adherence to gender asymmetry within the parties and the exclusion of women from policy formulation and high-level decision-making. As things were, within the party structure only the head of the women’s section was included in the central committee. Ironically, some male leaders said this was evidence that women were not excluded. Some said it was sufficient representation for women. There is strong evidence that many of the women members interviewed were critical of the situation. Despite the fact that women were conscious of their subordinate role and the prevalence of male bias against them, the majority of the female respondents believed that they had opportunities to demonstrate their abilities, to develop their skills and to assume responsibilities. Some male leaders believed the parties provided women members with these opportunities, but some others expressed skepticism as they did not think female members’ participation and input were equivalent to that of men.

Notwithstanding the positive way women viewed their participation in terms of opportunities to demonstrate and develop skills, it needs to be noted that these opinions were expressed within the context of the women’s section as a given. Women enjoyed roles, responsibilities and opportunities within the confines of the women’s section.
The formal requirement that the head of the women's section be given a seat in the central committee was intended to give women a say, but it has served primarily as a barrier, a mechanism to exclude women. This was especially the case in SUPP. In PBB, the rights of the elected female representatives to sit in the central committee had provided more representation for women in the party. However, it must be pointed out that only one of the elected female legislators was from the ranks of the party; the other three were handpicked based on their qualifications and experience acquired in public service. The resort to selecting candidates from outside the party was justified on the grounds that women in the party were not suitable. Perhaps, with adequate opportunities and grooming of members within the party there would not be a need to look elsewhere. The situation is best described by the following comment made by a senior woman member from SUPP.

"The party structure limits us. The fact that we have a women's wing limits us."

The information on the nature of women's participation largely affirms Hypothesis I—that political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interaction. This raises the question of whether women's participation underscores male dominance as stipulated in Hypothesis II.

6.5 The Nature Of Women's Participation

6.5.1 Hypothesis II:

Women's party participation underscores the dominance of men.

i. Women are perceived as lacking commitment and ambition.

ii. Women are perceived to be less able to carry out the responsibilities of political office.

337 FGB II 5.
While *Hypothesis I* is concerned with party structures, *Hypothesis II* is concerned with the implication of women’s participation. It is postulated that women’s party participation underscores male dominance. This is attributed to the perception that women lack ambition and commitment as stipulated in *Sub-hypothesis II i*, and the perception that women are less able to carry out political responsibilities as stipulated in *Sub-hypothesis II ii*.

The evaluation of *Sub-hypothesis II i* - it is perceived women lack commitment and ambition, focuses on the following. In order to find out their motivation and the value they place on their party activities, interviewees were asked what they found interesting and rewarding as members of their party. To gauge the ambitions of women members, the interviewees were asked to give their opinion on whether they and other women in the parties were interested in pursuing higher party positions or public office. They also commented on the problems women faced, whether women’s place was in the home, and whether having a family inhibited active participation.

The evaluation of *Sub-hypothesis II ii* - that women are less able to carry out political responsibilities was based on responses to two sets of questions. The first concerned women’s capabilities and abilities. Respondents were asked to give their view on women’s capabilities and whether men are more appropriate for politics. The second set of questions concerned women’s representation. Respondents were asked why few women hold political office and their opinion on equal gender representation.

### 6.5.2 Interesting and Rewarding Party Activities

Interviewees’ responses indicated diverse ways in which they found participation rewarding and interesting. The most frequently mentioned was meeting and socializing with people\(^{338}\). Many interviewees described their participation in terms of the benefit to community and society. Among the things mentioned were, cross-
cultural interaction and cooperation; cooperative teamwork; contributing to development efforts; doing social work; and political struggle. Some spoke of personal attainment such as broadening knowledge and self-development, and access to important people. Only 3 respondents saw their participation as contributing to women’s participation (PBB: 1 respondent, SUPP: 2 respondents), and only 5 (one from PBB and 4 from SUPP) assessed their interests and rewards in terms of the benefit to the party.

The following are some examples of the insightful things they mentioned. Firstly, the responses given by interviewees from PBB.

On acquiring knowledge and self-development:

“I feel happy when I organize something. I also have the chance to mix with political personnel and learn from them. A position is the doorway to doing more work. As an agent for change one needs to learn from both the higher level and the grassroots.”

“I have the opportunity to meet people and to travel when I attend conventions, seminars and make outstation visits. I am learning communication skills through the various activities.”

On social work among the community:

“Working with the rural people is satisfying. I enjoy teaching the women. Some have very little education. Presently I am working on improving and formalizing customary marriage laws for Iban women. All these need political will.”

On contributing to development efforts:

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339 PBB: FGA IV 1 and V 4; SUPP: FGB VI 1.
340 PBB: FGA III 3 and FGA V 2; SUPP: FGB II 2 and FGB IV 2.
341 PBB: FGA IV 2; SUPP: FGB II 3 and FGB III 3.
342 PBB: FGA III 1 and FGA IV 6; SUPP: FGB II 3, FGB II 4, FGB II 5, FGB III 1 and FGB III 2.
343 PBB: FGA II 1; SUPP: FGB III 3.
344 PBB: FGA III 2, FGA IV 4, FGA IV 5 and FGA V 1; SUPP: FGB IV 1, FGB IV 3 and VI 2.
345 FGA IV 3.
346 FGA II 2.
347 FGB II 4 and FGB II 6.
348 FGA IV 6.
349 FGB II 1, FGB II 5, FGB III 1 and FGB VI 2.
350 FGA III 2.
351 FGA IV 5.
352 FGA III 1. Response was mainly reference to work undertaken within her husband’s rural constituency.
"Taking part in politics is not like taking part in other organizations. Many people feel that politics is dirty in comparison with other activities. In my experience I do not find politics dirty. I think it is necessary because it is about the progress of the country, about rural development, water, road and electricity. This is different from church activities, or the Iban women association that deals with customary laws."

On access to important people:

"As a party member it is a little easier to talk to elected representatives about problems. My son got a job with someone's help."

Some of the comments from respondents from SUPP were as follows:

On political Struggle:

"At first it was opposition to British rule, then it was opposition to the formation of Malaysia. After Malaysia, it was working for the progress of the people."

On support for the party:

"Unconditional support for the party without thought for reward."

"I feel rewarded only after the candidate wins because I have worked hard. The benefits to the party are more important. People are happy."

On meeting and socializing with others:

"Getting to meet a wide range of people with different background puts things into perspective for me."

On concern with community welfare:

"Because of my interest in community welfare I gave up my career for this. Helping others is more meaningful than being material."

A few displayed mixed feelings about their memberships. For example, one respondent summed up her experience as a party member in the following way:

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353 FGA IV 2.
354 FGA IV 3. Getting such assistance is common and acceptable. Winning candidates reward supporters.
355 FGB III 3.
356 FGB II 1.
357 FGB III 2.
358 FGB IV 1.
359 FGB III 2.
"I find my work in JC (Junior Chamber of Commerce) more rewarding. I used to be very active and worked hard for SUPP, but there was no reward, in fact I made others jealous. There are some rewards such as positions. I understand more about politics, about people in politics, and generally I have gained more knowledge."360

Another said,

"The gatherings are interesting. I get to know more people, learn from them and broaden my views. Other than that there is not much that is rewarding. In fact participation costs money."361

Overall respondents reported a wide range of ways they found their participation interesting and rewarding. The diverseness suggests that, although women were loyal to their parties (as reported) there was also a lack of a singular dedication to particular goals such as ideology or specific causes, for example feminist demands. As the parties were communal based parties, loyalty to party could be an extension of loyalty to community. Meeting and socializing with people was the only aspect of participation that a majority of respondents from a party found appealing. That was the PBB, only five from SUPP mentioned this aspect. However, most respondents found their participations interesting and rewarding through various activities that benefited community and society. Except for the fact that those who spoke of doing social work and working for the benefit of the party were mainly women leaders from SUPP, there does not seem to be any distinct differences in the responses from ordinary members and leaders. Interestingly, except for one respondent from PBB who mentioned that a position in the party was a "doorway" to doing more work362, and another from SUPP who referred to a party position as a reward363, there was no mention of the fulfillment of personal ambitions. To find out whether women in the two parties had personal ambitions as regards positions in the party or public office, respondents were asked their opinion on whether the women in their party were interested in pursuing public office.

360 FGB IV 1
361 FGB VI 1.
362 FGA III 2.
363 FGB IV 1.
6.5.3 Women Members’ Political Ambitions

Party Pesaka Bumiputra

Almost all the female respondents from PBB who gave their opinion said women in the party were interested in pursuing public office. However, it is noteworthy that three women leaders thought women were interested but were skeptical as to whether they would be able to aim for office.

“They may be interested but there is no opportunity.”

“A lot of women are interested, but the qualified ones do not want to give up the security of their jobs. Politics is not secure.”

“Yes they are interested. But looking at the Dayak women, they don’t think politics or speak politics; that is why Dayak women are not at the forefront. The educated ones are too comfortable in their jobs. Politics give no assurance that their families will be taken of. They would prefer to keep their jobs.”

A slightly different perspective on the situation within PBB was provided by a women leader who gave the following comment on the selection of female candidates in the party.

“A large number of women in the party are interested in pursuing public office, but, except for one who is the leader of the women’s section, all the elected women representatives were handpicked and did not belong to the party prior to standing as candidate. They were handpicked and groomed. Maybe the idea is that things must initially be done this way in order to pave the way for others.”

The party leadership had mostly chosen not to select female candidates from within the party probably because they did not think women in the party were suitable for public office. This could have been due to a number of reasons. Firstly, most of the women in leadership position (i.e. those most likely to have leadership experience and skills) were spouses of party leaders, or elected representatives. Secondly, most of the women members were housewives lacking appropriate qualifications. Thirdly as was

364 FGA II 1.
365 FGA II 2.
366 FGA III 1.
seen earlier, the women’s section was primarily a subsidiary support for the party; not a training ground from which to draw suitable women candidates.

*Sarawak United People’s Party*

Almost all of the 14 respondents from SUPP thought women in the party were interested in seeking public office. However, most of both ordinary members and leaders also expressed skepticism as to whether it was possible for women. The following are examples of the bases for the skepticism.

“They are interested, but it is not certain if they can.”

“Yes, but they cannot because they have not done enough. Some are not qualified.”

“Yes, but they do not have enough power and support.”

“Yes, but it is difficult to go up.”

The only respondent who did not think women in the party had political ambition gave the following pessimistic comment.

“No, I feel that they are there to serve the men - the YBs.”

In contrast to the above comments which displayed outright skepticism and cynicism, the following comment reveals a less visible, but possibly a more significant determinant of women’s ambition.

“Women are interested but they should know the party philosophy first.”

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367 FGB II 3.
368 FGB III 3.
369 FGB IV 3.
370 FGB IV 2.
371 YB is the local reference to elected representatives. FGB IV 1.
372 FGB II 5.
Expressed by a high-level women leader, it cautioned the need to adhere to the party philosophy that, basically, was to serve the community. It was a reminder that women should not be driven by personal ambition. As the following comment shows, for women, who were already subject to the constraints of proper female behaviour, such a maxim would further inhibit exhibiting ambition.

"Women are interested, but mostly they will try to make it look as charity. They will try not to show ambition as they do not want to be perceived as aggressive or ambitious."  

The responses from both PBB and SUPP suggest that women in the two parties were interested in political office but there was doubt as to whether they would be able to achieve such an ambition. Moreover, in the case of SUPP, women would be discouraged by expectations regarding female behaviour and the principles of party membership from openly pursuing political ambition. Further insight into the issue was obtained by asking the respondents whether they were interested in public office or in advancing within the party.

**Parti Pesaka Bumiputra**

Five members from PBB said they were interested in pursuing public office and party positions. Some answers were more tentative than others. The following are some of their responses.

"I feel I can do it and I want to do it."  

"Yes, definitely."  

"Yes, if given the chance."  

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373 FGB VI 1.  
374 FGA III 2, FGA III 3, FGA IV 4, FGA IV 5 and V 3.  
375 FGA III 2.  
376 FGA IV 4.  
377 FGA IV 5.
Some respondents said they were interested but did not think it was possible. For example, one felt she did not have the opportunity and the other felt she was not good enough.

"I am interested in pursuing public office but I do not have the opportunity. It is hard."\textsuperscript{378}

"I am interested, but I do not feel educated enough. Confidence is based on experience. I am not qualified enough."\textsuperscript{379}

Of the rest, some members said they were only interested in party positions\textsuperscript{380}, and some said they were not interested at all\textsuperscript{381} Of the latter, some of the explanations given were:

"No. Now that I have the time, I am too old. When I was younger, I had to look after my family."\textsuperscript{382}

"No, I am afraid I will not succeed."\textsuperscript{383}

"I would like to be more active, but this is not possible because of housework."\textsuperscript{384}

The following comment by a women leader whose husband was a party leader and elected representative confirms a notable aspect of the nature of women’s participation within the party.

"I have never for once felt the need that I want to be an elected representative. I may have shown the qualities or spoken like a politician but I do not intend to be one. What ever I want can be achieved through my husband. One casualty to politics is enough. In my case I work through the party to influence policies. It works better this way...no fear, no favour. There is no need to worry about losing votes."\textsuperscript{385}

\textsuperscript{378} FGA II 1.
\textsuperscript{379} FGA II 2.
\textsuperscript{380} FGA VI 1, FGA IV 3, FGA IV6 and FGA V 2.
\textsuperscript{381} FGA III 1, FGA IV 2, FGA V 1, FGA V 4 and FGA VI 1.
\textsuperscript{382} FGA V 1.
\textsuperscript{383} FGA V 4.
\textsuperscript{384} FGA VI 2.
\textsuperscript{385} FGA III 1 is the wife of a state minister.
Most of the women leaders in PBB maintain their positions to secure support for their spouses. As shown in the above comment, their party activities were connected to assisting their husbands in constituency work. This characteristic in female participation demonstrated the pervasiveness of patronage within the party. Advancement within the women's section would depend on patronage and connections to the right people.

A similar lack of interest in public office was found among the respondents from SUPP.

**Sarawak United People’s Party**

Among those from SUPP only 4 indicated they were interested in political office. All 4 were in leadership positions. However, as their responses show, there were no indications that they would actively pursue public office.

“I have never fought for my position in the party. I was appointed. I will accept if offered.”\(^{386}\)

“If there is opportunity I would consider”\(^{387}\)

“Yes, if possible.”\(^{388}\)

Of the rest, eight said they were not interested\(^{389}\). As the following remarks show, for most of these, the reason was an unwillingness to lose family life.

“No, because of my age. I have contributed so much I wish to have more time with my family.”\(^{390}\)

“Looking at what political life is, it is not my way of life. I would like a happy peaceful life, but would still like to help. There are many different ways of representing the people.”\(^{391}\)

\(^{386}\) FGB II 3.

\(^{387}\) FGB II 5.

\(^{388}\) FGB III 1.

\(^{389}\) FGB II 1, FGB II 2, FGN II6, FGB III 2, FGB III 3, FGB V 1, FGB V2, FGB V 3, FGB VI 1 and FGB V 2.

\(^{390}\) FGB II 2.

\(^{391}\) FGB III 2.
"No. My family is important. Even if my children are older I would not be interested. It is difficult to get appreciated for what you do."\textsuperscript{392}

There were also two who said they were not presently interested but did not rule out the possibility of a change of mind in the future.

"No. I worry about my children. Maybe after they have grown up, when we can afford it."\textsuperscript{393}

"No, not in party positions. I am only interested in seeing what is going on. Party membership allows access to society; to knowing how well government projects are improving people's lives. There is too much backbiting in the party for my liking...I will not say no to a public office. Give me another ten years."\textsuperscript{394}

One respondent was resigned to the fact that she was not suitable for public office.

"I am a helpful person. I do not wish to pursue political ambition because I lack qualification and wealth. I do not mind as long as others can do the job."\textsuperscript{395}

The comments respondents gave as regards other women members in the party indicate their belief that the women members in their parties were interested in political office and party positions. On the other hand, their responses as regards themselves do not support that view. For both parties, there were only a few who indicated they were actively interested in the political office. Some displayed an interest that was tempered by some reservation. As suggested earlier it would be difficult to get an accurate picture because women would conceal their aspiration. An insight into this was obtained by asking them what sorts of problems women face. The next section examines this issue.

\textsuperscript{392}FGB IV 1.
\textsuperscript{393}FGB IV 3.
\textsuperscript{394}FGB VI 1.
\textsuperscript{395}FGB IV 2.
6.5.4 Problems women face

Most of the women in PBB and all the women in SUPP said women faced problems in their political participation. For both parties, the most frequently mentioned problems were women’s familial responsibilities. Other problems were the lack of qualifications, capability, finance, party support and public support. Cultural expectations on male and female interaction were also mentioned.

*Party Pesaka Bumiputra*

Only two of the fifteen respondents who commented on this issue said they did not think women faced any insurmountable problems. Interestingly, both were ordinary members, and one said the following:

"None if they want to be a leader. This is as long as they follow the proper way, that is, the hierarchy. It all depends on how well you go along with the party. There will not be any problem with your family if you are able to organize your time."

All of the other respondents thought women faced problems. Although a few said it was not a problem as long as one could organize one’s time, the most frequently mentioned problem was family commitments. There were also references to morality in connection with male and female interaction, lack of finance, and lack of party support. The following are some examples of the opinions expressed by women in leadership positions.

"Firstly, a woman must have the support of her husband and family. It is our way of doing things. Secondly, we must accept that a woman is attached to the home. It is a matter of time management."

"Women’s problems are mainly connected to the family, for example, a husband’s objection. Age is also factor. It is harder for a young woman because her family needs her. Moreover, there is the issue of moral behaviour, particularly people’s view of a woman being out until late. Older women have more freedom. There is no interference from their families. There is also more respect for older women."
“For women in politics it is better to be single, divorced or older because one would have more time and be more free to make one's own decisions. However, I have still have a problem with my “ganda” (divorcee) image. Women in PBB talk negatively about my interaction with men. I don’t care. I mix freely.”

“A woman would need the support of her husband and the rest of her family. One of the biggest barriers faced by Dayak women is finance. This is a crucial point. I would not have been able to do it without my husband.”

“The main problem is internal in the party. Women do not get support from male leaders. They have done enough but have not been given recognition. Women are mostly oppressed in the party. The family is not a problem

“The kinds of problems women face depend on their objectives. The family should not be a problem if one is able to organize one’s time.”

While the above comments from women leaders referred to a range of problems, ordinary members tended to point to family commitments and cultural constraints regarding proper behaviour.

“It is hard to prove oneself. Married women have family commitments.”

“The problem is mainly family commitment. It is much more inconvenient for women, especially traveling. There is also the problem of freely associating with men.”

Sarawak United Peoples’ Party

All of the respondents from SUPP said women faced problems. The majority pointed to family commitments; others mentioned lack of support from the party; lack of

403 FGA I 1.
404 FGA III 1.
405 FGA III 2.
406 FGA II 1.
407 FGA IV 4.
408 FGA V 1.
409 FGB III 1 and IV 1.
ability and qualifications \textsuperscript{410}, lack of finance \textsuperscript{411}, and lack of interest, support base and support from leaders \textsuperscript{412}. One member mentioned gossip and jealousy among female party members as a problem. The following are some of the comments made by women leaders.

"The lack of qualification is a problem. A woman must also have the consent of her family and relatives. The financial situation is also important. One will not have the heart to participate if one's family has financial problems. Also, respect for a person is tied to their financial status."\textsuperscript{413}

"The problem is not that the party is not giving the chance. At the personal level one must have interest and the necessary support as well. Only those who have the time, are financially sound and independent, as well as qualified and capable have a chance. Leaders are more concerned with winning the seat."\textsuperscript{414}

"Political life is different from other kinds of association. It is wide and endless. It requires sacrifice, effort, time, and money. Many women are not prepared. The older women members with grown children join the party to do the groundwork. These do not have adequate education. The younger educated ones are not serious. The young married members have their families and are not prepared to sacrifice. They are not prepared to do the groundwork, which is difficult. They are just attending meetings."\textsuperscript{415}

"Party leaders are not keen to select women. Everyone wants high position so women are given little. It all comes down to connection and cronyism. Contributions by women are not recognized."\textsuperscript{416}

Responses from ordinary members differed slightly from those in leadership positions in that they tended to emphasize family commitments.

"Women must assist in bringing in income for the family. There is no money in politics. Time and energy is spent without monetary reward. Moreover, one needs people's support, and must have the ability."\textsuperscript{417}

\textsuperscript{410} FGB II 1 and II 2.
\textsuperscript{411} FGB II 1, FGB II 2, FGB II 4 and FGB IV 2.
\textsuperscript{412} FGB II 1, FGB II 4, FGB II 6, FGB IV 2 and FGB IV 3.
\textsuperscript{413} FGB II 2.
\textsuperscript{414} FGB II 1.
\textsuperscript{415} FGB II 4.
\textsuperscript{416} FGB III 1.
\textsuperscript{417} FGB IV 2.
"I have no time because of my home and family. I was more active when I was living with my in-laws."\textsuperscript{418}

One member pointed to the prevalence of envy and gossip amongst the women.

"In the women's section there is a lot of jealousy going on. For example, if one gets along with a YB it will cause gossip\textsuperscript{419}. It is usually gossip that stops women. It is the biggest deterrent."\textsuperscript{420}

In both parties, women's family commitments were most frequently mentioned as a problem faced. However, compared to the members from PBB, members from SUPP mentioned problems that were more related to the individual's personal ability and circumstances such as, qualifications, finance, motivations and support base. Another noteworthy difference was between the comments made by women in leadership position and ordinary women members. The latter generally spoke about problems arising from family commitments. Women leaders voiced problems associated with individual qualities and party environment. Perhaps most interesting is the reference by interviewees from both parties to male and female interaction within the parties. This suggests that the traditional idea of appropriate behaviour between male and female was an issue within both parties.

The data on problems women faced strongly suggests that women's home and family commitments was the main impediment to women's participation. Further information on this aspect of the circumstances under which women participate was gathered by asking interviewees whether they thought a woman's place was in the home.

\textbf{6.5.5 Women's place is in the home}

Among the 15 from PBB who gave their opinion on this issue, only 3 did not think a woman's place was in the home. Of the rest, half said they thought women's priority should be the home and family. The other half said that women could do other things\textsuperscript{418,419,420}

\textsuperscript{418} FGB VI 2.
\textsuperscript{419} An YB (Yang Berhormat) is the honory for an elected representative.
\textsuperscript{420} FGB IV 1.
as long as they could organize their time\textsuperscript{421}. The following comments from two high-level woman leaders would summarize the prevalent opinion.

"No matter what we are, we go back to the home. Affairs in the home are the most important."

"A woman’s primary concern should be the family - for the children, for the husband and wife relationship. But there is nothing wrong with a woman who has a family to participate in politics. This is possible and has been proven right in Malaysia. Of course the women will need the support of her husband and the rest of the family. For married women the family comes first and then the community.\textsuperscript{422}

The above view demonstrates an assessment in terms of the importance of women’s role within the family. Equally noteworthy was a comment made by a women leader who gave an assessment in terms of the perception of women’s role within the party. She said:

"Leadership should mirror the family."\textsuperscript{423}

This seems to suggest that women, especially the women leaders, should maintain the image of their gender roles within the family, in their leadership of the women in the party. The idea that women’s place was in the home was an important component of women’s participation.

\textit{Sarawak United People’s Party}

Of the 14 members from SUPP who gave their comments, 9 said women’s priority should be the home but 5 disagreed. The following comment from one women leader shows there were more than just the practical and cultural aspects of the matter. It was imperative that women should fulfill their duties at home because failure to do so would undermine whatever they wish to do outside the home.

"It is very important. A woman must organize the home. A mother’s care is more effective. If you can manage your home well, you can go out. If you cannot than don’t. Taking care of the home first would give women more

\textsuperscript{421} FGA II 1, FGA III 3, FGA IV 3, FGA IV 5 and FGA V3.
\textsuperscript{422} FGA III 1.
\textsuperscript{423} FGA III 2.
confident as society will talk. If you are not ok from all angles people will talk.  

Among those who disagreed, the disagreement with the idea was not in the absolute sense. As can be seen from the following comments by two women leaders, there was a precondition that the home was taken care of first.

“‘No. Not in the modern world. As long as you can manage your time, you can be involved successfully.’”

“‘No. According to our culture, yes, but every individual must look after their own interests. It does not mean I must be tied to my family.’”

All the males from both parties who were asked for their opinion said that women’s place was in the home.

“‘Generally speaking yes. In spite of that, hopefully women can be active outside the home. It depends on the husband. In our society men are not involved in the home. In my case, my wife takes care of the house.’”

“‘Yes. Normally love is from the mother. This is natural and it takes time to change.’”

“In our society it is natural for women to be in the home.’”

“It is not that women’s place should be the home but that women are more effective in the home. The main thing is the welfare of the home - the most important in human existence. In this regard, it is better for women to be at home and there is no need to disturb the environment.’”

Most of the female interviewees from both parties said women’s place should be the home. Two interesting observations can be made from the data. Firstly, the perception was that women’s endeavours outside the home depended on their taking care of the home first. Secondly, women’s participation within the party should uphold the image

424 FGB II 4.
425 FGB II 3.
426 FGB III 2.
427 MGB I 2.
428 MGB II 3
429 MGA II 1.
430 MGB III 1.
that women’s place was in the home. There were some who said they disagree, but it must be noted that the disagreement were based on the belief that women need not be in the home all the time, and not that women need not be at home. The male members who commented on the issue each gave varying reasons for their belief that women’s place was in the home. In a nutshell, males thought women were naturally better at taking care of the home than men. An attempt to gauge the extent to which women’s commitment to their families affect their participation in their parties was made by asking female interviewees whether their families prevented them from active participation.

6.5.6 Family and party participation

Party Pesaka Bumiputra

Except for two respondents, all the female members from PBB (including two who were unmarried and one with adult children) said they did not have to worry about juggling family and party activities. In the case of the two who said they had problems, one said,

“My husband is half and half. He does not wish me to be too active. It is difficult to keep up because I work.”431

The other had a different sort of difficulty.

“I would like to be more active and to join in most party activities, but I am unable to do so because of housework. My husband does not mind as long as my work at home is done.”432

Most said their husbands were supportive. Among these, three said their husbands looked after their children while they partook in party activities. Following are two of their comments,

“My husband does not mind. He helps by looking after the children and doing the cooking when I am not at home. My children do not mind either. I have no difficulty keeping up with party activities.”433

431 FGA IV 1.
432 FGA VI 2.
433 FGA IV 3.
"My husband is supportive. He helps with transport, and he looks after the home and the children when I am away, for example, for party conventions."\textsuperscript{434}

Some said it was a just a matter of managing time. The following comment describes the situation succinctly,

"No problem. Everything at home that needs to be done is done first."\textsuperscript{435}

\textit{Sarawak United People’s Party}

Only two respondents from SUPP indicated they encountered some difficulties. One said,

"My husband supports me mostly, but he grumbles sometimes. I do not have a problem as long as I can organize my time."\textsuperscript{436}

The other made this comment about her husband,

"At first he approved, but when I rose up the ranks, he had an inferiority complex. I would have aspired to go higher up otherwise. I was under a lot of pressure. It is not just a matter of a supportive husband. I had to manage my time very carefully between career, participation and family."\textsuperscript{437}

Apart from one interviewee who was not married\textsuperscript{438} all the others said their family commitments did not get in the way of their participation in the party. All said their families and husbands did not mind. Four had husbands who were also members of the party\textsuperscript{439}. Some, however, emphasized having to manage time as important.

Almost all the respondents from both parties who had families said they did not encounter problems participating actively in their parties. However it needs to be noted those whose participation was not problematic had families who didn’t mind and husbands who were supportive.

\textsuperscript{434} FGA IV 4.  
\textsuperscript{435} FGA V 3.  
\textsuperscript{436} FGB IV 2.  
\textsuperscript{437} FGB II 6.  
\textsuperscript{438} FGB V 7.  
\textsuperscript{439} FGB II 1, FGB III 2, FGB III 3 and FGB IV 1.
6.5.7 Women’s capability

Party Pesaka Bumiputra

All the interviewees from PBB said women were capable without elaborating further. Some said men and women were of equal capability\(^{440}\). However, as a woman leader pointed out, women must not be seen to be too capable.

"One must not aspire too fast in the political hierarchy. In our culture women must not appear to be superior. We must be sensitive to that even though in reality we can be superior. We work harder.\(^{441}\)

This comment draws attention to a paradoxical aspect of asymmetrical gender relations within the party. Women must maintain an environment that is non-threatening to male egos and their dominance.

A male member of the party pointed out that capability should not be taken as merely educational qualification.

"It is not just education that is required. They must also have a sense of belonging.\(^{442}\)

In other words, women must feel a sense of belonging to their community and dedicated to working for the interest of the community. This condition would disadvantage women because, being deprived of important roles to play in the party, they would not have the opportunity to prove themselves.

Sarawak United People’s Party

The responses from members of SUPP were less positive. Only five (4 were women leaders)\(^{443}\) said women were capable. Others, such as the 3 women leaders who made the following comments, expressed some reservations.

"No, women are not capable enough. There are not many qualified women in the party.\(^{444}\)

\(^{440}\) FGA II1, FGA II2, FGA IV2, FGA IV6 and FGA V4.
\(^{441}\) MGA I 1
\(^{442}\) MGA II 1
\(^{443}\) FGB II 1, FGB II 5, FGB II 6, FGB III2 and FGB VI 1.
\(^{444}\) FGB III 3.
"Yes, but only those who have had the opportunity to undertake responsibilities. These make up a small percentage. Sometimes it is necessary for one person to hold two or three posts."\(^{445}\)

"There are not many at the moment. Women tend to be a bit reserved in the presence of men. They would not stick their necks out or stand up to speak on certain matters. As for the capable ones, given the platform, they are as capable as men. But usually among equals, the men will be selected first. Moreover, women usually have reservations. The men will go all out. The selectors will prefer the least trouble."\(^{446}\)

The male members of SUPP who gave their comments were of the opinion that women in the party did not have the capability for political responsibilities. Some of their comments, like the earlier comment made by the male member from PBB, demonstrate the need for women to possess qualities beyond just educational qualification.

"Now, if women have the ability we are prepared to put them in high places.... There are now more women graduates, but I do not know why they are not interested. Our women's section seems to have a 'foo ni choo' [mature women] image that does not appeal to the young."\(^{447}\)

"To a certain extent. They may have the pre-requisite in education but are lacking in other experiences."\(^{448}\)

"If enough accept, in many cases women are better than men. But there is also the need for dedication, vision, and courage. Exposure is very important."\(^{449}\)

"It is a battle against ourselves. When the environment is not conducive, women tend to take the easy way out - cooking. There are good women organizers and speakers. But the norm is that wanita [women] play a subsidiary role. You have to earn recognition. For women they need to have that something extra."\(^{450}\)

There is a marked difference between the responses from the female members of PBB and those of SUPP. All the interviewees from PBB said women were capable. Some

\(^{445}\) FGB II 1.  
\(^{446}\) FGB IV 2.  
\(^{447}\) MGB I 2.  
\(^{448}\) MGB I 3.  
\(^{449}\) MGB 11.  
\(^{450}\) MGB II 2.
members said women had the same capability as men. On the other hand, only a few (mainly female party leaders) of those from SUPP thought women were capable. This view was shared by the male members from SUPP who thought women in the party did not possess the capability necessary for holding office. The question of women’s suitability for political responsibility was further explored by asking respondents whether men were more appropriate for political office.

6.5.8 Men are more appropriate for political office

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Almost all the respondents from PBB disagreed that men were more appropriate for political office. The only respondent who said that men were more appropriate was a women leader who took into account specific practical reasons.

“Regardless of what is said about there being no gender difference, to be a candidate in a Dayak constituency is a tough job. Some regions are so remote it would be impossible for women to serve. In the rural constituencies men are better received. But this does not mean that women are less appropriate as far as brainpower and ability is concerned. But there again there are more men to choose from.”

The above points to an important consideration in the selection of candidates. In Sarawak there are many remote inaccessible constituencies covered with thick tropical jungle. In some of these regions people have a very primitive way of life. Within this context, men would be more appropriate for practical reasons. However, as the above comment also points out, men would be taken more seriously then women in these places.

In contrast to the opinion expressed by female members, male members believed that men were more appropriate. Echoing the above comment, the male members felt that people would prefer men. There were some things women could not do.

“Yes, there are certain things women cannot undertake. Women are important for perpetuating the population.”

451 FGA III 1.
452 MGA II 1.
"Yes, because men who are good politicians are more effective by nature. No matter what, more weight will be given to men. Women are more submissive. They do not carry much weight compared to men because of their character and nature. People will not listen to women. Women have to be much better than the men to overcome this."\(^{453}\)

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Compared to PBB, almost half the respondents from SUPP thought men were more appropriate. The reason, as exemplified in the following comments by two women leaders, was mainly women’s family commitments.

"Because men do not have to get the consent of their families."\(^{454}\)

"Not many women are committed. Their priority is their commitment to their families. If they can commit, they would be better than men. But that is not the case."\(^{455}\)

Those who disagreed men are more appropriate did not think it had anything to do with gender.

"It all depends on the person."\(^{456}\)

"It has nothing to do with gender. It is not that women are not there because they are women or that men are more appropriate because they are men."\(^{457}\)

In sharp contrast to the opinions expressed by females, males from both parties who gave their opinion on the matter strongly believed men were more appropriate.

"Yes, I believe in Confucius philosophy; ‘Put your house in order first’ For women it is a double burden, a matter of time management. If they can manage both home and community then it is ok. I have a division of roles with my wife."\(^{458}\)

\(^{453}\) MGA III 1.
\(^{454}\) FGB II 2.
\(^{455}\) FGB III 1.
\(^{456}\) FGB II 6.
\(^{457}\) FGB VI 1.
\(^{458}\) MGB I 3.
"In the Sarawak context - yes. There are few constituencies in the urban areas - many are rural. The traveling, mixing around require more free time. One must be available at all times. There are activities at night and meetings at night. Men are much more free. Women are home oriented, like it or not.\(^{459}\)"

The data on whether men are more appropriate for political office show the respondents were divided on the issue. More female members from SUPP appear to agree with the idea compared to female PBB members. However, males from both parties strongly believed that men were more appropriate. The reasons given were of two kinds - women were disadvantaged by the constraints of home and family, and by their feminine nature. In order to investigate further the views on women and political office, respondents were asked why few women held political office.

### 6.5.9 Why few women hold public office

Respondents from PBB gave various reasons why few women hold public office. Some attributed the dearth to lack of support and discrimination against women in the party.

"Many men see women as incapable."\(^{460}\)

"The present leadership does not have a real concern for women."\(^{461}\)

"Men are preferred over women because they are better qualified. Consequently there are few opportunities for women."\(^{462}\)

Other respondents attributed the problem to women’s inadequacies such as inactivity, lack of qualification and inability to commit on the part of women.

"Women in the party are not active enough. The intellectual women are not active."\(^{463}\)

\(^{459}\) MGB I 2.
\(^{460}\) FGA III 3.
\(^{461}\) FGA IV 4.
\(^{462}\) FGA IV 6.
"Most women are not confident they would succeed because of their lack of qualification. Women with qualification will be more confident."  

"Women are not able to pursue public office because of family commitments."

One high-level women member pointed to the leadership of the women's section as the problem. The remark was a criticism of the leaders of the women's section who were seen as attempting to hold on to their positions and were not inclined to welcome other women who might challenge or be a threat to them. Consequently, there were very few women in the party who would be suitable to hold political office.

"With the present leadership, professional women will not be interested in joining the party. All the members are housewives."

One male respondent from the party placed the blame squarely on women.

"Women are not ambitious enough. They are not interested in becoming involved. The party has women representatives as an obligation - to put a number there."

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Like those from PBB, most of the reasons given by members from SUPP could be categorized as lack of support and discrimination against women in the party, and deficiencies on women's part. In terms of the former, the dearth in women in public office was attributed to the scarcity of positions and a preference for men. According to two women leaders:

"The leaders are not willing to choose women. Their reasoning is that there are not enough places to go around."
"Men are already fighting for the posts. It is not because there are not enough women. The positions are distributed to the men first and then to the women."

Another women leader, on the other hand, said that women were not actively pursuing public office:

"In my branch, a person who had been nominated for position is always returned unopposed. It would be better if things can change but there are no takers. Maybe the women think they are not capable. It is not that the leaders are not willing; the women must be capable and willing. If you don’t show your capability, no one will know you. Some women are shy. Some capable ones are too absorbed in their work - too selfish to do community work. However, it is also true that it is not easy to make a firm decision because those with support may not have the favour of the leadership and vice versa. It is also necessary to have the support of the grass-root. Men are better at getting this. There are factions in the party."

It was generally felt that women were not ready to assume political office.

"Women have not been able to exercise their rights. They need time to get ready."

"In SUPP there are more men. When selecting representatives women never offer names. The men planned carefully."

"Women are not seriously involved in politics"

"It has to do with culture mostly. The religious, cultural, as well as familial constraints. It is only recently that some women think a career is just as important."

Male members from SUPP also said that women were not ready to assume political office. They had yet to field a woman candidate, and the following explanations gave the reasons why. According to some male leaders this was due to the lack of necessary qualities and societal prejudice against women.

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469 FGB II 6.
470 FGB II 3.
471 FGB III 2.
472 FGB IV 3.
473 FGB IV 1.
474 FGB VI 1.
“SUPP is mainly in Chinese constituencies. At this point in time the Chinese are still skeptical of women. For example, when the party wanted to field a woman, she was rated very lowly by the electorate. My personal view is that people are not prepared to accept a woman. The party has not fielded a woman because at the personal level it has to do with the person's popularity and at the mass level it has to do with gender.”

“Much as we want to have women, there must be the right material. Entrenched ideas cannot be changed overnight. Women must change and tell themselves that whatever men can do women can also do. We have not given women the chance because it is also a matter of whether society will accept them. Society needs time to change their mindset. The Chinese believe that men can do better than women. To be selected a woman must possess qualifications, speak the mind and voice of the people and must be fair when formulating policies. In candidate selection, the main thing is the right experience and qualifications. Women lack these qualities, and again this is due to society and culture.”

“Ladies are more efficient. If they are determined and prepared to go into public life then why not? Unfortunately, the role of women in social and political matters leaves much to be desired. This is especially in the Malaysian context where there are more women in the population. SUPP encourages women to come in and as far as possible provides room for them. But we are a conservative society. Our mentality sees women's roles as domestic - as childcare and housework. Even professional ladies face these. It is accepted as normal life. To change the structure would require time. We need to induce them to come out and do social service. To be selected, one must be acceptable and able to perform.”

These male leaders spoke of the difficulty of finding suitable women who were ready to assume the responsibilities that came with political office.

“There is no suitable candidate who can be accepted by all sections within the party. It requires true leadership and genuine participation. A woman was given the opportunity recently but party members rejected her. The problem included both personality and gender.”

“There have not been many who have shown their talent as they have mainly been doing backstage work. Some think they should not. They need a catalyst. Maybe the fault is with the party in not doing enough to train and expose women members. To be selected, one must have leadership qualities, a strong

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475 MGB I 5.
476 MGB I 3
477 MGB II 3.
478 MGB II 4.
following and the ability to bring about change. It has nothing to do with
gender.\footnote{MGB II 1.}

"The structure of the party requires that one must start at the grass-root. Apart from academic qualification, one must be able to work with the people. The opportunity is there - the questions is whether women are able and ready.\footnote{MGB I 1.}

"It is difficult to choose women, for example, for local councils. Not many are active enough to make it possible for the party to make appropriate choices. Women are active at grass-root level where they excel. Most are effective campaigners as they are less assertive, more communicative and therefore more acceptable to the public. But they need to rise from this. The dropout is high at the higher levels for women. There is constant competition at all levels. The rate of survival is higher for men. Women, especially those in their thirties, face obstacles such as their careers and families.\footnote{MGB II 2.}

"If women are capable, it is possible for them to become representatives. But women are limited by family commitments. It is also very inconvenient for women to do constituency work. My constituency, for example, is in a remote inaccessible area. To be selected one has to have leadership qualities, must be able to perform and must produce results.\footnote{MGB I 2.}

The following explanation given by one of the party’s top ranking leaders best depicts the situation in the party from the male leadership point of view.

"Women are grossly underrepresented in other bodies as well. I took over this branch two years ago. There is no discrimination against women. We encourage women to be active but we have not been successful. I don’t favour women for no reason. It must be on merit. Positions are as deserved. It is a chicken and egg situation - men dominate and women would not get involved because there are too many men. We have often approached women who are qualified but they refused. It is mainly due to traditional roles - their perception of themselves as subordinate. We have also tried to recruit professional women. The party more often attracts less qualified women, particularly elderly women. Younger women are not interested in active roles. They do not want to be deeply involved. The married women are more concerned with family and career and the unmarried ones are attracted to other social activities. It is not so much the constraints imposed on women as their 'defeatist feeling' that it is a men's world. Women themselves must change their attitudes. Women are actually discouraging women. The target of one-third representation by women that we propose is an incentive but we

\footnote{MGB II 1.} \footnote{MGB I 1.} \footnote{MGB II 2} \footnote{MGB I 2.}
have not been successful. Women are not willing to accept heavy responsibilities.”

The above illustrates clearly that from the male leadership point of view, women were to blame for the party not having any woman in office. The party, that is, the men in the party, had done all they could and it was up to women to take up the challenge.

Overall, the responses from both parties seem to indicate two prevalent views on why few women hold political office. One view lays the blame on the parties; the other on women. In both cases the main underlying issue was women’s capability. Further insight into this issue was obtained by asking respondents their opinion on women’s representation.

6.5.10 Women’s representation

Party Pesaka Bumiputra

All the respondents from PBB said that there should be more women representatives, but of these, only three thought the number of women and men should be the same. There appears to be a general belief that there should be more women representatives then there were, but this did not extend to equal representation. The following responses by 3 women leaders demonstrate this view.

“There should be more women - at least one third. But, because women in Asia are not ‘free’, the other two thirds should go to men who can perform roles women cannot perform.”

“Not half but one third.”

“It is alright to have more men, but at least one quarter should be women, if half is not possible.”

483 MGB I 4.  
484 FGA III 3.  
485 FGA III 2.  
486 FGA II 2.
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Except for one, all the respondents from SUPP said there should be more women. There were, however, a few who were skeptical about the idea. The following are the reasons given by two women leaders on why there should be more women.

“Even if the men are good, they cannot help women. They are not as sensitive as women would be on some issues, for example, rape.” 487

“Yes, especially in relation to those areas close to women’s hearts. The female views are different.” 488

Those who thought there needed to be more women but on certain conditions gave the following comments;

“Yes, but for women who are willing to come forward as candidates. Women tend to think men should be in politics, that it is not our job. The qualified women are not interested. Women are not ready.” 489

“Yes, but it must also depend on ability. Even though we call for more women, this is important. Some women are well educated but are not interested.” 490

“More women only if they are knowledgeable and capable.” 491

Despite largely agreeing that there should be more women, interestingly, only one interviewee 492 said there should be equal representation between males and females. Two said they would like to have equal gender representation but stressed suitability to hold office rather than equality just for the sake of equality.

“There should be equality, but this is not possible so some would be enough. There are not many women who are able.” 493

“I would like to see equal representation, but at the same time this must based on qualification rather than filling numbers.” 494

487 FGB II 3.
488 FGB II 5.
489 FGB II 1.
490 FGB III 1.
491 FGB IV 3.
492 FGB II 6
493 FGB IV 1.
494 FGB VI 1.
The majority of the members from SUPP did not think it necessary to have equal representation. Most did not have a problem with a higher number of men and thought the presence of some women was sufficient. Some attributed their opinion to the reality that there were very few women who could shoulder the responsibilities.

"We should focus more on the brain than the heart because the heart is emotional. Although I am the women leader, I do not agree we should have equal representation. The phrase 'women hold up half the sky' is nice. It is good to have it, but at the moment -and I emphasize the councilors as example - whether they are capable is more important. I would rather have men. If we field women who are not capable, we will expose our weaknesses.""495

"There should be equal representation, but as this is not possible so some would be enough. There are not many women who are capable.""496

"I would like to see equal gender representation but at the same time this must be based on their being qualified rather than merely filling numbers.""497

Some though that there should be more men because they were more capable.

"Forty percent representation by women is enough. Because men have more free time, they should be given more chances. For women, the home is important.""498

"Men should make up two thirds as they are better decision-makers.""499

The following comment highlighted a factor that had priority over the issue of gender equality in representation.

"Presently we are not trained or educated. Just some women would be enough. Equal ethnic representation is more important.""500

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495 FGB II 4.
496 FGB IV 1.
497 FGB VI 1.
498 FGB IV 2.
499 FGB IV 3.
500 FGB II 3.
In terms of real politics, communal representation would be of major concern for both the parties. However, this consideration could also be a convenient and justifiable reason for not remedying women’s underrepresentation.

All the males from both parties who commented on this issue agreed there should be more women representatives, but some stressed that increases should be based on ability and not gender. None said there should be equal representation.

"Personally I think there should be more women. This is the 21st century. Women should be given the chance."  

"I would like to see at least one third of elected representatives are women. This is the target. How long it will take to achieve this, I don’t know."

"It is not healthy. Women must be involved especially since they are 50% of the population. There should be more women, but positions must be contested based on ability."

"For a start there should be a number of reserved seats for women to encourage them. But this should not be entrenched."

"There should be more women, but they must be judged by their ability not sex."

"There definitely should be more women. However, on the matter of equal representation, this depends on women. Women are not strong enough. Of course, no doubt, men make it hard for women to move up. But we cannot have more women just to make up the numbers. The key thing is that the person is appropriate."

The responses from both males and females of both parties clearly indicated the prevalent opinion that there should be more women representatives but there was no need for equal representation for women. The general opinion among members of SUPP was that holding public office should be based on ability, and not on letting women have representation.

501 MGB I 5  
502 MGB I 4  
503 MGB II 3  
504 MGB II 2  
505 MGA II 1.  
506 MGA III 1.
6.5.11 Evaluation: Sub-hypothesis II i:

*It is perceived that women lack commitment and ambition*

The evaluation of *Sub-hypothesis II i* looks firstly at the comments interviewees gave on the things female members found interesting and rewarding. There were varied ways female members found their participation interesting and rewarding. Overall, the most frequently mentioned was meeting and socializing with people. Many respondents found activities that helped society and community satisfying. A few especially female leaders from SUPP mentioned working for the benefit of the party as rewarding. On the whole there was very little evidence of respondents gauging their participation in terms of personal achievement and ambition. This observation becomes more complex on examining responses on women’s ambitions within the parties.

The data on female members interest in pursuing public office is both interesting and puzzling. Almost all female respondents said women in the parties were interested in pursuing political office. However, some also doubt that women would undertake to aim for office. Among the reasons given were their lack of qualification, and their reluctance to sacrifice family life or to give up the security of their jobs. It was also pointed out that women would not display aspiration for fear of being seen as ambitious and aggressive - traits considered unbecoming in females. This notion was probably accentuated by the party doctrine of working for the interest of the party and not for oneself. The effects of these factors might have manifested in the responses interviewees gave as regards their ambition.

On looking at the data on whether the female respondents were interested in political office, the impression that female party members were interested in political office becomes less clear. In contrast to the interviewees’ expressed belief that women in the party were interested in pursuing office, very few interviewees said they were interested. In the case of SUPP all those who said they were interested were in leadership positions. On the whole, the interests expressed were mostly tentative rather than strongly positive.
The data on problems women faced may partly explain the scant display of ambition. Most of the respondents from PBB and all from SUPP said women faced problems. In both parties, family commitments were mentioned most often. Other problems related to capabilities, qualification, financial situation, and support. Male and female interaction was also a problem within both parties. The various kinds of problems women faced would most likely dilute women’s ambition and commitment to political work. Being the most common problem, family commitments would be the greatest barrier. This assumption is supported by the data on whether women’s place was in the home.

Most of the respondents believed women’s place should be the home. Even in the case of those who indicated they disagreed, the belief was really that women’s place was in the home, but that they did not need be at home all the time. The key was time management. Notwithstanding the prevalent belief that women’s place should be the home, almost all the respondents said their families were not obstacles to active participation in the parties. Inherent in most of the responses was the crucial matter of managing time. This basically meant that responsibilities at home must be fulfilled as a precondition for undertaking responsibilities outside the home. Also important was the support from husband and family.

The above observations, largely support Sub-hypothesis II i - that women lack commitment and ambition. It could be said that women in the parties had some ambition but lacked commitment, in that they were interested in political office but were unable or unwilling to actively pursue it. The lack of commitment could be due to the various problems faced in participating in politics. The most common problem was family commitments. The idea that women’s place is in the home was prevalent even though for some people it was not held in the strictest sense. Women did not have to be at home all the time but nevertheless had to fulfill their responsibilities in the home. The data shows it was possible for women to balance family and participation but this depended on how well they could manage their time and whether they had the support of their husbands and families. This should not, however, give room for optimism on women’s ability to commit to political life. The present data on participation in the parties may have shown that with efficient time management it was possible for women to commit to other undertakings outside the home. Women in
paid work are evidence of this. However, it is doubtful whether the same could be said of a full commitment to political life.

Apart from having to encounter various problems at the personal level, women members were subjected to expectations regarding proper female behaviour and the idea that women’s participation needed to reflect and maintain the image of a proper family.

This was over and above the party’s expectation that members place party above personal interests. All these would work to pressure women to refrain from displaying ambition and strong commitment. Apart from the party, the public’s view of women, and the preference for male would all work to discourage women.

6.5.12 Evaluation: Sub-hypothesis II ii:

Women are perceived to be less able to carry out political responsibilities

Over the period the interviews were carried out, there were four elected women representatives in Sarawak - two in the State Legislature and the other two in the Federal Parliament. All four were from PBB that, compared to the other parties in Sarawak, had the largest number of seats at both state and federal level. SUPP at that stage did not have any female representative nor had it fielded any female candidate. Despite the fact that PBB had four elected female representatives it was still the case that there was a dearth of female representatives in Sarawak. This was especially at the state level where out of 62 seats only two were held by women.

The evaluation of Sub-hypothesis II ii - it is perceived that women were less able to carry out political responsibilities is based on four issues. First is the question of women’s capability. The information revealed a striking difference in the responses between the two parties. Respondents from PBB were more positive about women’s capability. All thought women were capable. This was perhaps due to the fact that there were 4 female elected representatives (one with a ministerial portfolio) who, together with the head of the women’s section, sat in the party’s Central Committee alongside the male leaders. This placed the women at par with the male leadership. In the SUPP, only the head of the women’s section sat in the Central Committee.
Women, being denied the opportunity to operate at the same level as men, would not have been seen as possessing the same capability. Male respondents from SUPP did not think women in the party were capable. The few female members who thought women were capable were almost all women leaders.

On the question of whether men are more appropriate for political office, respondents appear to be divided. More female members from SUPP agreed compared to members from PBB who almost all disagreed. Male members from both parties, however, were of the opinion that men were more appropriate. Women were said to be less appropriate because of their gender roles and feminine nature. Further explications of women’s inadequacies were revealed by respondents’ comments on why few women hold public office.

There were two prevalent views on why few women hold public office. The first attributed the scarcity to the lack of support and discrimination against women in the party. The second faulted women’s lack of interest and capability. Similarly, male members criticized women’s lack of interest, but they also blamed their lack of necessary qualities and societal prejudice against them. Unlike the female party members, the male leaders (especially those from SUPP) did not fault the party for the dearth in women in public office.

The scepticism over the likelihood of women being able to hold public office perhaps underpinned the view on women’s representation. Most respondents felt that the number of women should be increased, but very few thought it was necessary to have equal gender representation. Generally, there was no problem with a higher representation by men. Some stressed suitability and ability to hold office rather than equality. Others expressed awareness that not many women could carry the responsibilities of public office.

The data on the four issues: women’s capability; whether men are more appropriate for political office; why few women hold public office; and women’s representation, strongly suggests the validity of Sub-hypothesis II ii - it is perceived that women are less able to carry out political responsibilities. Except for capability, which respondents from PBB believed women possessed, the prevalent opinion on the other
three issues was that women, due to various reasons, were less able to undertake political responsibilities.

6.5.13 Conclusion: Hypothesis II:

*Women’s party participation underscores the dominance of men*

Earlier, it was concluded that the data examined largely confirm *Hypothesis I* - that political party structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions within the party. This led to the question of whether women’s participation underscored male dominance as postulated in *Hypothesis II*. The evaluation of *Hypothesis II* was based on examining information in relation to perceptions on women’s ambition and commitment, and women’s ability to carry out political responsibilities.

The information gathered in relation to *Sub-hypothesis II i* – it is perceived that women lack commitment and ambition, shows that women members did not see their interest in and satisfaction from the party participation in terms of personal achievement and ambition. The main satisfaction for women was meeting and socializing with others. This characteristic of women’s participation is reinforced by the lack of interest in pursuing political office. As can be inferred from the information on problems women faced, there were several reasons for this, the main one being women’s family commitments. The common view was that women’s place was in the home, but it was permissible for women to partake in other endeavours outside the home as long as priority was given to the home. This was confirmed by interviewees who said their families did not prevent them from participating actively because they organized their time properly and they had their spouses’ support. This may seem to demonstrate that women’s family commitments need not necessarily constrain women from active participation. However, it also shows it is difficult for women to give undivided commitment to undertakings outside the home.
The data in relation to Sub-hypothesis II ii – women are perceived to be less able to carry out political responsibilities, shows the different ways and varied reasons why women were deemed as less able to shoulder political responsibilities. Although part of the data shows that women were thought to possess capability, the overall view, as inferred from the data on whether men were more appropriate for political office; why few women hold public office, and whether women should have equal representation, was that women were less able to hold political office.

The observations in relation to Sub-hypothesis II i and Sub-hypothesis II ii, mainly supports Hypothesis II. For numerous reasons women were not able, or not prepared to participate on an equal footing as men. Consequently, women’s participation merely serves to maintain men’s dominance.

6.6 Conclusion

The broader objective of this chapter is to further explore the environment surrounding women’s pathway to political office. Chapter 5 looked at the social dimension, this chapter focuses on the institutional dimension. The specific objective is the evaluation of the second of two sets of hypotheses, postulated in chapter 3. Based on the public and private divide as a framework of analysis, the hypotheses relates to the environment surrounding women’s underrepresentation. Framed within the institutional dimension each hypothesis subsumes two sub-hypotheses pertaining to gender relations in political parties. The assessment of the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses is based on qualitative data derived from intensive interviews carried out among members of PBB and SUPP - two political parties with differing ethnic composition.

The rationale for choosing these two political parties is that it would allow a comparative analysis of the data. The results obtained from the data examined strongly suggest that women’s participation in political parties bears the hallmark of
the public and private divide. The gendered ordering took multi-faceted manifestations that assumed differing saliency depending on the situation. Notwithstanding this complexity, it is possible to distinguish two aspects; one occurred at the level of the organization and the other at the level of the individual. The data confirmed the political parties as gendered organizations that maintained asymmetrical gender relations characteristic of the public and private divide. At the individual level, each individual perpetuated the divide through his or her behaviour and beliefs. Another general finding is that there are no marked differences between the patterns observed in each party. A discussion of this and other interesting comparative findings will be given in the concluding chapter. The rest of this chapter will look at findings in relation to the public and private divide.

The assessment of Hypothesis I - political party organizational structures maintain asymmetrical gender relations and interactions - reveals the interplay of the different aspects of the public and private divide within each of the issues examined. On evaluating Sub-hypothesis I i - party structures prescribe a secondary role for women, it was seen that the division into the women’s section formalized gender asymmetry within the party. From the outset women’s participation was of a subordinate status - primarily a supporting role. Moreover, a division of labour was ensured between male and females. Within the women’s section, women were mainly involved in activities deemed suited for women such as, activities that entail culinary skills, maintenance of social harmony, and social work that benefited the community. Even campaigning during elections, the only significant activity of a political nature that women were thought to be good at, can be traced to women’s inclination to maintain good communication with others.

Women contributed substantially to their parties through their loyalty, conscientiously carrying out party tasks and rallying support at the grass roots. Men control the party and enjoy superior status. As one female party member commented, women do the work and men do the thinking. Clearly, within political parties male agentic qualities and female communal qualities were a crucial part of the organizational set up. Male dominance was a cause of discontent for some women members.
The evaluation of Sub-hypothesis I ii - party structures prevent women from acquiring political experience and skills - reveals women were critical of gender inequality particularly male bias and discrimination against women. Women complained that important positions and responsibilities were given to men. Males held the power and ran the parties with minimal input from women. The women's section was not regarded as essential to high-level policy formulation and decision-making. Only one woman, the head of the women's section, was officially entitled to sit in the central committee of the party. This inequality was primarily due to men's stereotypical image of women as incapable and incapacitated by domestic constraints. Some women shared the same opinion.

Despite being excluded from men's power space, women in the parties generally felt that they had opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and to develop skills within the party. In a limited way, taking part in activities and holding positions and responsibilities within the women's section provided the platform. Although these opportunities were certainly not at par with what could be gained within the main section of the party, most women members favoured having the women section. This was mainly due to a recognition that women were incapable of participating equally with men; hence the need for the section where women could operate within a more conducive environment. From this point of view the women's section was essential to women's participation. Those who did not favour having a separate section pointed out that it limited women's participation and deprived women of opportunities to partake in matters that were important. According to this view, male and female members should be allowed to work together based on ability.

While the sexual division of labour in the form of party structures and male dominance limited women's participation directly within the party, at the personal level women had to face the constraints of their domestic roles, societal expectations of appropriate behaviour and the realities regarding their capabilities. The evaluation of Hypothesis II - women's party participation underscores the dominance of men - uncovers this aspect of women's participation in political parties. The findings in connection with Sub-hypothesis II i -women are perceived to lack commitment and ambition, and Sub-hypothesis II ii - women are perceived to be less able to carry out political responsibilities, mainly support the validity of both postulations, but more
importantly, the findings provide an insight into the nature of women's participation. Underneath the surface of the observable outcome was a complex mix of factors.

Women members displayed a highly communal type quality in the things they found interesting and rewarding as regards their participation. These were mainly related to meeting and socializing with people, and working together for the benefit of community and society. Satisfaction of these sorts was consistent with the role designated for the women's section. Notwithstanding, noticeably lacking was satisfaction of a more personal nature. Except for two members (one from each party) who saw their rewards as party positions, the other party members interviewed did not mention satisfaction in terms of personal achievement or ambition. This would suggest women members did not have ambitions, but other data revealed otherwise.

According to the majority of respondents, women in the parties were interested in political office and position, but most also expressed doubt that women would actually pursue this ambition. Various reasons were given, such as lack of opportunity, qualifications, support base, and financial security. But perhaps more significant, due to its relevance to all women members regardless of their immediate circumstances, was the notion that women should not show ambitiousness because it was not proper female behaviour. Added to this was the party doctrine that members should be concerned with the objectives of the party and not personal ambition. Although this maxim applied to both male and females, women would be subjected to pressure from two fronts. This factor could have been the reason why the majority of interviewees said they were personally not interested in pursuing office. The few who said they were interested gave tentative answers that indicated they would only do so if offered the opportunity, or if invited. The preceding observations strongly indicate that women in the parties adhered to expected female behaviour.

The issue of whether women were free to overtly indicate ambitions is important in understanding women's ambition, but it must not obscure other realities regarding women's participation. The data on problems women face highlights numerous factors ranging from those related to individual circumstances such as qualifications, finance and motivation, to lack of support from the party. Women were also subject to societal perceptions and expectations of proper behaviour in male and female
interaction. Overall the main barrier to women's participation was deemed to be women's home and family commitments. This opinion was strongly reinforced by the belief that women's place should be the home. Women should fulfill their domestic obligations before other undertakings outside the home. According to the data, this was possible with efficient time management, but it does not erase the fact that women's domestic roles take priority over all else.

The above manifestations of the public and private divide, namely; stereotyping, conformity to gender roles and gender appropriate behaviour, and acceptance of male superior status, thread through all aspects of women's party participation. These factors also influence the view on women's ability to carry out political responsibilities. Female respondents tended to think that women were capable, but the male leaders pointed out that women lack the capability that came with experience and exposure - qualities which were important in politics but which women are less likely to have acquired. Male leaders also differed from the majority of females in their opinion that men were more appropriate for political office. Citing reasons such as women's feminine nature and the constraints of home and family, male leaders said men were more effective and their opinions given more weight. They gave similar reasons for the fact that few women hold political office. Women members, on the other hand placed the blame on lack of party support and male bias.

Overall it could be said that within the domain of political participation, women were not seen as comparable to men in their abilities, ambition and commitment. Underlying these factors were the various constraints corresponding to the public and private divide that impact on women's participation. One of the consequences of this reality can be found in the data on lack of equal representation for women. Almost all thought that there should be more women representatives than there were, but very few thought it was necessary to have equal gender representation.
CONCLUSION

This thesis is an attempt to explain the political underrepresentation of women in Southeast Asia. The writing of this thesis was motivated in the first place by the belief that there is a need for a renewed scrutiny of this social phenomenon. This is due to two developments within the field of women and electoral politics. First is the tendency on the part of some scholars and policy advocates to de-emphasize the urgency of increasing the number of women representatives. Recently, policy advocates of women’s participation in electoral politics have demonstrated an impatience to move ahead by recommending looking beyond numbers to concentrating on enhancing effective representation by women. This thesis takes the position that gaining increased representation for women remains a crucial issue. To relent on the effort to get more women into office would be detrimental to the attainment of a critical mass that will give women genuine participation and enable them to effectuate changes for the betterment of women.

The second development within the field of women and electoral politics that motivates the writing of this thesis is the recent pronouncements by such bodies as the International Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarian for a plan of action to achieve equal partnership between men and women in politics. This well-intentioned agenda, however, lacks credibility when at the same time it was emphasized that the equal partnership is to be achieved without impinging on local culture. In most societies, culturally prescribed gender asymmetry that corresponds to a public and private divide is the main reason for women’s underrepresentation. Gender equality in politics will remain elusive as long as societies adhere to the ordering.
Women's underrepresentation is a phenomenon that has persisted in most parts of both the developed and developing world. One of the main purposes of this thesis is to explicate the significance of the public and private divide in relation to women's underrepresentation particularly in Southeast Asia. It is argued that the underrepresentation of women is due to the scarcity of political women, which in turn is due to various factors emanating from the public and private divide.

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first is concerned with the formulation of theory and hypotheses. The ongoing vast array of paradigms, perspectives, approaches which ensue from the various fields in social science research posed both a blessing and a dilemma in the attempt to investigate a phenomenon. Within this context of current multifarious literature, rigorous and sometimes effusive debates, it became necessary to justify positions taken in terms of approach and theoretical framework. The literature on women in Southeast Asia displays a situation of popular scholarly thought at the crossroad. At a general level, there is a current trend among scholars in Southeast Asia to repudiate - ranging from criticism to rejection - the applicability of western knowledge locally. At another level are the accusations by feminist writers - following worldwide feminist trend - of unfair scholarly treatment of women. It has been pointed out that women have been neglected in scholarly studies, which results in a lacuna in the literature and contributes to the marginalization and invisibility of women. It has also been alleged that where studies on women had been undertaken or where studies included women, these had followed a "male-centered" analysis. Following these trends, recent writings propose new perspectives, new methods of analysis which reflect the current mode of deconstruction and indigenization. Within such a climate, a study that attempted to utilize theories, methods and concepts which did not conform to these trends essentially needed to start from a defensive position.

The approach adopted in this study runs counter to current popular thoughts in its adoption of a theoretical framework that is based on the public and private divide. The chapters in the first part of the thesis were concerned with justifying the use of the public and private divide and the formulation of the theoretical hypotheses on women's representation. Chapter 2 established the public and private divide in gender relations as the key organizing principle in society and the most plausible explanation for the dearth in political women. Insights from various studies on gender processes
were incorporated into Rosaldo’s original public and domestic distinction which was then reformulated as an integrated framework with an interactive and dynamic dimension. The public and private divide is not rigidly defined, but comprises factors that are fluid, interacting and capable of shifting saliency. Most individuals possess a sense of the public and the private divide, which defines spaces, activities and behaviour that may take concrete reality or exist as abstract ideas. The public and the private divide is also reflected within institutions. In most societies the public and the private divide affects almost all aspects of human social existence.

In chapter 2 four sets of factors on gender processes, namely, women’s domestic role, men’s superior status, gendered behavioural characteristics and gendered organizations were stressed as manifestations of the public and private divide. Based on these factors, 5 postulations on women’s involvement in political life were advanced. These highlighted the constraints and disadvantages women face.

Chapter 3 expanded on the postulations advanced in chapter 2 by looking more specifically at the environment surrounding women’s pathway to political office. Based on available literature, two sets of hypotheses were proposed. The first set - framed within a social dimension - was related to societal perception of women and political office and societal attitudes on gender roles and gender asymmetry. The other set - framed within an institutional dimension - was related to political parties as gendered institutions. Chapter 4 provided an overview of relevant literature on Southeast Asia in order to justify and demonstrate the applicability of the public and private divide in that part of the world. It was concluded that despite claims of the unsuitability of the public and private distinction in Southeast Asia, it was not possible to reject the prevalence of the ordering. The ordering manifests as cultural specifics within gender relations.

The second part of the thesis focused on evaluating the hypotheses and sub-hypothesis postulated in chapter 3. Chapter 5 pertained to the social dimension of the public and private divide. Theoretically the hypotheses encompassed nesting concepts starting with the public and private division, within which lay gender roles and gender asymmetry, and within that gender stereotyping, cultural beliefs and practical imperatives. The analysis was based on quantitative data was from a survey of 538
adult males (43.8%) and females (55.6%) belonging to 4 ethnic groups. It was deemed necessary to use quantitative data in order to gain a sense of the prevalence of an attitude or perception which was important to the interpretation of the data. In terms of purely assessing the data in relation to the hypotheses postulated, the findings do not clearly prove or disprove the validity of each hypothesis. This was due to the diverse responses to the different facets contained within each hypothesis. However, this mixed outcome revealed a number of other significant patterns in the data that were as important in providing insights into the pervasiveness of the *public and private divide*.

From a broader standpoint, the first significant observation is that, apart from gender, and to a small extent ethnicity, all other variables did not register noteworthy relationship to responses to measurement items. This finding suggests that factors such as age, education and religion that are commonly thought to exert influence on the way people think, did not affect the respondents’ opinion. Gender displayed significant correlation with a large number of items which meant that a more accurate analysis required incorporating gender in the interpretation of the data. The finding suggests firstly that differences in opinion were strongly linked to gender, and secondly, that males and females differ in their opinions.

In comparison to gender, ethnicity had significant correlation with only a few measurement items. There did not appear to be noteworthy patterns that would merit a separate analysis. Having said that, there was, however, an interesting finding on the distinctively high number (ranging from 16.4% to 51%) of Malays who gave “no opinion” responses to a number of items. This could have been due to the fact that as Muslims, they did not want to express attitudes that they think would contradict Muslim practices. Apart from this particular characteristic on the part of the Malays, the data suggests that opinions on gender issues were not necessarily linked to cultural differences. For the most part, the data indicated similarities across the four ethnic groups.

As a general observation regarding the *public and private divide*, the data uncovered an inclination towards rather than away from the *public and private divide*. This was particularly the case with male respondents who favoured male dominance in politics,
female conformity to gender roles, and superior male status and power. These were most evident from the high percentages of males who thought that women were indispensable in the home, that women should put home and family first, and that males are superior in status and competence. The instances males displayed an orientation away from the public and private divide were when they disagreed with negative stereotypes of women, such as, females' weaker personality and capability.

Compared to male, females expressed more egalitarian attitudes through their rejection of a high number of item measurements particularly those on male domination of politics, male superior capability, and negative female stereotyping. However, despite this display of egalitarianism it was evident that women maintained their adherence to key aspects of prescribed gender roles and gender asymmetry. Most agreed that the husband is the master of the house, that women should put home and family first, and that women are nurturing and caring.

The examination of the data in relation to the social dimension of the public and private divide generated four noteworthy observations. Firstly, the data demonstrated similarities between the different ethnic groups as regards the public and private ordering. This is contrary to the expectation of differences in values and practices that often accompanies cultural diversity. Secondly, even though both males and females adhere to the key defining features of the public and private divide, females exhibited more egalitarian opinions than males. This is consistent with other findings in the literature on male and female gender attitudes. Thirdly, among both males and females there was move away from negative stereotypes of women's capability. This is consistent with the present widespread acceptance that women are as capable as men. Fourthly, unlike males, females disagreed that men were more appropriate for politics or that men should dominate politics, but they agreed with the males that women were constrained by their families and work from active participation in politics.

The findings on the public and private divide in chapter 5 were largely reflected in the findings on the institutional dimension of the ordering in chapter 6. Chapter 6 focused on the evaluation of two sets of hypotheses that expound the political party as a gendered institution that maintained the public and private divide. It expanded on the
quantitative analysis of societal attitudes and perceptions in chapter 5 through a qualitative analysis of intensive interviews among male and female members. Qualitative data allowed a more detailed scrutiny of the gender dynamics within the political party as an institution. It comprised responses on respondents’ perceptions and experiences in connection with women’s participation in the political parties examined.

In terms of the hypotheses postulated, the data largely supported the validity of Hypothesis I - that party organizational structure maintains asymmetrical gender relations and interactions, and Hypothesis II - that women’s party participation underscores the dominance of men. The data confirms that political parties are highly gendered organization with strong manifestations of the public private divide. In terms of gender asymmetry in the party that bore on women’s participation, the most important was the women’s section. The women’s section epitomized the public and private divide through gendered task differentiation between males and females in the party. Women’s participation was officially recognized and accepted as of a lower status and women were excluded from male power space. Amidst all this there was evidence that the situation was not all due to males imposing their superiority on females, but also to women submitting to male dominance. To a large extent women maintain male dominance through their loyalty, hard work and acceptance of their subordinate role in the party. This had enabled the men in the party to use the women’s section to draw women into the party but at the same time freeze women out of their power space. Most women in the party, on the other hand, appeared content to remain in the women’s section which they viewed as beneficial to women. While it was true that the women’s section provided women with the opportunity to gain some experience and exposure it also confined and disadvantaged women.

Another significant feature within the party is women’s seemingly lack of ambition to advance politically. Women could have been conforming to the appropriate behaviour of not appearing aggressive and ambitious, or they could have been under pressure from party principles to conceal ambition. But it was also possible that women were not interested. This was an opinion expressed by a number of male leaders in the party. Male leaders also had reservations about female’s ability to assume political office.
Citing familial constraints, practical inconvenience, and lack of experience, the male party leaders highlighted very stereotypical aspects of women's deficiencies.

Consistent with the findings in chapter 5, there did not appear to be major differences between the perceptions and attitudes expressed by members (males and females) of both parties even though they were from different ethnic communities. There was a slight difference in opinion on women's capability, with many female members from SUPP saying women were not capable while most of those from PBB said they were. These views may have been influenced by the fact that in PBB there were 4 female elected representatives who would be viewed as capable as men, while in SUPP there was none. In fact male leaders in SUPP constantly drew attention to women's deficiencies. Another difference was that women in SUPP were more critical of male discrimination against women. This again could have been due to the fact that women had never been given the opportunity to seek office.

The only significant difference between the parties was the fact that PBB had 4 female elected representatives whereas SUPP had (at that time) yet to field a female candidate. This could be due to the political situation in the state. PBB was the dominant party with a higher number of seats - including safe seats. Consequently it could "afford" to field women. SUPP on the other hand held fewer seats and had to compete in constituencies with strong opposition candidates. Hence their reluctance to field women because of the risk involved and the fact that there were not enough seats for men let alone for women.

Another interesting fact concerning the 4 female elected representatives was that 3 were handpicked from outside the party. All three were senior public servants prior to becoming candidates. A possible reason was that there were no suitable women in the party, in which case it could be concluded that the party had failed to provide for the development of political women in the party. It is also possible that it was deliberate on the part of party to field women with no support base within the party. The allocation of seats would rest solely on the decisions of the selectors. Women with support within the party- even if it were just the women's section - would pose a threat to male hegemony.
From the data analyzed in chapter 6 two broad generalizations can be made in connection with women's pathway to political office. Firstly, it can be said that political parties with women's section are less likely to serve as a platform for the creation of political women. Women in the women's sections of parties are mainly there to serve as a support a base for the party, not to share power. Secondly, contrary to the argument that multi-party systems provide more opportunities for women, the data examined shows that women are more likely to be left out because smaller parties have fewer seats and have to give priority to males.

In terms of broader issues the most significant finding in this study is the lack of notable differences in the perceptions and attitudes expressed by respondents from vastly different cultures and religions. Observations derived from both sets of data demonstrate a high degree of similarity on all aspects of the public and private divide. Respondents shared the view that women were soft hearted and were more suitable to taking care of the home. Men were still held to be the master of the house. There was no significant difference in the opinions between the males of each group or the females of each group. Even the shift to egalitarian attitudes in relation to women's negative stereotypes was displayed by the majority of all groups.

The data derived from the 4 groups appears to be similar on this aspect of social existence. As explained earlier, a possible explanation could be that the ordering is based on the biological fact that women give birth and lactate; consequently the seeming naturalness of the sexual division of labour assigning women to the home. All else then flow from this fact. But this would allow room for some variations. An alternative explanation would be to point to an external factor such as the effects of state policies. In this case, even though Malaysia is a plural society created by British colonization and policy of divide and rule, the modernizing state would have penetrated and homogenized society. In Malaysia as in other developing countries in Southeast Asia, the state has had a pivotal role in upholding patriarchy. A prevalent state policy is the recognition of the male as head of the household for most official transactions, and the state promotion of the importance of women in the welfare of the home; thus the undisputed acceptance of male dominance. Alongside the state, another homogenizing agent could have been the onset of widespread paid labour, urbanization and consumerism that came with capitalism. The opportunities arising
from this development would have afforded women roles and responsibilities that would lead to a more positive view of women’s abilities; thus the cross-cultural evidence of a move away from negative stereotyping of women. This shift is accommodated without upsetting the basic premises of gender asymmetry.

The manifestation of similar views on gender relations between the different ethnic groups supports a key proposition adopted in this thesis - that cross cultural similarities be given due recognition and importance. The finding is highly significant for its implications to existing literature as well as future work on gender, politics and ethnicity. While it mainly verifies studies such as Williams and Best (1990) that highlights pan-cultural sex stereotypes, it also affirms views such as Ong and Pelezt’s (1995) that gender relations is constantly being reconstituted into hybridity. The finding also suggests that studies that emphasize diversity or difference should not neglect aspects of culture that transcend cultural demarcations.

The above indicates that culture may not be as important in imposing differences as it has been made out to be. Resolving this issue is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is a question that calls for research. Nevertheless, whether or not culture imposes differences, among most people the beliefs and practices in connection with asymmetrical gender relations are regarded as an integral component of their culture. Herein lies the tenacity of the public and private divide.

This point brings this discussion back to the initial reason for writing this thesis. This study has shown the incompatibility of aiming for increased representation for women while insisting on retaining existing culturally prescribed asymmetrical gender relations. A possible solution for the problem of inequality in representation would be to strive for egalitarianism within societies such as that which exists in the Nordic countries. These places demonstrate this goal is a possibility; the question is how to achieve it. In many societies, the public and private divide manifesting as various forms of gender asymmetry such as stereotyping, gender roles and male dominance, are the means by which people make sense of a large part of social life. In these places, for most people, the inclination would be to maintain the ordering.
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Appendix A – Methodology

Research method and the goals of the study.
This thesis uses both quantitative and qualitative empirical data. This method was adopted primarily in order to obtain a more comprehensive data set on people’s attitudes and perceptions on gender relations and women’s participation in politics. The quantitative data obtained from a survey of the public is essential for gauging the pervasiveness of the public and private divide within society. It also enabled comparative analysis in relation to variables such as gender, ethnicity, age, marital status, education, occupation, religion, party affiliation and spatial residence. In this study quantitative data complements the qualitative data from intensive interviews conducted with members of two political parties in Sarawak. The choice of qualitative data for this part of the study was in order to capture in more detail the intricacies of gender relations within political parties.

Fieldwork was carried out between January 1999 and April 2000. Due to the nature of the research which required two sets of data and two methods of data collection, there were two field trips of about four months each. Two trips were required because of the need to conduct the face-to-face interviews first. The information collected from the interviews was used as a guideline for the construction of the survey questions and answers for use in the collection of the second data set.

A preliminary fieldwork trip to Sarawak was undertaken in February 1998 to assess the feasibility of the study. This included submitting an application to the Sarawak State Planning Unit, Chief Minister’s Department for permission to conduct research in Sarawak. Permission was granted in November 1998. The survey that was carried out had the approval of the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee.
Methodology I : Survey Data

Survey Method
The survey was carried out between November 1999 and March 2000 in seven localities in Sarawak, Malaysia. Three of these - Sibu, Kampong Dato/Hilir and Kuching-are urban areas, and the other four - Aup, Bawang Assan, Beruit and Saribas are rural areas.

It would have been preferable to make use of random or probability sampling technique that would have enabled a more representative sample to be obtained, however, in this case a non-probability sampling method was used. This was because as an individual undertaking a non-probability method was more feasible. It was also decided that as the main objective of the study was analytical, a non-probability sampling would suffice. The goal was to investigate and understand the subject being studied, rather than to attempt representativeness or the ability to generalize findings to the wider population.

The survey questionnaires were written in three languages - Malay, English and Chinese. Nine hundred and sixty-three were distributed; only 537 were returned. The non-probability sampling method used was a mix of accidental sampling and quota sampling. Accidental sampling was a procedure whereby people were approached and willing participants were given a questionnaire to complete. Respondents were either given a stamped envelope for returning the questionnaire or told that it would be collected from them. The survey was carried out with the assistance of relatives and friends who helped with distributing and collecting completed forms. In many cases people’s acceptance of the questionnaire when approached did not mean they would return it. In some places such as the rural longhouses, the questionnaires had to be completed for the respondents who were illiterate. Most of the questionnaires were self-administered.

In order to achieve a sort of representative number in terms of gender and ethnicity, the non-probability sampling was combined with quota sampling that involved targeting respondents from specific groups. This was in order to get the proportion of males and
females, and the proportion of each ethnic group within the sample to equate with their respective proportions within the general population.

Survey Sample
The survey sample was made up of 233 males and 299 females from four ethnic groups- Iban, Chinese, Malay and Melanau. The final sample did not replicate the wider population in terms of gender and ethnicity, but it was not wide off the mark. The sample included 43.8% males and 55.6% females while the population was made up of 51.6% males and 48.4% females. In the case of ethnicity, the following show the proportion of each ethnic group within the sample and the proportion within the wider population (the latter in parenthesis): Iban 20.8% (28.4%), Chinese 32.5% (26.8%), Malay 24.9% (21.4%), Melanau 14.3% (5.5%). The difference of 14.3% to 5.5% in relation to the Melanau group was, strictly speaking, too wide. However, within a sample of 538 respondents, 5.5% would make up a number which would have been too small for analysis. A tabulated sample profile showing the distribution of respondents in relation to each independent variable is provided in chapter 5.

Survey Questionnaire
Participants were asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire written in one of three languages - English, Malay (Bahasa Malaysia) and Chinese. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part required participants to provide factual information. The second part comprised 8 questions subsuming 48 statements (items) on gender roles, gender inequality, and gender and politics. The concrete representation (operationalization) of the abstractions and concepts in the study took the form of people’s expressed perceptions or attitudes. Ideas for the items in the questions were obtained from information gathered in the interviews conducted earlier in Sarawak, and from previous studies on the subject. Each concept was measured through multi-items indicators representing different aspects of the concept. This was important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it enabled a more comprehensive examination. Secondly, instead of a reliance on a single response, it enabled conclusions that were based on a set of related responses. Samples of the survey questionnaire in three languages are provided in Appendix B.
The measurement method adopted was based on Likert’s multiple-item scaling. Each construct is measured through a set of items (statements) to which respondents indicated they “disagree”, “strongly disagree”, “agree” or “strongly disagree”. Respondents may also choose a “no opinion” position. Graded responses added to the comprehensiveness of the measurement. Following Likert’s scale, all items in the item pool were monotone. This means that all items were either in favour, or not in favour in direction. The questionnaire constituted two types of measures. One set of responses measured people’s perception of women and political activities. The second set measured people’s attitudes on gender roles and gender asymmetry within a gendered division of labour ordering. The two sets of measures tapped societal attitudes on the public and private divide in gender relations.

**Statistical method used in data analysis**

The statistical analysis of the survey data was carried out by using SPSS version 9.0; a data analysis software package. Data was subjected to three statistical procedures. The first was frequency distribution analysis. This showed the distribution of responses in relation to item measurements, and the distribution of respondents in relation to the independent variables. The second procedure was the cross-tabulation analysis. This process examined the relationship between responses to items and the independent variables. The relationship was expressed as Cramer’s V correlation values. As the cross-tabulation correlation analysis between items and a variable did not take into account the simultaneous effects of other variables, a further procedure - multiple regression analysis was necessary. This procedure examined the relationship between items and a variable while holding other variables constant. This was expressed as a $b$ coefficient value. Throughout the analyses, the statistical significance of findings was given importance mainly for statistical purposes such as the reliability of the data. In terms of the objectives of the analyses, emphasis was on the substantive significance of findings.
Methodology II: Interview Data

Fieldwork for the interview data was undertaken in January 1999. Forty-two interviews of approximately one hour each were conducted. Interviews were by arrangement and were held at the interviewees’ place of work or homes. There were no particular criteria for selecting respondents apart from the need to include party leaders in order to obtain more authoritative information on the party. An effort was made to contact as many party members as possible within the time frame of two and half months. Some interviews were arranged with the assistance of friends and relatives. The sample selection was made up of those who were accessible and willing to give their time. Respondents were given an assurance that they would not be identified as participants. However, almost half said they did not mind being identified as a participant. Some said they were happy to contribute to research on Sarawak.

An initial concern that respondents would be reluctant to talk openly was quickly dispelled as respondents gave their unrestrained opinions, some of which were highly critical comments. For some this was perhaps due to the assurance of anonymity, but there were also those to whom identification was not an issue. During all the interviews, respondents, males and females, were relaxed and forthcoming with their views. This may be due to the fact that as a multi-lingual speaker I was able to speak with them in their languages and in the process made them feel I was one of them.

Interview Sample

The sample was drawn from the two political parties in Sarawak. The interviews, conducted in four languages - English, Malay, Iban and Chinese - were carried out among 34 female and 11 male party members. The interviewees held party positions that ranged from ordinary grass-root members to party leaders, public office holders and elected legislators. All the male interviewees held high level, middle level or local branch level leadership positions in their respective parties. A brief profile of each interviewee is provided in Appendix D. For the purpose of presenting data, and in keeping with the request for anonymity on the part of some interviewees, each interviewee was given a coded identity that indicated gender, party, party position and number within his or her sub-group.
Interview Questions
The interview schedule was made up of structured but open-ended interview questions. There were two sets, one for males and one for females. A sample of each set of interview is provided in Appendix C. The objective was to elicit information on respondents’ opinions and experiences in their respective parties. The interview questions were designed to gather information that could be used to evaluate the hypotheses postulated. As the purpose of the interviews was to uncover the interactive, relational and structural dynamics of gender relations, the interview questions were constructed to elicit the interviewees’ own account of their experiences and perceptions. To achieve this, “open ended” questions were used. With “open ended” questions, it was possible to elicit more discussion or clarification and respondents were able to respond in their own way. Basing the interviews on a standardized interview schedule was to ensure that the information collected was manageable for the purpose of categorization and comparison.

Data Analysis and Evaluation of Hypotheses.
The objective of the interviews was to elucidate respondents’ perceptions and experience within their political parties that would shed light on the issues under scrutiny. Analysis was undertaken by examining the information provided by interviewees through categorization and inference according to the goals of the task. The objective was to observe patterns, similarities and differences, and significant issues. The emphasis was on respondents’ account of their actual experiences as well as their perceptions of women’s roles and activities, and the problems they faced. The resulting observations were used to assess the validity of the hypotheses. The analysis and presentation of data was mainly by summarizing patterns observed and quoting respondents.

507 Translated into English.
Appendix B – Survey Questionnaire

University of Canterbury
Department of Political Science
Christchurch, New Zealand

Information

You are invited to participate in the research project “Women’s political participation in Sarawak”.

The aim of this project is to study the factors which influence women’s participation in electoral politics.

Your participation in this project will involve answering questions on your views, opinion and knowledge in relation to women’s participation in electoral politics. The survey questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes.

The project is for the purpose of a Ph.D thesis in political science. It may be published, but the anonymity and confidentiality of your identity will be maintained.

Your participation is conditional on your consent to participate. You may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information you have provided.

The project is being carried out by Phyllis Mowe who may be contacted at 084-340615. She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about the project.

The project has been approved by the State Planning Unit, Chief Minister’s Department, Sarawak. Ref: (111) dlm.UPM/807/1/Vol.4

Thank you.
Survey Questionnaire (English)

Questionnaire

Women’s Political Participation in Sarawak

NOTE: You are invited to participate in the research project “Women’s political participation in Sarawak” by completing the following questionnaire. The aim of this project is to study the factors which influence women’s participation in electoral politics in Sarawak. The questionnaire is anonymous, and you will not be identified as a participant. You may at any time withdraw your participation, including withdrawal of any information you may have provided. By completing the questionnaire, however, it will be understood that you have consented to participate in the project, and that you consent to publication of the result of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved.

Part I
Please provide the following information with respect to yourself.

(Circle where appropriate)

Gender: male / female

Age: ..................

Marital Status: married / divorced / unmarried

Education
Highest level attained: ...........................................

Medium of education: ...........................................

Occupation: ...........................................

Religion: ...........................................

Race: ...........................................

Place of residence: town / kampong / rumah panjai

Are you a member of a political party: yes / no
Part II

On the following questions, please choose the answer which most closely indicates your opinion on the matter in question.

Please circle your answer.

1. There are presently 2 women (out of a total number of 62) representatives in the Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak, and 2 women MPs (out of 28 MPs from Sarawak) in the Federal Parliament of Malaysia. Do you feel that there should be many more women, a few more women, about the same as now, or less than now, women representatives in the DUN and in Parliament. (Circle 1, 2, 3 or 4)
   1) Many more women (eg. 10-20 more)
   2) A few more women (eg. 5 more)
   3) Same as now.
   4) Less than now.

2. Presently, women make up not more than 15% of the total number of councilors in each local council in Sarawak. Do you feel that there should be many more women, a few more women, about the same as now, or less than now, women councilors. (Circle 1, 2, 3 or 4)
   1) Many more women
   2) A few more women
   3) Same as now
   4) Less than now

3. Would you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Circle either 1: strongly agree, 2: agree, 3: disagree, 4: strongly disagree, or 5: no opinion)

   |   | strongly agree | agree | disagree | strongly disagree | no opinion |
---|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
a) Men should dominate politics. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
b) A woman’s place is in the home. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
c) In our society women do not command the same status and power as men | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
4. Would you agree or disagree with the following explanations of why there are few women representatives and councilors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Political parties do not pick women as candidates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The public prefers men.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) There is a lack of trust or confidence in women.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) There are too few women to choose from.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Women prefer the security of jobs in the economic or private sector.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Women place their career or family above community involvement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Women themselves are not ambitious or confident enough.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Women do not want to appear aggressive or ambitious.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Women think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Would you agree or disagree with the following explanations of why not many women participate actively in political parties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women are not participating actively in political parties because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women are not interested in politics.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Women have no time because of family or work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Women feel they lack education.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Men control the political parties.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Women personally think politics is not appropriate for women.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Women feel people think it is not appropriate for women to be in politics.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Would you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning why men dominate politics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) It is more appropriate for men to be in politics because:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Men are more competent in making larger and more important decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Men are more aggressive and forceful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Women lack confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Women are soft hearted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Women are not knowledgeable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) It is not proper for women to be in politics because:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Politics is an activity which should rightly be carried out by men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Women's main concern should be with the well-being of their families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) It is not appropriate for women to be ambitious and dominant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) It is not appropriate for women to interact freely with men.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C) It is not convenient for women to be in politics because:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Women have no time because of children and housework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Women need to contribute to their family's income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Activities such as frequent traveling and meetings at night are not convenient for women.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Would you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning why a woman’s place is in the home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) Women are better home-makers and care-givers because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women can do housework and take care of the family better.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Children need their mother’s love and care.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B) A woman’s main concern should be the home and family because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) The most important thing for a woman is to get married and have a family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) It is a woman’s duty to take care of her husband and family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) A woman must always place her husband and family first.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) It is preferable that the husband works and the wife stays at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C) Women are tied to the home because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women have carry to out almost all of household work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Pregnancy, lactation, and caring for children confine women to the home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8) Do you agree or disagree with the following statements on women’s status and power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) Men and women are not equal because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Women are weak and deferential.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Women lack education.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Men are generally more capable than women.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B) Generally, society does not perceive men and women as equal because:

a) Men should lead and women follow. 1 2 3 4 5
b) The husband is rightfully the master of the house. 1 2 3 4 5
c) A woman must defer to her husband. 1 2 3 4 5

C) Women do not have access to resources because:

a) Most women are full time housewives. 1 2 3 4 5
b) Few women have high status, or high income jobs. 1 2 3 4 5
c) Being dependent on their husbands financially, women have to defer to their husbands. 1 2 3 4 5

Thank You
Informasi

Tuan/Puan adalah dipelawa untuk mengambil bahagian dalam projek penyelidikan yang betajuk "Penglibatan Wanita Dalam Politik di Sarawak".

Matlamat projek ini adalah untuk menkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penyertaan wanita dalam politik.

Penyertaan anda dalam projek ini membabitkan keterangan berdasarkan pandangan, pendapat dan pengetahuan ada berhubung penglibatan wanita dalam politik tempatan. Soal selidik ini mengambil masa kira-kira 15 minit.

Kajian ini adalah bagi tujuan penulisan tesis Ijazah Falsafah Kedoktoran (Ph.D) dalam pengajian bidang politik. Ianya mungkin akan diterbitkan.

Pembabitan anda dalam projek ini bergantung atas persetujuan anda. Nama dan pengenalan identiti anda akan dirahsiaakan.


Projek ini diluluskan oleh Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri, Unit Perancang Negeri, Jabatan Ketua Menteri Sarawak. Ruj: (111)dlm.UPM/807/1/Vol.4

Terima kasih
Survey Questionnaire (Malay)

Soal Selidik

Penglibatan Wanita dalam Politik Sarawak

Peringatan: Tuan/Puan adalah dipelawa untuk mengambil bahagian dalam project penyelidikan yang bertajuk “Penglibatan Wanita Dalam Politik Sarawak”. Matlamat projek ini adalah untuk menkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penyertaan wanita dalam politik tempatan. Ianya mungkin akan diterbitkan. Pembabitan ada dalam project ini adalah bergantung atas persetujuan anda. Nama dan pengenalan identiti anda akan dirahsiaikan.

Bahagian I
Sila nyatakan keterangan diri anda

(Sila bulatkan yang berkaitan)

Jantina: lelaki / perempuan

Umur: .............

Taraf Pekawinan: berkawin / cerai / bujang

Pendidikan
Pencapaiyan pendidikan ..................................

Bahasa Perantaraan (bahasa persekolahan): ..................................

Pekerjaan: ..................................

Agama: ..................................

Bangsa ..................................

Tempat Tinggal: bandar / kampong / rumah panjang

Adakah anda ahli parti politik: ada / tidak
Bahagian II
Untuk soalan seterusnya, sila pilih jawapan yang paling sesuai dengan pendapat anda.

Sila bulatkan jawapan anda.

   (Bulatkan 1, 2, 3 atau 4)
   1) Lebih ramai wanita daripada sekarang. (contoh: lebih 10-20)
   2) Lebih wanita daripada sekarang. (contoh: lebih 5)
   3) Kekal.
   4) Kurang daripada sekarang.

2. Sekarang, tidak lebih daripada 15% kaunselor wanita daripada jumlah keseluruhan kaunselor dalam setiap majlis Perbandaran di Sarawak. Pada fikiran anda, adakah wanita patut diberi lebih banyak, lebih, kekal, atau kurang, peluang untuk menjadi kaunselor.
   (Bulatkan 1, 2, 3 atau 4)
   1. Lebih banyak wanita daripada sekarang.
   2. Lebih wanita daripada sekarang.

3. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan pernyataan berikut.
   (Sila bulatkan sama ada 1: sangat setuju, 2: setuju, 3: tidak setuju, 4: sangat tidak setuju, 5: tiada komen)

   a) Politik seharusnya dikuasai oleh kaum lelaki. 
      1  2  3  4  5 
   b) Wanita seharusnya berada di rumah. 
      1  2  3  4  5 
   c) Dalam masyarakat kita kaum wanita tidak mempunyai darjat dan kuasa yang setara dengan kaum lelaki.
      1  2  3  4  5


4. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan keterangan berikut yang menyatakan sebab mengapa kurangnya wakil dan kaunsellor wanita.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>sangat setuju</th>
<th>setuju</th>
<th>tidak setuju</th>
<th>sangat setuju</th>
<th>tiada komen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Parti-parti politik tidak meletakan wanita sebagai calon.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Masyarakat lebih mengutamakan lelaki.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Kurangnya kepercayaan atau keyakinan kepada wanita.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Kurangnya wanita untuk dipilih sebagai calon.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Wanita lebih mengutamakan pekerjaan yang bergaji tetap.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Wanita lebih mengutamakan karier atau keluarga.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Kaum wanita tidak bercita-cita tinggi atau tidak mempunyai keyakinan yang penuh pada diri sendiri.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Wanita tidak mahu kelihatan agresif dan bercita-cita tinggi.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Wanita merasakan politik lebih sesuai untuk lelaki.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan kenyataan berikut yang menyatakan mengapa tidak ramai wanita yang melibatkan secara aktif dalam parti-parti politik.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>sangat setuju</th>
<th>setuju</th>
<th>tidak setuju</th>
<th>sangat setuju</th>
<th>tiada komen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Wanita tidak berminat dengan politik.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Wanita tidak mempunyai masa kerana keluarga atau kerja.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Wanita merasakan mereka kurang mempunyai pendidikan.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Lelaki menguasai parti-parti politik.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Kaum wanita bependapat bahawa politik tidak sesuai untuk mereka.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Kaum wanita merasakan bahawa masyarakat tidak menyetujui penglibatan wanita dalam politik.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak dengan kenyataan berikut mengenai sebab mengapa kaum lelaki lebih menguasai politik.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Lelaki lebih sesuai untuk politik kerena:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Lelaki lebih cekap membuat keputusan yang penting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Lelaki lebih giat dan agresif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Wanita kurang berkeyakinan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Wanita lebih lembut hati.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Wanita tidak berpengetahuan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) Politik tidak patut untuk wanita kerena:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Politik adalah kegiatan yang seharusnya dilaksanakan oleh lelaki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Wanita seharusnya lebih bertanggungjawab keatas kesejahteraan keluarga mereka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Wanita tidak sesuai untuk bercita-cita tinggi dan dominan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Wanita tidak sesuai untuk bergaul bebas dengan lelaki.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C) Wanita tidak mudah berpolitik kerena:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Wanita tidak mempunyai masa kerena tanggungjawab rumah tangga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Wanita perlu menyumbang kepada pendapatan keluarga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Kegiatan seperti mesyarat pada waktu malam dan perjalanan keluar daerah adalah tidak sesuai untuk wanita.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak bersetuju dengan kenyataan mengapa wanita seharuanya berada dirumah.

A) Wanita lebih sesuai di rumah kerana:
   a) Wanita lebih cekap dalam tugas rumah dan membela keluarga.  
      | sangat setuju | setuju | tidak setuju | sangat tidak setuju | tiada komen |
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   b) Anak-anak memerlukan kasih sayang ibu.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |

B) Keutamaan sesa-orang wanita harusnya kepada keluarga dan rumah tangga kerena:
   a) Pekara paling penting bagi wanita adalah berkahwin dan bekeluarga.  
      | sangat setuju | setuju | tidak setuju | sangat tidak setuju | tiada komen |
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   b) Tugas wanita adalah untuk menjaga suami dan keluarga.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   c) Wanita mesti mengutamakan suami dan keluarga terlebih dahulu.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   d) Adalah lebih sesuai untuk suami berkerja dan isteri di rumah.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |

C) Wanita terikat kepada rumah tangga kerena:
   a) Wanita perlu melakukan hampir semua kerja rumah.  
      | sangat setuju | setuju | tidak setuju | sangat tidak setuju | tiada komen |
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   b) Kehamilan, menyusukan, dan menjaga anak-anak membataskan wanita di rumah sahaja.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |

8. Adakah anda bersetuju atau tidak bersetuju dengan penyataan berikut mengenai taraf dan kuasa wanita.

A) Lelaki dan wanita tidak setara kerena:
   a) Wanita adalah lemah dan mengikut kata.  
      | sangat setuju | setuju | tidak setuju | sangat tidak setuju | tiada komen |
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   b) Wanita kurang pengetahuan.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
   c) Lelaki lebih keupayaan dan kebolehan daripada Wanita.  
      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
B) Kebiasaanannya, masyarakat tidak melihat lelaki dan wanita sebagai setaraf kerena:

a) Lelaki sepatutnya memimpin dan wanita mengikut.  1 2 3 4 5
b) Lelaki berhak menjadi ketua rumah tangga.    1 2 3 4 5
c) Wanita mesti patuh kepada suami.     1 2 3 4 5

C) Wanita tidak mempunyai sumber kewangan kerena:

a) Kebanyakan wanita adalah surirumah tangga sepenuh masa.  1 2 3 4 5
b) Tidak begitu ramai wanita yang mempunyai taraf dan berpendapatan tinggi.  1 2 3 4 5
c) Disebabkan terlalu bergantung kepada kewangan suami Isteri mesti patuh kepada suami.  1 2 3 4 5

Terima Kasih
Survey Questionnaire (Chinese)

University of Canterbury
Department of Political Science
Christchurch, New Zealand

讯息

你已受邀共同探讨“砂羅越女性参于政治”的調查工作。

這項調查的目的在于研讨那些因素影响砂羅越女性参于选挙政治。

你参于這項調查工作将牵涉到須要回答你對女性參于選挙政治的看法，意見及知識。這項調查是供給考取政治科學博士學位的論文之用。它將被公佈，不過這項公佈是姑隠其名，保密的。

你共同探討的條件是你是自願的參于，你可以在任何時候退出這項工作，包括收回所提供的訊息。

Phyllis Mowe負責這項的調查工作。她的聯絡電話是084-340615，她樂于跟你研究任何你對這項調查的看法。

這項調查工作已被砂羅越首長部門規劃單位的批准，列號(111)
dl.m.UPM/807/1/vol.4
問答系例
砂羅越婦女的政治參與

備註：你已受邀填妥下列的問答以便共同探討“砂羅越婦女參與政治”的主題。這項調查目的，在於研討砂羅越婦女參與選舉的政治。這項問答是匿名的，不會被鑑定出來參與這項的問答。你也可以在任何時候退出參予包括收回你所提供的資料。不過當你填妥這項問答時，你就被認定你已經同意參與這項調查工作及把調查的結果公佈。不過有關的公佈是匿名的。

第一部
請提供下列有關你個人的詳情。
（在有關你同意的部位畫圓圈）

性別：男／女

年齡：__ __ __ __ __

婚配：已婚／離婚／未婚

教育：
已獲得的最高教育：__ __ __ __ __
教育程度語：__ __ __ __ __

職業：__ __ __ __ __

宗教：__ __ __ __ __

種族：__ __ __ __ __

住址：城市／甘鎮／長屋

你是否是政黨黨員？__ __ __ __ （是／不是）
第二部

在下列的問題中，請選擇最適合你的意見的有關的答案。

請圈上你的答案

①在保羅州議會的62位議員中，僅有兩位女性代表，在聯邦國會有兩位女性國會議員（總共來自保羅的國會議員是28位），你認為在國會議會需要增加更多的，或增加一些，或剛剛好，或減少女性代表。
1. 增加更多的女性代表（比如：10-20多位）
2. 增加一些女性代表（比如：5位）
3. 堅持現狀
4. 減少女性代表

②在保羅州地方議會中婦女沒有佔代表總數的15%，你認為需要增加更多的，或增加一些，或剛剛好，或減少女性的地方議員。
1. 增加更多的女性地方議員
2. 增加一些的女性地方議員
3. 剛剛好
4. 減少女性的地方議員

③你贊成或不贊成下列的說法。
（請圈上任何一項）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>主題</th>
<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>責成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 男性應主導政治</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 女性是主內</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 在我們的社會，女性沒有像男性享有同等的地位與權力</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
④你贊成或不贊成下列的原因是造成很少的女性在國州及地方議會有代表。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>絕對贊成</th>
<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 政黨沒有提拔女性做代表</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 公眾比較喜愛男性</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 對女性缺乏信心</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 可選擇的適合女性太少</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 女性覺得在經濟及私人領域的工作比較有安全感</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 女性把她們的事業及家庭放在社團活動之上</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 女性本身不夠信心與進取</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 女性不要表現進取的雄心</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 女性認為男性比較適合搞政治</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⑤你贊成或不贊成下列的解釋為何很少的女性積極的參予政黨活動。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>絕對贊成</th>
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<th>絕對不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 女性不喜歡政治</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 由於家庭及工作女性沒有時間</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性覺得她們缺乏教育</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 男性控制政黨</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 女性自己認為政治不適合她們</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 女性覺得平常的人都認為為女性不適宜搞政治</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. 你贊成或不贊成本下列說法為何男性主導政治。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>贊成</th>
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<th>絕對</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. 男性比較適合主導政治因為：</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 男性比較有能力做較重要</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>與大問題的決定</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 男生比較有雄心與能力</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性缺乏信心</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 女性比較心軟</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 女性智慧不夠</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
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<th>絕對</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. 女性不適合主導政治因為：</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 政治是一種的活動應由</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男性更適當去執行</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 女性的主要關懷應該是她們家庭的福利</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性不適合表現進取與</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>與主導的雄心</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 女性不適合自由的與男性交往</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. 女性不便主導政治因為：</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 由于孩子及家庭工作女性</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>沒有時間</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 女性須要幫助家庭經費</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性不便做繁忙旅行及</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>夜間開會</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1)你贊成或不贊成下列的說法為何女人是主內的。

A. 女性更善于關懷及作家庭的主管因為：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>絕對贊成</th>
<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 女性能更好的照顧家庭及做家庭工作</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 孩子需要母愛及母親的照顧</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. 女性主要的關心應是家庭因為：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 女性最重要的事情是結婚及擁有一個家庭</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 照顧丈夫及家庭是女性的職責</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性應把她的丈夫及家庭放在第一</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 丈夫工作，妻留在家內是比較好選擇</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

C. 女性與家庭分不開因為：

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<th>絕對不贊成</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 女性幾乎執行所有的家庭工作</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 身孕，授乳及對孩子的關懷造成女性必須關在家裡</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
你赞成或不赞成下列有關女性的地位與權力的說法：

A. 男女不平等因為：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 女性軟弱及順從</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 女性缺乏教育</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 男性通常比女性較有</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

能力

B. 通常，社會不認為男女平等因為：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 男性領導，女性隨從</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 丈夫應該是一家之主</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 女性必須順從丈夫</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. 女性沒有經濟資源：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>贊成</th>
<th>不贊成</th>
<th>絕對</th>
<th>沒意見</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 多數女性是全日制的家庭主婦</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 很少女性有高尚地位或高收入工作</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 由於依靠丈夫經濟，女性必須順從丈夫</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C – Interview Questions

University of Canterbury
Department of Political Science
Christchurch, New Zealand

Information

You are invited to participate in the research project “Women’s political participation in Sarawak”.

The aim of this project is to study the factors which influence women’s participation in electoral politics.

Your participation in this project will involve answering questions on your views, opinion and knowledge in relation to women’s participation in electoral politics. The interview will take approximately one hour.

The project is for the purpose of a Ph.D thesis in political science. It may be published. If you wish, the anonymity and confidentiality of your identity will be maintained.

Your participation is conditional on your consent to participate. You may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information you have provided.

The project is being carried out by Phyllis Mowe who may be contacted at 084-340615 She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about the project.

The project has been approved by the State Planning Unit, Chief Minister’s Department, Sarawak. Ref: (111) dlm.UPM/807/1/Vol.4

Thank you.
Informasi

Tuan/Puan adalah dipelawa untuk mengambil bahagian dalam projek penyelidikan yang bertajuk "Penglibatan Wanita Dalam Politik Sarawak".

Maklumat projek ini adalah untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penyertaan wanita dalam politik tempatan.

Penyertaan anda dalam projek ini membabitkan keterangan berdasarkan pandangan, pendapat dan pengetahuan anda berhubung penglibatan wanita dalam politik tempatan. Sesi temuramah ini mengambil masa kira-kira satu jam.

Kajian ini adalah bagi tujuan penulisan tesis Ijazah Falsafah Kedoktoran (Ph.D) dalam pengajian bidang Sains politik. Ianya mungkin akan diterbitkan.


Projek ini dijalankan oleh Puan Phyllis Mowe yang boleh dihubungi di talian 084-340615. Sebarang pertanyaan dan perbincangan mengenai projek tersebut amatlah dialu-alukan.

Projek ini telah diluluskan oleh Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri, Unit Perancang Negeri, Jabatan Ketua Menteri Sarawak. Ruj: (111)dlm.UPM/807/1/Vol.4

Terima kasih.
Interview Schedule 1

(Female Party Members)

General Background Information

Name: (For some only)
Age:
Place of birth and where you grew up (Tempat Lahir dan Dibesarkan):
Ethnicity (Rumpun bangsa):
Religion (Agama):
   Intensity (Kekukuhan):
Education (Persekolahlan):
Level attained (Tingkat dicapai):
   Language medium:
   Type of school attended:
Marital status:
Present status (eg. worker, housewife):
Children:
   Number: Age range:

Present living arrangement:
   Extended family or nuclear:

Women’s Party Participation

When did you join the party?
(Bila anda menyetaai party)

How did this come about? (eg. Influence by others, some particular reasons.)
(Bagaimana mula berminat menyetaai)

Were you interested in political issues, current affairs before you joined the party?
Involvement in other organized activities.
*(penyetaan organisasi lain)*

What other organized activities are you involved in?

Did it play a part in the decision to join the party?
*(Adakah ini berpengaruh terhadap anda menyetaai parti)*

Has joining the party played a part in the decision to participate in these other activities?
*(Adakah menyetaai parti berpengaruh terhadap anda menyetaai kegiatan yang lain itu)*

**Party participation**

Are you an active member of the party?
*(Adakah anda seorang ahli yang aktif)*

What position are you presently holding or have held within the party?
*(Apakah kedudukan anda atau kedudukan lepas anda)*.

Describe your party activities?

In what ways do you and other women party members contribute to the party?
*(Bagaimana anda dan wanita lain memberi sumbungan kepada parti)*.

What do you find most interesting or rewarding or worthwhile as a party member?
*Apa yang dapat anda rasa yang paling menarik dan berfaedah setelah menyetaai parti*.
**Women’s and men’s participation**

Is there any difference between men’s and women’s participation within the party?

*Berkenaan dengan kegiatan dan sumbangan adakah perbazaan antara pihak wanita dan pihak lelaki.*

Are women separated from higher-level party activities such as policy and decision-making which are dominated by men?

*Adakah pihak wanita di asingkan dari kegiatan pihak lelaki (Ada perluang kah)*

Are men and women equal in the party - in what ways?

*Adakah pihak wanita setaraf dengan pihak lelaki.*

In your opinion, are women as capable as men in carrying out political roles and activities?

*Dalam fikiran anda, adakah wanita bercap setaraf dengan lelaki dalam melanjutkan kegiatan politik.*

Do you think that women have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability?

*Dalam pendapat anda, adakah wanita peluang untuk membuktikan keupayaan mereka.*

Do you think women have the opportunity to develop political skills and experience?

*Dalam pendapat anda, adakah wanita perluang untuk meningkatkan kemahiran dan pengalaman mereka dalam kegiatan politik.*

In some places, especially western democracies, men and women party members are not separated into sections. What is your opinion of the women’s section in the party?

*Apakah pendapat anda terhadap parti mempunyai bahagian wanita.*

Do you think that there should be equal representation by men and women?

Do you think the women members of the party are interested in pursuing public office?

*Dalam pendap anda, adakah ahli2 wanita party berminat memceburi jawatan yang mewakili rakyat.*
Would you be interested in seeking public office?
Adakah anda beminat untuk melibatkan diri untuk mewakili rakyat.

What do you think are the main problems facing women who are interested in a political life?
Apakah masalah2 utama yang di alami oleh wanita yang bergiat dalam politik.

In your opinion, why are there so few women participating in politics?
Dalam pendapat anda, kenapa tidak banyak wanita menyertai kegiatan politik.

Do you think it is more appropriate for men to be in politics? Why?

Do you believe that women’s primary concern should be the home?

Family

What does your husband think about your political activity?
Apakah pendapat suami anda mngenai penglibatan anda dalam kegiatan politik.

How much do your activities (as party member, party official, public office) keep you away from home?
Berapa banyak masa digunakan dalam kegiatan politik.

Is it difficult to keep up with the responsibilities at home and your political roles at the same time?
Adakah tanggungjawab kegiatan politik dan tanggungjawab rumah tangga sukar dilaksanakan dalam masa yang sama.
Interview Schedule 2

(Male Party Members)

General Background Information

Name: (For some only)
Age:
Place of birth and where you grew up:
Ethnicity
Religion
Education
  Level attained:
  Language medium:
  Type of school attended:
Marital status:
Occupation:
Children:
  Number:
  Age:
Present living arrangement:
  Extended family or nuclear:

Women’s Party Participation

When did you join the party?

What position do you presently holding or have held within the party?

Is there any difference between men's and women's participation in the party?

In what ways do women party members contribute to the party?
Is there equality between men and women within the party?

Do you think women have the opportunity to take part in the formulation of policy and decision-making?

Are women as capable as men in carrying out political roles and activities?

Do you think that women have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities?

Do you think that women have the opportunity to develop political experience and skills in the party?

What is your opinion of the women’s section?

What do you think is the role of the women’s section?

What do you think are the main problems facing women who are interested in a political life?

Do you think that it is more appropriate for men to be in politics?

Do you believe that women’s primary concern should be the home?
## Appendix D – Respondent Profile

### PBB Females Group A

#### Females: Group A I; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>English Mission Secondary School Bachelor Degree, Malaysia, MBA, US</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
<td>3 (10-19)</td>
<td>Living with children and own parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>English Mission Secondary school, Masters, UK</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Ex-school principal, Sarawak State Legislator.</td>
<td>3 (23-27)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Ex-teacher</td>
<td>5 (17-28)</td>
<td>40 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Females: Group A II; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary School</td>
<td>Unmarr.</td>
<td>Businesswoman Ex-local council member</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Living with siblings</td>
<td>Joined 1960s</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Females: Group A III; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Samarahan</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>English - State secondary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Senior Supervisor (Govt Agency)</td>
<td>4 (10-18)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>Since 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>9 (26-40)</td>
<td>Living with siblings</td>
<td>PBB – since the 1970s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Females: Group A IV; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>English-Lower sec.school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Manageress</td>
<td>4 (6-14)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Bawang Assan</td>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Christian Methodist</td>
<td>English – Primary School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Suri Rumah</td>
<td>4 (13-35)</td>
<td>Married children living at home</td>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Suri Rumah</td>
<td>4 (30-37)</td>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>Party member at start of PBB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>English – Mission sec school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>2 (6-11)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>1992 – when BBA was formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>2 (7-10)</td>
<td>Living with parents and siblings</td>
<td>1986</td>
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</table>

### Females: Group A V; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Residence</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Melanau</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>English, Malay – Primary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>3 (5, 8, 13)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>8 (7-23)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>Joined when opposition DAP was formed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Bawang Assan</td>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>English, Primary School (village)</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>6 (14-28)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>1992</td>
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</table>

### Females: Group A VI; PBB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay – Primary school</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Living with siblings</td>
<td>1992 PBB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Malay School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (17-25)</td>
<td>Living with siblings and own family</td>
<td>1992 PBB</td>
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</table>
### PBB Males Group A

#### Males: Group A II; PBB

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<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Businessmen</td>
<td></td>
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#### Males: Group A III; PBB

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<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>Melanau</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>English – Sec school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>3 (9-27)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>Since 1987</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SUPP Females Group B

#### Females: Group B II; SUPP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>Chinese &amp; English – Mission School, Tertiary overseas.</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Administration – husband's accounting firm.</td>
<td>3 (20-26 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Kanowit</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Chinese – Secondary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Head of Methodist Primary School.</td>
<td>3 (12-29 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Binatang</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>English – Mission School</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Ex-teacher</td>
<td>5 (12-24 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>40+</td>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>Chinese – Hakka</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Chinese &amp; English, Vocational school, Diploma in Administration.</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (19-26 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Kuching</td>
<td>Chinese – Hailam</td>
<td>English Mission school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>3 (5-10 years)</td>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Chinese Cantonese</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>English – Secondary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Ex-Nurse</td>
<td>4 (27-34 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>30</td>
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#### Females: Group B III; SUPP

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Miri</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Tertiary – Overseas</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>1 (6 years old)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Chinese education</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Office secretary</td>
<td>3 (19-21 years)</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Females: Group B V; SUPP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Sibu</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>Chinese – Senior 3</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Office work</td>
<td>3 (5-17 years)</td>
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<td>Christian</td>
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<td>Businesswoman – Beautician</td>
<td>2 (10, 14 years)</td>
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#### Females: Group B VI; SUPP

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<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
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<td>Unmarried</td>
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<td>Haika</td>
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<td>Housewife</td>
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### Males: Group B I; SUPP

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<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Living Arr</th>
<th>Party membership (years)</th>
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<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>50s</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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### Males: Group B II; SUPP

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<th>Occupation</th>
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<th>Party membership (years)</th>
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<td>Chinese &amp; English – Tertiary</td>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
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<td>Since 1959</td>
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3b
3c
4a
4b
4c
4d
4e
4f
49
4h
4i
5a
5b
5c
5d
5e
5f
6Aa
6Ab
6Ac
6Ad
6Ae
6Ba
6Bb
6Bc
6Bd
6Ca
6Cb
6Cc
7Aa
7Ab
7Ba
7Bb
7Bc
7Bd
7Ca
7Cb
8Aa
8Ab
8Ac
8Ba
8Bb
8Bc
8Ca
8Cb
8Cc

Mean
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2.66
3.25
3.56
3.05
3.11
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2.63
3.09
2.90
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2.18
3.53
2.90
2.97
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3.57
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3.28
1.94
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3.33
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2.73
3.26
2.98
3.32
3.89
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3.82
2.69
3.21
3.31
2.60
1.99
2.82
3.17
3.89
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2.93
2.98

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Std.
Err. Of
Mean
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0.033
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0.048
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0.045
0.047
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Kurtosis
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### Appendix F – Significant Cross Tabulation Correlation Table

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<td>Gender</td>
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### Appendix G – Significant Multiple Regression Correlation Table

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<th>Independent Variable</th>
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<td>Item 3c Education</td>
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* Statistically Significant at < 0.05
** Statistically Significant at < 0.005