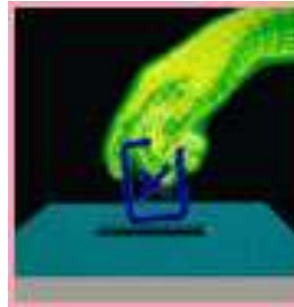




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Women Representation in Municipality Election 2015: Opportunities and Challenges



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Summary

Bangladesh has improved significantly in a number of development issues but it has not made significant improvement in the area of Women's Political Empowerment. Women's overall presence in the country's top decision making institution, the Parliament has never crossed the 6 percent mark when it comes to their direct contest in the 300 general seats. Currently 20 women MPs are representing in the 10th parliament which represents 6.6 percent of the total number of MPs. Out of 50 parliamentary committees, women head of 8 committees. Four women including the prime minister were in the cabinet of the 10th Parliament and the number was 6 in 9th Parliament.

Since 2008 less than three percent women got nominations for the Mayor Position from all political parties In the Municipality Election 2011, a total of 26 women got support for Mayor Position from mainstream political parties like AL and BNP but it decreased to only 8 in the 2015 Municipality Election.

The democracy of Bangladesh has long history of holding non-partisan local government election. In October 2015 government declared that all local government elections will be partisan and candidates will be given nomination by political parties. This shocked many local government experts, civil society organizations and non-government organizations. Government decided to revise the decision and went for partisan election for the Mayor Posts only and continue positions of other local government elections (including upcoming Municipality Election 2015) as non-partisan . Statistics shows that numbers of women candidates for the Mayor Position has decreased drastically in this election (2015) compared to the last election year 2010-11. In the 2011 Municipality Election 26 women got support from major political parties like AL and BNP but the number decreased to 8 only for the current election

This study proposes to identify situation of women contestants in selected APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas during December, 2015 pre-election period. The research questions were developed by considering the specific objectives and problems of the study to identify situation of women contestants in selected APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas during December, 2015 pre-election period. Questionnaire includes background of the respondents, their knowledge about election code of conduct, support received from different sections, problems encountered and steps taken to solve the problems, opinion on election procedures (partisan/non partisan) to increase participation of women as election candidates. The questionnaire was finalized as per different variable which was considered for finding result.

Besides literature reviews primary data collected through direct interview from the respondents by using questionnaire from selected Aparajita areas where election was conducted All candidates appearing in the election including EWRs, PEWRs and others were selected for interview. A total of 660 EWRs and PEWRs (Aparajita 272 and non-Aparajita 388) from 54 Municipality of 37 District and 46 Upazila were selected for interview.

Background of the Contestants:

Among the contestants who participated in the 2015 Pourashava election number of councilors interviewed is 656 which include 647 (98%) from reserved seats and one percent from general seats. Approximately two third (65%) of the respondents are in the age group 35 to 44 years old and another 27% are in the age group 45 and above. It may be mentioned that minimum age limit for election contestant is 25 years. Most (97%) of the respondents are literate out of whom around 80% completed primary level and secondary level education. Twenty three candidates are graduates.

Eighty eight percent respondents are housewife. Among the remaining seven percent are service holders. Four percent are engaged in business. Most (94%) of the contestants are married Most (93%) contestants are Muslims. Only seven percent are from Hindu religion including four Mayors and seven councilors in general seats. One fourth (26%) of the respondents do not have any source of monthly personal income.

Financially they are dependent on their husband or other family members. Among the rest 71% respondents have nominal personal income varying from TK. 1000/- to Tk. 20000/- only and 42% have personal savings. Average savings is Tk.1,10,000/- Ninety eight percent of the respondents have monthly family income varying Tk. 1,000/- to Tk. 50,000/-.Out of total 660respondents 40% has a personal asset which is mostly landed property.

Political Affiliation:

Sixty two percent of the contestants are affiliated with different political parties which includes 68% respondents belonging to Aparajita and 57% from non-Aparajita. Most (96%) of the respondents are from two major political parties such as Awami League (68%) and BNP (28%). Other political parties include Jamat-e-Islam and Jatio Party etc. Among Aparajita group 68% are affiliated with different political parties. Those (243 respondents) who are affiliated with different political parties are holding position of president, vice-president, general secretary, treasurer, members of secretary board and member of presidium. Those who are not affiliated with political parties 48% have not yet decided which political party to join, 41% are not interested to join any political party and only 11% did not get any chance to join any political party.

Knowledge regarding election rules and regulations

Out of total respondents 99% has knowledge regarding election rules and regulations. Candidates representing Aparajita has more (10%) knowledge regarding election rules and regulations than non- Aparajita candidates. Those who are not aware of the rules and regulations of election is due to Lack of information (35%), and/or did not have access to information (22%) and did not care to get information (14%).

Support from different sources:

During pre-election period candidates from Aparajita areas because of their active role as EWRs received more (64%) support from their affiliated parties than candidates from non-Aparajita (47%) areas. Most of the support received by the candidates is from their family which is followed by community people. Family support mostly (86%) includes financial assistance, where as community people mostly (93%) provided encouragement and campaign support. The respondents largely received information and technical support in preparation and submission of nomination papers (52%), as well as encouragement (75%) & (88%) for Information support from Aparajita.

Problem Encountered:

Out of total respondents 40% reported that they faced problems for participation/ as nominee. Problems encountered include pressure to withdraw nomination, Obstacle during campaign, use of Black money, Use of muscle power, violation of election rules, non cooperation from party, non cooperation from Law enforcement agency, non cooperation from Election commission, non cooperation from Local Administration etc.

Opinion on the election process:

Out of total respondents who are affiliated with political party 62% of them are in favor of non partisan election and those who are not affiliated with any political party among them 86% are in support of non-partisan election. Out of total respondents 71% do not want partisan election. This shows that in most cases local government is not yet ready for partisan election. At party level 60% Awami League, 67% BNP, 75% Jatio Party are not seeking party election Only Jamat (67%) seeking partisan election.

Priority of actions which would be taken by respondents if they won election:

In case they win the election most (78%) of the respondents would stress for government to act in specification of their roles and responsibilities as women local government representatives. Seventy five percent wants to enhance their capacity so that they can play their role and responsibilities effectively. Another 61% respondents want a system for easy access to information.

1. Introduction

Bangladesh government has taken good numbers of initiatives regarding empowering women in different areas such as education, health etc. While empowering women, government has incorporated relevant policy issues. For example the 6th Five Year Plan (2011-15) of Bangladesh which is the national medium term development plan committed to transform Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021, considers women's engagement in political and economic activities as a cross-cutting issue with women's empowerment as one of the main drivers of transformation.

The government effort to empower women has been quite successful. The country has made commendable progress during last two decades which has positively affected women's participation in the areas of education, health, employment and income. Bangladesh's status has improved in different global index. According to World Economic Forum (WEF) 2015 report on World Gender Discrimination, Bangladesh has secured top position (64 overall) in the South Asia which is much higher than India and Pakistan in reducing discriminations between male and female. It also has moved two steps forward in women education and political empowerment compared to the previous year. Bangladesh also ranked 7th in the world in terms of Political Empowerment, according to Global Gender Gap Report 2013.

It is true that the country has improved significantly in a number of development issues but it has not made much improvement in the area of Women's Political Empowerment. Women's overall presence in the country's top decision making institution, the Parliament has never crossed the 6 percent mark in the 300 general seats. Currently 20 women MPs are representing in the 10th parliament which represents 6.6 percent of the total number of MPs. Out of 50 parliamentary committees, women are heads of 8 committees. 4 women including the prime minister were in the cabinet of the 10th Parliament and the number was 6 in 9th Parliament (Steps: 2014).

Bangladesh Election Commission has made the mandatory provision to include 33 percent reservation for women in all political parties' executive committee position including the central committee by 2020, But data shows that women's representation in

decision making forums in political parties remain low with numbers in central working committees as low as 2.7 percent to 11.2 percent (Steps: 2014). Since 2008 less than 3 percent women got nominations for the Mayor position from all political parties (Kalerkonto 18 December 2015).

The percentage of women participation and winning the senior position like Chairmen, Women Vice Chairmen, and Mayors has declined in last two of decades. Decline was noticed in the elections of Upazila Parishad, Municipality and Union Parishad. For instance, in 2009 Upazila Parishad election, on an average 7-9 women contested per seat which decreased to 3-4 women per seat in 2014 (Steps: 2014). At the same time, decrease in the women participation in senior position of the local government elections was reported. For example, in the Municipality Election 2011, a total of 26 women got support for Mayor position from mainstream political parties like AL and BNP but it decreased to only 8 in 2015 Municipality Election (Kalerkonto 18 December 2015).

Similarly, rate of women participation and winning also drastically fell for UP elections in the last two decades. In the 1999 election, women winning rate for the Chair and Reserve Seats was 22.5 and 24 percent respectively. Even in the next UP election 2003 women participation decreased. The rate was 9.5 and 13.5 respectively for Chair and Reserve seats. In the same way, 22 out of 225 women candidates (9.8 percent) won the chair posts in the 2011 UP election. In 1997 UP election, around 1, 80, 00 women contested in the 13500 reserve seats; 124,000 in 2003 and 90000 in 2011 (DW: 2015)

The government has emphasized on the need of Political Empowerment of Women. In doing this, Bangladesh Election Commission has taken step towards strengthening women's political participation by imposing a 33 percent reservation for women in all political parties' executive committee position including the central committee by 2020. Constitutional Amendment also has increased the number of women's reserve seats to 50 from 45 in Parliament which also indicates government's positive attitude on the Political Empowerment of Women.

2. Background

In October 2015 government declared that from now on all local government elections will be partisan and candidates will be given nomination by political parties. In line with such decision a law was passed in the cabinet on 12 October 2015 that shocked many local government experts, civil society organizations and non-government organizations. However over disagreements, fear of chaos, and clash at the local level, government decided to revise the decision and went for partisan election for the Mayor posts only and continue other positions of other local government elections (including upcoming Municipality Election 2015) as non-partisan . Local Government Pourasava (Corrected Version) Bill 2015 passed in the parliament following the decision of the government on 16 November 2016. According to the law, apart from candidates from political parties, independent candidates will be able to contest for Mayor position. The president or general secretary of the Political Parties had the authority to delegate selection of candidate by district committee for the Mayor Position (Daily Amader Shomoy 5 November 2015).

There were mixed reactions from the Parliamentary Members (MP), local government experts, political parties, civil societies, media, local government associations, non-government organizations and elected representatives, LGIs regarding the revised law. Political parties like Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), local Government Associations like Municipality Associations of Bangladesh (MAB) and local government experts did not agree with some of the clauses of new law. However, local government experts were of the opinion that, partisan election for the Mayor and non-partisan for the councilor position will imbalance the power structure of local government institutions as well as shrink the power of those institutes. At the same time, some elected representatives of municipalities opined partisan election will create more professional distance between Mayors and Councilors (ProthomAlo 16 November 2015)

However some of the parliamentary members opined that, both Mayor and Councilors position should be political. On the other hand, some MPs opined that creating new position as vice chairman at UP level would resolve the problem related to position of panel chairman. Some MP felt that, if the Mayor position becomes vacant, a non-political councilor would sit as panel Mayor Position which is inconsistent with the

current law. Keeping to such law, election commission declared Municipality Election Schedule (1st Phase) in the month of November 2015 in 234 Municipalities.

Since the announcement of the partisan/non-partisan election, print and electronic media has been publishing /broadcasting several in-depth reports, columns and editorials on the effectiveness of partisan election, municipality wise election manifesto by Mayors election campaigns, the rise of election dissident candidates and its impact on election, the status of women candidates, challenges of Election Commission in holding local government election under new laws within short time, discriminatory symbols for women, publicity campaign. During the Election Day many of the media reported on violence and election corruption, broadcast live talk-shows on election issues e.g. channel 24, ATN Bangla, Channel I. After the election media also reported on the attack on journalists, statement of main opposition on the election, reactions from local government experts etc.

One of the important aspects of this election was comparatively low numbers of women participation in the senior position. Statistics shows that numbers of women candidates for the Mayor Position has decreased drastically in this election (2015) compared to the last election year 2010-11. In the 2011 Municipality Election 26 women got support from major political parties like AL and BNP but the number decreased to 8 only for the current election (Kalerkantho 18 December 2015). The number of candidates from minority communities in this election has not been encouraging. Only 19 candidates for the Mayor position (male and female) was nominated by political parties like AL (8); BNP (6) and from other political parties (5). However, no candidates from 3 districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) were given nominations by political parties (ProthomAlo, 9 December, 2015).

Status of Candidates in the Municipality Election 2015 (1stPhase)

In the Election a total of 945 candidates contested for the Mayor Position (AL: 234; BNP: 223; Jatiyo Party 74; Jashod 21; Independent 285; Others: 108) from 20 different political parties (Daily ProthomAlo 30 December 2015). On the other hands, 8589 also

contested for 2193 general seats. In the case of reserve 731 seat, a total of 2533 candidates contested (Kalerkantho 18 December 2015).

In the election a total of 20 women candidates for the Mayor position were nominated by political parties. Out of 20 women candidates 7 from ruling AL, 1 from BNP, 3 from National People's Party and rest of 9 got nominations from other political parties. Unfortunately, no women got nominations from other political parties like National Communist Party, Bangladesh Workers Party, Jatiya Party. However 5 women candidates withdrawn their nominations and finally only 15 candidates contested in the election (Kalerkantho 18 December 2015).

Out of 227 municipalities, election was held in 207 municipality and was postponed in the 20 municipalities. 168 candidates from AL, 22 BNP, one from JAPA and others 16 won in the Mayor Position (ProthomAlo 6 January 2016). However 7 AL candidates for Mayor Position and 134 from councilor's position won the election without any contest (ProthomAlo 30 December 2015). In the 2011 Municipality Election held in 5 stages 116 Mayor from AL and 106 BNP won.

This study proposes to identify situation of women contestants in selected APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas during December, 2015 pre-election period.

3. Objectives of the Study:

- Analyze election procedure to see the challenges of the women candidates at APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas
- Critically analyze the Influencing Factors - Social, Political, Family and the APARAJITA
- Analyze contributory factors
- Analyze the influencing and contributory factor of Women Leaders and also to identify future needs of elected women at Municipality
- Identify advocacy and program strategic issues for considering

4. Methodology:

4.1 Research Question:

The research questions were developed by considering the specific objectives and problems of the study to identify situation of women contestants in selected APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas during December, 2015 pre-election period. Questionnaire includes background of the respondents, their knowledge about election code of conduct, support received from different sections, problems encountered and steps taken to solve the problems, opinion on election procedures (partisan/non partisan) to increase participation of women as election candidates. The questionnaire was finalized as per different variable which was considered for finding result.

4.2 Methods of Data Collection:

- Sampling procedure: Primary data collected through direct interview from the individual by using questionnaire. Data was collected from all Aparajita areas where election was conducted. All candidates appearing in the election including EWRs, PEWRs and others were selected for interview. Data was collected on purposively.
- Sample Size: Total 660. (Aparajita 272 and non-Aparajita 388)

Area Covered: Data collected from 54 Municipality (34 Aparajita, 20 non-Aparajita) of 37 District and 46 Upazila (see annex).

4.3 Data Processing:

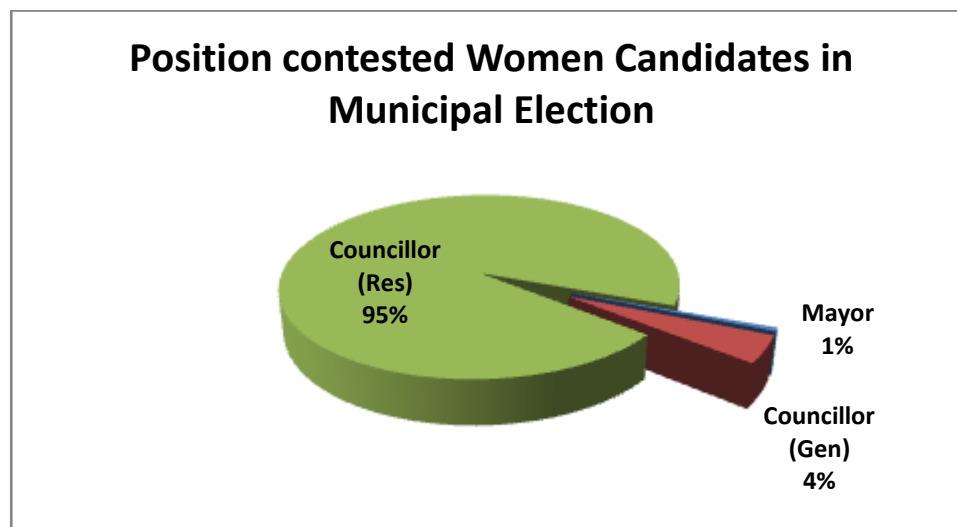
The quantitative data will be input in data base of statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) with graphical presentation.

5. Limitations

- Shortage of time was major limitation. Data collection from 54 municipalities was done in a very short period.
- The respondents were busy with election campaign for which many of them were not available for interview.
- It was hard to collect information from non-APARAJITA area.

6. Findings

6.1 Background of the Respondents:



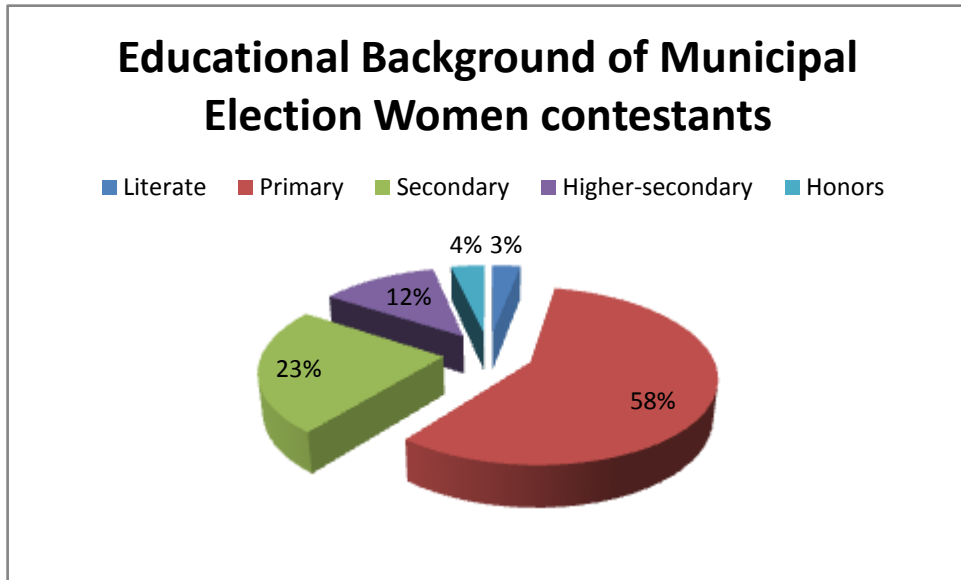
Among the contestants who participated in the 2015 Pourashava election number of councilors interviewed is 660 which include 647 (95%) from reserved seats and one percent from general seats. Nine councilors contesting from general seats are from Satkhira, Natore, Narail, Moulvi bazaar, Kushtia, Jessore and Hobigonj. In addition four Mayors belonging Rangpur, Thakurgoan, Natore and Comilla were also interviewed.

Age of the Municipal Election Women contestants

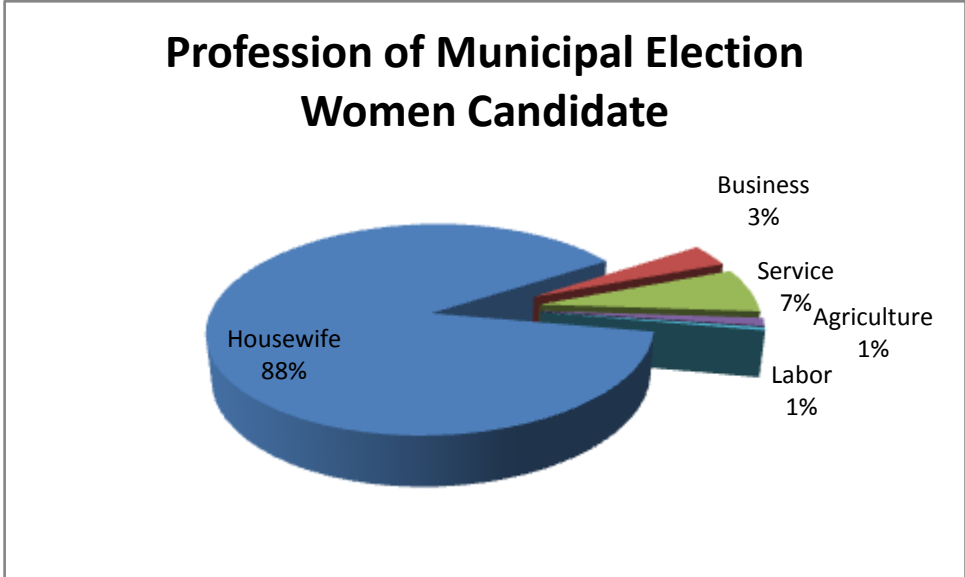
		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
25-34 Years	Count	13	44	57
	%	4.8%	11.3%	8.6%
35-44 Years	Count	170	255	425
	%	62.5%	65.7%	64.4%
45-59 Years	Count	62	59	121
	%	22.8%	15.2%	18.3%
60+ Years	Count	27	30	57
	%	9.9%	7.7%	8.6%
Total	Count	272	388	660
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N=660

Approximately two third (65%) of the respondents are in the age group 35 to 44 years old and another 27% are in the age group 45 and above. It may be mentioned that minimum age limit for election contestant is 25 years.



Around 80% candidate completed primary level education and secondary education. Twelve Percent candidates completed graduation who are coming from Tangail (8),Magura, Sirajgonj & Nilphamari(3) Jessore & Pabna(2), Dinajpur and Rangpur 1. In contesting for election, there is no requirement for literacy. However, education may help in understanding development situation including need for clear political perception.



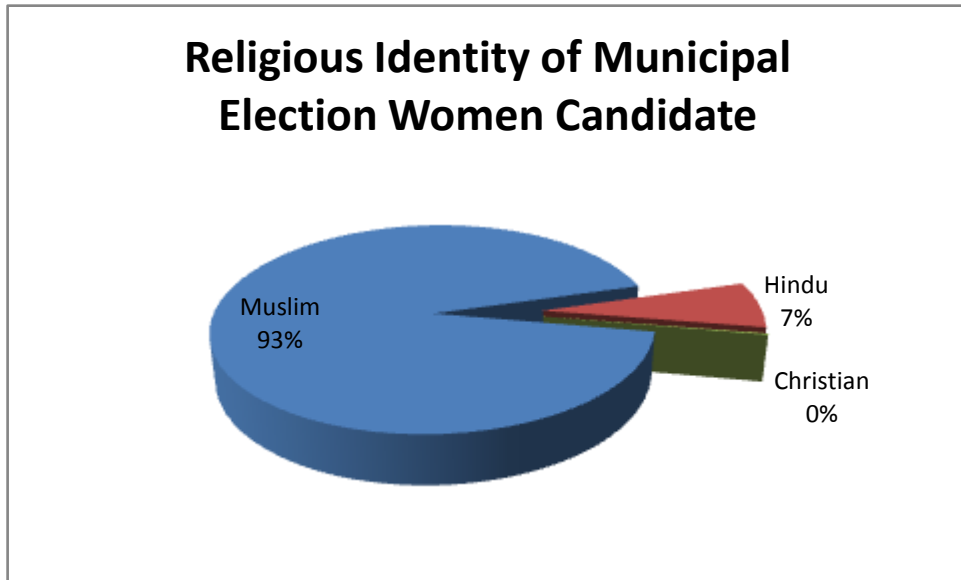
Eighty eight percent respondents are housewives. Among the remaining seven percent are service holders who are identified mostly in northern districts such as in Sherpur, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Chapainawabganj, Bogra, Thakurgoan, Natore, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Pabna. Some of them are from Kushtia, Jessore, Satkhira, Tangail, Jamalpur, Moulvibazar and Hobiganj. Four percent are engaged in business who come from Thakurgoan, Sunamganj, Rajshahi, Narail, Naogaon, Mymensingh, Moulvi bazaar, Magura, Kushtia, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Tangail, Pabna and Jessore.

Marital status of Municipal Election Women contestants

Marital status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Married	618	93.6
Unmarried	29	4.4
Widow	11	1.7
Separated	2	.3
Total	660	100.0

N=660

Most (94%) of the contestants are married. One unmarried candidate contested for Mayor Position. All Separated and widows are contesting for the position of reserve seat.



Most (93%) contestants are Muslims. Only seven percent are from Hindu religion including four Mayors belonging to Rangpur, Thakurgoan, Natore and Comilla and seven councilor in general seats coming from Satkhira, Natore, Narail, Moulvi bazaar, Kushtia, Jessore and Hobigonj

Monthly Personal income of Municipal Election Women contestants

Personal income	Frequency	Valid Percent
0	170	25.8
1000-10000 taka	401	60.8
10001-20000 Taka	70	10.6
20001-30000 Taka	12	1.8
30001-40000 Taka	2	.3
40001-50000 Taka	2	.3
70001-80000 Taka	1	.2
100001-30000 Taka	2	.3
Total	660	100.0

N=660

One fourth (26%) of the respondents do not have any source of monthly personal income. Financially they are dependent on their husband or other family members. Among the rest 71% respondents have nominal personal income varying from TK. 1000/- to Tk. 20000/- only. (Who are having 10,000 to 30,000 mainly service and business)

Family Income of Municipal Election Women contestants

Family Income	Frequency	Percent
0	5	.8
1000-10000 taka	227	34.4
10001-20000 Taka	246	37.3
20001-30000 Taka	127	19.2
30001-40000 Taka	24	3.6
40001-50000 Taka	19	2.9
50001-60000 Taka	1	.2
60001-70000 Taka	2	.3
70001-80000 Taka	2	.3
90001-100000 Taka	2	.3
100001-300000 Taka	4	.6
600001-900000 Taka	1	.2
Total	660	100.0

N=660

98% of the respondents have family income varying Tk. 1,000/- to Tk. 50,000/-

Personal savings of Municipal Election Women contestants

Personal savings	Frequency	Percent
Yes	278	42.1
No	382	57.9
Total	660	100.0

N=660

Forty two percent contestants have personal savings. Average savings is Tk.1,10,000/-

Personal asset of Municipal Election Women contestants

Personal asset	Frequency	Percent
Yes	264	40.0
No	396	60.0
Total	660	100.0

N=660

Out of total 660 participants 40% has a personal asset which is mostly landed property.

6.2 Political party

Political party Affiliation of Municipal Election Women contestants

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Yes	Count	184	222	406
	%	67.6%	57.2%	61.5%
No	Count	88	166	254
	%	32.4%	42.8%	38.5%
Total	Count	272	388	660
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N=660

Sixty two percent of the contestant is affiliated with different political parties, which includes 68% respondents belonging to Aparajita and 57% from non-Aparajita.

Different Political party Affiliation of Municipal Election Women contestants

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Awami League	Count	122	155	277
	%	66.3%	69.8%	68.2%
BNP	Count	57	56	113
	%	31.0%	25.2%	27.8%
Jamate-Islam	Count	4	2	6
	%	2.2%	0.9%	1.5%
Jatio Party	Count	1	3	4
	%	0.5%	1.4%	1.0%
Others	Count	0	6	6
	%	0.0%	2.7%	1.5%
Total	Count	184	222	406
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N=406

Most (96%) of the respondents are from two major political parties such as Awami League (68%) and BNP (28%). Other political parties include Jamate-Islam and Jatio Party etc. Among Aparajita group 68% are affiliated with different political parties.

Average Affiliation of Political Party 11 Years

Committee Affiliation of Municipal Election Women contestants

Committee Affiliation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	243	59.8
No	163	40.2
Total	406	100.0

N=406

Out of 406 respondents who are affiliated with different political parties, 60% of them holding positions in different political parties.

Municipal Election Women contestants Position in Party committee

		AparajitaAffiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
President	Count	18	17	35
	%	51.4%	48.6%	100.0%
Vice-president	Count	16	13	29
	%	55.2%	44.8%	100.0%
General secretary	Count	12	20	32
	%	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Treasurer	Count	1	1	2
	%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Member of Secretary board	Count	44	42	86
	%	51.2%	48.8%	100.0%
Member of presidium	Count	23	36	59
	%	39.0%	61.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	114	129	243
	%	46.9%	53.1%	100.0%

N=243

Out of 243 respondents affiliated with different political parties as president, vice-president, general secretary, treasurer, members of secretary board and member of presidium.

Reason for not being affiliated with any political party

	Frequency	Percent
Not interested	172	41.2
Never got a chance	44	10.6
Still not decided	201	48.2
Total	417	100.0

N=417

Out of total respondents those who are not affiliated with any political parties 48% has not yet decided which political party to join, 41% are not interested to join any political party and only 11% did not get any chance to join any political party.

6.3 Election

Women Candidates knowledge on Election rules and regulation

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Yes	Count	270	380	650
	%	99.3%	97.9%	98.5%
No	Count	2	8	10
	%	0.7%	2.1%	1.5%
Total	Count	272	388	660
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N=660

Out of total respondents 99% has knowledge regarding election rules and regulations.

Candidates know five most important rules and regulations of election

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Five or more	Count	156	210	366
	%	67.2%	60.0%	62.9%
Four	Count	71	98	169
	%	30.6%	28.0%	29.0%
Three	Count	2	20	22
	%	0.9%	5.7%	3.8%
Two	Count	3	19	22
	%		5.4%	3.8%
One	Count	0	3	3
	%	0.0%	0.9%	0.5%
Total	Count	232	350	582
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Candidates representing Aparajita has more (10%) knowledge regarding election rules and regulations than non- Aparajita candidates.

Cause of not aware about election of rules and regulations

	Frequency	%
Lack of information	90	34.75
Lack of Opportunities	56	21.62
Lack of Efforts	37	14.29
Others	86	33.20
	259	

Those who are not aware of the rules and regulations of election are due to Lack of information (35%), did not have access to information (22%) and did not care for getting information (14%).

Women candidates Got support from their party participation in the election

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Yes	Count	120	125	245
	%	64.2%	57.0%	60%
No	Count	67	94	161
	%	35.8%	43.0%	40%
Total	Count	187	219	406
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N=406

Candidates from Aparajita areas because of their active role as EWRs received more (64%) support from their affiliated parties than candidates from non-Aparajita (57%) areas.

Types of Support got from political party

	Frequency	%	% of Cases
Nomination	110	21.28	45.3
Financial	86	16.63	45.5
Publicity/campaign	147	28.43	72.8

N=245

Most of the support received from their party is publicity/campaign which is followed by nomination and financial help.

Receive support from

	Frequency	%	% of Cases
Family	638	47.22	96.7
Local People	536	39.68	81.2
APARAJITA	177	13.10	65.1
	1351	100	

(Multiple responses)

N=660

Most of the support received by the candidates is from their family which is followed by community people. 27% respondents also received support from Aparajita Personnel. In Aparajita area 65% respondents got support from Aparajita.

Types of support received

	Family(Percent of Cases)	Local People(Percent of Cases)	APARAJITA (Percent of Cases)
Encourage	78%	93%	84%
Help To Submit Nomination Paper	59%	0	52%
Economic	86%	11%	0
Campaign	42%	83%	0
Information	0	0	88%

(Multiple Responses)

Family support mostly (86%) includes financial assistance, where as community people mostly (93%) provided encouragement and campaign support. The respondents largely received information and technical support in preparation and submission of nomination papers (52%), as well as encouragement (75%) & (88%) for Information support from Aparajita.

Women candidates Faced problem

Faced problem	Frequency	Percent
Yes	264	40
No	303	46
No Answer	93	14
Total	660	100.0

N=660

Out of total respondents 40% reported that they faced problems for participation/ as nominee. Problems encountered include pressure to withdraw nomination, Obstacle during campaign, use of Black money, Use of muscle power, violation of Election rules, non-cooperation from party, non- cooperation from Law enforcement agency, non cooperation from Election commission, non cooperation from Local Administration. They solve their problems with the help of local people, family, local administration, law enforcement agency and political party.

Women candidates Opinion on Election Process (Party level)

			Opinion on election process		Total
			Party election	Non Party election	
Political party	Yes	Count	154	252	406
		%	37.9%	62.1%	100.0%
	No	Count	35	219	254
		%	13.8%	86.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	189	471	660
		%	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%

N=660

Out of total respondents who are affiliated with political parties 62% of them are in favor of non party election and those who are not affiliated with any political party among them 86% are in support of non-party election. Out of total respondents 71% do not want party election. This shows that in most cases local government is not yet ready for party election.

Women candidates Opinion on Election Process (Aparajita-Non Aparajita)

		Aparajita Affiliation		Total
		Aparajita	Non Aparajita	
Party election	Count	81	108	189
	%	29.8%	27.8%	28.9%
Non Party election	Count	191	280	471
	%	70.2%	72.2%	71.1%
Total	Count	272	388	660
	%	100%	100%	100.0%

N=660

Women candidates Opinion on Election Process (Different Party level)

		Opinion on election process		Total
		Party election	Non Party election	
Awami League	Count	112	165	277
	%	40.4%	59.6%	100.0%
BNP	Count	37	76	113
	%	32.7%	67.3%	100.0%
Jammat-e-Islam	Count	4	2	6
	%	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Jatio Party	Count	1	3	4
	%	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Others	Count	0	6	6
	%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	154	252	406
	%	37.9%	62.1%	100.0%

N=406

Out of total 660 respondents 71% supported for non party election. Those who are engaged with political party of them 62% support for non party election. In APARAJITA area 70% respondents express their opinion for non party election. At party level 60% Awami League, 67% BNP, 75% Jatio Party are not seeking party election Only Jammat (67%) seeking party election

Need assistance after winning Election

	Frequency	%
Capacity Enhance	495	75.0
Available Information	405	61.4
Specific role	516	78.2

N=660

In case they win the election most (78%) of the respondents would stress for government to act in specification of their roles and responsibilities, Seventy five percent wants enhancement of their capacity so that they can play their role and responsibilities effectively. Another 61% respondents want a system for easy access to information.

7. Observation:

1. Undue favors towards ruling party supported candidates have been observed.
2. Due to lack of financial solvency, women candidates are dependent on their husbands/fathers/brothers.
3. Due to political interference women participation was low in general seats
4. Because of social relationship/pressure women were compelled to contest in reserve seats rather than general seats.

8. Recommendations:

- More women should be encouraged to contest for general seats
- Political Party should nominate more women in Mayor Position
- Local Government Election should be non-partisan in order to ensure greater participation
- Election Process should be more women friendly (Reformation of RPO)
- Women should get protection from local administration and law enforcing agencies during election campaign
- The expenditure of election should be reduced
- Nomination process should be transparent, easy and free from irregularities
- Nomination should be given on the basis of popularity
- Election process should be devoid of money and muscle power
- The Advisory, Information and Technical Support should be ensured for non-APARAJITA areas by local administration as well as EC.

9. Conclusions:

This study proposes to identify situation of women contestants in selected APARAJITA and Non-APARAJITA areas during December, 2015 pre-election period. A total of 660 EWRs, PEWRs and other candidate (Aparajita 272 and non-Aparajita 388) from 54 Municipality of 37 District and 46 Upazila were selected purposively and interviewed. The report included background of the contestants, political affiliation, knowledge regarding election rules and regulations, support from different sources, problems encountered, opinion on election process, and priority of actions to be taken provided respondents win election.

Two third of the contestant is affiliated with different political parties. Most of the respondents are from two major political parties such as Awami League and BNP. Majority of the respondents has knowledge regarding election rules and regulations.

Finally local government is not yet ready for party election.

10. Annex1

List of Sample Districts

	Frequency	Percent
Barishal	11	1.7
Bogra	5	.8
Borguna	11	1.7
Brahmanbaria	9	1.4
Chandpur	9	1.4
Chapainawabgonj	26	3.9
Chittagong	19	2.9
Chuadanga	25	3.8
Comilla	15	2.3
Dinajpur	16	2.4
Faridpur	8	1.2
Gaibandha	11	1.7
Gopalganj	3	.5
Hobigonj	24	3.6
Jamalpur	42	6.4
Jessore	19	2.9
Kurigram	19	2.9
Kushtia	49	7.4
Magura	11	1.7
Manikganj	12	1.8
Meherpur	10	1.5
Moulvi bazar	19	2.9
Mymensingh	12	1.8
Naogaon	15	2.3
Narail	10	1.5
Narsingdi	12	1.8
Natore	16	2.4
Nilphamari	17	2.6
Pabna	15	2.3
Rajshahi	65	9.8
Rangpur	16	2.4
Satkhira	10	1.5
Sherpur	18	2.7
Sirajgonj	26	3.9
Sunamganj	13	2.0
Tangail	30	4.5
Thakurgoan	12	1.8
Total	660	100.0

List of Sample Upazillaz

	Frequency	Percent
Akhaura	9	1.4
Alamdanga	10	1.5
Badargonj	16	2.4
Bagha	7	1.1
Bagharpara	6	.9
Bakergonj	11	1.7
Birampur	8	1.2
Borguna Sadar	11	1.7
Chapainawabgonj	27	4.1
Chauddagram	8	1.2
Chuadanga	15	2.3
Faridgonj	9	1.4
Gaibandha Sadar	11	1.7
Gangni	10	1.5
Godagari	28	4.2
Hakimpur	8	1.2
Hobigonj	24	3.6
Jamalpur Sadar	19	2.9
Kamalgonj	10	1.5
Kulaura	9	1.4
Kurigram	7	1.1
Kushtia Sadar	36	5.5
Laksam	7	1.1
Madargonj	12	1.8
Manikganj Sadar	12	1.8
Melandah	11	1.7
Mirpur	13	2.0
Mirsarai	19	2.9
Muktagacha	12	1.8
Nagar Kanda	8	1.2
Naldanga	8	1.2
Narsingdi Sadar	12	1.8
Natore Sadar	8	1.2
Sadar	79	12.0
Sador	15	2.3
Satkhira	10	1.5
Sayedpur	17	2.6
Shajadpur	11	1.7
Sherpur	5	.8
Sherpur Sadar	18	2.7
Sunamganj Sador	13	2.0
Tanore	29	4.4
Thakurgoan Sadar	12	1.8
Tungipara	3	.5
Ulipur	12	1.8
Ullapara	15	2.3
Total	660	100.0

List of Sample Municipalities

	Frequency	Percent
Akhaura	9	1.4
Alamdanga	10	1.5
Arani	7	1.1
Badargonj	16	2.4
Bagharpara	6	.9
Bakergonj	11	1.7
Baroairhat	8	1.2
Birampur	8	1.2
Borguna	11	1.7
Chapainawabgonj Sadar	27	4.1
Chauddagram	8	1.2
Chuadanga	15	2.3
Faridgonj	9	1.4
Gaibandha	11	1.7
Gangni	10	1.5
Godagari	13	2.0
Hakimpur	8	1.2
Hobigonj	10	1.5
Jamalpur	19	2.9
Jessore	13	2.0
Kakonhat	15	2.3
Kamalganj	10	1.5
Kulaura	9	1.4
Kurigram	7	1.1
Kushtia	36	5.5
Laksam	7	1.1
Madargonj	12	1.8
Magura	11	1.7
Manikganj	12	1.8
Melandah	11	1.7
Mirpur	13	2.0
Mirsarai	11	1.7
Muktagacha	12	1.8
Mundumala	13	2.0
Nagar Kanda	8	1.2
Naldanga	8	1.2
Naogaon	15	2.3
Narail	10	1.5
Narsingdi	12	1.8
Natore	8	1.2
Pabna	15	2.3
Satkhira	10	1.5
Sayedpur	17	2.6
Saystagonj	14	2.1
Shajadpur	11	1.7
Sherpur	23	3.5

Sunamganj	13	2.0
Tangail	30	4.5
Tanore	16	2.4
Thakurgoan	12	1.8
Tungipara	3	.5
Ulipur	12	1.8
Ullapara	15	2.3
Total	660	100.0