

Women and Politics in Contemporary Philippines

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The study introduces the gender factor into the analysis of the nature, forms and quality of political participation by Filipino women. In so doing, the inquiry seeks to offer a qualification on the "exceptional status" often claimed by Filipino women citing their impressive presence and achievements in social and economic fields as their empirical bases. Despite this, however, the political arena remains as a man's world in the Philippines. Thus, the investigation poses three hypotheses: (1) that male dominance in Philippine politics prevents Filipino women from attaining full equality with men; (2) that continued male dominance in politics is anchored on male control over key decisionmaking processes and male monopoly of the use of violence during peace time; and (3) that the persistence of male dominance in politics is sustained by deep-seated biases against the nature of women as internalized within the family. To transcend the constraining factors toward greater political participation by Filipino women, the concept of partnership and its operationalization is explored and offered.

Introduction

Objectives and Significance of the Study

This paper serves as the final report of the research project on "Women and Politics in Contemporary Philippines" supported by the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC). For its empirical base, the inquiry benefited immensely from the Elections Study Series being conducted by the University of the Philippines, College of Public Administration (UPCPA) from 1984 up to the present.

The study zeroes in on the observation that in the Philippines, as in other parts of Asia, the role of women has always been an active one (Aquino 1985:319). However, it is meaningful to qualify the nature, forms, level or quality of women's participation in the Philippine society particularly in the field of politics where women's contributions are most concealed. By probing into the extent and quality of political involvements of Filipino women, the intention of this investigation is to introduce the gender factor, which has long been glossed over, into the analysis of the country's political development. The woman's question essentially points to the need for a deeper analysis of the basic political perspectives by both Filipino men and women.

An explicit recognition of the contributions of women in the task of nation-building will help clarify some of the major issues touching on long-held biases against women and politics. A critical reexamination of the nature of women vis-a-vis the general notion of power and the orthodox or unorthodox forms of political practices is attempted in the context of the concrete experiences of Filipino women. The investigation also serves as an

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invitation to take a serious look at the essence of politics and the present quality of its practice in the Philippines along with potential contributions of Filipino women toward political change.

In pursuing the above objectives, one of the main problems encountered is that matters pertaining to man-woman relations have been generally relegated to the private realm. Women are submerged in the privacy of the home and the family while men dominate politics and economics which are both identified as the public sphere of life. As a consequence, the aspect of man-woman relations as an integral part of social and political change has long been taken for granted. Available studies on Philippine political, economic, and socio-cultural change show very little attempts, if at all, to relate systematically the personal aspects of man-woman relations to the larger concerns of the nation as well as the general and broader aspirations of the Filipino people. Thus, this study includes both women's activities in women's organizations and their involvement in the formal process of electoral contests. What has been excluded is the role of women in the bureaucracy for practical rather than substantive reasons. For purposes of delineating research areas of hitherto unexplored field of women's studies among female colleagues at the University of the Philippines, the study is limited to women's activities in socio-civic organizations and formal politics. In both cases, the concern is to see the implications of class and gender factors on women's political activities. It is equally interesting to compare the various perspectives on class and gender held by the Filipino women themselves involved in formal and informal politics. Similarly, the study explores the relationship between class and gender considerations in leadership selection in the Philippines. In this regard, it is equally significant to account for what Wilma Rule and Irving Krauss (1988:1) refer to as the "contextual" factors that tend to inhibit or facilitate women in pursuing political careers.

At the empirical and behavioral levels, the study tackles an intriguing issue; that is, whether or not there has been a significant women's vote in the Philippines, particularly in the 1986 special presidential elections? Whereas the woman's question has not been an issue in the previous elections, it was one of the more prominent issues that surfaced during the 1986 elections. Consideration of this issue has unveiled the long-held biases against Filipino women to occupy high positions in government, and much more, the tacit doubts on the capability of women to assume political leadership in this country. With Corazon Aquino's victory in the polls, does that mean that the Filipinos have already overcome the biases against women expressed openly during the election campaign? Have the Filipinos come to accept that politics is any qualified person's domain irrespective of sex and that the woman is equally capable as the man to lead the country? The extent of bias against a woman executive among the various sectors of the Filipino people has yet to be known explicitly.

This study seeks to contribute to theory building by qualifying certain claims which Filipino women are sometimes too quick to make. For one, it has been argued that the Philippines represents a departure from the nearly universal claim by current feminist writings that the status of women everywhere is one of subordination. To support the "exceptional status" of the Filipino women, the following are offered as evidences: (1)

large number of women in the professions occupying supervisory and managerial positions; (2) an equal number of female students at the post-graduate level; and (3) recognized authority of women in the Filipino family particularly in financial matters and in enforcing discipline on children. However, no mention of the equality of women in the political arena has ever been made in the list. It is thus imperative to examine more closely certain facets of man-woman relations focusing on the political sphere, in an effort to shed better light on the "exceptional status" of Filipino women.

Women's Organization: An Essential Requisite to Women's Power

State power is organized, formal political power, and conventional politics is limited to the formal processes and structures of winning and exercising state power.

In analyzing the political activities of women, such limited notion of politics has to be expanded to capture the women's political contributions found to be at the periphery of the formal seats of state power but very much part of its nature and dynamics. This is because their entry to the formal structures of power has been traditionally limited by the "rules of the game" made by men buttressed by deep-seated biases on their understanding of the nature of women and their qualities (turned disabilities) to run for political posts. As a result of these combined legal and ideological limitations imposed on women, the disability of women to vie for political leadership has come to appear as a "natural thing" to happen. Women's exclusion from politics is thus made acceptable to women themselves.

In this discussion of women's organizations, the collective character of the political process by which decisions binding to all members of the community are shaped and made is taken to be the core of politics. With a more inclusive definition of politics to cover interest articulation as much as the contest of winning formal positions of power, empirical and historical data on women's organizations are presented here.

A brief historical account of women's involvement in organizations and their organizing efforts for political mobilization is likewise given. This is followed by an initial inventory of women's organizations in terms of membership, institutional support base or sectoral affiliation, identified clientele to serve, and ideological orientation, as evidenced by the philosophy they profess. Admittedly, these criteria are still loose for categorizing the various groups of women that proliferated since 1983. Neither can these be regarded as mutually exclusive because of the gray areas and the many overlaps existing among multisectoral and umbrella types of women's organizations. Considering the fluidity of the situation, and the lack of systematic records, it is safer to assume that we have not covered the entire gamut of women's organizations particularly those based in the region. Nevertheless, they suffice for present purposes.

Brief Historical Background of Women's Organizations in the Philippines

Colonial Period. Historical accounts reveal the existence of organized women's groups during the Spanish and American colonial periods. As the Spanish colonial masters

heightened their unjust and cruel administration of the country, a growing number of men and women took up arms and led the people in numerous anticolonial revolts and uprisings. In the late 1700s, Gabriela Silang carried on the leadership of a rebellion began by her husband who was assassinated by Spanish authorities. Gabriela Silang would symbolize the hundreds of women who broke the tradition of women's subservience and docility to the feudal patriarchy (Santos-Maranan 1984:26).

In the late 1890s, the women of the *Katipunan*, an anticolonial revolutionary organization led by Andres Bonifacio, served as couriers, arms procurers and soldiers of the revolution. Some of these exemplary women included Melchora Aquino, acknowledged Mother of the Revolution, who took care of wounded revolutionaries and gave them refuge; Trinidad Tecson, heroine of *Biak-na-Bato*, the site of the historic peace settlement between the Spanish and American forces; Gregoria de Jesus, wife of revolutionary leader Andres Bonifacio; Agueda Kahabagan, a Batangueña general who led an army of anti-colonial revolutionaries; and Teresa Magbanua who was also called "Joan of Arc of the Visayas" (Santos-Maranan 1984:26).

The women addressed by Jose Rizal in his "Letter to the Women of Malolos" actively campaigned against Spain's discriminatory educational policies which banned women from pursuing higher education and from pursuing training in field other than teaching (Camagay 1985:8). This event signified an emerging new consciousness albeit limited only to the women of middle and upper classes.

In 1893, a masonic lodge of Filipino women known as *Logia de Adopcion* was founded. Composed mainly of enlightened intellectuals and members of the well-to-do and highly-respected families, this masonic society was considered an important link in the growing anticolonial movements at that time (Miralao in Santos-Maranan 1984).

In 1899, the *Asociacion de Damas de la Cruz Roja* (Women's Red Cross Association) founded by Hilaria Aguinaldo, wife of General Aguinaldo, coordinated the humanitarian work of the women in the country's 13 provinces. Driven by patriotism and a strong anti-colonial sentiment, many Filipino women enlisted in the army. These women donned military uniforms and fought beside the men, operating machine guns and building trenches (Santos-Maranan 1984:26). It is noted that not all women's groups have strong anticolonial sentiments. The *Liga Femenina de la Paz* (Philippine Women's League), for example, was organized by Carmen Poblete in 1902 to help the Americans in their pacification drive against the Filipino people.

The *Asociacion Feminista Filipina* (Feminist Association of the Philippines), the first women volunteer organization, was founded in 1905 by Concepcion Felix-Rodriguez with broader objectives. This group sought prison reforms especially for women minors, labor reforms for women in factories and shops and educational reforms which included conference and lectures for women. Other aims included the drive against prostitution, gambling and drinking; the conduct of religious and moral campaigns in schools, factories, etc.; and the appointment of women to municipal and provincial boards of education, electoral precincts and municipal committees. The association held lectures on sanitation, health, infant and maternal care, and raised funds for typhoon victims.

Despite the liberal education policies adopted by the American colonizers, women's groups during this period raised specific political issues. In 1906, Pura Villanueva Kalaw founded the *Asociacion Feminista Ilonga* (Association of Ilonga Feminist), the first women's group to work for women's suffrage. However, it was only after six years, 1912, when a nationwide campaign on women suffrage was formally launched. Two American women, Carrie Chapman Catt and Aleta Jacobs, along with some Filipino women, led the suffragette movement. They were later joined by the Women Citizens' League in 1935. The women's groups were actively involved in pro-suffrage propaganda campaigns through lobbying in congress, conferences and rallies. Their efforts finally bore fruit with the passing of the suffrage bill in the Philippine Legislature in 1933; the Administrative Code allowing women to vote in 1935; and finally, of women's suffrage rights in a national plebiscite in 1937 (Alzona 1934:95).

Pre- and Post-Independence Period. Since then, the Filipino women had carried on their active and direct involvement in the electoral process through more organized groups. In 1939, the League of Women Voters was established, whose aim was to encourage the participation of the public during elections, and to provide them with information on political issues and on the qualifications of candidates. A few years after the grant of Philippine independence, another group called *Kababaihang Rizalista* was organized. Centering on Rizal, the members sought to implement the principles embodied in *La Liga Filipina*. The National Political Party of Women in 1951 aimed to consolidate the women's vote and thereby tried to cross party lines. Another significant headway achieved by the women's groups during this period was the passage of laws granting women their rights. The Philippine Association of University Women worked for the passage of Paraphernal Property Law which gave married women the power to do as they wish with their paraphernal property without the husband's consent. The League of Women Voters of the Philippines together with the Philippine Government Employees Association worked for the passage of the Women and Child Labor Law which was to take care of the rights and privileges of women workers. The Filipina Nurses' Association supported the Government Nurses' Salary Act. Almost all-women's clubs supported the new Civil Code which removed or modified the restriction on married women imposed by the Civil Code of Spain.

In the latter part of the 1950s and through most of the 1960s, the women's groups shifted their activities to fund raising and moral regeneration campaigns to social welfare and health and nutrition projects (Torres, Amaryllis 1986:10). Many of these women were also established as the female counterparts of existing male political, business, religious and socio-civic organizations and hence, performed auxiliary or supportive roles to men's organizations (Hollnsteiner 1976:46). Maranan conjectures that this development in women's organizations during the postwar years may be attributed to the perception of relative peace and order. Women had regarded the electoral process as a pillar of democracy that effected a peaceful and orderly transfer of power from one hand to another. It could also be that the middle-class composition of women's groups account for their inability to see and agitate for substantive structural changes during the postwar years.

Women's Organizations In Contemporary Philippines

Pre-Martial Law Period. The onslaught of radical political activism that challenged the prevailing system of injustice and repression in the late 1960s saw the re-emergence of women's groups.

The *Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan* (Free Movement of New Women), more popularly known by the acronym MAKIBAKA (Struggle) was born with the fundamental task of advancing the struggle for national democracy. The women of MAKIBAKA answered the call for revolutionary work, for organizing urban and rural women and for armed struggle. In view of these activities, MAKIBAKA was considered the first movement in the Philippine history to develop a women's consciousness and to raise the issue of women's liberation. Being the female arm of the well-organized and vigorous political movement of the late 1960s and early '70s, MAKIBAKA had the orientation to properly situate women's emancipation from semi-feudal and neo-colonial exploitation (Lanot 1985:44).

But even before MAKIBAKA could fully develop its potentials, expand its reach and gain momentum, martial law was declared. Nationalist organizations including MAKIBAKA were declared illegal and forced to go underground (Gomez 1986a:37).

Martial Law Period. The martial law years provided a favorable climate for the growth of women's organizations. The extreme degradation and increasing suffering endured by many Filipino women during this period were the rallying points for women's groups, and the conditions for transforming the national women's movement into a more militant one with feminist orientation (Miralao in Santos-Maranan 1984). Thus, several women's groups, including church-based organizations openly protested against organized sex-tours, "mail-order brides," the exploitation of women in export processing zones, human rights violations, reported cases of rape and violence perpetrated by the militarization of the countryside, among others.

These developments took an added dimension with the declaration of the United Nations International Decade for Women in 1975, which promoted research and discussion on the status of Filipino women. The creation of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) constituted a formal response of the Marcos government to this international stimulus. Women-specific programs formulated within the development framework prescribed by foreign funding institutions were implemented. Supported by the government, the most significant accomplishments of the NCRFW are as follows: (1) the review of Philippine legislations which revealed many remaining sexist elements and provisions in Philippine laws; and (2) the formation of cooperatives and small-scale industries for and by women. However, the lack or absence of feminist and anti-imperialist perspectives of the government was made manifest in the formulation of anti-women policies in the labor, tourism, industry and other sectors. These policies are responsible for the institutionalization of the image of the Filipino women as maid and prostitute on a global scale.

Post-Martial Law to the Aquino Assassination Period. The deepening political, economic and social malaise affecting the nation brought forth an upsurge of mass actions and protest movements in late 1981, and further increased in 1983 following the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr.

With the death of Ninoy Aquino as their rallying cry, women from all walks of life—women workers, the religious peasants, urban poor, students, women minorities, professionals and even society matrons—became visible, and took up issues such as Ninoy's murder, US-Marcos dictatorship, military bases, nuclear power plant, among others.

In addition to joining forces to discuss national issues, various women's groups conducted regular meetings for consciousness-raising. Related to this was the organization of more and more women whose heightened perception of the ills of society and the desire to change it would give the women greater motivation to join mass actions. Women alliances such as GABRIELA, a coalition of women's groups formed in 1984, indicate the solidarity and support of various issue-oriented, class- or sector-based women's organizations. It also functions as a center for coordinating and expanding women's campaign (Gomez 1986a:37).

Other women's groups that addressed national political concerns are as follows: Women for the Ouster of Marcos (WOMB); STOP, an organization which aims to counter sex trafficking; KALAYAAN, which exposes sexism within the family, the educational and political systems, and other institutions (Miralao in Santos-Maranan 1984).

Attempts at a Typology of Women's Organizations

A simple but useful typology of women's organizations is introduced in this section for the purpose of assessing the level of their organizational development, their guiding ideological perspectives, and the clients they serve. The degree to which women have organized themselves determines the extent of their power or influence. Moreover, this section also influences women's effectiveness as groups for interest articulation and aggregation, and a service delivery system to meet women's needs. The proposed typology is based on the dimensions of structures, functions and ideological orientation. The following serve as indicators of both structure and orientation: (1) leadership system; (2) staff support; (3) size and location of membership; (4) permanency of organization headquarters; (5) sources of financial support; (6) publications and propaganda materials; and (7) types of organization problems. Indicators for functional diversification are: (1) nature of the problems that serve as the *raison d'etre* of the women's organizations; (2) the programs and activities pursued; and (3) the opportunity for grassroots' participation offered in the implementation of programs/activities. It would have been useful to combine the diverse aspects of structure, ideological orientation and clientele along with their respective indicators for one to arrive at three types or models of women's organizations which may be referred to as Levels I, II, and III depending on the level of its institutionalization. However, in the absence of complete and detailed information on all these dimensions for the 289 organizations covered, the present typologies may give the purpose of this intimate study.

Women's Organizations By Sector. Out of more than 400 women's organizations marked by Rosca (1986:48), the study has identified 289 women's organizations. Table 1 shows the distribution of women's organizations by institutional membership or support base. The most number (29.07%) of these organizations draw their membership from specific professional groups, like doctors, lawyers, nurses, etc. This is followed by the civic type of organization (23.88% in all) the members of which may come from all sectors of the society, including the professionals themselves.

The church, an institution closely identified with male power, also provides an institutional base to women's organizations composed primarily of nuns, women theologians and lay women. The peasants are also trying to consolidate their numerical force by organizing themselves. There are at least 25 organizations (8.65%) whose members are women farmers, fisherfolks and other agriculture-based women. The youths are also making themselves visible and actively participate in issues regarded as the privilege of the adults. A total of 21 organizations (7.27%) are classified as school-based composed primarily of students and youth.

The small number of organizations composed primarily of housewives confirms the view that housewives as a group find themselves in a highly atomized situation. There are 17 organizations (5.88%) established by housewives and mothers. This is seen as a significant attempt by the housewives to break the atomized situation they are in.

Table 1. Distribution of Women's Organizations by Institutional Membership or Support Base

<i>Support Base</i>	<i>Total Number</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Church	42	14.53
Civic	69	23.88
Professionals	84	29.07
Peasants	25	8.65
School	21	7.27
Business	8	2.77
Multi-Sectoral	23	7.96
Housewives/Mothers	17	5.88
Total	289	100.00

Women engaged in business or concerned with uplifting women's condition by giving them economic and livelihood assistance scheme have their own organizations. But they are not of great significance because their number is still minimal.

Classification of Women's Organizations Based on Ideological Perspective. The ideological perspective of any organization charts its direction and suggests the level of its members' consciousness on the women's issues, the relation of gender and class or the roots of social ills in the society. In short, the world view of the organizations provides a particular frame of social analysis and organized action for its members

and clients. On this count, initial findings revealed that a significant number of these women's organizations have gained a feminist perspective as they show at least an awareness of the patriarchal system in the family and society.

As shown in Table 2, out of the 91 sample organizations, 38 (41.69%) have the professionals as their support base. This is followed by the multi-sectoral, church-based and civic-oriented groups with 13 (14.26%) each.

Fifty-eight (64%) of these organizations nurture the view that women are marginalized by the society by virtue of their gender. On the other hand, a small number are aware of class, gender and colonial oppression. There are 18 organizations (20%) which exhibit this tendency. This group includes the church, civic, professional and business organizations. Of the 18, five are professional-based and appear to have no clear ideological perspective. This can be partly explained by the fact that such groups as doctors, lawyers, business executives, accountants, etc., are relatively secure economically speaking. It may be conjectured that any form of oppression women may have felt can be compensated by material and monetary security.

Again, based on the sample size, a very small number 8 (8.78%) appears to be conscious of the combined class and gender inequality. Even smaller is the group that sees the triple bind Filipino women find themselves in (4 or 4.39%). This implies that so many have yet to interrelate class, gender and colonial domination in their own consciousness.

Classification of Women's Organizations According to Services Provided and Clientele Served. Table 3 provides an initial enumeration of the types of services performed by the women's organizations. These include providing economic and livelihood opportunities, health services, information and education, provision of homes to specialized cases as well as political consciousness and mobilization activities.

From a total of 151 organizations as sample size, 55 (36.4%) are actively involved in giving information and education type of service while 53 (35.1%) are engaged in political activities. By way of responding to one of neglected social services, 23 (15.23%) are directly involved in health-related activities.

The data suggest that adequate academic and professional training have allowed the professionals to be visible in most of the above-mentioned services. They are particularly active in giving information and education type of service; and political activities, which include consciousness-raising, organizing, and extending free legal assistance.

Primarily concerned with giving economic and livelihood support are 16 organizations, 7 of which are civic-type of organizations. Their activities include capital assistance or finding employment for their members or to those who are in need of it, particularly the housewives and mothers who are their main clients (See Table 3a).

The association of housewives and mothers are primarily meant to provide services to their members on issues related to health, like breast-feeding, family planning information and health education.

Table 2. Classification of Women's Organization by Institutional/ Support Base and Ideological Orientation

<i>Institutional/ Support Base</i>	<i>Absence/ Lack of Perspective (See no bind at all)</i>	<i>Critical of the Patriarchal System in the Family and Society (Single bind: Gender)</i>	<i>Critical of Class Inequality But not of Gender Inequality (Single bind: Class)</i>	<i>Critical of Class and Gender Inequality (Double bind: Class and Gender)</i>	<i>Critical of Class and Gender Inequality and Imperialism (Triple bind: Class, Gender and Colonial Domination)</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>
Church	3 16.67%	9 15.52%	0 0.00%	1 12.50%	0 0.00%	13 (14.26%)
Civic	8 44.44%	4 6.90%	1 33.33%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	13 (14.26%)
Professional	5 27.78%	29 50.00%	0 0.00%	3 37.50%	1 25.00%	38 (41.69%)
Housewives/ Mothers	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 (.00%)
Peasant	0 0.00%	4 6.90%	1 33.33%	1 12.50%	0 0.00%	6 (6.58%)
School/Youth	0 0.00%	6 10.34%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	6 (6.58%)
Business	2 11.11%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	2 (2.19%)
Multi-Sectoral	0 0.00%	6 10.34%	1 33.33%	3 37.50%	3 75.00%	13 (14.26%)
Total	18 100.00% 20%	58 100.00% 64%	3 100.00% 3.29%	8 100.00% 8.78%	4 100.00% 4.39%	91 100.00% (100.00%)

Among the 26 peasant women organizations, 14 are directly involved in extending education and information dissemination services while 8 are engaged in political activities. These are very significant activities which could lead to mobilizing rural women.

The youth-and-school-based organizations are also seeking to make themselves visible in the discussion of issues that are regarded as the domain of the adult. Out of the 6 youth- or student-based organizations surveyed, 4 of them are active in political activities.

In terms of clientele served, Table 3a shows that specific professional groups appeared to be the most prominent beneficiaries with 42 (38.53%) organizations addressing their needs out of the total sample size of 109. Mothers followed with 31 (28.40%), while children and prostitutes were catered by 10 organizations each (or 9.18% each) out of 109.

Of the 109 samples, the biggest number of institutional base of women's organizations are the professionals. They number 50 in all. However, the clientele group they serve the most are the professional groups (26 out of 50) followed by mothers (13 out of 50) and prostitutes (4 out of 50).

Table 3. Classification of Womens's Organizations by Institutional/ Support Base and Type of Services Rendered

<i>Institutional/ Support Base</i>	<i>Type of Services Rendered</i>					<i>Total Sample Size</i>
	<i>Economic Livelihood</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Information/ Education</i>	<i>Provision of Homes to Specialized Cases</i>	<i>Political</i>	
Church	1	0	10	0	12	23 (15.23%)
Civic	7	1	3	2	4	17 (11.30%)
Professional	4	16	24	0	20	64 (42.40%)
Housewives/ Mothers	0	4	2	0	0	6 (4.00%)
Peasant	2	1	14	1	8	26 (17.20%)
School/Youth	1	0	1	0	4	6 (4.00%)
Business	1	0	0	0	0	1 (.01%)
Multi-Sector	0	1	1	1	5	8 (5.30%)
Total	16 (10.6%)	23 (15.23%)	55 (36.4%)	4 (2.65%)	53 (35.1%)	151 (100.00%)

Table 3a. Classification of Women's Organizations by Institutional/Support Base and Clientele Served

<i>Institutional/ Support Base</i>	<i>Specialized Groups / Clientele Served</i>								<i>Total Sample Size</i>
	<i>Prosti- tutes</i>	<i>Unwed Mothers</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Mothers</i>	<i>Migrant Workers</i>	<i>Tribal Women</i>	<i>Specific Profl Groups</i>	<i>Peasants</i>	
Church	4	2	2	1	0	0	5	1	15 (13.76%)
Civic	0	1	1	7	0	1	1	0	11 (10.09%)
Professional	4	1	3	13	0	2	26	1	50 (45.89%)
Housewives/ Mothers	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3 (2.75%)
Peasant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7 (6.42%)
School/Youth	1	0	2	4	0	0	7	0	14 (12.84%)
Business	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2 (1.83%)
Multi-Sector	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	7 (6.42%)
Total	10 (9.18%)	4 (3.70%)	10 (9.18%)	31 (28.40%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (2.75%)	42 (38.53%)	9 (8.26%)	109 (100.00%)

Unorthodox Forms of Women's Political Participation

Excluded from the formal structures and processes of politics, women resort to unorthodox modes of political participation to make their presence felt. With greater obstacles to hurdle, women's political involvements turned out to be more dramatic, innovative, colorful, and participatory. The Filipino women's creativity has surfaced glaringly in their clamor and fight for progressive changes through unorthodox manner. Out of their disillusionment with the colonial and authoritarian rule, the Filipino women have proven their persistence and resourcefulness in struggle and their determination to stand fearlessly for a cause.

During the Spanish colonial rule, their vigorous dissent against the colonial policy excluding women from the right to formal education, led the women of Malolos (representing middle class women) to campaign actively for such right at the risk of Spanish reprisal. During the American Regime, countless women's groups came

out into the open to work for reforms, for better conditions in factories and shops, for suffrage and for Philippine independence (Santos-Maranan 1984: 24-30). On the other hand, women (from the lower classes) who joined the revolutionary movements, first against the Spaniards, and then against the Japanese, fought as fiercely as men in their armed struggle against the colonizers to gain independence and either ended the Spanish colonial domination or subverted the Japanese imperialistic design. This revolutionary fervor of women fighters was rekindled in the late 1960s and early 1970s among the progressive sectors of student women leaders. In 1970, the *Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan* (Free Movement of New Women) or MAKIBAKA was formed to advance the struggle for national democracy and to raise the issue of women's liberation (Gomez 1986b:3-4).

It was observed that these women's movements bloom during times of political and social upheavals. For instance, MAKIBAKA was born during the period of nationalist and student activism in the late 1960s. The prevailing system then was characterized by the widening gap between the rich and the poor, the intensifying economic distress and political instability which was bred by the country's dependence on foreign capital and unbridled graft and corruption (Gomez 1986b:3-4).

By 1980s, the situation was getting worse than the previous decades under a dictatorial rule. In the context of the political and economic crisis of early 1970s and 1980s, it is hardly surprising to know that hundreds of thousands of Filipino women marched in the streets and joined the protest actions in the streets of Plaza Miranda, Mendiola and later in Ayala. What came as a surprise was the emergence of well-heeled women coming out from the confines of their comfortable homes to join the "parliament of the streets" that burgeoned after the Aquino assassination in 1983. Prominent women like Bea Zobel, Mercy Tuazon, Tingting Cojuangco and Nikki Coseteng became familiar sights in rallies. Organized alumnae from exclusive girl's schools—KULASA of St. Scholastica's College, Teresa Makabayan of St. Theresa's College, Spirit of Mendiola of the College of the Holy Spirit and Josefina students and Josephine graduates of St. Joseph's College—also marched up and down the streets of Ayala (Parel 1985a:20).

These women deserve special note because they represent those who have been raised to be conservative mothers, daughters and wives (Parel 1985a:18-20). But Ninoy Aquino's death jolted them from their complacency. The assassination became a haunting reminder that not even the privileged upper class is safe from the military fascist rule (Floro and Luz 1985:9). The deteriorating economy shattered their "glasshouse affluent style of living" (Floro and Luz 1985:9).

Aside from the well-heeled women, women professionals, educators, artists, consumers, businesswomen, and members of religious congregations, a significant number of plain housewives also took interest in partisan politics and activities after the Aquino assassination. Spurred by the political crisis and the economic crunch, they joined the old-timers in street demonstrations: women workers, peasants, students and members of the

urban poor. This is a significant advancement in the women's struggle because for the first time in Philippine history, women from all social classes and from all sectors participated in the national struggle. Women rose up and became vocal, participating in symposia, fora, mass rallies, demonstrations, national assemblies, conventions and consciousness-raising sessions (Lanot 1985:45).

As a result of these activities, women recognized the need to organize and unite (Lanot 1985:46). Women's organizations of various persuasions mushroomed. Thus, we saw the emergence of, among others, Women for the Ouster of Marcos (WOMB) composed of women from the middle class sector; Association of Women in Theology (AWT), and *Kapisanan ng mga Madre sa Kamaynilaan* (KMK), and other church women's groups; Alliance of Women for Action Towards Reconciliation (AWARE), an exclusive group of business executives, entrepreneurs, teachers and conscientized housewives; Women Writers in Media Now (WOMEN); *Samahan ng Makabayang Kababaihan* (SAMAKA), a sectoral organization of women students and youth; Concerned Artist of Philippines Women's Desk; and *Kilusan ng Manggagawang Kababaihan* (KMK).

In March 1984, the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA) was formed to coalesce politically active women and women's organizations in the country. Under the GABRIELA wing are some 50 organizations in Manila, 38 in Mindanao and the beginnings of a regional federation in the Visayas (Rosca 1986:48). Professionals, businesswomen, educators, artists, workers, religious, urban poor, peasants, housewives, consumers, students/youth are represented in the coalition (*GABRIELA Primer* 1984).

Although 70% of the Filipino women reside in the rural areas, leadership of the women's movement rests on the urban-based and urban-trained women from the upper and middle classes (Rosca 1986:48). Dr. Mamita Pardo de Tavera, for one, comes from the old elite, while Nelia Sancho and Maita Gomez of GABRIELA are from the middle class (Rosca 1986:48).

Since women joined the national struggle as members of a particular sector or as citizens of this country who saw the need to get involved, many of the women's organizations begun with little or no understanding of women's issues (Gomez 1986b:3-4). The issues raised by women were therefore the most urgent ones affecting the Filipino people: Marcos' authoritarian rule, US-Marcos dictatorship, US imperialism, Aquino assassination and trial, election frauds in the 1984 Batasan elections, US military bases, PDA, IMF and WB impositions, Bataan nuclear plant, cronyism, high prices, hidden wealth and low wages.

While women continued to demand for democratic rights and economic welfare as members of a particular sector and as citizens of the Philippines, they realized that they suffer a special type of apprehension intimately related to the roles (as members of the weaker sex) assigned to them in our society (Floro and Luz 1985:9). As the women got

deeper in the national struggle, they realized that unless they also raise issues directly affecting them as women, their full and equal participation in the movement for democracy and economic emancipation will not be possible nor their liberation as woman ensured (Lanot 1985:46).

Thus, the women's struggle which is directly aimed towards the emancipation of women was integrated in the overall struggle for a democratic egalitarian society (Floro and Luz 1985:10).

Among the women's issues raised by women are: (1) militarization in the countryside which has brought not only hunger and war but rape and various forms of sexual harassment to peasant women (A peasant woman from Langtud, Davao del Norte reported that in her village, women were molested by soldiers, including married women who were sometimes sexually abused in front of their husbands) (Floro and Luz 1985); (2) the unprecedented rise of prostitution and sex tourism (According to estimates, there are some 5,000 child prostitutes concentrated mainly in Manila's tourist belt and US military bases in Olongapo and Angeles) (Arriola 1985:29) which was abetted by the promotion of the tourist industry to beef up the country's foreign exchange, and by the country's severe economic crisis; (3) the creation of a commodity that Western media call mail-order brides that was born because of the plummeting economy; (4) proliferation of pornographic magazines which further exploit and humiliate women; (5) relegation of women to the lowest types of jobs: threader, wrapper, fastener of micro chips, waitress, maid, salesgirl, secretary and clerk; (6) exposure of women to inhuman conditions in their workplace, such as their exposure to extreme temperatures and harmful chemicals in Export Processing Zones (EPZs); (7) low wages (Statistics show that women only get an average of ₱165 per week while men get ₱296 per week) (Arriola 1985:32); (8) sexual harassment such as the virginity tests conducted in EPZs to preclude the hiring of pregnant or married women (the management did not want to provide maternity benefits) (Rosca 1986:46), and the "get laid or laid off" practice whereby women are threatened to be terminated if they do not submit to the sexual demands of the male managerial staff (Rosca 1986:47); and (9) documentation of laws against women such as the law which gives husbands the upperhand over the choice of family residence, his wife's profession, and parental authority (Floro and Luz 1985). Apparently, the gamut of issues addressed by women manifests increased political and social awareness.

As the women joined in more mass actions, their positions in the protest ladder improved from mere supports in major protest actions to prominent figures and leaders in their own merit. Cory Aquino, Mita Pardo de Tavera, Maita Gomez and Nelia Sancho shared center stage with Lorenzo Tañada and Butz Aquino. The women had led marchers to Mendiola and to Bataan. They had planned and implemented the SALAKBAYAN March motorcade as part of their Anti-Nuke Campaign. Some 40,000 joined the rallies held in the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Bataan (Arriola 1985:32). The women even organized all-women protest rallies such as the Women's Day of Protest on October 28,

1985 which was participated in by about 4,000 women (Parel 1985a:18-20).

The women added a new touch to protest actions. Aside from marches, speeches and placards which are the regular fare of any demonstration, the women joined the rallies with their rosaries, candles and chrysanthemums and their pet dogs dressed in yellow vests and shorts. The urban poor housewives brought along kitchen utensils with which to sound off their protests (Parel 1985a:18-20).

Despite violent, brutal and grisly dispersals of demonstrations, the spirit of women's protest did not seem to wane. The women braved the truncheons, smoke bombs, teargas, water cannons and even bullets until the dictator finally fled in fear.

Forms, Levels and Quality of Women's Political Participation

Political participation refers to activities by citizens formally intended to determine or influence those who govern and the manner of their governance (Hague and Harrop 1987:89). Focusing on the nature of political participation of women as citizens and candidates, the recognition of women's right to participate actively in the political arena is a tribute to the legitimizing power of popular sovereignty. In this case, the voluntary nature of such participation is a key consideration that gives women the choice of getting involved (i.e., by voting or abstaining) or not and how to get involved (by joining a party or by joining mass actions or demonstrations). Without this essence of voluntarism, participation may either be reduced to tokenism or mere formalism. It is thus suggested that analysis must include the nature and quality rather than limit the inquiry to the qualitative measure of political participation.

Within the category of voluntary participation, Hague and Harrop made a distinction between the orthodox and unorthodox modes of political participation. In liberal democracies, orthodox participation is largely limited to the electoral process (Hague and Harrop 1987:80). This is because elections serve as an exercise of popular sovereignty and as the embodiment of the people's sovereign will. As a major instrument through which consent by the governed is elicited, elections clothe the exercise of power by elected leaders with legitimacy (de Guzman and Tancangco 1987: 11-16). On the other hand, the unorthodox type of political participation takes new forms; i.e., demonstrations, sit-ins, boycotts, political strikes, political prayer rallies, etc. These more creative modes of political participation "are built on disenchantment within the existing political structures" (Hague and Harrop 1987:90).

While we have touched on the unorthodox modes of political participation by Filipino women in the previous section, this portion delves into the orthodox type of political participation by Filipino women focusing on elections.

It is interesting to test whether Hague and Harrop's findings in their study of comparative electoral systems and their dynamics hold true in the Philippines. The two observed that mass political participation in the Third World is typically limited in quantity and ma-

nipulative in quality. In this connection, it will be enlightening to examine the level and mechanism of political participation the electoral process opened to Filipino women. From here, incisive insights into the form, pattern and content of Philippine contemporary politics may be gained along with the potential contributions of women to political change.

Women as Voters

The women's call for enfranchisement started in 1906 but gained momentum only in 1912 with the foundation of the Society for the Advancement of Women by the American suffragettes. It took twenty three years (1929) when the National Federation of Women's Club had organized the First Women's Convention to pass a resolution approving the right of women to vote (CWR 1987:14). Other women organizations were formed to support the suffragette movement. By 1935, the women won the struggle for the right of suffrage (CWR 1987:14).

Finally, in 1936, the Constitution provided that "the National Assembly shall extend the right of suffrage to women, if in a plebiscite ... no less than 300,000 women ... should vote affirmatively on the question (Alzona 1937:95). Thereafter, the women renewed and intensified their educational campaign for suffrage. When the plebiscite was held on April 30, 1937, 447,725 women voted "yes" to suffrage—more than a hundred thousand votes beyond the required margin. After more than 30 years of struggling for enfranchisement, the Filipino women were granted the right to vote.

Ever since the Filipino women first exercised their right of suffrage in the 1937 Plebiscite, they have actively participated in deciding the country's destiny through elections. From 492,032 women who participated in the 1937 plebiscite (NCRFW 1985:15-16), the number of women voters soared to 13.65 million in 1988.

COMELEC statistics revealed that the turnout of voters had been higher among women than men in 18 out of 22 elections held from 1947 to 1988 (See Table 4). The average turnout rate of women voters was 79.29%, higher by 0.55 percentage points than the average turnout rate of their male counterpart.

In the January 18, 1988 local elections, 10,768,881 women voted out of 13,605,495 registered female voters (79.15%) whereas 11,028,484 men voted out of 14,019,567 registered male voters (78.66%). This confirms the higher rate of voting by women than men. This higher degree of participation rate by women in elections is not a cause for great joy. The findings of the study by the UP College of Education tend to suggest that this is because voting is the only mode of formal political participation opened to all Filipino women. Running for elective posts are reserved to privileged women. The minimal number of women actively participating in electoral contests as candidates attests to this (UP College of Education Survey 1983:119; de Guzman and Tancangco 1985 and 1987).

Table 4. Percentage of Qualified Electors who Voted by Sex (1946-1988)

<i>Election Year</i>	<i>Voter's Turnout Rate In Percent</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1947	77.09	77.14
1949	70.58	68.26
1951	92.00	92.90
1953	77.00	77.50
1955	77.37	77.39
1957	75.86	75.05
1959	81.50	82.05
1961	79.45	79.41
1963	79.14	80.11
1965	75.19	76.63
1967	81.29	82.09
1969	79.09	80.29
1970	68.19	68.02
1971	80.03	81.62
1978	85.05	85.97
1980	76.37	77.10
1981	80.53	81.36
1982	65.89	66.80
1984	88.74	90.15
1986	78.06	79.55
1987	85.22	85.97
1988	78.66	79.15
Average	78.74	79.29

Source: COMELEC

Constituting almost half of the total electorate, sheer number can be power if women so desire. Despite their high voting rate, women's vote is generally non-existent as Filipino women do not capitalize on their number. While there were enough women voters to push women candidates to easy victory during the elections held from 1946 to 1987, only 10 women made it to the Senate, 34 women to the House of Representatives and 19 to the two *Batasang Pambansa* during the Marcos years. (See Table 5). There were even instances wherein women almost did not make it to the winning circle. Such was the case of Maria Kalaw Katigbak and Helena Z. Benitez, both ending up as tailenders in the 1961 and 1967 polls, respectively (Torres, Antonio 1985:34).

In the 1984 Batasan elections, only 10 seats were won by women. However, it is interesting to note that successful women candidates during the 1984 polls garnered the highest or second highest number of votes in the cities or provinces they represented. A woman garnered the first of the six slots in Manila; a woman garnered more votes in the slots in Ilocos Norte; women candidates garnered the highest number of votes in Pampanga and Tarlac; a woman got second place of the three seats in Quezon City and fourth place in Cavite, respectively (NCRFW 1985).

**Table 5. Number of Women Senators and Congresswoman
1946-1987**

<i>Election Year</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>No. of Women Elected</i>	<i>No. of Positions to be Filled</i>	<i>%</i>
1946	Congresswoman	1	8	12.50%
1947	Senator	1	8	12.50%
1949	Congresswoman	1	100	1.00%
1953	Congresswoman	1	102	.98%
1955	Senator	1	8	12.50%
1957	Congresswoman	1	102	.98%
1961	Senator	1	8	12.50%
	Congresswoman	2	104	1.92%
1963	Senator	1	8	12.50%
1965	Senator	1	8	12.50%
	Congresswoman	6	104	5.77%
1967	Senator	2	8	25.00%
1969	Senator	0	8	.00%
	Congresswoman	3	109	2.75%
1971	Senator	1	8	12.50%
1978	IBP Member	9	165	5.45%
1984	Mambabatas Pambansa	10	181	5.52%
1987	Senator	2	23	8.70%
	Congresswoman	19	202	9.41%
	Total	63	1264	4.98%

Source: COMELEC

On the other hand, out of 14 women candidates in the 1987 senatorial elections, only the two women candidates of the administration banner made it. Leticia Ramos-Shahani landed on a safe rank of number 7, while Santanina Rasul tailed at number 23, with her proclamation marred by protests from male opposition and administration candidates who closely followed, and even threatened to dislodge her.

In the 1988 local elections, although women's representation in the provincial and municipal/city levels showed considerable increases, women candidates still performed miserably, compared to their male counterparts (See Table 6). Of the 73 provincial governors elected, only 4 or 5.48% are women. For the position of vice-governors, 9 (12.33%) made it. There are only 118 (7.48%) women among the 1,578 city/municipal mayors; while there are 102 women vice-mayors or 6.46% of the total.

As to whether there is a woman's vote, most of the winners said they were not aware of the contribution of the women voters to their victory (Daza 1984:1). This was further affirmed by 1984 Batasang Pambansa members Eva Estrada Kalaw and Carmencita Reyes in a talk show.

Only former MP Helena Benitez, who also guested in the same talk show, was sure that she owes her victory to women. Benitez explained that she was informed that the barangay captains and leaders of Cavite were told to vote for her all-male opponents but the barangay captains' and leaders' wives voted for her (Daza 1984:6). The Cavite women, in effect, refuted what former Cavite Governor Juan Remulla had said during the early part of the campaign period for the Batasan election that "Cavite is a macho country" and has no need for women in the government (Daza 1984:6). The Benitez case showed that women's votes only became evident where chauvinism was more explicit.

**Table 6. Female Representation in Elective Posts
1989**

<i>Position / Office</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>% Female</i>
President	1	1	100.00
Senator	23	2	8.70
Congressman	202	19	9.41
Governor	73	4	5.48
Vice-Governor	73	9	12.33
Provincial Board Member	626	62	9.90
City/Municipal Mayor	1,578	118	7.48
City/Municipal Vice-Mayor	1,578	102	6.46
City/Municipal Councilor	12,406	1,305	10.52
	16,560	1,622	9.79

It may be conjectured that the same observation happened during the 1986 snap presidential elections when Marcos consigned rival Cory Aquino to the bedroom because she is a woman. In the 1987 congressional elections, Santanina Rasul in various occasions had acknowledged her political debt to women from all over the country's 13 regions. By her own admission, she is the least known among the administration candidates (Lopez 1987:7) and she accounts her strong showing in Luzon and other regions in the Visayas to the women's vote. Based on our analysis of the senatorial election results, Rasul's victory could be attributed first to her being an administration candidate, and secondly to women's vote.

The non-existence of a solid women's vote can be traced to our cultural make-up. Filipinos generally believe that men are superior to women especially in the field of politics. It is also generally believed that public life is a man's domain and familial and private concerns are the woman's. Because of the public nature of politics, women are inappropriate (Benitez 1984-85:42). Another common belief is that women are weaker,

more emotional, less courageous, less aggressive, less competitive, less rational and less analytical than men.

In a comprehensive study conducted by the College of Education, University of the Philippines on the value orientation of Filipino women, it was revealed that Filipino women regarded the family as their top priority. Although they have shown willingness to engage in productive activities, they would rather perform jobs that would not require them to leave their homes (UPCE 1983:70). Asked who were the most influential figures in their life, the female respondents indicated their mothers, a response which implies that women have long been socialized into their traditional role as wives and mothers (UPCE 1983:212).

Because of these deeply-rooted biases, male and female voters have a prejudicial outlook against female candidates such that between a man and a woman candidate with equal qualifications, they exhibit an irrational preference for the former (Cortes 1983:9). Moreover, the women voters can be dictated by the man of the house on whom to vote for. That the traditional father calls the shots in political decisions is not debatable (Torres, Antonio 1985:34).

However, this does not mean that women voters no longer consider women candidates. They still do but they vote for a woman candidate not because they are of the same gender but because the women candidates are capable, qualified and deserving (Maniquis 1986:5).

These attitudes were very evident in the surveys on people's feelings about a woman president which were conducted prior to the snap polls. A Veritas survey of women at the grassroots level showed that there are women who will not vote for Aquino precisely because she is a woman with no experience in politics (Hidalgo 1986:16).

Margaret Pineda, a 35-year-old housewife said: *Mas gusto ko lalaki kasi mas mataag ang lalaki. Babae kasi, kahit ang tapang, babae pa rin. Mahina ang ibig sabihin. Kahit na mababang lalaki, matapang pa rin. Si Cory gusto lang maghiganti. Ginagamit niya ang kapangyarihan niya para makulong si Marcos* (Hidalgo 1986:16). (I would prefer a man because a man is more determined. A woman, even if she is courageous remains a woman, a weakling that is. Cory is running because she only wants to take revenge. She is using her power to get Marcos into jail). Sidra Elambre, a 27-year-old housemaid responded: *Sa bagay hindi pa nangyayari 'yung magkaroon tayo ng presidente na babae. Palagay ko, magiging mahina ang palakad ng bayan* (Hidalgo 1986:16). (In a way, we have never had a woman president. If ever, I think her administration will be a weak one.)

A survey conducted by Lani E. Verdan of *The Freeman*, involving 500 male and 500 female respondents from Central Visayas, showed that 90% of the respondents said "No," meaning they will not vote for a woman president, 5% said "Yes" and 5% answered "It depends" (Verdan 1985:16). The survey also showed that 90% of the respondents were clinging tenaciously to traditional beliefs about women's disability to enter the political arena. About 10% were objective in their choice of candidates.

While the political motive of this survey is highly suspect, the comments forwarded by these women are worth looking into if only to show the stereotype attributes of women being peddled in the society. The reasons of the 90% who planned not to vote for a woman president are as follows: (1) "Women can easily be intimidated;" (2) "Women can easily be overpowered by emotions;" (3) "Women have changeable minds;" and (4) "No woman can solve the overpowering ills of the country at present, especially the economic and insurgency problems" (Verdan 1985:16).

The 5% "Yes" was as conditional as the 5% who answered "It Depends." Most of the reasons given for saying "Yes" and "It Depends" showed the conditionalities of the respondents. They said that they will choose a woman for president (1) "If her credentials are much better than that of the male candidate;" and (2) "If she's capable, and not just being a woman whose sole prerequisite is being a widow of a martyr." One reason forwarded was not as objective: "If she's the only other candidate" (Verdan 1985:16).

But aside from traditional beliefs and qualifications, another very important factor that the electorate had in mind is change. For instance, Rose Almendra, a 20-year-old security guard, said: *Maganda rin, di ba? Ano na rin ang tao, sa sobra ng mahal na bilihin, namulat na rin ang tao diyan. Kaya ni Cory na babaan ng konti. Si Marcos, kurakot ang ginagawa niya. Si Cory, hindi niya tinitingnan ang tao—pantay naman lahat ang tao sa kanya. Dapat ano na lang diyan, manalo siya* (Hidalgo 1986:16). (This development is also positive, right? Due to high prices, people are awakened. Hopefully, Cory will be able to lower the prices even a bit. What Marcos did was to commit corruption. For Cory, on the other hand, all the people are equal, hence she must win.)

With the snap presidential polls over, and with Aquino at the helm, some of the traditional biases continue to persist. Like most Filipino women who entered politics, Cory Aquino was seen as a substitute to her husband Ninoy Aquino (who had been bruited about as Marcos' natural successor to the presidency). Her being the wife of Ninoy earned sizeable sympathy votes for her. While she could not have been a candidate at all if she were not Ninoy's wife, she has also her own personality attributes that proved crucial in the final selection of a bankable opposition tandem. Her personal integrity, sincerity and moral authority gave her advantage over the leading male aspirants.

A number of political analysts tend to give the people's anger and disenchantment against Marcos and their desire for change along with sympathy to the widow as major deciding factors for the victory of Cory Aquino.

In terms of the quality of political participation of women voters, evidences drawn from the 1984 parliamentary and the 1986 snap presidential elections tend to show that women do not easily lend themselves as instruments to the manipulative design of the ruling party. The type and nature of frauds and irregularities documented during these last two political exercises under the Marcos regime involved mostly male registrants voters. In a systematic effort to pad the voters' lists in areas where administration candidates were expected to lose, mostly male registrants were contracted for a fee to register several times

in different precincts; a few were female street sweepers who were instructed by their supervisors to meet a quota of 10 to 20 (de Guzman and Tancangco 1985; 1987:214-217).

On election day, the magnitude of vote-buying operations launched by politicians involving male voters could be gleaned from the statistics on voters' turnout rate and number of registered voters for the male category. More than 3,000 precincts in 1986 showed that the number of male voters who actually cast their ballots was more than the total number of male registered voters (de Guzman and Tancangco 1987:471).

Women as Campaigners

Women have always been a part of Philippine election campaigns. In 1961, for instance, we saw the Women for Magsaysay for President Movement (Lanot 1983:22). In 1969, the Blue Ladies, Bluzettes, Osmeña Women's League and Osmeña Pearls busily campaigned for their respective candidates (Joaquin 1981). These groups, who were composed mainly of women in upper echelons of society, served as glamour girls adding glitter to the campaign of their candidates. They also helped in the campaign by preparing food for party leaders and the rest of the electorate and by stumping through the provinces to woo voters. They sung, danced and distributed campaign materials and gift bags to win the votes of people. Sometimes, their presence was enough to lure people to attend election rallies (Joaquin 1981).

As in the past, women actively participated during the campaign for the 1986 presidential polls. In fact, a groundswell of women neophytes in political campaign joined in the fray of the Aquino-Laurel team. Cory's Crusaders, the UNIDO Ladies, the Volunteers for Cory and Doy, and the Antipolo Ladies for Cory and Doy were part of the rag-tagged and inexperienced team who challenged the well-oiled and gargantuan Marcos' KBL machinery.

Among the women's groups, Cory's Crusaders is the women's group that is at the helm of Aquino's presidential campaign. Cory's Crusaders was formed on December 6, 1985, when about 250 women, who were either relatives or friends of Aquino, met with the lady candidate to assure her of their votes and to signify their intentions to help her in the tough presidential campaign (Fiel 1985:20). During the meeting, the ladies donated P2,000 in cash, a mimeographing machine and silkscreening and printing services (Aquino 1987b:6-8). These gestures show that the women mean serious business.

Members of Cory's Crusaders grew in number as teachers, professionals, students and even nuns—most of whom were political neophytes—signed up and joined the organization (Fiel 1985:20). With the participation of ordinary women, Cory's Crusaders became a people's movement. This made the group different from the previous women's arms of political parties organized during election which, as noted earlier, were elitist. Cutting across the different levels of the social ladder, members of the Cory's Crusaders were greatly motivated to join the campaign not only for Aquino but more so, for the country (Fiel 1985:20).

Activities of the Cory's Crusaders extended beyond those performed by women campaigners in the past. Aside from stumping through the provinces, market places and shopping malls, they also had to raise the much needed campaign funds (Aquino-Kashiwahara 1986:8-9). Thus, instead of simply distributing campaign materials, the women had to sell them for a nominal fee (Aquino 1987b:6-8). Items included Cory T-shirts, visors, pins, buttons, dolls and yellow hats (Aquino-Kashiwahara 1986:8-9). They also helped in the solicitation of ₱1 for the Cory drive (Aquino 1987b:6-8).

With Marcos controlling the media, the Cory's Crusaders carried the message to the people through the alternative media. Homes of the members of Cory's Crusaders served as campaign headquarters and meeting places where the people gathered to acquaint voters more intimately with Cory, Ninoy and other national issues. Laban video tapes—a video compilation of Ninoy's life and times, Cory's speeches, Ninoy's death on the tarmac and Marcos' hidden wealth—were shown to the people (Fiel 1985:20). Copies of these tapes were also sold. The women also acted as receptionists, secretaries, and typists of schedules and press releases. Telephone campaigns were also conducted by these women.

In the 1987 senatorial and congressional elections, although not as visible and aggressive as in the snap elections, women's groups have again taken on a number of political activities particularly in campaigning for few candidates expected to push for women's cause if elected.

The Cory's Crusaders, one of the groups that served as backbone in the campaign that helped Cory Aquino to get into power, was revitalized to do the same for Leticia Ramos-Shahani. Other women's groups that enlisted their support for Shahani were the Concerned Women of the Philippines, the Makati Women's Civic League and the Yellow Brigade. Deserving special recognition in the campaign of the lady diplomat should go to the low-key entity called SHA Women Movement for Senators. The movement was launched in response to the need to establish networks among various women's organizations and regional, provincial and barangay groups, especially at the grassroots level (Aquino 1987a:5).

The more visible, aggressive and vocal women's groups openly associated with the Left of the political spectrum threw their support to the lone lady candidate in the slate of the leftist Alliance for New Politics (ANP), Nelia Sancho. An all women's political party, *Kababaihan Para Sa Inang Bayan* (KAIBA) like GABRIELA was organized and fielded women candidates, one of whom was Sancho. The umbrella organization of women's groups, rallied behind the candidacy of Sancho. They were most visible in the campaign rallies of ANP, waving feminist flags and banners in support of the former beauty queen turned-rebel. During the 1988 local elections, most wives of candidates served as the main organizers of their husbands' campaign, or support staff in-charge of their schedules, food and distribution of other campaign paraphernalia. As in the pre-martial law elections, wives of male candidates performed varied roles; i.e., as campaigners and organizers taking jobs that require manual and tedious work in the preparation and distribution of campaign logistics.

Outstanding Individual Women Campaigners. Some women stood out among the campaigners. On the KBL side, there was Mrs. Imelda Marcos who campaigned across the country. She delivered speeches, sang, danced, smiled, cried, pleaded, shouted and distributed packages of rice, sugar and other gifts. She urged people to re-elect Marcos so "you will get me as a bonus" (Quimpo 1986:4-7). Mrs. Marcos also joined her husband in lambasting and ridiculing Aquino, portraying Aquino as brainless while mocking her simplicity. She even criticized Aquino for not wearing make-up and not manicuring her nails (Alabastro 1986:12).

Imee Marcos Manotoc, the eldest daughter of the Marcoses, was also very active during the 1986 snap presidential campaign period. She was in-charge of media and gave special attention to KBL's exposure on television. In one instance, Imee relieved Cabinet Member Gregorio Cendaña and his assistants from their television job because of poor performance (Borjal 1986a:4).

On the UNIDO side, Aurora Aquino, Kris Aquino, former Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera and Tingting Cojuangco figured prominently during the campaign period. They delivered speeches during the campaign sorties while the latter two were known organizers of Cory's campaign in specific areas.

A surprise woman campaigner for the UNIDO tandem was Leticia Ramos-Shahani from the diplomatic corps. She had to resign from her post after she endorsed publicly the UNIDO team in Pangasinan and Dagupan City and disputed the KBL statement that public office should not be entrusted to a woman (Velasco 1986:1). Shahani said that she is a woman in the public service and that she feels very much at home with her work (Velasco 1986:1).

Her decision to support the Cory-Doy ticket was reportedly triggered off by her dismay over the status of Filipino women, particularly in view of her work in the United Nations Commission On the Status of Women (Velasco 1986:1). Shahani is said to be disturbed by the international image of the Filipino women as mail-order brides and prostitutes (Velasco 1986:1).

Her support for the UNIDO tandem aroused the ire of the Marcoses who immediately ordered former Acting Foreign Affairs Minister Pacifico Castro to call the attention of Shahani to the constitutional provision prohibiting government officials from engaging directly or indirectly, in partisan political activity (Borjal 1986a:4). Shahani later resigned from her position as Chief of Mission, Class I in the Philippine Foreign Service. In a press statement announcing her resignation, Shahani said that in expressing her support for Aquino and Laurel, she was exercising her right and responsibility as a private Filipino citizen (Velasco 1986:1).

It is interesting to note that among the career officials and appointees to the foreign service who actively campaigned during the presidential election, only Shahani was reprimanded. Pacifico Castro, Danding Cojuangco and Kokoy Romualdez were spared (Fiel 1986:5). All three men were known KBL stalwarts.

Apparently, Marcos' ire on Shahani's support for the UNIDO team was aroused by the widespread support for Shahani's decision from all sectors of society, particularly among women leaders.

During the two previous elections under the Aquino administration, the woman who figured prominently in the campaign was no less than President Corazon C. Aquino herself who actively campaigned for senatorial and congressional candidates of the administration party many of whom she personally selected. Another non-candidate woman whose mettle for the rigors of a nationwide campaign proved already valuable to her husband's candidacy was Mrs. Gloria Angara. Pitching in for her husband after then candidate and now senator-elect Edgardo Angara suffered mild heart attack, Mrs. Angara was a delight in the campaign trail. Her efforts paid off handsomely with her husband landing in the much coveted top five slots. At the local level, the "annointment of the President" was very much sought-after as a campaign capital. This practice of having a picture with the President raising the hand of the official Cory candidate was referred derisively as "armpit politics." It was widely believed that the campaign and victory of these Cory candidates for national and local elective positions centered on the "Cory Magic." For the same reason, opposition candidates branded their rivals as *nagtatago sa ilalim ng palda ni Cory* (hiding under Cory's skirts).

The Lady President's stamina was shown during her active, almost frantic, campaign for her bets. In the morning, she would be in a certain province, then in the afternoon of the same day, the nation could see her raising the arms of her candidates in another province. Even though some winning administration candidates still do not admit that their victory was mainly a product of the Cory factor, there is really no point in denying that the campaign materials and posters showing Cory beside a candidate bolstered the candidates' chances of winning.

Daughters of politicians added glitter to election campaigns. Presidential daughter, Kris Aquino was visible during election campaigns in 1986 and elections thereafter. But even way back in 1978, Kris at 7 years old started her political involvement as campaigner for her detained father Ninoy Aquino, who was then heading the LABAN line-up during the *Interim Batasang Pambansa* elections. By the time her mother was the candidate, the girl in her teens, admitted publicly that she likes her mother to be the President. Known for her persistence to break into the field of showbusiness, she sang in *Lakas ng Bansa* bets' campaign sorties, and appealed to the swooning *masa* to vote for her mother's choice. One particular candidate in the senatorial race who enjoyed Kris' personal endorsement, both on TV and radio, is a labor leader Ernesto Herrera. Her presence in the political rallies of Cory's candidates was a big factor that drew crowds and turned heads of curious people.

Women as Candidates

With the end of Marcos' authoritarian rule and the subsequent opening up of wider democratic space by the first woman President, several questions come to the fore. Did women take advantage of the enlarged democratic space, why and why not? For those

positively affected, the questions raised are: To what extent have they registered gains and who are they? In what areas could women contribute to improve the quality of politics in this country?

In the absence of a complete data on the number and profiles of women candidates from 1946 to 1971, the analysis focuses only on the participation rate of women as candidates for the last 10 years, from 1978 to 1988.

Table 7 contains data on four electoral exercises, two held under the Marcos regime and the last two under the Aquino regime. While the data suggest some positive developments for women, the number/percentage of women candidates is still minimal. Except for the senatorial and vice-gubernatorial posts, the number of women candidates has not exceeded the 10% mark for all elective posts up for grabs during the four elections. The impressive figure of 16.67% for the senatorial race in 1987 is not far from the traditional female representation rate recorded in the postwar years up to 1971 (See Table 5). This means that it is still a long, uphill struggle for women before they can register a major breakthrough in the field of formal politics.

Table 7. Number and Percentage of Women Candidates in Recent Elections 1978-1988

<i>Election Year</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>%</i>
1978	IBPElections	536	33	6.16%
1984	BPElections	992	54	5.44%
1987	Congressional Elections Senator	84	14	16.67%
	Congresswoman	1,844	109	5.91%
1988	Local Elections			
	Governor	270	21	7.78%
	Vice-Governor	272	28	10.29%
	Provincial Board Members	1,913	157	8.21%
	City/Mun. Mayor	5,834	423	7.25%
	City/Mun. Vice-Mayor	6,373	460	7.22%
	City/Mun. Councilor	45,692	4,428	9.69%
	Total	63,810	5,727	8.98%

Source: COMELEC

It would seem that the ascendancy of a woman president is not a guarantee to score significant gains. Part of the answers to this poor showing of women in politics are discussed earlier. Foremost is the serious lack of a woman's consciousness that will liberate the women from a self-image that accepts male superiority over women, particularly in the exercise of power, that the woman's rightful place is the family, thus, leaving the field of politics primarily to men. This self-image of women has been internalized through a socialization process in the family, school and the church which teach the girls to give the family their topmost priority and to regard motherhood as the ultimate goal of womanhood. Once accepted, most of the Filipino women then create their own realities accordingly (Cortez 1983:70). Such are the attitudes that seem to dominate women during peace time; but during war time, such limiting perceptions readily banish. History bears witness to Filipino women who came out in the battle fields and even assumed the role of frontline commanders during the revolution against Spain and war against Japan.

From the testimonies of living women commanders during the Japanese occupation, it may be surmised that during wartime, women discard the superiority ideal of men as they fight the enemy. However, during peace time, women begin to retreat from actual political battle ground to the bedroom of their homes. The minimal number of women candidates is a good indication of this change.

On the part of the electorate, the most recent data on the extent of the Filipino electorate's bias against women candidates showed very optimistic developments.

According to partial reports of the nationwide survey by the UCPA Elections Project and its regional teams, it was revealed that about 60% of the respondents said that they could vote for women candidates while only 16% explicitly answered in the negative. When probed about their answer, the reasons given by those who said they would vote for women are: "women are more responsible," "women have no vices," "women are not or less corrupt than men," and "women are more sincere." The number of non-committal answers reached a significant level at 26% while the rest did not answer the question. (See Table 8)

**Table 8. Leadership Preference for Women Candidates
(Will you vote for women candidates?)**

	<i>Male</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	6,184	54.14%	7,433	58.58%
No	1,955	17.12%	1,976	15.57%
Neutral/ Abstained	3,282	28.74%	3,280	25.85%
Total	11,421	100.00%	12,689	100.00%

Profile of Women Candidates

Although 109 women candidates ran in the congressional race, only 102 (93.58%) had their certificates of candidacy available at the central office of the COMELEC. Likewise, of the 5,517 women who ran for positions in the 1988 local elections, only the certificates of candidacy of 4,501 (88.16%) of the total number are available. Hence, the socio-demographic profile presented in the subsequent paragraphs are those of the candidates whose certificates of candidacy are on file.

Civil Status. Table 9 shows that among the 102 female congressional candidates with certificates of candidacy, 63 (61.76%) are married; 25 (24.51%) are single; 8 (7.84%) are widows and 6 (5.88%) are either divorced or separated from their husbands.

Of the 4,501 female bets with certificates of candidacy for the local elections, 3,341 (74.23%) are married while 591 (13.13%) are single. Out of the total female bets, there are also 550 (12.22 %) widows and nineteen (.42%) divorced or separated.

Table 9. Civil Status - Women Candidates

	<i>Single</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Divorced/ Separated</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>Total</i>
Congressional House	25 24.51%	63 61.76%	6 5.88%	8 7.84%	102 100.00%
Senate	3 21.43%	9 64.29%	0 0.00%	2 14.29%	14 100.00%
Local Elections	591 13.13%	3,341 74.23%	19 0.42%	550 12.22%	4,501 100.00%

Age. Thirty four (33.33%) of the 102 candidates for congressional seats are between 45-54 years old while 30 (29.41%) belong to the 35-44 years age bracket. On the other hand, female bets who are between 55-64 years old number 23 (22.55%); while the younger set who are between 25-34 years old, account for 9 (8.82%). There are 6 female bets (5.88%) of the total who are 65 years old and above. (See Table 10)

In the local elections, of the 4,501 female aspirants, those belonging to the age bracket 45-54 years got the biggest share with 1,364 (30.30%) of the total; followed closely by those of the 35-44 age bracket with 1,170 (25.99%). The more mature set, the 55-64 years old women bets, numbered 839 (18.64% of the total); while there are 598 (13.29%) female aspirants who belong to the 25-34 age bracket. The youngest candidates, whose ages are between 18 to 24, number 143 (3.18%); while the most senior candidates those who are 65 and over number 387 (8.60%).

Table 10. Age - Women Candidates

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-over	Total
Congressional House	0 0.00%	9 8.82%	30 29.41%	34 33.33%	23 22.55%	6 5.89%	102 100%
Senate	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	5 35.71%	2 14.29%	6 42.86%	1 7.14%	14 100%
Local Elections	143 3.18%	598 13.29%	1,170 25.99%	1,364 30.30%	839 18.64%	387 8.60%	4,501 100%

Occupation. Table 11 presents data on the occupation of women candidates. Twenty nine female candidates (28.43%) in the congressional elections are businesswomen; 19 (18.63%) are legal practitioners; 12 (11.76%) are housewives; another 12 (11.76%) are physicians; and 11 (10.78%) are teachers. There are 7 (6.86%) former government officials; 4 (3.92%) employees; and 3 (2.94%) socio-civic leaders.

A significant finding on the local elections is that the housewives took the greatest opportunity of the democratic space after 1986. Probably inspired by President Aquino's case, the housewives (1,407 or 31.26%) accounted for the biggest number of women candidates recorded in Table 11.

The second biggest group numbering 1,029 (22.86%) are businesswomen. Teachers account for 488 (10.84%); farmers 342 (7.60%); while practitioners of medicine and other allied medical professions constitute 328 (7.29%). There are 226 (5.02%) employees; 216 (4.80%) former government officials; 170 (3.78%) college students; 64 (1.42%) practitioners of vocational skills and 63 (1.40%) socio-civic workers. The remaining 28 (.62%) are either engineers or architects. Ninety two (2.04%) are religious layworkers, preachers, bus conductresses, waitresses/receptionists and mail sorters.

Political Affiliation. Data on the political party affiliation of women candidates are given in Table 12. For the House of Representatives, 35 (34.31%) of the total of 102 contenders chose not to affiliate with any political party by running as independents. Among Cory's magic ticket running under the banner of the administration coalition, 14 (13.73%) were females; 8 (7.84%) ran under Lakas ng Bansa; while those who were part of the slate of PDP-LABAN also had 8 (7.84%). Ten female candidates (9.80%) carried the torch of pro-administration Liberal Party; while another 10 were evenly distributed among other pro-administration parties, UNIDO and Nacionalista Party, each with 5 bets (4.90%). Local parties had also placed their support behind 9 female aspirants (8.82%).

A total of 14 female aspirants for the senatorial seats were either fielded by different political parties or launched their independent candidacy. Out of the fourteen, 8 (57.14%) candidates opted to run independently, 6 of whom were endorsed by the Emancipated Scientists of the Philippines, while two were supported by a minor political party.

Table 11. Occupation - Women Candidates

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Congressional Elections</i>		<i>Senatorial Elections</i>		<i>Local Elections</i>	
		<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>
Housewife	12	(11.76)	1	(7.14)	1,407	(31.26)
Businesswoman	29	(28.43)	6	(42.86)	1,029	(22.86)
Teacher	11	(10.78)	4	(28.57)	488	(10.84)
Ex-Government Official	7	(6.86)	1	(7.14)	216	(4.80)
Employee	4	(3.92)	1	(7.14)	226	(5.02)
Medical Practitioner	12	(11.76)	0	(0.00)	328	(7.29)
Farmer	2	(1.96)	0	(0.00)	342	(7.60)
College Student	0	(0.00)	0	(0.00)	170	(3.78)
Lawyer	19	(18.73)	0	(0.00)	48	(1.07)
Vocational Skills	0	(0.00)	0	(0.00)	64	(1.42)
Socio-Civic Leader	3	(2.94)	1	(7.14)	63	(1.40)
Engineer/Architect	0	(0.00)	0	(0.00)	28	(0.62)
Others	3	(2.94)	0	(0.00)	92	(2.04)
Total	102	(100.00)	14	(100.00)	4,501	(100.00)

UPP-KBL, one of the parties strongly opposed to the government, included 3 females (21.43%) in its slate. On the other hand, the administration coalition of PDP-LABAN-Lakas ng Bansa reserved two slots for women out of the male-dominated 24-seat slate. One female candidate was fielded by the ANP-Partido ng Bayan.

Again in the 1988 local elections, 1,282 (28.48%) of the total 4,501 female aspirants for local elective offices opted to run as independents. The administration coalition ticket included 681 (15.13%) of the total female contenders; while 610 (13.55%) joined the Liberal Party wagon. There were 638 (14.17%) who were affiliated with Lakas ng Bansa and 574 (12.75 %) with PDP-LABAN.

Table 12. Political Party Affiliation - Women Candidates

<i>Political Party Affiliation</i>	<i>Congressional Elections</i>		<i>Senatorial Elections</i>		<i>Local Elections</i>	
		<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>
Lakas ng Bansa	8	(7.84)	0	(0.00)	638	(14.17)
PDP-LABAN	8	(7.84)	0	(0.00)	574	(12.75)
Liberal Party	10	(9.80)	0	(0.00)	610	(13.55)
UNIDO	5	(4.90)	0	(0.00)	210	(4.67)
Nacionalista Party	5	(4.90)	0	(0.00)	201	(4.47)
Administration Coalition	14	(13.73)	2	(14.28)	681	(15.13)
UPP-KBL	4	(3.92)	3	(21.43)	101	(2.24)
Partido ng Bayan	4	(3.92)	1	(7.14)	30	(0.67)
Local Party	9	(8.82)	0	(0.00)	174	(3.87)
Independent	35	(34.31)	8	(57.14)	1,282	(28.48)
Total	102	(100.00)	14	(100.00)	4,501	(100.00)

On the other hand, Doy Laurel's UNIDO fielded a total of 210 (4.67%) female contenders for various positions, while the conservative Nacionalista Party supported 201 women (4.47%). Only 101 (2.24%) of the female bets in the list were affiliated with the pro-Marcos UPP-KBL and 30 (.67%) were bets of the leftist Partido ng Bayan.

It is quite notable that a great percentage of women candidates in the 1987 and 1988 elections ran for various elective positions without the endorsement nor support of any political party. This phenomenon may indicate any or all of the following: (1) women would probably need a type of political party different from the traditional ones dominated by men to launch their candidacies; (2) prevalence of centralized decisionmaking in the choice of official candidates in established political parties may not be conducive to the broadening of women's political opportunities; and (3) more than majority of interviewed women candidates in Metro Manila and Rizal province who ran under the banner of several political parties were personally handpicked by party top brass, only a few were chosen through a party convention.

Possibly the existing political parties cannot accommodate the sudden increase in the number of interested women candidates so that when they were not chosen as official bets, they ran as independents. In the case of certain provinces in the Ilocos region, women candidates preferred not to be identified as Marcos loyalists nor as *balimbings* so they opted to run independently.

The formation of Kababaihan Para sa Inang Bayan or Women for the Motherhood (KAIBA) as an all-women political party, calls for an assessment of its performance especially on its purposes, memberships, strategies and party ideology. The disparaging performance of KAIBA candidates during the 1987 congressional elections calls for a more careful analysis of the party's level of organizational development as well. The fact that the party became dormant in the 1988 local elections, less than a year after the 1987 congressional elections, calls for further research.

Issues Raised by Female Candidates. The quality of politics practiced by women candidates can be gleaned from the issues raised during election campaigns and the manner by which they carried out their campaigns. In the 1987 senatorial elections, the most prominent political issues that figured in the campaign sorties and platform of women candidates were the US military bases, communist insurgency, foreign debt, economic thrust, land reform, civilian-military relations, foreign policy, local autonomy, land reform and social justice. However, the stand of women aspirants, particularly the more popular ones, vary according to their political leanings and the official stance adopted by their party.

Nelia Sancho, the lone lady in the slate of the leftist ANP, consistently denounced the presence of the US military bases in the country because they undermine Philippine sovereignty. Moreover, she stood unequivocally for selective repudiation of the country's foreign debt. She was also very vocal against the military meddling on political affairs, the vigilantes and the country's dependent economy, and traced the roots of insurgency to

poverty, which she believed could be solved easily if the government would adopt a genuine land reform program to redistribute national wealth.

On the right side of the political spectrum, Eva Estrada Kalaw, the grand dame of the opposition was for the retention of the US bases and critical of what she perceived as "soft policy" toward insurgents. Kalaw also accused the Aquino government of having no definite economic plan and suggested a non-violent solution to the external debt problem and agrarian reform.

Taking the centrist position, Rasul and Shahani opted for a review of the American bases pact and recognized poverty as the root of insurgency. They expressed optimism that these problems could be resolved later. Both have faith on the role of the small capitalists and the agro-industrial sector in national development, arguing that economic recovery will not happen overnight, so does the redistribution of the country's wealth to achieve social justice.

Based on newspaper clippings, the more prominent political issues raised by female candidates in the local elections are peace and order, democratization, and the need for closer ties between government and the people. The prominent economic issues in the platform of women aspirants are economic recovery, unemployment and the call for the government to implement more livelihood programs. Among the top social issues raised by women bets are improvement of health/social services, education, better infrastructure/housing and redistribution of wealth through land reform. These findings are further elaborated by the UCPA Elections Research Team.

Among the 53 (33%) of the total 159 female bets in the National Capital Region (NCR) and the 35 in Rizal (79.55% of the 44 women aspirants in Rizal) who were interviewed, the leading political issues listed are "graft and corruption in government" and "political dynasty." Of the respondents in Metro Manila, 37.74% considered these issues number one, while 25.71% for those in Rizal mentioned these. Following closely is the issue on "peace and order," which was ranked number two in the list of 16.98% of female bets in NCR and 11.43% in Rizal. Next to "peace and order" are the issues on "democratization" and "political stability" cited by 9.43% and 2.86% of the women candidates in NCR and Rizal, respectively. No interviewee indicated that "communist insurgency" is an issue in the polls.

On economic issues, both "rising prices" and "employment" are topmost for 17.14% of the women candidates in Rizal and 39.62% in the NCR. The social issues raised by women candidates in both areas include "social services," "housing," "women," "youth," "child abuse" and "prostitution."

The 88 women bets in Rizal and NCR interviewed for the study were also asked what were the major issues on women and minors that they and their parties have raised and included in their campaign platforms. The issue on "employment/livelihood" for women was in the top list of 14 (26.42%) respondents in the NCR and 14 (40%) in Rizal.

"Prostitution," "immorality" and "education" were second in the list of social issues in Metro Manila, followed closely by "youth development" and child abuse.

On the other hand, 12 or 34.29% of women candidates interviewed in Rizal answered that they and their parties did not raise any single issue on women during the campaign. Of the total respondents, 9 (25.71%) said that "prostitution" and "immorality" are major issues on women, landing third in the ranking of issues. Only 5 (14.29%) of total interviewees in Rizal and 1 (1.89%) in NCR considered women in depressed areas or urban poor women, as another area of concern.

Campaign Strategies. From the responses of the 88 interviewed women candidates in NCR and Rizal, "house-to-house" campaign was the strategy most commonly adopted by women aspirants in the 1988 local polls. This was confirmed by 35 (66.04%) of the total interviewees. The second strategy was "public rallies" utilized by 23 (43.40%) in Metro Manila and 20 (57.14%) in Rizal. While 12 respondents (22.64%) of the total in NCR said that they had "debates/caucuses" as campaign strategies, nobody resorted to this in Rizal. However, "doleouts," "leaflets/posters" and other strategies such as "motorcades" and "alay-lakad," were adopted by only 3 (8.5%) out of the 88 respondents in NCR and Rizal. In Metro Manila, "sponsorship of socio-civic activities" and "distribution of leaflets/posters" were the strategies adopted by 6 (11.32%) of the women interviewed.

To promote the cause of women during the campaign, the female aspirants from NCR and Rizal adopted the strategy generally utilized by their party. Only a few candidates in both areas adopted more imaginative and specialized campaign strategies, such as "organizing seminars" with 4 (7.55%) in NCR; and "holding cultural shows on women issues" one each from NCR and Rizal. In the NCR, 16 (30.19%) of the respondents used "house-to-house campaign" and only 5 (14.29%) did this in Rizal. In Rizal, 40% of the interviewees did not adopt any particular strategy to promote the cause of women in their campaign, compared to only 28.30% in the NCR.

Women candidates did not figure prominently in terms of using the "buy and scare" tactic as a campaign strategy. The political morality that sanctions violence in the struggle for power, even through the electoral process, is subscribed mostly by male politicians and their male political leaders. Data on electoral violence that marred Philippine elections in 1984 and 1986 indicate that election-related violence are committed by men victimizing lower class men, political rivals and women (de Guzman and Tancangco 1985; 1987:128). Worse, this phenomenon of electoral violence is taken as something "natural" in bitter political struggles for dominance where the weaker sex has NO place at all. The prevalence of the three Gs—guns, goons and gold—in Philippine elections has made electoral politics an exclusive power game for men. Even with the ascendancy of the First Woman President after an electoral contest characterized by "buy and scare" tactics, frauds and irregularities at every stage of the electoral process presided and instigated mainly by men, the level and quality of Philippine electoral politics seem not to have changed substantively. Could this belief be at the bottom of the insignificance of female representation in elective posts in this country? Through the years, the representation of women in public elective posts remains nil.

Leadership Qualities. Women bets interviewed in the National Capital Region and Rizal ranked "moral integrity and honesty" as the foremost quality of a good elected official. The "pro-masses" stance of the candidates ranked second in both areas. "Leadership capability, "platform of government," past performances marked by an impressive "(record of) achievements/services," and "sense of nationalism" were also cited as the qualities that would make a good leader.

Other attributes of political leaders that were cited are as follows: "talent/education/intelligence," "popularity/personal appeal," "party/organizational affiliation," "winning chance" and "high social status."

A more qualitative assessment of the leadership qualities preferred and put into practice by women is suggested by the comments about women oppositionists during the height of Marcos' dictatorial regime. At a time when only a few, mostly women, dared to do so at their own risks, the women fearlessly criticized Marcos and his family. During the 1984 parliamentary elections, women candidates in Manila, Quezon City and Makati showed their mettle by running against Marcos' candidates. In 1986, it is a woman who was pitted against a well-entrenched dictator. The courage and integrity of these women earned for them the recognition that in the Philippines during the time of authoritarian rule, "it is the women who have the balls." Although they constitute a minority, the courage, determination and sincerity shown by these women candidates would suffice to justify a critical re-examination of the perception that women belong to the weaker sex.

Conclusion

The present level of understanding and practice of politics in the Philippines suggests that change is long overdue and that substantive change is slow in coming particularly among the elite section of the population. The same is true with the persistent notion on the nature of women (as the weaker sex, half-human and destined to be domesticated) that supports male dominance in politics during peacetime.

Some may argue that there is a forced connection between women and politics. This paper has attempted to argue otherwise. Based on the data presented, it can be said that male dominance in politics is critical in preventing Filipino women from attaining full equality with their men. Under normal circumstances, male dominance in the political sphere insures monopoly of male control over all the decisionmaking centers affecting both men and women. By default, women relinquish to men all the powers to decide not only for their own destiny but also for the entire nation, 50% of whom are women.

Even if Filipino women (whether as candidates, political oppositionists and voters) are found to be less vulnerable to political compromises and do not succumb easily to electoral violence and manipulative practices instigated mainly by male politicians, Filipino women, in general, still shy away from the political arena. A golden opportunity could be missed if women, who are generally believed to be more sincere, highly moral and equally competent as men in assuming political leadership, continue to believe in their disabilities stemming from their being women. With the recognition that women have less vices,

possess moral authority and integrity along with competence and leadership capability, the entry of Filipino women from all sectors and classes into the electoral arena could have tremendous impact in hastening the process of effecting substantive political change.

The occupation of the topmost executive position by a woman however, does not mean an immediate broadening of political opportunities for Filipino women. With the highly personalistic type of politics based on family alliances and relations of patronage and clientage left unchanged, only the upper and middle class women are given the opportunities to run for top elective positions. Although the entry of an increasing number of housewives into politics is a significant development in itself, the higher elective positions are opened to women only in the absence of the recognized male politicians in the family. Women who succeeded to land in top positions are members of the established dynasties in the country and are mostly seen as substitutes of either their fathers or husbands.

What seems to be a bright spot in this area of broadening the pool of political leadership to include more women is the existence of established women professionals who have the educational training, competence and organizational base. Under a fair, honest and open competition for power, these women professionals can very well give their men rivals a good, clean fight as much as affording the electorate wider range of policy and leadership choices. In fact, women professionals may have the advantage over their male competitors as women may seem to fit better given the leadership preferences of the Filipino electorate. The Filipino electorate gives equal weight to personal integrity, sincerity and competence in their choice of leaders.

However, to counteract the overpowering impact of "guns, goons and gold" in the determination of winners, organization is necessary. Organized action empowers women of all classes. As they prove their creativity and organizational capability in various political activities, women's militancy and organizing fervor have to be sustained to build the women's vote. What seemed to be problematic is that while women could respond easily to challenges of revolutionary character, women tend to await major crises and political upheavals to stand up. Their lack of sustained organization and action is a major setback in empowering women. The failure of all-women political parties to mobilize women voters in building a solid women's vote and to sustain its activities during and off-election periods are cases in point.

A strong women's movement is needed to crystallize the relation of women's personal oppression with the larger problems in the society. A clearly nationalist perspective critical of gender, class and imperialist domination in the society is sadly lacking in most of the women's organizations identified in the study and even absent among the majority of the women candidates. To mobilize women for revolutionary struggles, nation-building and their own emancipation, a certain level of political consciousness must be inculcated in them. At present, this task is done more actively by women's organizations than by women candidates and winners.

The nurturing instinct of women, very much evident in the family, has a lot of good potentials in bringing into the consciousness of leaders (men and women alike) the need for the government to give priority to the poorest of the poor. This gives recognition to one's ability to provide services, particularly the poor and the powerless as the main legitimizing factor in their exercise of power. Concern for the most unfortunate, the needy and the weakest is said to be strongest among women and also among men who have transcended sex stereotyping and parochial interests. Once applied in favor of the needy, this nurturing principle could hasten the development of the "politics of service" that is the direct opposite of the "politics of promises and plunder."

Women elective leaders as much as men may carry with them the potential of imbibing a certain morality of politics that is premised on their understanding of the public nature of their position. As such, it is the collective interest instead of the more limited family-based interest that has to remain supreme in all cases. Transcending the narrow and parochial concerns of family interests presents a great challenge for both men and women political leaders in the Philippines.

A concrete example is the perceived overprotectiveness of President Aquino to some of her erring cabinet members and relatives who are even referred to by Vice-President Laurel as "relathieves." Such an attitude typifies the protective nature of women to her family members. What may be a virtue at the family level, however, may be a crime when viewed at the societal level. The seeming inability of Mrs. Aquino to transcend beyond family relations could be taken against future women candidates. What Mrs. Aquino might have contributed to the cause of broadening the political opportunities of women might be cancelled out by her failure to transcend her family and class interests during her rule.

By way of qualifying the "exceptional status" of Filipino women, it may be postulated that the Filipino women's achievements in many areas are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the Filipino women to attain full equality with men. For instance, the relatively egalitarian relations between men and women in the family does not include equality in the use of physical force. Such a male monopoly of the use of force begins with the family and extends to the polity which in the end formalizes male control over women in this country. The claim for an "exceptional status" on the part of the Filipino women has some empirical basis but not without certain qualification.

That despite the impressive presence and achievements of Filipino women in many fields of endeavor, clear male dominance in politics formalizes as much as institutionalizes male control over women. Pursuing this further, the study presents three conjectures based on the data presented. First, that male dominance in Philippine politics is critical in sustaining overall male dominance in the society and in preventing Filipino women from attaining full equality with their men. Secondly, such continuing male dominance in the political sphere anchored on male control of the decisionmaking processes and the use of arms is deeply rooted in the near or total monopoly of the use of violence by men during

peace time. Thirdly, that male monopoly over the use of force and violence is, in turn, sustained or sanctioned by the long-held biases on the nature of women internalized within the family.

In view of the above, Maria Mies' thesis (1981:25-27) that male dominance in the political sphere institutionalizes the male monopoly over arms which in the final analysis accounts for continuing control of men over women and of one dominant class over other classes, finds great relevance. Both in times of peace and war, the field of politics is the site where the process of winning the positions of power and the process of making decisions on the allocation and distribution of the society's resources as well as burdens transpire. Marred by power struggles among competing factions, representative and participatory mechanisms are continuously worked out to insure effective implementation of decisions and compliance from those affected.

While Filipino women participate actively in political affairs during revolutionary times, fighting side by side with Filipino men, the former tend to retreat to their homes and leave politics to men once the situation normalizes. Thus, in a situation where relative peace reigns, the women themselves subscribe to the myth of their being the weaker sex which they effectively debunk in times of significant economic and political upheavals. By allowing men to dominate politics, the women, in effect, give their tacit consent to an arrangement where men exercise monopoly of control over key decisionmaking centers including the use of arms and violence in all spheres of life. In this sense, the family as a basic unit of the society is not an isolated but a constituent part of the overall arrangement. To soften the impact of male dominance and male monopoly of the use of violence in a family set-up, the ideology of love and mother hood are strongly inculcated in the socialization process of girls and boys, sons and daughters within the family (Tancangco 1982:197-201).

The substance of inequality between the sexes that is rooted in the family is glossed over due to the belief that since family members are bound by mutual love and commitment to each other, deep cleavages rarely occur and, if so, their resolutions generally do not require violent means. However, the social reality of many battered women and children can no longer escape public attention due to an increasing magnitude of violence committed within the family. This brings us to probe into the reasons that sanction the application of brute force by men within the family. Even if physical violence undermines the very foundation of the family as a basic social institution, and strikes at the very core of family relations, such violation usually done by men is hidden from public view and censure by the fact that violence within the family assumes largely the character of a private affair. Given this, the legal means and other public avenues formally made available to women to seek redress become ineffective. Bolstering the claim of institutionalizing male violence in the family as it extends easily to the polity, is the preservation of male dominance in the key power centers and the military establishment. Thus, to understand the phenomenon of violence in the family, a critical examination of the long-held beliefs on the nature of women internalized through the socialization process that starts within the family along with a review of the underlying political philosophy on which the country's politico-legal system has been built are all in order.

While the above arguments acknowledge the level of Filipino women's achievements in many areas, it is also true that such achievements do not constitute sufficient conditions for women to break completely from male dominance. Like any other process of liberation, the process of liberating women from men is much more complex than could be thought.

At this juncture, it may be more meaningful to speak of "partnership" between men and women in all spheres of life, be it political, economic or socio-cultural in nature. Forging a kind of partnership premised on equality, mutual respect and concern for each other requires the elimination of the constraining elements that characterize a relation of dominance by either male or female. In line with this, the use of force or physical violence by a partner over the other is totally unacceptable.

Promoting the concept of partnership between men and women, both as an analytical category and as the objective of change in man-woman relations, makes a lot of sense. This is because dominance *per se* is objectionable and the substitution of female dominance over male dominance can be as equally oppressive.

In the Philippine context, the concept of partnership is deemed to be appropriate in analyzing the role of women in politics for three reasons. First, the relatively advanced degree of women's contributions in many fields and the increasing visibility of women as public functionaries is a positive indication of increasing public recognition of the competence and suitability of women to practice professions and occupy positions of responsibility. Secondly, the non-antagonistic stance of the term encourages a less passionate discussion of objective facts; in addition, the comprehensiveness of its relational meaning can enable us to capture concerns beyond the attainment of equality in political terms. Lastly, as partners, basic differences between men and women are recognized without assuming an unequal valuation that tend to favor men at the expense of women.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that more active and substantive participation of women in politics is the key to the meaningful operationalization of the concept of partnership between men and women.

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