

WOMEN IN POLITICS IN THE PHILIPPINES

By

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study is part of a comparative study of women's role in formal politics in one Pacific and six Asian countries sponsored by the UNESCO program on women and development. It is an attempt to present a more realistic situation of women's actual participation in politics in the Philippines as national and local politicians and as women citizens. There seems to be a prevailing belief that the Filipino women among Asian women have attained higher status because they have transcended most of the social and cultural constraints that other Asian women have been subjected to in their respective societies. It seems presumed that Filipino women having access to better education have also equal access to opportunities outside the homes including careers in politics. Because of the freedom that Filipino women have gained, they have openly participated in politics as active members in the national legislature and local governments in voting and campaigns during elections as well as in political mobilization for a cause. Women have also served in the bureaucracy.

From the day that the Bill of Rights,¹ which allowed the people to exercise the freedom of speech, association and assembly for redress of grievances, was introduced in the Philippines during the American colonial period, women political participation has been quite visible. When women were granted the right of suffrage in 1936,² which was the gain made by the demonstrations and lobbies by the women suffragettes, some women did not just stop at voting and campaign participation but also launched their candidacies for elective offices despite the odds that they had to hurdle.

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Women politicians have gone a long way since then. The Filipino women had competed strongly in a profession considered the preserve of astute men wherein competence was not the only criterion but adeptness in the art of statecraft as well as in political manipulation. Through the years, women got themselves elected to almost all positions available in the Philippine political system³ such as in the Philippine Legislature, the governorships of provinces, the mayorships of cities and municipalities, lesser political positions such as councilwomen of provinces, cities and municipalities as well as headships of barangay councils, the smallest units of government. Finally, a woman for the Presidency was legitimized by the Filipino people during the people power mobilization on February 22-25, 1986. Since the postwar period women have also occupied positions in the Cabinet and performed administrative functions in the bureaucracy. Women, too, have been appointed to the Judiciary — from the Justices of the Supreme Court down to the lesser courts all over the country. Women have also participated in the making of the Philippine Constitutions of 1973 and of 1987.

In the contemporary period, some ordinary women citizens have organized peasant and labor movements or have become members of these movements to pressure the government for the creation of policies beneficial to their groups. In the period of the '70s, a few women organizations had developed in opposition to the authoritarian rule of President Marcos.⁴ Presently, more women organizations have evolved not only to pressure government for welfare policies for women but to take sides in crucial national issues facing the nation. Women organizing is also taking place in the rural areas both for livelihood and political purposes. Women organizations all over the country today have the opportunity to network and dialogue among themselves to report on the nature of their works and achievements and identify the problems that women face in their respective areas. It appears that the process of networking allowed women to be more assertive. At the same time, it provided support for a more united position to push for legislative policies beneficial to women. But while women organizing has taken a more intelligent direction, it has not been clear as to how women issues and concerns are taken up by career women politicians.

While the Filipino women's role in politics gives the impression that so much has been achieved by the nature of their political participation, this study has gone on a more realistic inquiry on what is the actual situation of women participation in contemporary formal politics.

The study has looked into the actual role of career women politicians in the national legislature and as local officials as well as ordinary women citizens' participation in politics. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine the qualifications of women politicians in the country, their cultural, social and economic background and the factors that allowed their entry to politics.
2. To determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the women politicians.
3. To know the level of political awareness of ordinary, women citizens and the nature of their political participation in their respective communities.
4. To know the extent by which women in politics have transcended the cultural and social constraints and gender discrimination that Asian societies are noted for.
5. To find out whether women's participation in politics is spurred by a feminist ideology.

While the original study has three parts, the portions presented here are the historical review of women participation in politics in the Philippines and the actual role of women in formal politics during the contemporary period. The third part of the paper, (which is not included) here is the nature of participation of grassroots women in political activities.

The study on women in formal politics also includes the incumbent 21 women national legislators and 38 women local officials from the provinces.

Methodology

The researcher made the survey and interviews, using the questionnaires prepared by the UNESCO, on 40 women legislators who had served the Philippine Legislature from the period 1978 to 1990. For those who could not be reached by personal survey or interviews, their biodata which were available in the records of the Philippine Congress were studied and evaluated. Some articles that were written about them in the newspapers and magazines in the country were also used. The official proceedings of the Philippine Legislature were examined to determine the nature of their political participation and

productivity. The researcher is also deeply appreciative of the women legislators' cooperation particularly those who willingly accepted the questionnaires and filled them up as honestly as they could. The second group of women studied were the six members of the Constitutional Commission of 1986 to determine their contribution to the making of the present Philippine Constitution. Their biodata were examined as well as their output as recorded in the Commission's proceedings. In the first place, some of them who were interviewed considered themselves as non-politicians but merely competent professionals. The third group of women surveyed were 14 women local officials and politicians in a city in Mindanao. The women helpfully filled up the questionnaires and expressed their views on the nature of their political participation including the issues and problems that they have to face in politics. The last group of 30 women politicians were those who were either incumbents or were former local officials coming from different towns and cities. They were surveyed through the assistance of my students and by some friends who came from places outside of Metro Manila. Some of the respondents were their relatives and family friends. A total of 90 women politicians representing the national and local levels of government are considered the sample for women politicians in this study.

The sample for women citizens constitute a total of 350 interviewees. One hundred fifty of the total number represent the middle class and the other 200 represent the lower class women group. Seventy-five per cent of the middle class women citizens come from Metro Manila and 25 per cent come from a city in Mindanao. Of the lower class women, 25 per cent come from the small community in Metro Manila suburb known as the dumping place of garbage gathered from the city. In that area, there are supposed to be 400 poor families whose means of livelihood is scavenging. The second 25 per cent of the respondents are household helpers and shop helpers in Metro Manila. Finally, the last 50 per cent of the respondents are women who belong to organized groups like the urban poor, the peasant women group, the women in the labor force, and the women who identified themselves as the poor fisherfolk community. It is interesting to note the difference in the political awareness and political participation of the women belonging to organized groups and those who are just sedentary unorganized women. It must be mentioned here, however, that the UNESCO questionnaires were modified, simplified and translated so that these could be understood easily by the respondents.

The respondents were receptive to the survey although in certain cases some aspects of the questionnaire had to be explained to them. The most difficult aspect of the survey was setting the appointment for making the survey. The second difficult aspect was getting back the questionnaire. Because of its lengthiness, it required time for the respondent to sit down and reflect on the nature of the questions asked. For this reason, the researcher had to simplify the questionnaire into two pages for the women of the lower class who were not highly educated. The survey made in a city in Mindanao was done by a research associate who is an instructor of political science in a university in the area. That solved the problem of the language barrier. There was no problem communicating with the women politicians and the middle class respondents in English and for them to answer the questionnaires in their original form. Most respondents, however, were sensitive to the question on their monthly income which oftentimes they left out without answering. But the researcher has disregarded that as a criterion for classifying the respondent whether middle class or lower class. In the Philippines, one can easily tell the social status of a person whether upper, middle or lower class without using the income statistics as the immediate criterion. The kind of lifestyle and the educational and professional status of a person will place her in the middle class category. The same can be said of the respondents belonging to the lower strata of society.

The survey questionnaires were received from UNESCO in November, 1988 and were administered from that period until March, 1989. However, information on the output of women politicians had covered the period 1990. It became necessary also to continuously administer some questionnaires to obtain better answers. For instance, the survey on the organized women groups of the lower strata was done as a second try in order to find out how organized women groups will respond in comparison with those who are sedentary and not organized. The research that had to be done on the performance of the women legislators also took sometime to complete because of the voluminous materials to be examined in the archives of the Philippine Legislature. Collating the data was also a long and tedious process.

The questionnaires covered questions on the socio-economic-cultural background of women career politicians, their socialization process, exposure and training, entry into politics, problems in politics, attitude profile, views about women political participation, and their performance in office. The common women citizens were asked about their cultural background, political activities, their exposure to media and political awareness regarding issues and the degree of their involvement.

II. Women's Movements — A Historical Review

Women's movement in the Philippines can be classified according to its motivation — those that are politically motivated or those that are welfare oriented; or according to its class character — those led by elite women or those led by women of the masses; and also according to its ideological underpinning — those that have nationalist objectives or those that are feminist inspired. Feminism and the women movement is a current concern.⁵

When the women of the 1930s mobilized to be granted the right of suffrage under the law, the motive was political. It was also inspired by feminism and was led by an elite group of women. While it was feminist in character the women at that time were not aware of the term. Feminism is defined as

awareness of women's oppression and exploitation in society, at work and within the family and conscious action by women and even by men to change this situation. Anyone who recognizes the existence of sexism or discrimination on the basis of gender or male domination and patriarchy and who takes some action against it is a feminist.⁶

When peasant women joined the men in demonstration against the government in the 1930s and in the earliest postwar period over the issues of land tenancy, land distribution, landlord exploitation of the peasants and the inimical sharing system, the motivation was to promote the welfare of the peasants and the tillers of the soil against the landlords' interests. The peasant movement was a mass-oriented movement that expected government to work for social justice policy for the peasants. The ideological underpinning may be nationalism and socialism. Socialism in the Philippines also expresses the working class' aspiration for them to be able to control the mode of production. The same can be said of women participation in the labor demonstrations led by the men during the same period.⁷ Oftentimes the peasants and workers had supported each other in mass actions initiated by either group against the government.

During the Japanese occupation of the country from December 1941 to February 1944, the women who joined the HUKBALAHAP were motivated by nationalism and self-preservation. It cannot also be said that the class origin of these women were all from the peasant and the rural working class. Some of them came from middle class homes in the provinces and were college educated. But they were forced to take up arms to protect themselves and their

families from the enemy and other forms of abuses.⁸ Bravely, many of them fought like men in the field against the Japanese. After the war, however, the ideological underpinning became more prominent. These women were carried into the mainstream of socialist ideology because of government neglect to offer solution to the land question and the exploitative landlord-peasant relation to the detriment of the latter. The same was true with the women in the labor unions because of the perennial unfair labor practices that oftentimes took place.

Another aspect of women organizing in the Philippines is in the formation of civic associations to take care of the welfare of particular deprived groups in the society. There are hundreds of groups of this nature and oftentimes are led by elite and wealthy women who have so much to offer. Charity and civic works also helped these philanthropic women give direction to their lives. Together with these groups are the religious organizations that offer religious services as well as civic and welfare functions. But while there are several women groups of this nature all over the country, they cannot be characterized as women movement because each group works by itself and not in the context of a sustained coordinated effort as a united grouping of women for civic and welfare efforts to develop the country through the communities.

The most popular group of women in the Philippines are the career politicians. But these women have not organized themselves to be one in purpose. Each woman politician is a person distinct and separate from the other woman politician. The only common line among them is that they are all involved in introducing certain recommendations which they think should be the policies that should apply either for their respective communities or for the whole country. The other noted aspect about them is that they are in the profession that is in constant competition and possible conflict with the men. Women career politicians have increased their number since the immediate postwar period under the independent Philippine Republic to the present.

During the Marcos authoritarian rule, the women movement in the Philippines became more politically prominent and well organized.⁹ Ideological discussions conducted by study groups were oftentimes along socialist lines. The women who were involved in the political movement were indifferent to the idea of voting or participation in the referenda conducted several times during the period. By holding the referenda, Marcos had extracted his alleged mandate from the people. The women's political participation was manifested by the public demonstrations and rallies that they had conducted to oppose the

dictatorship. The women had taken much risk because of the suppressive policy of the government against any opposition to the regime. In fact some women were reported to have been arrested and tortured and some died.

The women who had participated in the movement against the dictatorship came from all walks of life: from the labor group and the peasant women, the studentry and women intelligentsia who took the lead. The involvement of women during the dictatorship was most significant because it meant that they had to forget their own safety and that of their families while putting up their political opposition. Some participants in the women movement during the Marcos period have rejoined the women movement under the Aquino administration. There was also a change in the names of the women organizations. The women movement today has become more attractive even for the less adventurous because the environment has comparatively become less suppressive. There are also incentives for women organizations to obtain funding for their projects from foreign donors.

Some women groups that participated during the EDSA Revolution on February 22-25, 1986 were not there for Mrs. Aquino nor for the military faction that broke away. The primary reason was to oust the dictator. But it can be said that there were women groups that were Cory Aquino's loyalists. These women belonged to the religious and cause-oriented groups. Some women groups, however, had moved away from the cause-oriented groups for various reasons after the Aquino government was established.

Under the Aquino administration there has been a more intelligent direction of the women movement. There have been more opportunities for networking and dialogue among women organizations from all over the Philippines. Women could discuss their problems and possible solutions and take common stand regarding women issues. There has been more education and discussion about gender issues and feminism as a women ideology. The less educated women were organized by the more intelligent women who oriented the former to the current political, ideological, welfare and gender issues. There has been extensive efforts to organize the women from all walks of life — the urban poor, the peasant women, the women in the factories, the women in the fishing villages, the domestic helpers from overseas who had come home, the indigenous women, even the enlightened prostitutes and entertainers, the women in media, and almost any sector where there are women.

But even while women were organized and given education and orientation to make them understand the gender issues and feminism, not all the women have fully absorbed the full significance of such. The issue that lower class women understand easily are those concerned with welfare and benefits. This conclusion is derived from the researcher's participation in three big workshops of hundreds of women from various sectors held in different places in Metro Manila at different dates during the period of the research.¹⁰ The biggest umbrella organization for women groups from all over the Philippines is the Women's Action Network for Development (WAND) composed of 76 women organizations representing various sectors. Another umbrella organization is the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA) composed of ten women organizations. The religious institutions have their own network composed of poorer women groups. The agenda of these three broad networks of women organizations include women development and welfare, gender issues and women empowerment. But there are other women organizations that are not part of these broad-networks of women groups. Colleges and universities have also organized women centers within their units. So far there are six universities in Metro Manila that have done this¹¹ A conservative estimate would place the number of women organizations in the country to 300. Some organizations, however, have their regional chapters or units.

Women from various sectors have agreed to organize as a result of a political consciousness that only as organized groups can women be effective in whatever endeavors they will undertake. Women when organized can become a potent political force. They had proven this during the period of the dictatorship and the ousting of that dictatorship. Under the Aquino administration the women movement have also taken more important political positions. Among these are the issues of the U.S. Military bases in the Philippines which some women groups would like to see terminated, the ban on nuclear weapons, the promulgation of the agrarian reform law which the rural women and the nationalistic women groups would like implemented effectively, and the position on what to do with the Marcos stolen wealth and the country's foreign debt. Recently, some women leaders and organizations have related the gender issues and feminism with the greater national issues at hand.

Participation in Politics

Women participation in politics in the Philippines has taken five forms:

participation by voting; campaigning for a particular candidate; becoming candidates themselves; assuming positions in the Cabinet or the bureaucracy; and organizing and mobilizing women for political empowerment as earlier discussed. The record showed that the number of women voters was 492,032 in 1937 when they first cast their votes on the plebiscite issue of women suffrage and also the election of local officials. By 1988, the number increased to 13,650,000. A study made by Luzviminda Tancangco¹² indicated that voter turn-out among women was higher than men in 18 out of 22 elections since 1947. In the 1988 election, it was 79.29 per cent for women while that of the men was only 68.64 per cent. This was based on the Commission on Elections statistics. Generally there were more women voters than men.

The Tancangco study also indicated the role of women as campaigners in various elections held in the Philippines. Campaigns were done not only on an informal basis as among friends and relatives but by more formal organization of women. Cited were the Women for Magsaysay for President Movement in 1953; the Blue Ladies for Marcos in 1969; the Osmeña Women's League and the Osmeña Pearls in 1981. During the 1986 Snap election, there were groups known as Cory's Crusaders, the UNIDO Ladies, the Volunteers for Cory and Doy, and the Antipolo Ladies for Cory and Doy. Women as campaigners were considered useful, not only as distributors of campaign materials but as charming entertainers, party hostesses and persuasive vote getters. In the 1987 congressional election the women umbrella organization known as GABRIELA campaigned for the candidacies of the Alliance for New Politics (ANP) which included a woman candidate in their slate. Unfortunately, she did not win.

There was also an all women political party, the Kababaihan Para sa Inang Bayan (KAIBA) formed in time for the 1987 Congressional elections. GABRIELA and other women groups supported the KAIBA candidate who won a seat in the 1987 Congressional election. But the votes for her did not all come from the women organizations. The elites in her district also supported her. The KAIBA is the second attempt of women to form an all-women political party. The first attempt was in 1950 which like the second, died a natural death.

The government since 1946 has been sympathetic to the participation of women in the Cabinet and other government bodies. There has been a woman appointed to the Cabinet of almost all the presidential administrations that had served the country. But the position that the lady cabinet member has perennially held was the portfolio for Social Welfare, a position often as-

sociated with woman service for the needy and the helpless. Under the Marcos twenty- year administration, aside form the Social Welfare portfolio occupied by women, the Ministry of Human Settlements was headed by Mrs. Imelda Marcos which had control of all the agencies of the government that attended to the social services in the country or what was termed at that time as "the eleven basic needs of the people." When the Aquino administration assumed office, there were three women Cabinet Secretaries that she appointed and eight women undersecretaries out of a total of eight Cabinet secretaries and 66 undersecretaries. But as the Aquino government continued in office, the women Cabinet members were replaced by men. There is now only one woman in the Cabinet representing the Social Welfare Department. There are two women Justices in the Supreme Court and two women are heads of constitutional offices, the Commission on Civil Service and the Commission on Human Rights.

Women were candidates in the various local elections held in the country since 1947 and had served in various capacities. There were women provincial governors, mayors of cities and municipalities, councilwomen and provincial board members. Many also served as heads of their barangays. Mrs. Imelda Marcos was appointed Metro Manila Governor from 1978 to 1986 with jurisdiction over four cities and thirteen municipalities. Her control over the Metropolitan Manila, local governments and the various agencies under the umbrella of the Ministry of Human Settlements providing eleven basic social services to the country made her very powerful. The local election of January 18, 1988 had the most number of women candidates which was 5,517 in all. The number of positions to be contested was 16,904. Finally the election results showed that there were 1,678 women who got elected out of the 5,517 candidates.¹³ This number of winners constituted 9.92 per cent of the total elective positions available. The male candidates occupied 90.08 per cent of the available positions.

Candidacy to the positions in the Philippine Legislature was also attractive to the women. Electoral contests in this area were considered difficult and expensive but the record showed that a number of women were able to hurdle the election challenge and had won seats in the House of Representatives and the Philippine Senate. A representative to the House was elected by the constituent district. During the First Congress (1946-1949), there was one woman representative from the lone district of Bukidnon. During the Second Congress (1949-1953) another woman won a seat from the lone district of Bataan. For

the third Congress (1953-1957) a woman won a seat from the First district of Capiz. For the Fourth Congress (1957-1961) another lone woman won a seat representing a province in the Bicol region. During the Fifth Congress (1961-1965) there were two women representatives, one representing the Third district of Albay and the other the First district of Pampanga. During the Sixth Congress (1965-1969), there were six women winners. The districts that they represented were the lone district of Batanes, the First district of La Union, the Third district of Albay, the First district of Pampanga, the Third district of Iloilo and the Second district of Leyte. For the Seventh Congress (1969-1972), there were two women who won seats, one from a district in Iloilo and the other from a district in Pangasinan.

The record of the Philippine Senate showed that since 1955, there were women Senators elected to the Senate. Senators were elected at large by the nation's electorate. The first woman Senator was elected during the 1955-1961 Senate; another woman Senator won during the 1959-1965 term. A woman Senator won for the 1963-1969 term while there were two women senators who won seats during the 1967-1973 Senate. One woman Senator was elected during the 1965-1971 Senate. She was re-elected in the 1971 Senatorial election. But while it was encouraging that women had broken the barriers in national politics, their membership in the National Legislature did not even constitute one per cent of the total membership dominated by the men. The incumbent members of Congress in 1972 were not able to finish their terms of office because when President Marcos declared martial law on September 21, 1972, he did so when Congress was in recess. He did not call for the resumption of the Legislature and in effect declared the Congress abolished.

It was not until July, 1978 that the new unicameral legislature known as the Interim Batasang Pambansa was convened after an election was held. There were women who participated during the two elections conducted for the Batasang Pambansa. There were ten women who won seats during the 1978-1984 Assembly and another ten seats were occupied by women for the 1984-1989 Assembly. But this second Assembly was abolished after the snap election of February 7, 1986. Mrs. Corazon Aquino was legitimized as the new President by the support of people power which ousted President Marcos. The next Congressional election was held on May 11, 1987 under the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Twenty-one women gained seats in the bicameral Congress: 18 in the House of Representatives, two in the Senate and one was appointed as a sectoral representative.

III. WOMEN CAREER POLITICIANS

Their Family and Socio-Economic Status

Women career politicians generally come from elite and middle class families. Seventy per cent of the women who won seats in the three national Legislatures being studied have elite background. To be an elite in the Philippines means one must come from a traditionally rich family (old rich), the family has been prominent in the community where they originated and must also be known in the country. Members of the family must have served important private and government offices in the past or in the present by virtue of their prestige and prominence. Most elite families were also known to have provided leadership in their respective communities. While elites are the recognized rich people in the community, it is difficult to measure how much wealth they have. But one criterion is that the public are aware of their business interests in the community and the nation.

Middle class socio-economic background means that the family or the person is not wealthy but had attained college education. The expertise through education allowed the person to have a lucrative position in the place of work. The person can afford to own a house and all the basic luxuries of modern living, the maintenance of a car or two, can send all her/his children to private schools. Thirty per cent of the women in the three National Legislature under consideration can be classified as middle class.

The women who served in the Constitutional Commission of 1986 considered themselves competent professionals. While they preferred to be classified as middle class and all were working women, a closer examination has shown that 33 per cent of them can be classified as elite.

An examination of the composition of each Philippine legislature revealed that the women members of the Interim Batasang Pambansa of 1978-1984 can be classified as 70 per cent elite and 30 per cent middle class. The social background of the women membership in the 1984-1986 Batasang Pambansa indicated a 90 per cent elite and 10 per cent middle class origin. The socio-economic background of the twenty-one women of the present Congress can be classified as 62 per cent elite and 38 per cent middle class.

The nature of political elections in the Philippines has been so expensive, despite the rule against election expenditures, that only the rich and those with money can afford to compete. Prestige and popularity are not sufficient factors

in winning. Wealth counts very much. The wealthy women who can afford to compete in the national elections can do so by virtue of their birth, their marriage to rich husbands who are supportive of their political inclination and by their own business acumen to make money. The records show that a few of these women members of the Legislature before their election were holding high positions in business corporations. Some of these business holdings are established nationwide but most are confined to their region of origin and in Metro Manila. Several of the women are closely related to other known politicians in the country who have served in the past and the present governments. It is interesting to know that at least four of the incumbent women in Congress are related to three or four other members of the same Congress. The women politicians are not to be blamed for this kind of situation. Elite politics have often brought about such a situation. As had been earlier stated, the people who have money have better chances of winning the elections. It will therefore, turn out that the wealthy elites coming from the same clan will, have better chances of winning as long as they are distributed to the different electoral districts.

Patronage politics have prevailed in the country ever since and the women politicians have been benefited by the practice both in the national and local levels of government. But it must also be noted that politics in the country encourages a bandwagon mentality. Politicians capitulate to a particular presidential candidate because of the prospect that such a person will have a surer chance of winning. When finally the presidential candidate sits in power as the winner, the more that the minor politicians and even the important ones would polarize around the presidency. This has happened in 1986. In the 1987 and 1988 elections the general sentiment in the country was to oust the politicians identified with the Marcoses. Several from the cause-oriented groups became the political candidates overnight to provide the alternative leaders which the people could choose from in the attempt to get rid of the politicians identified with the previous regime. The majority of the winners in both the congressional and the local elections held in 1987 and 1988, respectively, were from the cause-oriented groups who belonged to the broad coalition of groups supporting President Corazon Aquino. Several women winners in these elections were identified with the pro-Aquino coalition. As had earlier been indicated, these two elections encouraged more women to be candidates and more women came to occupy political seats.

The women politicians in the local government come from families considered prominent and well-to-do in the locality where they were elected to office. Most of these families are considered the elites of the community. Before their election to office, many were involved in socio-civic activities by which they had gained recognition from the residents. Several had been engaged in activities that involved public service to the community. It must be noted also that seventy-five per cent of the local women politicians, before their assumption to the elective office were also working women. Their husbands can be described to be stable businessmen or professional practitioners that earn substantially. Both husbands and wives are members of almost all the available civic and social organizations in the community. They may be the people whom the poorer members of the community can run to for financial assistance when in need or when there is an emergency. They may not be so rich as to afford all the dole outs that the less fortunate members of the community would require but they are people who are ready and willing to give their money and time to charity work and a helping hand to others. They are also willing to spend their funds during elections. But while the women politicians in the local government are generally recognized as the prominent women and the elites of the community, the socio-economic status of at least 75 per cent would be middle class and only 25 per cent would fall under the category of the traditionally known elites. Some of the women politicians in the local government would cite their parents as farmers or people engaged in some form of agricultural activities. Being farmers means that they own substantial land to be able to send their children to college. Most of local women politicians gained affluent status after they set up their own homes. Not all local women politicians are rich. People elected them to office in recognition of what they had done for the community or the residents or what they are capable of doing. In the local communities, the people also give recognition to the intellectual capacity, good naturedness and humility of candidates. If the candidates have these traits then they also have chances of getting elected even if they are not rich.

It must also be taken into consideration that in the local election of January 18, 1988, the President's bandwagon had carried almost all the candidates under the yellow banner to victory. But in the subsequent poll to elect the barangay officials in April 1989, voters were reported to be not so enthusiastic to participate.

Socialization Process

Almost all career women politicians had actively participated in social organizations, civic and charity works. They had shown assertiveness and assumed leadership roles during their student days or in the practice of their professions. Several of the national women politicians came from families with access to politicians and politics or had other members of their respective families engaged in active political careers or had served the government. They also had friends who were politicians or relatives of politicians. When young they had been exposed to political discussions on matters related to government and politics. As members of the community they had displayed strong sense of social consciousness and political awareness and concern.

The women national legislators have interesting academic profiles. Most of them had obtained their education from exclusive schools in the country. Several of them had pursued special studies or degree programs abroad. The women who had served during the Interim Batasang Pambansa of 1978-1984 had the following academic qualifications: two had Master of Arts degree in Education; 8 graduated with four-year college degrees in Education, Commerce, Bachelor of Arts, and Economics. Two of the women graduated with honors, a *magna cum laude*, and a *cum laude*. The women legislators elected during the 1984-1986 Batasang Pambansa included three lawyers, one had a Master of Laws; one had a degree in social work; one had a Master of Arts in Education; one graduated with Bachelor of Economics, *magna cum laude*; one had gone through special courses in languages, painting and designing in a European school; while two were high school graduates but rich with experience in private business, government service and public life.

The women members of the Constitutional Commission included two lawyers, one, a human rights lawyer and the other a former Justice of the Supreme Court; one woman had been active in media and holds a doctorate degree in English; one was a registered nurse with a doctorate in public health; one was a nun, an educator and social worker; and one was a civic leader with training in the musical art. The incumbent women legislators elected for the 1987-1992 Congress have the following degrees: 2 medical doctors, 2 with doctoral degrees, 2 with master of arts degrees; 2 educators, 11 with B.A. or B.S. degrees, 4 of whom graduated with honors while there are 2 college undergraduates. The women legislators who may have appeared lacking in formal academic degrees have compensated such shortcoming by their wealth, ex-

perience, social status and powerful political access. The ages of the women national politicians ranged from 35 to 70 years old.

Of the local women politicians included in the study, 2 had completed degrees in social work, 10 finished Bachelor of Arts degrees; 5 graduated with Bachelor of Science degrees; 8 graduated with Bachelor of Science in Education; one with a doctorate in Education; 9 with law degrees, one finished secretarial science and 2 high school graduates.

Prior to entering politics, some women had worked as teachers, office-managers, radio announcers, company cashiers, sales representatives, and social workers. Some had indicated that they were self-employed with their own businesses and were more of housewives until convinced that they should join politics. Almost all had been active in socio-civic works. Some had engaged in campaigns for particular candidates in the past, usually for relatives or close friends.

Majority of the incumbents had indicated that they were involved in the activities of the cause-oriented groups in their communities after the Ninoy Aquino assassination. Most of them had indicated their anti-Marcos posture. Those who were not incumbents but were former politicians were engaged in private businesses. Ninety-five per cent of the local women politicians are married and their ages ranged from 22 to 66 years. Ninety per cent of them are Catholics and 10 per cent are Christians. Most of those who are married have adult children who are already engaged in their own professions or have families of their own.

All the women career politicians hire helpers, housekeepers, cooks, and drivers and other household staffs perhaps to compensate for their absence and lack of time to perform their household chores for the family. It is the practice in the Philippines, though, for affluent households to have helpers. But it is noted that some of these important national women politicians had indicated that they tried to do some cooking for the family when they have the time. It is fortunate that in the Philippines it is easy to hire helpers especially when they have to be in the employ of important people in the community. While in the performance of their duties these women politicians are often dependent on the technocrats. A competent technical man will be helpful to her otherwise it will be folly for a woman to be in politics when not so trained with administrative and political requirements of the job. The wise women politicians have also media men and image builders in their employ. The

public image of the politicians depends on the competence of the public relations men.

Entry into Politics

In most cases, the women career politicians' entry into politics especially at the national level, were upon the encouragement of male relatives or friends who have access to politics or are in politics themselves. Those who have family members in politics, either had the father, grandfather, uncle, brother, husband or cousins in politics. Some of these male politicians had already established reliable mass bases in their respective communities. It is presumed that women were encouraged to be in politics by people predisposed to political power. There is also a prevailing attitude that politics runs in the family. Some women politicians were assured of mass support through their relatives in politics who had access to well organized political machine and party support. The women's social experience and good public relations contributed to their gaining votes.

The reasons given by some recent women politician for their entry into politics can be summarized as follows: it was by pure chance; their being the community civic leader; the desire to change the status quo where politics was controlled by the traditional politicians (referring to the Marcos group); the Ninoy Aquino assassination; dictates of the people; necessity of the time (referring to the need to take a political position in a crisis); persuasion of friends among the cause-oriented groups; the desire to fight Marcos and his cronies; the desire to render service to the people; to prove their capability for leadership; to test their popularity with the people; to speak on behalf of the youth (youth representative); and to bring people closer to the political leader. They had overlooked that one reason will be to promote and protect the women's interests.

Present Preoccupations

The new women politicians had indicated that there were obstacles to their entry into politics. Among them were the lack of finances for campaigns; they were virtual unknowns; they did not have the political leaders to help their cause; there was difficulty in contending with other politicians who had well-established national statures. The most serious problem was the constraints and responsibilities demanded of politicians, at the same time, the demands of their responsibilities to the home and family. While in office, the obstacles included intrigues from the oppositions, letters of threats sometimes from insur-

gents, and black propaganda from rivals. The women politicians have also to contend with the pressures of internal politics.

At the time of their election, the women in the present Congress were members of the different political parties which constituted the coalition that supported Mrs. Aquino. The distribution was as follows: UNIDO-4; UNIDO-LP-1; LP-Salonga-1; PDP-Laban-5; LB- PDP-Laban-2; NP-1; LB-1 and Kaiba-1. The four other women legislators launched their candidacies as independents. The sectoral representative for women and the disabled did not belong to any political party nor did she agree to affiliate with any. She was a Presidential appointee. The other woman representative appointed by the President was not confirmed by the Commission on Appointments. She elevated her case to the Supreme Court but lost. After two years in office some of these women have changed their party affiliations following the prevailing political polarization taking place in the Senate and the House of Representatives. Their respective party affiliation at present are indicated as follows: LDP-11; LP-2; UNIDO-2; KAIBA-1; NP-1; and Independent-1. The same party polarization is also taking place at the local level.

Career History

Ninety per cent of the incumbent women politicians in the national and local governments do not have lengthy careers in politics as stepping stones to their present positions. In the past administrations, at least 20 per cent of the women national politicians had built their political careers by serving first in the elective local government positions before they launched their candidacies for the national elective offices. Some of these women had been re-electionists and, therefore, had learned the political game through the process. Some local women politicians in the past had been in office for several terms and had developed competence for the job after sometime. There were cases where the so-called local political dynasties had dominated the political leadership for several years, wherein the local elective positions had been held by one family or one clan and women members were no exception as office holders.

Views and Attitudes

In the Philippines there is no marked discrimination against a woman politician as had been shown in the earlier discussions and historical political experience. It is interesting to note that the role model that the women politician in the survey had cited were all men politicians who had track records for their statesmanship and able leadership tested through the years of

their public service. The reasons for the choice of their role model can be summarized briefly in the following: competence, outstanding achievements, leadership, political ideas, personality, dynamism, dedication, concern for the poor, concern for the victims of the military abuses, and statesmanship.

Women politicians think that the source of their political support came from their friends, the youth, the general public, the masses, the women, and also the men. Most of the women incumbents are not members of organized women groups. But they think that the individual women politician can still be effective in mobilizing support for themselves even if they are not members of organized groups or political parties. In the real sense, the women are not proportionately represented in politics and the respondents think that there should be more representation in decision-making for the women today. They had agreed that the women must be treated in equal terms with the men in the profession of politics. They think that there are not too many women occupying higher positions in the bureaucracy because not too many women are prepared to carry out the work requirements in the higher echelon; there seemed to be a feeling that women are often underestimated in their competence and capacity. Many disagreed with the idea of setting a quota on the number of women politicians. But there is still a need for women to wield real influence in government.

Views about Women's Political Participation

One of the major obstacles that women politicians have to disprove is the thinking that women are weak in facing problems; one handicap is that their projects can not be carried out because of lack of funds to implement them. They, therefore, need support for their projects so that there can be some impact on what they have done in their community. The other negative perception about women politicians are that women cannot sustain themselves in crisis; their freedom of movement is too limited even in going around and knowing the constituency; women cannot travel around without a companion; women may be soft in making decisions that will require toughness; women may become pregnant and this may hamper performance of political duties and functions; it will be difficult for them to compete with the male machismo; there is still a prevailing bias against women even if the male will not admit it. It was admitted that sometimes some women cannot help but feel inferior to the men.

Career women politicians argued that there are also advantages of having women politicians such as: women have more patience and perseverance; female politicians are sincere; the women voters may tend to support female politicians; constituents' request will seldom be refused; there will be more fairness in government and politics; women are more sympathetic and considerate. The women who had some sense of insecurity when they were new in politics were able to master this and had adjusted to the demands of the office. However, even the women politicians themselves are not one in their attitude regarding choices between a man and a woman politician. Some may still prefer to support the men depending on his competence against the women who may not be so competent. They think that the best woman politician model must be the one who is competent, tough, dynamic, energetic, and has well-rounded knowledge. She must be strong-willed, decisive, good and strong.

Many believe that women can influence government better, therefore, it is acceptable for women to be in politics. Women politicians think that people power is effective to change the government. There is no doubt that the women politicians are well-exposed to media and information. Several of them still wish that they can have more time to spend with their family.

Performance in Office of Women Legislators

There is no doubt that women politicians take their jobs seriously. For the women legislators during the period 1978-1984, their legislative output was affected by the prevailing trend at the Batasang Pambansa where Cabinet bills were given more priority while individually introduced bills had difficulty of passage. It must also be noted that President Marcos had continued issuing Presidential Decrees until February, 1986. The women legislators' accomplishments during the period included the introduction of bills of local applications that had something to do with the changing of names and creation of municipalities, upgrading of the status of schools, creation of health centers or hospitals, related welfare projects and livelihood projects. Only two women legislators had introduced bills on women. The women legislators oftentimes became co-authors of bills that male legislators had sponsored. For the period 1978-1984, a total of 1100 bills were introduced or co-authored by the women members of the Assembly and only 103 became actual laws or Batas Pambansa. The women legislators had also contributed to the passage of 174 resolutions.

During the 1984-1986 Batasang Pambansa, there were a total of 488 parliamentary bills and 196 resolutions that the women legislators had initiated or co-authored. This second Batasan was prematurely abolished in February, 1986 and no bill sponsored by the women became a law. Among the women members, a former Justice of the Supreme Court introduced the most number of bills.

It is noted that during the 1978-1984 Batasan, one lady legislator had introduced very relevant bills, the subject matter of which continues to concern the country today. One was a bill governing the public inspection of assets and liabilities of all the members of the Batasang Pambansa for the purpose of public transparency. There was also a bill making Tagalog as the *lingua franca* in the Philippines. Another bill required that drugs and other medical substances should be sold under their generic names instead of their brand names; and finally there was also an Act requiring the locally manufactured cigars and cigarettes to have a label — smoking is dangerous to health. Unfortunately all these Acts never saw the light of day. They were tabled and forgotten.

In the Congress which opened in July 1987, the record shows that at the end of the First Regular Session, there were 11,000 bills introduced by the Lower House, of which only 53 became laws. The women members had affixed their names to 1,517 bills and to 160 resolutions either as sponsors or co-authors. The sectoral representative for women had passed a resolution making the month of March as the month for women. With regard to legislation concerning women, a total of 152 bills had been introduced by the legislative members. The subject matters of these 152 bills can be summarized as follows: the need for day care centers, standardized salaries for domestic helpers, equal rights for women with men, more protection for women in family relations, protection against illegal recruitment for overseas work, ban on mail order brides, maternity benefits for both parents, protection for nurses overseas workers, population issues, social problems and what shall be done, and protection for women workers. Out of the 152 bills, 126 were sponsored by men and only 26 were introduced by the women members. In relation with the general Congressional output as of February, 1990 the Lower House had introduced 28,091 bills, out of which 208 became laws; the Senate introduced 1,420 bills, out of which 41 became laws. Except for the resolution making March the month for women, the bills on women are still pending.

The women legislators themselves had indicated that upon their assumption to office, they had tackled the following issues: environment, human

rights, no to nuclear weapons, anti-bases, anti-pornography, foreign debt, economic problems, rights of government employees, agro-based industrialization, improvement of the investment climate, food production, agricultural improvements, agrarian reform, education, health and the issue of autonomy for local governments. What is sad about these efforts is that some bills that had passed into laws relating to some of the subject matter that the women had worked for were all authored by the male members of Congress.

Women Local Politicians

The women in local government had listed the following tasks which they had given priority attention: beautification and health service in the barangays; establishment of the Philippine National Red Cross blood bank, emergency hospital, improvement of the puericulture centers, promotion of family planning; visits to districts, creation of training programs for out of school youth; creation of jobs; program for the early retirement of government employees; creation of fast track development programs such as counter-insurgency measures; and the creation of women related activities for community development. Many women politicians appeared to have common goals and plans to beautify and develop their respective communities, promote youth development, the protection and safety of the people especially in areas where there are insurgents, the promotion of health facilities and services and giving assistance to the oppressed and displaced inhabitants in conflict zones.

Women Politicians and National Issues

There are three crucial issues in Philippine politics today: what to do with the US Bases in the country; how to implement immediately the Agrarian Reform Law as the government's centerpiece for social justice; and how to prevent vested interests of politicians. On the issue of the U.S. Bases two women legislators took anti-bases positions while two other women legislators preferred to study the matter thoroughly to determine what preparations should be made to anticipate the possibility of pull-out. On the issue of agrarian reform, one woman legislator opted for a pro-peasant agrarian reform law while one woman legislator was opposed to the provisions that will deprive the landlords of most of their land. Two women legislators were also linked to certain vested interests and commercial transactions that became questionable.

IV. Conclusions

Summary of Findings

The findings are presented according to the order of the objectives set by the study.

Objective 1. The qualifications of women politicians in the country, their cultural, social and economic background and the factors that allowed their entry into politics.

As shown by the study, the politically emancipated Filipina today is the product of the Filipino women's struggle to free themselves from the social, cultural and legal bondage that Spanish colonial tradition had imposed on them for three hundred thirty-three years. The Filipino women's status of freedom and equality is credited to the democratic tradition that the American colonial administration introduced to Philippine society. The Filipino women themselves have to be credited for their boldness and courage in asserting their equality with the men. The policy of free access to higher education for all benefited women.

The Filipino women since then had become rights-oriented. This outlook has proven beneficial for them as they developed through the years. All the gains that had been achieved in terms of policies and legislation to protect and promote women and women concerns in the Philippines were the out-growth of the society's consciousness that whatever goods are granted to men must also be equally given to women. But it must be noted that the privileges that women enjoy were also owed to the viewpoint of Filipino men that women should be treated as their partners and equals. Thus in the Philippines the culture sustained the tradition that men must respect womanhood. That is why in the Philippines there is no marked discrimination against women in politics as long as the women can prove their competence as well as their cordial relations with people.

The study has shown that women's entry into politics in the Philippines since the postwar period had been through the encouragement of the men who were already established in politics. It is, however, an accepted reality that in the Philippines, the elites have more access to politics for two reasons: the first, is the nature of the politics of patronage and clientelism by which the elites with their resources can easily rise to become the patron amidst the network of clientele relationships; and second, the societal expectation that a

politician must be highly competent in terms of education and training to be totally acceptable to the people. With these qualifications, only those who have the economic resources for self-development can have favorable access. The socio-economic elites in the country have better opportunities to be in politics than those who have less resources. Many middle class people however, have also gained access to politics by their competence and capacity to spend during elections.

The women politicians who have both the qualifications of high education and training and competence as well as the socio-economic resources have no problem in their entry to the political profession. Thus the women politicians in the Philippines are found in almost all levels of the political hierarchy, both in the national and local scenes. If there are not too many women in proportion to men occupying political positions, one reason is that there may not be too many women who think that the right career for them would be in politics. As the study has shown, some women still entertain the hidden fear that they may not be equal in capacity with men in running the political office. The successful women politicians in the country must have their own determination that their political career must bear effective results. That is why in the past, there had been women politicians who became re-electionists in several elections. There are still some women career politicians today who were re-elected to office because of their past political experience and records. The prevalence of dynastic regional politics have not excluded the role of a woman politician who belonged to the ruling clan.

The political events since 1986 made a tremendous breakthrough for women who are interested in the pursuit of political careers for themselves. Many women have broken the barrier of political elitism in many regions in the country. As the study has shown, in the local levels, many middle class women have won seats in the 1987 election for local officials. Their passports to political victory were the support of the cause-oriented groups and the Cory Aquino band wagon. At the same time, the people were eager to bring about political change in the country. Even in the Congress of the Philippines, which seemed to have been the bastion of political elitism especially for the women politicians, the last Congressional election had shown that the new names with non-elite tradition had won at least 38 per cent of the seats. This is an encouraging record in comparison with the 1978-1984 and the 1984-1986 Assemblies. The most significant breakthrough is that a woman has become the

President of the Philippines. She represents, however, the apex of the elite class in the country.

Objective 2. The efficiency and effectiveness of women politicians

The study has looked into what the incumbent women politicians have accomplished in their two years and a half in office in both the National Legislature and the local government to see whether they are efficient and effective in the task of being public officials. While the women career politicians must be given credit for their seriousness in conducting the affairs of their respective offices there is still greater need for them to develop effectiveness and efficiency in the conduct of their function as officials.

The women legislators were authors or co-authors of bills and resolutions in both the House of Representatives and the Philippine Senate. But these bills are mostly pending bills. The record showed that, with regard to the general performance of the House and the Senate, as of February, 1990 there were a total of 28,891 House bills introduced by the lawmakers, but only 208 of these became laws. There were a total of 1420 Senate bills, of which only 41 became laws. A total of 249 laws, therefore, were the output of the Congress after more than two years of work. The women must still work harder to leave their mark.

There were a total of 152 legislations introduced in the House of Representatives concerning women and women welfare as of December, 1988. Out of the total, 126 were sponsored by the men members of the House which means that only 26 were introduced by the women. Most bills have not been calendared. The question therefore, that can be raised is, how concerned are the women legislators with issues that affect women and what are they doing to promote the welfare of the women. Another question to be concerned with is whether the women legislators are influential enough to be able to sway the trend of legislation or to see to it that bills that they had introduced would be calendared for consideration. What is the sense of urgency of the bills that they had introduced.

In terms of legislative output, the women legislators have to be more alert aggressive and assertive — the three A's towards more legislative impact. It will need determination and seriousness of purpose for every bill introduced to become a law. Women in Congress must project quality participation as legislators in order to be heard.

The role of local women politicians is equally challenging. The women official is under closer scrutiny by the people whom she is serving. In some cases, she will still have to deal with the problem of insurgency. At the same time, she must be concerned with community development amidst the poverty that seems to be the characteristic of 80 per cent of the country's population. The effective woman official is one who can successfully meet the pressures posed by these needs.

Objective 3. The level of political awareness of ordinary women citizens and the nature of their political participation in their respective communities.

The study has come up with the conclusion that the quality of political participation depends on the level of political awareness which vary depending on which group of common women citizens one is dealing with. The degree of political awareness of a political group depends on the nature of their socialization process. Political awareness can also be equated with political consciousness. The nature of political participation that women engage in depends on the level of their political consciousness.

The middle class women citizens who have a high level of education and broader media exposure to all the issues that are going on in the country more often become politically active women. They participate regularly in elections, as voters, as campaigners, as canvassers, as poll watchers and as volunteers to safeguard free election. Some women even took the position of election boycott and they had their reasons. The women do not only join rallies and demonstrations but in some cases spearheaded the organization of such. They also conducted political meetings, joined political parties or supported a party. In the elections that were conducted since 1986, the middle class women had played active roles supporting the cause-oriented groups and Mrs. Corazon Aquino. There were others, too, whose party inclination were for the former politicians as well as for the candidates identified with the left. It must be noted that two candidates of the Partido ng Bayan have won seats in the present House of Representatives. There are two categories of lower class women citizens that the study tried to examine: the organized women citizens composed of workers in the industry and the urban and rural women groups. These women have limited educational training and exposure to media but their experience in organizing and mobilizing of their ranks have made them very much politically conscious. The other groups of women are the domestic

helpers and the shop helpers who have sedentary lives, are not exposed to politics and have limited socialization. The group is apolitical and do not participate in elections. The other group is the unorganized urban poor in the dumpsite who are extremely poor and have no media exposure. Their socialization is limited to their concern of what economic benefits they can obtain for survival. The group is apolitical and does not bother to participate in elections.

It is also the conclusion of this researcher that the lower class women need guidance and direction to become organized and to be made conscious that politics is relevant to their lives. The truth is that there are too many women like this group in the country. This means that too many women are marginalized and are not participating in political activities like voting. This may have a bearing with the fact that the reported registered voters for the period in the Philippines is only in the range of 25 million according to the Commission on Elections estimate out of over 60 million population. Voting age in the Philippines is from 18 years old and over. By computing the population statistics based on age distribution, there are an estimated 29,957,851 non-voters, i.e., below voting age in the country. It means therefore, that the probable voters would number a little over 30 million. It will appear that almost 5 million people do not participate in the elections in the country. The marginalized women are presumed to be included in the estimated statistics of non-voting qualified voters.

Objective 4. The extent by which women in politics have transcended the cultural and social constraints and gender discrimination that Asian societies are noted for.

The case of the Filipino women is unique in the sense that women are accepted in politics and are supported in politics even by the most competent men in the society. But what the women politicians must prove is their competence and credibility on the quality of their political performance. Gender discrimination if any, is allayed when the women can truly prove their ability as administrators, legislators and politicians. While the women politicians have expressed their concern about how to keep up with the men who have established political statures in the political scene, such concern is just natural even for men politicians who are still political neophytes. Men too, must prove their competence if pitted against the more respected politicians in the country. What more with women who must prove their better qualifications and competence than men.

The women in politics had long ago transcended the social and cultural constraints set on women. The fact that in the Philippines, women participate in all levels of political activities and occupy high positions in political offices as well as the bureaucracy, are signs of the women's achievement in transcending social and cultural constraints. But what should be done further is that women must change their own attitude and transcend their own fear that they may not be equal with the men or that they may not be so competent in politics if they choose this as their professional careers.

The women in the lower class who are not participating in any political activity in the community are apolitical not because of discrimination against them but because of their own personal attitude and unconcern. If they are socialized with a new political orientation, it may still be possible for them to get involved in the political activity. Poverty is not a reason for non-political participation as proven by the women workers and the organized rural and urban women. But the point to be considered is that the women were able to organize and attained political enlightenment because of the initiative to organize themselves.

Objective 5. Is the women's political participation spurred by a feminist ideology?

When the suffragettes mobilized to assert their rights to vote, they did so out of a feeling of being discriminated against as women. While not aware of the feminist ideology at that time, their action was a rebellion against voting discrimination. In other instances where women were involved in political organizations, demonstrations and other forms of political mobilization, the reasons were not to oppose gender discrimination but to assert a role in the larger issues in the country such as policies for social justice, the need for political change against an authoritarian rule, support of political causes as projected by the cause-oriented groups or even support of the labor group mobilization and issues like the anti-bases or the anti-nuke positions. These are not feminist issues but national issues.

Even the women legislators were not concerned about the feminist outlook which means that they have to give priority for women concerns as their primary task as lawmakers. Not too many women lawmakers in all the Congresses in the Philippines had been concerned with women issues when they recommended certain legislations. The present House of Representatives'

record, as indicated by this study, have more bills for women introduced by men members than by women members. The proportion is 152 bills were introduced but only 26 were done by women for women concerns.

Today, however, some women organizations are concerned with orienting women members with the feminist ideology. Thus, topics that are taken up in the women fora give priority to the discussions on the role of women in relation to particular national issues. However, the most serious issues of discrimination against women are those involving men's acts of violence against women in the homes and outside and where the women are exploited as sex objects. Women legislators had not taken seriously the making of laws that can provide adequate protection for women from being battered or subjected to sexual indignities by perverted husbands. The Family Code of the Philippines despite its being amended does not provide adequate protection for the helpless wife.

It can be said that the women in politics may not have been so concerned with the feminist ideology nor for special concerns for women interests because for a long time in their own experience they had enjoyed equal rights with men in their political careers.

NOTES

¹ President McKinley's Instructions to the Second Commission or the Taft Commission in Jose M. Aruego, *The Framing of the Philippine Constitution*, Volume II. (Manila, Philippines: University Publishing Co., 1949). Appendix B, pp. 762-769.

² Aruego, *op. cit.*. Vol. I, Chapter XVIII, pp. 215-228.

³ The records of the election returns of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) from 1946 to the present for the local and national elections.

⁴ Aurora J. De Dios "Participation of Women's Groups in the Anti-Dictatorship Struggle: Genesis of a Movement", Paper delivered in the Conference on the Women's Role in Philippine History, March 8-9, 1989, University Center for Women Studies, Conference Hall, Faculty Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

⁵ Leonora Angeles, "Getting the Right Mix of Feminism and Nationalism: The Politics of the Women's Movement in the Philippines." Paper presented in

the Third International Philippine Studies Conference, July 13-17, 1989, Philippine Social Science Council, Diliman, Q.C. M.A. Thesis, Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines, 1989.

⁶ *Ibid.* "Introduction."

⁷ Corazon Damo, *A Century of Activism*. (Manila: Philippine Normal College, 1976).

⁸ Logarta, Sonia, "The Participation of Women In The Huk Movement" and the Testimony of Mrs. Arceli Mallari. Conference on the Women's Role In Philippine History. March 8-9, 1989, Conference Hall, Faculty Center, University of the Philippines.

⁹ De Dios, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Conference on Women, March 1989, U.P. Law Center; Women's Action Network for Development, January 10-14, 1990. Oblates of Mary, Quezon City; National Conference on Women, February 2-4, 1990, Manila Film Center, CCP Complex, Manila.

¹¹ Six Universities in the Philippines with Women Studies and Resource Centers are the University of the Philippines, Miriam College Foundation, Philippine Women's University, St. Scholastica College, De La Salle University and Silliman University.

¹² Luzviminda Tangcangco, "Women and Politics in Contemporary Philippines," Paper presented in the Conference on Women's role in Philippine History, March 8-9, 1989, University of the Philippines.

¹³ Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Electoral Returns, after the January 18, 1988 election. Republic of the Philippines.

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