

Token versus Team Work: Women in the Local Bodies of Nepal 2017

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Abstract

Taking the local elections data 1992, 1997 and 2017, and reviewing the development of institutions, the paper argues that the institutional shift has numerically boosted women from token to titled group in the local bodies of Nepal. It has provided a space to boost political leadership among women which does not necessarily lead to team work. Both formal and informal factors significantly hinder women to make a team work. Party framework and anti-defection laws make elected women extremely loyal and accountable to the male dominated party leadership and limit their full participation. Similarly, mindset of the male political leaders and masculine social settings significantly prevents elected women to form a team work, and facilitates for full and meaningful participation in the local bodies. However, there are many hopes and aspirations that increase women as a titled and potential group helping them to push for women friendly policies based on how they negotiate with their male counterparts.

Keywords: Token, Teamwork, Election, Local Body and Women Representation

Introduction

Throughout the world's social and political history, women have been treated and represented as a token – both as a means of decoration and to show that there is no discrimination against women (Kantor, 1977; Laws, 1975; Yoder, 1991; Zimmer, 1988). The increase of number of women in the workforce form a teamwork and enhances interaction between male and female (Simmel, 1950; Kantor, 1977). Therefore, emerging democracy around the world has pursued a fast track method – provision of women quotas, and implementation of affirmative actions to increase the number of women in the legislatures and local bodies (See Dahlerup, 2007; Rai et al, 2007; Araujo, 2006). The increase of women in the parliament and local bodies has raised a crucial

question: will the increase of women in the parliament and local bodies shift the status of women from token to titled group or token to team work and increase the interaction between male and female?

Critically examining the concept of tokenism, the paper argues that the numerical increase of women does not necessarily increase the interaction nor shifts their position from token to titled group and form a teamwork as suggested by Kantor. There are several social, political, gender and economic factors that hinder women to participate and form a teamwork. The increase of number of women in the parliament and local bodies provides good forum to emerge leadership among women.

The paper is largely drawn from Nepalese local election data 1992, 1997 and 2017. For the paper, the data is cleaned, coded and re-coded and put it in SPSS. Mostly, descriptive statistics is used to show increase of number of women in the local bodies and legislature in Nepal. Similarly, an extensive analysis of constitutions, acts, laws, directives is made to show how the institutional shift has occurred over time and its subsequent impact on the increase of women in the local bodies and legislature.

Context: Recent Political Development and Elections in Nepal

Among several doubts and contestation, local election finally held peacefully with total voter's turnout 75 per cent in three phases in 2017 after 17 years filling all the local representatives in all 753 restructured local bodies of Nepal. There were total 148362 (Male 90524 (61%); female 57836 (39%) and third gender 2 (0%)) number of people contested for municipal election 2017 in seven different posts¹. Among them, 5470 (94%) male and 366 (6%) female contested in the head of the local bodies whereas 780 (18%) male and 3584 (82%) female contested for the deputy head of the local body. In ward chairperson 31205(97%) of male filed the candidacy and 1061(3%) female. Similarly, 35069 (96%) male and 2021(4%) female were contested for the ward member (open). Ward women member (Open) and Dalit women member are reserved for women in general and Dalit women respectively.

The local election 2017, total of 14349 (41%) women got elected in 753 local bodies in 7 different posts i.e. 7 (2%), 274 (94%), 11 (2%), 419 (91%), 64 (1%), 6742 (100%), 6567 (100%), and 265 (2%) respectively as mayor, deputy mayor, chairperson, vice chairperson, ward chair, ward women member (open), ward Dalit women member and ward member (open). This is a historic inclusion of women in the public space with women share 41 percent space in local bodies.

Concept of Tokenism

The concept of tokenism is usually used to explain women's experiences and behavioral

¹ Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair, Vice Chair, Ward Chair, Women Member, Dalit Women Member and 2 Member (Open).

response based on their number while they engage in traditionally male jobs (Zimmer, 1988; Canter, 1977; Laws, 1975; Yoder, 1991). The number affects in group interaction (Simmel, 1950) and can form a critical mass to lobby their issues and form alliance (Kanter, 1977). The hypothesis of the concept is that the occupational barriers and difficulties of women can be lowered by accommodating sizable number of women in the male skewed workplace (Kanter, 1977). However, many scholars contest the hypothesis being gender neutral and no sufficient tests have been done to satisfy the hypothesis (See, Yoder, 1991; Zimmer, 1988).

In sociology, tokenism implies the inclusion of women, minority and marginalized groups in a mainstream politics to show that states treat equally to all people irrespective of gender, ethnicity, caste and creed (See Marden, Charles F. & Gladys, Meyer. 1973; Cook, 1978; Riemer, 1979). However, in developing democracy like in Nepal, inclusion of women, minority and marginalized groups is the result of long and continuous contestations with state and marginalized groups – the Madhesi, indigenous, Dalit, and women's movement (Sunam, 2017; Jha, 2014; Hengan, 2009).

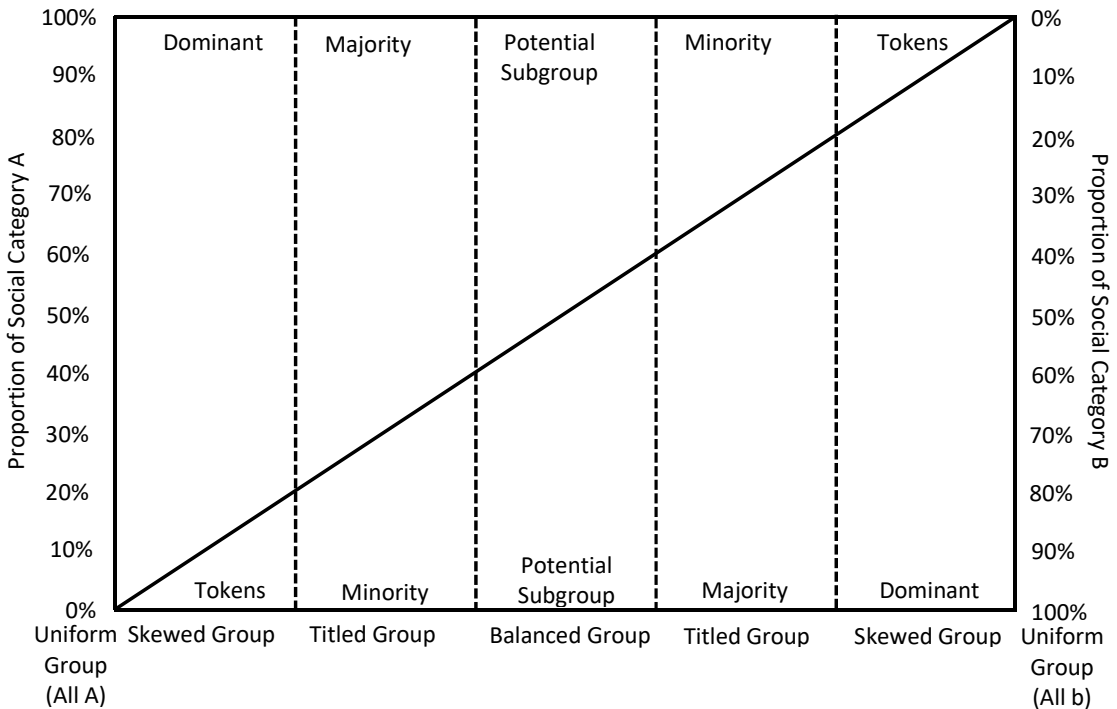
The concept of tokenism has been popularized by Judith Longs Laws in 1975. In her paper, she distinguished between sponsor and token. Token is a member of deviant class whereas sponsor is a member of dominant class (Sponsor) and dominant class control and limit the participation of deviant class (Token). She has analyzed sponsor vs token in an academic profession with gender class system. Later Kanter (1977) greatly contributed to expand and extend the concept of tokenism with organizational behavior in her seminal work *Men and Women in the Corporation*. She further makes a critical lens that few numbers of women in the high skilled jobs and dominance of women in unskilled and low paid jobs confuses people- is it male attitude or women's behavior (See also Bennett Etal, 2013). Power structure and opportunity largely shape the psychology.

Kanter (1977) argues that, female's engagement in typical female works provides spaces to point out that females are not fit to traditionally male profession. For example, politics and outside jobs are not women's businesses. She further points out that femaleness is less related to their occupation than the social and structural barriers. First, women's position lacks power; second, women's position lacks opportunity; and third, has to work in masculine settings and often suffer from detrimental effects of tokenism. The consequences of tokenism are performance pressure, social isolation and role encapsulation which, according to Kanter, is being few in women among many.

Kanter (1977b) very nicely presented four schemas-frameworks of proportional representation to explain tokenism – Uniform, Skewed, Titled and balanced group. Uniform type comprises 100:0 ratio with uniform and homogenous groups. A skewed group entails 85:15 ratio and dominant group control minority group. The few people,

on the other side, are often labelled as “Token” the representatives of their groups. Titled group encompasses 65:35 ratio in which dominant are just a majority. Titled group can make alliance and can influence process and structure of the entire group. Minority and majority turns into sub-groups in balanced category with 60:40 and down to 50:50. There is complete interaction in a balanced group (Kanter, 1977b).

Fig. 1 Group types as defined by proportional representation of two social categories in a membership.



Source: Kanter, 1977 *Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life: Skewed Sex Ratios and Responses to Token Women*

Unlike Hughe’s ‘Outsider’ (1945) and Simmel’s work ‘Stranger’ (1950) many scholars noted the marginal status of token and limits of their full participation (Laws, 1975; Kanter, 1977; Yoder, 1991; Zimmer; 1988). The dominant class often creates a dichotomy of insider and outsider. Token are never accepted as a full member of the dominant group. For example, females are often treated as an outsider and never accepted them as a full member of the dominated group (Ruling community) – no matter whether they are token or titled group. The dichotomy of insider versus outsider limits women’s full participation in the parliament and local bodies.

The concept of tokenism by Kanter faced many contestations in terms of its numerical explanation of increase of women in workforce enhances the greater interaction. Power and privileges are more important to understand for qualitative boost of women's position in workforce and increase their participation (Gittler, 1956; Noel, 1968; Yetman, 1985). Some scholars concluded as opposite to Kanter's numerical argument (See, Giles, 1977; Marden & Meyer, 1973; Blalock, 1967). They argue that the inclusion of minority members in proportion to dominant groups increases the tension between them because dominant groups simply do not want to share their power and privileges. Number alone is not a sufficient condition for tokenism (Yoder, 1994). Subordinated social status of women, patriarchal system, norms and values greatly matters in producing tokenism. Concept of tokenism greatly fails to acknowledge the impacts of gender-based discrimination and violence and sexism (Fairhurst & Snavely 1983a; Zimmer, 1988). Gender discrimination is pointed the principal factor that prevents full participation and interaction irrespective of numbers (Keskin, 1988).

Despite the criticism of concept of tokenism that argues for numerical increase of women in the workforce to enhance greater interaction and participation, scholars have put for different justice-based arguments (See, Philips, 1995, Norris, 2004, WeDo, 2005, FWCW, 1995). For example, Beijing platform talks to be at least 20 to 30 percent of women is necessary in the parliament for critical mass to push gender friendly policies (FWCW, 1995: Art. 181 – 95). Similarly, gender balance is necessary to articulate women's interest and legitimacy for democratic institutions (Philips, 1995; Norris, 2004). The increase more than 30 percent of women in the parliament and local bodies potentially lead to team work and push for critical mass (FWCW, 1995).

In order to address the underrepresentation of women in the parliament, many developing democracies have adopted fast track methods such as affirmative action, gender quotas (Bacchi, 2006; Rai Etal, 2006;). But many scholars doubt on substantial representation, in traditional societies with low literacy among women even the dramatic increase of women in the parliament. For example, party affiliation matters more than the gender variables (Lovenduski and Norris, 1993). Similarly, Pitkin (1967) argues that there is representational dilemma among women the women representatives 'map' or 'mirror'. They have double burden – have to represent their groups as well as have to accountable to their electorate and follow party guidelines (Philip, 1995).

Institutional development and Inclusion of Women in Decision Making Bodies

Both formal and informal institutions play a significant role to exclude women and other minority and marginalized communities in Nepal (Lawoti, 2010; Volan, 2015; Guring, 2009). The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1991, electoral act as a formal institution, and patriarchy as an informal institution were reported largely for the

exclusion of women in the parliament and local bodies (Lawoti, 2010). For example, plurality electoral law – First Past the Post (FPTP) tends to foster two party system and mostly excludes women and marginalized communities (See, Duverger, 1986; Colomer, 2005). As a result, women limited on less than 3 percent in the legislature and 0.5 and 20.5 percent respectively in the local election 1992 and 1997².

The Interim Government Act 1951 section IV, article 68 has stated that the aims of the interim government shall be to create conditions, as early as possible, for holding election for the parliament. The constitution has provisioned to hold free and fair election. Similarly, the first election act popularly known as ‘Representative Act 1952’ was enacted. It has set a very clear goal to regulate and hold the election. However, both acts have not exactly envisioned to encourage and include women in the parliament.

The constitution of Nepal was promulgated on 12 February 1959 concentrating more power to the king. The constitution clearly mentioned the independent election commission with 109-member house of representatives and the age of eligible voters. However, the constitution has not ensured any special provisions to encourage and ensure women in the legislature yet.

After the royal coup by king Mahendra in December 1960, the king dismissed the 1959 constitution and promulgated another constitution in 1962. The second amendment of the constitution acknowledged that women could be the candidates in the election by recognizing six class organizations including women organization. There is also provision that women can be the candidates of the national Panchyat, but most of the candidates were nominated by the king. Five women were nominated in the national assembly.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1991 provides that all political parties must have at least 5 percent female candidates in the election of the House of Representatives, the Lower House, and at least three women in the Upper House (See Article 114 and Article 46 Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal, 1990). But in the local level women were not encouraged and reserved in the village/municipal/district council nor executive (See the Local Election Act 1992). The local election act 1992 was amended in 1997 and reserved one (20%) women in each ward. The amendment increased the number of ward members from 1 to 5 and reserved one seat for women member (See also section 7 Local Self Governance Act, 1999). The Self Governance Act 1999 also ensured women, people from marginalized groups and Dalit community in village, municipal council and District Development Committee (DCC).

The inclusive institutional development however started in the early 1960, but was in the form of token. The institution only provides few spaces for women and mostly via nomination. The institutional development to include women as a ‘Titled Group’

² 1 (20%) women member in each ward is reserved in the local election 1997.

in decision making bodies has massively accommodated in Nepal after the mass movement 2006 backed by Maoist insurgency. The inclusive institutional development was first time realized after the formulation of the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007. The constitution acknowledged the philosophy of proportional Inclusion (See Article 21 of Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007) of women and marginalized groups; endorsed positive discrimination to women (See Article 13 of Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007), minority and marginalized groups and provisioned mixed model electoral system (See Article 63 of Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007). At least 33 percent of women were reserved in the constitution (See Article 63(5) of Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007).

At least 33 percent of women have been acknowledged in the in all decision making bodies – the National Assembly, Federal Parliament (Article 84(8) Constitution of Nepal 2015), Provincial Parliament, local body executive and District Coordination Committee (DCC) including bureaucracy in the new constitution of Nepal 2015 (See Article 84(8) and Article 176 (9) Constitution of Nepal 2015). In the local level, 40 percent of women are reserved in the ward committee (2 out of 5) and 50 percent in the vital position – either mayor or deputy mayor and chair or vice chair of the local bodies (See Article 215(4) of Constitution of Nepal 2015). Similarly, 50 percent of women have been reserved in the speaker or deputy speaker (See Article 91 (2) and Article 182 (1) of Constitution of Nepal 2015). Likewise, 33 percent of women are reserved in the municipal executives and district coordination committees (See Article 220 (3) and Article 216 of Constitution of Nepal 2015).

Switching Token to Teamwork: National Parliament

The inclusive institutional development, particularly after the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, included sizable number of women in the decision-making bodies. The Constituent Assembly (CA) Election 2008 held based on mixed model electoral system electing 240 CA members from the plurality electoral system (FPTP) from the 240 constituencies; 335 from the proportional representation electoral system and 26 nominated from the council of minister from the think tanks groups. The total 197 (33%) women were elected/nominated in the Constituent Assembly 2008 maintaining the ethnic diversity among women.

Inclusion of 33 percent of women in the Constituent Assembly 2008 was the historic moment for the inclusion of women in the decision-making body. Among them, 8 and 4 percent of women respectively were elected/nominated from hill and Tarai Dalit; 25 and 8 percent of women respectively elected/nominated from hill and Tarai Adivasi/Janajati; 18 percent women elected/nominated from Madhesi community.

Similarly, 3 percent from Muslim and 33 percent of women elected/nominated from Khas/Arya community.

Despite the different party affiliation, women CA members from different political parties came together and formed a women caucus in 2009 which provided them a common platform to work together and push for women friendly policies and work for the rights for women. This is the example, shift from token to teamwork with boosting the greater interaction among women. Thus, the increase of women potentially leads to greater interaction and chances to make a team work.

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai-led government dissolved the Constituent Assembly in June 2012 without promulgating the new constitution announcing the second CA election to be held in November 2013. The CA election was held in 2013 with the same electoral system – mixed model electing/nominating 177 (29.5) women in the CA. The number slightly decreased. Among them, 7 and 5 percent hill and Tarai Dalits were elected/nominated; 23 and 12 percent of hill and Tarai Adivasi/Janajati were elected/nominated. Similarly, 17 percent Madhesi women and 2 percent Muslim women were elected/nominated. 34 percent of women from Khas/Arya community were elected/nominated.

The institutionalization of women's rights in the new constitution of Nepal 2015 is often perceived as a product of critical mass 'Titled Group' in the Constituent Assembly. Women formed a critical mass and pushed for the women friendly policies. The institutionalization of women's right in Nepal's constitution 2015 is translated into the recent women's inclusion in local bodies and federal and provincial parliament.

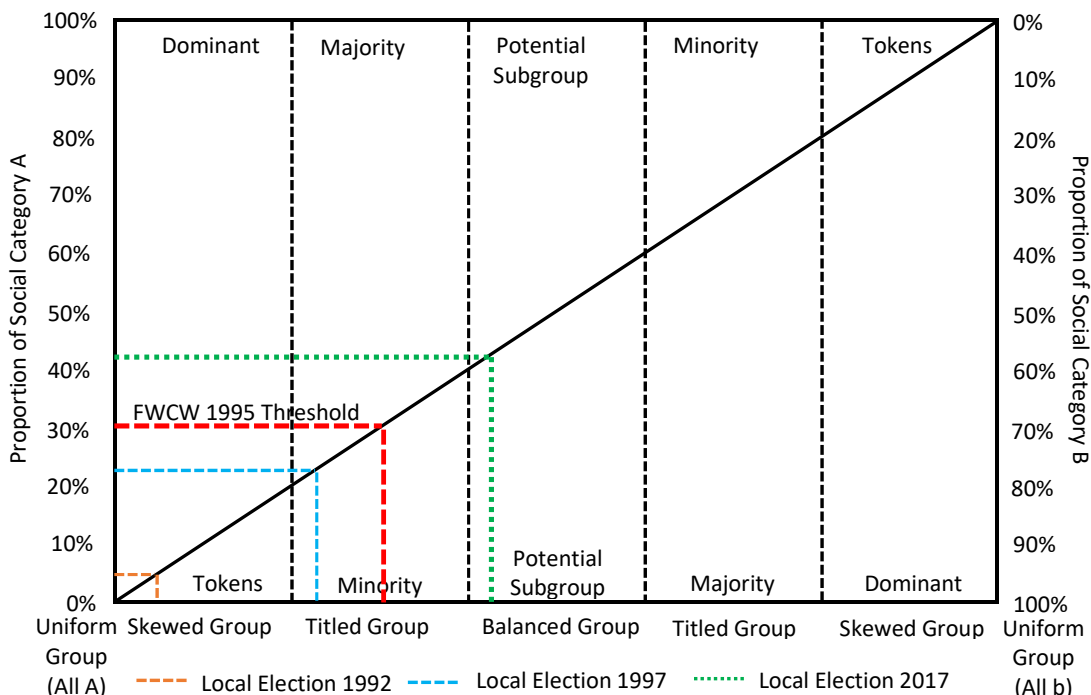
Shifting Token to Team Work: Local Bodies

The local body election result 2017 clearly shows how the institutional shift from token to team work than the previous local elections in the 1990s. For example, in the local election 1992, only 27 (0.003%) (5 Deputy Mayor, 7 VDC Chairperson, and 15 VDC vice Chair Person) were elected. After 20 percent of women reserved in a ward as female members boosted dramatic increase of women in the local bodies in 1997 local election. As a result, 45994 (20.5%) women represented in the local bodies in the local election 1997. Among them, 3 women were elected as deputy mayor, 806 as a municipality ward chair, 20 as a VDC Chair Person, 17 as VDC Vice Chairperson 240 as VDC ward chair and 35208 as ward members.

Only handful of women were nominated/elected in the District Development Committee (DDC) in 1992 and 1997 local body election. In 1992, 6(0.006%) of women were elected in the District Development Committee. Among them, two were elected as a vice president of DDC. In 1997, 11 (0.01%) women were elected in the District Development Committee. Out of total elected women in DDC only one was elected as a vice-president. This shows that the inclusive institutional setup is mandatory to

include women in Nepal.

Fig 2: Sifting Token to Team Work in the Local Elections:

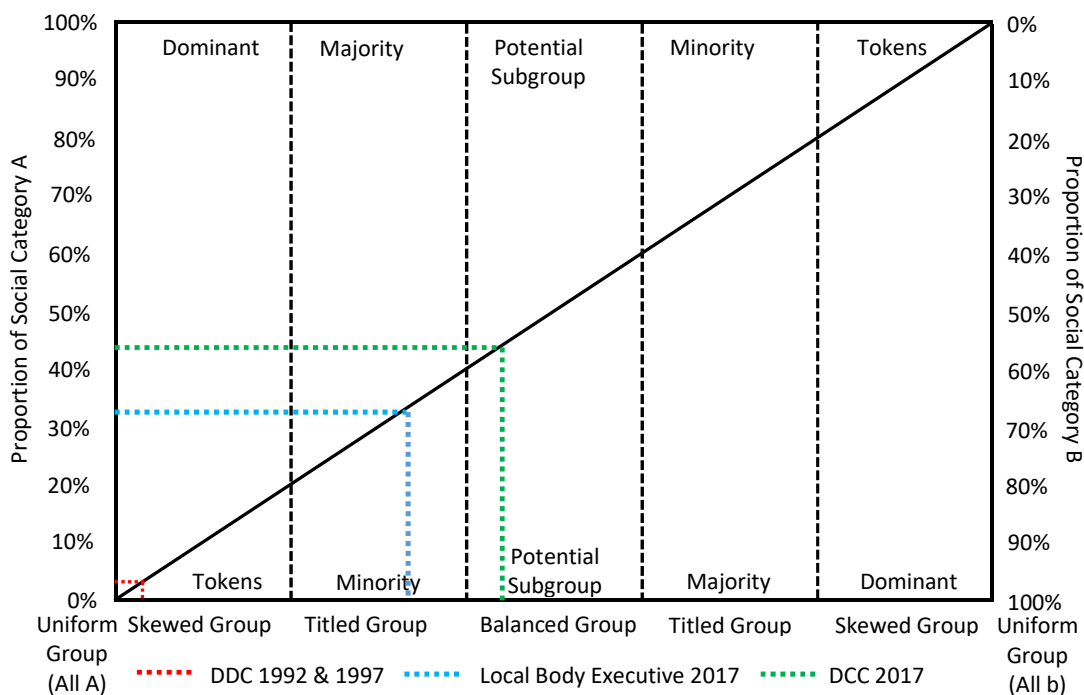


Source: Kanter (1977), Local Elections 1992, 1997 and 2017

The reservation of 40 percent of women in the ward level and 50 percent of women in the vital position (head and deputy head of the local bodies) has dramatically boosted both level of participation of women in the election and number of elected/nominated women in the local bodies. For example, 57836 (39%) of women file the nomination to contest election in 7 different posts.

Among them, 7 (2%) of women got elected as mayors; 274(94%) percent of women got elected as deputy mayors, 11(2%) as chairs and 419(91%) as vice chairs of the rural municipality 64 (1%) as ward chairs of the local bodies, and 265(2%) as ward members (open). Ward women members (open) and ward Dalit members are reserved. In total, 41 percent of women have got elected in the local bodies which is according to the Kanter’s framework, number of women in the local bodies is already in a balanced group.

Fig. 3: Total Number of Women in District Development Committee (now District Coordination Committee (DCC)) and Municipal Executives



Source: Election Commission 2017: Result of Local Elections 1992, 1997 and 2017

The constitution of Nepal 2015, local body election act 2017 and the first amendment on 16 May 2017 ensured at least 33 percent of women to be elected in both municipal executive and District Coordination committee. As a result, in all local bodies, 4323(32.4%) percent of women are ensured in both municipal executives and 298 (43.3) women representation in District Coordination Committee.

The adoption of fast track method to include women at least 33 percent in all state mechanisms and decision-making bodies particularly after 2007 dramatically boosted the number of women in the decision-making bodies particularly in the legislatures and recently formed local bodies (municipalities) and District Coordination Committees (DCC). This satisfies the Kanter’s framework of shifting token to titled and balanced group. The numerical increase of women in the decision-making bodies has provided many opportunities for teamwork, boost development process, formulations of women friendly policies and most importantly the space to develop political leadership among women. However, there are many challenges as well. Patriarchy, masculine social structure, people’s mindset and other resource differentials matter for their effective representation.

Barriers for Teamwork

Institutional Barriers

The new constitution of Nepal 2015 provided many spaces for women to be included in the decision-making bodies. But at the same time there are many obscurities and contradictions among acts, rules and regulations. These obscurities and contradictions potentially prevent women's full and meaningful participation. For example, on the one hand, the constitution has ensured 33 percent of women in the legislature but anti defection act of Nepal (Political Party Renounce Act 1997 with amendment, 2010) states that the party can dismiss the membership of the representatives if he/she does not follow the party leadership's whip; remains neutral in any case against party whip or remains absent in the voting in the legislature. Once the party membership is dismissed, the electoral mandate is automatically dismissed, and he/she will no longer be an elected delegate.

The anti-defection act does not allow representatives to be critical and free from the party dictatorship and provide free and critical space in public policy engagement. For example, there were many MPs in the CA 2013 who are against some clause of the constitutions such as secularism, citizenship but they had to follow the party whip. Nobody dared to go against the party whips. The party whips have made women caucus formed in 2009 dysfunctional. And in the 2013 they could not form women caucus again.

Similarly, the mixed model electoral system has many holes and politicians often manipulate and plays with the constitutional gaps. For example, it states 33 percent of women shall be included in the legislature parliament, but it is not clear how they include 33 percent women – how many percent through FPTP and how many via PR. Now, most of the women are nominated via PR which created bad images to the system of PR and women who are nominated through PR. For example, major ruling parties, Nepali Congress, CPN (UML) and Maoist Center did not put fair number of women in the electoral list for the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral competition. CPN (UML), Maoist Center and Nepali Congress respectively put 5 (3%), 4(2.5%) and 9 (5.5%) women in FPTP electoral list in 2017 parliamentary election. In total six women candidates were elected from FPTP electoral list – 2 from CPN (UML) and 3 from Maoist Center and 1 from Rastriya Janamorcha.

Most of the women representatives were nominated through PR system of election. This implies, women are less competitive than the male counterparts in the direct election. Most importantly, in many cases, MPs elected from FPTP and PR system of elections treated differently. For example, the constituency development fund, MPs nominated via PR gets almost one third less money than the MPs who are elected via direct elections. Similarly, the women MPs who are nominated via PR often tagged as

‘Quota Women’ which does not have positive resonances in the society.

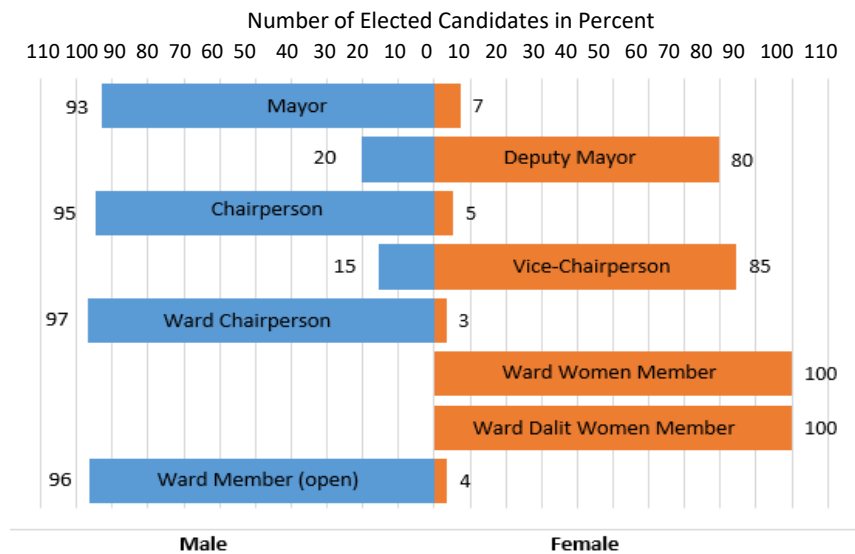
Formation of top political leaders’ body as a problem resolution mechanism often undermines the participation of women in the decision-making body. Mostly, decisions are made by the top political leaders without adequate discussion and consultation with other parliamentarians in their own party and asked for consensus in their decisions.

Woman in Secondary Roles

Due to the masculine setting of the society and patriarchal thinking and mind set, women are always treated at the secondary position and ascribed the social roles accordingly. For example, since the childhood parents and society treat girls as they are born to do inside jobs such as cooking and caring. These mentalities barely allow women to hold a traditionally male’s job. This secondary mentality of males has clearly reflected in the local election 2017 as well.

The proportion of male female candidacy in different posts in the local body election also show the mindset of the male and female politicians as well as reflects the patriarchal social structure. Why there are only very few women contested in the head of the local body and chief of the ward? The social construction of gender roles and patriarchal mind set of the male politicians have not changed and still think woman has deputy roles and are not fit themselves into a leading role.

Chart 7: Number of male and female contested in different posts in the local election 2017



Source: Election Commission Nepal 2017

The above chart clearly shows the hunches in the candidacy in the different posts in the local election 2017 – which is a clear reflection of Nepalese patriarchal social structure and mind set. Since parties have to maintain at least 50 percent of women in the candidacy to vital posts – head and deputy head of the local body, most of the male got tickets for the post of head of the local bodies. For stance, male had 93 percent candidacy against the women 7 percent in a mayor. Similarly, 95 percent male candidates filed candidacy on chairperson against the 5 percent female. Most surprisingly, only 3 percent women filed their candidacy in ward chairperson and 4 percent in ward member (open). This indicates that, indirectly, by consent, ward chairperson and ward member (open) are reserved for male. Similarly, majority of women have been elected as a deputy speaker in both provincial and federal parliament.

Similarly, all speakers in the provincial legislatures and national assembly in the federal parliament are male and female are elected as deputy speakers. This clearly shows the deputy mindset of the male politicians who dominates the political leadership of major political parties. Moreover, they often treat women as an outsider and do not acknowledge as a full member of their group. They are quite reluctant to put and push the female political leadership. The top political leadership of major parties started feeling reservation of women in the decision-making bodies as a burden. For example, the newly formed Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) with the merger of Communist Party of Nepal – United Marxist Leninist CPN(UML) and Maoist Center failed to fulfill the legal requirement of 33 percent of women in the central committee. Only 70(16%) of women are included in the central committee. This shows that the mentality of male dominated political leadership in major parties..

Double burden

Many feminists warn that changing the roles and women taking up the roles traditionally being played by men might add double burden for women as men are less likely to change their roles and share the traditional role of women even when they have time. For instance, they do not easily try to fit in kitchen work and caring the children. Therefore, women have to do both domestic works as well as the public works at the same time which reduces their full potentiality to engage in decision making and policy engagement. Additional work without proper support systems at home and in the community is likely to result into increased violence and mental stress.

IDEA(2015) reports that one of the reasons hindering women’s qualitative representation in the politics is prevalent forms of gender and sexual violence in Nepal. The study done among the CA members revealed that 22 percent women politicians have faced some kind of gender-based violence during their tenure; 58 percent of women who

faced the violence reported that perpetrators were from their own colleagues and people they know. Most surprisingly, 96 percent of women politicians are the victims of psychological violence and these are mostly related to gender based norms, values and expectations. Prevalence of violence among women representatives further constrains their ability to participate effectively.

Furthermore, women still have limited voice within their own political parties and decision-making. Political parties are often headed by men of dominant caste and ethnic groups. Women politicians often have limited access to decision makers within the political parties. It is also observed time and again that when women politicians have such access, their concerns, especially if related to gender based constraints and opportunities are hardly heard, noted and responded. The question of qualitative participation is therefore a matter influenced less by personal ability of women and more by existing patriarchal structures, attitudes, values and norms.

Heightened Visibility

Usually, few women working in a male dominated workplace make women highly visible in a couple of ways – first the physically visible and are highly scrutinized; second the public expectations and the outputs from them. But in a fast track method of inclusion of women in the decision making body, women are dramatically enter into the public space and even numerically more but are highly visible in terms of their output. People expect more and quality outputs than their male counterparts. This over expectations from the public put them more pressure to work. For example, most of the women are elected as deputy mayors and are head of the local judiciary. People are expecting more justice than the highly masculine judiciary of Nepal.

The issue of women representatives at local level remains much discussed particularly because for the first time women are accommodated 40 percent at ward level and 50 percent at vital position. Since most of the women are elected in deputy head of the local bodies, and assigned as a judiciary head of the local bodies. The legal framework provides public space for women but also specific duties. This increases the expectation of people to have access to justice at local level to be delivered by newly elected representative. People have high expectation but at the same time have been very critical about the service delivery by these representatives, for example, there are several instances whereby the justice delivery by the judicial committee has been questioned in media. With high expectation people have started using their access to justice right at local level, this puts the local representatives under pressure to work under the new constitution and new legal framework defining their roles. Representatives in local judiciary have the pressure of meeting the people's expectation to justice which has

traditionally being a challenge for the people to achieve under prior masculine judicial settings.

Representational Dilemma

The issues of women's meaningful representation and influence in decisions is still a debate – 'map or mirror' (Pitkin, 1967). The common problem for elected women are 'representational dilemma' in Pitkin's term 'map or mirror'. In common language, female representatives have burden to both represent their party policy, manifesto, principles and their groups at the same time. They are often in dilemma of representing all the electorate or reflecting to their group 'women'.

Philip (1998) argues that women representatives have to be accountable to their voters who voted them in the election and at the same time have responsibilities on the issues of women. The representational dilemma is higher among representatives who are nominated/elected via reservation and quotas (Dhakai, 2015). The dilemma further influence gender roles and relations to shape horizon and quality of women's participation in public space. For example, most of the women representatives are nominated based on either loyalty to the party leadership or funding to the party. The extreme loyalty to the party and their male dominated leadership never allow them to fully participate and engage in better public policy. In this way, numerical increase of women in the local bodies does not ensure their full and meaningful participation.

Conclusion

The paper has discussed the numerical increase of women in the decision making body does not necessarily lead to full, meaningful participation. There are many other external factors that determine the women's full and meaningful participation in the decision making body. With referencing the local elections data the paper has clearly presented the historical shift of the number of women from token to titled group and potential group. The dramatic increase of women in the local bodies of Nepal and federal and provincial parliament became possible with revolutionary institutional shift from 1990s to after 2007.

The dramatic increase of women in the local bodies has provided many opportunities and space to emerge political leadership among women and expected to have greater interaction among the elected representatives. The increase of women further provide a platform to teamwork among women irrespective of political parties. But numerical increase of women has less to do with sexist and patriarchal mind set of their male counterparts. For example, male counterparts are less likely to switch their social roles that is they do not try to fit themselves into a domestic and caring works and share the domestic space. This has created a double burden for women – have to work both

public and domestic works.

Similarly, even the women are potential group by number but male are still do not think they are full member of their group and thinks they are outsider. The dichotomy of insider and outsider do not facilitate women's full participation. The reason behind that is that they do not want to share their power and privileges with anyone who are not supposed to enter into their business. Likewise, the representational dilemma also matters for effective and meaningful participation in the decision making bodies. Institutional barriers are still the big challenges for teamwork.

Most importantly, the mindset and psychology of male political leaders are the alarming threat for the included women in the local bodies. For example, mostly women are put into the deputy roles. Women are contested and elected as a deputy head of the local bodies. Similarly, in the DCC as well, only handful of women are elected in the major posts primarily in deputy head of the DCC. This 'deputy' mentality of male leaders are the main challenges posed for women's full and meaningful engagement in the decision making bodies which do not allow women's to be a teamwork.

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