

WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

—A STUDY ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY IN THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The purpose of the thesis is to understand and analyze the present situation of gender equality in politics in the Philippines, investigate women's opportunities to be politically active and to exercise political influence. Finally find out if there is a difference in horizontal and vertical positions between women's and men's representation in politics and investigate further possibilities and problems that might be associated with women's political representation in the Philippines. The empirical material for this thesis has been gathered through qualitative interviews with male and female politicians from Manila, the capital of the Philippines. The theoretical framework is divided into different parts which are used to analyse various points from the empirical material. In this chapter, we included theories about differences between gender experiences and why women should be politically active. As well as the meaning of an overrepresentation of a certain group in politics and the possible reasons to women's underrepresentation in politics as well as the arguments about women's presence in politics, and also the horizontal and vertical segregations. To analyse the empirics from a theoretical point of view, we have divided the results into three sub-categories which are the respondent's' attitude to the present situation of gender equality in politics, women's opportunities to be politically active and to make political influence and the horizontal or vertical divisions between women and men's positions in politic

The results from this thesis shows that women are as competent as men in the political field, and they have a lot of experiences to contribute with in politics that benefit all the citizens, but it is easier for women to come in politics if they are a part of a political clan. But these women, who replace their family members, usually pursue those members' decision, but do not act according to their own will.

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1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce with the Philippines and their political system, as well as the importance of women's participation in politics and the Philippines standpoint on gender equality in politics compared to other Asian countries and the rest of the world. We will also introduce the reason behind our decision to choose the Philippines.

1.1 Background

Högström (2012) begins his work with the quotation from the Beijing platform of action, fourth world conference on women: *“Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved”*. This quotation briefly but powerfully describes why it is so important that women should have the right and opportunity to represent themselves.

Although Krogstad (2015) pointed out that the proportion of women in top politics is low and that in 2014 the number of females in government was less than 8% worldwide, while the portion of female head of State was even less, just under 6%. Because of these small numbers women do not have a major impact on legislation, and only with the increased number, women can develop a considerable minority of all legislators (Childs and Krook 2008). Only with considerable minority they will be able to work more effectively together and with their male colleagues as well as to promote legislation regarding women's concerns. Wängnerud (2009) also points out that many studies indicate that female politicians contribute to strengthening the situation of women's interests and that they tend to prioritize problems that are also prioritized by female voters. National election Studies from 1988 to 1998 describes that *“higher numbers of women elected promote higher values of external efficacy for female citizens”* (Wängnerud 2009). In 2011 and 2012 the World Economic Forum has appointed the Philippines the most gender equal nation in Asia. According to World Economic Forum (2013), the Filipino women hold the majority of jobs in the legislative, top official and managerial occupational category. All these results indicate that the Philippine has taken steps to improve gender equality in the country. Today the country is placed as the seventh of 145 countries in terms of gender equality, according to the recent World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report 2016.

The statistics show high quantity of jobs that Filipino women have in politics and management. The statistics show high quantity of jobs that Filipino women have in politics and management, which promotes the Southeast Asian state in female education (Strother 2013). According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, based on information provided by national parliaments by 1th February 2016, the Philippines is classified as the 53rd country by descending order of the

percentage of women in the House of Representatives. They have 290 seats in the House of Representatives with 79 women, which represent 27.2%. And in the Senate, the Philippines have 24 seats with 6 women, which constitute 25%.

The Philippines has had two female presidents. The first female president Corazon Aquino struggled to address her country's economic problems and restored democracy to the Philippines. The second president was Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who sponsored new laws such as the indigenous people's rights law and the anti-sexual harassment law. Both presidents came from powerful political families and contributed little to advance women's situation in the country. (Philippines presidents 2006)

The reason why we want to explore the Philippines is that they have a relatively high percentage of women in the parliament. The Inter Parliamentary Union (2017) claims, that the Philippine has a relatively high percentage of women in the national parliaments with 29.5% compared to most Asian countries. Even though Philippine has the highest percentage of women in parliament in Asia continent, there still are variety of articles which lift the problem about quality of women's representation in politics. These articles point out that even though the county has high percentage of women in politics, not all of these women represent women's issues.

There are many researches that describe the issue about women's representation and presence in politics, also that women are underrepresented and not prioritized in politics compared to men. Although the Philippine has 29.5% of women in the parliament, they are still not represented equally, in number and quality, as men in politics. This problem also means that women's interests and issues are not priorities as much as men's. Politicians are citizens elected representatives for a democratic system, and their mission is to represent the voters. It is more difficult for female politicians to obtain political influence, and with this background we considered this issue a democracy problem.

1.2 The Republic of the Philippines

This bachelor thesis will focus on women's political representation in the Philippines. The Philippines, officially the Republic of the Philippines, is a country in south-eastern Asia at the western Pacific Ocean with a population of 100 998 376 people in July 2015, and an area of 300 000 km². The Philippines is a constitutional republic with a strong presidential power. The president is elected by universal suffrage for a term of six years and appoints a government to lead; he or she can only be elected for one period. The Philippines has a democratic government and free elections have been held since 1986. The Parliament has two chambers; the House of

Representatives and the Senate. The president is also military commander in chief, head of state and even head of government. The government of the Philippines is divided in 17 National Capital Regions, 80 provinces and 39 chartered cities. (CIA 2015)

Around 80 percent of the Philippines population is Roman Catholic. A further 11 percent belongs to other churches and about 5 percent are Muslims. Yet, the government in the Philippines does not represent any religion. And the citizens have the right to choose any religion they want (Ebrary, I. & World Trade Press 1993).

The Philippines passed the global economic crisis better than their neighbouring countries, because of domestic consumption, fast expanding outsourcing industry and reduced exposure of the international securities. The per capita income was \$7,500 GDP in 2015 and in a comparison to the rest of the world, The Philippines comes in 34th place. The sex ratio in The Philippines stands 1.01 male(s) for every female as of 2015. The country's unemployment rate is low with only 6.5 percent and 25.2 percent of the population is below the poverty line (CIA 2015).

The largest city and the capital is Manila with 12 946 million residents. Philipino (Tagalog) and English are the official languages in the country. The Philippine has been colonized three times; first they were colonized by Spain from 1521 to 1898 and second – by USA from 1898 to 1946. The country restored democracy in 1986 after two decades of dictatorial rule. In 2010 president Benigno Aquino III took office with a mandate to eradicate corruption (The Heritage Foundation 2016)

1.2.1 Political parties in the Philippines

The first Philippine political party was the Federal Party, established in 1900. The Nationalist Party (NP) was established in 1907. After Japanese occupation, which occurred in 1942-1945, a two-party system developed between the NP and the Liberal party (LP). These two parties lacked rational political programs and tried to appeal to all social classes, ethnic groups and all regions avoiding taking such position which might divide the electorate. Almost all representatives and senators were aristocrats and because of that the parties never discussed such fundamental national problems as unfair distribution of power, land and wealth. (National Encyclopedia 2016)

Over the years, number of parties increased and now there are 16 major political parties and two of them is led by women, also there are 29 minor political parties and party-list groups and three of them are led by a woman (Philippine country guide 2017).

After Republic Act 7941 (Party-list Law) was approved in 1995, there were established two women's group “Abanse! Pinay” and “Gabriela Women's Party”. Enactment of the Party-list

Law was very important step for women, because until then there was no formal recruitment process for women into political parties in The Philippines. (Vermonte 2014:10)

The Akbayan, progressive-left party is the only political party in the Philippines which uses a gender quota, i.e. female must constitute the 30 percent of members. This party is known for its most ‘institutionalized’ recruitment system for women in the national election, although the party was established in early 2012. Leaders of the Akbayan party reveal that it is difficult to find qualified women to fill in all the positions. (Vermonte 2014:13) According to Vermonte (2014) a leader of one party explained this situation as an outcome of poverty, low level of education, and also low political understanding of how important women’s participation in politics is. Liberal Party opened its door only in 2011 to so-called ‘sectors’, and after that, they established the women’s wing of the party with ability to recruit 400 new members (Vermonte 2014:13).

1.2.2 Election process in the Philippines

The current electoral system in the Philippines was established in 1987 and it dictates that presidential and vice presidential elections are to be held every six years with no re-election allowed. The last election was in May 2016 when Rodrigo "Rody" Roa Duterte was elected the president of the Philippines. The Philippine presidential seat is an extremely powerful position, because a president of the Philippines has the power to appoint and control the disbursement of government funds. The majority of House of Representatives (200 of about 300 representatives) and the Senate are elected by the citizens. The president appoints the minority of the House members. Senate and local elections are held in the same years as the presidential elections and three years after them. Senators are limited to two terms but representatives are limited to three terms. Representatives for the local and provincial levels are elected to three year terms, with a three-term limit. (Rocamana 1998)

According to Hays (2013), the Philippines have universal direct suffrage at age 18 and older to participate in the elections. Voter participation is typically between 70 percent and 85 percent. The Philippine elections have many candidates and many positions each year (Hays 2013).

The voting system in the Philippines is "first past the post" and this is the simplest voting form of majority electoral system. The candidate who receives the highest number of the votes wins, although this is not an absolute majority of votes. In the “first past the post” system voters vote for individual candidates rather than political parties. (International IDEA 2013)

At the core of the Philippines political system are the wealthiest families which are united from the national to the barangays level. Some of these families can afford to finance provincial election campaigns on their own or even congressional seats at the local level. The national elite

families differ from the local families only in degree and these national elite families *"have attained a level of wealth and status practically immune from the vicissitudes of political fortune"*. (Rocamona 1998:1)

1.3 Previous research

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency claims that women and men are not equal and it is clear to see all over the world, especially in developing countries. Inequality prevails regarding the lack of women's economic and political power, which is why gender inequality is a prioritized issue for Sida (2016). The Swedish equality policy focuses on women's and men's right to have equal privilege, opportunities and conditions to shape their own lives. When women have more influence over their own lives and in society, everybody will benefit, since gender equality increases, poverty decreases. (Sida 2016)

According to The Government Offices of Sweden (2016), women and men should have the same opportunities to shape society and their own lives, and also to be active citizens to be able to shape conditions for decision-making. The purpose of gender equality policy is to change the system that preserves the deployment of power and resources between the sexes in society.

Equality also contributes to economic growth, by promoting people's skills and creativity.

Gustafsson (2008) explains "gender power and gender based interests" that a common feature around the world is that men are still overrepresented in most political assemblies, and women are often underrepresented in terms of the most influential political positions and in terms of what might be described as typically "male" policy. A central issue in this context is women's representation in politics, and not just the percentage of women with political assignments. Gustafsson (2008) also describes that the qualitative aspects of women's political representation stresses that women's and men's representation varies between different hierarchical political positions and between different policy areas. It has also been shown that women and men's political interests, focus and political conditions in certain respects are different. Yvonne Hirdman (1987, 1990) points out, that women's participation and representation in political life as well as in the political institutions has not increased their political influence. Hirdman (1987, 1990) explains that women's representation is limited, because women mostly work in areas that have low status, for example social policy or education policy. She also claims that this "internal segregation" is limiting women's opportunities to influence in contrast to men (Hirdman 1987, 1990).

Women are basically the same as men, which makes it hard to explain why women reach organizations' high positions to a much lesser extent than men. An often-used metaphor for this is "glass ceiling". This is an invisible, yet impenetrable barrier of expectations and attitudes that

block women's path to the organization's higher positions. (Billing 2011) Historian Östberg (1997) explains that women's absence from politics depends on men's resistance to let them participate. They use different forms of suppression techniques, such as making women invisible, manipulation or hostage taking of women.

Phillips (1995, 1997, 1998) states that politicians' social background and their gender affects policy content, and that is one main reason that women and men should have equal representation. Studies also shows that female politicians more often than their male colleagues feel that they have no influence over policy, and that they feel devalued, marginalized or overlooked in the public policy process, and they also feel that there is greater attention to men than to women's arguments in political debate (Pincus 1995).

Women's participation in politics varies from men's, women show a much stronger interest in issues of social policy, family policy and health care than their male colleagues. Parliamentary report in Sweden in 1994 about female and male policy interest selection has shown that the proportion of commissioners had mentioned different subject areas as their main area of interest, only 1% among the male parliamentary commissioners had gender equality as a personal area of interest, compared to 12% of their female colleagues, and it was almost a double quantity of women who were interested of care policy than men. Most male members were interested in economic issues and taxes. Gender is of importance but does not mean that women always fall into one category and the men in another. (Wängnerud 1999:174-175) Wängneruds (1999:177-178) conclusion is that when female politicians take over seats from men it means that a greater number of politicians will prioritize issues of equality and social care, women's participation in parliamentary work means that women's areas have a more central role because of the increasing proportion of female politicians.

1. 3.1 Asia and the Philippines

The percentage of women members of parliament varies considerably between countries of the world. According to the inter-parliamentary Union (2017) the average proportion of women in the world's parliaments is 22.7% and the regional averages in Asia is 18.8%. The Senate of the Philippines has 24 members and 6 of them are women, which constitute 25%. The House of Representatives has 86 female politicians of 292 representatives, and it constitutes 29.5%. The number of representatives is located above the world average and the regional averages in Asia. For example, Japan has 9.5% women in the parliament; Thailand has 6.1%, Malaysia - 10.4% and Sri - Lanka 5.8%. The Philippines is also located above the world average, which is 22.7% and Europe's 25.6%. (IPU: 2017)

In Asia, women's representation has hardly progressed at all during the post-war period, in 2005, 8.4% of parliamentary seats in region held by women. The communist states of China, North Korea, Laos and Vietnam were using relatively strict gender quotas in the nomination of candidates for the elections and have held around 25% female members during the period. In China, the parliament is not even directly elected, which gives the communist party total control over nominations. In other Asian countries, there is only a few percent women members of Parliament (Wide 2006:88).

Högström (2012) examined women representation in parliaments and governments in the democratic countries all over the world.

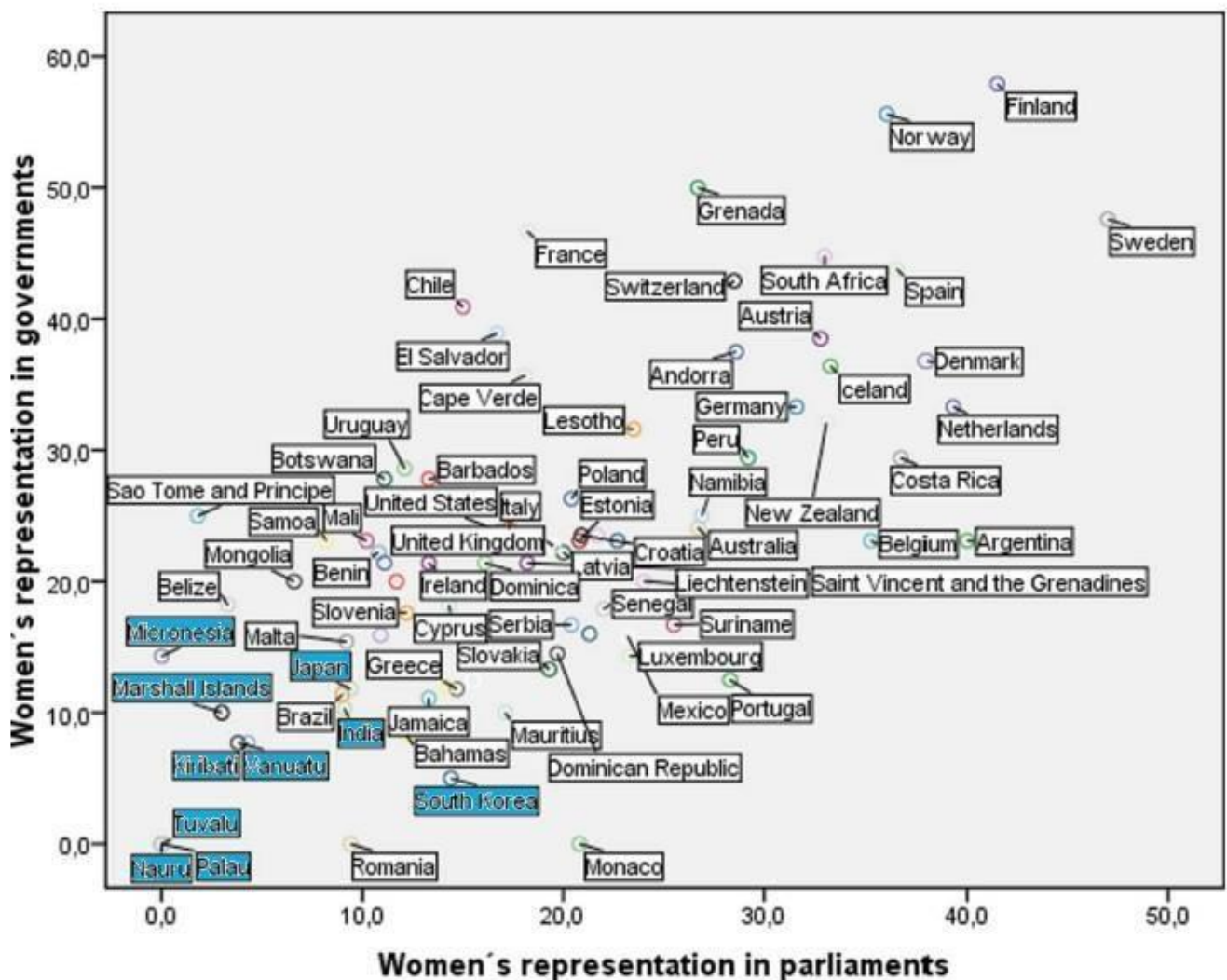


FIGURE 1. Correlation between Women's Representation in Parliaments and Government (Högström 2012).

As it sees from figure 1 there is quite strong correlation among women's representation in governments and in parliaments. The closest countries to the Philippines are situated in the bottom left corner of the figure 1 and nine of these ten countries had lowest female

representation in national politics in 2008, according to Höglström. Three of these countries had 0.00% of female representation both in government and in parliament: Tuvalu, Palau and Nauru. The other closest countries of the Philippines such as Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Micronesia had higher female percentage in government in cooperation competition with the female percentage in parliament, while South Korea had the contrary situation.

The situation in the Philippines is better in comparison to other parts of Southeast Asia, because women always enjoyed greater equality in the Philippines. Since the Spanish occupation, Filipinas (women in the Philippines) had the legal rights to inherit family property. (U.S. Library of Congress nr.2 2016)

In 1990 women had higher education and literacy levels than men in the Philippines. Women appearance in important positions such as senators, heads of major companies or Supreme Court justices is not unusual or new in the Philippines. But on the other hand, even though women were higher educated but the high positions were mostly obtained by men. Women held about 15 percent of top work places in the private sector and only 159 of 982 top-level positions in the civil service, although 64 percent of graduated students were women in 1990. (U.S. Library of Congress Nr. 2 2016)

According to Vermonte (2014), the Philippines is a country in Asia that started a voluntary quota for political parties. The 1987 Constitution and the 1991 Local Government Code had influence to increased number of women's representation in parliament as well as in local government. The 1991 Local Government Code requests that the one third of sector representatives in every municipal, provincial and city legislative council would be female. This code has also important role for women in the decentralization and empowerment processes of governance. (Vermonte 2014:10)

Another important law, according to Vermonte (2014), is Republic Act 7941 (Party-list Law) which contributes to enabling the participation of women's groups in the election by forming party-list groups. "Abanse! Pinay" and "Gabriela Women's Party". Enactment of the Party Law was very important step because until then there was no formal recruitment process for women into political parties in The Philippines. (Vermonte, 2014:10) According to Vermonte (2014:11) the recruitment is done through family system: women can come in to politics only if a father or a husband decides to allow their daughter or wife to replace him.

Table nr.1. Women's Representation in Congress

Period	Women Senators	Percentage	Women in House of Representatives	Percentage
1987-1992	2	8.3	21	11
1992-1995	4	16.7	24	11.1
1995-1998	4	16.7	24	10.6
1998-2001	4	16.7	27	12.4
2001-2004	3	12.5	38	17.6
2004-2007	4	16.7	37	15.7

Source: Inter-parliamentary union (2017)

Looking through the history of The Philippines it can be noticed that number of women in politics has increased, as you can see from table 1. During the Marcos period (1965-1986) women could be assigned only to such cabinet posts as social welfare, human settlements and social services, but nowadays situation is changed. (Vermonte 2014:11)

According to Philippine Commission on Women (2014) in September 2013 there were elected 4 women from 12 senators (33.3%), while in the 2010 senatorial election there were only two women elected (16.7%). In the 2013 Congress women accounted for 25.6 percent of all members of the House of Representative, but in the 2010 Congress there were 22.5 percent of women in the House of Representatives. Voter turnout, which is computed by dividing the total votes cast by the total number of registered voters, is higher for women than men. The women voter turnout in 2013 was 77.9% while men – 77%. The women voter turnout was also higher than men in 2004 and 2007.

In the 2010 national election, two representatives of a women's organization – Gabriela Women's Party (GWP) got seats in the House of Congress, this party also won in the 2007 and 2004 national elections. In the 2010, national election 25 percent of representatives were women, in 2007 there were 28.6 percent and in 2004 17.4 percent were women. Women dominate the bureaucracy especially the technical or second-level (58.7 percent) they also constitute more than 40 percent in the 3rd level positions, but men are more likely to work as clerks or managers/executives. (Philippine Commission on Women 2014)

According to Vermonte (2014), in 2001 civil society organizations worked for the adoption of the 30 percent quota for women in the executive and legislative branches but the bill has been

rejected. Author also points out that the electoral politics of the Philippine constitutes of elite and upper or middle class interests, that witnesses the fact that the economic and political elite dominates in major institutions in national and local levels (2014:12). Teehanke (2002:195) describes that the Philippine electoral politics “suffers from institutional and procedural defects that prevent it becoming meaningful to effective and efficient governance”. He also claims that only those candidates who are rich or popular can win elections, and unfortunately but poor farmers, laborers as well as women belongs to that social group that have little opportunity of winning elections in the Philippines (Teehanke 2002:195). Silvestre (2001:165) argues that family ties have allowed women to enter politics and those women often have a father-daughter or husband-wife relationship with male politicians and that is how she explains the election of Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Silvestre (2001:165) points out that the Philippines long history of oligarchy, patriarchy, subordination of women and the role of Catholic Church have positively affected women possibility to enter politics. According to Silvestre (2001:167), approval from the church benefits to increase the candidacy of women in politics. Writer adds that support is also given for women candidates, because they have the symbolic role in the culture of the country. Female politicians with strong Catholic background have a positive image in society of the Philippines. (Silvestre 2001:167)

1.4 PURPOSE AND GOAL

The goal of this bachelor thesis is to investigate the political gender equality in the Philippines. Moreover, to research the present situation of gender equality, opportunities as well as horizontal and vertical segregation in politics.

Our research questions are:

- How do politicians experience the present situation of gender equality in politics in the Philippines?
- What opportunities are there for women to be politically active and to make political influence?
- Are there any horizontal or vertical divisions between women and men's in political positions?

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework will present the important theories for us to analyse the empirical material and answer our research questions. Here we have included the theories about the difference between genders experiences and why women should be active in politics, the meaning of an overrepresentation of a certain group in politics and the possible reasons to women's underrepresentation in politics. This section includes even the arguments about women's presence in politics, and also the horizontal and vertical segregations. Which we will use later in the analysis section together with respondents answers.

2.1 Women's political representation

Wängnerud (1999:17) explains that women are a group that has been, and still is, frequently outside the decision-making assemblies, and there are conflicts of interest between the sexes.

Women as a group are subordinate and in today's male-dominated system women's interests are suppressed. Phillips (1995:66) clarifies that:

"Women's interest and experiences is good to have in a parliament because there are particular needs, interests, and concerns that arise from women's experience, and these will be inadequately addressed in a politics that is dominated by men. Equal rights to a vote have not proved strong enough to deal with this problem; there must also be equality among those elected to office".

Overrepresentation of a specific group in politics means overrepresentation of certain opinions, and the gender of the politicians can be a decisive influence on what they suggest as desirable or possible (Phillips 2000:38, 213). Phillips (2000:15,17) clarifies that the representatives affect what is represented, which in turn affects the community and the priority issues. Decisionmaking authority needs to be diverse and better reflect all groups in society to be considered as a good representation.

Ideas of politics stresses that the quality of the representation depends on how well it reflects and promotes the voters' opinions and principles, regardless of who is representing them. Phillips criticizes politics of ideas and claims that certain groups become excluded when it is not considering who the decision makers are (Phillips 2000:11-12). But despite her criticism to politics of ideas she does state that neither one of them cannot exclude the other, a balance between them needs to be created for further development, and politics of ideas needs politics of presence and even the other way around. She explains that even if a woman in politics can not represent all the other women because they might have different experiences, they still share specific interests and are all underrepresented as a group which separates them from men (Phillips 2000: 38).

In several studies, it has been argued that it requires a certain number of female politicians in order to influence the political content, thus the number of the female commissioners must pass a certain threshold, a so-called (critical mass), so they can influence the policy content and shape

it. The value of the "critical mass" varies from 10 to 35 percent, depending on the researcher. Other scientists argue instead that the proportion of women in parliament is less important and believe instead that it is important to have a few key female politicians, who can be an actively driving force in some specific issues (Wide 2006:5).

There is a research that emphasize that politics of presence is sociological, which means that the environment that surround people will shape their opinions. Therefore, it is important to spread the politicians' social background as wide as possible. Otherwise the result will be that the group, who dominates the parliament, for example men, will have inappropriate high impact based on their earlier life experiences. The Parliament should reflect the citizens in order to be able to act and lead more than just certain privileged groups. If a strong distortion exists in recruitment to the parliament, there will be distortion in the interests that dominate the policy (Wängnerud 1999:17).

There are various solutions on how the distribution of recruitment to the parliament is determined, for example there is a proportional or majority electoral system, but the most important thing is that there are established rules that everyone knows in advance (Wängnerud 1999:18).

Researcher in International Studies, Francine d'Amico (1995), has on the basis of a comparative study of female political leaders made a typology of women's career paths. D'Amicos three main tracks include: 1) "deputies" in which power inherited through family members, whether living or deceased, 2) "insiders" or "climber", which flows into politics through the party or other political channels, and 3) "outsider" or "activist" who are recruited through grassroots movements or opposition politics. Venues perspective on "deputies" is that women in politicized families are acting as an extension of the power base which (usually) male relative has established. They can be described as a sort of "male equivalents" women who safeguard the interests in his absence or by his disappearance (Currel 1974). Also, when it comes to female insiders widely seen by a male promoter, a "mentor" (Ramsey 2003).

2.2 Reasons for the varying proportion of female commissioners

Women's representation in parliament can be studied at various levels of government and parties, and can be explained in different ways. Studies vary in terms of analysis units, cases and periods. Some scientists show that different variables like socio-economic, cultural and international factors influence women's representation, other scientists believe that culture and institutions have the power but not the socio-economic factors. An explanation to the various studies is that different authors use different types of variables and interpret them in different ways. (Wide 2006:83-84)

-Women's representation varies in *time and period*. The trends over time for the whole world shows that the average women's representation in parliament has increased from an average of 2% from 1945 to 15% in 2005. (Wide 2006: 91)

-The *economic development* is considered important for women in society. It is considered to be a positive correlation between economic development and women's political representation for several reasons. The economic development leads the traditional values about gender to reduce which in turn lead to changed attitudes about female politicians from both parties and voters. The economic development makes more women able to study and work and thus become more interested in politics (Wide 2006:93).

It is claimed to be a correlation between women's socio-economic conditions, and women's political representation. But if a country has a high level of economic development, it does not necessarily mean that both sexes live in good conditions. (Wide 2006:96)

Gender-related development index (GDI) explains that gender differences depend on life expectancy, education and income. GDI is lower when there are differences to the disadvantage of women, and higher when women live under the same terms as men. Women's socioeconomic conditions are measured by the percentage of women in the workforce and women's education level. Women's educational level shows how participant they are in the public sector, as well as more highly educated women in the world means more women are interested in politics. Responsibility for many children and a high mortality in some countries, mainly in Asia and North Africa, as well as during childbirth or during pregnancy limits women's political participation, but also because girls are neglected compared with boys when it comes to food and public health (Wide 2006: 97).

-There correlation between women's representation and the *dominant religion and religiosity*. Women's representation in politics tends to be lower in countries that are dominated by religions that emphasizes more traditional roles for women, as well as in countries that are characterized by a high degree of religiosity. Religions in society affect the perception of gender and religion correlates with certain values and traditions. Religions are considered as a sign of a wider cultural context, which means that women are primarily seen as mothers and wives. Religion is able to influence women's political representation through the creation of attitudes about women as politicians. Religion can also affect girls and women's opportunities to get educated or professional work. (Wide 2006:100)

-*The electoral system* is one of the main explanations for the variations in the representation of women. The percentage of women in parliament is higher in countries with proportional electoral systems than in countries with majority electoral system. In countries with majority

electoral system in single-member constituency the party generally nominates their only candidate following strictly set criteria of what is a successful candidate. Since it is often perceived as less likely that voters will vote for a woman, the party preferably nominates a man. Countries with proportional electoral system have several commissioners per constituency, and the parties strive to appeal as many voters as possible, therefore it is considered necessary to include women in the party to not risk losing voters. (Rule 1994:18-19)

Stockemer (2011: 693-694) Means that the proportional electoral system allows to choose several representatives which make it easier for the political parties to involve female commissioners on their nomination lists. In other words, when the nomination lists are evenly divided between men and women, the proportional electoral system benefit to attract more voters. It is a bit harder when it comes to majority electoral system, since they have a single man constituency which means that only one commissioner can be chosen from each constituency. In greater extent, the selected is already politically experienced or a well-known politician.

Women's representation is associated with women's suffrage and eligibility. Women's representation in politics is expected to be higher the longer time they have been in the parliament, and had the right to vote and were eligible. (Wide 2006:110)

Though there is correlation between how long tradition a country has accepted women in parliament, the proportion of women in parliament is higher the longer tradition the country has women as politicians. It is even possible that women's representation stays at the same level when the country is characterized by factors that favor or disadvantage women's political representation (Wide 2006:113).

2.3 Arguments about women's presence in politics

Hernes (1987:22) claims that there is variety of arguments about women's political representation and participation that are considered as relevant categories about participation rights in politics. There are three important basic arguments.

2.3.1 Justice and democracy argument

This argument implies that women's representation is a matter of justice and democracy because all groups in a society should have the right to participate in decisions that concern them. It is not the qualification of decision makers, nor consequences of their competence for the quality of decisions, nor even that would it be better or different if women participate, but women's participation is a democratic right (Hernes 1987:22).

2.3.2 Recourse argument

The argument claims that the society lose when women are not participating in politics, because women have different knowledge of values and experiences than men, for that reason do men and women complete each other and make better decisions together for the whole society. It is even important to have women in decision-making positions because male decision-making politicians might forget, overlook or omit the consequences of political decision for women (Hernes 1987:23). Women's participation in politics would change the meaning, the condition and the quality of decisions because they have different gender experiences than men that are needed to create a wide decision area that is thought through from different perspectives for all of the citizens best (Eduards 1991).

The influx of women in politics increases generally the level of competence and represents relevant and valuable experience. This argument considers the absence of women from teaching and research and from political life as a waste of valuable experience, and that is why women should be producers of political decisions in cooperation with men and not just consumers. (Hernes 1987:23)

2.3.3 Conflict of interest argument

This argument stresses that men and women have inconsistent and different interests. The interests of women are underrepresented, repressed or hidden. There are conflicts in the political system between women and men, and between dominant values and repressed values. Women need to be allowed to participate equally as men to make the conflicts between them visible, which in short term increases the level of conflict but leads to change that benefit women's interests in the political system. But in long term the political system will be less conflict-filled (Hernes 1987:23). It is important to have women in politics because they need to observe women's political interests and not risk that their interests will be less value next to men's interests (Eduards 1991).

2.3.4 Vertical segregation

Ellingsæter (2013) stresses that vertical segregation describes as over and underrepresentation of certain type of workers in areas identified as having high status. Men have generally higher positions in the society and in different organizations, which gives them more power and influence than women for example to decide the salaries and work time (Lipman- Blumen 1976).

The thought of men is better or more interested in leader positions must be reduced and changed, because women's and men's knowledge and qualifications needs to measure equally, not

depending on their gender (SOU 2004:43). The lack of women's influence can be described as a vertical problem because they don't have as much access to power and leadership compared to men (Carli & Eagly 2001). Women are prevented to reach higher positions because of their gender and not because of their skill level (Muhonen 2010).

Meyerson and Petersen (1997) states that there are many explanations to why it is harder for women to achieve higher positions and why the employers do not want to hire women. One of the reasons that women don't achieve higher positions is that men are usually responsible for the electing and they prefer to choose individuals that are just like themselves. The other reason can be that men perceive women as less suitable because they are too unpredictable and emotional (Meyerson and Petersen 1997).

Ohlsson and Öhman (1997) concluded that women are prevented to achieve higher positions, but added that there is an increased number of women that started to achieve top positions, but they got stuck in the development at a certain level. Drake and Solberg (1996) clarifies that women leaders can only reach the lower management levels in hierarchical organizations, when women try to move up in the hierarchy they face a barrier that prevents them to do so. These obstacles can be conscious or unconscious, visible or invisible, mechanisms that make it harder for women to advance upward.

Women and men are considered as equal, that is why it has been difficult to explain why women do not reach the top posts in the same degree as men (Billing 2011).

2.3.5 The horizontal segregation

The horizontal segregation divides men and women in to different professions. Women are predominant in certain areas (such healthcare), while men are found in other areas (defines, finance). Within each profession men and women tend to be doing different tasks and the more specific a professional level studied is, the greater gender segregation there can be found (SOU 1998: 6).

With horizontal segregation, division is differences between women and men in the labour market, meaning that they are found in different occupations, workplaces and sectors (Ellingsæter 2013). Since ancient time society has been characterized by division of labour, and as a result, women now work in jobs that do not provide the same influence and opportunity to be promoted (Billing, 2011). To reduce gender segregated labour market requires that the programs would be attractive for both men and women to apply to. The recruitment policy should be changed so that the competence and qualifications would be measured regardless to gender of a candidate (SOU 2004:43).

Labour segregation, which emerged in the 1960s, showed that the labour is divided; men and women are in different occupations, industries and sectors of society. The segregation can be found in different occupational structures, workplaces and sectors. Although women in the 1990s took more and more space in the labour market, gender segregation continues to create concern because it is important for whole growing economy. The one of possible explanations why segregation still remains is that there are gender stereotypes, of how women and men are, and what they do. The other reason is that women are more seen as mothers and that the "glass ceiling" because of that becomes more difficult to reduce. (Ellingsæter 2013) Although segregation in the labour market has decreased, but the problem remains and there still are differences between men and women in the division of jobs. Bygren (2013) believes that the organizations which already have a high proportion of one gender tend to continue to employ people of the same gender. Organizations balance largely determined by gender-related composition of the professions that exist within the organization (Bygren 2013). Ellingsæter (2013) states that both vertical and horizontal segregation is difficult to study and causes of segregation may vary from time to time.

3 Methodology

This chapter describes how our thesis is written, by including its design, the data collection and analysis, critique of the chosen method, validity and Reliability concepts which are important parts of both quantitative and qualitative researches. Delimitations of the bachelor thesis, ethical considerations, target group and a presentation of the respondents without intrude their right to be anonymous, because we asked for their permission to publish their names and they didn't want to remain anonymous.

3.1 Research design

The research that we have conducted is a field case study which has been carried out in Manila in the Philippines. Since our study focuses on understanding why the Philippines is represented as the most gender equal nation in Asia, we chose to use qualitative method, because it focuses on respondents' experiences and words (Bryman 2011). Qualitative method aims to create deeper understanding of attitudes and ideas as causes people's actions, formulations and decision making (Andersen 1994). The reason that we chose the qualitative method is to help us understand women's opportunities to be politically active and exercise political influence to generate empirical material to analyse our research questions.

3.2 Data collection

According to Bryman (2011) there are different types of interviewers, qualitative and quantitative interviews. The qualitative interviews are less structured than quantitative

interviews. Esaiasson (2012: 228-230) states that the qualitative interviews are not critical because the respondent's answers are from their own opinions and experiences about different situations and circumstances which will guide the interviewer to identify them. The performances can't be assessed as false or true, the most important thing is to capture the interviewee's thoughts and experiences. (Esaiasson 2012: 228-230). For the purpose of our study we have interviewed both female and male politicians who have been elected as senators and congress members, with a hope to get a wide perspective of gender equality, the politicians' comprehensive opinions and broader information to analyse women's political representation, possibilities and obstacles to be politically active.

Our thesis aim is to understand and explain the reality of women's political situation in the Philippines by interviewing congress members and senators from Manila, to hear their own opinions, values and experience in different questions. For that reason, is qualitative data the most suitable method for us to use. According to Trost (1997) the qualitative interviews gives a complex and comprehensive answers to the questions, and the researchers can obtain the respondent's real opinion and provide more deep answers about the subject being studied.

Bryman (2011) clarifies that observations are also very important during studying people in different circumstances, and once the respondent is being observed it might change their behavior when they notice that they are being observed.

We didn't want to have a focus group to interview because we want the respondents to speak their own minds about the subject and not be affected by other politicians' opinions Bryman (2011) states that there is a lot of important factors to the direct discussion in an interview, for example comfortableness and the internal dynamics, that is why we wanted to meet them one by one and give them the opportunity to speak their minds. Though it was very hard to book interview time with each politician that we had met, and it would be impossible to gather them and ask them to leave their work at the same time, because they were so busy.

The best option for us to write our thesis is semi-structured interviews because this kind of interviews allows to prepare relevant questions before the interviews (see attachment), as a guide of interview questions, but even let us add new questions during the interviews if it is needed. Semi-structured interviews are easier to use if we want to compare the answers of the respondents (Lind 2014:124-130).

The empirical study will be collected by semi- structured interviews with nine female and male politicians in different positions in municipal parliament in Manila, which is the capital of the Philippines, and will be focusing on women's political representation.

We are also going to collect information about the difference between women and men opinions about the women opportunities to have high positions in municipal politics. This will help us to

collect broader range of information to relate with the theoretical framework (Bryman 2011 s.250).

Bryman & Bell (2013) explains that the interpretation of the interview results is controlled by the person who interprets them, which means that it might be a variation of interpretations between different researchers and this can be seen as a disadvantage of our chosen method. Another weakness with qualitative method is that it consumes a lot of time for both, respondents to answer the questions, and interviewers to prepare the interview guide as well as to process all the data material afterwards (Bryman 2011).

3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis has been done through taking notes and recording all the interviews, then listening and transcribing the answers that will be the basis to the empirical data material. The transcription was used to make sure not to miss any important information and even to better isolate the relevant from the irrelevant information which makes it easier to analyse.

3.4 Critique of method

Qualitative method has some weaknesses, one of the weaknesses according Bryman (2011:368-369) that it is difficult and rarely possible to replicate the research, because qualitative researches are unstructured and depends on the researcher's creativity and thoughts. The second critique is that qualitative interviews are time consuming for the interview persons because they must prepare and process all the data, but it is also time consuming for both of the respondents and the interview persons to go through the questions. The author states that qualitative researchers are often based on researchers' unsystematic ideas of what is influential, and even their relationship with the respondents. The third problem is the difficulty to generalize different situations the results are established from. Bryman (2011:413) adds that the interviews might not capture the general perception of the questions or have misunderstandings, which make it difficult to draw the final illations. Because of the limited time, we had together in the Philippines (4.5 weeks), and because of the politicians' busy schedules, we could only interview few politicians from the house of the representatives and the senators house in Manila.

3.5 Validity and Reliability concepts

Bryman (2011) states that reliability and validity are important parts of quantitative and qualitative researches, because the interpretation of data can be affected by the researcher. The validity concept explores only what the examination needs, which captures one sight of the whole study, and therefore it's considered as less credible and flawed (Esaiasson 2012:58).

To increase the validity of our study we interviewed the top politicians in the country, because our study is going to be about them and they are the ones who know exactly how it is being represented in politics. During the interviews we double-checked with the respondents if their answers were interpreted correctly and recorded them. The respondents took a part of the interviews and gave a confirmation that the material has been interpreted correctly. Though, the results of our research only apply to the situation we investigated and the persons we interviewed.

Reliability refers to the researcher's measure of the reliability of the study and the survey has credibility (Bryman 2008:354). The lack of reliability depends on carelessness and random errors during data collection and which pass on to the data processing, these errors can among other things be in the form of illegible notes, fatigue and confusion. An adequate measurement instrument without accuracy doesn't perform as a high reliability. The lack of reliability depends even on, when one respondent is interviewed at different times and states different answers every time at each interview opportunity. (Esaiasson 2012:63)

It is important to be aware of that reliability is more believable than the validity concept, because the lack of validity is a more serious problem than the lack of reliability, the reason is that the validity studies beside of the case and also measures partially or completely wrong reality, because validity measures only a proportion of the entire subject (Esaiasson 2012:63). Reliability errors are easier to be observed because they are about varying under and over estimates during merge the measurements (Esaiasson 2012:64).

By using qualitative research and approaching with interviews to get a deeper understanding of the respondents' perceptions is a credible and dependable method in answering our research questions. Since our study only includes a small portion of the top politicians in the Philippines, it means that the results that we have collected may not summarize the results that might have been from low-level politicians. We might not be able to generalize the aspects of all senators and congresswomen with only 9 respondents, but we can acknowledge their experiences and opinions.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The assumptions and the conclusions that we have made are based on the information from the interviews that we conducted. The result will only be based on the respondents' thoughts and experiences and therefore will not be able to reflect the women's political representation situation in general.

We have informed our respondents about the interview purpose, which is a field case study and told them that it is voluntary participation to the interviews and that they can cancel their

participation whenever they want. We also explained that information provided will not be used for any other purpose than thesis and informed them about their right to be anonymous, have anonymous municipality or workplace, and even about their right to be unidentified. The respondents gave us permission to publish their names, since they didn't find it necessary to be anonymous.

3.7 Delimitation

We were planning to interview just senators, half female and half male. Unfortunately, it was very hard to book interview time with them, because they were very busy, so we settled for the senators that wanted to meet us. Since it was only three senators who could meet us we decided to reach to other politicians, which is why we decided to interview congress members also. Though it was impossible to interview the same number of male and female politicians because of their busy schedules, therefore we had to be content with the politicians who wanted to meet us. We interviewed only the highest-ranked politicians in the capital of the Philippines, we choose not to widen our research into more municipalities because that would broaden and perhaps confuse our study.

3.8 Target group

This thesis focuses on gender equality in politics and on women's representation in politics. This aims at senators and congress members' perception about the present situation of gender equality and possibility for women to get into politics. The study is target to theorists and students who want to make a further research based on the knowledges that we have already explored, and perhaps help them find new interesting areas and save them some searching time for all the information that we have already found.

3.9 Presentation of the respondents

We have interviewed three senators, one of them was a male and two female senators, as well as six representatives and two of them were male politicians.

3.9.1 Senators

We interviewed three senators, one male and two females. Our first respondent is a male senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV, were a soldier for 16 years before he became a senator. Trillanes got involved in politics by accident of circumstances, because none of his relatives was politically involved. At 2003, he was involved in an incident when he was protesting against corruption, which sentenced him to jail for 7,5 years. Meanwhile he decided to participate in 2007 election and won when he was still in jail. Trillanes explains that he was not an expected

victory because he didn't have any money, any political organization, or any access to the media.

The second respondent is a female senator Loren Legarda, who runs her third and final term as a senator; she was also married to a former senator and used to be a journalist before she became a senator. The third respondent is a female senator Risa Hontiveros, who also used to be a journalist and ran first as a senator in 2010, which means that it is her second term. She started being politically active as a representative of "Akabay" which is a democratic socialist party in the Philippines.

3.9.2 Congress members of the House of Representatives

We interviewed six members of the House of Representatives, four of them were female and two of them were male representatives. Our first female respondents from the House of Representatives were the congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia, her first political position was when she was elected as the first female governor in Cebu. Cebu is the biggest province in terms of population in the entire country. Over 435 years it was only male governors. She served 9 years as a province governor, later she ran as congresswoman of the third district of Cebu. She was the first woman representing the third district of Cebu. She is a deputy speaker who serves as speaker's alter ego.

The congresswoman Vilma Santos-Recto is married to a senator, and works at the same time as an actress. Recto served in Batangas for 18 years and nine years as the governor of Batangas. Congresswoman Marisol "Sol" Castillo Aragon-Sampelo is a former reporter and anchor and got involved in politics through her writing and reporting of reality-based stories about the struggling families with very limited opportunities given by the society; of a sick and aged woman who is too poor to afford her own medicines. She wanted to become a part of their plight and a part of the solution and respond to the needs of the people that she used to only write and report about.

The last congresswoman is Arlene Brosas. She is from a little town and her parents were land keepers. It is her first time running as a candidate for the election. Previously she used to work as a teacher and in nongovernmental organization for women and child care. Brosas started to be politically active in certain problems as women and children issues already in college. We also interviewed two congressmen, Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo and Cesar V. Sarmiento. Quimbo is a lawyer by profession and the deputy speaker of the seventeenth congress and a member of the liberal party. Taxes are one of his main advocacies as a congressman. He has got involved in politics because he was tired of hearing people's complaints about politicians and thought that it was time to make some change, so he ran for

congress and he won. The last congressman we interviewed is Cesar V. Sarmiento reappointed officials of the country.

4. Results and analysis

This chapter includes the results and the analysis section of our research, in order not to intrude our respondents right to be anonymous we asked for their permission to write their names in our thesis but they didn't want to remain anonymous, therefore we will introduce them shortly at the beginning of the results and present then results and analyse it from the theoretical framework and the previous research.

We will do that in three sections, the first section will be about the present situation of gender equality in politics, the second section will be about women's opportunities to be politically active and the last section will be about the horizontal and vertical segregations.

4.1 The present situation of gender equality in politics in the Philippines

The respondents from Senate and Congress have different views when asked about their opinion about gender equality and women's political representation, although all respondents see the situation positively. All three men respondents described that the Philippines has made a dramatic jump against the other Asian countries in this area, and according to U.S. Library of Congress (2016) women in the Philippines always enjoyed greater equality in comparison to other parts of Southeast Asia.

“The rights of women have advanced a lot in our country over the years, much more in the political arena. We had two female presidents already, a female Chief Justice and a lot of female legislators, cabinet officials and judicial officers.”

Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento

Senator Risa Hontiveros agrees with such opinion and adds that besides two female presidents the Philippines also had two vice presidents (Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Leni Robredo) and that the Philippines takes pride in its history of women in the government. The Philippines has 3,580 elected female government officials. In the current congress, there are 87 female representatives and there is a rising trend of women occupying powerful positions as chief justice, ombudsman, and cabinet secretaries. Wide (2006:110) states that women's representation is associated with women's suffrage and eligibility, in other words women's representation in politics is expected to be higher the longer time they have been in the parliament, and had the right to vote and were eligible. Writer explains that there is a correlation between how long a country has accepted women in parliament and the number of women there. The proportion of women in parliament is higher; the longer country has a tradition to see women in politics. Senator Loren Legarda points out that unlike the other conservative societies where women are expected to be at home and where job opportunities are limited by law or by cultural norms. Philippines is more open to seeing women occupying higher positions, as well as given that fact that the country has long history of women participation in politics. The boundaries supposedly set by gender in the discussion-making of certain issues are no longer

there. According to Vermonte (2014:10), the Philippines is a country in Asia that started a voluntary quota for political parties and other acts and codes, which had influence to increased number of women's representation in parliament as well as in government. Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento explains that to advance women rights and correct the inequality that has prevailed over the past decades, women-specific assignments were mandated by their laws. These gender-specific political laws were adopted to encourage women participation in politics, such as Party-list Law, allowing the creation of women-based parties and their election to the House of Representatives. The Local Government Code of 1991, mandating the election of representation from the women sector in legislative councils. Republic Act No. 7688, which gives representation to women in the social security commission. He points out that all these laws had been triggered primarily by the Philippine Constitution recognizing the role of women in nation-building. Enactment of the Party Law was very important step because until then there was no formal recruitment process for women into political parties in The Philippines, explains Vermonte (2014:10).

The other three congresswomen also support this statement and think about situation as positive and they point out that the situation has been changing and that there is steady increase in the number of women serving in public offices. Wide (2006, p. 91) states that the trends over time for the whole world shows that the average women's representation in parliament has increased.

“If man would compare 16th congress with the 17th congress the numbers of women is changing and they are still growing. People have changed their opinion, they beginning to believe that women can also be good legislators.”

Congresswomen Marisol “Sol” Aragonés

According to Silvestre (2001: 167) Philippines has a strong Catholic background where women have a symbolic role in society of the Philippines. Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia could relate that to her own experience. Due to that fact that the Philippines is a traditional catholic country and they are not allowed to divorce, but under the family code spouse can get a declaration of nullity, and that is what she went through, when she first run as a governor. Some people thought that it was a disadvantage to be divorced and a single parent but she still got elected as a governor. The old concept that the wife needs to stick with her husband and stay at home is no longer valid because Garcia without her husband, successfully run for 3 terms as a governor and still raised her children.

Congresswomen Marisol “Sol” Aragonés and Vilma Santos-Recto assume that number of women in politics is already good enough, but Congresswoman Marisol “Sol” Aragonés adds that it is important to have a higher number of women in politics, the more women are the more

will fight for women rights. Wängnerud (1999:17) stresses that women are a group that still is, frequently outside the decision-making assemblies, and there are conflicts of interest between the sexes, as well as women, a group, which are subordinate and in today's male-dominated system women's interests are suppressed. The congresswoman Arlene Brosas believes that there should be gender equality (50/50) in politics all over the world not only in the Philippines. Senators Loren Legarda and Risa Hontiveros stress out that there is more work to be done to reach the level of equality in opportunities for women participation in politics, while congressmen Cesar V. Sarmiento and Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo also agrees with that statement.

Gustafsson (2008) explains that a common feature around the world is that men are still overrepresented in most political assemblies, and women are often underrepresented in terms of the most influential political positions and in terms of what might be described as typically "male" policy. And senator Loren Legarda strongly believes that the Philippines fails to fully harness both the potential and the possibilities arising from higher female participation in the public sector and adds that in an ideal political world, gender should not matter since public servants should be prepared to advocate and represent the interest of all their constituents regardless of social status, gender and/or level of education. However, many issues and interests still arise from gender-based differentiation in society. Congresswomen Marisol Castillo Aragonés-Sampelo and Vilma Santos-Recto claim contrariwise that gender doesn't matter in politics, and there is no difference between male and female politicians. There are equal possibilities for the both genders to be politically active. Congresswoman Recto explains that men used to be the leaders in the political world, but they have recognized that women are also capable to be leaders and have other properties to contribute with. Those Congresswomen agrees about Justice and democracy argument due Hernes (1987:22) declares that women's representation is a matter of justice and democracy because all groups in a society should have the right to participate in decisions that concern them; it is not the qualification of decision makers, nor consequences of their competence for the quality of decisions, nor even that it would be better or different if women participate, but women's participation is a democratic right. In congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo's opinion the gender still matters in the political world, although it shouldn't, instead it should be based on capacity or capability and leadership skills of politicians, but generally he thinks that women have more difficulty braking the barrier, and it requests more work from women to succeed. He also adds that men are more mediocre in politics in fact most are mediocre, but women who are in politics are generally more achievers, so it is more difficult for women. In the ideal it shouldn't, but in

reality, unfortunately as far as the voters are concerned is a very male dominated system. Although Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento has another opinion and points out that the reason why there is a lesser number of women in politics right now compared to the number of men is not mainly due to unequal political opportunities. He thinks that the elective positions are open for all genders; candidates compete with their credentials and platforms, while the people get to vote and because of that it is impossible to predict who will win in a political fight between male and female candidates. Senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV shares the same opinion and states that there is no difference if the candidate or the politician is male or female, he thinks that they don't have strong gender biases and the gender is not an issue, as a politician he doesn't feel that the male voters just vote for male politicians because of their gender, instead voters look to the merits and the qualifications. He explains that the unequal number of men and women in politics is an outcome of that there are more men than women who are running for elections, but on the other hand men and women have the same possibility to win the election. Senator Fuentes assumes that women are not inclining to join the Philippine politics, but when they do they can achieve the same positions as men.

Wide (2006:5) claims that the proportion of women in parliament is less important and believes that instead it is important to have a few female politicians, who can be an actively driving force in some specific issues. Senator Risa Hontiveros points out that it is more important to ensure that the increasing number of women representation is of quality—that they represent the interest of women. Congresswoman Arlene Brosas stresses that usually the wife of the certain congressman is put there just to maintain their power, but there is no real change, although at the same time there are women who go to politics and fight for their rights. She points out that 29% are women in the 17th congress, but in her opinion there is only 1% who are really empowered. Yvonne Hirdman (1987, 1990) stresses that women's participation and representation in political life as well as in the political institutions has not increased their political influence and women's representation is limited. Senator Loren Legarda argues:

“Given the lack of a strong ideology-based political party system in the country, opportunities for a political career are difficult to access for people who do not belong to or are connected to a political family. We have more than our share of women who are active in civil society and have the education and experience to be in public office but the reality of actually running a political campaign, mostly the challenge of access to political finance, hinders their participation.”

Silvestre (2001: 165) argues that family ties have allowed women to enter politics and those women often have a father-daughter or husband-wife relationship with male politicians. Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo states that it is critical due to that they have a very family oriented politics, and it makes easier for women to penetrate, because there are many areas in the Philippines that are dominated by certain clan, by just one family, the governor the vice governor, they are brothers and sisters or husband and wife. He thinks also it becomes a way by which women get access because they are a part of the family, and that is also a unique thing in the Philippines. According to Vermonte (2014:11) earlier the recruitment was done through family system: that is only if a father or husband decides to allow their daughter or wife to replace him. The Philippines has the highest number of woman legislators in congress in their history, but, in his opinion, 8 of 10 women are elected because of their clans, which means that they are not self-prepared, it is not because of their own action or own initiative, they only get there because they are a part of a political clan, for example their father, husband or brother use to have certain position. That is why they have a lot of women legislators in the Philippines.

Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo thinks that it is mistake to say that they have made giant leap in women empowerment because they have a lot of women in politics, but in reality, they need to analyse if whose women achieved everything self or if they a result of a political dynasty. He thinks that 75% off all women who are in politics is because of their political families (without meaning to damage their accomplishment). It is easier for women to get in politics because of their families, although the fact that they got in politics, but not their family members, it is also a certain degree of openness. He means that there is a bigger window in the Philippines for women but there is still full of political clans. "Miro" claims that even if they have got into the politics because of their political families, they still must work hard to stay there, and that makes them very strong women. Though there are some women who are not so strong, and they are convinced by their male relative to participate in elections; for example, often, in the third limit congress members don't want to give up their district, because they can only stay for 9 consecutive years. That's why congressmen persuade their wives to take over their positions, but generally women are just filling the space while the husband is waiting for the next election, and deciding instead of her. If the woman is strong and determined, it means that she is in politics not because of her husband, brother or other family member. Although Congressman Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV is not so critical and explains that political clans:

“Applies for both men and women, if you are a man and you don’t have any politicians in your family it is also very difficult to become a politician, so it is not really a gender issue. It is more of an opportunity issue. In my case, I was also an outsider and the public got to know about my background because of my peculiar circumstances, but I was an ordinary man and I also had a very difficult time to come in to the politics.”

However, all respondents agree that it is important to have a higher number of women in politics. Phillips (1995:66) also claims that: “women's interest and experiences must be used in a parliament because there are certain needs, interests, and concerns that arise from women's experience. All men respondent state that having more women legislators or female public officers is not only an end for them to be able to say that there is gender equality. It also means to help bring about those laws and policies that protect the marginalized or affected gender. Phillips (2000:15,17) explains that representatives affects what is represented, which in turn affects the community and the priority issues, that is why decision-making authority needs to be diverse and better reflect all groups in society to be considered as a good representation.

Which matches Congressman Sarmiento answer:

“Having more women legislators or female politicians doesn't just mean that there is gender equality in the Philippines. It also means allowing laws and policies to protect the marginalized or affected gender. “

It is assumed that a woman can understand another woman more than a man could, it will take women officers help men understand the plight of women in crisis or harsh situations. Wängnerud (2009) also points out, that female politicians contribute to strengthening the situation of women's interests and that they incline to prioritize problems that are also prioritized by female voters.

“Yes, I think we need greater number of women in politics. Women, with their unique designs, personalities and roles, can offer much to our political decision-making process. They can give inputs, positions and experiences that men may have not known or may have set aside because of differences in the appreciation of things. Having more women in politics therefore means that a healthy exchange of ideas is ensured in our decision-making process and the concerns of their gender are even more voiced out”.

Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento

As it is written in theory politicians' social background and their gender affects policy content and that is one main reason that women and men should have equal representation (Phillips 1995, 1997, 1998). These men politicians also believe that more women they have the better is the perspective and those women will fight more for their rights, because there are simply

certain things that men don't recognize, but women have different knowledge, behaviors, perspectives and nature than men. While men can voice out the concerns of women, women can do it more with greater passion and on a more regular basis. Wängnerud (1999:174-175) also points out that women's participation in politics varies from men's, women show a much stronger interest in issues of social policy, family policy and health care than their male colleagues. Through women representatives, citizens will find easier and more available avenues to lobby advocacies that will address the injustices and abuses done to women. Hernes (1987:23) declares that men and women have different interests than men, and because of that there are conflicts in the political system between women and men, and between dominant values and repressed values. Due to that, women need to be allowed to participate in politics equally as men, to observe women's interests and lower the risk that their interests will be less value next to men's interests (Eduards 1991). Male respondents also add that there is certainly issues that men simply can't comprehend, and will not feel the necessity to fight for, when you look at child-caring, issues pertaining to a criminal liability of children, this are things that women have a natural attachment to, it is a perspective that men will never have. Also, knowledge, experience and psychology behind harassment or discrimination directed against women. These knowledge and experiences are needed so that policies and laws are crafted that effectively promote the rights of women and stop the abuses. Women and men should have the same opportunities to shape society and their own lives and to be active citizens to be able to shape conditions for decision-making (Regeringskansliet 2016).

“Men generally let things pass, but women don't and that is why the greatest warriors are women, meaning that people who carry out important things are also women just because they never get tired, they never compromise, they still fight until the very end.”

Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo

He also thinks that it is always better to have women in politics. Any organization that has more women is generally a better performing organization. Senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV has the same opinion and adds:

“Women senators are more productive and more committed to their advocacies than the male senators; it would really benefit our country to have more women legislators.”

All women respondents share the same opinion as men respondents and state that the participation of women in the political arena – whether in ministerial or in parliamentary positions is important and should be promoted given that women's perspective must be considered in the crafting of policies and the implementation of laws. Though men can also

advocate for women's issues, but they believe that their advocating for women's issues gains credibility and heart since this is learned through actual experience. Congresswoman Garcia proceeds from recourse argument, when she mentioned that women have their own advantages to succeed as politicians, which men don't have. As Hernes (1987:23) state that recourse argument intends that society lose when women are not participating in politics, because women have different knowledge of values and experiences than men, for that reason men and women complete each other, and make better decisions together, for the whole society. Senator Risa Hontiveros and Congresswoman Arlene Brosas regards that the government needs to be a genuine representation of society and the population. Half of the population in the Philippines is women but they are underrepresented in terms of quantity (number) and quality (real representation). Hontiveros means that they need more women in positions of power, to put their issues and interests in forefront of the government policies and programs. Congresswoman Brosas points out, that women need to be in the political arenas, to be heard, and take actions in politics. Both female politicians view of gender in the political word accords with conflict of interest argument. Hernes (1987:23) explains the content of the argument is that women's interests are underrepresented or hidden, and women need to participate in politics equally as men, to make the conflicts between them visible, which will benefit women's interests in the political system.

Congressmen Sarmiento, Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo and senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV agrees with the female politicians that gender matters in the political word, because women can understand each other better than men, which makes it easier for them to support the female citizens. He also states Congresswomen and female senators are needed in politics to help the male politicians to understand the plight of women in crisis or harsh situations. Congressman Trillanes adds that:

"The government in the Philippines doesn't have a strong gender biases and the ability to be a politician should not be based on gender, it should be based on capacity qualifications, capability and leadership skills, but in reality, it has always been more difficult for women to come in politics."

The male politicians agree with Hernes (1987:23) about recourse argument which contains that it is even important to have women in decision-making positions, because male decisionmaking politicians might forget, overlook or omit the consequences of political decision for women, as well absence of women in political life is a waste of valuable experience, and that is why women should be participate in political decisions making (Hernes 1987:23).

“It is important to have more genuine women representation in the politics, because it all boils down to the fact that genuine representatives of women know the needs and the issues of women. We are considered marginalized because we suffer injustice starting from harder time in getting work to sexual harassment in the office, in public spaces, online and even at home. Thus, we are the best person to say what is needed to address these issues and problems.”

Senator Risa Hontiveros

Wängnerud (1999:17) points out that the parliament should reflect citizens, and be able to act also lead more than just certain privileged groups, and if a strong distortion exists in recruitment to the parliament, there will be distortion in the interests that dominate the policy. Women respondent state that having more women representation, means more voice in the Senate and Congress chamber. This can heighten the awareness of the society to the plight of women. As they believe that more importantly, this also means more numbers in times of voting. More women representation means more support and faster facilitation of passing bills that promotes women’s rights and upholds social justice. Wängneruds (1999:177-178) also states that when female politicians take over seats from men it means that a greater number of politicians will prioritize issues of equality and social care, women's participation in parliamentary work means that women's areas have a more central role because of the increasing proportion of female politicians.

4.2 Women's opportunities to be politically active and make political influence

Phillips (1995, 1997, 1998) states that politicians gender affects the policy content, and that is one main reason that women and men should have equal representation. Hernes (1987:23) claims that women need to participate equally in politics as men, in order to make the conflicts between them visible, increase women’s interests in the political system and make the political system less conflict-filled.

Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia explains that people thought that being a woman in politics was a disadvantage when she first runs as a governor, because there were no women who had made it before her. But she had her own advantages as a woman:

“I could reach out to the women easier, hug them and get their support. Aside from the rational part of women’s brain they do also have their hearts to guide them, women are more nurturing, more giving and they have eye for details that men usually don’t have. Men can deal with generalities, all of the world issues, but they don’t have natural sensitivity for how a human feel.”

All the politicians agree about that education helps women to come into politics and women with higher education attainment increase their ability to get into politics. Except senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV, senator Risa Hontiveros and Congresswoman Marisol "Sol" Aragonés who state that education is not an issue, the most important thing is to have the heart in the right place, willingness to fight for the welfare and passion to serve the people.

"A Filipino voter looks at the advocacy primarily of a politician. If the politicians' advocacies are aligned with what the voters want, then they will vote for him or her. If the candidate regardless is a female or a male candidate and came from the voters' province, they will probably also vote for him or her, and the advantages and the disadvantages will apply for both genders."

Congressman Trillanes

International IDEA (2013) states that the voting system in the Philippines is a majority electoral system, and according to Rule (1994:18-19) the percentage of women in parliament is lower in countries with majority electoral system, than in countries with proportional electoral systems. Stockemer (2011: 693-694) expresses that it is harder when it comes to majority electoral system, since they have a single man constituency, because only one commissioner can be chosen from each constituency. In greater extent, the selected is already politically experienced or a well-known politician, or as Vermonte (2014) earlier claimed previously that the recruitment was done through family system, only if a father or a husband decides to allow their daughter or wife to replace him.

"People in the Philippines are liberated morally on their perspective about genders and the roles accompanying them, but they often prefer to choose the "stronger gender." Women in the provinces that are unemployed and illiterate are often left to tend for their families, which limits their political participation. The politicians need money for campaigning and implementing projects and without the support of their families or political parties, any male or female candidates will surely have a hard time entering politics. The lack or abuse of these things is also the obstacles."

Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento

According to Wide (2006:96) there is a correlation between women's socio-economic conditions, and women's political representation, because the economic development leads the traditional values about gender to reduce, which in turn lead to changed attitudes about female politicians from both parties and voters. The economic development makes more women able to study, work and thus become more interested in politics. Which might be connected with

CIA (2015) statement about the per capita income was \$7,500 GDP in 2015 and in a comparison to the rest of the world, The Philippines comes in 34th place.

Senator Risa Hontiveros points out that the economic resources are one of the greatest obstacles for women who want to join politics. But she is not among those traditional politicians who have popular family names and well-established political machineries caused by long time dynasties. She doesn't have immense resources, or the guns, goons, and gold, but she is supported by her party, family and friends, civil society groups, and the people who are fighting for similar causes, together with hopeful members of the society who are willing to fight nonstop for the people.

Congresswoman Vilma Santos-Recto stresses that at the beginning when she became the first woman mayor of the city of Liba, she felt a little bit discriminated because her province was conceded as “macho type city” and they looked down at her because she was a woman but she proved them wrong by working hard and be successful. Congresswoman Aragonés on the other hand stresses that nowadays there is not so much obstacles being a woman in politics, because people generally don't look at them as second class anymore because they have proved them wrong. According to Wide (2006:110) Women's representation is associated with women's suffrage and eligibility. Women's representation in politics is expected to be higher the longer they have been in the parliament, and had the right to vote and were eligible.

Francine d'Amico (1995) claims that female political leaders make careers and comes into politics because of the power inherited through their family members. Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo and Senator Loren Legarda confirm that the Philippines have a very family oriented politics, which makes it easier for women to participate in politics. There are many arias in the Philippines that are dominated by particular clans, for example the governor and the vice governor are brothers and sisters or husband and wife, which makes it easier for women to access because they are a part of a political family. However, that doesn't apply to all politicians, Senator Risa Hontiveros states:

“I don't have a popular family name and well-established political machineries caused by long time dynasties. I don't either have immense resources, guns, goons, or gold, but she is supported by her party, family and friends, civil society groups, and the people who are fighting for similar causes, together with hopeful members of the society who are willing to fight nonstop for the people.”

On the other hand, Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia claims that it is an advantage for a woman to come from a political family, but she still must work hard to be able to remain in the politics. All the values and principles that the family imparts on an individual prepares her to the rough and tumble political world. Congresswoman Garcia summarizes that family values,

political background and education complete each other, but also an element of luck is needed to succeed in politics. Her two brothers tried to run for governor of Cebu, but they failed even though they are from the same family. Senator Legarda clarifies that the opportunities for a political career is difficult to access for women who do not belong to or are not connected to a political family which applies both genders. The Philippines have many women who are active in civil society and have the education and experience to be in politics, but mostly the challenge is to gain access to political finance which hinders their participation.

According to Currel (1974) Women in political families are usually an extension of the power base that their male relative has established. They can be described as a sort of "male equivalents" women who safeguard the interests in his absence or by his disappearance. Congresswoman Arlene Brosas and congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo corroborate that it is usual that the wife of a certain congressman takes over his place after his last term, so he can be able to maintain the power, and makes all the decisions while he is waiting for the next election. But if the female politician is determined with strong opinions, it means that she is not in politics because of her husband or brother and she fights for her rights.

“Culturally the Philippines is a mix of three cultures, the manly culture of being warriors, the Spanish culture because of the occupation for 300 years, and the American culture because of the occupation for 50 years. The Philippines have a by-product of all those colours, so the women are generally strong, but the strength of the women remains often in the households running. Though, many women are now working and studying, which means that they are getting a fewer women staying at home taking care of the children, he thinks it is proving to be a difficult transition.”

Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo

Congressman Quimbo's statement is in line with U.S. Library of Congress that women in the Philippines always enjoyed greater equality in comparison to other parts of Southeast Asia. Since the Spanish occupation, Filipinas had the legal rights to inherit family property. Some of the politicians as Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento, Senator Risa Hontiveros and Congresswomen Brosas, Marisol Castillo Aragones-Sampelo and Gwendolyn Garcia expresses that women and men are different, they think different and have other knowledges and experiences that are relevant in politics.

“The knowledge and experience of pregnancy and the services that are needed by mothers, can be used as advantage to serve the citizens. Another example is the psychology behind harassment or discrimination directed against women. These knowledges and experiences are

needed for policies and laws to be crafted and effectively promote the rights of women and stop the abuses.”

Congressman Cesar Phillips (1995:66) confirms that women's interest and experiences are good to have in a parliament because there are particular needs, interests, and concerns that arise from women's experience and these experiences will be inadequately addressed in politics that are dominated by men. Senator Risa Hontiveros argues:

“It is important to have more genuine women representation in the politics. Women are considered marginalized because they suffer injustice starting from the harder time, in getting work to sexual harassment in the office, in public spaces, online and even at home. Thus, women are more aware of what is needed to address these issues and problems.”

According to Congressmen Cesar V. Sarmiento and Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo women are perceived as unqualified in decision-making process sometimes, but this case are dramatically gone down. It requires more intelligence, more brilliance and more hard work for a woman to succeed. Women who are able to come in politics are generally really brilliant individuals. For example, Senator Loren Legarda have never been perceived as unqualified in the decision-making process because she always makes sure that she is adequately informed on the issues that may need her support. As a legislator, she conducts legislative inquiries on particular issues that is on the agenda, which provides her an opportunity to seek information from experts.

Wängnerud (1999:174-175) claims that most of the male politicians are more interested in economics and taxes cases. Which corresponds with the answers from the congressmen about the policy areas that they know more about and are more interested in? All of the male politicians stresses that they knows more about and are more interested in taxes, peace and order, infrastructure development like school buildings, multi-purpose buildings, roads and bridges, public consultation and transportation. The male politicians didn't mention any interests that are linked to women's issues.

According to Wängnerud (1999:174) women shows much stronger interest in issues of social policy, family policy and health care than their male colleagues. Most of the female respondents are more interested in areas that they are already working with, as Congresswoman Aragonés who fights for women's rights, health and treatment for breast cancer. Wängnerud (2009) reinforces this in her previous research, and points out, that female politicians contribute to strength the situation of women's interests and prioritize problems that are prioritized by female voters.

“My advocacy and interest has been anchored on women’s rights and empowerment for years, my chairmanship on the senate committees on health and women testifies her commitment to both main advocacies.”

Senator Hontiveros

According to Wängnerud (1999:174-175) gender is of importance but doesn't always mean that women fall into one category of interests, and the men in another. Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia doesn't confine herself to a particular advocacy to work with, she looks at the entire picture and sees what it is worth to fight for, because in the distribution of the assignment there is no distinction, it is based on the experience and capacity. Senator Legarda has on the other hand always been a lifelong advocate for environmental protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, cultural preservation and promotion. As a UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Global Champion for Resilience, she has worked towards the institutionalization of national policies that will ensure sustainable development and climate resilience for the country considering that the Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world in terms of disasters.

All of the male respondents that we interviewed feels no bias about gender representation and indicates that they are representatives of both genders in their national constituency, they push for advocacies that are not gender specific, such as traffic, peace and order, corruption and un-poverty. Senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV states:

“I'm a representative for the security and military sector but even in that sector there is men and women that he is responsible for.”

Congressman Sarmiento claims that when he thinks about projects and programs for the citizens, he thinks of how to benefit all the people, men and women alike. He supports the advancement of women rights and give them equal possibilities for education, public services, employment and other opportunities, not just because he has four women in his family but because it is the right thing to do to correct social injustices.

Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo adds that he has generally more women voters and a bias for women's issues, with the few reassures that he has, he rather put them on maternal care like develop help centers for teenage pregnancy, rather than put it into some other activities because childbirth is really hard and many women dais in the Philippines while they are giving birth. The congressman explains that politicians must regard the needs of the citizens whether they are women or men.

Most of the female politicians feel that they are representatives of their gender. According to Phillips (2000: 38) even if a woman in politics can't represent all the other women, because they

might have different experiences, they still share specific interests and are all underrepresented as a group which separates them from men. Congresswoman Vilma Santos-Recto have prepared a lot of bills that concerns women and children, Congresswoman Marisol “Sol” Aragonese Sampelo is a senior Vice-Chairman of women's health and is responsible for a breast cancer organization. Congresswoman Arlene Brosas is one of representatives of the party Gabriela which advocate women and children. Senator Risa Hontiveros is the chairperson of the Committee on women, and always promotes the well-being of women and support their rights.

Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia states contrariwise to the other female politicians:

“I’m a representative for everybody, men, women and children, but the women citizens feel very proud that I’m is a woman and is being able to perform and able to deliver important decisions.”

4.3 Horizontal and vertical division in political positions between women and men

Respondents opinions about horizontal and vertical division in political positions, was also divided. The horizontal segregation divides men and women in to different professions; women are predominant in certain areas, while men are found in other areas (SOU 1998: 6). While vertical segregation describes, as over- and underrepresentation of certain type of employees in areas identified as having high status (Ellingsæter 2013). The congresswomen Marisol Castillo Aragonese-Sampelo and Vilma Santos-Recto were emphatic that there is no division in the Philippines, and there is no more discrimination, thus possibilities are equal for both women as well as men, and these both genders are very strong. Senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV also points out that all political positions are open and anyone can pick a specific advocacy as they want, as long as it is generally aligned with politician's specific expertise, where isn't much difference between genders. He also explains that there are more women than men in the managerial positions, even in the ordinary stuff positions there is more women than men, and when it comes to assignment of specific commissions such as a Commission on women and National youth commission, it would help if the chairman would be a woman, but other than that everything is equal. The selection of candidates should be such that the competence and qualification would be measured regardless to gender of a candidate (SOU 2004: 43). Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento points out that while preference is usually given to women to lead on women issues, this does not mean that men cannot work with such issues. Women issues are public issues that are presently the concern of all- men and women alike. Although Senator Risa Hontiveros argues that as long as there is no equal representation of men and women in office, there will always be a disparity. Lipman-Blumen (1976) points out, that men

have generally higher positions in the society, which gives them more power and influence than women.

Meanwhile congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia and Senator Loren Legarda claim that there is no specific law or rule which states that some certain position must be occupied by a woman or a man. When it comes to work, these respondents don't think that there is any delineation between men and women, there is more like recognition of who is more capable of what. Although there are certain traditional choices, for example the secretary position of the department of social welfare and development is usually held by a woman. Although segregation has decreased, but the problem remains and there still are differences between men and women in the division of positions (Ellingsæter 2013).

“In my experience as member of parliament for more than a decade, there has never been a formal rule on gender-specific political assignments particularly in the assignment of committee chairmanships. However, perhaps influenced by traditional societal roles, certain committees in the Philippine Senate, e.g. women and family relations, or youth, have been offered to women members. Given the country's long history of women participation in politics, the boundaries supposedly set by gender in the discussion of certain issues are no longer there”.

Loren Legarda

Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia argues that there are also certain positions that women still need to achieve and break new ground, for example the department of finance or the central bank governor. Although she thinks that there are many women who are qualified but on the other hand she believes that it is just a matter of time. The thought of men being or more interested in leader positions must be reduced and changed, because women's and men's knowledge and qualifications needs to measure equally, not depending on their gender (SOU 2004:43). Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo states that there still is a perception what women can do and what they can't do, even in the cabinet or in the government generally, the department of social service work and development is often manageable by a woman, he doesn't ever recall having a male serving there, however it is not usual think to see women working in national defense. Also, Ellingsæter (2013) defines that there is a possible explanation why segregation remains is that there are gender stereotypes, of how women and men are, and what they do. Muhonen (2010) continues that women are prevented to advance higher positions because of their gender and not because of their skill level. It seems like they are just cornered in to certain areas, politicians in the Philippines still have gender-specific

assignment but it is slowly being removed by the fact that they have a lot of women who are chairwoman or head of important committees, ads “Miro”. Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia also annex that they still must see a woman finely becoming speaker of the house of representatives, although they had two women presidents. In the House of Representatives now there are an equal number of women and men among the deputy speakers. The assignments of the positions are not gender specifics; it is more about personal capability and experiences. Garcia also points out that she does not think that there is any gender discrimination in the Philippines.

In congresswoman Arlene Brosas opinion women are not very active, usually they are here because they must take care of their districts, but not a lot how speaks about national questions such as death penalty, sexual orientation bills, women and children specific legislation bills, while men are taking care of agricultural questions, as well as discussion about drugs. Since ancient times society has been characterized by division of labour, and thus, women now work in jobs that do not provide the same influence and opportunity to be promoted (Billing, 2011). Talking about higher/lower positions Brosas hasn't experienced that in politics, there is a lot of men who takes the higher positions as a boss etc., but there are also women who challenge them, points out Brosas. Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento experiences that the number of women in terms of lower or higher positions depends on the election or appointment results. High or low political positions in the Philippines are open for all genders. Women are not hindered but the results are unpredictable. He continues further that the influential positions in his province (Catanduanes, Lone District) are open to both men and women. Men and women have equal opportunity to gain such positions. They presently have many lady officials including current Vice-Governor. Also, from 2010-2016, their Governor and the Chief Executive of the province, was a woman.

5. Discussion

This chapter will present a discussion about our results from theoretical considerations and previous research. Afterwards, we will present our conclusions, and the recommendations for further research in the field.

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to understand and investigate women's opportunities to be politically active and to exercise political influence. We wanted also to find out if there is a difference in horizontal and vertical positions between women's and men's representation in politics. Interviewing 9 politicians from the top positions in the capital of the Philippines, that we selected and researched their outlook on women in the political world has given us the opportunity to analyse and answer the research questions.

Respondents have different opinions about gender equality and women's political representation, however they all described situation as positive and as improving, because there

is a steady increase in the number of women serving in public offices. Wide (2006:110) states that women's representation in politics is expected to be higher the longer they have been in the parliament, and had the right to vote and were eligible. Respondents state that the Philippine has made a major progress in gender equality in comparison to other Asian countries and as a main reason they point out the long history of women participation in politics as well as the fact that the country has started voluntary quota for political parties and other acts and codes, which had influence to increased number of women's representation in parliament as well as in government. But only two respondents assume that the number of women in politics in the Philippines is already good enough, the others consider that there is more work to be done to improve gender equality in the country.

According to Gustafsson (2008) men are still overrepresented in most political assemblies, and women are often underrepresented in terms of the most influential political positions, and because of what it might be described as typically "male" policy. Likewise, senator Legarda and Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo strongly believes that gender still matters in political world in Philippines. However, the other two male respondents have the opposite opinion and state that elective positions are open for all gender and only that matter is candidates' merits and qualifications.

Wide (2006: 5) claims that the proportion of women in parliament is less important and believes that instead it is important to have a few female politicians, who can be a driving force in some specific issues. Senator Risa Hontiveros agrees with that statement and points out that beside the quantity, the quality how women are represented is also very important.

According to Vermonte (2014:11) the recruitment is done through family system: women can come in to politics only if a father or a husband decides to allow their daughter or wife to replace him. The other three respondents lift up the common problem in the Philippines – political clans (family ties), which leads to that many of these women in politics are not self-prepared. These women are in politics not because of their own action nor own initiative. They just fill up their male family members place and maintain their power until the next elections. Because of that congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo thinks that it is a mistake to say that they have made giant leap in women empowerment. Although congressman Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV has another opinion and explains that political clans applies for both men and women, and he sees it as an opportunity issue, not the gender issue.

All respondents have the same opinion that it is important to have a higher number of women in politics. All male respondents state, that having more women legislators or female public officers would help bring about those laws and policies, which protect the marginalized or

affected gender. They also point out that women's participation in politics varies from men's, because women show a much stronger interest in issues of social policy, family policy and health care, than their male colleagues. Wängnerud (2009) and Phillips (2000) points out that decision-making authority needs to reflect all groups in society, as well as, that female politicians contribute to strengthening the women interests. All female respondents share the same opinion as men respondents and state that the participation of women in the political arena—whether in ministerial or in parliamentary positions is important and should be promoted. Hernes (1987:23) argues that the society lose when women are not participating in politics, because women have different knowledge of values and experiences than men, for that reason men and women complete each other and make better decisions together for the whole society. Wängnerud (1999:17) adds that the politicians should reflect all citizens, and must be able to act and lead more than just certain privileged groups.

The respondents have quite similar opinions about women's opportunities to be politically active and make political influence. In the current situation, it's more acceptable and usual to have female politicians in the Philippines. Though, the female politicians had to prove the society that they are capable to be politicians and fought for their right to be politically active. According to Wide (2006:110) Women's representation in politics is expected to be higher the longer they have been in the parliament, and had the right to vote and were eligible.

All of the politicians agree about that women have some experiences and knowledges that men don't have and therefore it is important to have them in politics. Phillips (1995, 1997, 1998) states that politicians gender affects the policy content, and that is one main reason that women and men should have equal representation. Phillips (1995:66) also confirms that women's interest and experiences are good to have in a parliament because there are particular needs, interests, and concerns that are inadequately addressed in politics that are dominated by men. Wängnerud (1999:174-175) claims that most of the male politicians are more interested in economic issues and taxes cases, while the female politicians show much stronger interest in issues of social policy, family policy and health care than their male colleagues. This Corresponds with our female respondents that felt that they were representatives of the female citizens, while the male respondents felt that they were respondents for the both genders. Francine d'Amico (1995) claims that female political leaders make careers and come into politics because of the power inherited through their family members. Vermonte (2014) adds that the political recruitment was earlier done through family system, which means that only a father, husband or a brother decides to allow their daughter, wife or sister to replace him. Some of our respondents agree with the authors and confirms that the Philippines have a very family

oriented politics, which makes it easier for women to participate in politics, and there are many areas in the Philippines that are dominated by particular clans. According to Currel (1974) Women in political families are usually extension of the power base that their male relative has established; they can be described as a sort of "male equivalents" women who safeguard the interests in his absence. On the other hand, the respondents explained that it is usual that a wife of a certain congressman replaces him after his last term. This enables him to maintain the power while he is waiting for the next election and making all the political decisions instead of the wife.

According to our respondents the Philippines is a mix of three cultures, the manly culture of being warriors, the Spanish culture because of the occupation for 300 years, and the American culture because of the occupation for 50 years. Since the Spanish occupation, Philipina women had the legal right to inherit family property which explains the high number of women's representation in politics.

Respondents opinions about horizontal and vertical division in political positions, was also divided. In congresswomen Marisol Castillo Aragonés-Sampelo and Vilma Santos-Recto as well as Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento opinion, there is no division in the Philippines and no discrimination, as well as that possibilities are equal for both women as well as men. The selection of candidates should be orientating to the competence and qualification, regardless to gender of a candidate (SOU 2004: 43). Senator Antonio "Sonny" Fuentes Trillanes IV and Congressman Cesar V. Sarmiento point out that preference is usually given to women to lead on women issues and it would help if the chairman would be a woman, but other than that everything is equal. Senator Antonio Trillanes adds that all political positions are available to anyone can pick a specific advocacy as long it is generally aligned with politicians' specific expertise. While Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia and Senator Loren Legarda agree, and claim that there is no delineation between men and women, there is more like recognition of who is more capable of what, but there are certain traditional choices. Ellingsæter (2013) points out that although horizontal and vertical segregation has decreased, but the problem remains- there are still differences between men and women in the division of work positions.

Congressman Romero Federico "Miro" Saenz Quimbo states that there still is a perception what women can do and what they can't do. Ellingsæter (2013) defines that segregation remains because of the gender stereotypes of how women and men are and what they do. Although Congresswoman Gwendolyn Garcia states that there is no gender discrimination in the Philippines, thus agrees that there are some positions that women still must reach.

Congresswoman Arlene Brosas experiences that women are not very active and do not participate in discussions about national questions, but she does not think that there are some horizontal or vertical segregation.

5.1 Conclusions

All our respondents perceive the present situation as positive, although believe that it can and should be improved. They are also in agreement that women are capable to be political representatives and serve the citizens as well as men. In fact, women have a lot of experiences to contribute with, which benefit the citizens. The more women there are in politics the more they will fight for women's rights. According to the respondents it is easier for women to come in politics if they are a part of a political family. If a father, brother or a husband decides to allow their daughter, sister or wife to replace him, but education, economic resources and strong personality also benefits for women to come in the political world.

Simultaneously congressmen don't want to give up their district because they can only stay as politicians for 9 consecutive years in a row; therefore, they convince their wives, sisters or daughters to take over their place. However, generally the woman will just fill the previous congressman's space while he is waiting for the next election and is still making the political decisions instead of her. But if the woman is determined and with strong opinions, it means that she is not in politics because of her clan.

All respondents if asked about gender equality and women's political representation, defined situation as positive and improving, although they all claim that it is important to have a higher number of women in politics. They also understand that there is more work to be done to improve gender equality in the country. Still some of respondents believes, that gender matters in political world, but the others point out that elective positions are open for all gender, and only that matter is candidates' merits and qualifications.

Some of interviewed politicians declares that, beside the number of women in parliament, the quality of women representation is also very important. The common problem in the Philippines is political clans (family ties), which leads to that many of women in fill up their male family members place and maintain their power until the next elections. For that reason, some of the politicians claim that it is mistake to say that they have made giant leap in women empowerment, because the high number of women in politics does not insure that there is quality in representation of women issues.

The politicians have different opinions about women's opportunities to be politically active and make political influence. Some of them think it's more difficult for women to make political influence and be politically active and the others think that women have equal opportunities to

be politically active as men. Being a woman in politics has been a disadvantage before, but not any longer. Because women have their own advantages, they have different knowledge of values and experiences than men, which leads to lack of impact from woman's behalf and different perspectives on the society if they are any less participating in politics.

The government in the Philippines does not have a strong gender biases and the ability to be a politician is not grounded on gender, but it has always been more difficult for women to go in politics than men. All the politicians agree about that education helps women to come in politics and women with higher education attainment increase their chances to participate. But it is also important to have the heart in the right place, willingness to fight for the welfare. The Philippines have a very family oriented politics, which makes it easier for women to participate in politics. There are many areas in the Philippines that are dominated by particular clans, which makes it easier for women to access that kind of field of expertise, because they are a part of a political family. However, that does not apply on all politicians. It is a benefit for a woman to come from a political family, but she still must work hard to be able to remain in the politics. The economic resources are one of the greatest obstacles for women who want to join politics in the Philippines. According to Wide (2006:96) There is a correlation between women's socioeconomic conditions, and political representation, because the economic development leads the traditional values about gender to reduce.

5.2 Future recommendations

Since we chose to focus on women's political representation in the Philippines, due to their wide quantity, we delimit the villages, municipalities and provinces councils from the study. Though the village, municipalities and provinces level study can show different results than our conclusions, can be a reason to study female representation in politics in those areas.

We interviewed only the top politicians in Manila, which means that our results might describe just apart from the wholeness of the reality. For this reason, we recommend to interview politicians from lower positions as well as interview more male politicians to get a more accurate perception of reality. In our case, it was difficult to find politicians who had time to meet us and wanted to be interviewed, that is why we just had 3 male politicians.

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Attachments

Interview questions.

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?
2. What are your duties as a politician?
3. How long have you been politically active?
4. How did you get involved in politics? When? Why?
5. Is it your first time running as a candidate for the election?
6. Does gender matter in the political world? Why/why not?
7. What is your opinion about that there is less women in politics than men in your country?
8. Do you think it is important to have a higher number of women in politics? Please explain.
9. What helps women to come in politics? What do you see as obstacles? (education, religion, percent of working women, electoral system)
10. Do you experience that there are gender-specific political assignments? In which way?
11. Do you experience that there are some special division between men and women in politics? That women work with certain issues, and men with others? that there is higher or lower number of women in higher / lower positions in politics?
12. What is it like to be a woman/man in politics? Advantages? Disadvantages?
13. Do you feel that you are also a representative for your gender? Why/why not?
14. Are there any specific policy areas that you know more about or you are more interested in?
15. Do you think that women's representation in politics is important? Why is it important for citizens?
16. Have you encountered any obstacles during your time as a politician? What caused these obstacles? Do you think it may have been because you are a woman/man? Why/why not?
17. Do you believe that female politicians have other experiences and knowledges than men? What kind of experiences/knowledges? Are those experiences relevant in politics? Why?
18. Do you think it would be easier to bring up "women's issues" if there would be higher number of female politicians? Why? How?
19. Do you think that it is important for women to participate in politics decisionmaking- why?
20. Is there anything else you feel is important which you want to share with us?



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