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# Approaches to political gender equality in Bosnia-Herzegovina

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# Abstract

How can the low representation of women in politics in Bosnia-Herzegovina be understood and what can a different approach add to already existing approaches to make Bosnia-Herzegovina more gender equal in terms of political representation of the genders? There has been established a Gender Equality Law that demands a 40% gender quota of political representation, but the gender representation has only reached a number of 26% at most.

It can fairly be claimed that the top-down approach itself is deficient in this area based on the amount of laws and regulating documents that have been determined by the state to improve the gender inequality issue. That is why I am going to try to understand the underrepresentation using a bottom-up approach. I am going to have an anthropological feminism perspective during this research, which will help me clarify the importance of gender symmetry and that the issue has to be approached from the bottom and up. In this single case study I am going to combine theories with the aim to understand the underrepresentation of women in Bosnia-Herzegovina. My primary material consists of interviews, reports and documents from EU, UN, NGOs and governments. The conclusion to my research question, which is what a bottom-up approach can add to the top-down approach to increase women's representation in politics, is the understanding of the need to have a fully supported and financed bottom-up system. Gender stereotypes, cultural norms and corruption permeate the higher political positions and are preventing an equal gender representation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

*Key words:* gender equality, Bosnia and Herzegovina, women in politics, female underrepresentation, NGO, bottom-up approach, top-down approach, policy implementation, awareness-rising, gender-responsible budgeting, women in governments

Words: 10475

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# Abbreviation

AISBL	International Non-Profit Making Association
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BL	City of Banja Luka
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination against Women
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina/Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine
GAP BiH	Gender Action Plan BiH
GE	Gender Equality
GEL	Gender Equality Law
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LEADER	European LEADER Association for Rural Development
NAP BiH	National Action Plan BiH
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PSBiH	Parliamentary Assembly of BiH/Parlamentarna Skupština
RS	Republic of Serbia/Republika Srpska
SOC	Sarajevo Open Center/Sarajevski Otvoreni Centar
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

# 1 Introduction

In Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) women are still, years after the implementation of the Law (GEL) and other regulating documents such as action plans and UN recommendations, facing major political limitations compared to men. It is clear that it exists gender inequalities, which creates political and democratic underdevelopment (Epiphany 2014. p.55-56). The issue that I am trying to understand is the low representation of women in politics in BiH.

BiH is a democratic state and it is by law demanded to recognize human rights and fundamental freedoms inside the state. One of the paragraphs in BiH's constitutional law is that no one, no matter what sex, race, color, language, religion or political opinion, should be discriminated. The state needs, by law, to implement all human rights including the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. 1995). BiH has failed to provide these rights to the citizens since it is obvious that women are being discriminated only because of their gender and not their lack of skills or ability (Epiphany 2014).

It is also proven that gender equality (GE) with an equal political gender representation and democracy leads to a better economic development and welfare, which also is why this issue is of importance for the state BiH on all spheres of the state and society (Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013. p 12).

## 1.1 Problem and Purpose

The constitution of the state BiH (with its' both entities) is the main legal document of the state, also known as the Dayton Agreement. It is built on human dignity, safety and equality. It is committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the state BiH in accordance to international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Rights of

Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities as well as other human rights instruments inspired the agreement and made the ground for its development. The state BiH with its both entities, Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS) has to make sure that the human rights and fundamental freedoms are recognized since they are set by the European Conventions to protect (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. art.2).

There are 21,05% women in the Parliamentary Assembly in BiH (PSBiH) in contrast with the 78,95% men, despite that there are established laws and regulating documents that demand a 40% quota of female representation in political spheres such as in the PSBiH. Thereof, the purpose of this research is to try to understand the low representation of women in politics in BiH. My research question is: What can the bottom up approach add to the top down approach to increase women's representation in politics in BiH?

According to UN's Concluding Observations of BiH from 2013, some problem areas that BiH needed to address and improve were clearly presented. They specifically pointed out that BiH needed to eliminate all kinds of gender stereotypes in the society with the explanation that they are the underlying reason to what they call, a deep-rooted inequality, which would make the 40% gender quota hard to reach. They illuminated the fact that these stereotypes are the cause to why women are in a disadvantaged position in political spheres, especially in the decision-making areas. The gender gap that women experience on a daily basis is rooted in what they learn in early ages of school and public life (UN. 2013. §19abc). BiH was recommended by the UN to develop a strategy with the aim to overcome all forms of stereotypical behavior about female-roles and responsibilities, especially women in political or employment positions (UN. 2013. §20c). They explained their concern about the indolent representation of women in governmental positions and they noted that women are being excluded from the decision-making processes on different political levels, from state level and entity level to municipal level. "No country is so richly endowed that it needs only half of its brainpower" (Hunt 2004).

Solutions to these issues were presented with a top-down approach with the aim to make the state promote processes to make sure that the implementation of the GEL, et al is being done. Also making sure that women are accepted in

participation in political and leading position with encouragement of all kinds (UN. 2013. §27, §28bc).

This research will be a case of female underrepresented in politics in BiH with the aim to present what a bottom-up approach can add to already existing top-down approaches to make the gender representation in politics more equal.

## 1.2 Research question

- What can the bottom up approach add to the top down approach to increase women's representation in politics in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

### 1.2.1 Academic and Non-Academic Relevance

The non-academic relevance criterion is that the issue needs to have some kind of relevance to the outside world and that it needs to be of importance from a political, economic or social perspective, affecting people's lives and lifestyles (Teorell & Svensson. 2012. p.18). I believe I have achieved to choose a topic that is of a non-academic relevance for the people it concerns (mainly women in BiH).

I am a strong believer in GE in all contexts of societies and my interest in BiH emerged after a visit I did there in 2016 where I witnessed the gender inequality myself. After some research on the topic I decided that I wanted to understand more about the inequality in the political spheres in BiH and why women are underrepresented compared to men. I wish to contribute in making BiH, which is my own country of origin, a more gender equal country where women can have the same political opportunities as men.

The issue that I am presenting and trying to understand is about why it exists gender inequality in forms of female underrepresentation in politics in BiH. BiH is a democratic state and it is by law demanded to recognize human rights and fundamental freedoms inside the state. The academic relevance criterion can serve as an additional requirement to the non-academic criterion because the more thorough research question the greater chance it has to become of relevance to social relevant issues and problems. The academic relevance criterion means that



the research seeks cumulativity, which means that it is providing grants to existing research, literature and subject in whole, which I believe that I have achieved with (Teorell & Svensson. 2012. p.19).

## 1.2.2 Contribution

I am hoping to contribute to existing research with a presentation of my understanding to why GE has failed in a certain area of great importance for the state and welfare system. I believe this research is going to be of relevance for anyone who is eager to understand the issue to point out and develop strategies to the unequal political situation in BiH. This research can also be a part of a bigger perspective for relevant GE projects or help understanding different approaches to use when dealing with gender inequality issues in political life in general.

## 1.3 Delimitation

In this research, I will focus on the underrepresentation of women in the political spheres in BiH and why the 40% gender quota is not reached. I will do a case study that consists of interviews and I will continue with an analysis of my empirical material to be able to reach an understanding to the situation. I have chosen to use both primary and secondary material such as EU-documents, interviews, NGOs, state documents and laws, books and articles on the issue.

I am going to use Article 20 from the Gender Equality Law as an explanation to how I use the term 'gender equality' in this research. In that case, GE means that the genders are at least 40% represented in the state bodies at all levels, including legislative, executive and political representation (Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013. p 12). I am only focusing my research on examining the highest level of decision-making, which is the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH because I believe that the GE would improve on all lower levels if the highest level were to be equal first.

The bottom-up approach as a concept in this research is described as an approach with the aim to inspire for a process of local participation in a certain

development. This engagement of local force is what the bottom-up approach strive to use as tools for the process around policy implementation and GE.

## 2 The faces of gender inequality in BiH

It is interesting to present what has been done on the GE issue in the country so far from both a top-down and bottom-up approach. By doing that I am going to give a brief historical background to what could have caused the situation to emerge to later introduce what institutions and documents regulate the issue in the country today, to lastly show that women are underrepresented even though these documents exist. The documents that will serve as a background are relevant laws, the Gender Action Plan, the latest country reports from the European Commission from June 2014, UN Observations and NGO program reports.

I believe this will give a clear view on the current gender situation in general and a foundation to what I am trying to understand in this research.

### 2.1 Legal framework

The economic and social crisis in BiH began after president Josip Broz Tito's death in 1980 when the Yugoslav Federation precipitated and the ethnic, political and economical aspects became of interest for the potential new leaders left in charge. After a nationalistic party won the first democratic multi-party elections, some of the countries belonging to Yugoslavia proclaimed their independence, BiH in 1990 as well. This led to internal conflicts because of ethnic differences where women became one of the main victims. The Dayton Agreement had put an end to the conflicts dividing the country BiH into two entities, the Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina (FBiH) which are governed by the same administration (Simic 2015. p 87). BiH has experienced a post-conflict transition in economic, political and social reconstruction. GE is

known as one of the economic and social reconstructions and is under development thanks to GE laws, international conventions and NGOs. The gender inequality still exists even though measures have been taken from a top-down approach. Some of the reasons to the inequality are the country's cultural gender stereotypes and patriarchal history. The party system in BiH began to replicate the ethnic differences because of the amount of power each ethnicity had during the war. Therefore ethno-nationalist parties have continued with their nationalism through politics, which made early democratic parties ineffectual (Pugh & Cobble 2001). Since BiH is traditional in how their politics represent the states ethnicities, women are being less active at all levels of political decision-making, which makes this a male-dominated sphere (Helms 2007)

The elections also therefore continued to marginalize women and democracy (Pickering 2007). Because of that, women are still experiencing difficulties in fully participating in political life and they remain underrepresented in the decision-making organs without enough power to make any significant change for themselves (Simic 2015. p 88).

BiH today has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the single and lower house. Women in the House of Representatives hold 9 out of 42 seats today, which is approximately 21% of the seats. The electoral law requires that both genders be equally represented in the lists of candidates. Equal gender representation is considered when the genders are represented to at least 40% of the candidates on the list.

### 2.1.1 Regulating documents

It exists a lot of regulating documents in the issue on GE and they all have in common to eliminate or at least improve the unequal gender situation. I am not going to present all the regulating documents in the issue, only the ones relevant to this research and the ones that regulate women in political spheres specifically. These are the The Election Law, Gender Equality Law, UNSCR 1325, National Actions Plans, Gender Action Plans and CEDAW UN-Recommendations that are presented in a time order below.

### 2.1.2 The Election Law of BiH

This law was incorporated to regulate the members and delegates of the PSBiH and the Presidency of BiH and to direct principles about governing the elections at all levels of authority. It says that the composition of an election must be multiethnic and reflect the population, with an equal representation of both genders. An equal representation is described as when at least 40% of both genders are members of the Election Commission. Every candidate list should also include an equal representation of both genders (Election Law of BiH 2001). The Election Law provides open lists, which reduces the impact of the 40% gender quota. In 2014, 42% of the candidates were women but they only obtained 21% of the seats.

#### *Open lists*

In an open list system, voters have the power to choose not only what party but also what candidate they prefer within a certain party. This way a voter can choose candidates over parties, which is why this type is called a preference vote. This way, even if women are 40% of the candidates on the list it does not guarantee that women will have 40% of the seats after the election. In fact, a study shows that an open list system combined with a 40% quota is inferior to women in countries where the public's acceptance of women in politics is low. Male-dominated cultures with male-dominated parties therefore don't voluntarily choose women to the higher political positions. If a party wins four seats, then the four candidates who got the most votes are elected (Jones & Navia 1999).

### 2.1.3 GEL

The Gender Equality Law (GEL) was adopted in 2003 with the aim to create GE in public and private spheres for all citizens in BiH. The law had the purpose of creating institutional structures that shapes GE policies. This law has a major importance for creating equality in different administration levels (Law on Gender Equality. 2010). The establishment of this law was made after the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women that was accessed

in 1993 which assures that the GEL prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This law explains what can be interpreted as discrimination and also in what spheres it can occur to be claimed as gender inequality (ARS BiH. 2016).

Penalties for violation are presented in Article 30 (1abc, 4) as fines from 1000KM to 30.000KM (=approx. 500-15.000 euro) if any misdemeanor of the law occurs in forms of “failure to undertake appropriate steps and use effective protective mechanisms against discrimination on the grounds of gender” (Law on Gender Equality 2010). It also lastly claims that “until the adoption of the relevant law on offenses of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the misdemeanor proceedings under the provisions of this Law shall be conducted by the bodies responsible for this proceeding in the Entities” (Law on Gender Equality. 2003). GEL was incorporated fifteen years ago and lastly amended nine years ago, and there still does not exist any relevant law on offenses that regulates GE. The responsible bodies in each Entity does not seem to actually create any progress in the gender inequality issues using their existing penalties since the issue remains the same, and even worse based on the decreased number of women in parliamentary seats from 26% in 1998 to to 21% at the moment and 17% in 2010, seven years after its incorporation. (IPU 2017)

#### 2.1.4 UNSCR 1325

UNSCR 1325 “Women, peace and security” was adopted in 2000 and was the first UN Security Council Resolution that made clear the weight of equal gender participation when building peace in a post-conflict country. It specifically pointed out the importance of women’s participation in decision-making at all state levels. A directive by the UN Secretary General in 2008 made it mandatory that all member countries made action plans to implement UNSCR 1325 (Bosnia & Herzegovina 2013. p 3-4).

#### 2.1.5 NAP 2010-2013 & 2014-2017

The first National Action Plan (NAP1) from 2010-2013 was the first attempt to implement UNSCR 1325 and this also contained plans on women’s participation

in the decision-making positions. It presents information about the fact that women lack support to create electoral change and that the traditional views on women create barriers for them to reach certain positions, which lead to ineffective development in relevant gender legislation and underrepresentation of women in political and public life (Bosnia & Herzegovina 2010. p 9). The Annex in NAP1 shows that the state should have succeeded to reach the share of 40% of women participating in decision-making processes by the end of 2013 (Bosnia & Herzegovina 2013. p 46). After results and recommendations from the first NAP a new NAP for the period 2014-2017 was established trying to reach the goal of 40% again.

The new NAP2 contained the same goals in the same fields but with a better structure with priority areas in the different fields. It also had a different approach to make the implementation more successful containing more direct result-oriented activities. The NAP2 was unlike the old one divided into three bigger sections: equal participation, prevention and protection where every category had clearer strategic goals and definitions than the last one (Bosnia & Herzegovina 2013. p 22-23).

#### 2.1.6 GAP 2013-2017

The Gender Action Plan 2013-2017 (GAP) contains strategic goals with systematic and multi-sectorial approaches to improve the planning and implementation in the area by the monitoring body Gender Equality Agency. The first strategic goal was aimed to develop, implement and monitor the programs of measures for advancement of GE in the governmental institutions. Goal 1 includes measures in different priority areas where public life and decision making is one of them. The plan was to implement monitoring and reporting bodies to achieve GE so that men and women have equal opportunities, which includes their representation in public life (Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013. p 6-7).

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 together with the European Parliament Resolution stated that ‘a society without the full participation of women and men in decision making is a nondemocratic society.’ (Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013. p 12-13).

The most concerning conclusion of the report is that the women's political participation and their political influence in the public sphere are extremely limited. The measures that needed to be taken to reach the goal of providing equal gender representation in creating policies and decision making at all levels were to integrate international standards for GE. The deadline for this was in the end of 2017 (ibid).

### 2.1.7 CEDAW and CEDAW Recommendations

CEDAW was implemented in BiH in 1993 whereby the optional protocol was signed in 2002.

#### *Stereotypes*

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made concluding observations and recommendations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of BiH<sup>1</sup> adopted in July 2013. The report points out the problems of the patriarchal attitudes and firm stereotypes in the society. These stereotypes are becoming obstacles for the implementation of CEDAW since they are the reason to why women are in disadvantaged positions in political life, especially the decision-making positions. The rapport also presents development areas where the state can improve, where it is said that the state needs to develop a strategy across all sectors that work on overcoming patriarchal and stereotypical norms and behaviors, especially in positions where women are in a disadvantaged position (CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/4-5. §19a-20c).

#### *Participation in political life*

The Committee Rapport also notes that the GEL required to make sure there was a 40% participation of women in political life, on candidate lists to political parties and on representation of women in judiciary and civil service. But, these

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<sup>1</sup> The GAP BiH was included as the fifth periodic report that was being observed by the UN.



numbers are concerning for the Committee because women in decision-making levels are still, not even underrepresented, but even absent. BiH has because of this been recommended to establish procedures to guarantee that the 40% participation limit is being endeavored (CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/4-5. §27-28bc).

## 2.2 Women in politics

Even though there are several regulating documents regarding this issue from a top-down approach, that have been established with pushes from the bottom such as laws and policies, but there is still a major gender inequality that is seen on a daily basis. It is therefore known that a top-down approach itself does not seem to make any difference for women in BiH.

The Infohouse Association made a research in 2015 to examine women's participation in politics in some southeastern European countries, including BiH. The first voting quota was established in BiH in 1997 by the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE), which made every political party obligated to have at least three women at the top ten candidates. This quota made it easier for women to become more politically active and 26% of the seats belonged to women by the next election in 1998, but to keep in mind is that the adoption of the gender quotas came from NGO and bottom-up forces. The model of open lists<sup>2</sup> was introduced in year 2000 which again made it harder for women to get support for becoming candidates. The situation at the time was survivable with the only 4,76% female seats in the House of Representatives<sup>3</sup> of the Parliament of BiH. In 2010, before the establishments of NAP's and GAP, the women fought their way up to a percentage of 13,3% in the House of Representatives (Infohouse 2015. p 23).

In 2013 the GEL made a big step in BiH because of the establishment of the Law on Amendments and Law on Elections, which required 40% of the candidates to be women. Because of this obligation, female candidates increased

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<sup>2</sup> Voters can influence the order in how a party's candidates are elected.

<sup>3</sup> One of the two Houses in the Parliamentary Assembly

to 40% on the candidate lists. The election in 2014 was the first election after these new strategy implementations and it resulted in a 19,90% elected women at all levels of government. Even after all the regulating documents that had been made before the election, women still did not reach the record number of 20,15% from the 2002 election, and the 40% quota seemed to be very far away (Infohouse 2015. p 23).

### 2.2.1 Women in decision-making

The European Commission did a report on gender in BiH 2014 to evaluate the situation to be able to create future cooperation with BiH in the issue.

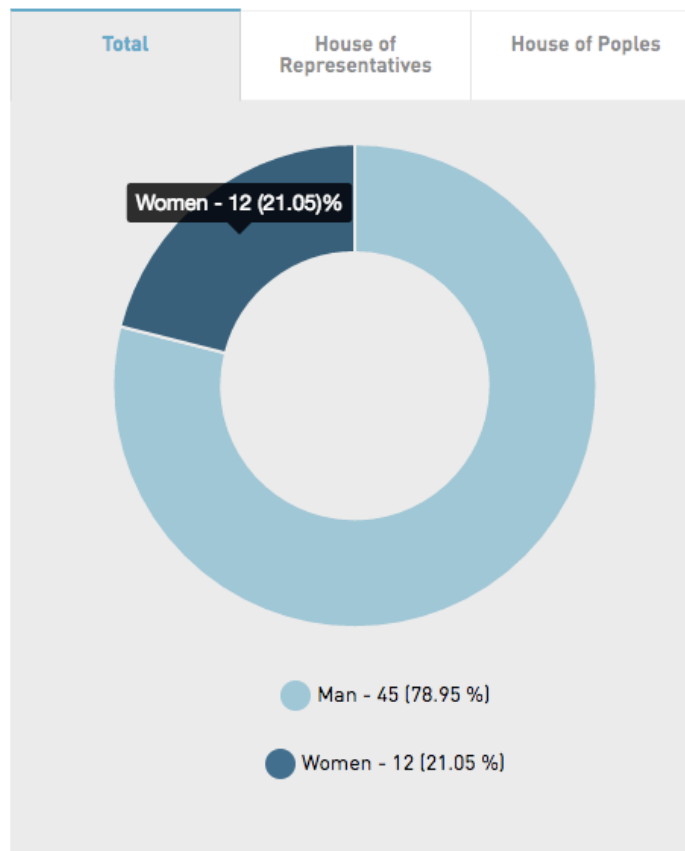
Women in BiH are, as stated before, somewhat excluded from decision-making levels. If women are being excluded from rights and responsibilities of their citizenships, they are being excluded from the political life as well (Pateman 1983).

All nine ministries in the country 2013 were men. Thus, women are equally represented as men on the deputy-positions, which is a sign of something that could lead to success. The prime minister in RS is in fact a woman, Zeljka Cvijanovic, and the first woman ever at such a position (European Commission 2013/333302/01. p 41).

The highest legislative body in BiH is the Parliamentary Assembly (PSBiH) that was established by the Constitutional law of BiH. The PSBiH consists of the House of Representatives and the House of Peoples and all legislative decisions enter both Houses before adoption. Their role is to control and regulate the entire internal structure with legislation and oversight activities since they are the only authority that can regulate legislation.

This is the gender structure in the PSBiH today:

### Gender structure in BiH PA 2014. - 2018.



(Parliamentary Assembly of BiH. 2016)

### 2.2.2 NGO's roles

Women have been gathering since 1996 to share postwar experiences to create political affection for themselves. Their participation and communication with NGOs and INGOs have been strong but still their fights to translate their goals to political actions has failed. The NGO campaign Nas je Vise (There Are More Of Us) was what pushed for gender quotas in the elections. It is therefore possible to claim that the 26% of the seats that belonged to women in 1998 was managed to happen because of bottom-up forces. The campaign together with thirteen other NGOs, encouraged women to participate in election which resulted in an increase from 2% to 25% of female representation in the House of Representatives in the Parliamentary Assembly in BiH. In fact, female politicians

often turned to NGOs for support in gender-related questions and this cooperation actually resulted in GEL becoming an official law (Peace & Change 2012. p 306-307).

## 2.3 Gender inequality and economical loss

A study made by Ognjen Radonjic and Isidora Jaric analyzes how gender inequality can have negative effects on the quality of life and society since countries with these kinds of inequalities show macroeconomic losses, which deteriorates the economic growth and economic development. Their study claims that political policies and structures that aim on equal gender-employment also have an increased number of economic growths. They argue that governmental and non-governmental institutions need to take important measures to be able to create equality for women in the labor markets. They specifically point out that these institutions need to work simultaneously to reduce the gap between the genders and aim for equal qualification, equal access to new jobs, equal safety and so forth (Etnoantropoloski Problemi. 2016).

# 3 Feminist approaches to representation

The feminist perspective characterizes the issue and helps understanding women's roles and prospects based on their position in different roles or societies. Applying a feminist perspective on the representation of women in the political life in BiH, it will help me clarify the previous approaches with the aim to understand why the situation looks like it does today and what approaches would be more effective for GE.

## 3.1.1 Anthropological and liberal feminism

This issue has mostly been discussed through anthropological feminism perspectives and liberal feminism perspectives. The liberal feminism perspective believes that the society somewhat leaves women behind when it comes to interacting with political-related questions. Liberal feminism focuses on the fact that equality between the genders needs to be approached through laws and policies. This makes the liberal feminism a top-down approach. The anthropological feminism perspective instead focuses on the social construct of the gender and its existence, purpose and meaning. The anthropological perspective believes in bottom-up approaches and that gender inequality is an issue that has to be addressed from the bottom and up (Hasanovic 2014. p 56).

Indira Hasanovic who has an anthropological perspective on the issue exemplifies these two perspectives in her article using the diplomat J. Butlers and S. Begleys statements. Butler claims that gender is a "construct that is produced and maintained through the workings of power in societies" (Jelke. 2010. p.3) and Begley argues that "stereotypes present a trap into which many people can fall." (Begley 2000. p 66-67) (Hasanovic 2014. p 56).

Thus, the gender issue in BiH has most often been approached with an anthropological feminism perspective when discussed in researches, with questions about what gender is and how societies create different roles to different genders to maximize profit and labor, blaming the cultural norms for the creation of gender behaviors. And that it is because of this that women are still underrepresented, underpaid and discriminated (Hasanovic 2014. p 57).

Hasanovic's main argument to the fact that women are employed less than men and are facing discrimination is because of the lack of law enforcement that regulates the norms in the society. Her research confirmed her hypothesis about women facing discrimination more often than men only because of their gender and not their capability to perform or accomplish the given tasks (CEDAW and Women's Rights in Bosnia. 2013). Maximizing women's and female's chances to become politically active as voters or representatives is one of the pathways to create a society with a political culture that is more liberal and nonviolent to decrease the nationalistic and religious ways that has a tendency to divide societies instead of reconciling them.

## 3.2 Feminism in gender equality

The feminist approaches can, like I stated above, be categorized into two: the anthropological and liberal perspective, where the first one focuses on bottom-up strategies and the last one on top-down strategies.

A research done by Annika Björkdahl, who has an anthropological bottom-up approach, presents the fact that when the Dayton Agreement, which was meant to create and empower GE, was implemented it created a 'peace gap' because of the lack of women in the implementation process. This resulted in an even more divided system than what it already was with women at the bottom of the hierarchy. She points out the concerns about the low public awareness about equal representation of women and men in the political life and the women that managed their way up to respectable positions are often excluded from participation (Björkdahl 2012. p 302). This research agrees with Vanessa Pupavac's thoughts in her article about the fact that the leading national

institutions and politicians have not been able to make the theoretical policies match in practice. This has unfortunately led to a gap between the citizens and politicians that are based on the government's incapability to create a safety-providing welfare system. Björkdahl's main argument is that a gender-just peace accommodates equality in political, social and economic powers and points out that the injustice depends on ethnicity, religion, gender and class. Because of this it is of great significance that women become equally represented as men in the political spheres.

### 3.2.1 Top-Down Approach, Bottom-Up Approach & the Double Strategy

Amy G. Mazur analyzed feminist policy in practice and she explains that there is a major difference in top-down and bottom-up approaches. The bottom-up approach locates the implementation of a certain policy or law at a local level where actors like NGOs can express the policy's success in practice (Journal of Women, Politics & Policy. 2016. p.70). The bottom-up approach in this research has the aim to inspire for processes of local participation in a certain development-area. The bottom-up approach also focuses on that the local actors need to be a part of the decision-making about how to reach certain goals. The bottom-up approach can work as capacity-building components with involvement from local actors and interest groups with three crucial components that a bottom-up approach should include.

- 1) Awareness rising, training, participation of the local population to identify strengths and weakness of a certain area.
- 2) Participation of different interest groups with the goal to create development strategies.
- 3) Establishment of criterions for selection of suitable projects deliverable of the strategy (ELARD. 2017).

Björkdahl also presents three crucial approaches for creating a gender-just peace. 1) The first is to encourage women to contribute in thoughts of what kind of society and peace they would like to achieve. 2 & 3) The second and third is to learn coping with setbacks from post-war experiences and consequences such as conservative social orders. Engagement and participation in gender-related

questions and peace-process politics is primary to the development to a more democratic, equal and calm political environment (Björkdahl. 2012).

Mazur and other feminist policy-analysts have researched about the phases that a policy goes through after its adoption. She points out that early literature on gender seem to look at only the adoption-phase or policy formation, which focuses on policy-content, definition and issue framing which in fact has no direct impact on the actual policy outcome (Journal of Women, Politics & Policy. 2016. p.67) One of her arguments is that the main obstacle to why feminist policy in practice does not succeed is because of the lack of valid and reliable measurements of policy success. It can be difficult to identify if a policy has been successful since it is not always clear if a policy is the reason to a certain change in situation or relation. This is known as the ‘‘difficulty of determining causality’’ because of the fact that other factors could have been related or unrelated to the policy and its impact on gender inequalities (Journal of Women, Politics & Policy. 2016. p.69).

De Leon and De Leon agrees with both Mazur and Björkdahl in this question and argues that implementation needs to focus more on bottom-up approaches since that is a way to emphasize democratic processes and a way to understand that policies are made for the people by the people (Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory. 2002. p.467-92) (Journal of Women, Politics & Policy. 2016. p.70).

Pupavac critiques the top-down approach which has been pursued a multiple times since the Dayton Agreement along with international support from NGOs, INGOs, OHCHR and other international Human Rights activists. With help from the bottom, the NGOs, the CEDAW was implemented and integrated in the national legislation and policies (International Peacekeeping. 2005. p.394). Pupavac’s main focus is policy-making that encourages women to be a part of the political process. Since Hasanovic claimed that the main issue was in law-implementation and the lack of monitoring bodies and institutions, Pupavac instead argues that NGOs are able to make the law-implementation increase and become more practically integrated in a society.

Pupavac has come to the conclusion that international policy development with the top-down approach alone is not very action filled in BiH (International Peacekeeping. 2005. p.405). It is obvious that the top-down approach is



ineffective because of the proven fact that the GE has been making minimal improvements even though a multiple documents have been established to eliminate the issue. Therefore I will focus my research on the bottom-up approach only, using different components of bottom-up approaches to understand if a bottom-up approach is better for creating a gender equal political representation in the PSBiH.

### *The double strategy*

The researcher Jagoda Rosul-Gajic discusses the importance of NGOs and how they can contribute to implementation policies and that the cooperation between the top-down and bottom-up approach are the key to success. She tries to point out their methods and tools to implement GE into state policy norms. She presents an interesting double strategy that she believes women's NGOs have been using to make an impact to reach policy-changes and that they play the most important role in the gender implementation. She points out that the cooperation between national and international actors are the key to develop norms in post-conflict countries. One of her main arguments is the importance of UNSCR 1325 that she claims is one of the most important policy-implementations in post-conflict countries and that there need to be monitoring bodies that controls the implementation of these principals. She agrees with Pupavac on the importance of NGOs and how they can work to become this monitoring body that is needed in purpose to develop women's human rights norms and implement the UNSCR 1325 (Journal of international Women Studies. 2016. p.145). The NGOs strive to implement norms and policies and affect the decision makers into taking women's human rights into account since neither the national or international actors have managed to do so (Journal of international Women Studies. 2016. p.146).

She presents two main tools NGOs can use to reach implementation into state policy with the double-strategy. It firstly contains pressuring both the authorities and the international organs. The strategy has three different phases:

1. The Orientation phase
2. The Agenda-setting phase
3. The Policy-creating and Norm-implementation phase.

These serve the purpose of getting national governments to get more entailed with the human rights so that the NGOs don't have to be the monitoring bodies when human rights are being violated. The agenda-setting phase include searching for cooperation and support from other national or international organizations to put the topic on the political agenda. In transnational states like BiH the feminist NGOs don't often have economic support from national authorities, which explains why INGOs or other sponsors finance them instead. After the orientation and agenda setting phases, the national government along with international actors hopefully have a base to implement the norms and policies on (Journal of International Women's Studies. 2016. p.150-151). The bottom-up approach makes local actors participate in decision-making

The European LEADER Association have experienced that the bottom-up approach have the best outcome when it is combiner together with a top-down approach, which would confirm Mazur's theories about the double strategy (ELARD. 2017).

To maximize a successful post-implementation phase where the implementation actually makes a difference for women, it could be effective to combine a top-down and a bottom-up approach. The top-down approach must focus on the financial parts and creating monitoring bodies to eliminate gender stereotypes (besides the NGOs) and more effective measurement strategies so that the government can map out where and later why a certain policy or law implementation is failing, to be able to see some kind of improvements. The bottom-up approach needs to focus on getting women politically involved and encourage them to speak up about what kind of society they want to live in so that the gender stereotypes and norms vanish so that they at least do not prevent women to reach the decision-making levels (ibid).

BiH has established all the documents presented above as a way to deal with this issue from a top-down approach. Researchers and scientists have come to the conclusion that the top-down approach is unsuccessful since the issue needs to be addressed by the people for the people.

### 3.3 The Bottom-Up Approach to gender equality

To summarize what is presented above I can draw the conclusion that the GE issue has been addressed from both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Björkdahl, Hasanovic, Pupavac, Mazur and De Leon and De Leon all have in common that these issues has to be attacked from a bottom-up approach, and some of them have presented evidence to that the top-down approach itself is not working in BiH. Mazur specifically focuses on the outcomes of a policy or law and she points out the major difference in having a top-down approach and bottom-up approach when addressing GE issues. Rosul-Gajic presents the fact that the issue of gender inequality in BiH could be improved by combining a top-down and bottom-up approach.

Equal representation on decision-making levels means that men and women should have at least 40% representation and in chances of reaching these political positions recording to GEL. The top-down approach is proven to be unsuccessful in BiH because of the fact that all the existing legal documents do not seem to make the difference it takes, therefore the liberal feminist theories that focus on change and development using laws and policy implementation become insubstantial.

My theory will therefore be a combination of a top-down and bottom-up approach with a feminism perspective. I want to understand why it exists gender inequality in the political life in BiH using a bottom-up and top-down approach that will be put against existing legal framework.

Based on the overview of the different strategies from Rosul-Gajic, ELARD and Björkdahl above, I developed a theoretical framework of my own that consists of three components: ELARDS two first components of a bottom-up approach combined with the first crucial component that Björkdahl presents and Jagoda Rosul-Gajic's all three strategy phases (besides the Norm-implementation) are therefore going to be the foundation to my theory. Thus, I have adapted the strategies above so that the components of my operational theoretical framework to GE at last consist of the combination of:

- 1) The Orientation Phase (by Rosul-Gajic)/the awareness rising, training and participation of actors to identify strengths and weaknesses in a certain area (by ELARD)/the encourage of women to contribute in thoughts of what kind of society and peace they would like to achieve (by Björkdahl).
- 2) The Agenda Setting Phase (by Rosul-Gajic)

3) The Policy-creating and Implementation Phase (by Rosul-Gajic)/participation of different interest groups with the goal to create a common policy (by ELARD).

I will rename them into:

- ➔ 1) The Awareness component
- ➔ 2) The Agenda-Setting component
- ➔ 3) The Policy & Implementation component

The purpose of the renaming is only practical. Every name is the keyword of each combination above, which represents what every component consists of. The new components are the foundation to my interview questions, which in turn are going to be the tools for my theoretical framework to become operational and measurable.

## 4 Method

This is a case study with the aim is to reach an understanding to why it exists gender inequality in political life in BiH even though there is a gender quota requirement of at least 40% representation. The reason why I chose to do a case study in this qualitative research is because case studies are often used when understanding and explaining is the intention. This method is often used when decision-making is at issue because it is about the study of understanding and interpretation. In my case study, I will use legal documents, interview-material and NGO-programs to try to create an understanding to the low representation of women in politics in BiH (Teorell & Svensson 2012. p 99).

This study will be a case of the gender inequality in the political life in BiH and also understanding why the there has been a failure to reach the 40% gender quota. I will apply a feminism perspective, which means that I advocate a bottom-up approach. (Teorell & Svensson 2012. p 82, 221).

The theory is based on combined components from different researchers to produce components of a bottom-up approach that would possibly make the GE closer to the 40% representation. I have developed an analytical framework that will guide the analysis of the case.

### 4.1 Interviews

I have interviewed NGO-representatives and a former politician that are active in GE questions in BiH over Skype and in writing. The reason why I chose Lejla Šomun Krupalija and Nada Golubović are because their GE work reflects a bottom-up perspective, which is what I advocate in this research. I am aware that this could be bias; however the secondary material I used such as the UN studies

compensates this. Lejla Š. Krupalija is a GE researcher, former politician and NGO representative; she has been working against violence against women and girls, rights for people with disabilities and more. She has twenty-five years of experience in working with development organizations, UN and NGOs. (Diskriminacija 2018) She has been involved in gender issues for more 10 years by supporting NGOs, interest groups and politicians (Š. Krupalija 2017). Nada Golubović has twenty years of experience in working with GE in political life and she is currently working as the president of the NGO United Women Banja Luka but also active in working with the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 (Sarajevo Open Center. 2015). The NGOs that have been interviewed are Sarajevo Open Center and United Women Banja Luka, with support and recommendations from Sasa Čudić who is the Vice President of the Assembly of city Banja Luka. The interviews I have had with the above are semi-structured, which means that the questions are skill-based which makes this type of interview one of the most secure ones for this type of study, since the respondents are chosen based on their skills and competence on GE issues. The interviews took 45 minutes and were both oral and written.

## 4.2 Operationalization

I have presented different theories from different researchers that lead me to developing three components of a bottom-up approach of my own. These three components put together in an analytical framework are therefore this study's main tool to understanding the low representation of women in politics in BiH.

Thus, the first step to understanding gender inequality in BiH is to determine a theoretical concept, which in my case is the underrepresentation. My theoretical definition, the second step, is the underrepresentation of women in politics in BiH, which will lastly be translated to an operational definition, which in my case are tools to interpret the interviews and NGO-programs. (Teorell & Svensson 2012. p 39).

Intersubjectivity is also of importance because of the veracity and transparency of the conclusion. I want to present in the clearest way possible how I have combined different theories into one and how I have gathered the

information so that my result and conclusion come out as clear as possible from my point of view for the reader. It is also of importance to make sure that my research is possible to evaluate by others, which gives the clarity even more importance (ibid).

To be able to reach these requirements I will explain why I have chosen the interview respondents and NGOs and how I have come up with my specific interview questions. (Teorell & Svensson 2012. p 280). The NGO-representatives I chose to interview were based on the relevance of their work on GE issues and their bottom-up approach perspectives. The interviewees have a long history of feminist advocacy and of policy-making and their input has been very inspiring and helpful during this entire research. I reached out to influential NGOs in BiH and I used the responses I got combined with their strategy programs and project history in my analysis.

I will structure the analysis according to my analytical framework. I believe that the connection between my theoretical framework and my empirical material will be presented clearly that way.

## 5 Analysis

I have been in contact with NGO-representatives and relevant NGOs in BiH and I was able to ask them some questions about the situation that I am trying to understand. The NGOs are the Sarajevo Open Center and United Women Banja Luka. I have double-checked and confirmed their answers to their action-plans and finished project-reports to make sure exactly what progress have been made.

### 5.1 The Awareness component

The main focus of this component is to try to understand how the awareness rising phase and how different actors raise awareness about gender inequality. Also what they specifically do to encourage women to contribute in political questions in their society.

Lejla Š. Krupalija says that she works a lot with gender mainstreaming, which is directly linked to GE where she tries to create a space for women in political parties where they can make decisions in gender-related questions. She points out that women do not equally participate even though the 40% quota demands it. She also helps organizations to work with peace building and for a more equal society. She has been a member of the political party Nasa Stranka where she was the head of the election committee that prepared the municipal election lists. She pushed for the quota to be 50% and she made sure that the party did not marginalize women and make them have a specific group of active members but instead she aimed for mainstreaming. She therefore created the Committee of Gender Equality and Empowerment of women in politics, which made every member, male and female, of the party mainstream GE in their politics. She has also done training with female politicians on basic things like feminism and why it is important to empower women's rights (Šomun Krupalija, interview December 2017).



“I try to support my female politicians and I am always there to help all women. I promote solidarity.” (Šomun Krupalija, interview December 24<sup>th</sup> 2017).

The NGO Sarajevo Open Center (SOC) has been active in the field of improving the political participation of women in BiH by advocating for changes to develop new laws and implementation strategies in forms of Action Plans with the goal to ensure and protect women’s rights in political participation. SOC has during 2015 produced two studies that were related to GE and women’s political participation with the goal to present the current status to see where improvements are needed to finally reach the main goal of the 40% representation of both genders in all government bodies. They established models together with the Agency of Gender Equality where they have had meetings to discuss the representation of gender. (Sarajevo Open Center. 2015)

My translation:

“Even if we knew from the beginning that our proposals were a somewhat unrealistic, we still believed that a change was possible.”<sup>4</sup>

–Maida Zagorac, representative of SOC.  
(Sarajevo Open Center M.Z, interview May 12<sup>th</sup> 2017)

The Commission for Gender Equality finally accepted their proposals to introduce a 50% electoral quota in new amendments to the BiH Election Law which led to a period of street actions, lobbying, education to authorities from the civil sectors to raise public awareness and to point out the importance of these amendments. Unfortunately the proposals did not pass the PSBiH. The second attempt was to add gender quotas of 40% with the already existing ethnic quotas, which actually made progress at the first reading since there are no female-ministers in the executive branch, but this also failed because of the lack of further support in the PSBiH (Sarajevo Open Center M.Z, interview May 12<sup>th</sup> 2017).

The NGO United Women BL’s (Udružene Žene Banja Luka) first program report from 2010-2014 shows that after the general election in 2010 women were still seriously underrepresented with a 17% of women in the legislative

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<sup>4</sup> “Iako smo od početka znali da su naši prijedlozi ambiciozni i pomalo nerealni, vjerovali smo da je promjena moguća.” –Maida Zagorac

authorities. This is a violation of art. 4:19 in the Election Law of BiH that requires the 40% quota in these elections. It is also a violation on art. 20 in the GEL since state bodies at all levels of government need to make sure and promote equal gender representation in decision-making. Also here, GE is when one of the genders are at least 40% represented in the bodies from art. 20 §1.

They got recommendations from the European Council concerning the area of women's participation in political life to strengthen Resolution 1706, which increases women's representation in politics through the electoral system. Recommendation 1899 also needed strengthening which would increase women's representation using the 40% quota.

United Women BL have after these recommendations focused their work in the next four years to work on the Amendments to the Election Law to ensure its compliance with the GEL and the Recommendations of the European Council in a way that it is corresponding with the 40% quota.

United Women BL's report from 2014-2016 presents an increase from 3% to 20% from 1996-2014, but still far away from a 40% representation. Their goal in this report was to: 1) Initiate changes to the Election Law in order to meet the representation of 40% of both genders in legislative bodies so that no mandate can be approved by the Council of Ministers if it does not have a 40% quota, which is an example of how a top-down approach can be beneficial for gender equality. 2) Improve the attitude of political parties towards GE, strengthen women assets within political parties and work with female voters (United Women BL. 2016).

According to Jones and Navia (1999), an open list system combined with a 40% gender representation quota is ineffective since the voters (who are still very affected by the historical gender stereotypes) are going to vote for males over females, which make the male-dominated parties, stay male-dominated. In that case, the only change in the election law that would be necessary is the change from open lists to a more representation-effective system. Otherwise it could also be effective to keep the open lists and the 40% quota while working with a bottom-up approach to increase the voter's knowledge about women in politics so that they would voluntarily vote for women. Nada Golubović, that I interviewed is doing exactly that and she works together with the NGO United Women BL to try to increase the awareness about gender inequality by helping and preparing women as voters before elections or mandate periods by strengthen campaigns to

raise awareness to the importance of female-participation in politics. They have themed workshops and meeting with representatives from PSBiH where common priorities and being created. Also continuing with activities aimed at amending the Election Law of BiH in order to achieve a minimum representation of 40% of both genders in the legislative bodies (Golubović, interview December 24<sup>th</sup> 2017).

### 5.1.1 Gender-Responsible budgeting

Another approach that the NGO has been using is something called gender-responsible budgeting which focuses on GE through financial resources. To prepare and allocate financial resources in a way that takes the specific needs of men and women into account. Currently the government provides budgets for development of the state and the budget reflects the priorities and commitments of the government. Gender Responsible Budgeting is an approach by which all budget processes are structured and evaluated from the perspective of GE. This approach recognizes that budgets are not gender-neutral and that all actors in the budget process need to evaluate the results of spending public resources from the perspective of GE, leading to a more equitable allocation of budget resources and improving the economic development of the country. In BiH, the budgets, in most cases, are not created according to a principle that takes into account the specific needs of both genders. Golubović ends with explaining how the analysis of a gender equal budget should be done, which will be presented in the their next program. She later quotes the inventor Nikola Tesla from an interview held with him in 1926. (Golubovic, interview December 24<sup>th</sup>)

My translation:

“The struggle for gender equality will end in which the woman will be superior. This equality, and later on superiority, will not be achieved through shallow physical imitation but through the wake of the woman’s intellect.”<sup>5</sup>

(Golubović. 2017)

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<sup>5</sup> "Ova borba za ravnopravnost spolova završit će novim poretkom u kojem će žena biti superiorna. Tu jednakost, a kasnije i superiornost, neće postići kroz plitku fizičku imitaciju već kroz buđenje intelekta žena." (Iz intervjuja Nikole Tesle 1926. godine)

## 5.2 The Agenda-setting component

This component focuses on how to go from awareness-rising to actual agenda setting. This is the step between the theoretical and the practical.

BiH is still, unfortunately, a very conservative and patriarchal society and it is a fact that it continuously keeps showing in various ways in our society. These conservative values are somehow coalescing and defining the place of women in our society. But it is also a fact that things are, slowly but safely changing and that the awareness in these issues is increasing. If we compare it with a period from 20 years ago we see the political changes where women today are more involved. In addition to rising awareness of the general public, it is also necessary to work on raising the awareness for the existing politicians, especially those at the top of the hierarchy and the leaders for the political parties.

The political parties are organized by different principles and strategies but every party has in common that women are underrepresented, a far way below 40%, in the bodies of the parties (Sarajevo Open Center M.Z, interview, May 12<sup>th</sup> 2017).

Golubovic explains that she together with United Women BL communicate through lobbying to reach representatives of as many executive authorities in BiH as they can in order to reach some kind of agenda-setting impact. Šomun-Krupalija also focuses on lobbying and is well prepared with good data and good statistics of political weaknesses when they have to be presented to reach the political agenda. She uses the former Yugoslav countries in comparison and looks for good examples from abroad with similar systems and issues. She points out that she simplifies information for it to be more understandable for everyone that has to be involved. She makes sure that the information about a certain political weakness is understood which is the first step towards finding support and cooperation from other national or international organizations. Making supporters and donors understanding the GE issue is the greatest way to make it being taken seriously. The government is not very gender aware which makes the economic support for gender activities very limited. The government needs to be thought in order to make a budget that supports gender activities (Šomun-Krupalija, interview December 24<sup>th</sup> 2017).

## 5.3 The Policy-creating and Implementation component

This component focuses on the last and most important steps in a successful bottom-up approach; the policy creating and implementation. In addition to the propositions to legislative solutions they have also actively worked in educational activities. Three years ago they did a cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation which led to the creation of the Academy of Equality that is designed to increase action of the government representatives and members of political parties. The aim was to strengthen the capacity of political leaders in GE in order to improve the rights of the citizens in BiH. Participants of the Academy are fighting for increased political participation of women on a daily basis (Sarajevo Open Center M.Z, interview May 12<sup>th</sup> 2017).

Golubovic is a member of many networks in BiH and she cooperates with a couple of strategy managers and has direct communication with the representatives of PSBiH and executive authorities on local to governmental level of BiH. In that way she is able to present certain weaknesses so that they have a chance to reach the political agenda.

### 5.3.1 Participation of policy creating

Šomun-Krupalija discusses the importance of participation from the executive authorities for policies to be created. She uses participation as an approach to making policies develop with their right values, by arranging workshops with stakeholders to give them a chance to have time to discuss gender inequality issues. She makes them discuss political obstacles and solutions to different GE problems and she makes each and every participant write down their opinions. She later uses these opinions when creating action plans and project documents together with NGOs so that the stakeholders feel like they have been a part of or helped planning the policy-process in a certain question or topic. These stakeholders are later going to present the specific action plans or project documents together with its main problem, which is the gender inequality and its strategic solutions to how the issue should be solved, in their political areas

because they are probably going to feel proud of their own contribution. This method does not only teach the male part of politicians in BiH about gender inequality but it makes them a part of the process, which is valuable because the issue about gender inequality is then being stirred in the right direction (Šomun-Krupalija, interview December 24<sup>th</sup> 2017).

Šomun-Krupalija's last step in her participation approach is the implementation of the policy that the stakeholders helped create. The policy will consist of strategic action plans on what needs to be done and who is going to do it. It is also of importance to have a time frame and realistic budget. If the entire structure is presented in the policy, it will be easier for the government to adapt. My work with GE issues would be more effective if BiH had a development budget that was based on the needs of the community and not only the needs of the politicians.

''We need politicians who are going to care about the community more than their own pockets. (...) We need a revolution!'' (Šomun-Krupalija, interview December 24<sup>th</sup> 2017).

## 6 Conclusion

The main conclusion of my analysis to the low representation of women in politics in BiH is because of the lack of a fully supported and financed bottom-up approach. By examining the issue from a bottom-up approach using an anthropological feminism perspective I have come to the conclusion that a bottom-up approach is most likely relevant when developing GE in BiH, because of the fact that a top-down approach itself is proven in earlier researches to be ineffective. Some of the regulating documents that do exist today have been pushed on from the NGOs, which prove that the driving force is coming from below.

By adapting and re-creating already existing material and theories on the topic I was able to obtain interview-material that gave me a result of a detailed perception and a very straight forward understanding on the issue from a bottom-up perspective. I believe that the development of the three new components was a very necessary course of action because of the fact that the components made the issue more divided, separate and clearer to understand. By developing three new components I was able to grasp a wider base to the issue, which only makes the perception, understanding and conclusion more reliable.

Thus, I have come to the understanding that the reason to the low representation of women in politics in BiH is because of a none-supported and economically limited bottom-up approach. I have reached an understanding to the issue and I firmly believe that the Gender-Responsible Budgeting and the Participation of stakeholders in policy creating that is presented above in 5.1.1 and 5.3.1 can make the issue about gender inequality and female underrepresentation decrease. I believe that the bottom-up approach, with the right kinds of economical resources and empowering tools together with the existing and future top-down approaches, would make the state of BiH reach the quota of 40% gender representation in politics in BiH, like they have strived to do for a long time. A clear example on how these two approaches can work together is seen when

looking at how the awareness-rising activities cooperates with the open-list system with the aim to make voters GE aware.

GE is known as one of the economic and social reconstructions and is under development thanks to GE laws, international conventions and NGOs. Therefore a lot of the top-down approaches that has been taken are actually pushed from the bottom. The top-down approach made the representation of women reach a number of 26% by itself; finally I can argue that the bottom up approach, if correctly supported and applied, can add the right sort of power that is needed for the top-down approach to succeed to reach the 40% gender quota. Therefore a combination of these with the correct amount of support would probably be very beneficial for creating a more gender equal political life in BiH.

## Future research

I am hoping that I have given a clear picture of the meaning and importance of the right kind of approach in gender inequality development as a contribution to existing research and I also hope that I have increased the understanding and the weight of a gender equal political life within a state. I believe that this research have proven and confirmed some of the already existing researches in the field, which could possibly lead to more attention in the results that are presented.

Bosnia-Herzegovina has been developing their gender inequalities since their independence and a lot of research has been done in the field since then. I am hoping that my presentation of understandings can be of importance in future development of GE in BiH and all other post-conflict countries in the former republic of Yugoslavia. I believe that this research have created a bigger understanding about how the issue needs to be approached and how important it is for everyone to understand that they can contribute and make a difference in their society.

Recommendations for future research in this study would be to search for more effective methods that focuses on battling corruption to increase economic support to NGOs, eliminating gender stereotypes, social gender norms and the patriarchy that has stuck in all levels of the society. I believe that finding an effective way to resource GE and to handle and eliminate gender stereotypes



would be the key to a fast and sustainable GE development in BiH and I truly believe it would be of great interest for everyone involved.

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## 8 Appendix: interview questions

1. Could you short tell me a little about your work with gender equality in BiH?
2. What do you do to raise awareness about gender inequality in your society?
3. How do you encourage women to contribute to political questions?
4. In what way do you present political weaknesses or strengths for them to reach the political agenda?
5. Do you search for cooperation from other national or international organizations to get support?
6. How would you describe your engagement with (private) interest groups in order to include them in policy-making processes?
7. Do you work in a certain way or by certain guidelines to make the implementation of a policy successful?
8. How do you perceive your work with implementation of policies? Could it be different or more effective somehow?