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POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN INDIAN POLITICS

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Abstract :

Women constitute half of the world population, but they are the largest excluded category in almost all respects. Women are neglected at family, community and societal levels and living as an oppressed class. Historically they have been exposed to extreme form of physical, sexual and psychological violence and enjoy least socio-economic status. They have been victims of gender based violence and their miseries got intensified further due to patriarchal nature of society. Women attempted diversified strategies to liberate themselves from shackles of exploitation and feminism was a major response to challenge patriarchy at global platform as well as within national boundaries. An important area where women have been inadequately represented is in the political sphere. Articles 325 and 326 of the constitution of India guarantee political equality, equal right to participation in political activities and right to vote respectively. Lack of space for participation in political bodies has not only resulted in their presence in numbers in these decision making bodies but also in the neglect of issues and experiences in policy making.

Keywords: Empowerment, political participation, Representation, position of women, Indian politics.

I. INTRODUCTION

"There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of the women improved"

- Swami Vivekanand

Women's issues are of great importance in contemporary societies and culture. Although gender relations are concerned with both men and women at present gender studies are still mainly focused on women because they have been marginalised for so long. Throughout most of human history there has existed an asymmetry in relations of power between men and women. Thus there exists a major agenda to be addressed in order to overcome women's invisibility, marginalization and subordination. Gender has now become a critical category for analysis in all fields social, economic, religious, cultural and political. Many current issues in debates about women their status and role in a society. Politics and economy are influenced by Historical, cultural and religious factors. Women constitute more or less half of the citizen of any country, yet they lack support for fundamental functions of a human life. According to Indian's constitution, women are legal citizens of the country and have equal rights with men (Indian parliament) because of lack of acceptance from the male dominant society. Indian women suffer immensely. Women are responsible for baring children, yet they are malnourished and in poor health. Women are also overworked in the fields and complete the all of domestic work. Most Indian women's are uneducated. Although the country's constitution says women have equal status to men, women are powerless and are mistreated inside and outside the home. In workplace they face greater obstacles including discrimination in hiring and sexual harassment in workplace. Gender equality in the realm of politics continues to be elusive even today. Even



though they make up half of the adult

In post independence India, large number of women's autonomous groups have sprung up challenging patriarchy and taking up a variety of issues such as violence against women greater share for women in political decision making etc both at the activist and academic level. India has a rich and vibrant women's movement but it has still a long way to go to achieve gender equality and gender justice.

Women's empowerment is still a debatable issue in India. She is still treated as a second class citizen and the reason besides are illiteracy, customs, traditions, poverty, ignorance, her own lack of interest in her own political empowerment leads to such government policies, which lack proper insight and direction. It is important for the empowerment of women that the women actively participate in the political process of nation.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To know the role of women in the political arena and their political consciousness.
2. To examine the causes responsible for low level participation of women in Indian Politics.
3. To explore the constraints faced by women in performing their role in electoral politics.
4. To find out the position of women in Parliament.
5. To find out the position of women in Maharashtra Vidhanshabha and Local Self Government.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The information for this paper has been secondary sources Books, Journal, Government reports and Internet.

Women's Participation in Political Activities:

The roots of the women's participation in politics can be traced back to the nineteenth century reform movement. This movement

emerged as a result of conflict between the Indian bourgeoisies, trying to wrest control from the British. This class made attempts to reform it, mainly by campaigning against caste, polytheism, idolatry, animism, purdha, child marriage and sati etc. Male social reformers who took up issues concerning women and started women's organization from the end of nineteenth century, first at the local and then at the national level. In the years before independence the two main issues they took up were political rights and reform of personal laws. Women's participation in the freedom struggle broadened the base of women's empowerment. It is important for the empowerment of women that the women actively participate in the political process of the nation.

Women's are the world's largest excluded group in political arena. 21.9 % of the members of national parliament worldwide are women. Women hold 16.0 % of the seats in Arab state parliaments and 21.8 % of the seats in Sub-Saharan African nation's parliament. In Americas women hold 26.6 %. On the other hand in the developed nations of USA, France and Japan 18.3 %, 26.2 %, 8.1 % respectively of the House of Representatives of Lower House of parliament are comprised of women. In Palestine 13.0 % of the Legislative Council members are women and in Morocco women make up a mere of 17.0 % of Parliament. In India women comprised 11.4 % of National Parliament Austria was the only state to have elected a member to the presidency of one of the Parliaments chambers (the Bundersrat) before the Second World War. Currently, 59 women presides over one of the House of the 183 existing parliaments (32.2%). In 1955, Sweden became the first country to have an equal number of women and men in Ministerial posts. At present Swedish Cabinet comprises equal number of male female, cabinet Ministers. One of the biggest setbacks that the women of the

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State have faced in last few years related to the provisions of the 73rd and 74th amendment of Indian constitution. These amendments related to Panchayati Raj institutions (PRTI) have brought about a silent revolution by the way associated to 33% reservation for women in the institutions of local self-government. They have brought a drastic transformation in India in terms of participation of women at the grass root level politics concerned. As per an estimate there are nearly 71 lakh women in the Panchayats and the Chairpersons of Panchayat. The twentieth century has been a worldwide revolution in the extension of political rights to women. Less than ninety years ago there was no major country in the world where women are guaranteed the right to participation in politics on an equal basis with men. Today even a handful states most of them little developed Arab nations, legally bar women's participation in political life. In several major waves of change in this century, the ideal of the political equality for women has spread from these states where it originated to the rest of the world and has been translated in to legal guarantees.

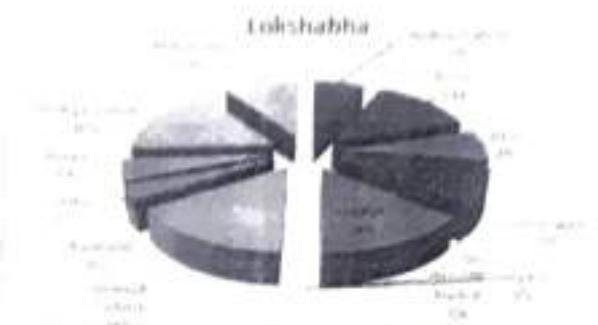
Women in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha

The 16th Lok Sabha in India (2014) comprised 12 women members only 11.41% of the total Lok Sabha membership. While it has decreased from 9.02% in 1999, it is almost half of the world average of 22.2%. The Rajya Sabha does not fare much better, with 29 women members comprising 11.9% of the total membership in 2014. Again, while this is an improvement from the 1999 figure of 7.70% it is far below the world average of 19.6% it comes as no surprise then that India is ranked 141 in the world rankings of women in national parliaments, compiled by the inter-parliamentary union. India's rank is one of the lowest in the region and falls below her neighbors, Nepal ranked at 40, Afghanistan at 45, China at 71, Pakistan 86

Position of Women's participate in Lok Sabha

Year	Seats held by women	% of female members	Year	Seats held by women	% of female members
1952	27	7.04	1977	36	7.77
1957	34	7.26	1980	35	7.27
1960	31	7.41	1984	43	7.92
1967	31	6.74	1988	43	8.72
1971	34	6.93	1996	45	8.24
1975	36	6.45	1999	37	7.70
1980	37	6.77	2014	12	11.41

Source: Election commission of India

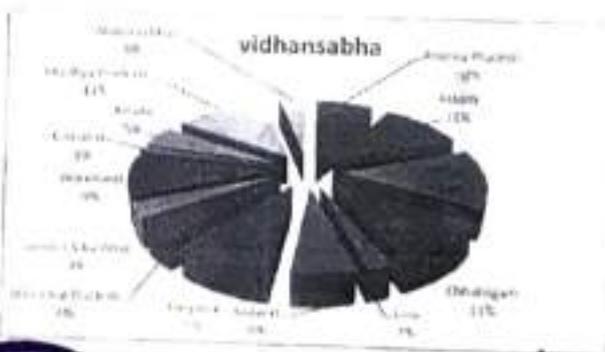


Position of Women's participate in Rajya Sabha

Position of Women in Rajya Sabha Year	Seats held by women	% of female members	Year	Seats held by women	% of female members
1952	17	11.08	1967	19	12.12
1957	18	11.1	1980	20	12.50
1960	21	13.4	1984	21	13.13
1967	22	13.7	1988	24	15.00
1971	24	15.1	1996	24	15.27
1975	27	16.6	1999	26	16.32
1980	28	16.8	2004	25	15.62
1984	31	19.4	2008	28	17.77
1988	32	19.7	2009	28	17.77
1996	34	20.9	2014	29	18.43
1999	37	23.2	2014	29	18.43
2004	38	23.9	2014	29	18.43
2008	39	24.3	2014	29	18.43
2009	39	24.3	2014	29	18.43
2014	29	18.43	2014	29	18.43

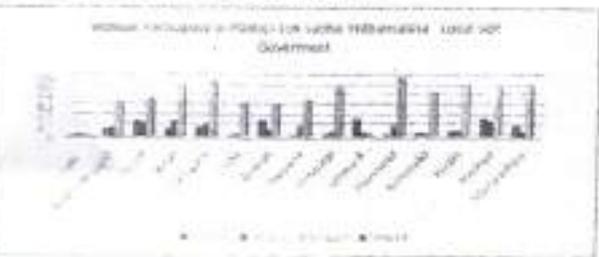
Source: Election commission of India.

Position of Women's participate in all state Vidhansabha



Position of Women's participate in all state Vidhansabha

Women in India are much better represented in the panchayat raj institutions as compared to the parliament. As per the Ministry of Panchayat Raj, in 2008 the Gram Panchayat had 37.8% women members, the Intermediate Panchayats 37 % women members. The total representation of women in all three tiers of the Panchayat amounted to 36.87 % . This seems to be a result of Article 243 D of the Indian constitution, mandating at least 1/3rd of the seats in all tiers of the Panchayat. A further amendment to the Article was proposed in 2009, increasing to 50 % but was not passed. Some states such as Bihar have 50 % reservation for women in the Panchayat Raj as per the state Legislation, but not all the states in India have adopted similar legislations.



Elected Women's Participation in Local self-Government in Maharashtra

The three tiers of panchayat system are spread across the state of Maharashtra and the e-panchayat services are made available for the employees/users and citizens across the state. The deployment envisages coverage of 34 Zilha Parishads, 351 Panchayat Samities and 28006 Gram Panchayats to bridge the digital divide and further socio-economic opportunities for its citizens. Maharashtra cabinet has increased the women's quota from 33% as per the 73rd and 74th Amendment to 50% seats in local self-government bodies. The State Election Commission is implementing the Kranti Jyoti scheme to make women representatives competent to handle governance.

Total no. of Districts - 34
Total no. of Zilha Parishad Members

(District Office) - 1955
Total no. of Zilha Parishad Women Members- 661
Chairmen of Zilha Parishad - 34
Women Chairperson of Zilha Parishad - 15
Total no. of Panchayat Samiti (Block Office) - 351
Total no. of Gram Panchayats - 28553
Total no. of Gram Panchayat Members - 232644
Total no. of Gram Panchayat Women Members - 101466

Percentage of Gram Panchayat Women Members 49.09%
Chairmen of Gram Panchayat 32463
Women Chairperson of Gram Panchayat 12773

Conclusions

Although the constitution guaranteed the equal rights for women, the reality is that they are not seen as equal. The case studies reveal that patriarchal society enforces rules and laws in such way that has detrimental effect on self-confidence of women, limit their access on resources and information, restrict their freedom of movement in the public place and thus keep them in a lower status than men. If numbers are indicative of progress, Maharashtra does not seem to fare badly in respect of women's representation in panchayats. The 50 per cent reservation has been largely successful in this State. As quantity itself is a quality the introduction of direct election to the reserved seats at local levels is undoubtedly a breakthrough. In no other way could these women in large numbers have moved in to these institutions and participated in them. Though improvements are clearly visible but still there is a gender imbalance that prevents elected women members to influence decisions. Low literacy levels, absence of education and limited or no exposure lead to a lack of confidence. As a result, women at local levels are unable to comprehend the true spirit of political decentralization and recognize the opportunities that it provides.

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04

Position of Women in Indian Society

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ABSTRACT:

The present study is related to status of women in Indian society from ancient days till today. It gives importance on the position of women in various fields like family life, social life and work situation. It highlights on female low literacy level of women, women's low nutritional status, women's role in decision making, their position as per Indian tradition etc. This paper also gives emphasis on number of women in total workforce, torture of them by men in family life, social life and in other fields where they are participants. Lastly it concludes on importance of women and role of society for the emancipation of women from male dominated society and their oppression and suppression.

Keywords:- Position, Women, Society
Women's position in ancient India.

Men and women are two basic components of our human society. Women constitute 48.47% of the India's total population. Constitutional provisions give stress on the quality of men and women. Art-14 stresses on men and women to have equal rights and opportunities in political, economic and social spheres. A woman also prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc. Women stresses on the renunciation of the practices derogatory to the dignity of women. Constitution gives equal importance to women's position and accorded equality to them. It is seen that where all citizens

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