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POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN HARYANA PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Women are integral part of society, they are essential for the existence of the world. Despite being an integral part and necessary for the existence of world their condition is not good since ancient times. It was assumed that they are inferior. They are still considered a weaker sex. They were discriminated in every sphere which is still continue. In order to improve their condition, a term empowerment was needed. Government made various provisions to empower them, 73rd amendment is one of the good steps taken by government of India to politically empower women. By this they will not only politically empowered but it will result into overall empowerment of women. This provide them 33% reservation at local level, by this Amendment women have come forward to join politics in a huge scale. The present study focused on political empowerment of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Haryana state of India. This describes the political representation of women in Haryana. Women in Haryana have crossed the limit of 33 % reservation and they have empowered but still there is a long way to go.

Keywords: women, Panchayati raj, empowerment, representation

INTRODUCTION

Women are important part of the society, but despite this they are not considered equal to men. They faced discrimination in society since their birth. A birth of girl child is not celebrated like a boy. Nature has made men and women equal but this society and patriarchal nature of society is responsible for the bad status of women, negative attitude of society pushed them on secondary place. After independence constitution of India, provide equality to both women and men. Various positive measures have been taken by the government from time to time to improve the condition of women. Various articles such as 14, 15, 15 (3),

16, 21, 23, etc. ensures gender equality, not only constitutional but various legal provisions have been made by the government to safeguard the interest of women. In the Lok Sabha in 1952, representation of women was only 4 %, only 24 women were there in Lok Sabha. In 2019 there are 78 women elected in parliament which is the 14.36 % of the total. Since then their representation increased from 5% to 14.36 % of the total. This is the highest percentage of women representatives till now. Although women constitute 48 % of the total population and their representation is very low at the highest temple of democracy. This ratio in decision-making is very disappointing. Women's reservation bill is still pending in parliament. These facts show that women need more positive action in favor of them, they should be empowered. The condition of women has been changed but still it is not much satisfactory. The issue of political empowerment of women came into forefront in 1995's Beijing conference. Women's political participation is very crucial for their overall development. Political participation means not only right to vote but they should have their share in decision-making at political level. Women should be politically empowered so that they can also contribute in the development of country.

Equal participation of both women and men is very vital not only for to maintain the democracy, justice and equality in society but it is also very crucial for the development of women. By looking at the bad status of women, a term empowerment was needed; it focused on access and share of women in resources and in decision-making process at all the levels. Women should have autonomy to do whatever they want; there should be no restrictions on women like men. If men can freely spend and live their life then women should also have right to do all that.

This is the need of the time to give equal opportunity to women so that they can live their life with dignity and honor. There should be absence of all those forces which are responsible for the bad status of women. Patriarchal nature of society is the main cause of women's inferior status. According to the census 2011, the sex ratio in Haryana is 879 as per 1000 men which was 861 in the year 2001. The literacy rate has increased by 67.91% (2001) to 76.64% In Haryana. This is a positive change in female literacy but the level of literacy is still not good today. Women and girl's condition are serious issue of concern in Haryana. Various societal norms are responsible for their low participation. Women face number of problems in the way of their participation in politics. These problems are: Patriarchal structure of society, low level of education, proxy problem, negative attitude of society towards women, dual burden of household work, unawareness, financially dependency on men etc.

73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act was passed in 1992 which provides 33% reservation to women at grass root level. After this, Haryana government passed Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. This was the significant step taken by government to empower women. More than a million of women as members and chairpersons came forward to take part in politics. The performance and election of women are different in various states.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Manohar K. Murali (1983),ⁱ This article “*socio-economic status of Indian women*” describes a study of Warangal district. Socio-economic status of women has been described in this book. It has been described that history tells us the class or group which plays the main role in productive forces, inevitably takes control of that production. In primitive societies, women played the main role in the production, but the invention of fire, weaponry and cattle rearing gave further impetus to the release of new productive forces. Women were confined to domestic spheres and no importance was given to their role which was played by her. Men played a major role in the family. This process was continued in feudal age also and women became a secondary citizen in the family.

Sen Sujata (2013),ⁱⁱ This book “*women rights and empowerment*” describes that despite many international agreements women’s condition still not impressive, they are still poor and illiterate, and have less access to property, education and employment. The author describes changing the status of women according to different periods of time and different evil practices such as sati, Jauhar, devadasi, child marriage etc. It describes the constitutional provisions after independence and said that condition of women has changed a lot in modern India, they have made wonderful strides towards equality in last decades, however; we still live in a community in which the value of females is measured in their physical presence, not their intellectual appearance. The economic and educational development of women with different problems which they suffer has shown i.e., crimes against women, sexual harassment, dowry, child marriage, domestic violence, trafficking. Political empowerment of women in rural India has been discussed and it describes that increased political participation of women has yielded a positive result. It describes women’s reservation bill that was passed by Rajya Sabha in 2010. After that various steps for empowerment have been discussed with employment and the environment. Gender bias and reproductive role of women has been explained. The study has proved that some rural women did have independent and positive views on contemporary issues. It was also analysed that the effect of mass media made a positive contribution on the lifestyle and their opinion on social issues.

Gull Raashida and Shafi Aneesa (2014),ⁱⁱⁱ This article “*Indian Women’s Movement after Independence*” describes that Indian women’s movement building on the 19th-century social reform movement progressed through the period of nationalism and freedom struggle towards the milieu of democracy which was established in India with the achievement of independence. The achievement of the constitutional guarantee of equal rights for women could not fully realize the feminist aims in India providing a new momentum to the Indian women’s movement. The paper tries to present a picture of how these debates and issues are shaping women’s question in India. The authors describe various women’s groups and organizations after independence. Authors also explained that there have been many debates going on around important questions and issues characterizing the feminist movement. Although feminist interventions relating to the

law have resulted in the passing of many laws (Domestic Violence Act in 2005, a law on sexual harassment in workplace etc.) feminists have recognized the inefficiency of the laws passed.

Marnie. S, Shaul (1982),^{iv} This article “*the status of women in local governments: an internal assessment*” describes that when women achieve an equal share of political power many things besides political have automatically changed profoundly. The author describes status of women, government policies and changing status of women, progress of women in gaining equal participation, barriers to equal participation by women and recommendation for increasing women’s participation in politics, and also describes that existence of quotas may lead to the belief that a woman is included only to satisfy the quota not because she has ability.

Hazarika Sujata. D, (2006),^v This article “*Political participation of women and the dialectics of 73rd Amendment*” is based on a study conducted from Feb 2004 to Dec 2004 in three districts of Assam. The study highlights gross unawareness and misconceptions regarding the Panchayati Raj institution and 73rd amendment. The author describes that primary objective to delineate political participation of women through democratic institution can be contained within the following issues such as awareness, decision-making, empowerment, participation and aspirations. It has been specified that Panchayati Raj should be able to change the governance in India. Women can now be chosen at the local level in unprecedented number as an outcome of this amendment.

Thanikodi and M Sugirtha (2007),^{vi} This article “*Status of women in politics*” explains that women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves underrepresented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. Authors describe the representation of women at cabinet level and sub-ministerial level and explained various obstacles faced by women and representation of women in politics in South Asia countries. It has been stated that quotas are the most effective tool for improving women’s representation in politics, there’s enormous need for an institutional mechanism which will promote the participation of women in the process of development. Women themselves have to be systemic and they must aim at challenging prevailing structure.

Mohd. Hanief Wani (2016),^{vii} “*Women’s participation in Lok Sabha from 1952 to 2009*” describes that women contestant has shown a largely increasing trend, the percentage of women contestant as well electorate is largely increased as compared to prior elections. In the general election of 1957 women’s voting percentage was 39% as compared to 56%. The general election of 2014 has witnessed the women’s increased record in voting percentage. women have always been a significant part of the politics of India but their participation in politics is still very low. The number of women politicians is insignificant as compared to men. This paper described the women as a contestant during various Lok Sabha election, a number of women ministers in the various cabinet of India and representation of women in Lok Sabha from 1952 to 2014.

B, Anju (June 2017)^{viii}. “*Empowerment of Women in Haryana*”, In the present study various parameters of women empowerment have explained by the author. This study is based on secondary data and analyzed the status of women in Haryana through various variables like women work force participation, literacy rate and sex ratio. Author explained various problems of women empowerment in Haryana as well as various programs which have been started by the centre government for the empowerment of women.

Goswami, Dipa (2018),^{ix} This article “Women Empowerment in the Context of Feminism & Ecofeminism -A Rational Approach” describes that Constitution of India theoretically includes equality and justice as a relevant feature towards the development of the society. Women are considered an essential part in economic, cultural, social and political position in the present time. The main reason for the low empowerment of women can be justified as a lack of education in India. The concept of women empowerment is explained. The author describes Eco feminist movement and specifies that the ecofeminist approach conjoined the movement of women and environmental crisis. Eco-feminism brings together elements of feminist and green movement, while at the same time, offers a challenge to both.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To know the political representation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Haryana.
- To study the political empowerment of women in Haryana.
- To know the impact of reservation on women by seeing their numbers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on secondary data collected from Government websites, journals and books. Data is collected from official website of Haryana Panchayati raj. The data related to Zilla Parishads, sarpanch and block Samiti is accessed from the government records. The study is exploratory cum descriptive in nature.

PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA:

Panchayati Raj is not a new concept. It has its root in ancient India. Article 40 of the constitution states that “the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government”. Panchayati raj got constitutional status in 1992 when 73rd amendment was passed. The structure of Panchayati Raj is not same in all the states in India, it is different according to state wise. States like Goa, Nagaland, Sikkim and have two-tier structure in Panchayats- some have 1 tier and others like Assam, Tripura have four tier structure of Panchayati Raj, and other states have three tier structure in the states. Like

- Village Level
- Block Level
- District Level

Their tiers are different according to their states, tiers- Zilla Parishad at District level,
Anchalik Parishad at Block level,
Anchal Panchayat
and Gram Panchayat and ADC etc.

Representation of women in politics is very poor. Their representation in parliament is only 14% and it can be found 36.87 % in Panchayats which can be seen better than parliament. The reservation bill in parliament is still pending. The percentage of women in panchayats has increased only just because of the reservation policy which was passed by 73rd amendment. This amendment provides 33 % reservation but some of the state gave 50% reservation to women. Bihar was first state to provide 50 % reservation to women at local level as per the state legislation. representation of women is averagely 42% in Haryana. Representation of women in Haryana according to different levels have been described in tables:

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table-1 Gender- Wise Classification of Zilla parshad in Haryana

female	181
Male	235
total	416

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-2 Education wise classification of female Zilla parshad in Haryana

Education	Numbers
5 th	0
8 th	35
10 th	73
12 th	28
Graduation and above	39
Total	181

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-3 Caste-wise classification of Female Zilla parshad in Haryana

Caste	Numbers
SC	50
BC+OBC	20
General+ OTH	111
total	181

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

At Zilla Parishad level 10 women belongs to SC, 3 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 22 belongs to general class have passed 8th class. 21 women belongs to SC, 9 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 43 belongs to general class have passed 10th class. 7 women belongs to SC, 1 woman belongs to BC+OBC, and 20 belongs to general class have passed 12th class. 11 women belongs to SC, 6 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 22 belongs to general are graduate or above. The average age of women is 33.

It has been analyzed that representation of women is 43% of the total at Zilla Parishad level. The education percentage of 8th passed is 9 %, 10th passed is 47 %, 12th passed is 18 %, 21 % representative are graduate or above. The representation of SC women is 39.02% of the total, the representation of BC+ Obc women is 11 % and general women candidate's percentage is 61.32 % at the Zilla Parishad level.

Table-5 Gender-wise classification of sarpanch in Haryana

female	2565
Male	3621
total	6186

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-4 Education-wise classification of female sarpanch in Haryana

Education	Numbers
5 th	0
8 th	832
10 th	1146
12 th	318
Graduation and above	245
Total	2565

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-6 Caste-wise classification of sarpanch in Haryana

Caste	Numbers
SC	600
BC+OBC	661
General	1304
Total	2565

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

The representation of women is 41.46 % at the sarpanch level, their average age is 32.

At sarpanch level 241 women belongs to SC, 207 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 384 belongs to general class have passed 8th class. 210 women belongs to SC, 301 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 635 belongs to general class have passed 10th class. 90 women belongs to SC, 78 woman belongs to BC+OBC, and 150 belongs to general class have passed 12th class. 56 women belongs to SC, 70 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 119 belongs to general class are graduate or above.

Table-9 Gender-wise classification of block Samiti in Haryana

female	1258
Male	1739
total	2997

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-8 Education- wise classification of female block Samiti in Haryana

Education	Numbers
5 th	0
8 th	334
10 th	633
12 th	206
Graduation and above	81
Total	1258

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-7 Caste-wise classification of block samiti in Haryana

Caste	Numbers
SC	379
BC+OBC	288
General	591
total	1258

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

The representation of women is 41.9 % at the Block samiti level, their average age is 31.

At block samiti level, 110 women belongs to SC, 91 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 133 belongs to general class have passed 8th class. there are total 633 women who have passed 10th class, out of them 182 women belongs to SC, 139 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 312 belongs to general class have passed 10th class. 72 women belongs to SC, 39 woman belongs to BC+OBC, and 95 belongs to general class have

passed 12th class. Out of 81 women, 12 women belongs to SC, 19 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 50 belongs to general class are graduate or above.

Table-10 Gender wise classification of Panch in Haryana

female	25495
Male	34941
total	60436

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-11 Education- wise classification of Panch in Haryana

Education	Numbers
5 th	3713
8 th	7116
10 th	11576
12 th	2174
Graduation and above	842
total	25495

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

Table-12 Caste-wise classification of Panch in Haryana

Caste	Numbers
SC	8365
BC+OBC	7008
General	10122
total	25495

Sources: <http://prielections.nic.in/>

The representation of women is 42 % at the Panch level in village, their average age is 31.

At Panch level, 3644 women belongs to SC, 27 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 46 belongs to general+ OTH class have passed 5th class, 2080 women belongs to SC, 2404 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 2632 belongs to general + OTH class have passed 8th class. 2070 women belongs to SC, 3602 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 5904 belongs to general class have passed 10th class. 453 women belongs to SC, 687 woman belongs to BC+OBC, and 1034 belongs to general class have passed 12th class. Out of 842 women, 110 women belongs to SC, 267 women belongs to BC+OBC, and 465 belongs to general +OTH class are graduate or above.

FINDINGS:

from the above-mentioned table, it has been analyzed that representation of women is less than 50 %. at all the levels.

- The representation of women is 43% of the total at Zilla Parishad level, their average age is 33.
- The representation of women is 41.46 % at the sarpanch level, their average age is 32.
- The representation of women is 41.9 % at the Block samiti level, their average age is 31.
- The representation of women is 42 % at the Panch level in village, their average age is 31.
- Except Panch no other women candidate was found 5th passed, all women were minimum 8th passed or above because of “Padhi Likhi Panchayat” criteria.
- No women candidate belongs to ST category, no one found transgender candidate.
- The representation of SC women is 39.02% of the total, the representation of BC+ Obc women is 11 % and general women candidate's percentage is 61.32 % at the Zilla Parishad level.
- The representation of SC women is 23% of the total, the representation of BC+ Obc women is 25.76% and general + OTH women candidate's percentage is 50 % at Sarpanch level.
- The representation of SC women is 32.81% of the total, the representation of BC+ Obc women is 27.48% and general + OTH women candidate's percentage is 39.70 % at panch level.
- The representation of SC women is 30.12% of the total, the representation of BC+ Obc women is 22.89% and general + OTH women candidate's percentage is 46.97 % at Block Samiti level.

CONCLUSION

In 2016-17 election of Haryana Panchayati Raj (PRIs), the state government introduced the education criteria in (PRIs) election. By the reservation policy thousand of women came forward to join politics who were never allowed to join it. Representation of women have increased at all the levels of Panchayati Raj. At all the levels in Haryana averagely 42 % women got a chance to take part in decision-making. It is a positive change in the direction of political empowerment of women. To improve the condition of women it is very significant to ensure their presence in political arena. By introducing education criteria, the demand of educated people has increased, people who are in general category but uneducated, they also filed nomination for their daughter daughter-in-law and wife. Result into women have crossed limits of 33% reservation by this. Not only this but other factors are also responsible for this such as positive attitude of society towards women. Women have been politically empowered but still more efforts need to be done to improve the condition of women.

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