

A study on women's reservation and participation in local self-government in Anand District

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ABSTRACT

Although ladies have created various developments, ladies are treated as subordinate to men. one in all the foremost necessary steps during this is that the 50% reservation of girls in all areas. The paper aims to grasp women's actual participation in native autonomy and the way reservation has helped them in it. From a total of a hundred ninety villages having ladies sarpanch, twenty-one villages were chosen simple random sampling methodology. The research is explanatory cum descriptive in nature and used the questionnaire as a tool of data collection. In General, we discover that social action implies that additional women enter politics however doesn't guarantee that ladies become active in politics and function non-appointive members. Male dominance, family support, lack of education, lack of awareness are major constraints behind less participation of girls. On the opposite facet, ladies are additionally creating their substitute politics by fighting all the odds, however, there's nonetheless way great distance to travel.

Keywords: Local self-government, participation, Reservation

Women represent 1/2 of the population. The issue of the political empowerment of girls has attracted international attention. The United Nations (UN) followed the Convention at the Political Rights of Women in 1952. UN has prepared four World Conferences on Women. Fourth changed into held in Beijing in 1995 and it declared that girl's same participation in choice making isn't always handiest a call for easy justice or democracy however also can be visible as an important circumstance for girls' pastimes to be taken into account. (N. Sanyal, A. Ghoshal, 2015).

The political repute of female implies a degree of equality and freedom loved through women in the sharing of strength and significance given through the society to the function of women withinside the political system. Equality and lively political participation are inseparable. The participation of women in the political area is essential to the development of women. Their political participation method now no longer bests the usage of the proper to vote, however additionally strength-sharing, co-decision-making, and co-policy-making in any respect stages of governance of the State. Women's identical repute in each sphere is inextricably connected to the

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country's development and development. (S Latif & N Khan, 2020). The political participation of ladies in India has been ignored even considering the fact that independence. Though our India has followed the democratic gadget of the presidency and the ladies represent 48.9 consistent with cent of the populace of India, however, their political participation may be very low. Due to diverse constraints, they couldn't occupy the positions of strength and count on management roles. Women's participation has been growing unexpectedly however it isn't always satisfactory. (Sadiq R & Rani S. 2020). They also are denying possibilities to take part withinside the administration, even withinside the making of choices that have an effect on their existence and welfare. (N. Sanyal, T. Fernandes, Y. Guntupalli, 2015).

The 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution have impacted almost 600 million Indian people in 500,000 villages. Interestingly the percent of girls at numerous tiers of the political hobby has risen from 4-5% to 25-40%. Both nationally in addition to on the country and nearby tiers girls in elected our bodies were only a few or even the ones who've been elected whilst found from nearer quarters present a complex picture (Chandra, 2007). Empowerment of girls is essentially the manner of upliftment of economic, social and, political fame of girls who're historically underprivileged ones in the society. It entails the construction up of a society in which girls can breathe without the concern of oppression, exploitation apprehension, discrimination, and the overall feeling of persecution which is going with being a lady in a historically male-ruled structure (Lal and Kumar, 2007).

Article 243D of the Constitution of India delivered thru above-referred to 73rd CAA presents that one-third of the full range of seats and workplaces of the Chairpersons in PRIs at every stage will be reserved for girls to be allocated via way of means of rotation to exceptional constituencies in a Panchayat. Such reservations of seats and workplaces of the chairpersons for girls also are in the reservations for SCs and STs in all three tiers of PRIs. That suggests now no longer much less than one-third of all seats and workplaces reserved for SCs and STs. Although the 73rd CAA offers for most effective 1/3 reservation for ladies in PRIs, as many as 19 States (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana) have raised reservation of seats and places of work of chairpersons to ladies to 50%. Efforts are direct to boom the reservation from 1/3rd to half throughout India. There are about forty-five lakh Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) in PRIs which represent 46.14% of general Elected Representatives (ERs). The State-smart info is to be had on the internet site of Ministry of Panchayati Raj, GOI ([https:// www.Panchayat.Gov.In/ladies-representation-inpris](https://www.Panchayat.Gov.In/ladies-representation-inpris)).

From the country's prime minister to pioneer Woman has proven she can do it all. In India, there are a variety of diverse women leaders from the national to the grassroots level. But this is a very small number. All the employment sectors are dominated by men, and getting into that is a major challenge for women. Women are advised to stay at home but she must still choose between family and work when she wants to come out. It has never been easy for women to get a place in politics. But when it comes to local self-government or Panchayat, this is more complicated. Since she does not get support from family or friends, or she has to be a part of the proxy. But some women battle against the traditional social norms and show leadership and governance is not just for men.

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Objectives:

- To study impact of reservation on the political participation of women in local self-government in Anand district
- To examine whether there is an active participation of women in decision making process in panchayati raj institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sadhu et al. (2014) did study on Factors influencing participation of women in panchayati raj institutions. Assess the level of knowledge about the duties and responsibilities of the elected women and different development programs and Examine the role of women elected officials in decision-making and their issues. The other objective was to examine factors influencing women's involvement in the panchayati raj institution.⁴¹ Elected women representatives Purposively adopted from two blocks of Karauli district of Rajasthan. Interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection. Study concluded that the goal of empowering women can't be accomplished just by giving reservations, while the other social and demographic factors also influence the EWR to engage and actively function in local self-governance. It cannot be claimed on the basis of the present study that women are categorically empowered, but it cannot be denied that they have acquired a certain degree of authority and trust as a direct result of the Gram panchayat women's reservation. Some supplementary policies should provide women with greater self-confidence, capacity for negotiation and dispute resolution so that they can lift their voices in decision-making processes.

Agnihotri et. Al. (2014) did study on Women Empowerment through reservation in panchayati raj Institutions in Himachal Pradesh. The study was undertaken in Shimla and Solan Districts of Himachal Pradesh. The main objective of the study participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and to study various provisions of reservation in Himachal Pradesh. The other objective was to know the socio-economic background of the women and to know the awareness level of women about their power, responsibilities, functions under Himachal Pradesh Panchayati raj Act. Total 420 samples were taken for data collection, in which female members of Gram Panchayat, Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti of both the Districts and 200 General Public respondents. In her study she found that Women mostly works as proxies and male intervention is main reason behind it. So, women are unable to perform their duties. Husband of the elected women always intervenes in functioning and decision making also. Study also found that awareness is very low among the rural women about politics. Most people have negative opinion regarding women's leadership. Reservation is limited, so majority of male members can easily dominate the women. the study concluded that with the establishment of the panchayati raj act, women gets the opportunity to come forward and participate in politics and prove her worth. For the success of the act and provisions for women government should provide extra financial, administrative and political assistance to women.

Ray (2015) published paper on Political Empowerment of Women in Panchayati Raj (Odisha's Initiative Towards a Gender Just Rural Local Governance). Study concluded that, it can be said that the provision of women's reservations in the Panchayati Raj Institution has brought about significant changes in rural women's status, including empowerment, self-confidence, political awareness and identity affirmation. However, in Odisha as found by several studies that the prevalence of proxy involvement, the Sarpanch Pati being practically "active member" of the

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Panchayats exposes the ground reality of true empowerment of women in the state's PRIs. Women must be able to hold open meetings, have faith in other leaders, and carry out their growth plans. In particular, Odisha still has a great deal to do to make grass root democracy fully immune to gender. Simple affirmative action by legislation won't fix the issue, the need of the hour is a barrier-free climate.

Bedi (2015) did study on An Assessment of Empowerment of Women Sarpanch through Panchayati Raj Institutions in Jaipur District. The main objective of the study was to find the level of women's knowledge about their powers and duties as sarpanch and determine the extent to which sarpanch women exercise their powers and carry out duties. Other objective of the study Understanding the perceived shift in women sarpanch's decision-making power at household level. Multistage sampling was adopted for research. 117 participants were sarpanch women, their heads of families and co-workers working with sarpanch. And in each village, approximately 6-10 villagers. Findings of the study revealed that villagers accepted that women's sarpanch remained absent for meetings and lack of literacy is the biggest obstacle in the decision-making process that made women fail. Study concluded that after becoming sarpanch there was a positive change in women's power structure at household level. The improvement in decision-making, however, remains inadequate due to low level of awareness about PRI rules and regulations, low level of education, first-time entrants into politics that affect women decision-making capacity. It isn't enough to merely include democratic laws, constitutional protections and freedoms. It's only through a new way of thinking, specific critical perspectives, a logical stream of thoughts regardless of gender that we can achieve any degree of change.

Sahu et al. (2018) published paper on Women's education and political participation. The research was motivated by the following objectives; the first was to evaluate the political engagement and decision-making of women. Second, what the incentives for women to engage in politics the third goal was to assess the extent of women's political engagement and decision-making incentives. The findings showed that women from Cameroon's South West region are relatively well exposed to formal education as only 4.1 per cent of the sampled population did not have formal education. The study revealed that the higher the level of formal education for women, the more their propensity to engage in politics in electoral voting and the occupation of political post through elections or nominations at all levels of government. Conclusively arguing that and better education makes women more interested in politics is hard. In many other main respects political institutions that differ from other social institutions in the manner in which they select participants. Increased level of education will increase actual political participation of women in politics.

METHODOLOGY

The study has used Explanatory cum Descriptive research design in nature. Present study was conducted in Anand district of Gujarat village. Out of 350 Gram panchayats in Anand district 190 were having women sarpanch. From which 21 villages were randomly selected for study. The research is explanatory cum descriptive in nature and used questionnaire as a tool of data collection. The researcher will use the results for understanding that how reservation is helping women for participating in local self-government and increasing confidence in women.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Women as a subordinate to men at home, work place and in politics has its roots in patriarchal system where men are the natural masters of women. It is becoming obstacle to gender equality and equity. Thus, participation of women in politics is becoming a challenge. From taking decision to be in politics and working on it, taking actions, contesting elections, managing finance, convincing family members and many more obstacles women are facing for making her stand in democratic system. The study had immense importance in now days when women issues are in center of national and international scenario. Women representatives will affect the local bodies directly or indirectly. In a male dominated society, societal norms, orthodoxy, custom ridden society and illiteracy in society; how women raise their voice and came out. It is very important to study and analyze actual participation of women.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to their education.

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	13	61.9
SSC	5	23.8
HSC	1	4.8
Graduation	2	9.5
Total	21	100.0

The distribution of respondents according to their educational qualification are presented in table 1 and figure 1. The data indicates that majority of the respondents are illiterate which is 61.9 percent. Only 23.8 percent women had completed their SSC. Only 9.5 percent (N=2) had completed their graduation.

Education plays a major role in everyone's life.

Shanu et al. (2018) examined in their study women's education and political participation are corelated with each other. Increased level of education will increase actual political participation of women in politics. Higher level of participation of women will give attention to gender equality in socio-economic policy.¹ In villages, people are not giving importance to women's education.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according their opinion about Reservation Has helped Women in Active Participation in the Democratic System

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Disagree	6	28.6
Neutral	3	14.3
Agree	12	57.1
Total	21	100

The distribution of respondents according to their views on reservation helped them for participating in politics showed in table 2. The data illustrates that 57.1 percent (N=12) agreed that reservation has helped them for making their stand in politics. Through participation they get respect from their family and relatives. While 28.6 percent (N=6) disagreed that reservation has not helped them for making their stand in politics. 14.3 percent (N=3) neutral about reservation

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helped women in active participation in democratic system. Because they said that in many cases, women work as proxy member. So, reservation only cannot help women for participation in politics.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their opinion regarding dominance of male in decision making process

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Disagree	6	28.6
Agree	15	71.4
Total	21	100

The distribution of respondents according to their opinion regarding dominance of male in decision making process presented in table 3. The data shows that majority which is 71.4 percent (n=15) Agreed that male dominate the decision-making process. While 28.6 percent (n=6) disagreed about dominance of male in decision making process.

Table 4: Showing Whether Respondents Contested Elections Only Because Their Ward was Reserved for Women

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	90.5
No	02	9.5
Total	21	100

In regards to the contesting elections only because ward was reserved for women, the data is given in table 4. The data indicates that majority of respondents which is 90.5 percent (n=19) agreed that they contested elections only because their ward is reserved for women. While 9.5(N=2) denied about contesting elections only because their ward was reserved.

Government reserves seats for women so that they can participate in politics. Women are contesting elections only because male member of their family wants to. In most of the cases women are only proxy members.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to their views on Influence of Higher Caste in Decision Making in Gram Sabha Meeting

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	57.1
No	9	42.9
Total	21	100

The distribution of respondents according to views on influence of higher caste in decision making presented in table 5. The data shows that majority respondents which is, 57.1 percent (n=12) responded that there is influence of higher caste in decision making. While 42.9 percent(n=9) said that there is no influence of higher caste people influence in decision making.

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Caste system is in practice till date, women are yet subordinate of male. Being a women sarpanch caste is major obstacle because getting respect and taking decision is really difficult. While it is always easy for man from higher caste. Knowing influence of higher caste gives information about how women is getting respect and taking decision in such an oppressive environment.

CONCLUSION

Affirmative action suggests that more females become involved in elections, but it does not guarantee that they become active in politics and serve as elected officials. The hierarchical caste structure, traditional norms, social taboos, surrounded by patriarchal framework, have greater consequences in women's decision-making capacity both at home and at PRIs. The power dynamic of women at the household level changed significantly after becoming sarpanch. This allows women to be accepted by families, peers, and community, but there is yet a long way to go. Low level of education, lack of awareness regarding their rights and roles, male dominance these all were major constrains of female participation.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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