**CHAPTER – I**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Democracy applies to all individuals on an equal basis. In India, all citizens, irrespective of their backgrounds and categories are given certain rights, which enable them to render an effective contribution towards development of the nation. Women have been excluded from different walks of life and they are discriminated against in every society. The discriminatory treatment against women is high among the economically weaker sections of the society, as compared to wealthy upper caste families. Women are excluded from political participation as well. The United Nations, observes that for the attainment of true democratic spirit, political participation of women is regarded to be of utmost significance. Making provision of equal treatment to women in political participation is considered to be meaningful and effective and should begin from the grassroots level.

To perform their role effectively in the political sphere, it is vital for women to generate awareness and be informative in terms of various aspects. This includes, good decision making, conducting an analysis of the areas that need to be improved within the regions, and working to their best abilities towards promoting well-being of the communities and nation. One of the aims of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act is to accomplish this purpose. Because of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the question of political empowerment of women in rural India has assumed considerable significance.

Political participation has been characterised as the civic duty. It is the sign of political health and the best method of ensuring that the methods and practices that are essential are not neglected. In every society, political power is monopolized by a few. The incumbents of political authority in every system are found to be keen in ensuring the political participation of the individuals. Therefore, by the involvement of individuals in the matters of state, political participation promotes stability and order by reinforcing the legitimacy of political authority. The term, political participation applies to all activities of theindividuals that are different from the political system. Participation may be observed from two perspectives, i.e. intensity and width. Intensity is referred to how profoundly a person is involved in the issue and to what extent, he would go towards the achievement of its objective. They also comprise of voluntary activities, which individuals are required to put into practice in the selection of rulers. Furthermore, voluntary activities are put into operation, directly or indirectly in the formulation of public policy.

The Constitution of India (Article 15) attempts to remove gender inequalities based religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and enshrining fundamental rights for all citizens.It is unfortunate that women have not substantially availed of the constitutional provisions. Women still have only de jure rather than de facto access to these rights. Forget about the gender parity at all levels, India fails to become a nation wherein women have proportional representation in legislation. Since independence, the Parliament hasn’t seen a fair percentage of women members who can represent the almost half of the population of the nation.No one can deny the fact that greater participation of women in the political process would havepositive impact on economic and social emancipation of women. Although of large number of women vote in the country, then too only a few of them reaches to the top levelin political parties. On the other hand, in few cases women have held the posts of President and Prime Minister as well as Chief Ministers of various states in India, the country ranks 145thin terms of representation of women in Parliament.

In the 21st century, women are facing obstacles in their political participation worldwide. The socio-economic factors emerge as an obstacle to the advancement of women. According to the report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017 (The IPU is the international organization of Parliaments which was established in 1889), worldwide female representation rate is 23.6per cent. This minimum representation shows that Women need long distance to achieve equality in politics. For the equal participation of women in policy-making to promote gender fair government efforts are being made to increase participation of women such as legislative measures. According to the famous philosopher Aristotle, "In the differences between sexes, men are considered better and more in nature, while women are underestimated". The gender quota is being implemented at a remarkable rate throughout the world. It is seen as an important policy measure to increase the reach of women in decision-making bodies. The basic purpose of the quota system is to promote participation in women's government. In order to involve women in politics, in a political situation, the quota is applied temporarily until the barriers to women's political participation are removed. Many developing countries in the world have ensured quota atnational or sub-national level so that gender can be ensured. In many developed countries, political parties have voluntarily adopted quota, women can be helpful in political empowerment.

Women will get empowerment in politics only if women getreservation in politics. Social barriers can also be overcome when the roots of women are raised and activated in politics. For the participation of the Women Organization, the Government of India has not taken any concrete steps. This change of political development is visible in the form of political power. Instead of women, the place is reserved for political parties. The political uplift of women is not the basis of women's economic status. Women have long waited for politics to come because the majority of parties do not give a chance to women in politics.

This research intends to highlight that political systems are not a socio-political basis, and therefore there is a need to develop indigenously. According to the law, the numerical strength of women is not a sign of quality but there is a difference in their effectiveness and effectiveness. Due to uneven socio-economic development in rural and urban areas, women's position in India is odd. Generally, women's status is weak compared to men.Besley, T., & Case, A. (2000) show that “the fractions of women in t he upper and lower state houses are highly significant predictors of a state's workers' compensation policy”.Chattopadhyay, R., &Duflo, E. (2004) show that “the reservation of one-third of the seats for women in the Panchayats (local governments) of West Bengal and Rajasthan has a positive impact on investment in infrastructures relevant to women's needs”. In most societies, the activities of men and women are divided outside and inside ofthe home. Therefore, the social mobility of women is restricted and controlled. It is observed that men are given better education to compete. Women have become dependent on men due to lack of resources outside the house, and hence, in the social, economic and political areas, men become the basis of power. The role of women in the formation of economic and social policies is negligible. Due to being away from women's decision-making bodies, they do not get any chance to raise their concerns or promote their participation in politics. Men dominate the system of governance in India. It is compulsory for women to claim their share of women's empowerment.

**CHAPTER – II**

**PROBLEM STATEMENT**

**RESEARCH PROBLEM**

In India, with advancements taking place and with the advent of globalization, there has been an increase in the participation of women within the political sphere. The participation of women within the political sphere enables them to acquire an efficient understanding of the problems and challenges, which need to be overcome for leading to progression of the country. When women render a significant contribution in political participation, then it is vital for them to possess the essential skills and abilities. The most important aspect is, they need to be aware of the strategies and approaches to promote well-being of the community and nation as a whole. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper include, meaning and significance of political participation, the participation of women in politics: historical framework, modes of political participation, variables of political participation, measurement framework, empowerment of women through political participation and recommendations.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Political participation of women in any country gives an overview of how women are treated in society. The development of any country also depends on the equal participation of men and women. Since women’s presence is seemed to be low in Indian politics, it is the duty of every human being to make them aware of their rights and motivate them for participating in mainstream politics. The constitution of India not only guarantees equality in society but also suggests states to make special provisions for women. Women still are fighting for equal status in society. Because of their low representation in Indian politics, their issues and problems are generally unseen and unnoticed. To have strong democratic governance, women’s equal participation is must and therefore their contribution to this processes needs to be analyzed in the appropriate context by the media. There cannot be a real democracy if the voices and issues of women that constitute half the population of the country are ignored or sidelined. This paper analyzes the role of women in politics and also analyzes whether or not women’s voices and issues are articulated to the public as matters of importance.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

* To identity the indicators and substantiate the existence of disparity and disadvantage women face in their political participation.
* To highlight the causes and barriers that limit women’s political participation and its effect on women
* To identify the lacunance in the initiatives of the state and evolve strategies to enhance the involvement of women in all activities of the political process.

**HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

* Political participation ofwomen is affected by age and marriage.
* The socioeconomic status contributes towards their visibility in political activities.
* Women coming from political families show more interest and greater political consciousness than others
* Activity of the Women Councillor has been profound influence by the husband in case she is married.
* There has been improvement in the status of women inside the family as well as in the locality

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study mainly concentrated on exploring women of Kannurand their political participating. The study highlighted women’s unrest and their demand for reservation in politics. The research was framed to study dissatisfaction of women regarding various problems they face in their political career and administrations apathy to these problems. The women organize themselves under one umbrella to put forward their demands in the form of demonstration, meetings etc.

**DATA SOURCES Sources of Data**

Survey method is employed to collect the data from the SHG members. The data used for the present study are primary in nature. So an interview schedule is prepared and applied on the basis of the objectives of the study. Secondary data were also collected for the study.

**Primary Data**

The required primary data are collected from the selected respondents with the help of a comprehensive, pre-tested questionnaire through personal interview method.

**Secondary Data**

Secondary data were collected from the various sources like published thesis, journals, websites etc.

**TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The data were collected through a structured questionnaire.

**TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS**

Simple statistical tool like percentages and averages were used for analyzing the collected data to derive conclusion. Collected data were tabulated and diagrams and charts were used to represent the data.

Questionnaire Design:

Aproperly structured series of questions were framed to collect information from individual women actively participating for various political parties. All the respondents were enrolled as a member in their respective political party. All the questions in were structured in a systematic and in a proper manner.

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

* The sample size limited to Kannur district only. So generalization is not possible.
* The information given by the respondent may be based some of them might not be interested to given correct information
* Time constraints
* Cost constraints.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Vicky Randall in ‘Women and Politics’16 has made an in-depth study of the extent of women’s participation in grass root politics, less conventional politics, emphasizing on adhoc political participation, as also an analytical dissection of women’s political attitudes, their moralistic bias, conservatism as also their personalization of politics. Determinants of political behaviour, is studied in the backdrop of childhood socialization, to provide a logical basis to political attitudes.

In Women in Indian Politics edited by Niroj Sinha17 the editor has emphasized, conventional aspect of politics, as also the social mindset which retards participation. The concept of participation has also been analytically dissected. Chandrakala Padia in the same book has dealt effectively with the role of women as voters in India. The impact of women on electoral politics constitutes a major strand of her work.

**‘Women’s Empowerment through political participation in India’, KuldeepFadia’ –2013.**

The researcher Kuldeep Fadia explains that women’s empowerment has been advocated throughout history in almost in all societies for a variety of reasons. At International level leaders accepted women’s vital role in achieving sustainable development and acknowledged that women’s rights are human and headed the evidence of widespread violence against women. For social and political enhancement government should recognize gender equality as a prerequisite for the achievement for political participation, productive employment, social integration and economic development. World conference on women held in various countries insisted on full equality of men and women which contributed to the progressive empowering the legal, economic, social and political dimensions of the position of women in society. Women have achieved significant development in many societies, still women concerns are given second priority almost everywhere.

**‘Women’s Participation in Electoral Politics in India: Silent Feminization’, Praveen Rai, South Asia, Research Journal, Sega Publication, New Delhi, 2017.**

In this research article the author makes a comparative study of women’s political participation as votes, members of political parties, their position and shows substantial increase in political participation of the one hand and continued under political representation of women in legislative bodies. Imbalanced representation of women in India exists not only in Parliament and Assemblies at National and State levels but also in the governments executive and Judiciary branches. Analysis of parliamentary shows the most of the cabinet ministers posts portfolios are occupied by men. This prominent marginalization of women is due to some extent from the inherent exposure of political party internal competition. Which basically follows the method of traditional patriarchal and male dominating in nature. At most all the political parties at both national and regional levels practice to discriminate against women political participation not only in terms of selection of candidates for electoral politics but also at the time of allotment of portfolios and decision making process.

This research qualitatively determines views of theorist on electoral process in India and participation of women. It is argued that women is deliberately excluded by men from shaping political power equal with men due to societal circumstances based on male patriarchy and dominance. On the other hand it is again argued that there is increased participation of women in politics which includes both votes and women’s sharing of political power at grass-root levels reveal that political participation in India is not considered as gender-exclusive but now it is marked as inclusive. Women’s participation in political process has increased due to strength and determination of women’s movement in different parts of India which includes from grass root level to national level. Women’s participation in political structure is increasing due to government regulated quotas, in voting patterns, active participation in politics and decision making process and women’s access to holding positions in public office. The level of women’s political awareness, commitment and involvement in electoral politics is gradually increasing day by day.Women’s autonomy and independence in electoral behaviors, the challenges and barriers act as impediments for participating as active political participants.

**‘Women’s Political Participation in India’, Shiva Chakravarti Sharma, The Journal of the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration at the George Washington University, 2016.**

The author strongly reveals that in India political participation of women is in deep increasing but it has not translated into women holding position in state and national parliaments. The percentage is comparatively very less of elected women members in the parliament. Absence of women in politics is not only the picture in India but it is also seen all over the world. This research article emphasizes on women’s political participation in electing leaders and to be leader. Measures of women’s political empowerment should encourage women’s active participation in interest groups and grass root activities. In India figures shows increased political empowerment of women at the same time women should hold official political positions, formulating federal and national policies. Various government policies and programmes that are directly related to women are formulated and implemented through federal and national assemblies and at higher women’s participation becomes essential. In terms of women’s political participation India ranks high in the global gap index but remains far from ideal in state and national assemblies. Efforts should be put to develop measures that aim to improve women’s political participation to progress towards more equitable governing structures.

**‘Political Participation of Women: A case study in India’, Anuradha Chadha, Ontario International Development Agency, 2014.**

The Research paper the women empowerment through its political participation. Due to various reasons realizing women’s subjugation and subordination which emerge d the need for affirmative discrimination against women in general. The objective of this research paper is to support and encourage the implementation of the women’s political reservation bill. The motive is to initiate for eradicating corruption, criminalization and communalization of politics. It also aims at enforcing rules and regulation of funding expenses incurred for election campaigns and creating awareness in the society in a manner to inculcate the values of gender equality and justice. Political participation is not limited to only exercising the right to vote, but also power sharing, actively participating in decision making process, policy making at all levels of state and national governance empowerment of women means giving powers to those who are lacking in power and position and those who are over represented amongst the poor section of society. Provisions for women under the Indian Constitution mentions provisions of gender equality. The study depicts the historical and current political status of women at national and international level. At international level also a number of rules, regulations and traties are made relating to political empowerment of women majority of the nations all over the world have ratified the importance of women’s political participation and made them significant part of their laws aiming at the progress and growth of women. For women’s empowerment government in India has taken various legal, social and economic measures and tried to infuse a new confidence in women by providing special provisions for them which worked like a powerful revolution against the male dominating attitude of the society. The Constitution of India is a National Charter for abolishing inequalities and injustice in respect of women who remained suppressed, suffered perpetual discrimination and age old injustice.

**‘Women’s Political Participation in India’, Vijaya Kumari and K. Gangadhara Rao. Internatiolnal Global Journal for Research Analysis, Vol-3, 2014.**

In this research article the researcher highlighted political activism of women in elections. Women are certainly marginalized in electoral politics and this problem is deeply imbibed in party system and it is related to imbalanced gender power relations. Women rarely play any role in structuring policies and strategies in political parties and are assigned duties related to women’s issues and encouraging them if needed for electoral benefits for their parties. In electoral politics women continued to be under – represented state and national levels, though their participation as voters has taken a quantum leap. Therefore reservation policy for women in politics becomes essential and by giving reservation women have developed a sense of sharing power with men equally. Reservation has benefited women in many ways and has provided much needed momentum which resulted in upsurge of women’s political participation. Women’s political participation and gender politics is mainly divided over the question of affirmative action for women in the state legislatures and parliament.

**‘Media Analysis of Women’s Participation in Politics’. ShafqalMunir, Hassan Shehzabi and Aoun Sahi, Journal of Mass Communication &Journalizm, 2014**.

Justification of this research reveals that the media portrait’s the already existing stereotypical character of women with the emerging political profile of women belonging to different political parties representing theme as an ideal to be following by other women in terms of projecting their talents and political knowledge and should not focus and waste time projecting their lifestyle. Women’s political participation provides a well researched and thought provoking policy position that the frequency of media coverage of women’s active participation in policies has increased. But the increased media coverage cannot be predicted into an acceptance of women’s active participation in politics. It is a baseline study that sets a new trend in further media research.

**CHAPTER – III**

**THE STUDY**

The data on political participation of women is of immense use for planners and policy makers which helps them to evolve better schemes and programs. Women participation in local level politics brings viewpoints which are essential for a holistic development of the society. The quantitative data on women participation is easy to measure and India has a long history of recording gender statistics for political participation. The challenge is to measure the actual participation of women and to filter out the problem of proxy participation which may be prevalent at the grass root level. Efforts are being undertaken to devise measures which would give a truer picture of women’s participation in local level politics.

**INTRODUCTION**

True democracy is a system which in Abraham Lincolns words, is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. While most of the democracies have given a system which has government elected by all the sections of societies, it is debatable whether the government comprises of all the diverse sections and importantly whether the government works for all the people of the democracy. In this context, the problem of low participation of women is of special concern for democracies and without changing that true democracy can never be achieved.

Women’s participation in decision-making is essential for women’s interests to be incorporated into governance. It has been widely experienced that governance structures which do not provide for ad- equate participation of women, often suffer from state interventions which are neither inclusive nor democratic. Including women, especially in local governments is an essential step towards creating gender equal opportunities and gender sensitive policies. Since women have different needs and per- spectives on social and political issues, it is important to involve women in governments to incorporate all of the societal viewpoints in policy and decision-making processes. Women are actively involved in household and community work and hence well aware of real issues faced by common people. This gives them insight and perspective which can be instrumental in sustainable overall development.

The presence of women in local governments serves as an encouragement for other women to enter diverse professions and leads to breaking stereotypes of women’s roles in society and public space. People had gained confidence in women as good public administrators and local government represen- tatives after seeing women making a positive difference in other people’s life. The society acknowledges the sincerity and commitment of women to their duties and their resistance to criminalization of politics.

The measurement of women political participation is essential to identify the need of policy intervention to improve the same. India had understood the need to record gender statistics on political participation since its independence. The process of capturing women participation at the local level is an evolving area and efforts are being done to improve the present infrastructure.

**WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIAN POLITICS: HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The status of women in India has seen many ups and downs since ancient times - from at par status in ancient history to be in veils (Parda System) during the Medieval period. In the post independent India, the status of women regained its strength and has been on a rise ever since. Women in post- independent India have been participating in almost all types of economic activities, day-to day house- hold chores, voting for a better governance and also in active politics. India has elected a woman prime minister, Indira Gandhi, and a woman president, Pratibha Patil. In the present central government, women comprise roughly quarter of the Indian cabinet with portfolios like external affairs, commerce and human resource development. At the ground level, India has a significant proportion of women in local level politics which has been achieved by reserving seat for women.

**Indian Freedom Movement**

Women participated in the freedom movement with true spirit and undaunted courage and faced various tortures, exploitations and hardships to earn us freedom. Many great Indian women like Rani Lakshmi Bai, Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Vijayalakmi Pundit, Annie Besant need no introduction for their dedication and undying devotion to the service of India. Indian women who joined the national movement were initially from educated and liberal families. All changed with the advent of Gandhi who converted the freedom struggle into a mass movement involving all sections of society. He understood that true freedom cannot be achieved if all the sections of the society are not truly rep- resented. His most successful campaign against the imperial rule was fought on the issue of salt tax which brought Indian women to the forefront. Local issues started getting debated and women took center stage in this regard.

**Women Reservation Bill**

Post Gandhi, India experienced centralization of planning which resulted in higher inequality in political decision making at the various levels. While Government was deeply concerned of issues of gender equality, women were not always a part of such decision making. Although, India has seen women participating in politics as the longest serving Prime minister, as chief ministers of various states, members in national parliament and state legislative assemblies in large numbers, yet the occurrence of such events has not been commensurate to their population.

In order to enable better women participation in active politics, authorities had been trying to put in reservation for women but have not been successful in true terms due to non-support from some of the regional parties.

Back in history, one of the prominent member of freedom struggle, Sarojini Naidu rejected reser- vation for women, citing that women are not week, timid, meek. She claimed that the demand for granting preferential treatment to women is an admission on her part of her inferiority and there has been no need for such a thing in India as the women have always been by the side of men.

The issue of women’s reservation again came to limelight in 1973 with voices recommending reservation for women in at least one third of the seats and eventually statutory women’s panchayats at the village level were recommended to take care of the neglect of women in rural development programs through 73rd & 74th constitutional amendments in 1993.

Women’s Reservation Bill or the Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, is a pending bill in India which proposes to reserve 33 per cent of all seats in the Lower house of Parliament of India, and in all state legislative assemblies for women. The seats to be reserved in rotation will be determined by draw of lots in such a way that a seat shall be reserved only once in three consecutive general elections. Women’s Reservation Bill, was passed in Rajya Sabha on March 9, 2010 But Lok Sabha could not clear the bill due to resistance of some regional parties on certain provisions of the bill.

**Panchayati Raj Reforms**

Indian Constitution made provisions relating to the establishment, powers, and responsibilities of the panchayats through the 73rd Amendment in 1993 with three tier system, viz, panchayats (village governance bodies) at the village, intermediate and district levels in every state, except provision of skipping intermediate level in states with less than twenty lakh population. The states have been em- powered through law for the composition of panchayats. The reform provided for reservation of both seats and leadership positions for the Scheduled Castes, tribes, and women. A normal duration of five years for panchayats has been provided with the authority of preparing the electoral rolls and con- ducting elections in the state Election Commission. The state government is also empowered to make laws providing criteria for disqualification of candidature from panchayat elections and also to legis- late with respect to maintenance of accounts by the panchayats and their audit. Apart from providing political empowerment, the Panchayati Raj reforms endow the panchayats with necessary powers and authority to enable them to function as institutions of self-government and for the devolution of pow- ers and responsibilities upon panchayats at the appropriate level for economic development and social justice under their jurisdiction. This has helped all the sections of the society particularly the weaker sections including women to take part and to share the responsibility of governance and development at least at the sub-district levels. As the legislation provides for reservation for women, the number of women elected representative at local level has sharply increased. India has been maintaining the record of number of women representatives at the panchayat level and statistics indicate that 30-50% of local level elected representatives are women.

**CURRENT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK**

**Introduction to Indian Electoral System**

India is the largest democracy in the world with a three layer governance structure: central govern- ment, state government and city/village government. The election to all these three is done by an independent body of Election Commission which is constituted separately at state and central level.

At the national level, the head of government, prime minister, is elected by the members of Lok Sabha, lower house of the parliament of India. All members of Lok Sabha except two, who can be nominated by president of India, are directly elected through general elections which take place every five years, by universal adult suffrage. Unlike most of the other democracies of the world, India gave women voting right since the first election. Members of Rajya Sabha, upper house of Indian parliament, are elected by an Electoral college comprising of Members of Lok Sabha, elected members of the legislative assemblies of states and Union Territories of India. Similar structure is in place in various states of India with two bodies called Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad. Data of successive central and state elections show that Indian democracy is truly representative of women when it comes to their participation in elections but it significantly lacks women participation as legislature and executive.

With the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Indian Constitution, a third tier of governance was created. It has helped in providing new opportunities for local level planning, effective implementation and monitoring of various social and economic development programs in the country.

**Electoral Statistics in India**

An independent Election Commission has been established under the Constitution in order to carry out and regulate the holding of elections in India. The Election Commission is responsible for the conduct of elections to parliament and state legislatures and to the offices of the President and Vice-President.

The Election Commission prepares, maintains and periodically updates the Electoral Roll, which shows who is entitled to vote, supervises the nomination of candidates, registers political parties, monitors the election campaign, including candidates funding. It also facilitates the coverage of the election process by the media, organizes the polling booths where voting takes place, and looks after the count- ing of votes and the declaration of results. All this is done to ensure that elections can take place in an orderly and fair manner.

All the statistics for the elections is primarily maintained by the Election Commission with information on both the voter participation as well as the information on elected representatives. The electoral rolls in India are compiled based on a four stage classification. The entire country has been divided into 543 parliamentary constituencies. Each parliamentary constituency has several assembly con- stituencies in it. An assembly constituency is further divided into Wards. Each Ward has multiple Poll stations (PS) which are practically smallest manageable unit for conducting voting in that area. The information on voting pattern is accumulated at the polling station level with a field that includes gender information. Extensive data has been captured since the first election which has been made public through digitalization. This allows the government to identify political participation of women in elections at the level of polling station which typically is of the order of 1000 voters.

**Political Participation of Women**

Political participation of women can be measured in three different dimensions: their participation as a voter, their participation as an elected representative and their participation in the actual decision making process. The first of these two dimensions have been measured and reported by the Election Commission from the first election which was held in 1952 with few exceptions. The information on the women participation as a voter is recorded at a booth level which is the smallest possible entity in Indian electoral system. Fig 2 shows the trend of women participation in successive elections.

With the electoral reforms that have taken place which include the recording of elections at sensitive places, information on women participation can be relied upon with a high degree of confidence. This information is not only helpful for the electoral process but can also be used by the policymakers to identify areas with lesser women participation and take remedial actions. As an example, government can open a girls school where the difference between men voting percentage and women voting percentage is more than 20%.

The second aspect of women becoming elected representative is also recorded at all the three levels. While India has a good record of women holding all the important posts in the country, the overall participation of women in politics is not very satisfactory.

At the local level, women participation as an elected representative is high primarily because of the reservation introduced for women as per the 73rd amendment in the Indian constitution. Concerns have been raised over the genuine participation of women as an elected representative. It has been reported that the men have been ruling with their women as a proxy and presently there are not many robust techniques to identify genuine women participation. Table 1 shows the voting percentage of women in the most recent Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and Panchayat elections.

**Statistics for Local Level Development**

The National Statistical Commission (NSC), headed by Dr. C. Rangarajan, while reviewing the Na- tional Statistical System made a number of recommendations regarding the basic statistics for local level planning in its report. It stressed on need to develop a system of regular collection of data on a set of core variables. With a view to conceptualize the system, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) constituted a high level expert committee headed by a Member, Planning Commission in 2004. The report of the expert committee submitted to the Government of India in 2006 provided a broad framework for undertaking a schematic approach to get the data collected and compiled through the PRI mechanism for the rural areas. The Ministry on the advice of the Planning

Commission launched a nation-wide pilot scheme in 2008-09 to establish the availability of desired data from identifiable sources with a view to study the need, financial implications and data sources. The findings of the pilot have been disseminated in the form of a report, already uploaded on the Min- istrys website (www.mospi.gov.in).

Basic Statistics at Local Level Development is scheme for data collection pertaining to local devel- opment through the panchayat. As members of the Panchayat setup are much more aware of the local issues and have better knowledge of socio-economic parameters, they are the data informants. Role of women in providing data for these variables is more inclusive as women are better informed about the local knowledge and thus better quality of data may be expected.

As per the provisions of Article 243 D of the Constitution, one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in Panchayats (local self-Government) at all levels and also those of the Chairpersons are reserved for women. Even some States like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tripura and Uttarakhand have legislated for 50% reservation for women. In Sikkim, reservation for women is 40%. As a result of this initiative, out of about 28 lakh elected members in Panchayats, around 10 lakh are women. The last 15 years of Panchayati Raj in India have seen women go from strength to strength in terms of their political participation.

To empower Elected Women Representatives instructions have been issued to all States/UTs and other Central Ministries implementing all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (by Government of India) as follows:

(1) All the States / UT Governments may impress upon Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to en- sure the safety of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) / Female Sarpanches (elected village head), particularly those belonging to the weaker sections. They should not be physically harmed, assaulted or humiliated in any manner on any count. Discrimination of any kind against them should not be allowed to remain unheeded and resolved expeditiously.

(2) To put a curb on the cases of proxy attendance by relatives of women EWRs, States have been advised to initiate departmental proceedings against the officers in whose presence such meetings are held.

(3) To advise the concerned authorities of PRIs that meeting of Mahila Sabha / Palli Sabha (ladies con- gregation) be held prior to Gram Sabha Meeting (village meeting) and recommendations/ decisions of Mahila Sabhas mandatorily transmitted to Gram Sabhas who should consider the proposals imperatively.

(4) In the quorum of Gram Sabha, inclusion of at least half of the number of women voters should be mandated. States which have not mandated such a provision should do so.

(5) PRIs should be involved in any Integrated Plan of action to prevent and combat women trafficking, problems in disturbed areas, displacement due to land acquisition etc. Related matters may be taken up in Mahila Sabha in case of issues of children and women.

The data on political participation of women is of immense use of planners and policy makers to evolve better schemes and programmes, which can be better implemented by women at local level. Women participating in politics have a better understanding of women based issues and their aware- ness about the know-hows of government functioning render better solutions to the society in terms of bring about gender equity in the country. Once the qualitative data on women participation in pol- itics is captured and analysed properly, the planners may give shape to more programmes on women empowerment to enhance the radiating effects of women empowerment.

**CHALLENGES IN MEASURING WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

The measurement of women participation in politics based on voting percentage and election to legis- lature is relatively easy. The challenge is to estimate the actual participation of women in the decision making process.

**Men dominating political structure:**

In politics male largely dominate the political arenas largely formulates the rules and regulations of political structure and often decides the standard for evaluation. Many a times political pattern is established according to male principles and values. It is always predicted that politics is based on the concept of winning and losing, competitions and confrontation, apart from deciding on a systematic collaboration and concessions Disparities between men and women is also observed with respect to the content and priorities of decision making process in politics this is significantly determined by the knowledge,interest,background and working strategies of men and women.It is often predicted that women tend to give priority to societal concerns as security measures,health and care,women and children issues. The men dominating working

**Gender disparity:**

According to the Indian constitution the right to stand for election, to become a candidate and to get success in elections is based on political rights. The reality is however, the women’s right to vote remains restricted and misused principally because the majority candidates are male. This is true not only for Kerala but for the whole nation. The low level of women’s political representation should be considered as violation of women’s fundamental democratic rights and ultimately violation of their basic human rights. An unequal percentage of women’s representation in legislative bodies are the consequence of democratic nation. To establish gender equality in political structure it is necessary to ensure that commitment to equality is related to laws and constitutional provisions.Therefore, introducing political representation for electoral seats is considered as important political strategy. All political parties required to nominate women to fifty and thirty percent electable position on their list of candidates. When such laws are violated there are evidences that women’s representation is affected. Political parties can play an important role in women’s representation in all the level of political structure.

**Lack of party support:**

It has been noticed that women play an important role in political campaigning and mobilizing support for their respective parties, still they are denied of opportunity specially in decision making positions in any political structure. Very few women are party leaders in the Kannur District. All the political parties possess resources for conducting election campaigns women rarely get benefits from these resources. On the contrary if women are given enough facilities a large pool of women candidates combined with sufficient financial resources has the capability to increase the number of women in politics. The criteria of selection and nomination of candidates within political parties is also discriminated against women likes wise men characteristics are emphasized and often become the criteria in selecting candidates. Lack of party support can inhabit and prevent women from integrating themselves in to the party work. As a result, the impact on perception of women as capable candidate on the party of those who provide finance for electionprocess. Therefore, political reservation for women becomes essential.The allotment of portfolios isa complex phenomenon forpartyleadersas selection of ministers is discussed and decisions take place in a confidential manner. It is a trend in politics that a small group of higher level members in a political party negotiatebetween themselves and allot portfolios and there is range of dimensions during the process. Women are in a very less number in the selection process.

**Lack of co-ordination:**

By the implementation of political reservation policy for women, their local bodies representation in long-standing democracy is increasing. The government strategy would result in increasing women’s representation in state legislative and local bodies. Although government might declare the commitment to democratic forms of change, but in practical terms it is very difficult to expect government alone to secure women’s correct position in all parts of the society. Civil society in general terms that includes nongovernmentalorganization groups, as these organization plays an essential role in forwarding women’s representation in to politics should also concentrate on aims and ambitions, strategies and tactics. It is essential to support women in politics to promote on their promises and to support them with required skills & policies to ensure that various issues highlighted by women are taken seriously in the debate session and equally by the decision-making process in politics. The target is to empower women & enable them to get actively participate in politics. It is important to increase the scope of women’s participation at all the levels of political bodies. The main goal of government policies for women should be to inculcate self-confidence and positive approach among them. Politics should be structured to express proper ideological messages and inspire confidence and it is required to think in an innovative way regarding women’s political participation

**Lack of development:**

Development conditions plays a significant role in the participation of women in politics. Development of women in politics has direct influence on the participation and elected bodies.It is pointed out that there is correlation between women’s political participation and proportion of women working outside home and educational qualification. Developmentsin a society leads to eradicating tradition values, decreased fertility rates, increase urbanization, importance of education and labour force enhances political participation for women.

**Decision making opportunities:**

It is true and conformed that without active involvement of women and the incorporation of women’s perspectives at all levels of decision-making process in politics, the basic concept and aim ofachieving equality, progress and human values cannot be achieved. To strengthen democratic principles and promote its proper functioningwomen’s equal participation in decision making process in politics is a necessary condition.In the study it is observed that women’s participation is important from various angles.Women have specific requirements and interests that are properly understood and represented by women in a better manner. It is againviewed that women’s leadership qualities are distinguish and their understanding and cooperative approaches towards society would change politics and lead towards better perspectives. The study focused the fact that lack of decision making opportunities for women in elected positions undermines democratic principles. The basic conversation is about the necessity for women to participate in decision-making as they are capable to serve as role models to the society and next generation that is considered as human right. For Maratha women it is essential to remain vigilant and observe the ways in which political mechanism discriminatory.

**Lack of political training:**

The need for political training of women and the electorate in general to properly understand various dimensions of electoral system in their respective political structure. It is important to note that these proposed training sprogrammesare often drafted but implementation is not serious considered. In the existing democracy there are many opportunities for women to advocate for gender equality issues during the period of policy formulation. This is an important space for women politicians to propose the design of electoral systems and training schedule that is favorable to women. The political training should be a part of electoral system. Encouraging women to participate in party programmes that grooms women to become candidates along with leadership training programmes for women candidates. Many a times it is indicated that there are not enough endeavor to encourage women to actively participate in politics, or provide political education programmes for women at every political level. Women raised question about the lack of political education programmes, or even voter education at the time of elections.

Challenges in Political Parties:

The prime importance is to first campaign for recognition within their own political parties and thena woman can campaign for elections in a way to have a wider range of options.The study generates many responses about the challenges faced by women within political parties. The major problem highlighted is under-representation of women in the leadership of political parties, lack of understanding of parties’ principles and ideologies are hindrances to achieve a prominent position in their own political party. Other challenges includegender sensitive policies within parties, partiality in selection of candidate for contesting elections and unfavorable appointments of women candidates on party positions. Another major challenge faced by women is raising finance for women’s campaigns in elections.Women deals with many difficulties in their own political parties in influencing the leadership and ideologies of the party.

**CHAPTER – IV**

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**TABLE NO 4.1**

**AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Below 30 | 9 | 30 |
| 30-40 | 15 | 50 |
| 40-50 | 3 | 10 |
| Above 50 | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows the age wise classification of respondents. 50% of the respondents are comes under the age group of 30-40, 30% are comes below 30, 10% are comes under 40-50 and 10% of them come above 50.

**TABLE NO 4.2**

**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICTION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Illiterate | 3 | 10 |
| Primary | 6 | 20 |
| Secondary | 6 | 20 |
| Graduate | 9 | 30 |
| Post graduate | 6 | 20 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 30% of the respondents are graduates, 20% are completed primary education, 20% completed secondary education, 20% are post graduates and 10% of them are illiterates.

**TABLE NO 4.3**

**MARITAL STATUS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Married | 12 | 40 |
| Unmarried | 6 | 20 |
| Widow / separated | 12 | 40 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 40% of the respondents married and also 40% of them are widow/separated. 20% of the respondents are unmarried women.

**TABLE NO 4.4**

**STATUS OF FAMILY**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Nuclear | 12 | 40 |
| Joint | 18 | 60 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 60% of the respondents are from joint family and 40% of them are from nuclear family.

**TABLE NO 4.5**

**OCCUPATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Agricultural labour | 9 | 30 |
| Industrial labour | 12 | 40 |
| Self employed | 6 | 20 |
| None | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table and chart shows that 40% of the respondents are industrial labours, 30% are agricultural labours, 20% are self employed and 10% of the respomndents have no occupation.

**TABLE NO 4.6**

**PERSON WHO INSPIRED TO ENTER POLITICS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Self | 9 | 30 |
| Husband | 3 | 10 |
| Family members | 6 | 20 |
| Political party leaders | 12 | 40 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**CHART NO 4.1**

**PERSON WHO INSPIRED TO ENTER POLITICS**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 40% of the respondents are inspired by the political party leaders to enter in to politics, 30% are inspired by themselves, 20% are inspired by family members and 10% of them are inspired by their husbands.

**TABLE NO 4.7**

**PRESENT POSITION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Member | 12 | 40 |
| Member of standing committee | 9 | 30 |
| Vice president | 6 | 20 |
| President | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**CHART NO 4.2**

**PRESENT POSITION**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 40% of the respondents are members in present, 30% are members of standing committee, 20% are vice presidents and 10% of them are presidents.

**TABLE NO 4.8**

**NUMBER OF TERMS ELECTED TO PANCHAYATH**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| One | 3 | 10 |
| Two | 6 | 20 |
| Three | 15 | 50 |
| More than four | 6 | 20 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**CHART NO 4.3**

**NUMBER OF TERMS ELECTED TO PANCHAYATH**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents said that there are three terms involves in panchayath election, 20% are said as two terms, 20% said as more than four terms involves and 10% of the respondents said that it involves one term only.

**TABLE NO 4.9**

**SATISFACTION WITH THE PERCEIVED LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF POWER AND POSITION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Satisfied | 15 | 50 |
| No opinion | 9 | 30 |
| Dissatisfied | 6 | 20 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**CHART NO 4.4**

**SATISFACTION WITH THE PERCEIVED LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF POWER AND POSITION**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are satisfied with the perceived level of power and position, 30% of them have no opinion and 20% of them are dissatisfied with power and position.

**TABLE NO 4.10**

**FREQUENCY OF SPEECH IN PANCHAYATH MEETINGS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Always | 9 | 30 |
| Sometimes | 15 | 50 |
| Rarely | 3 | 10 |
| Not at all | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: primary data**

**CHART NO 4.5**

**FREQUENCY OF SPEECH IN PANCHAYATH MEETINGS**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents opined that they sometimes speaks in panchayath meetings, 30% opined as always speaks, 10% speaks rarely and 10% of them are not at all speaks in panchayath meetings.

**TABLE NO 4.11**

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN WARD SABHA, GRAMA SABHA AND PANCHAYATH**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Always | 12 | 40 |
| Sometimes | 6 | 20 |
| Rarely | 9 | 30 |
| Not at all | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.6**

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN WARD SABHA, GRAMA SABHA AND PANCHAYATH**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 40% of the respondents are always actively participating in ward sabha, grama sabha and panchayath, 30% are rarely participated, 20% are sometimes participated and 10% of them are not at all participating.

**TABLE NO 4.12**

**FREQUENCY OF PRESENTATION OF WARD PROBLEMS IN PANCHAYATH MEETINGS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Always | 15 | 50 |
| Sometimes | 9 | 30 |
| Rarely | 6 | 20 |
| Not at all | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.7**

**FREQUENCY OF PRESENTATION OF WARD PROBLEMS IN PANCHAYATH MEETINGS**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents always presenting their ward problem in panchayath meetings, 30% are presents sometimes, 20% are rarely presenting the problems and no respondents are not at all presenting the ward problems.

**TABLE NO 4.13**

**PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Actively involved | 15 | 50 |
| Moderately involved | 12 | 40 |
| Not involved | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.8**

**PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are actively involved in the process of decision making, 40% are moderately involved and 10% of them are not involved in the process of decision making.

**TABLE NO 4.14**

**MEETING MEMBERS OF WARD AND SOLVING OF THEIR PROBLEMS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Always | 6 | 20 |
| Sometimes | 15 | 50 |
| Rarely | 9 | 30 |
| Not at all | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.9**

**IMPROVEMENT OF VOTING PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTION**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are sometimes meeting the members of their ward and solving their problems, 30% are meets rarely, 20% are meets always and no respondents are not at all meets the members and solving their problems.

**TABLE NO 4.15**

**OBSERVATION OF DOMINATION BY THE MALE IN THE PANCHAYATH**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Greater extent | 0 | 0 |
| Moderate extent | 0 | 0 |
| Minimum extent | 18 | 60 |
| No dominance | 12 | 40 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.10**

**OBSERVATION OF DOMINATION BY THE MALE IN THE PANCHAYATH**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 60% of the respondents observed minimum extent of domination by the male in the panchayath and 40% are observed no dominance.

**TABLE NO 4.16**

**AS A WOMEN, FACING OF PROBLEMS IN POLITICS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 21 | 70 |
| No | 6 | 20 |
| No opinion | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.11**

**AS A WOMEN, FACING OF PROBLEMS IN POLITICS**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 70% of the respondents said that as women they are facing problems on politics, 20% are said that they are not facing problems and 10% of them have no opinion about it.

**TABLE NO 4.17**

**AS A LEADER, GETTING OF EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS WOMEN**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 15 | 50 |
| No | 12 | 40 |
| Cannot say | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.12**

**AS A LEADER, GETTING OF EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS WOMEN**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents opined that as a leader, they got extra responsibility towards women, 40% opined that not got extra responsibility and 10% of them opined that they cannot say.

**TABLE NO 4.18**

**MEMBER OF LOCAL ORGANIZATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Mahila mandal | 15 | 50 |
| Self help group | 6 | 20 |
| School betterment committee | 6 | 20 |
| Any other | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.13**

**MEMBER OF LOCAL ORGANIZATION**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents are the members of Mahila mandal, 20% are self help group members, 20% are school betterment committee members and 10% are members in other local organization.

**TABLE NO 4.19**

**FEELS THAT THE STATUS IN SOCIETY HAS INCREASED SINCE THEN**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 18 | 60 |
| No | 9 | 30 |
| No opinion | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.14**

**FEELS THAT THE STATUS IN SOCIETY HAS INCREASED SINCE THEN**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 60% of the respondents opined that the feels that their status has increased since then, 30% are opined that they do not feels that their status has increased and 10% of the respondents have no opinion.

**TABLE NO 4.20**

**AWARENESS ABOUT THE RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PANCHAYATH MEMBER**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Well aware | 21 | 70 |
| Aware | 9 | 30 |
| Not aware | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.15**

**AWARENESS ABOUT THE RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PANCHAYATH MEMBER**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 70% of the respondents are well aware about the rules and responsibilities of panchayath member, 30% are aware about it and no respondents are there for not aware about the rules and regulations.

**TABLE NO 4.21**

**ACT ON OWN PANCHAYATH**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 24 | 80 |
| No | 6 | 20 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.16**

**ACT ON OWN PANCHAYATH**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 80% of the respondents are act on their own panchayath and 20% of them are not act on their own panchayath.

**TABLE NO 4.22**

**DEPENDING PERSON WHEN THERE IS NO ACT ON OWN PANCHAYATH**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Husband | 6 | 20 |
| Family members | 6 | 20 |
| Panchayath members | 18 | 60 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.17**

**DEPENDING PERSON WHEN THERE IS NO ACT ON OWN PANCHAYATH**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 60% of the respondents depending panchayath members when they are not act on their own panchayath, 20% are depending their husbands and 20% off them depending the family members.

**TABLE NO 4.23**

**OPINION REGARDING THE WOMEN’S POLITICAL RESERVATION BILL**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Very essential | 15 | 50 |
| Essential | 12 | 40 |
| No opinion | 3 | 10 |
| Not essential | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.18**

**OPINION REGARDING THE WOMEN’S POLITICAL RESERVATION BILL**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents opined that the women’s reservation bill is very essential, 40% opined as essential and 10% of them have no opinion.

**TABLE NO 4.24**

**RESPONDS WITH THAT THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN HAS INCREASED IN THE LAST PANCHAYATH ELECTION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Agree | 18 | 60 |
| Neutral | 6 | 20 |
| Disagree | 6 | 20 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.19**

**RESPONDS WITH THAT THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN HAS INCREASED IN THE LAST PANCHAYATH ELECTION**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 60% of the respondents are agreed that the participation of women has increased in the last panchayath election, 20% are neutral and 20% are disagreed.

**TABLE NO 4.25**

**INTENTION TO CONTINUE IN POLITICS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Particulars** | **No. of Respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 21 | 70 |
| No | 6 | 20 |
| Cannot say | 3 | 10 |
| **Total** | **30** | **100** |

**Source: Primary data**

**CHART NO 4.20**

**INTENTION TO CONTINUE IN POLITICS**

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 70% of the respondents are intended to continue in politics, 20% are not intended and 10% are opined that they cannot say.

**CHAPTER – V**

**FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

**FINDINGS**

* Majority of the respondents are comes under the age group of 30-40.
* Most of the respondents are graduates.
* Most of the respondents married and also 40% of them are widow/separated.
* Majority of the respondents are from joint family.
* Most of the respondents are industrial labours.
* Most of the respondents are inspired by the political party leaders to enter in to politics.
* Most of the respondents are members in present.
* Majority of the respondents said that there are three terms involves in panchayath election.
* Majority of the respondents are satisfied with the perceived level of power and position.
* Majority of the respondents opined that they sometimes speaks in panchayath meetings.
* Most of the respondents are always actively participating in ward sabha, grama sabha and panchayath.
* Majority of the respondents always presenting their ward problem in panchayath meetings.
* Majority of the respondents are actively involved in the process of decision making.
* Majority of the respondents are sometimes meeting the members of their ward and solving their problems.
* Majority of the respondents observed minimum extent of domination by the male in the panchayath.
* Majority of the respondents said that as women they are facing problems on politics.
* Most of the respondents opined that as a leader, they got extra responsibility towards women.
* Most of the respondents are the members of Mahila mandal.
* Majority the respondents opined that the feels that their status has increased since then.
* Majority of the respondents are well aware about the rules and responsibilities of panchayath member.
* Majority of the respondents are act on their own panchayath.
* Majority of the respondents depending panchayath members when they are not act on their own panchayath.
* Most of the respondents opined that the women’s reservation bill is very essential.
* Most of the respondents are agreed that the participation of women has increased in the last panchayath election.
* Majority of the respondents are intended to continue in politics

**SUGGESTIONS**

* Being a weaker section of the society, women could be given reservation of 33% seats both at State and National level legislature.
* Without a fair proportional representation of women at the legislature, women related issues would be neglected. The women should participate at all levels in political party, start from having voting rights to taking political membership and representing the women at different level in political system.
* Women should be motivated and trained by the women wing of different national and state level parties such as Mahila Congress of the Indian National Congress, Mahila Morcha of the Bharatiya Janata Party, National Federation of Indian Women of the Communist Party of India etc. These wings should take more initiative at grassroots level to increase the women participation.
* Some bigger leaders who are mass representative of women such as Congress President Sonia Gandhi, Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, Chief Minister Mamata Benarjee, BSP President Mayavati and many others should at least give chance to have more participation of women by allotting more seats to them.
* Although the Government of India has initiated the National Mission of Empowerment of Women with the broad objective of gender empowerment, the progress of this project is not up to the mark. It is thus imperative to strengthen its functioning and implementation.
* There is need for capacity building of prospective women leaders by imparting leadership training to the female members of political parties.
* Women have to change their mode of approach to political participation, if they aspire for substantial representation in the legislative bodies.

**CONCLUSION**

Women have the right to participate in political processes that effect the progress of the nation, state,society, their family and individual personality. It is observed that increase in women’s political participation and leadership leads to development of the society and also effects the performance of political process and tends to move towards more inclusiveness, responsible, egalitarian, and democratic in nature. Meaningful political participation of women is essential for a liable democracy, it helpsin expanding the scope of democratic norms and improve the prospects for durable development

The exclusion of women from political position affects the ability to challenge the deprivation of women in all its manifestation. Fair representation of women in politics at all level is the need of the hour. Women have to represent in politics to challenge the power which has excluded them since decades. Women who consist of almost half of the population need to be represented significantly in decision making bodies; this will be possible only when more number of women will take keen interest in representing weaker and deprived section of society. Lacking this parity and due to this exclusion, goal of social development with equity and justice cannot be achieved and as a result representation of women in Indian politics will farther be a way ahead.

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**APPENDIX**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name of the member

1. Age :

* Below 30
* 30 – 40
* 40 – 50
* Above 50

1. Educational qualification

* Illiterate
* Primary
* Secondary
* Graduate
* Post graduate

1. Marital status :

* Married
* Unmarried
* Widow / separated

1. Size of the family

* Nuclear
* Joint family

1. Occupation

* Agricultural labour
* Industrial labour
* Self employed
* None

1. The person who inspired you to enter politics?

* Self
* Husband
* Family members
* Political party leaders

1. Present position:

* Member
* Member of standing committee
* Vice president
* President

1. Number of terms elected to Panchayath

* One
* Two
* Three
* More than four

1. Are you satisfied with your perceived level of satisfaction of power and position?

* Satisfied
* No opinion
* Dissatisfied

1. How often do you speak in Panchayath meetings?

* Always
* Sometimes
* Rarely
* Not at all

1. Do you participate actively in ward Sabha Grama Sabha and Panchayath?

* Always
* Sometimes
* Rarely
* Not at all

1. How often do you have presented the problems of your ward Panchayath meetings?

* Always
* Sometimes
* Rarely
* Not at all

1. Do you participate in process of decision making?

* Actively involved
* Moderately involved
* Not involved

1. Do you meet the members of your ward and solve their problems?

* Always
* Sometimes
* Rarely
* Not at all

1. Do you observe any domination by the male members in the Panchayath?

* Greater extent
* Moderate extent
* Minimum extent
* No dominance

1. Do you think as a women you face problems in politics?

* Yes
* No
* No opinion

1. Do you think as a leader you have got an extra responsibility towards women?

* Yes
* No
* Cannot say

1. Are you a member of local organization?

* Mahila mandal
* Self help group
* School betterment committee
* Any other

1. Do you feel that your status in society has increased since then?

* Yes
* No
* No opinion

1. Are you aware of the roles and responsibilitis of a panchayath Member?

* Well aware
* Aware
* Not aware

1. Do you act on your own in Panchayath?

* Yes
* No

1. If no, whom do you depend upon?

* Husband
* Family members
* Panchayath members

1. What is your opinion regarding the womens’ Political Reservation bill?

* Very essential
* Essential
* No opinion
* Not essential

1. Do you think that the participation of women has increased in the last Panchayath Election?

* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree

1. Do you intend to continue in politics?

* Yes
* No
* Cannot say