

The Role of Women in Karnataka State Legislative Council

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ABSTRACT:

A woman has played a major role in all the fields of society. The political field still need for more women participation. The political institutions have to provide adequate facilities to them to get more involvement in the political field. The gender discrimination is the main cause to not achieving more the desired goals and objectives of the government under the programme of 'women empowerment'. The self interest of women needs for the political participation high but unfortunately the women are facing different phases of political exploitations at the different stages. Women are not only to be considered as voter in the political participation even they do have opportunity to contest in the election and to get portfolios in the government.

In recent days the role of women in politics is inevitable because all the section of society is prior to participation in politics will helps to achieve the popular democracy in the country. Unfortunately, the women's participation and representation in politics is proportionately unequal. Only a few of women candidates recognised in the Karnataka politics. The constitution of India made it clear about the equal opportunity to all irrespective of caste, gender and religion. 'The Women's Reservation' was one of the factor influence more on women empowerment in all social sectors.

KEY WORDS:

Women Empowerment, Gender Discrimination, Portfolios, Popular Democracy

INTRODUCTION:

The union of India has provided an opportunity to establish the bicameral legislature system. In Karnataka we have two houses respectively Vidhana Parishath and Vidhana Sabha. Vidhana Parishath or State legislative Council is the upper house which is

represented by the members who achieved in different fields of society. The Vidhana Parishath is the permanent house. It has the strength of 75 members who elected for the term of 6 years and every 2 years 1/3 of members are retired.

The biological and anatomic factors are made difference between the genders. There is also a natural difference among them in to the physical strength but rationally they are equal. However, the ideas, opinions and the situations create inequality among them. It treated as gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals wholly or partly due to their gender. (Gender inequality – Wikipedia) As in the convention of UNO stated that the phrase “The elimination of all forms of discrimination against women” and it guaranteed by our constitution in India.

The political participation of all the sections of society is inevitable without any discrimination on the grounds of gender. Increasing the participation of the both gender especially the women’s in politics is critical and to promote popular representation of Democracy as practical. The role of women’s is essential to participate in politics such as voting and contesting in the elections. For the moment reservation seems to be strengthen the women’s politics in to increasing the more number of women contested in the elections. Popular representation of Women’s in politics is not only a demand of them but it is the equal opportunity to all as provide by the political parties in their organisation. However the causes affecting on women’s political participation in Karnataka as well as affecting on gender inequality in the politics by the factors affecting on them which are political culture, interest, gender discrimination, political abuses and illiteracy. Education is the factor to enlighten and empower the women in all social fields which is helps to recognised them as strong as in masculine society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Satyabrata Chakraborty (2005), in his book ‘Political Sociology’, explains the different political systems of countries along with their political culture and political socialisation of each individual. People’s participation in politics depends on how they react with the political environment of their state as well as the different political fluctuations and events. He explained about the different kinds of political participation of people in the

electoral process and the active participation in the political activities of political parties and the state. On participation of politics, he discussed the role of age, gender, education and other social aspects of the individual in society. The following elements are identified from his studies:

- A) Active and inactive political participation
- B) The process of political socialisation in individual behaviour
- C) Politics is action oriented (action-reaction)
- D) Political apathy is the political environment of the state.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the evolution of women politics in Karnataka
2. To analyse the data of women representation in the state legislative council
3. To understand the challenges are facing by women in political representation.

METHODOLOGY:

In this study used the “Historical and Analysis method” for the collection of data along with interpretations. The present study is based on the collection of data from secondary sources. The role of women in Karnataka politics briefly explained since from unification of Karnataka. The study is focus more on the role of women in Karnataka Legislative Council since 1952. The data helps to understand about the total number of women representation, the total percentage of women representation, average and differences among their representation in the Karnataka Legislative Council.

In Karnataka majorly there are two national political parties such as BJP and INC and one state party called JD(S) had a great history in their progress and political development. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments brought a significant development in the women’s political participation. It was the result to ensure the women political participation become more in the state irrespective of their education, religion, region and socio-economical conditions. Especially the Panchayath raj institutions have played a significant role in the empowerment of women in politics.

In Karnataka majority of the political parties have wings to strengthen of the party activities. Among the wings of political parties one of that is women wing. It plays an important role and made it as frontal organisation of the party to focus on women issues and women empowerment in all social sectors. Mean while the political parties utilise properly the strength of women and to support their political aspirations in to the strength and development of the party organisation. The political parties ensure the women's representation more through the reservation in Karnataka.

The political abuse is very unsatisfactory to the representation of women in political institutions such as political party, assembly and government. The political parties also give 33% reservation to the women in the election despite of their vocal support. Therefore women have made initiative in political participation beyond the force of patriarchal society in the state. 'A son is son till he gets his wife but a daughter is my daughter throughout my life' as said by Rabindranath Tagore. The constitution of India has provided reservation for women in representatives' bodies at the gross root levels such as three tier of Panchayath system 1/3 of total seats are reserved for women in zilla, taluk and mandal Panchayath and municipalities.

At the state level the women participation has not up to the maximum level compare to the men participation at both legislative assembly and council. Hence, the following data shows that women representation in the Karnataka Legislative council.

Women Representation in Karnataka Legislative Council (1952-2013)

Sl. No	Years	Total Number of Seats	Women Members	Percentage
1	1952-1958	63	03	4.76
2	1959-1965	63	02	3.17
3	1966-1972	63	02	3.17
4	1973-1979	63	03	4.76
5	1980-1986	63	06	9.52
6	1987-1993	75	04	5.33

7	1994-2000	75	05	6.66
8	2001-2007	75	05	6.66
9	2008-2013	75	05	6.66

Source: Secretariat of Karnataka Legislative Council, Vidhana Soudha.

The above table shows that the women representation in legislative council of Karnataka from 1952 to 2013. At present the total strength of the house is 75 earlier it was 63. The total number of women members represents in the legislative council is very less. Compared to the women representation in the first election to the recent elections there is no major changes in the increase of the women representation. Hence, it shows that till women representation is weak in the council. There is need to empower women in politics. But significantly identified that in the elections of 1980's there was nine percent of women represents in the legislative council compared to the other elections. Even though the recent elections of legislative council proved that only a five women representatives elected to the house of legislative council in Karnataka. Therefore, chronologically identified that the elections of legislative council is witnessed the poor representation of women in politics.

Therefore the following reasons are influence on less women's political participation in Karnataka.

- ❖ The few of a social factors are discourage of women enter in to the politics
- ❖ Lack of women political statesman in the state
- ❖ The effective implementation of Women's reservation bill.
- ❖ To provide equal opportunity to women in the participation of Decision-making process
- ❖ The Political parties has to support women to contest in the elections, to win in the elections and to provide adequate economic assistance
- ❖ To build confidence among women to face contemporary political issues
- ❖ To strengthen the organised women movement in the state
- ❖ The encouragement of civil society is to empowerment of women in the social fields
- ❖ To recognised the role of women organisations and pressure groups
- ❖ To recognised the role of women and their ability in politics at the different levels

- ❖ The media has the responsibility to bring political awareness among women.

FINDINGS:

- The Women's representation in legislative council is very less
- To enhance the representation levels of women in Karnataka Politics
- To uphold the Gender equality in the political field
- The civil society plays a significant role in the women political participation

CONCLUSION:

The responsibility of political parties is playing a significant role to bring equality among the citizens especially in field of politics. Each political party has to provide the political opportunity to the each sections of society such as women, youth, and the other class. The present Karnataka politics is based on the participation of civil society actively in the politics irrespective of caste, gender and communal. The active participation of women in politics is only the solution to uphold the strength of women representation in the politics and to bring the policy of women reservation in all social sectors. However, the proportionate representation of men and women in politics will be creating healthy political environment in the state.

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