



## Political Reservation and its Impact on Political Participation of Dalit Women: Special Focus on Chitradurga District

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### ABSTRACT

*Panchayat Raj system has been provided good opportunity for down trodden communities. The term 'political participation' has a very wide meaning. It is not only related to 'Right to Vote', but simultaneously relates to participation in: decision making process, political activism, political consciousness, etc. Women in India participate in voting, run for public offices and political parties at lower levels more than men. Political activism and voting are the strongest areas of women's political participation. To combat gender inequality in politics, the Indian Government has instituted reservations for seats in local governments. Actually, 73rd constitutional amendment was the milestone in Indian political scenario. It breakout the traditional political structure and provide an opportunity to political participation for women in general, Dalit women in particular. 73rd constitutional amendment boosting to women enter into political sector. Due to this, today women have able enter politics to rural or local. Specially, Dalit women in Chitradurga district did not achieve political participation until implement of political reservation. Now political reservation has been implemented. So far present study has been try to find out the Dalit women's political participation in local government.*

**KEYWORDS :** Women Reservation, Dalit Women's Political Participation

### Women in Local Governance

The Panchayat Raj, a system of self-governance, was introduced in 1959, following the submission of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee Report of 1957. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee had recommended that besides 20 members of the Panchayat Samiti (block level body); there should be two women as co-opted members. This may be said to be the first official declaration for women to enter active politics at the grassroots. Following this, the Maharashtra Zilha Parishad (district body) & Panchayat Act of 1961, provided for nomination of one or two women to each of the three bodies, in case no women were elected. As it happened, out of a total of 320 women representatives of Panchayat Samitis & Zilha Parishads in Maharashtra 1978, only 6 were elected members. In many parts of India, women were recruited to the Panchayat Raj by co-option rather than through election. The 64th Constitutional Amendment Bill was introduced in Parliament in 1989, which provided for 30% reservation for women. But it could not be passed. The Bill was defeated by a narrow margin in the Upper House. The Bill was reintroduced in September 1991, as the 72nd & 73rd Constitutional Amendment Bills with an additional provision such as one-third representation for women in chairperson positions. The Bills were finally passed on December 1992. Ratified by half the states by April 1993, they came into operation as 73rd & 74th amendments to the Constitution of India on 24th April 1993. This amendment can be considered as a landmark in the empowerment of women, as shortly after the 1992 election in Maharashtra, a total of 28,000 Panchayat Raj yielded positions of power to 93,333 women in various Panchayats as members & as chairpersons.

### Significance of the Study:

In India, downtrodden communities were kept away from socio-political mainstream from longtime it lead these people were considered as backward people, it effect on development process. Therefore, number of scholars insists to people participation is main roots for national development. As a result 73rd amendment have had adopt and it provide reservation for downtrodden at rural local level. So far, how reservation has make an opportunity for Dalit political participation in Chitradurga District.

Political participation is a process and it boost for people development at rural level. Presently, Dalit have some causes to political participation. Because most of Panchayat benefits were preferred for SC-ST, OBC and women. By this support these communities have come out of the vulnerable group. Present study tries to find out the kind of causes of Dalit women political participation.

Before 73rd amendment only dominant communities were enjoying the political benefits. But, at the time development programmes could not reach at lower level. So it create big problem to government mechanism. When Ashok Mehta committee was trace out and suggested to implement reservation system in local government.

Therefore, 73rd amendment have implement (1992). So reservation has adopted at rural local government and it helps to Dalit women in political participation. So presently, reservation and political participation has good mixture in political process. So this is the important significance of the present study.

Participation is the most crucial practice in present individual development. Number of scholars' linkage between political reservation and political participation of women in general, Dalit women in particular at local government. So that present study has main intention to find out the advantages of reservation in Dalit women political participation at rural local government.

### Statement of the Problems:

Before 73rd constitutional amendment SC, ST, OBC and minorities did not participate in local political process. Ashok Mehta committee has insisted to implement reservation system at local government. Hence, above communities were got chance to participate in local politics. Present study highlights Dalit women's political participation condition. So this study statement is "Political reservation and its impact on Dalit women's political participation. Special focus to Chitradurga District, Karnataka state".

### Scope of the Study:

Chitradurga District is a historically and culturally popular district in state Karnataka. It is famous for seven round fort and till it is a good historical monument. But some people were misuse this monument. Though present study has concentrate to this district and another important issue is Dalit communities were resided over at long period with highest strength. Specially, Adi Karnataka, Adi Dravida, Banjar and Bhovi communities have more strength. Most of the Dalit communities have been suffer by health, education, economic and political problems. Regarding this Chitradurga district has been specified for scope of study or study area.

### Objectives of the Study:

To find out the relationship with increasing Dalit women's political participation and political reservation.

To find out the advantages of political reservation in Dalit women at local government.

### Data Analysis:

Relationship with increasing Dalit Women's Political Participation and Political Reservation:

People participation is most important factor in rural local government though it helps to women share their idea for implementing development program at local level. When reservation have had implement even Dalit women were also able to participate in local gov-

ernment with enormous level. Today it creates wonderful motivation in development process at local level. Because, before reservation few dominant or upper caste people were enjoying political power and benefits it had traditional structure. So it was deep rooted at social-political sector. Constitutional drafting committee chairman Dr. B.R. Ambedkar insists to reservation system for SC-ST at state and central level. But they did not mentioned at local level. When Ashok Mehta committee was recommend (1993) to adopt reservation in local level. That was tremendous effect on Indian traditional political structure and SC-ST communities also participate local political process. Until reservation did not implement these people were denied by the local politics. So reservation is a boosting factor of SC-ST political participation at local level. Particularly, political participation and reservation have had close relationship in Dalits women's political careers. Presently 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment have been made it opportunities for Dalit communities in political participation. So this study intends to clarify the relationship with increasing Dalit women's political participation and political reservation.

**Table 1. Relationship with increasing Dalit women's political participation and political reservation.**

Political participation		Yes	No	Total
Before reservation	Frequency	30	120	150
	Percentage	20%	80%	100%
After reservation	Frequency	125	25	150
	Percentage	83%	17%	100%

**Source: Field Work**

Table 1 exhibit the relationship with increasing political participation and reservation among Dalit women in Chitradurga district. How Dalits political participation has been better level. But early independent time every political process have had control by dominants. 73rd constitutional amendment made it easy for Dalit women participate at local government. Data reveals that, about 20% of Dalit women's were agree to this and before reservation Dalit's women were did not enjoying power at local politics in Chitradurga district. But 80% of respondents not agree because more Dalit women till away from local politics. So it shows, most of Dalit women did not have power at local politics. Who are elite class though they enjoying power at both level, it has to done by the before reservation implement.

Next part of the table shows, after implementation of reservation system Dalit women's participatory practices. Data says majority of (83%) the respondents were opinion that about reservation has to provide good opportunity for women in local government. This is good development in Indian politics. So it changes traditional structure in local politics, Indian downtrodden communities were able to participate at local level politics. Totally, reservation system is most important elements of women as well as Dalit women political participation process.

**Advantages of political reservation to Dalit women at local government:**

Participation is the most important features of democratic political process. But Indian socio-political structure is not good for democratic political process. It has to be stereotyped through the constitutional and legislative practices. Hence India has been adopted constitution and it as a soul of our political as well as every phase of life. After that people have been participate and it has been basic need for successive political process. But again dominant castes were taken into remote control status. At the time reservation system has to adopt for control the monopoly of dominant caste at local level. Before constitution adaptation few people called royals and land lords have political benefits. In this regards number of political thinker insist to people should participate an actively, that is called active participation or active democracy. Particularly in India for longtime downtrodden or SC-ST people did not participate actively at local level. Therefore, they were considered as vulnerable section by social, political, economic section. Active participation means common people should chair as president, vice-president, and member. So that 73rd and 74th amendment has been provide to opportunity for common people at local politics. As a result, Dalit and other downtrodden people have number of advantages like, accountability or transparency practice, decision making power and getting development benefit. Present study has try to exhibit the few advantages of Dalit women at local

government.

**Table 2: Advantages of political reservation to Dalit women at local government:**

Advantages		Yes	No	Total
Emerging Decision making power	Frequency	97	53	150
	Percentage	64.6%	35.4%	100%
Getting development benefits	Frequency	98	52	150
	Percentage	65.3%	34.7%	100%
Accountability and transparency practice	Frequency	108	42	150
	Percentage	72%	28%	100%

**Source: Field work**

Table 2 highlights the advantages of political reservation to Dalit women at local government. Firstly, when Dalit women have been involve in local government by the help of political reservation and it helps to emerging decision making power at Grama sabha or other meetings. So present data has express, about 58% of Dalit women have had advantages, that is emerging decision making power through the political participation and reservation. If it did not implement at local level Dalit women decision making capacity could not emerge.

Secondly, actually benefits of PRI has been implement for rural downtrodden or Dalit development. Hence, data shows 65.3% of respondents were express about getting development benefits by Panchayat Raj through political participation and reservation at government. If the political reservation could not implement at local government, local benefits could not reach at downtrodden or Dalit women. So it is a root of people development at rural level.

Thirdly, accountability and transparency practices. This is most important practices at present Indian political situation. Before active people participation, nepotism and corruption has been spread at all over Indian social, political and economic life. When political reservation and people active participation have been implemented at local government level. Transparency and accountability practices also implement. So far common people or Dalit women were able talk about transparency and accountability practice. As a result, today they have good practices and about 72% of Dalit women were accepting to this issue. Totally by the help of political reservation Dalit women have number of advantages by local government.

**Discussion of the Research Findings:**

Panchayat Raj system has introduce by Ashok Mehta committee and review committee have had insist to universal reservation for political participation at local level. By this attempt rural downtrodden, particularly, Dalit women also get number of benefits from the participation through political reservation. Present study found few aspects mainly, causes of Dalit women's political participation, relationship with increasing Dalit women's political participation and political reservation, finally, advantages of political reservation to Dalit women in local government.

This part of the article is discussing the findings of the study. Firstly, Relationship with increasingly political participation through political reservation in Dalit women at local government. Data says that, only 20% of Dalit women were accept to these issues. Because, before reservation few Dalit families were enjoying political benefits but not at majority level. After the reservation adopted at local level about 83% of Dalit women were enjoying political participation and get political benefits. So reservation is the important element of Dalit women political career in Chitradurga district.

Advantages of political reservation to Dalit women at local government, mainly, emerging decision making power in Dalit women, data highlighted 64.6% of the respondents were agreed about when reservation has been implement at local level, Dalit women participation has also rising. So their decision making capacity has also emerge. This is the good advantage to Dalit women at Chitradurga district. This attempt has been done by reservation system. Even getting development benefits also most important advantages to Dalit women. In this regards majority of the women were accept to this. Accountability and transparency practices also most important advantages

to Dalit women at local level. So it comes from directly political participation through political reservation at local level. These are the advantages of reservation in Dalit women. Due to this support today Dalit women were able to talk about individually without any other support. Therefore government mechanism has to encourage to Dalit women in future.

#### **Conclusion:**

Panchayat Raj system is the most important element for Dalit women's political participation at local government. They got number of advantages by the local government for instance, seeking benefits for own purpose or development. But not insist to benefit to other people. Because, Dalit were suffer by poverty as well as marginal problem. Though they think individual development, another important issue is reservation policy in local government. Data says reservation is the most important tools for Dalit women political participation. If reservation did not implement at local level women political participation has leg behind. Though Dalit women denied by the political process. Inevitably they did not enter into political mainstream. Present data reveals that, majority of Dalit women has been getting benefit by panchayat raj, it has happening through reservation and today Dalit women were able take own decision and practice accountability and transparency. Finally panchayat system and reservation policy help to women as well as Dalit women political participation and their political development. In future, government mechanism should support and provide an opportunity for women or Dalit women definitely women have developed at all social species.

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