



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

A STUDY ON ATTITUDE OF EDUCATED WOMEN TOWARDS POLITICAL AWARENESS IN KARNAL

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Abstract

In the present research, an attempt has been made to study the political awareness in district Karnal by undertaking some dimensions of political awareness in educated women. Educated women of Karnal seemed active in common political activities. As 94.3% of educated women seemed sure of voting in the next coming elections. 80.5% of educated women are registered for voting at their current address. But they are a little unaware of the facts and information about politics at the state level. Nearly 50% of educated women were able to select the correct politician who has never represented the state of Haryana. Only 36.6% of the educated women from Karnal knew the name of the current president of a state party who had in coalition formed government in the state. Educated women seemed a lot more aware of local and national level politics.

INTRODUCTION

There was a period of time when women stood nowhere next to a man but over a period of time women have achieved heights in every field, be it sports, politics, industry, education etc. The major turnout factor in this changing scenario has been active participation of women. The various articles of constitution and fundamental rights have acted as a backbone for the emerging value of women in various sectors and roles in life. Although we still need to work more for providing an equal space in a society which has been male dominant for a long period of time. Women who are considered as an epitome of love, sacrifice, strength and courage have been referred as “Prakriti” which is one of the two main factors for a balanced human life. Education can be termed as a process in which the learner acquires some kind of knowledge, skill or training. It is believed that an educated person has sound and rational and critical thinking. Education in any female’s life holds a vital place, it is not only crucial for society but also for the nation. Generally, we see educated women come up as an asset, they have a better understanding of subjects and may lead to a number of reforms. Some operational definitions used in the

study are: The phrase “educated women” refers to the people of female sex who are literate or have some sort of education ranging from high school pass outs or more. The age group taken up for study is 18 years to 60 years. The term “attitude” here refers to “a feeling or opinion about something or someone”, or “a way of behaving that is caused by any reason.” The term “political awareness” here refers to “the extent to which an individual pays attention to politics and understands what he or she has encountered”. To elaborate, here awareness reflects “intellectual or cognitive engagement with public affairs as indicated by factual information about government, its policies and politics.”

Review of Literature: **Raghavendra Chattopadhyay (2001)** conducted a study which proved that women have certainly different way of performing development activities than men when they are given some kind of power with the help of some political establishment. The study exhibit that women certainly invest more in infrastructure which is generally directly relevant to great needs of women living in rural area. This revealed that more focus on some of the basic needs like roads, water and sanitization while men are inclined more towards the education sector. **National Commission of Women (2010)**, “Despite the increasing participation at representation level women are not that much active in political sector. Even though, women are brought into political institutions now a days, very few efforts are made to transform the patriarchal culture of these institutions.” **A report by UN Women – Asia Pacific** “By improving the participation of women in decision making positions we automatically make women more politically accountable. It promotes more women participation to ensure good governance. UN Women have been encouraging women to share greater political representation and responsibilities.” **Dr Tapan Kumar Sahu, Principle of S D College, Barnala (2018)** in his research article stated that the number of women in formal politics cannot be referred as the best measure of political participation of women. The areas of studies like voting behavior, associational activity, membership of political parties, lobbying activity and more such systematic studies are needed to present the factors promoting greater rate of women engagement in this field. **Maheshwari A Uma (2022)** in her research stated “The opinion of the women respondents is that political participation is inclusive of all political activities and not just voting. The economic empowerment of women is not an essential criterion. Household responsibilities are only an excuse by women. The political field is male-dominated and corruption is a factor that hinders women to enter politics along with the prevailing gender bias. The need for women to enter politics is strongly felt by the respondents both as a symbol of social status and the cause of women's development”

Justification of the Study: In general Indian households, we see that the political decisions are the congruent decisions of the families taken by the senior males of that family and the rest of the members follow such decisions without raising any questions. Females in the society are often treated as passive partners and have neither any say nor much interest in the complete political equations, ultimately this scenario has led the women to be insignificant for the results of votes cast. This is the reason that most of the political parties have been ignoring their interests and leaving them to live in plight conditions. Now, making women active again has been one challenge even for the government. Moreover, girls who get good education generally do not marry too young so

they lead a healthy and productive lifestyle. There are always a number of elements in the society which are deprived of their basic rights in every society, state and nation, because these elements lack awareness of their rights. If we enlist such elements from the society, then women might top this list. Women are the most important factor of every society. Even though everybody is aware of this fact, nobody is ready to accept this fact. As a result, the importance which used to be given to women is decreasing day by day in today's society. So, the aim of the current study has been to determine political awareness in educated women in a particular district in the state of Haryana which might help to give the prospects that how educated women think and to what extent they have knowledge regarding political aspects and scenarios at various levels as stated in the objectives. These continuous social plot changes make it more important to study the current thoughts, level of participation, access to information, educational status and level of awareness educated women have in today's time. Unlike other studies, it goes exclusively with the opinion of the educated women. Also, seeing the growing demand of the participation and representation of women in the political sector makes this study more useful for the future.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the political participation of educated women.
2. To study state level political awareness among educated women.
3. To study local level political awareness among educated women.
4. To study opinions of educated women towards central government policies.
5. To study the beliefs of educated women about work done by the government regarding various sections of society.

Exploratory cum descriptive study: Exploratory can be said as a research type which is used to investigate a problem which is not clearly defined. In general, this type of research is conducted to have a better understanding of the existing problem, but it might not provide the conclusions which are generally expected by the researcher. Descriptive research is the research that describes some features or characteristics of the variables undertaken in the study. Here, it was needed to find out the opinions and points of view of educated women for political awareness in detail as well as it was important to have a better understanding of the variables used in the research. So, the study is exploratory as well as descriptive by nature.

Population: A population can be referred as an entire group that the researcher want to draw conclusions about. In the research process, the word population doesn't always mean people. Population, here, are all the educated women currently residing in Karnal whether living in the rural or urban sectors.

Sample: The sample size in this study is 123 educated women from Karnal belonging to the age group of 18 to 60 years as shown below with the qualification.



Fig 1: Above pie diagram shows the percentage of educated women with different levels of education undertaken in this study.

Sampling Method: Random samples have been collected from educated women using *Random Sampling Technique* under which each sample has an equal probability of being chosen. This technique is important for drawing accurate conclusions as the samples are meant to be completely free from any type of bias and provides the researcher with accurate representation.

TOOLS USED:- QUESTIONNAIRE- A questionnaire of 15 questions has been prepared by the researchers in Google Form format. The questionnaire is divided into 5 dimensions. Each dimension is made up of 3 questions. All questions are optional in nature.

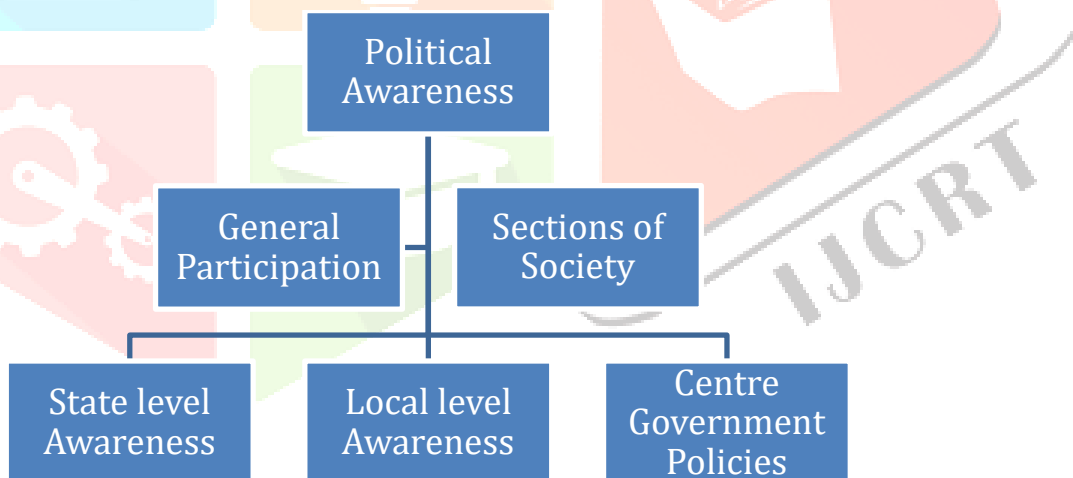


Fig. 2: Above organization chart stating the 5 aspects considered to study political awareness.

- **STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED:-** M S Excel, Tabulations, Direct Mean, Percentages, Pie Diagram.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The women of age group 18 to 60 years have different highest educational qualifications. 13% of educated women have class 10 or class 12 passing certificates. 40.7% women who are part of this study have some diploma or graduation certificate. The major participation can be seen from the women who have either done post-graduation or have doctorate degrees.

General Participation- This part is meant to study the attitude of educated women for the democratic process of elections and general responsibilities in the Karnal city. General political participation of women helps to take decisions and give shape to the community in right direction.

General participation table:

| Questions | % yes response | % no response |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| Are you registered for voting at your current address? | 80.5 % | 19.5 % |
| Will you vote in the next coming elections? | 94.3 % | 5.7 % |

Table 1 Above table showing percentage of yes and no answers of 2 questions.

- ❖ On an average 87.4% of the educated women are participating in the political activities.
- ❖ 80.5% of educated women responded that they are registered for voting at their current address while 19.5% of the educated women gave negative response.
- ❖ Outstanding number of women 116 out of 123 which is 94.3 % of educated women seemed sure of voting in next elections while 5.7% denied voting in next elections.
- ❖ 33.3% of educated women opted for 'previous work done' by candidate, 25.2 % women accepted that they 'do research' whereas 18.7% of them take 'current news running on TV', 14.6% opted 'Articles in magazines or newspapers' as base for selection of candidate. Shockingly 8.2% of educated women selected the religion or background of candidate as their base.
- ❖ Media resources and previous work done are equally impacting the voting which is major political activity.

Select the base on which you assess any political candidate?
123 responses



Fig 4: Above pie diagram showing various views of people.

State Political Awareness: Among the various political players BhartiyaJanta Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC), JannayakJanta Party (JJP), Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) are the key political players in the politics of the state of Haryana. To study the state political awareness in educated women of Karnal 3 (three) questions are asked in this section.

| Questions | % of right responses |
|--|----------------------|
| Who is president of JannayakJanta Party? | 36.6% |
| Which party does this symbol belong to? | 88.6% |
| Who among them has never represented the state of Haryana? | 51.6% |

Table 2 Above table shows the three questions and percentage of right answers given by women.

- ❖ As a matter of concern, approximately 59% on an average in this study are found politically aware at state level politics.
- ❖ 36.6% of the educated women knew the name of the president (Ajay Chautala) of Jannayak Janta Party who has in coalition had formed government in Haryana.
- ❖ Notably a satisfactory number of educated women, 109 out of 123, knew the symbol of a state party.
- ❖ Educated women seemed unaware about the political leaders who have represented Haryana.
- ❖ Approximately only half of the educated women (51.6%) in Karnal were able to select the politician who has never represented their state that is Haryana.

Local Political Awareness: Educated women in Karnal seemed aware of the political environment at local level or district level.

- ❖ 82% of the total population taken hereunder the study were able to tell the name of Member of Parliament from Karnal constituency
- ❖ 90.2% of educated women were in favour of strict punishments for the candidates of Karnal who spend beyond the permitted limit while campaigning.
- ❖ 89.4% of educated women were able to state the name of the Mayor of the Municipal Corporation of Karnal.

Central Government Policies: 81.3% of the educated women of Karnal on an average agree with the work done by center government for the country.

| QUESTIONS | % of right responses |
|--|----------------------|
| “Do you think policies of central government are moving in right direction for the people of the country?” | 79.7% |
| “Which political party will you support for handling the sensitive topic like national security?” | 70.7% |
| “Do you think declaring Article 370 as ‘inoperative’ was a great decision?” | 93.5% |

Table 3 Above table shows the three questions and percentage of right answers given by women.

- A large number of educated women (nearly 80%) selected “yes” as the option when they were asked if they agree with the policies of the center government
- 87 out of 123 women selected current sitting government for handling national security.
- 93.5% selected “yes” as they were asked if declaring Article 370 as ‘inoperative’ was a great decision.

Sections of Society: 72.27% of educated women of Karnal approximately on an average believe in work done by the government for various sections of society.

| QUESTIONS | % of right responses |
|--|----------------------|
| Are you satisfied with the efforts put by government on women safety? | 57.4% |
| Do you think Triple Talaq Bill (The Muslim Women (protection of Rights of Marriage) Act, 2019) made a significant change in the society? | 92.7% |
| Do you think economically weaker sections (EWS) of society are able to grab opportunities? | 66.7% |

- Table 4: Above table shows the three questions and percentage of right answers given by women.
- Shockingly, only 57.4% were satisfied by the efforts put by government in women safety.
- Around 93% of educated women agree with the decision made on amendment of Triple Talaq.
- A fair number of educated women from Karnal (82 out of 123) felt that Economically Weaker Section of Society is able to grab opportunities.

Studying this data depth reveals that a greater number of women are not actively participating as they ideally should. For the state concerning matters, a very poor picture comes out while educated women in Karnal are little more aware of national and local political scenarios. Steps should be taken to tackle the situation for favourable outcomes in society on a large scale.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the educated women of Karnal seemed active in common political activities. As 94.3% women seemed sure of voting in next coming elections. 80.5% of educated women are registered for voting at their current address.

Educated women seemed a lot more aware about local and national level politics. 82% of educated women were able to tell the name of Member of Parliament from Karnal constituency. And 89.4% were able to state the name of the Mayor of Municipal Corporation of Karnal. 81.3% of educated women from Karnal on an average agree with the decisions taken by centre government or policies framed by them

But they are a little unaware of the facts and information about politics at the state level. Nearly 50% of educated women were able to select the correct politician who has never represented the state of Haryana. Only 36.6% of the educated women from Karnal knew the name of current president of a state party who had in coalition formed government in the state.

General purview regarding central government policies has been in favour of government which they knew about the decisions made by the centre government. A greater number of educated women seemed to have faith in the work done by the government for the various sections of the society.

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