

Voting Behavior of Women's in Char Areas

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Abstract – The central feature of liberal democratic government is representation between men and women in political activity. Both men and women must have an equal opportunity to engage equally in all respects and in all stages of democratic systems in accordance with international norms. While in many countries women have taken great strides in securing a vote and the right to be elected to political positions, they make up less than 11%. While different legislative enactments and commissions for supporting gender equality have been created, gender differences continue to occur, particularly in the political arena. Encouraging women in politics is one of female empowerment's key fields. The participation of women at the policy level not only improves their social, political and economic status, but also reinforces public structures by enhancing their inclusiveness and purpose. While women have made greater progress, because of political, socioeconomic, ideological and psychological factors they still cannot engage in politics. Women's fair representation in this framework must also be analyzed in the proper way in order to provide good democratic governance. There will be no true democracy if we neglect or put aside the voices and problems of women that make up half of the country's population. This paper analyses women's difficulties, voting behavior and problems in national and local government.

Keywords – Voting Behavior, Women, Char Areas, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

Progress in a nation relies on the amount of development of its women. Regardless of the structure and shape of culture, women as producers and participants in the creation of society still played their central and inseparable role. Women are connecting community with history. The Vedas and the Hindu tradition show that women have a distinct status comparable to men in all societies. In Vivekananda terms, Just as a bird can't travel with a single wing only, if the women are left behind, the country won't march. The status of women in society is also one of the indicators of social and national growth. It is a weighing tool and a free index of the civilization and cultural achievements of the region. Emancipation from femininity and human growth may be correlated. Social development by the social status of the female sex may be precisely calculated. In Nehru's terms, "Women's position indicates a country's character." 4 In order to determine women's role in societies, an optimal starting point for an effort should be the institutional context, social function, cultural standard and value structures. With the use of multiple historical, political, economic and educational factor moving society through time and space, the place and position of women in society can better be understood. 6 In India, in various times

of history women have been put in different social class and positions.

Women were thought fair and complementary to men in all ancient religions. While Hinduism endows women with the shakti, Islam identifies them with Being's mystery, Christianity worships Virgin Mary which symbolizes every femininity. But religious scriptures were increasingly misinterpreted and women in India took a lower role in society during the Muslim era. They were systematically discriminated against and the male family and culture institutionalized exploitation. These remarks on feminist roles and standing in traditional cultures are not just strange arguments of feminists and social activists. Different observational research carried out in various cross-sections of conventional cultures by social anthropologists affirms this approach. The Indian Constitution does not distinguish itself from sex and provides all men and women fairly with citizenship, equality and privileges. The Constitution's Preamble ensures order, freedom and dignity for everyone regardless of gender. Women are still accorded basic rights as males. They are granted fundamental rights. In addition, women also get

additional rights through Directive Principles of Indian Constitutional State Policy.

Voting Behavior of Women's

When women do engage in civic events, their self-interest is linked to their lack of inherent incentive. To put it another way, modern female electoral engagement is mostly motivated by self-interest. 44% of rural women are only involved in village relations when their lives are necessary, 35% of whom only follow others or support their neighbors, and just 6% of women are involved in voicing their opinion. This shows that the decisions taken in the village are not focused only on the male elite. By their interest in themselves, rural women often contribute to it.

Voting behavior may be said to be "basic features of democracy". Thus, the study voting of behavior has become an important aspect of contemporary political research. It entails a study of people's psychological makeup and how it relates to democratic behavior, as well as institutional patterns including the contact mechanism and how it affects elections. The study of voting behavior constitutes an important area of political science in which theory can be systematically and qualitatively analyzed and tested. The complex role of elections in the political system is "sidelined by an examination and observation of voting behavior of the electorate". Thus, voting is an "individual behavior", which indicates the voter's "inclination, choice, preferences, agreements, ideologies, concerns, alternatives and so on with regards to various questions of issues on which the elections are fought". Moreover, voting behavior indicate the dynamic role that one plays in the achievement of collective ends. It implies the essential "assertion of his rights and communication for the society and nations.

Reasons for the Low Representation of Women

According to Indian culture, a woman's proper position is inside the four walls of her house, and her primary responsibility is to provide for her domestic duties. Without a question, the numerous measures taken towards the path of women's empowerment by the award of equitable legal rights have had a significant impact on their conventional status. Another factor contributing to the low number of women in the Lok Sabha is the largely agricultural economy. With little economic freedom and a growing workload, it is difficult to anticipate rural women to participate actively in politics.

Traditional Gender Concepts

Some old gender concepts from conventional Chinese society, such as "preference for boys over children" and "woman inferiority to men," continue to influence people's thoughts and actions today. In the course of socialization, women have been relegated

to the private part of the household. Their schooling, which began when they were young, seeks to instill in them the virtues of a wife and mother. As a consequence, they lack the skills requisite for civic leadership and engagement as they get older, and they have no appetite for leadership or freedom, which explains their lack of involvement in real democratic events. Many restrictions confront rural women, all of whom threaten their political efficacy. Our findings show that some women have primary education only because their parents do not believe in girls' worth and want them to go to work at a young age. As a consequence, many rural women have a low degree of schooling, which affects their desire to participate in politics and their electoral effectiveness.

Women's Limited Desire for Power

Rural women are also motivated by their own material wishes to participate in political activity. Rural people usually act according to their wishes. The conditions of rural women also fall in line with those of modern urban culture, such as physiological needs, protective needs and basic survival needs. The 'consent authority' is founded on a social compact that is ratified and executed on behalf of the public. It should not be mistaken for the totalitarian "criminal force" of the ruling class. The demands, the hunger for control and a stronger motivation for working are higher once they are free from economic worries. "Right to agree" is more costly for rural women than for men. They still have a huge burden in raising their kids, caring for their ageing relatives and fulfilling their duties as mothers. As a result, they are more concerned with the economic gains that directly affect their life and have no appetite for political influence.

Concept of Family Culture

The profound impact of the "homeland ethic" in rural regions, along with the absence of social institutions and the weak operation of the Federation of Women, lead to the lack of trust in public organizations, among rural women. Rural China is a society that creates raises and buries citizens in the same place. The town is usually made up of citizens of the same last name. In everyday life, rural people decide not to enter a society of common interest or draw upon help from their family clans or interest groups. According to our survey, 13% of women rejected the concept of creating a special mutual assistance organization to support them improve. When asked whether they wanted the Women's Federation's support in a situation, more than half of the women said only if they were uncertain about the policies. If they have household issues, they typically shift for help to their neighbors or family clans. Furthermore, because of the conventional wisdom not to publicize marital problems, they seldom pursue

support from "outsiders," preferring only to resort to their relatives and trusted associates.

VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN INDIA

The voter exercises this right under a constellation of influences including the "advice of a friend, fondness for a particular candidate, feeling about particular issue, his/her personal whims", etc. There is no single factor which decides voting behavior of the electorate. Each voter is influenced by several factors before he/she forms his/her opinion about a candidate or the party assesses its performance.

1. **Party Identification:** The important factors are perhaps party identification. Many people in India decide their voting behavior taking into consideration the identity of the political party and its programme. Party identification is a long process and very closely related to political socialization, but in some cases in India, people change their preference for political parties.
2. **Personality Factor:** Strong and charismatic personality of a candidate plays a decisive role in determining voting behavior. A positive image of a party's candidate is a source of popular support for the party.
3. **Religion and Community:** Religion plays a vital role in political behavior not only in India but also in the west. Political leaders at the time of elections visit religious leaders and get an appeal issued from them for election purpose. In fact, in India each religion has to an extent identified itself with some political party.
4. **Social Status:** In every country, people belonging to different strata of society offer themselves as candidate at the time of elections. Though it is left to each voter to cast vote in the manner he would like to vote, but while casting vote every voter very much takes into account the social status of the candidate.
5. **Age:** Age of the candidate in many cases considerably counts for determining voting behavior. The voters prefer to vote in favor of comparatively mature candidates rather than those who are younger or those who are old and weak.
6. **Sex:** Sex also counts in shaping voting behavior. In developing countries like India, voters often prefer to vote for men than women. It is evident from the fact that usually the number of women candidates who succeed at the polls is much less than the male candidates.

7. **Education and Income:** Education and income are two other variables. In Western democracies, the better educated and more affluent in the society are most persistent participants.
8. **Illiteracy:** A major portion of the populace constitutes the illiterate in India.
9. **Money Power:** India, like many other nations of the Third World, is a poor country. Voters seek money or goods from a candidate in return for their votes. A rich party has relatively better chances of electoral success

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN VOTERS AND THEIR PERCEPTION TOWARDS POLITICS

The respondents' socio-economic profile ensures that the electoral environment is understood and also a vital guide to knowing society's complexities. A individual forms his personality on the social, political, educational and environmental level. The voters' social history is vital since its status as democratic actor is determined. Caste decides a person's social class. It often contributes to the development of a distinctive political community and serves a key function as a public policy tool to achieve political and social objectives. Castes decide vote and establish banks for voting. Indeed, several election studies have verified the importance of caste in the electoral behaviour of the Indians in particular. In the political attitude of India in general and electoral behaviour in particular, Caste is said to be a core predictor. In the voting, caste plays a significant role in Warangal, particularly in the case of electorate help. The district politics are shaped by the political background and caste structure.

In analysis of voter behavior, Age is a significant analytical predictor. The research divides the age categories into 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-50 years and 51 years and over. Table-5.4 provides age-specific distribution. The majority of women chosen are from 30 to 50 years of age. Which is 67.72% compared with 19.04% and 12.89% in age groups aged 20-30 years, above the 50-year-old age range. From the above details it is clear that young people may not find a significant share of the sample, while the lower middle ages have majority proportions of the voters. The upper middle part is still very high, whereas the old strata are thin. In essence, young and elderly are meager for the electorate, while the lower centre and upper middle divisions dominate the majority of voters.

RELIGION AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR

In char areas, religion inevitably forms women's voting and political opinion. Women not only vote for a 'common interest' group, but also for a candidate's religion. In elections, religion is not only important for the voters, it is also important for the political parties. The above table shows that political parties nominate only candidates that take into account the religious demographics of Dhubri LAC. Dhubri LAC is a Muslim winner and runner-up. The candidate of BJP, a Hindu candidate, managed a ranking only in 2001. In all elections, 69% of respondents believed religion to be the central factor, shaping voting conduct and opinions. Again, the field study showed the importance of "religious identity" over "general identity." Just 22% of women interviewed believed that women's candidates should vote.

It should be remembered that during the election period, religious leaders play an important role. They freely preach the group the society needs to help and also point out the challenges that their community faces. "Religion is what holds us together," said Roopbhanu Bewa (Bhasaani Char 77 years of age). Religious leaders will visit each house every election and explain the reasons why AIUDF must be voted by our communities."

Voting Behavior: Rational Act versus Social Identity

Participation and commitment of citizens counts since it strengthens and legitimates democracies. The preamble to the Indian constitution begins with "We the citizens," which effectively means that the aims of the Indian state must be accomplished more collectively. However, in India the role of women remains a controversy and patriarchal standards have influenced women's lives in various ways. Public interests are becoming more powerful for women on the outskirts of society and they rely on them over time. Batra and Reio Jr. have claimed that 'India is a collective culture where human interests are sacrificed in favour of the group and Indian women make this sacrifice for their families in the first instance. Traditionally, and importantly, although the Indian patriarchal culture views a woman as a member of the family or a group, she is not viewed as an individual with an identity of her own.'¹¹ The notion of a "fair" vote is in conflict with this. The theories of rational choice believe that voting is a rational act through which the elector understands the advantages of participating and has links to the services he controls. Theory of reasonable choice has become the subject of critique by various feminist theorists who tend to be characteristically feminine by accusing theories of rative choice of the assumption of the egoistic, reparative and non-emotional actor who is masculine, while ignoring conjunctive, altruistic and emotive driving.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anne Stevens (2007) in their book *Women, Power and Policy* provides an account of women's involvement in political life and representation, mostly those in the Organization for International Cooperation and Development in 15 economically advanced liberal democracies (OECD). She gives an overview of the political behavior and status of women. Stevens will explore thoroughly how the circumstances under which women work are likely to change and how they are restricted or facilitated. She focuses on the differences that women will make in politics. This book helps me to consider women's interest in politics and to analyze women in Sikkim in context.

Bakshi (2012) Empowerment represented the principle of empowerment for women in *Challenges of Women*. The author spoke about women fighting to achieve their strength and status in society. Women in India are not encouraged because of lack of knowledge, lack of support, lack of trust, lack of qualities of leadership and so on. The question of women's engagement and inclusion is one of fundamental issues. Women in the hands of men are called lower and subject. Women physically and mentally frail relative to men are commonly thought about. An order to eliminate gender inequality, the government has enacted several regulations. However, in Indian culture, this dilemma remains. Women's economic status is not high in the world. They have yet to achieve equal chances and equitable wages. The role of women in politics is often controlled by men. Training may play a vital role in women's empowerment strategies. They become economically independent and trustworthy and explore their talents by learning. Government can also support programmes and aviation's aimed at empowering women.

Chaudhary (2012) the role of women in rural areas has been clarified in empowerment of rural women's issues and opportunities. Many individuals have gained from the introduction of technologies in recent years. But those people who live in rural areas, particularly women from rural areas, cannot make use of such technological developments. Rural women must be supported in developing their effectiveness and skills. Rural women's empowerment includes gender inclusion, job opportunities and personal freedom. These privileges have long been stripped of rural people. In the rural region, the wage prospects are lacking, jeopardising rural women's economic conditions. Their speech is muted because of economic dependence. In rural communities there is still a shortage of educational opportunities; many abuse against women is widespread crime in rural areas. Domestic violence. Several government policies for rural female growth have been analysed by the scholar. They still fall behind, however. However.

Awareness and empowerment policy for women is emerging.

Devi (2000) A myth or reality in the case of women equal rights in India has explored numerous problems faced by women, especially in the agriculture sector, to achieve their status and place. This thesis spoke about women as the first farmers and discovered farming equipment. They played a big role in agriculture, but they didn't enjoy fair opportunities even if they worked as men.

Durga P Chhetri (2013) In his article Politics of Inclusion and Women's Empowerment: Case of Hill State of Sikkim (India), it explores reservations as an element of inclusion policy and provides an opening to women in the practice of exercising their democratic rights in local self-governance. He also claimed that women from Sikkim experience more political independence and legal autonomy, and that these benefits were, he believes, a result of the Sikkim government's progressive policy approach.

Goswami's (2010) Indian people debated the status of Indian women in politics throughout the years. The author clarified that with the passing of time the status of Indian women has shifted. During the Mughal time there was a huge drop in their status. Indian women play a very significant part in independence combat while India was under the control of the British government. Since Indian independence, several legislations have been enacted to enhance women's position. Women's involvement in grassroots government also increased since the 73rd and 74th amendment. The author has also provided a profile in this piece of work to some popular Indian women such as Indra Gandhi, Mamata Banerji, Uma Bharati, Sushama Swaraj and Rabari Devi. It is analyzed that the representation of women in politics grew after the policy of reservations. The dilemma has been seen at a lower stage of politics of their empowerment. Male members are also dominant. Their engagement in politics must be improved.

Zoya Hasan and Ritu Menon (2005) In a minority: Essay on Muslim women of India (eds) is a collection of ten papers which aim to 'chart the diversity of women's life in India' (Oxford University Press, New Delhi). Over the last few decades, the topic of Muslim Personal Law and related fields, including triple talak and polygamy, has become the subject of attention. A baseline analysis of the Indian Muslim Woman Survey found that the "Muslim identity," which has been established between class, area and sex, is a "heterogeneous identity." There is a mixed question of 'public' and 'private domain,' and the survey reveals that 'religion does not substantially affect Muslim women's position, but poverty does.' This book discusses, among other topics, the role of Muslim women in Kashmir, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and in the media the portrayal of Muslim women. But the book in Assam, which has a large Muslim community, is not concerned with the

empowerment and position of Muslim people. It is important to remember that the problem of purdah, polygamy and triple talaq in Assam particularly in the charity areas does not form their identities, but poverty and analphabetism are the biggest challenges for women in the charitable fields.

Manon Tremblay (2007) A compared analysis describes the reasons that support or prevent women from getting to parliament in democratic countries. In her article Democracy, Representation and Women: A Comparative Analysis She says, due to the duration of political experiment, the considerations determining women in the entrance of parliament vary. In her studies, she concludes that the electoral scheme is the main explanatory reason for the proportion of women in parliament in countries where democracy has prevailed only for a short period, whereas in long developed democratic countries, the egalitarian principle of gender norms is the most strong explanation. This essay offers an analytical study into the duration with democratic experiments with various social, economic and political causes.

Manuka Khanna's (2009) Women's political involvement in India is an intense investigation into the causes that have led to a large gap between the role of women as "dejure" and "defecto" in Indian political participation. Khanna listed three factors: pathological variability, socioeconomic variable and political variable which have a far-reaching effect on women's engagement in politics. To gain a better understanding of it. Women were socialized to conclude that politics in a 'dirty game' in the psychological sense. Women therefore tend not to relate to this region. Secondly, the presence of women often depends on socioeconomic variables like sex, schooling, work, income, faith, families, and residence and so on. Women in India are socialized in order to play the part that is mostly domestic.

Rao (2007) In her work Women in Decentralized Governances defined women's presence in socio-economic and political realms as being half of the total population. The Indian government has established and initiated a number of women's development plans and initiatives. 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment for women's political emancipation is adopted by the Government of India. This was a landmark in promoting women in the grassroots sector. The author also provided socio-economic profile and the involvement of women in Panchayati Raj institutions in this paper. The thesis analysed the socioeconomic, structural and legal limitations of women's participation in the socio-economic and political process.

Savitri Goonesekere (2004) as violence against women becomes more prevalent in India, the law and criminal justice system have struggled to act or cope adequately with it in several respects. Indeed,

the prosecution rate for violence against women is estimated to be less than 4%. The State has made very little attempt in the last few years to actually curtail or cope with the abuse, both in terms of rendering the legislation more sensitive to women and in terms of implementing it. As a result, women have to live in silence, with little moral or other recourse. After several changes in the early 1980s, comprehensive legislation related to violence against women remains insufficient and do not represent the different types of violence women face.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study's goals were as follows:

1. To analyze the nature of political participation of women in char areas of Assam.
2. To analyze the electoral trends and voting behavior of women in char areas of Assam.
3. To examine the role of social institutions and forces in determining voting behavior and modes of participation of women in politics in char areas of Assam.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will be conducted in Dhubri district which has the highest number of chars amongst all the districts of Assam. It was confined to the study of chars under Dhubri LAC.

Field Study and Interview Schedule:

The field study will be done in the char areas of Dhubri district in different phases which will spread over three years, and quantitative methods were employed especially to analyze the General Elections (2014) and Assembly Election (2016). The primary data will be collected through field study and participant observation method where a structured interview schedule comprising lots of thematic questions will be used. The interview schedule acted as a guide in collecting data on quantifiable variables like age, educational qualification, economic and health status, level of participation in the political field etc. The schedule will be translated into the local language i.e. Bengali and the interviews were administered in Bengali which is spoken by the majority of the people of this char. After conducting the interviews, the responses were translated into English for the purpose of data analysis. Use of the Likert scale and matrix type questions was used to analyze the views of the electorates. With due permission from the respondents, the interviews were recorded in a voice recorder. Focus group interviews played a critical role in understanding women's perception on politics in the char areas.

Sampling method:

There are 186 polling stations in Dhubri Assembly Constituency. Out of them, 54 polling stations fall in char Areas.

1. A multi-stage sampling method will be adopted for the research work. Firstly, out of the 54 polling stations, 4 polling stations will be identified through purposive sampling methods on the basis of their uniqueness. Secondly, once the four polling stations were selected, women voters were identified and segregated from the electoral rolls. Thirdly, once the population is segregated, 50 respondents from each of the 4 selected polling stations were randomly selected. Thus, 200 respondents were identified and their views were analyzed and scrutinized. This method will follow for conducting the two field surveys i.e. General Elections (2014), Assembly Election (2016). A total of 400 respondents were part of the research study.
2. Women Presidents of Gaon Panchayats in Dhubri District were interviewed.

Research Tools:

The use of interview schedule will be imperative to analyze the issue of political participation and voting behavior of women in char Areas in Dhubri Assembly Constituency.

Additionally, the following research tools will be used:

- Interviews with the women electorates;
- Focus group interviews with the women voters;
- Case studies.

CONCLUSION

In general, participation of women and their interests therefore forward one measure and reverse two. Equality, fairness and rights to the real gender are also a long way to go. This research attempts to determine the voting behavior of women, who constitute nonetheless numerically a minority community, but functionally a major class by their practices that are profitable, sustainable and income producing. They also checked the principles of economic emancipation, but the key area of the current research is to what degree they still participate in the democratic process. The essence and degree of political socialization and the participation of working women were tried with this key area of study. Working people today represent a substantial portion of women, and their

inclusion in the democratic arena is required to take part in national building. But the degree and extent to which political socialization enables a person to acquire or learn the requisite skills, expertise, behavior and arrangements that allow them to behave more or less as successful and involved members of society depends on political engagement. This demonstrates that middle- and older women's parents, in turn, are less politically educated than younger-age women's parents. As women make up half of the population of the country, their participation in the decision-making process is essential for democratic change, culture and the development of the community. In addition, the fair opportunities, growth and empowering of the women are directly related to power shaping and distribution, and to democratic decision-making in order to allocate social principles. In conclusion, there has been no significant improvement in women's electoral engagement and political equality in terms of economic emancipation. Economic emancipation and democratic socialization are closely related to the political effectiveness of working people, but their political activity except voting does not have that relationship.

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