

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF SIKH AND
MUSLIM WOMEN IN PUNJAB: A CASE STUDY OF
MALERKOTLA CONSTITUENCY**


A

THESIS

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Supervisor
Dr. Jagroop Kaur
Professor and Head
Department of Political Science
Punjabi University, Patiala



Submitted By:
Rahila



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis, "*Political Participation of Sikh and Muslim Women in Punjab: A Case Study of Malerkoila Constituency*" submitted by Ms. Rahila for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science, is the record of her original research work, carried out under my guidance and supervision. The matter reported in this thesis is a bonafide research work and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of any university/institution.

Supervisor 

02 02 2017
Day Month Year

Dr. Jagroop Kaur
Professor and Head
Department of Political Science
Punjabi University Patiala

It is to be certified that there is no suggestion from Examiner's side


22.17

CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

Political participation is an essential part of democratic political structure. Better participation of the people in the political process and political Institutions replicates the good strength of the system. Utmost participation means additional legitimacy to the behavior of the government and political stabilities. The admiration for the political legitimacy by the people proves that the government enjoys the self-assurance of the people.

Political participation is very important for the political development of any country. The better involvement of the masses in a mounting political system, guided to a larger sympathy on the part of people to the principles of equality and a wider approval by them of universalistic law. A developed political system which did not have the original and participatory maintain of the masses, was not efficient political system or government.¹

In a society, where the structure either denies additional participation or has no respect for it and people do not participate in it, the probability of political insecurity or revolution become very bright. In the conventional and monarchical system, political participation is cruelly controlled. The democratic system on the extra hand has no limitations. Because the political participation in a self-governing system provides less possibility of revolution when compared with military and totalitarian rules and for that substance even in monarchy. The rejection of participation of the people in the political procedure led to aggressive activities on the part of the people for bringing about a modify in the societal and political life. In every time, today even armed dictators and totalitarian regimes, construct some agreement for the participation of the people

¹ S.P. Verma, *Modern Political Theory*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1975, p. 337.

in the political system in a partial way. There is some appearance of support of their achievement by the people.

In any democratic country, political participation is significant gadget for understanding the character of the political system. In democratic political system, probability and opportunities for political participation are given to every resident in the state. Development of political participation was partially stimulated by the wish to give meaning and strength to the standard of permission answerability and political resistance. Participation is the principal means through which approval is decided or inhibited in a democracy and the rulers made responsible to the ruled.²

Women Political Participation: Meaning, Definition

Women's political participation is the genuine and equal participation of women in the governance. The oversight of women from positions of power gravely affects the aptitude to confront the secondary of women in all its expression. Women have to be in politics and power to participate as women and to modify the very nature of that power which prohibited them. Women who comprise of almost half of the population need to be represented considerably in decision making bodies. Otherwise the goal of development cannot be attain. Gender fairness is very necessary for the development of any society.

Political participation is a method by which people acquire part in political activities. Implement voting rights during elections is one of the significant political activities of the people. Participation of women in this political movement is approximately equal to men, but political participation is not only casting the vote. It comprises extensive range of other activities like membership of political party, electoral campaigning, presence party meetings, demonstrations, announcement with leaders, holding party place, contesting elections, membership in

² Herbert Maccloskv, *International Encyclopedia of Social Science*, Vol.11 & 12, Macmillan Company and the Free Press, New York, 1968, p. 253.

representative bodies, pressure decision making and other related activities.

With this understand of political participation, the proof shows that in the majority of the countries participation of women is not extraordinary as the number of women participating in dynamic politics is smaller compared to men. Women who are gifted to obtain decision making power are classically from urban and elite groups. Large mass of women are reserved out of political field due to different reasons. There was no severe attempt to contain women in politics. In many countries women had to pay long encounter to get their rights. Despite that, they were not talented to get rightful position in the field of politics. The most ordinary and established political deed in elections is voting. This is exercised by women equivalent to men and in information the number of women voters is growing day by day. But women until the 20th century did not have the right to vote. American women were the first who begin fighting for their rights to vote. In most of the western broadminded democracies, women won voting rights after their regular fight with the system.

It has been stated that the character personality and the socio economic and cultural environment is to a huge amount accountable for women's insignificant participation in politics. The culture which puts maximum best on the males, the political environment of volatility, criminalization and deficiency of political attitude are factors which strain the amount of political participation. Socio political environment determines the participation and association of women in politics.³

The subject of women's political empowerment came to the front position of the global discuss for women's rights at the time of the fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995. It confirmed "women's equal participation in following in political life plays an essential role in the broad procedure of the improvement of women.

³ Sinha Niroj (Ed.), *Women in India Politics: Empowerment of Women through Political Participation*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000, p.p. 17-18.

Women's identical participation in judgment making is a command for simple impartiality and essential situation for women's curiosity to be taken into description".⁴ In this meeting global community harassed the significance of women arrogant position of power and pressure, not only because their point of view and talents are wanted, but also as a material of their human rights. Moreover, augmented participation of women in decision making process with admiration to social values, growth directions and allowance of resources enables women as well as men to control societal agendas and to assist to locate priorities.⁵

The widespread Wealth similarly has also been attend to the issue and taken a number of initiatives for the reason of ornamental women's representation. At their 1995 meeting, Common Wealth Heads of Government authorized the plan of action on gender and development, which was use by the member countries to obtain action to augment women's participation in political decision making at all levels. At their 1996 meeting, Common Wealth Ministers of Women's Affairs optional that the member countries realize a aim of no less than 30 percent for women in political, public sector by the year 2005. The require to augment women's participation in political decision making and quiet practice in the Common Wealth was a part of the program of the Common Wealth ministers accountable for women's affairs, in their sixth meeting detained in new Delhi from April 16-19, 2000.⁶

Women's political participation has been the agenda of different international conferences and symposiums. Different recommendations were made to get better the involvement of women in political decision making. Women's political empowerment was at the middle stage of all discourses on women's issues at the global level. It is outlook that, the

⁴ Beijing Platform for Action, pp. 109.

⁵ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/draw/public/w2oct97/partlen.html>. Seen on December 19, 2013.

⁶ Biju M. R, "Women Empowerment in India: Changing Socio-Political Equation", Mittal Publication, New Delhi, 2005, p.218.

participation of women is a vital quality in the modern political system. “The primary disparity among the ‘subject’ and ‘citizen’ depends upon the political participation of people in the political structure”.⁷ Political processes are possible due to this political participation.

The political procedure of return a public emissary based on general adult voting is now spread normally everywhere. Thus the chances of political participation are now obtainable to all citizens. The constancy or instability of any political system depends upon the political participation of people. “Approval responsibilities and political resistance are calculated as three primary principles of democracy.”⁸ The laws convincing the voting advance in reality to support the women for political participation and to allow the people to admit the blame of political participation. But it is seen that people do not engage in political process due to their political lethargy. In fact the participation of women in great amount is essential to reinforce the democratic system, but the majority of women concerned in it only for voting due to their political indifference. Every one shows one’s contribution as per his ability. Individual and the society are precious by many factors so the difference is seen in the political life of individual as well as society. Besides it, a person or society also shows the political participation at diverse levels, through dissimilar mediums. Thus, every individual or society involves in political processes by creation their direct or indirect participation.

J.L.Woodward and E. Rupes have quarrel five activities about political participation. “They are (i) By Voting (ii) Supporting through pressure groups, (iii) Personally and straight contacting with legislators, (iv) Participating by political parties, (v) Appealing in dimensions of political opinion with extra citizens.”⁹

⁷ S.G. Deogaonkar, *Rajkiya Samarshastra*, Shri Mangesh Publication, Nagpur, 2001, p. 88.

⁸ Garge S.M. (Edi.), *Bhartiya Samaj Vidnyan Kosh*, Vol.IV, Samaj Vidnyan Mandal, Pune, 1990, p. 98.

⁹ N. Jaypalan, *Modern Political Analysis*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi. 1990, p. 103.

In this recent age, of Federal Democracy the political participation of women is seen increasing day by day. Because the supremacy struggler political leaders, encourages the women for political contribution. Voting at polls is measured as the best tool for political participation. Many processes are counting in the political participation, like receiving in succession about politics to argue about it, campaigning for the elections and genuine voting etc.

The political participation of women is precious by the factors like social, political, psychological, cultural and economic and customs etc. The procedure of political participation may be also positive or negative. The direct participation is measured as an optimistic participation. The participation which influences the political setup without any real participation is said as negative participation. It means that any political system cannot find steadiness without the permission of people. The maximum participation of people is the mainly essential for the political constancy. All the political procedure gets liveliness only unpaid to the political contribution of people. One can engage in the political practice through diverse levels right from voting up to achieving the maximum position in power. So it is seen that there are various definitions of political participation.

DEFINITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation is a term that has many meaning. The word political participation has narrow as well as broader sense. For understand the meaning of political participation following definition can help:

According to Rush Michael and Althoff Phillip “The practice of sharing by an individual at different levels in a political setup is called as a political participation.”¹⁰

¹⁰ R.G. Khairna, *Dhule Jilhyatil Gram Panchayat Vyavasthe Antargat Zalelya Arthik, Samajik Va Rajkiya Gramin Vikasacha Chikistak Abhyas*, Ph.D Thesis-unpublished, 2010, p. 272.

According to David Easten, “when the set of people living in exacting area get some group decisions, then the participation of people in that decision making is called as political participation.”¹¹

According to Donald Mathues and James “Each political communication done by people to express straight the political thoughts is called as political participation.”¹²

According to Almond and Powell, “The participation of the members of the social order in the decision making process of the political system is called political participation.”¹³

According to H. Mcloey, “Political participation is the machine in democratic to get out the support or to provide the support as well as create the rulers towards the governed people.”¹⁴

Accordingly the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, “political participation will submit for those voluntary activities by which members of society share in the choice of rulers and directly or ultimately in the structure of public policy.”¹⁵

Norman H. Nowie and Sidney Verba defines the political participation as “political participation is the lawful movement of universal people whose objective is to affects straight to the discussion taken by those political legislature which are chosen by them.”¹⁶

Robert Daul said that “the mentally participation in the governmental conclusion means political participation.”¹⁷

All these definitions of political participation it is observed that the political participation is not just the limited, secondary and short term participation in the voting, but it is a lengthy and

¹¹ B.R. Joshi(Edi.), *Samajik Shastratil Saudnya Siddhant Kosh*, Rajya Shastra, Diamond Publication, Pune, 2008, p. 327.

¹² Devendrapal Singh Tomar, *Rajnitik Samaj Shastra*, Discovery Publication House, New Delhi, 2007, p. 103.

¹³ C.G. Ghangarekar, *Tulnatmak Rajkiya Vyavastha*, Shree Mangesh Publication, Nagpur, 1990, p. 64.

¹⁴ B.L. Bhole, *Rajkiya Vishleshan, Pimpalapur*, Book Distributors & Co. Publishers, Nagpur, 1988, p. 166.

¹⁵ David Sills (Edi.), *Internation Encyclopedia of Social Science*, Delhi, 1968, p.252.

¹⁶ *Ibid* 6., p.103.

¹⁷ S.B. Thakare, *Adhunik Rajkiya Vishleshan*, Vidya Publication, Nagpur, 1993, p.94.

continuous process. To choose the government and ruler to create the government accountable towards subjects and to engage the people in decision making process of government all these things are built in the process of political participation. Political participation is a wide idea, in which the public is choosing the ruler straightly or indirectly and willingly with it leaving its collision by the proper decision making process of rulers by participating through unusual medium.

FACTORS AFFECTING ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The amount of political participation is more or less at dissimilar levels and amid different factors of society. Several people participate only up to the conversation on politics; some participate by attractive part in vote as a candidate, while some other participates only for the voting at polls. Some people contribute right from the campaigning of election up to the preparation at all stages, while some people have a wonderful irritation about politics. They vary in proportion of political participation to each person happens due to shock of social, economic and other reasons on those persons. The political participation of a person depends upon the social, economical, cultural, educational and political status to which that being belongs, while studying about political participation Millbrith said that, there are four factors, which concern with the political participation. According to him these factors are – “1) The awareness gained to the person, 2) The personal traits of the individual, 3) The social backdrop or the social characteristics of that person, 4) The political background or the political impression in which people lives or works.”¹⁸

While livelihood in the society and while interacting in the society, the person happens in this nature, thinking and the actions as the time passes. Many people are self centered are living in their particular cocoon. They do not come out of their chrysalis; some

¹⁸ Rush Michael & Althoff Phillip, *An Introduction of Political Sociology*, Thomus Nelson and Sons, Nairobi Kenya, 1972, p.104.

other cannot choose their own view. While some are those who are always struggling in the society.

The political scientist Rizman classified the people based on their nature as “(i) Convention centered, (ii) Self central or shy person, (iii) Outgoing person. He has also seen the difference between their political assumptions.”¹⁹

Verba and Sydney have said “a) Faith in aptitude, b) Trust concerning the system, c) the attention about politics of person. These are three factors which make influence on the political participation of any person.”²⁰

Rabert E Lane says, about the factors touching on political participation – “Political participation is such an actions which get influenced due to age, sex, education, social position, higher or lower ethnic position, faith and nationality.”²¹

While living in the people some social forces are effect in the social life of the being changes happened with those forces on the person. Person also gets motivated or gets alienated from political participation e.g. the position of the person in society. The response with the stimulus and its reply is also different from person to person due to the dissimilarity in their personal qualities and abilities, competencies. The person either takes division in politics or goes left because of psychological discrimination of the persons, so the difference is observed in the political activities.

POLITICAL FACTOR

The level of political participation is determined by the degree of rivalry in the political life of the country by the contributor, the approach of the Government, the happening of political parties in the election process time and other essential political variables. When there is moderate, then these do not decide

¹⁹ *Ibid* 8, p.172.

²⁰ *Ibid* 7, p.71.

²¹ Ali Ashraff & L.N. Sharma, *Political Sociology – A New Grammar of Politics*, Universities Press, Madras, 1983, p.148.

participation e.g. universal adult franchise without caste, creed and religion. Then there is lively participation by the people. On the other side if the Rules are compound, the people are not in a spot to appreciate these rules and regulations. For example when restricted number of persons are permitted to cast their votes and limitations are put on the base of education, property, payment of tax, etc. the people do not appreciate simply the political electoral process in the state. It may also be revealed that some governments endorse chops which depress people from political participation. Such approach of the government alienates the people from dynamic participation in the political method of the state. The activities of the political parties in a democracy also play a major role in the participation of the people in political activities of the state. The political parties systematize meetings from time to time, a lot, act as connection between the leaders of the political parties and workers and emphasize problem of the people as well as propose their corrective measures. When political parties function at a point at which these are usually supposed to function, there is no complexity or problem. When however, either on possess or because of compulsions these measured down their activities, the point of political participation comes down. It is the election which differentiates democracy from other forms of government. One predictable and indissoluble of democracy is election when the election is frequently held with free and fair, without outside terror and pressures, then political participation on peak.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR

Similar to the others factors it has also effect the political participation of the people, authority factor, cluster environment loneliness, profession, freedom and state of mental clash play significant position to make the psychological environment of the political participation. The majority of the political leaders and workers at different levels claims that their aim to connect a particular party is

to provide it and propagate its philosophy and also that it has nothing to do with workplace or power, yet in real practice power factor plays a very large role in political participation process, when the possibility of possessing power is fairly wide open. Psychologically everybody is ready to participate in political activities. It is due to the wish for political power and its accessibility which increase or decreases the rate of participation. Psychologists have sharp out that loneliness is an essential factor which counts a lot in political participation. That person who live in solitude and want some good corporation join politics and starts to dynamically participate in political activities. The plan of the alone person is to combine with the people and enjoy their company. Profession also plays a significant job in political participation. Merchant and businessmen show more dynamic interest in politics than professionals because the previous are much effected by political disturbance and legislative measures than the latter. Teachers and Lawyers are more active political participants than others. There are several people who undergo from conflicts, these people have various problems at home which they find to resolution with the consequence that an unconscious disagreement is going on in their minds. They then choose to join politics to free from rational conflicts and their participation to politics gives release to them.

SOCIAL OR ENVIRONMENT FACTOR

The social or environment factor can transform or influence the people to political participation. It is the social surroundings which led the people to receive part in political participation. The social environment includes different basic feature of the society e.g. religion, education, job, residence, age and social position etc. Men and women have their religious which donate to his or her political participation. Political participation is also connected with religion of the people. In India the Hindus have been establish to be more dynamic participant's comparison to other religious communities. At the time of elections political parties move toward religious leaders for getting their hold for

their political parties. It is factual that those who have extra income have more chances of having higher education and relaxation which are positive factors for political participation. But in developing country like India people belonging to inferior and middle classes have produced very active political participants, who have grow to be very good leaders.

Habitation is also essential factor for political participation. Those who be alive in areas, which are the centre of political activities and where several political activists and leaders always acquire political interests, are simply prejudiced to participate in politics. On the other hand those, who are exist in in such areas where political action is dull, stay unaware of politics. In such conditions, the people are not aware about political participation, not to speak of fusion with political activities. The age of the people is also crucial factor for political participation. Generally the young man and women are enthusiastic to join in the political process comparison to the people who belonging to other age groups.²²

Political participation is also prejudiced by social position of the people. People belonging to lower caste show inferior rate of political participation when compared with those people who live in higher social status. It is because of this, that mature or male are more active contributor in political activities than.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

A really democratic and representative government cannot be established lacking women's contribution in the political processes. The dynamic participation of women on equal term with men, at all level of decision-making is necessary to the achievement of fairness, sustainable expansion, quiet and democracy.

The constitution of India is based on the standard of parity and assurances equality before law and identical defense to all its citizens. It not only guarantees fundamental rights and freedom, but also forbids

²² Cook and Morgan, *Participatory Democracy*, Harper and Raw Publisher, New York, 1971, p. 248.

favoritism on the basis of religion, caste, sex and place of birth. However, these rights have staid de jure and have not been interpret into de facto rights. As such, women have been denied social, financial, civil and political rights in many fields. An essential area where women have been insufficiently represented is in the political field. Under article 325 and 326 of the Indian constitution it gave the assurance of political equality, equal right to participation in political activities and right to vote correspondingly.

India, being the major democratic country in the world has very low representation of women in politics fields. Smaller women are seen in asset main status and decision making positions in the political fields. The marginalization of Indian women in politics is old as well as the Indian society. Their small representation in political field is one of the major reasons for the prohibiting of the interests of women in governance and expansion paradigms.

Women political participation of any country gives a muscular message globally not only in terms of parity and freedom of freedom but also in the space afford for women in the democratic structure of electoral politics. India has one of the strongest laws that give women a life with full respect and self-esteem, but the ethnicity, patriarchal set ups and societal norms have always treated them as secondary to men. Because of uneven distribution of resources, women do not have sufficient recourses, be it financial, material or human. Their monetary dependence over men also remains them away from burly political association. Their low representation in decision making institution signifies deep errors in the political arrangement of country. Historical, social and cultural factors have controlled women from enjoying their rights of participation in political procedure.

Indian constitution officially recognizes the political rights of women without any favoritism yet women are still slightly represented in the Indian political field. The reality that women are grossly under-represented in representation bodies in central and state governments

is evidence to a very incomplete admission to political power as the determination of socio-cultural difficulty in their way.

In the parliament and in the state Assemblies, women have not been given greatly significance as political actors. They could never engage more than 15 percent seats in the Parliament and state assemblies as well. It has been practical that democratic norms cannot be understand if marginalized sections, which comprises women are not in the normal of political process. It has been renowned that politics is conquered by males, mostly at the highest rank of political decision making.

Women's political participation in Punjab legislative assembly is concerned, it can be believed that the place of women in Punjab is not improved than the rest of India. After independence, the Punjab state legislature became bicameral for the first time in April 1952 encompasses two houses - Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad. The entirety number of women members in the 1952 Punjab Vidhan Sabha with 154 seats was 5. It enhanced to 9 in 1957 Punjab assembly elections, but in 1962 state assembly elections, number of women legislators declined and only 7 women got elected.

In 1966, the new state of Punjab was reconstituted. After reorganization, the first Punjab Vidhan Sabha elections were held in 1967 and simply one woman was elected as MLA. The amount of women MLAs in the Vidhan Sabha contacted the lowest point in the year 1969 when no woman got chosen. Many Assembly Elections have been held but the number of women legislators could never handle twice digits in the Punjab legislature previous to 2012 elections. The last Assembly Elections in Punjab were held in 2012 when 16 women were elected as MLA's. Even this representation of women was not balanced to the total population of women in Punjab. Even in Punjab from 1967 to 2012 only 10 women have in custody deferent situations in Council of Ministers. As far representation of woman in Rajya Sabha is concerned, Out of 13 seats only one women representative has been

to the Rajya Sabha from the state. In Punjab, sex ratio of women comes at 895 against 1000 men as per 2011 census report. The national ranking of Punjab in terms of sex ratio is 27th position.²³ According to 2011 census report, Male literacy rate is 80.4 percent and Female literacy rate is 70.7 percent in Punjab, comparatively less than male counterpart. Thus, above facts show that, in Punjab, the Political participation level of women is not much satisfactory.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to have a better understanding of the problem it is always helpful to review the existing literature to the problem of research project under study. A lot of work has been done on political participation of women in India and out of the country. The main among these works are:

Barbara J. Nelson in her *Women and politics World Wide*²⁴ analyses the complexities of women's participation on the irritated national scale and from the feminist perspective surveys 43 countries chosen to represent a diversity of political system, level of economic growth and regions. The research absolutely demonstrates that no country do women have political status, assess or influence equal to that enjoyed by men.

Ranjana Kumari and Anju Dubey in *Women Parliamentarians*²⁵ try to analyze the role and involvement of women parliamentarians in two different but related arenas of the political process: that is the parliament and the political party. It focuses on four levels: personal, electoral (party politics and not voting behavior), parliamentary and grassroots. A socio-economic outline of women parliamentarians is drawn up basically to explore who the women parliamentarians are and the impediments and support systems that either hinder or facilitate

²³ *Census of India*, 2011.

²⁴ J. Barbara Nelson, *Women and Politics World Wide*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1997.

²⁵ Ranjana Kumari and Anju Dubey, *Women participation: A study in Indian Context*, Har-Anand Publication, New Delhi, 1993.

their entry into politics. The study also analysis the role of women parliamentarians in their own party organizations and forums, responsibilities and leadership roles, their participation in election campaigns, in strategy formation etc. the work also deliberates on women political participation in parliament and their position.

Susheela Kushik's *Women participation in politics*²⁶ is anxiety itself the participation of women in the political formal political institutions. Such a participation is very much a state and indication of women's own present powers and status; it is also a obligation for influencing Direct and visible participation helps to increase the freedom of the social group and the accelerate the pace of its advancement. The lack of enough participation of women in politics and the decision making levels are themselves the consequences of their poor social and domestic status and their exclusion from certain place and level of power.

Kiran Saksena in her *Women and Politics*²⁷ highlights factors for the subordinate position of women in politics and some of the factors that imprison women to reach the top arc block. She declare lack of support by family and male counterparts, incomplete access to information , restricted access to training, fear of achievement, marriage, motherhood preordination of the family over vocation and stereotyped insight etc. as the main factors. The author reveals that women all over the world are not satisfied with this situation and exploring the ways to came out from this imposes.

Kapana Roy in her *Women in Indian Politics*²⁸ thrown light on three major issues which insist concern women's gross under representation in government, the in notice to women in the development process and violence against women. The author states that under representation of women in political arena in worldwide

²⁶ Susheela Kaushik , *Women's Participation in Politics* , Vikas Publishing house , New Delhi, 1993.

²⁷ Kiran Saksena (Ed.), *Women and Politics*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000 .

²⁸ Kalpana Roy, *Women in Indian Politics*, Rajat Publication , Delhi , 1999.

phenomena. It implies that they are being discriminated all over the world. She tries to find out the reasons for this sad situation and unfolds that the political parties are responsible for this sort of sad state of affair. She blames political parties for neglecting their duties to assemble to give political education to women and also for their crash of nominates more female candidates. She observes that the male leaders do not want women folk to join normal of the nation.

Ansari 2006 focused on Muslim representation in Lok Sabha and 12 sate familiar from 1952-2004 in his study political representation of Muslims in India 1952-2204.²⁹ He tried to identify the outline of success and failure visible from the analysis of data in constant and variables. The study comes to wide conclusion that initially Muslim under representation was caused by be short of of political will of Indian National congress during three electrons of first decade (1952-1962) to construct strong conservation for the due nomination of Muslim candidates.

The Empowerment of *Muslim in India: Perspective, Context and Prerequisites*³⁰ in a vital exercise on the empowerment of Muslims by Momin (2004). It also focuses for creating an surroundings which may definitely help the empowerment of marginalized communities.

Ghosh (1987) in his study *Muslim Politics in India*³¹ presents a depressing picture of ongoing activities of Muslims including population rise, decline to polygamy and birth control and sensitive issues particularly after independence.

*Muslim politics in the Punjab*³² is a pioneer study in the evolution of Muslim politics in the pre separated Punjab by Rakkar (1985). It

²⁹ Iqbal Ahmed Ansari , *Political Representation of Muslim in India 1952-2004*, Kanishka Publisher Distributors, New Delhi , 2002.

³⁰ A.R. Momin , *The Empowerment of Muslim in India : Perspective , Context and Prerequisites*, Institution of objectives studies, 1987.

³¹ Srikanta Ghosh , *Muslim Politics in India* , APH Publishing , New Delhi, 1987.

³² Jagtar Singh Rakkar , *Muslim Politics in Punjab*, Deep and Deep Publication, New Delhi, 1985.

importance that the advent of the Punjab Muslims in the politics of the region was not due to British Policy of Divide and Rule but was the effect of new spirit of communal consciousness in the community.

Basant(2007) in this paper *Social, economic and Educational Conditions of India Muslim's*³³ gives explanation of the social economic and educational condition of Muslims throughout t the country.

Dalip Singh's *Dynamics of Punjab Politics* (1981)³⁴ is the study of the history and the various social- political and economic developments in Punjab since 1966 and also analyses the elections and electoral politics in Punjab covering the era between (1952-1980)

A.S.Narang in his work *Punjab Accord and Election: Retrospect and Prospect* (1986)³⁵ examines the assembly elections of 1985 in the circumstance of Punjab accord and also it outcome. It also deals with some other variables in the politics of Punjab. Narang has also written on the 1992 Punjab Assembly Elections. His Article "*Punjab Elections 1992 Meaning and Trends*"³⁶ deals with a few essential issues of the Punjab problem and the outcome of the 1992 elections. According to Narang (i) the thump of militants command was much more extensive than the authorities would have the world believe: (II) The intra – communal unity had grown considerably in Punjab and finally through the congress had a record presentation its social base had narrowed. It is helpful but not an elaborate study.

Iqbal Naraian and Pande's *Election studies in India: An Evaluation* (1978)³⁷ is a select exercise in evaluating the information on the election and voting behavior studies conducted in India since the first election.

Myoon Weiner and John O. fields (eds) *Electoral Politics in the Indian States*³⁸ reveals a number of important characteristics of the

³³ Basant Rakest , " *Social, Economics and Educational condition of Indian Muslims*" , Economic and Political Weekly, March 10, 2007.

³⁴ Dalip Singh, *Dynamic of Punjab Politics*, Macmillian , New Delhi, 1981.

³⁵ A. S. Narang, *Punjab Accord and Election: Retrospect and Prospect*, Ritu Publishers, Delhi, 1991.

³⁶ Varinder Grover (Ed.), *The story of Punjab: Yesterday and Today*, in A.S. Narag, *Punjab Election 1992: Meaning and Trends*, Deep And Deep Publishers, New Delhi, 1995.

³⁷ Iqbal Narain and K.C Pande, *Election Studies in India: An Evaluation*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi , 1978.

Indian party System and electoral behavior at the states of India.

R.L Gupta in *Electoral Politics in Punjab* (1985) has deals with the voting behavior with particular reference to parliamentary election of 1984 and the 1985 to Punjab State Legislature Assembly.

Paul R. Brass's *Language, regional and politics in North India* (1975)³⁹ is mainly the study of language politics and their connection with religious identity and analysis of these politicians on more than a few issues of political and economic developments in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Paul Wallace and Surinder Chopra (ed.) *Political Dynamics and Crisis in Punjab*⁴⁰ is a study of current Punjab. The relationship between religion and politics in exacting is described and analyzed from a diversity of perspectives. The book contains research papers on the Akali Dal, Sikh religion and educational bodies such as Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak committee and the chief Khalsa Dewan as well as on electoral politics. Other papers deal with the politics of Punjabi Lower Castes Muslim elites Malerkotla and CPI Leadership and its view of the Trade Union Activity in Punjab.

Apart from the books some very useful studies are available in the form of research articles "*Changing Support base of Congress Party*"⁴¹ has tinted the changing support base of congress Party in Punjab during 1952-80 with special orientation to the emergence of religious

consciousness and Punjab's socioeconomic structure P.S Verma's two very important articles appeared in *Economics and Political Weekly regarding revival of political activity and electoral process in Punjab*⁴² which examine the active of electoral politics in the two Assembly

³⁸ Myron Weiner and John O'field (Ed.), *Electoral Politics in the Indian States*, Manohar Book Service, Delhi, 1974.

³⁹ Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in north India*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi 1975.

⁴⁰ Paul Wallace and Surinder Chopra (Ed.), *Political Dynamics and Crisis in Punjab*, GNDU Press, Amritsar, 1988.

⁴¹ M.S. Dhama, "Changing Support Base of Congress Party", *Punjab Journal of Politics*, Vol. VI11, No. 1, January- June, 1984.

⁴² P.S. Varma, *Politics of a By-Election: Nakidar and Ajnala Assembly Constituencies in Punjab*, *Economics and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXX, June 3, 1995, pp. 1321-1328.

Constituency in May 1993 against the backdrop of economics which have take place there. Second article by P.S. Verma deals with Zila Parished and Panchayat Samiti Election in Punjab. This also highlights the start of the process of Akali Unity.

Noorani (2002) in a documentary *The Muslim in India* presents significant documents recording reaction of Muslim in the period following independence and the partition of India. Besides enter political developments, documents such as Hindu revivalism and Muslim responses, the Babri Masjid question, the Supreme Court's ruling on the Shah Bano case, Rajiv Gandhi's deliberations with Muslim leaders and the issue of personal law has also been highlighted in post independence policy and society.

Pamela Singh's *Women's Participation in panchayati Raj*⁴³ has a center which looks into the issue of women participation in PRis in the north Indian state of Haryana which is characterized by an disturbing sex ratio in favor of men. The divider is studied not only from the angle of elected women members themselves but also the elected men members as far as attending the Gram Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parished meetings in worried.

Savita Thakur Joshi's work *women and development: The Changing Scenario*⁴⁴ takes into explanation the demographic, educational, economic, social and political indicators current in the rural economy under study. In this hiss the status of women in the rural economy has been empirically viewed under the prevailing demographic, health , educational, economical, social and political situations which provides on imminent to planners, policy makers, academicians and researchers about the grassroots realties prevailing in the rural economy of our country and intended development for growth with special justice.

⁴³ Pamela Singla, *Women's Participation in Panchayati Raj: Nature and Effectiveness: A Northern India Perspective*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur, 2007.

⁴⁴ Savita Thakur Joshi, *Women and Development: The Changing Scenario*, Mittal Publication, New Dehli, 1999.

Vibhuti Patel in her *women's Challenges of new Millennium*⁴⁵ tries to answer significant questions raised by the social movements of the 20th century and challenges brought about by the huge changes due to globalization in the 21st century. At the stage when the secular fabric of our country is threatened due to xenophobia, Patel argues women's predicament will be terrible unless both, the state and the civil society take assenting action to safeguard women's interest. The study makes efforts to provide instructions in this line. It tries to contextualization women's endurance struggles in the political economy perspective and offers word view and analytical dream for engendering each and every area of human existence.

Sarojini Vats in her *Women's Participation in rural development*⁴⁶ observes that women's participation and empowerment have become the keywords with development policies. After the 73rd Constitutional Amendments Act 33 percent reservation for women has been ensured in the Panchayati Raj institutions where by enabling them to get elected to the PRIs has greater than before their participation on papers. But the author raises the essential question whether this kind of participation empowers them? Are they able to play an effectual role in decision making. On the basis of empirical study and other sources available he author has tried to answer this question.

Arvind Sharma's *Religion and women*⁴⁷ try to inform us participation of women in the Akali Movement the fate Sikh women cantered primarily around the Akali's who believed trust without political power.

Gobinder Singh's work *Religion and Politics in the Punjab*⁴⁸ has a focus on the self-denial of the Sikh women from active participation in

⁴⁵ Vibhuti Patel, *Women's Challenge of the New Millennium*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2002.

⁴⁶ Sarijni Vats, *Women's Participation in Rural Development*, Abhijeet Publication, Delhi, 2004,

⁴⁷ Arvind Sharma, *Religion and Women*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1994.

⁴⁸ Gobinder Singh, *Religion and Politics in Punjab*, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1986.

the Gurudwara administration may be quality high level of literacy. Even in political bodies like Lok Sabha and Punjab Vidhan Sabha the proportion of women.

Bhawna Jharta in her book, "*Women and Politics in India Impact of family and Education on Women Political Activists*"⁴⁹ has discussed the altering role and position of women in society. It traces the status of women in the family and society, marriage system, education, status of operational women, women in labor force, etc. A good deal of notice has been devoted to the study of the social and economic position of women but very small attention has been paid to role of women in politics and the changing situation of their participation in politics.

Chitrasen (ed.) in his book, "*Violence against Women and Human Right*"⁵⁰ has analyzed various types of crimes committed alongside women in the society. It also defines various legal events for improving the status of women.

Hajira Kumar and Jaimon Vargheses's in their work, "*Women's Empowerment Issues, Challenges and Strategies*"⁵¹ have analyzed that the actual empowerment of women can be probable only when they get equal status like their male counterparts in this world. There is a considerable difference in the opportunities obtainable to both men and women. They have viewed that gender issues are graver than the developmental issues. There are number of challenges in the social, political and economic situation that woman has to face in establishing their rights and equality. Strategies are formulated and are being implemented by the state governments, International agencies, and the civil society at great, to repair a gender sensitive world.

⁴⁹ Bhawna Jharta, *Women and Politics in India: Impact of family and Education on Women Political Activities*, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1996.

⁵⁰ Chitrasen (Ed.), *Violence against Women and Human Right*, Alfa Publications, New Delhi, 2006.

⁵¹ Hajira Kumar and Jaimon Varghese, *Women's Empowerment — Issues Challenges and Strategies*, Regency Publications, New Delhi, 2005.

H.C. Upadhyay in her book, “*Status of Women in India*”⁵² has seriously examined all the issues related to women and development. The author has tried to explain the major role of women towards the country’s socio-economic development.

In his book, “*Women and Empowerment*”⁵³ Jaya Kothi Pillai said that empowerment is a lively multi dimensional process, which enables the women to understand their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. And this power has to be acquired and once acquired; it wants to be exercised, sustained and potted. Women have to empower themselves. It traces the fact that they have to know the causes of the existing inequality of women in all sectors — economic, social, political, education, and take the plan to change their status.

K. Uma Devi, in her book “*Women’s Equality in India a Myth reality?*”⁵⁴ has focused on the different problems of discrimination against female agricultural labourers in the light of their general status. The status of women implies women’s position in exacting sub system of society. This book covers most of the aspects connecting to women’s status.

Manju Verma in her book, “*The Role of Women in the Freedom Movement in Punjab*”⁵⁵ has made an effort to review the role of women of Punjab in the freedom movement of India during the years 1919-47. This book is a logical study of the role of Punjabi women in all phases of Satyagraha launched by Gandhi to achieve India’s freedom. An effort has also been made to bring into attention even the most unknown women freedom fighters of Punjab.

Mira Seth’s book, “*Women Development (The Indian Experience)*”,⁵⁶ provides information on women’s issues. She also discusses the labors made to go faster women’s development since independence.

⁵² H.C. Upadhyay, *Status of Women in India*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 1991.

⁵³ Jaya Kothi Pillai, *Women and Empowerment*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2005.

⁵⁴ K. Uma Devi, *Women’s Equality in India: A Myth or Reality?*, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000.

⁵⁵ Manju Verma, *The Role of Women in the Freedom Struggle of Punjab*, Abhet Publication, Delhi, 2003.

⁵⁶ Mira Seth, *Women Development: The Indian Experience*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001.

Neelu Kang in her book, *“Indian Women Activists”*⁵⁷, has provided a sociological analysis of activism concentrating mostly on social backgrounds, value orientations and activities of women activists, pertaining to women’s question. The author has given suggestions for the state policy to hoist women’s status and for further research in this field. This book includes materials concerning the First, Second and Third Worlds, as well as historical and modern case studies.

Niranjna in her book, *“Status of Women and Family Welfare”*⁵⁸ revolves approximately two objectives. First, it seems to understand social status of women second since the status of women and fertility behavior have a social and cultural circumstance, it attempts at analyzing the connected social-cultural values affecting women’s life in and outside home along with other issues explored be relevant to women’s work participation and identity, women’s autonomy in decision-making with stare to their own lives, particularly in the selection of mate, solemnization of their marriage, manner of children and their access to family property and capital. In the context of fertility behavior, it examines the nature and kind of marriages, nature of child bearing practices, social and cultural norms governing the family size and sex preferences, general stage of knowledge and family setting up practices and the socio-economic correlates of fertility behavior.

Sushila Aggarwal in her book, *“Status of Women”*⁵⁹ has tried to discover the changing status of women in India and Canada with reference to the social, legal and educational aspects. It seeks to quarrel constitutional and legal provisions in India in the situation of social reality, interpretation of religious texts from social viewpoint and role of educational counselors in raising consciousness and in providing girls and boys’ ability to effect alter in perception about the role of women and men in society.

⁵⁷ Neelu Kang, *Indian Women Activist*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1997.

⁵⁸ Niranjna, *Status of Women and Family Welfare*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2000.

⁵⁹ Sushila Aggarwal, *Status of Women*, Printwell Publishers, Jaipur, 1986.

Sushma Sahay in her book, “*Women and Empowerment Approaches and Strategies*”⁶⁰ deals with the idea and framework for women’s empowerment. The author has discussed the different approaches and strategies for empowering women by exactness the mechanisms and gear which women are using for their empowerment.

Usha Sharma’s book, “*Women’s Emancipation Rights and Population Control*”⁶¹ deals with the notion of empowerment. It expressed that empowerment is held to be a cure-all for social evils; like high population growth rates, environmental squalor and the low status of women among others. Women empowerment is based on the basis that it is an enabling condition for reproductive rights. The nature and priorities of the women empowerment procedure are shaped by the historical, political, social and economic conditions.

Jane Arnold Lincove’s research article, “*Efficiency, Equity and Girls’ Education*”⁶² has analyses World Bank strategies for education in the circumstance of gender equity. Developing countries face the confront of expanding education with limited resources. At the same time, promoting gender equity is very important in achieving basic development goals. Appropriate governance strategies are needed to give education in a way that is cost-effective and inclusive. Privatization, decentralization and citizen participation are three strategies that are promoted by the World Bank to control expenses and improve transparency in education. Intended to promote efficiency, these strategies can damage equity. This study compares World Bank strategies to established affective programs in girls’ education. Empirical analysis reveals that while many World Bank projects include effective strategies for girl’s education, governance reforms usually do

⁶⁰ Sushma Sahay, *Women and Empowerment Approaches and Strategies*, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, 1998.

⁶¹ Usha Sharma, *Women’s Emancipation Rights and Population Control*, Authors Press Publications, Delhi, 2001.

⁶² Jane Arnold Lincove, “Efficiency, Equity and Girl’s Education”, *The International Journal of Management and Research and Practice*, Vol. 26, No.4, 2006.

not promote awareness of gender insinuation for expansion of girl's education are discussed.

M. Veinkates Warlu' in her article, "*Women Empowerment-A Perspective*"⁶³ explains the position of women in past and present and the crash of welfare programmers and reforms on women. A big number of Women continue to jump by traditional practices and conventions and fail to understand that these have become obsolete and are an obstruction to progress and the need of the hour is to carry out the nationwide program of education that will bring home the realization that freedom cannot be won by anybody section, or people as a whole as extended as women are kept in bondage.

Nilika Mehrotra's paper, "*Perceiving Feminism Some Local Responses*"⁶⁴ explores the responses of some women's groups and women activists based in Delhi, during the late 1980s, to the notion of feminism. It attempts to know how middle-class women and grass root level women express their needs, aspirations and program in the context of women's movement in India. The focus here is on their differential responses and how these can be beached in the contexts based on caste, class, age, and political contact and affiliations. These differences are reflected in the interpersonal behavior of women activists and get translated into the method they understand women's issues and develop strategies to resolve them. Such an understanding is crucial for structure a theory of women's movement in India.

Rupinder Kaur, in her present paper, "*Gender and Social Analysis of Dairy Farming: A Case study of Punjab*"⁶⁵ makes an effort to count the extent of women's contribution in dairy farming in Punjab. The study also investigates the women's access to and control over capital along with the role of different organizations, associated with the milk

⁶³ M. Veinkates Wariu, *Women Empowerment-A Perspective*, *Vision*, Vol. XXV. No. 3-4. Oct-Dec 2005.

⁶⁴ Nilika Mehrotra, "Perceiving Feminism: Some Local Responses", *Sociological Bulletin Journal of the Indian Society*, Vol. 51, March 2002.

⁶⁵ Rupinder Kaur, "Gender and Social Analysis of Dairy Farming : A Case study of Punjab", *Journal of Rural Development*, Vol. 27 No. 1, NIRD, Hyderabad.

producers, in distribution of information and technology and provision of inputs along with their impact on intra-household reimbursement. For the analysis, household data were composed from 200 households of four villages.

Rupinder Kaur's article, "*Female Work Participation: Caste, Class and Gender Analysis in Rural Indian Punjab*"⁶⁶ is an analyses to the amount of female labour involvement in productive as well as reproductive work in rural Punjab. Female work participation of women has been analyzed in a socio-economic and regional viewpoint. The present study suggests that official statistics underestimate women's payment in Punjab's agrarian structure. The process of agricultural development in Punjab more led to women becoming 'invisible' in the so-called 'productive' work in the agricultural sector. The total work load of women is, however, increasing because of increase in domestic work within the household.

Sandhya Rani Das in her article, "*Empowerment of Women: A Holistic Approach*"⁶⁷ has discussed main reasons for the persistent low status of women in India. She has given parameters for their empowerment. She additional argued that a holistic approach is needed for ensuring the social, economic, political, cultural development of women in India.

Yashpal Kaur in her article, "*What Rights Does A Sikh Women Have Today?*"⁶⁸ While delineation the rights of a Sikh woman, stresses that she is equal to man. She has religious rights. She has independence. But apologetic to say so, these basic rights are denied to many women today. In some cases, even before a girl is born she is killed by abortion because of a wish for a male child. Upon birth, many relatives are not even knowledgeable for days that a daughter has taken

⁶⁶ Rupinder Kaur, "Female Work Participation: caste, Class and Gender Analysis in Rural Indian Punjab", *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, New Delhi, 1996.

⁶⁷ Sandhya Rani Das, "Empowerment of Women: A Holistic Approach", *Third Concept*, Vol. 17, No. 184, New Delhi, July 2002.

⁶⁸ Yashpal Kaur, "What Rights Does A Sikh Women Have Today?", *The Panthic Weekly*, Khalsa Press, April 10, 2005.

birth. But, in the same family, if a son is born, everyone comes to know within seconds.

Evelin hust (2004)⁶⁹ in the book *Women's Political Representation and Empowerment in India* tries to imprison the female and male sentiment on women's acquired presence in local politics in India after the introduction of 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992. Traditionally, politics in Indian villages has been an select male affaire and women had barely any presence in public affairs, but this situation seems to has been frequently labeled as a 'developing' or 'backward state in esteem of status of women, is at the forefront with look upon to the inclusion of women into the institutional political process. But practically, without hesitation, women in the rural areas in most Indian states face challenging obstacles in the of performing in politics owing to structural discrimination, and this culturally intended separation of the male and female world has efficiently debarred most women from becoming politically active.

After having reviewed the available literature on the themes connected with the research problem, it may be stated that a lot of literature is available on women issues. Some good studies are available on the violation of women rights. But as far as the State of Punjab is concerned, there is scarcity of systematic study on violation of women rights. This present study is a humble attempt to take away the aforesaid paucity and conduct a systematic and comprehensive study on the violation of women rights in Punjab since 1990.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Political Participation is a vital part of the democratic system. The issue of women's political participation is the majority significant and contentious issues at national and international level. After independence, India becomes a Democratic, Republican, Secular,

⁶⁹ Evelin Hust, *Women's Political Representation and Empowerment in India*, New Delhi, ,Manohar Publishers. 2004.

Sovereign and Socialist state. It provided all types of parity and freedom to all sections of society. Women being the 2nd vast group of society need to stand for it. The representation of the women in the political scheme of the country has its foundation in the constitutional freedom settled to every citizen. All though, in the Indian constitutional women have been accorded equal place, yet there is broad gap between constitutional status decided to women and actual position of women in society.

Punjab is an economically rich and Sikhs conquered state. Guru Nanak Dev ji, the creator of Sikhism laid importance on the women equality. As per as socio-economic and political participation of women in Punjab is concerned, they are motionless accorded position which is significantly secondary and inferior to men. In Punjab there is very little number in who participate in politics.

The heart of the study is on the Sikh and Muslim women which belong to alternative religions in India. The Present study is restricted to Malerkotla constituency which is the only Muslim majority constituency in Punjab. Various studies have been conducted associated to political participation of women grass root level, national level and international level but no real study has been done in so distant analysis the level of Sikh and Muslim women in Malerkotla constituency. Therefore, this gap this study has been taken up to overpass the gap.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

There are 117 assembly constituencies in the efficient Punjab which came into being on 1st November 1966. Each constituency has its own natural world and features. The Present study involves the study of Malerkotla Assembly constituency which consists of Malerkotla town and 56 villages. The study is focused on political participation of Sikh and Muslim women. However, it is the only constituency of Punjab where Muslims constitute the lone major group of population. Speaking religion- wise, the Muslims constitute 68.50 percent of the whole electorate in the constituency as the Sikhs and the Hindus constitute

9.50 percent and 20.71 percent of the entirety electorates, respectively. At the time of previous Lok Sabha elections, Malerkotla constituency had 135,424 electorates. Out of these 71,376 were men and 64,048 were women. The statistics of Males and Females indicate that like most of the other constituencies of Punjab, in Malerkotla too men voters outnumber the women voters. A sample of 300 women respondents has been taken. The respondent as of the both (Muslims and Sikhs community women) belongs to rural and urban areas. The present work aims to take out an in detail study of the political participation of Sikh and Muslim women. Study also focuses upon the challenges being faced by women through political participation in the present set up.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as under:

1. To study the theoretical perspective of the political participation.
2. To over-view the socio-political and economic profile of Malerkotla Constituency segment.
3. To examine the level of Political Participation of Sikh and Muslim women of Malerkotla Constituency.
4. To ascertain the pattern of participation of Sikh and Muslim women segments of Malerkotla Constituency.
5. To study the level of political awareness of Sikh and Muslim women segments of Malerkotla Constituency.
6. To make a comparison of the political participation of Sikh and Muslim women segments of Malerkotla constituency
7. To explore the possibility of exclusive existence of organizations of Sikh and Muslim women in Malerkotla constituency.

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses have been formulated to make the present study.

1. The level of Political participation of Muslim Women is lower than the Sikh Women in Malerkotla constituency.

2. Their (Muslim and Sikh Women of MalerKotla Constituency) political participation is simply confined to casting votes and are not involved in the other types of Political Participation.
3. As per as the level of political awareness is concerned. Muslim women have lower level of awareness as compared to the Sikh women.
4. There are very few organizations exclusively for women which are active in MalerKotla Constituency.
5. Cultural backwardness, conservative thinking, lack of education are the reasons for low Political Participation of Muslim and Sikh women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is always carried out with assist of proper and well definite methodology. In order to whole the research work, many methods and techniques have been used such as study and examine of historical sources, questionnaire-cum-interview schedule technique, field survey and utilization of study methods. Historical method is used primarily for detailed study of the status of women in the past in Malerkotla constituency. Field survey and questionnaire methods have been used to assemble the data. Analytical way has been used for the analysis of data.

For the reason of the study, a total sample of 300 women respondents has been chosen on the basis of random sampling from Malerkotla constituency. Out of the whole sample of 300 respondents, 150 are from Sikh women and 150 are from Muslim women. Both the Sikh and Muslim women respondents are additional separated into two groups i.e., 75 are from rural areas and 75 are from urban areas. From the selected sample, the data has been together through questionnaire-cum-interview schedule method. A exhaustive questionnaire consisting of close and open ended questions has been ready keeping the main objectives in view. Observation method has also been engaged in order to land at the facts which sometimes, respondents may seek to hide.

The questionnaire was arranged bilingual in both English and Punjabi languages for the ease of the respondents.

The present study has been complete with the help of both the primary and the secondary sources. The primary data has been collected from the field with the assist of structured questionnaire. The primary sources also comprise the text of the census, whereas secondary data has been collected from pertinent books, journals, articles, encyclopedias, dictionaries and newspapers etc. After the collection of data from the beyond sources, it was systematically compiled, analyzed and tabulated.

CHAPTERIZATION

The present study has been portioned into 6 chapters.

Chapter –I: Introduction

The first chapter is entitled “Introduction” which deals with different theories of political participation, their significance, and statement of the problem. It also explains the objectives, hypothesis, methodology adopted for the study.

Chapter – II: Status of women: A Historical Perspective

This chapter contains an overview of the status of women in India. It explains the changing status of women in India. It analyzes the situation of women from early period to present period.

Chapter – III: Women in Punjab

This chapter gives an overview of women in Punjab. It describes the socio-economic and political profile of women in Punjab and examines the rank of Political Participation of women of Punjab.

Chapter – IV: Profile of Malerkotla and Socio-economic Profile of Respondents.

This chapter describes the profile of Malerkotla’s constituency and examines the socio-economic status of the women respondents.

Chapter – V: Political Participation of Women in Malerkotla Constituency

This chapter describes the perception and viewpoint of the women respondents towards political participation and what are hurdles in their way towards Political Participation.

Chapter – VI: Conclusion and Suggestions

This is the last chapter of the study which summarizes the findings of the study. It also comprises some suggestions to develop political participation of women and removing the obstacles in the way.

CHAPTER – 2

STATUS OF WOMEN: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The importance of a society can be evaluated by the position given to women in the society. One of the best method to appreciate the courage of a civilization and to understand its Excellencies and understand its impact, one must study the history of the position and status of women in it. A.S. Altekar expresses that “The amount of independence given to move about in society and to take part in its public life gives a good idea of the nature of its administration and permits us to know how far it had realized the hard truth that women too have a giving of their own to make in its growth and development.”¹

Any evaluation of the status of women in society has to start from the social framework, social construction, and cultural standard and value systems that pressurize the social expectations concerning the behaviour of both men and women and decide women’s roles and their position in any society. A society is composed of many organizations and most important of them are the system of civilized, family and association, marriage and religious customs etc. They give the ideology and moral foundation for men and women about their rights and duties and their position and role in society.

The Indian society is full of inconsistency. On the one hand, foreigners come in groups to our country in search of spiritual consolation but on another hand, Indians are ranks among the most dishonest people in the world. India is expenditure millions and billions to send satellites in the space to shows its scientific ability but at the same time the society cannot supply almost half the population with the basic necessities like food, shelter, education and healthy life.

The similar contradiction is present in the case of women too. On the one hand, the scriptures put them on a high stand. An old Sanskrit proverb is that, where the women are detained in respect there do the

¹ A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization - From Prehistoric Times to the Present Day*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi, 1959, p. 2.

gods exist in. The conventional faiths in the Indian society are that, a society cultivates if the women rise, if they contribute to of the spirit of development, for they are recognizable domestic legislators, they are the atmosphere of social life.² In the Indian mythology, even God is considered as half man, half women-‘ardh-narishwara’. On the other hand, according to the UNICEF’s recent international report, “The Progress of Nations 1997”, more than 5000 dowry deaths occur every year in India.³

"Women's lives in India and the world over are restricted by what can be termed as five 'Ps' Patriarchy; Productive resources admission insufficiency, Poverty, Promotion improvement deficiency and powerlessness".⁴ It is predictable that women of two-thirds of the world's work. In replace they obtain only ten percent of all the income and own a simple one percent of the whole world's means of manufacture.

Indian transcripts essentials women as faithful and self sacrificed, yet infrequently disobedient and dangerous. Transcripts on every aspect of life like religion, law, politics and education carried different statement for men depending on caste, class, age and religious sect. In dissimilarity, women's differences were overshadowing by their biological distinctiveness and the secondary, supportive roles they were planned to play. Historians were evenly essentialist in their depictions about Indian women. Infrequently Indian transcript and historical narratives singled out one woman for special consideration but usually this was because her accomplishments were noteworthy by male standard. Topics that were intertwined with women's life’s - house -hold duties and agriculture knowledge; religious customs and sentiments; fertility and family size; furnishings, jewellery and clothing; inheritance and property rights; and marriage and divorce – were mainly unnoticed,

² Sushma Sood, *Violence against Women*, Arihant Publishers, Jaipur, 1990, p.12.

³ *Indian Express*, New Delhi, 23 July, 1997.

⁴ Hema Lata Swarup, “*Ethnicity, Gender and Class*”, *International Conference of Historians of the Labour Movement*, Europaverlag, Vienna, 1993, p.1.

remarks Geraldine Forbes.⁵ With view to the history written from women's point of view, Woolf's remarks suitably the mocking contradiction of woman's life. "Imaginatively she is of the uppermost value, but practically she is entirely unimportant. She permeates poetry from cover to cover. She is all but absent from history".⁶ Women have contributed appreciably since the starting of society. The moral values and commitment in the direction of civilization from ancient era till the present era can be seen many examples of Sita Anusuiya, Ahilya, Laxmibai, Mirabai, Razia Sultan, Sarojini Naidu, Indira Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Kalpana Chawla, Kiran Bedi, Medha Patkar, Maharani Praneet Kaur, Harsimrat Kaur Badal and others. In Indian society women have been symbolized as and raised to the level of goddesses, but unluckily the patriarchal family system and other socio-historical political factors resulted in the inferior status of women. The position of women is different from religion to religion, society, environment and culture of specific states. There is no rejecting the fact that much development has been made towards humanizing women's place in the society.

In history, women were bearded from natural and manmade handicaps and yet, in all ages, some of them capably predictable themselves and obtained the position of leadership and authority.⁷ However, a correct guess of the position and status of women cannot be complete without a field survey of the archives and records of Indian history. History would be a good resource to form an idea of the actualities. In the absence of a historical point of view it would not probable to give a universal view about women's status in Indian society and culture in common and in politics in particular.

Indian women have passed through with the times for centuries and have showed to the world that the hand that rocks the support can canon the world. To make a victory of overcome is the most vital and

⁵ Geraldine Forbes, *The New Cambridge History of India: Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1998, p.1.

⁶ Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, London, Penguin, 1945, p. 3.

⁷ Pitam Singh, *Women Legislators in India Politics*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2003, p.23.

amazing project in the world. The status and position of women in society is the real indicator of its cultural, religious, social and spiritual ranks. It is one of the main criteria for guesstimate with accuracy the degree of society reached by a particular society in diversity period of India.

In this second chapter an attempt has been made to trace the status of women in Indian society from social and political perspectives. The social status of society represents the social spirit of the era while the political status of women represents the thought and feeling of the community with regard of women at that time. The status of women in Indian society has changed from time to time.

Status of women in Ancient India

The period of Ancient India could be divided into two parts: Vedic Period, Post Vedic Period and little evidence can be quoted from Budhist Period as well.

The Vedic Period

Vedic era was the golden era for women status in India. It is normally advocated on the basis of the examples represented in religious transcripts (e.g. Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis, epics like Ramayan and Mahabharat and other Dharmasastras etc.) that in ancient India, particularly in Rigvedic period, women enjoyed equal status like men.

The Vedic period can be located between 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C. Thus the woman of ancient India would denote the women of Vedic and the Upaishad periods.⁸ The Vedic, a period of equitability with men, women treated with fair deal. The status and position of Indian women in the Vedic era was much superior to in any other ancient Indian society like that of Greece and Rome.⁹ During the early Vedic period women in India enjoyed almost an equal status with men in all spheres

⁸ Hansa Mehta, "*Indian Women*", Butala & company, Delhi, 1981, p.65

⁹ Majumdar Ramesh Chandra, *Ideal and Position of Indian Women in Domestic Life*, Great Women of India, Calcutta, 1982, p.5.

of life.¹⁰ In Brihadaranyaka Upanishad¹¹ there is also obvious proof of praying to God for blessings for the birth of a daughter, who should be a Pandita or scholar lady and in Kaushitaki Brahmin.¹²

Rigveda explains plentiful evidence notice the fact that women were completely the equals of men as views entrance to and capacity for the highest knowledge, even the knowledge of the complete or Brahma.¹³ Accordingly to Sarvanukramanika, where were as many as many women who composed the hymns in the Rigveda. Women thinkers were called Brahmavadini i.e. scholar women.

In Panini's texts (500 B.C.) several passages proves that woman had other careers open to them separately from a mere literary one.¹⁴ It found from Patanjali's Mahabhashya (150 B.C.) and Kautilya's Arthashastra (about 300 B.C.) that females were also soldiers armed with bows and arrows.¹⁴

Child marriage and many more evils were unknown in Vedic period. Marriage was based on equality at any rate support of marital accountability. During this phase, woman chosen her husband's. The Svayamvora marriages of Sita, Draupadi, Savitri, Rukmani etc. give the good examples of this practice.¹⁵ Husband and wife took the same marriage vows and was hurdle to fidelity.¹⁶

A widow had right to remarry and even under certain situation, a woman could marry again even if her partner was alive.¹⁷ The remarriage of a widow to the brother of her partner was very common

¹⁰ K.M. Kapadia, *Marriage and Family in India*, Oxford University Press, London, 1955.

¹¹ *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*(Ed.), With trans. by O. Bohtlingk Leipzig, VI, 4, 17, 1889

¹² Kaushitaki Brahmana: Ed. by E.B. Cowell, Asiatic society of Bengal, Kolkotas, 1861.

¹³ Tara Ali Baig, Women in Ancient India, in *Women of India*(Ed.), Government Press, Delhi, 1958, p.1.

¹⁴ Radha Kumud Mookerji, *The Gupta Empire*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi, 2007, p.15.

¹⁵ A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Motilal Banarsidass, 1962.

¹⁶ Kalpana Shah, "*Women's Liberation and Voluntary Action*", Ajanta Publications, Delhi, 1984.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

perform in ancient India time. The practice of the woman fetching sati after her partner was not in trend.¹⁸

In ancient India time, worship was given to women as mothers figure, a icon of life, force and transparency with huge capacity for tolerance, sacrifice and sufferings. In the Vedic and Upanishadic times, women enjoyed believe able liberty so far as political, social and educational actions were concerned and thus enjoyed a status and status in society. In their homes, women were given higher place to that of men, as they were treated as the personification of goddess of prosperity, power and knowledge. Woman was represented as 'shakti, and it was an accepted principle that where woman is respected, there is heavenly presence.¹⁹ According to Manu, where women are mistreated, all rites and ceremonies are fruitless and that family rapidly perishes, but where women do not mourn that family forever prospers.²⁰

In the Rig-Vedic time, women played a important role in the family, in the society and even in the political life.²¹ They enjoyed a position and status of equality and were esteemed both in the family and society as well. They were not decorative substance but co-partners in life, in its enjoyments and obstacles, in its delights and sorrows.²² They were taught education like men and enjoyed substantial freedom in their private matters. These are proofs of women aggressively participating in the political activities. They participated in the considerations of Vidhatha (the earliest folk assembly of Indo-Aryans) and Sabha along with men.²³

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Leela Damodara Menon, "India and the International Women's Year", *India Quarterly*, Vol.31, No. 3, July-September, 1975, p.278.

²⁰ Vidyaben Shah, "Role of VJomen in Ancient India" in C.K Jain, *Women Parliamentarians in India*, Surject Publications, Delhi, 1993, p.307.

²¹ A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1962, p.339.

²² P.Thomas, *Indian Women Through the Ages*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1964, p.49.

²³ Ram Sharan Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas an4 Institutions in Ancient India*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1968, pp.78-102.

Hence, it can be believed that in Vedic Period the status of women was extremely elevated and they take pleased rights in social, religious fields, limited rights in economic and political field. They enjoyed the same status as male enjoyed in society.

POST VEDIC PERIOD

In the Post Vedic era, the status of women was on the turn down. It was slowly dishonored in the puranic and smriti periods. This was the time when Epics, Purans, were written. This time onwards, condition of women was started failing. Rights which they had previous were not enjoying in this period. Limitations were put on social, economic, religious life too.

The statuses of women regularly get worse as the Vedic principles of harmony and equality began to vanish off as the time passes by. During smrities women grouped with the shudras. Pre teen's marriage came to be practiced now. According to Baudhaya was confirmed "a father who did not provide his daughter in marriage before her first menstruation incurred the responsibility of one procuring abortion (a serious sin, worse than several kinds of murders) for every menstrual period in which she remained unmarried"²⁴.

According to Manu, "Bride was one third the age of the groom thus a male of twenty four should get married a girl of eight year i.e. Nagnika".²⁵ In the opposing some literature were completely against of early marriage of girl child For example according to Sushuta samhita "Ancient Indian medicinal authorities states that the best children are created from mothers over sixteen and actually recognize the practice of child marriage as infrequently happen"²⁶. But it was criticized later on.

In society, husband accepted the status as a patiparmeshwar (God). Women were left without to education. Women were attending any lectures of Gurus hardly ever. By the time of smrities, vedic facts were only limited for male only. In Brhadaranyaka Upanishad tells of a

²⁴ *Baudhayana* iv, 12 p.166.

²⁵ *Manusmriti*, iix, 94, p.166.

²⁶ *Susruta samhita* (iii), 10, 54, p.166.

scholarly lady Gargi Vacaknavi who attended the discussion of the learned Yajnavalkya and for a time so confused him with her pointed questions that he could only jestingly answered “Gargi you not ask too much, or you head will go down”.²⁷

Sati system also was common in this period. Widow had suffered a lot; she was to all objectives and purposes an abstinent, sleeping on the ground and eating only once a day simple meal, wearing no jewellery or colored clothes. The widow had to sustain this strict routine to the end of her days in the trust of being remarried to her earlier husband in her life.

Many veil systems came into practice. Polygamy in common conditions was not encouraged by previous Hindu literature, according to Dharmashatra (Apastairiba) “it is definitely prohibits a man to take a second wife if his first wife is of good character and has borne him sons”²⁸. Polygamy became in trend for just kings and their chiefs. Narad states once put that a polygamist is unfit to give evidence in a court of law. The perfect models of Hindus marriage the hero was Rama and his faithful wife Sita.

Women were completely rejected rights e.g. property, economic areas. Most school of laws permitted a woman to have some personal property (stridhan) just in the form of jewellery and garments. According to Arthashastra, “Arthashastra allowed women also to own money up to 2000 silver panas. Any sum above this being held by her partner in faith of her behalf”.²⁹

Education of women which was a conventional norm during the Vedic period gradually started to be ignored and later on girls were completely denied, any admission to education.³⁰

Upanayana or blessed thread ceremony which was achieved to prisoner a person into the Vedic studies, was forbidden in the case of

²⁷ *Brahadaranyaka Upanishad*, iii, 6, iii, 8, p.178.

²⁸ *Apasthamba*, 11, 5, iif p.173.

²⁹ A.L. Basham, *The wonder that was India*, Grove Press, New York, 1959, p.172.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

women and Shudras by the Manav Codes, thus closing the doors for any official education to women.³¹ She was prohibited to study the Vedas. The well known saying of Manu shows the position of women easily.

In this period, women were always protected by their family males. She was to be protected in by her father in her childhood, by her husband in adolescence and by her sons after the death of her husband.

During the generally socio cultural subsidiary of women, it is amazing to find that law givers documented the right of property, chiefly “that which was known as Streedhan, women’s property”. Manu describes, “Streedhan as that which was given to her before the marriage fire, in bridal procession, in symbol of love and which she has conventional from brother, mother or husband.³² A woman during that huge distance not only occupied an inferior status but was made to feel that her place is secondary to men in our society.

WOMEN AND BUDDHISM

The religion and philosophy founded by the Buddha is recognized, in English as Buddhism. A Buddha is one who has reached Bodhi; and by Bodhi is meant knowledge or wisdom, a perfect state of rational and principled perfection which can be achieved by man through merely human means. The term Buddha accurately means the progressive one or a knower. Buddhists consider that a Buddha is born in each era of time and our Buddha- the tale Gautma who attained illumination under the banyan tree at Buddha Gaya in India was the seventh in sequence.³³

Mahatama Buddha originally was opposed to the admission of women into the sangha system but later on decided to the arrangement of the order of the nuns-these nuns were imparted religious and religious education.³⁴

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² A.S. Alterkar, *op.cit.* p.220.

³³ Suman Chaterjee, *Buddha: The Way to Wisdom*, Cyber Teach Publication, New Delhi, 2009, p.1.

³⁴ Maya Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p.213.

The education given to female novices and nuns was not different from that conversed to their male counterparts. The female lay supporter also conventional their preparation into the deepest problems of viewpoint as also into the delicate spiritual experiences possible through strong thoughtful exercises. It can be said that Buddhist days were more happy for women. Buddha's viewpoint towards life was full of sympathy and encompassed the whole of humankind. It was mostly owing to this that the status of women was elevated.

During the Buddhist era, the status of unmarried girls was superior to that at any other in history. It gives liberal approach about women and girl child. The cases of infanticide were almost not be exist in this time. Also there is hardly ever mention about child marriage in the canonical texts. But dowry system was common during the time of Buddha also. It is hard to say anything with positively about the situation of widows.

Buddhism appeared in against of rites and ritualism of Hinduism. Status of women in this period was to some extent improved in religious ground. They had their own sanghas 'Bhikshuni Sanghas" exercises the same policy and guideline as monks. In Gupta period, there were laws concerning about marriage, dowery, inheritance and widow remarriage was permissible. Vikramaditaya (Chandra Guptail) expressed romantic and chivalrous approach towards women. Rajyashri sister of Harshvardhan learnt rules from heuin tsang. Queen Prabhavati, the daughter of Emperor Chandra Gupta II played a important position in governing the country and on the death of her husband, she ruled for 13 years until her sons grown up and took over the charge of emperor. In the 10th century Queen Dida ruled in Kashmir, Apart from queen and princess, there were women from the common position who notable themselves in the field of literature philosophy, arts, maths etc. Bharti of mithila was well-known philosopher who had admiration from Shankarachary.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The period of 11th century to 18th century eyewitness of declined in the position of women. In 11th century Mohammad Gazanvi assault on India and occupied it. From this period to 18th century nearly 700 years, a universal decline were shown in the social institute take to pieces political, structure, economic misery in India.

The Medieval period spectator, a gradual decline in the position and status of women in India. Women were measured weak and it was the responsibility of man to protect their women. Since they were sensitive in nature, they should be treating with affection and care. They were measured needy on men throughout their lives. In childhood the father take care after her, in youth the husband and in the old age her sons protected them. Therefore, life time she had to depend on someone or the other and never enjoyed abandoned freedom.³⁵ During this period, there remerged social evils like female infanticide, child marriage and the practice of sati in the Hindu society.³⁶

Medieval India was measured the 'Dark Ages' for Indian women. Medieval India saw many foreign invasions, which resulted in the decline in women position. When foreign vanquisher like the Mughals and the British entered India they also brought with them their own culture and norms which in some cases unfavorably affected the condition of women and in some cases unbound them.

Many women like Razia Begum rose to become a ruler, Chand Bibi, Tara Bai and Ahaliya Bai Holker, left their enormous track for their ruling capabilities. In Bhopal, Begums or princesses ruled many times. With the arrival of Islam, many women like Jahanara, Begum Mumtaz and Noor Jahan enjoyed respectable positions in the country. These extraordinary ladies though severe Muslims, publicly managed justice with faces covered by covering or burkas, but after that many of evils came to existence in this period:

³⁵ Kala Rani, *Role Conflict in Working Women*, Chetna Publications, New Delhi, 1976, p.52.

³⁶ A.S. Altekar, *op.cit.* p.16.

Sati: The ceremony of dying on the funeral pyre of the husband is known as ‘Sati’. According to some of the Hindu texts women dying on the funeral pyre of her partner go directly to heaven so it’s good to practice this ceremony. Originally it was not compulsory for the women but if she accomplished such a custom she was extremely respected by the society. But after medieval period, this ceremony was compulsory for every woman their husbands were died before their wife.

Jauhar: It is also more or less alike to Sati but it is a mass suicide by women. Jauhar was common in ancient Hindu Rajput families. In this tradition wives burn alive themselves while their husbands went to perform Saka, i.e face the larger military of the opponent knowing that they will be killed since they are outnumbered. When people of the Rajput families became certain that they were going to die at the hands of their enemy then all the women assemble a large pyre and set themselves burning, while their husband used to fight the last critical battle with the enemy. Thus, they were protected our honor and the whole family respect.

Child Marriage: It was a custom in medieval India to get girls married at the earlier age (8-10). They were not allowed admission to education behalf of them they were trained in household duties. Child marriage had its own split of problems such as enlarged birth rate, poor health of condition of women due to frequent child bearing and high humanity rate of women and children. “Child Marriage” means to which either of the contracting parties is a child.³⁷

Restriction on Widow Remarriage: The circumstance of widows in medieval India was very unfortunate. They were not treating as equals and were subjected to a lot of limitations. They were supposed to live religious life after their husband death and were not allowed entry in any celebration or function of society. Their company in any good work was considered to be a bad sign. Many widows also shaved their hair often as a mark of grief. Widow women were not allowed to remarry if

³⁷ [Wcd.nic.in/policies/child_marriage_restraint_act1929](http://wcd.nic.in/policies/child_marriage_restraint_act1929), seen on 25 December, 2015.

any woman remarrying was looked down by the society. This brutality on widows was one of the major reasons for the huge number of women committing Sati. In medieval India living as a Hindu widow was not less than short of a curse.

Purdah system: It came into existence during the Mughal time, by which from teens to old age women were suspiciously screened from the vision of all men but their husbands and close relatives.³⁸ The veil or the 'Purdah' custom was widely common in medieval Indian society. It was used to protect the women folk from the eyes of foreign rulers who attacked India in Medieval period. But this system curtailed the liberty of women.

Female Education: The girls of medieval India and particularly Hindu society were not given official education. They were given education related to household tasks. But a well-known Indian philosopher 'Vatsyayana' marks that women were supposed to be perfect in sixty four arts which included cooking, spinning, grinding, and knowledge of medicine, recitation and many more.

Devadasis: It was a tradition common in Southern India. In this system girls were devoted to temples in the name of gods and goddesses. The girls were then beyond known as a 'Devadasi' meaning servant of God. These Devadasis were supposed to live the life of celibacy. All the conditions of Devadasis were satisfied by the funding given to the temples. In temple they used to spend their time in adoration of god and by singing and dancing for the god. Some kings used to request temple dancers to perform at their court for the pleasure of courtiers and thus some Devadasis transformed to Rajadasis (palace dancers) common in some tribes of South India like the Yellamma faction.

In short, it may be said that status of women in medieval period gradually declined. Many evils emerged in this period.

³⁸ A.D. Basham, *The Wonder that was Calcutta*, Rupa and Co., 1971, p.180.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

In Bhakti movement, 15th century took place which introduced new trends in social and religious life of women. Chaitanya, Guru Nanak, Kabir, Meera, Ramdas, Tulsi, Tukaram, and advocated women's rights for religious worship as a result women secured certain social liberty too. Emphasis is given to 'Grahastashrama' did not allowed husband to sanyas without the permission of his wife. During the Bhakti movement sign were confident to educate themselves. Though this movement did not bring extreme change in the position of women in economic, political field but in social and religious field some positive changes were seen, yet some evil practices were also observed like Devdasi custom, child marriage, sati system etc.

The starting of Sikhism gave a healing touch to the degradation of women. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, wanted women to be treated by men as equals. He said, "Within women is a man conceived, from women he is give birth, he is married to a women and with her goes through life....why call her bad. She gives birth to kings. None may survive without women. Only the one true God is external to women".³⁹ For the followers of Sikhism purdah was surplus, widow marriage was confident, sati was destined and women stepped out of their homes to help the men folk whenever. Guru Nanak's world rang deeply throughout India:

"How dare we deride one who mothers the best in the world?"⁴⁰

Bhai Gurdas beautifully said about the Sikh attitude towards women "Women is one partially of the complete personality of man and is entitled to divide secular and spiritual information equally".⁴¹

The Bhakti movement which happened during the medieval period denounces complicated ceremony and declared that God could be worshipped not only through temples and rituals but also by

³⁹ Government of India, *Toward Equality, Report of the committee on the status of Women in India*, New Delhi, 1985, pp.43-44

⁴⁰ Narinderpal Singh, "Outstanding Women in Sikhism" in Yash Kholi, *The Women of Punjab*, Chic Publications, Bombay, 1983, p.11.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

devotion. The devotional hymns collected in the languages spoken by the people transported this movement near to women, who's ignorance of Sanskrit and frequently disadvantaged them from sharing the spiritual practices and practice of men. This movement placed God within the reach of all irrespective of caste and sex.⁴²

The history of the Bhakti movement shows that it brought great consolation to women and presented an option way of life to many individual women. Some even reached sainthood. Meerabai, Muktabai, Janabai, Vishnupriya are well known names in Bhakti Literature whose compositions are popular to this day. The Bhakti movement tried to lift the status of women. It distributes the message of equality. But the impact of the movement did not show long lasting.

British Period

In the 18th century-mid to 20th century British ruled over the India. British government brought about modified in the economic and social structure of Indian society. When the British era started in India, the situation of women in India was the most horrible in the history of the country because of the child marriage and *sati* system and other evils are famous in Indian society. Several steps had been taken by the British rulers and social reformers, for the uplift the women. In this period remarkable attempts were made to abolish social customs like child marriage, *sati* and to allow widow remarriage etc.

In the 19th century Ram Mohan Roy was the first social reformer, who raised his voice against the existing religious and social maladies disturbing the conditions of women. He was collected a lot of matters from the Hindu religious literature in sustain of his attempts at abolishing the evil customs existing in the Hindu society. For this he also tried to activate the State for appropriate legal enactment against the tradition of *sati*.⁴³ In 1829, the British Government finally abolished

⁴² Anita Arya, "*Indian Women Society and Law*", Vol. 1, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, pp.31-32.

⁴³ Kalpana Shah, *op.cit.*, p.32

sati system and declared it is a crime.⁴⁴ Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his Brahma Samaj supported widow remarriage. However, it was the frequent and determined effort of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar that led to the circulation of the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. He quoted *Parashar Samhita* to support his views on a widow remarriage.⁴⁵

Dayanand Saraswati, the creator of the Arya Samaj was not in support of widow remarriage except in the case of virgin widows and men who had no sexual experience.⁴⁶ Gandhi Ji opposed dowry and asked to form a strong public views against that sick practice. He even entreated against Purdah system but stressed chastity.⁴⁷ He said, “chastity cannot be confined by the surrounding barrier of the *Purdah*.”⁴⁸

In order to improve the situation of women and to take out social improvements efficiently, social reformers left the need for providing education to girls. During the 1820’s, Christen missionaries in Bombay started the first school of girls in 1824.⁴⁹ With the help of Bethuen, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar started a school for girls in Calcutta in 1849 which school later known as Bethuen College. He also started numerous primary schools for girls in the village of Bengal.⁵⁰ In 1916, the Women’s University, Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Indian Women’s University was established by Dhondo Kashab Karve in Bombay.⁵¹

Mahadev Govind Ranade also raised his voice against the ending of child marriage and in favor of widow remarriage and education of

⁴⁴ M.C. Kotnala., *Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Indian Awakening*, Gitanjali Prakashan, Delhi, 1975.

⁴⁵ Heimsath Charles, *India Nationalism and Hindu Social Reforms*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1964.

⁴⁶ J.T.F. Jordens, *Dayanand Saraswati*, Oxford University, Delhi, 1978.

⁴⁷ M.K. Gandhi, *Women and Social Injustice*, Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1942, p.97.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Heimsath Charles, *op.cit.*,P.124

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ G.L. Chandavarkar, *Mahorchi Karve*, Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 1958.

girls. He also made efforts to attend the first widow remarriage in the western part of India.⁵²

Through the efforts and the various movements launched by these grand social leaders of the 19th century before independence, it had been likely to get many legislations passed and public opinion mobilized in favour of some matters of social reforms.

These treads have covered the way in removing the difficulty in the growth of women. Not only this, it had helped in eliminating inequalities between men and women and giving suitable esteem to the other-half of the society.

The most significant legislations connecting to the problems faced by the Indian (Hindu) women passed during British period were as follows:

1. Abolition of Sati Act. 1813.
2. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, 1856.
3. Civil Marriage Act, 1872.
4. Married Women's Property Act, I 874.
5. The Child Marriage Restraint Act (Sharda Act). 1929.
6. Hindu Law of Inheritance Act, 1929.
7. Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1939.
8. Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act, 1946.

In addition these Acts, many provincial governments also passed some legislation. In the year 1779, infanticide was affirmed to be a murder by the Bengal Regulation XXI. In the year 1804, this was extended all over to the other parts of the country of India.

In the last decades of 19th century, a main change took place in the outlook men and women about the education and employment of women as teachers, nurses, police etc. This changed outlook towards women's education also helped in rising the age of marriage and enacting legislation to ban sati. Thus, the ground prepared by the 19th century social reformers and their determined efforts led to the

⁵² Heimsath Charles, *op. cit.*,127.

liberation of women. This also helped them to take their rightful rest in society.

The great effort for the emancipation of women took place mostly in three guidelines - (1) to make essential laws for social reforms; (2) to afford utmost opportunities for women education; and (3) give them with the fundamental political rights.⁵³ Attention was determined on the 19th and early 20th centuries whereas political rights of women got attention only during the last phase of the freedom movement.⁵⁴

With the starting of the twentieth century a number of associations completely for women appeared among high - caste or elite women. The All India Women's Conference, the National Council for Women, Women's Indian Association of Madras etc. came into existence in this time.⁵⁵

Women in India's Freedom Struggle

The struggle for independence marked the launching of a political among women in India. With the organization of the Indian National Congress, membership was also open for women. The Swadeshi Movement in 1905 saw the entrance of women into freedom struggle movement. It also marked the formulation of several women's associations. The access of Annie Besant into Indian politics in 1914 accelerates the process of women's organizations with the independence struggle. She was the first women who ever been to be elected as president of the Indian National Congress. Sarojini Naidu too became very active in Indian National Movement.

It is M. K. Gandhi who represents large number of women into the freedom struggle. The contribution of women in India's freedom struggle was a country wide phenomena, their contribution in large scale was linked intimately with the beginning of Gandhi on the Indian political picture from 1917 on words. In response to Gandhi's call large number

⁵³ P.Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp.292-296.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Hem Lata Swarup, "Women's Political Engagement in India: Some Critical Issues", in Barbara Nelson and Najma Chauwdhary (Eds.), *Women and Politics World Wide*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, p.366.

of women thrown into the national freedom movement. His message “when women, we call abala became sabala, all those who are helpless will become dominant”, shows the significance he gave for the strength of women.⁵⁶

Through his trial test with sathyagraha (nonviolent strike), Gandhi realized that women could similarly participate jointly with men. His overwhelming voice in the freedom movement and his views on women prejudiced their position in it. His brand of politics and battle, which rested mostly on the principles like Ahimsa (non-violence), Sathyagraha and civil disobedience allowed women to participate in the political arena along with men. Gandhi was therefore able to rally a large number of women, no bound of caste, creed and class lines, to play a dynamic role in the independence struggle. Gandhi's own place on women development over time and he lastly urged women to fight development whether within the home or in the Congress Party.⁵⁷ For Gandhi, the freedom fight was not just political; it was also an economic and social reform for our society. He believed that men and women are equal but not identical rationally, mentally and spiritually, women are equal to a male and she can partake in every activity.⁵⁸ The main involvement of Gandhi to the reason of women put in his complete and unambiguous insistence on their personal dignity and sovereignty in the family and society. Gandhi succeeded in animating the traditional house bound women as a powerful device of political action.⁵⁹ Women's conventional ability to sacrifice was particularly emphasized by Gandhi in an attempt to assemble women. He strongly agreed that women's have capacity to sacrifice her own individual interest for the family was held to extend to the community and nation and this motivated women to join the Non-Cooperation Movement.

⁵⁶ M.K. Gandhi, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XXIV, Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1982, pp. 165.

⁵⁷ “Tracing the Path of the Struggle. Long March of Women”, *Third World Resurgence Issue*, No. 61-62 Penamp, Sep-Oct, 1995.

⁵⁸ <http://www.kamat.com/mmgandhi>, seen on 24 December, 2015.

⁵⁹ Kishwar Madhu, “Gandhi on Women”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XX, No. 4-5, Oct., 1985, pp. 1697.

The national freedom movement brought women to the mid of the stage. From liberal homes and conservative families, urban cities and rural districts, women solo and married, young and old came forward and united against British rule. Their participation is enormously important, women's sharing called into question the British right to rule, legitimized the Indian National Movement and won for protester women, at for a time the support of Indian men.⁶⁰

A huge number of women participated keenly in the Non-Cooperatoin, Civil Disobedience, Swadeshi, And Salt Sathyagraha movements led by Gandhi. During the Non-Cooperation Movement, women in unlike every part on India joined demonstrations and spread the use of khadi (spun cotton) and charakha (spinning wheel).

Many women like Vijayalexmi Pandit, Renuka Ray, Basanti Davi, Urmila Devi and Kasthurba Gandhi played an important role in the boycott of British commodities. In the Barsad Satyagraha of 1922-24, women turned out in great numbers. In Bardoli Sathyagraha of 1928, women slowly outnumbered men in political gatherings. Maniben Patel and Bakti Desai set their tents on the ground declared to be sold by the movement. In March 1930, the Salt Sathyagraha launched by Gandhi, a lot of women walked to Dandi to break the salt law. Sarojini Naidu, Muthuben Patel, Mridula Sarabai, Khurseedben, Kamaladevi Chattopadyaya and Avanthikabi, Gokhale were some of the well-known women connected with the Salt Sathyagraha. During the Civil Disobedience movement of 1940, women take part and courted arrest in great numbers. Suchetha Krapalani was the first one to do so, who 1939 had been in accused of the Women's Department of the All India Congress Committee.

In 1942 the Quit India Movement, women took part in demonstrations holding meetings, exhibitions and organizing strikes or dharnas. Kanakaltha Barua, a girl of Assam led a parade of 500 and

⁶⁰ Chatterjee Partha, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1993, pp. 117.

was killed in the police firing. In Bombay (Mumbai), Usha Mehta controlled an underground radio station. Aruna Asaf Ali a Muslim lady was one of the most important figures of 1942 movement, for years she stay behind underground avoiding arrest. She published bulletins and edited the newspaper 'The Inquilab' along with the Ram Manohar Lohia. Few women who did not believe in non-violence adopted the violence path. Many of young college girls joined underground societies. Kalpana Joshi, Preeti Waddadar was associated with Chittagong weapon store attack. In 1928 the Chchatri Sangh started was an important preparation and recruiting ground for future revolutionaries. In Delhi, at the age of 17 Roopvati Jain was in charge of a bomb factory under Chandrashekhar Azad.⁶¹ These are the only few examples of women who joined the freedom movement and actively participated equally with men. Women were connected with both in the moderate and extremist groups.

However, the number of women who obtained positions of power or membership in the representative bodies was very less compared to men. In the 1937 election, only eight women were elected from the general constituencies. Firstly, Vijayalaxmi Pandith become minister for local self government in Uttar Pradesh and later on Ansuyabi Kale and J.T Sipahimalchi were appointed Deputy Speakers in Madhya Pradesh and Sindh respectively. Hansa Mehta and Begum Shah Nawoy took office as Parliamentary Secretary in Bombay and Punjab respectively. In December 1946 Constituent Assembly, there were 14 women members.⁶² But there were no balanced increase in women as representatives or in power positions.

It has been well-known that the women who were active in politics or politically successful belonged to well-off and progressive families. They were sustained by husbands or family members who were dynamic in Congress. This is being followed even after independence. But, there were huge number known or unknown women who

⁶¹ Sinha Niroj, 2000, *op. cit.* pp. 83.

⁶² B.R. Siwal, *Political Empowerment of Women: Women's Link*, April-June, 2001, p 23.

participated in the freedom struggle movement. It provided a chance for great number of women to enter into active politics which was not seen earlier for them. They were willing to join demonstrations, and to go to prisons many times. Women joined active revolutionary organizations, helped in deal out newspapers and helped in the manufacturing bombs. Innumerable women provided support to freedom fighters by looking their families. Vina Mazumdar says there are situation in the reports during that period that thousands of women attended the political gatherings. Very little in known of who they were, why they came, and from where they came.⁶³

Geraldin Forbes notes that the contribution of women legitimized in Indian National Congress. Women's activities legalized Indian harmony and sathyagraha. Most important, it legitimized maintain to a place in the governance of India at that time. It also created movement who fight for women's rights. At the same time contribution of women had some clear negative aspects. Those demonstrating, claimed to represent the all Indian women, but the number of groups involved, other than upper and middle class Hindu women, was never large.⁶⁴

Participation of huge number of women in the freedom struggle strengthened freedom movement in real sense. In this movement, gender equity was not the agenda of that time. It was not the main focus of the Indian national movement. The participating of women in getting freedom for India is noteworthy. They proved that women are also capable of strengthening the political movement. The participation of women in struggle had its great impact on the society and family and on women themselves also.

After Independence

On achieving Independence in the year 1947, India became a Democratic Republic state. The Constitution of India adopted a parliamentary form of government. The government functions at

⁶³ Mazumdar Vina, "Women in the Political Process", in Maitheryi Krishnaraj (Ed.), *Women Studies in India. Some Perspectives*, Popular Prakashana, New Delhi 1986, p. 97.

⁶⁴ Forbes Geraldin, *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 154.

different stages. At the top level, there is the national government and state government.

The Constitution of India forced in the year 1950 who guarantee justice, liberty and equality to all the citizens. The Constitution of India decided to secure to all its citizens justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and to worship, equality of status and opportunity and to promote among them fraternity promised the dignity of individual and the unity of nation. To reach equality, the Constitution not only grants equality of treatment to women but also calls upon the state to adopt measures favoring women counteracts the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages which ensures equality between men and women.

In the Article 14 ensure that the state shall not refuse to any person equality before the law and give them equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

In the Article 15 discrimination is prohibited on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth. It is a guarantee against every form of discrimination.

In the article 15 (3), nothing shall avoid the state from making any special provisions for the benefit of women and children.

In the Article 16(1) guarantees gave equal of opportunity for all citizens in matter relating to employment or appointment to any office under state.

Article 16(2) no citizen shall, on grounds of religion, creed, cast, sex, place of birth residence, be eligible for, or discriminated against in respect of any employment or job under the state.

Directive Principles are the goals for state which achieved by state government is not compulsory. The Directive Principles of the state policy regarding women and having a special bearing on their status are:

Article 39-a) provide right to an adequate means of livelihood for the entire citizen.

Article 39-d) provides equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

39_e) that the health and strength of workers, men or women, and the tender age of children are not physically abused and that citizen are not forced by economic requirement to enter occupations unsuitable for their age.

Article 42 states provide humanitarian condition of work and maternity relief for women. This is in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 51-A clause (e) says that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India-to promote harmony and sprit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India, go beyond religious, linguistic and religious or sectional diversities, to rejects practice insulting to the dignity of women.

The 73rd which deals with the Constitutional Amendment has added the following articles to the Constitution providing reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Article 243-(D) (2) states has compulsory that 1/3 of the seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to S. C or as the case may be S.T cast.

Article 243-(D) (3) enlarge s political reservation to women not less than 1/3 of the total number of seats to be plugged by direct election in every panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats shall be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a panchayat.

Article 243-(D) (4) extends reservation to elected offices as well. The office of the chairpersons in the panchayats or any other level shall be set asided S.C and the S.Ts and women in such a method as legislature of a state may, by law afford.

The legal Constitutional framework in India would come into view a mixture of Communitarian view on one hand and that of liberal democracy on the other hand. In spite of such conditions in the Constitution, the decades following independence observed a refuse in

the women's participation in politics. These rights emerge illusionary as there was a transfer from the tray of the Constitution. Gap started widening in all political fields. Article 325 and 326 are gave political equality, equal right to participate in political activity and right to vote, respectively. While the latter has been admission and enjoyed by large number of women, the right to equal participation is still a remote vision. The lack of space for participation in political bodies has resulted in their attendance in not enough numbers in this decision making bodies.

Legal Provisions

To support the Constitutional permission, the State has enacted assorted legislative measures planned to ensure equal rights, to counter social bias and various forms of violence and slaughter and to give hold services particularly to working women. Although women may be victims of any of the offenses such as 'Murder', heating, torching etc, the offenses, which are directed particularly against women, are characterized as 'Crime against Women'. These are broadly classified under two categories these are:

1. The Crimes Identified Under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- i. Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)
- ii. Kidnapping and Abduction for diverse reasons (Sec. 363-373)
- iii. Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their efforts (Sec. 302/304-B IPC)
- iv. Torture, both mental and physical (Sec. 498-A IPC)
- v. Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC)
- vi. Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)
- vii. import of girls (up to 21 years of age)

2. The Crimes identified under the Special Laws (SLL)

Even though all laws are not gender specific, the provisions of law affecting women considerably have been assessment occasionally and amendments carried out to remain pace with the emerging conditions.

Some acts which have special conditions to defend women and their interests are:

- i. The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
- ii. The Plantation Labour Act, 1951
- iii. The Family Courts Act, 1954
- iv. The Special Marriage Act, 1954
- v. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
- vi. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 with amendment in 2005
- vii. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- viii. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (Amended in 1995)
- ix. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- x. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- xi. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1976
- xii. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- xiii. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- xiv. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983
- xv. The Factories (Amendment) Act, 1986
- xvi. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- xvii. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
- xviii. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

Special Initiatives for Women

(1) National Commission for Women

In January 1992, the Government set-up this constitutional body with a specific permission to study and monitor all matters connecting to the constitutional and legal defends provided for women review the obtainable legislation to suggest amendments wherever if it is necessary. It's focused on:

- a) Women weaker segment
- b) Widows of vrindavan
- c) Project Mangalam
- d) Problems about prostitution
- e) Study of mentally disables

f) Agenda of political empowerment

Focus areas of Commission in 1999 were :

- a) Launched Dehej Mukhti Abhiyan
- b) Prison improvements for women under tracks
- c) Gender sensitization workshops for police, judiciary, doctors through preparation components
- d) To study women and disabilities

(2) Reservation for Women in Local Self -Government

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Acts passed in 1992 and Parliament ensure one-third of the total seats for women in all elected offices in local bodies whether in rural areas or urban areas.

(3) The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (1991-2000)

The plan of Action is to make sure endurance, protection and expansion of the girl child with the final objective of structure up a improved future for the girl child.

(4) National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001

The Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development has ready a “National Policy for the Empowerment of Women” in the year of 2001. The goal of this policy is to carry about the advancement, development and empowerment of women.

To strengthen the status of women, many legislations be relevant to women were enacted after independence. These were mainly related to marriage, divorce, inheritance of property and employment.

Women Development in Five Year Plans :

First Five Year Plan (1951-56)

- 1) Organization of the Central social Welfare Board.
- 2) Organization of Mahila Mandals.
- 3) Community Development Programme.

Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)

Welfare measures for women continued during this plan period.

Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)

- 1) Maintain female education.
- 2) Rural welfare services and condensed courses of education had main concern alongside provisions of examine for material and child welfare, health, education, nutrition and family planning.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)

The outlay for family planning was stepped up and maximum main concern was accorded to immunization and additional Feeding programmes etc.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979)

- 1) Highlight the requirement to teach women to need of income and defense.
- 2) Practical literacy programme got the top priority.
- 3) Women welfare and Development bureau were set up in 1976 under the Ministry of Social Welfare for the development of women.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985)

- 1) It was a specific move from welfare to growth.
- 2) It documented women's lack of admission to resources as a dangerous factor impending their growth.
- 3) A programme for joint pattas to men and women was start.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990)

- 1) Concern for equity and Empowerment.
- 2) Emphasis was on qualitative aspects such as inculcation of confidence generation of awareness in skills for better employment of women.
- 3) Emphasized the required to open new opportunity of work for women.
- 4) Recognition was also given to require for organize women Safeguard for their rights.

Eight Five Year Plan (1990-1995)

It focused on authorizing women especially at the grass root level through Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)

In the ninth fifth year plan came into effect from 1 April, 1997. In this the main focus on empowerment of women and people's participation in planning and implementation of strategies. An important objective in the approach paper is the empowerment of women. The ninth fifth year plan is an attempt to bring in women's issues within the policy making spare.

Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007)

In the tenth five year plan emphasis upon social, economic and environment during this time.

In these targets, women and children related issues are:

- 1) Reduction of gender gaps in literacy and wages rates by at least 50%.
- 2) Reduction of infant mortality rate to 45 per 1000 live births.
- 3) Reduction of maternal mortality ratio two per 1000 live births.
- 4) All children to complete five years of schooling by 2007.

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)

- 1) Raise the sex ratio for age group 0 - 6 to 935 by 2011 - 12 and to 950 by 2016 - 17.
- 2) Ensure that at least 33 percent of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are Women and Girl Children.
- 3) Ensure that all children enjoy a safe childhood, without any compulsion to work.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (Fyp-12) (2012-17)

Twelfth five years implemented on 27 July, 2013. The chairman of this commission is Dr. Manmohan Singh. In this focused on environment issues but at the same time Women and children health and education issues were considerable:

- 1) Must aim raising the grass Enrolment Ratio(GEN) in higher education to 20 percent by 2017 and 25 percent by 2022.
- 2) Must focus on quality of education.
- 3) Must aim at significant reduction in social, gender and regional gaps in education.
- 4) Focus on women and children; ICDS need to be revamped.
- 5) Focused to increase seats in Medical colleges, nursing colleges and other licensed professionals.

No doubt, since the independence there are many laws and committee are made for the improvement of women as above mentioned. But it is fact that women are still struggling for their rights. In this situation, it can be said that even after seventy years of independence of India, the level of women's participation in higher political bodies stays very low. This trend needs serious concentration as the times command active participation of women in political fields. Nehru was concerned at the perseverance of the gender imbalance reflected in the poor representation of women in the Lok Sabha.⁶⁵

The below tables shows the women participation in parliament and their turnout in election times which show the picture of women representation in Parliament and Punjab State assembly:

⁶⁵ G .Palanithurai, *Contemporary Issues in Development Dynamics*, Kaniska Publiashers, New Delhi, 1992, p. 202.

Table no: 2.1
Representation of women in Lok Sabha

Year	No. of Seats	No. of Women Members	Percentage of Women Members
1952	489	23	4.70
1957	494	27	5.46
1962	494	34	6.88
1967	515	31	6.01
1971	518	21	4.05
1977	542	19	3.50
1980	508	28	5.16
1984	529	42	8.26
1989	521	27	5.10
1991	540	39	7.4
1996	543	40	7.36
1998	543	43	7.91
1999	543	49	9.02
2004	542	45	8.29
2009	543	59	10.86
2014	543	65	11.98

Source: Election Commission of India.

The above table evidently reveals the share of women in the highest legislative body of the country from the 1952 to 2014. This table clearly shows that women's representation failed to reach even ten percent of the total seats till the fourteenth general election to Lok Sabha that the number of women crossed ten percent. Even in the 15th and the 16th Lok Sabhas the percentage is slightly above 10 percent

Table no. 2:2
Representation of Women in Rajya Sabha

Year	No. of Women Members	Percentage of Women Members
1952	15	6.94
1954	17	7.79
1956	20	8.62
1958	22	9.52
1960	24	10.52
1962	18	7.62
1964	21	8.67
1966	23	9.82
1968	22	9.64
1970	14	5.85
1972	18	7.40
1974	18	7.53
1976	24	10.16
1978	25	10.24
1980	29	11.98
1982	24	10.16
1984	24	10.24
1986	28	11.98
1988	25	10.59
1990	24	10.34
1992	17	7.29
1994	20	8.36
1996	19	7.81
1998	19	7.75
2000	22	9.01
2002	25	10.20
2004	28	11.43
2006	25	10.41
2008	23	9.50
2012	26	10.27
2014	31	11.86

Source: Election Commission of India.

The above table establishes that the scenario in the Rajya Sabha is not different to Lok Sabha. The membership of women is consistently low and far from acceptable. The in general picture, however, appears to be improved than the lower house.

Table no: 2.3

Participation of Women in the General Election since 1952

Year	Poll Percentage of Men	Poll Percentage of Women
1952	53.0	37.10
1957	56.0	39.60
1962	62.0	46.60
1967	66.7	55.5
1971	60.4	49.6
1977	66.6	54.90
1980	57.69	51.29
1984	63.61	68.17
1989	66.13	57.32
1991	61.6	51.4
1996	62.1	53.4
1998	66.2	57.9
1999	64.0	55.6
2004	52.65	44.65
2009	60.2	55.8
2014	67.0	65.54

Sources: Election Commission of India.

The table no. 2.3 presents shows, in terms of percentage, of the participation of men and women in India as voters in General Elections. This table clearly proves that women voters used their right and cast

their vote with continuity. Their percentage as voters is quite positive in comparison with their representation in Parliament as is revealed in table no 2.1 and 2.2. The table reveals a significant socio-political reality. It establishes the clarity and vibrant nature of democracy where women come out to use their right to vote in good numbers. That their numbers in both the houses of the Parliament have remained low, on the other hand, is evidence of the patriarchal nature of Indian politics which denies admission to power on ground of gender.

In the end it can be said that although the status of women changed time by time. After independence Indian state guarantee that social and political inequalities come to end. This can be made possible, most of all, through creating social awareness and realization raising exercise directed at all segment of the society in arrange to sensitize people about the significance of gender equality. It is the primary duty of women legislators to donate to the uplift of women and to make concentrated efforts for addition of women in democratic progress.

Chapter – 3

WOMEN IN PUNJAB

Punjab has been the most important state of India in the matter of production of wheat and rice and was once called granary of India. It enjoys the credit of carrying the green revolution in the country. A development mix of irrigation, fertilizers and high-yielding varieties of seeds laid the foundation of a process, which was additionally strengthened by agricultural recognition societies, rural connection roads, village electrification, and a variety of extension services. Punjab today contributes nearly 40 per cent of wheat and 60 per cent of rice obtain for distribution through the public allocation system. Likewise, the state went in for encouraging the white revolution, ensuring the highest per capita accessibility of milk to the people. A normal agro-based and agro-oriented industrialization has been another well-known attribute of the state economy. No less praiseworthy have been the attempts at increasing the infrastructure, mostly irrigation and power. The increasing effect of all these measures is evident in the highest per capita income of the state, a situation of pride which Punjab has been investment for most of the years since its arrangement in 1966. An inconsistency may be stated here and explained: Despite its comparatively high-income level, the state is renowned for significant out movement to other divisions of India as also migration to several countries. This is qualified not to any distressful condition at home but to hold of greater wealth outside.¹

Punjab, the land of five rivers, inhabits an extremely significant place in India. The name 'Punjab' is derived from the Persian words, 'Punj' and 'Ab', meaning 'five' and 'water' respectively. So, literally Punjab means the land of five rivers. These five rivers are Sutluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jehlum.² History points out that Punjab — because

¹ *Human Development Report*, 2004, Government of Punjab, India.

² Askoh Kumar Gupta, *Emerging Pattern of Political Leadership: A Case Study of Punjab*, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 1991, p.17.

of its wealth and strategic location in North West India concerned many external invaders and provided almost like Gate way of India. The people of this state undergo many wars and invasions — which ultimately influenced its culture also.³

Punjab was divided into two parts as a result of the partition of the country on August 15, 1947. Its western part, having Muslim majority was transferred to Pakistan and the non-Muslim majority area of eastern Punjab became a part of the Indian Union. On July 15, 1948, a new political area was established within the boundaries of Punjab under the name of PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab States Union). It comprised the territories of the previous princely states.⁴ The limitations of Punjab were distended in 1956 as a result of merger of PEPSU with Punjab.

After ten years later (1966), Punjab was reorganized on linguistic basis into the Punjabi-speaking state of Punjab and the Hindi-speaking state of Haryana. The hilly areas of the compound Punjab were merged in Himachal Pardesh. The city of Chandigarh with some of its neighboring village came to constitute a Union Territory.

Participation of Punjab women in Freedom struggle Movement:

The period of participation of the women of Punjab in the nationalist movement can be divided into five phases from first 1901-10, Second phase 1911-20, Third phase 1921-30, fourth phase 1931-40 and the last phase occurred in 1941-47. In the early years of 1900s i.e. from 1901-10, participation of women of Punjab was mostly through the social reformative works. Bibi Harnam Kaur along with her husband Bhai Takht Singh opened school for girls known as 'Sikh Kanya Mahavidyalaya in Ferozepur in 1894 and in 1907, this institution started its educational journal known as 'Punjabi Bhain'.⁵ Sarla Debi Chaudharni⁶ along with Rambhuj

³ *Census of India*, 2001, Series 4, Government of Punjab, India

⁴ J. C. Anand, *Politics of Retreating Communalism*, State Politics in India, New Delhi, Meenakshi Parkarshan, p.262.

⁵ Suraj Singh, *Sri Mata Bibi Harnam Kaur : Adbhut Jeevan*, Amritsar, Wazir Hind Press, 1908, pp. 26-28.

Dutt Chaudhari established 'Hindu-Sahayak Sabha' in Lahore in 1906. The Sabhas were opened to make men and women actually fit as they were trained gymnastics, swordplay, Gatka fights and other actions.⁷ The partition of Bengal infused a new strength of nationalism among the women of Punjab and Punjabi nationalists welcomed the Bengali Swadeshi movement, the women in Punjab also stepped into the political spheres.⁸ 'In Lahore, women organized a Ladies segment at the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition of 1909'.⁹

In the first phase from 1901-10, there was a type of participation of the women in Punjab which was extra or less passive in nature in political affairs, where women were more concerned with women's problems and evil customs. Education was leading on their list, followed by child marriage and the problems of widows and dowry.

The second phase from 1911-20 witnessed many ups and downs in the involvement of women in the political movement in Punjab. The most significant event of the decade was the first World War (1914-18). It brought about critical changes in the political life and socio-economic situations of India.¹⁰ At the starting of 2nd World War, Indian leaders confirmed their understanding and sustain for Britain. In the article 'Jung, Europe Ate Sikh Deviyani Di Sewa' of the September issue, it confident the Punjabi people to give their support the Britishers whole heartedly.¹¹ Another main issue which guided to the straight and dynamic participation of the woman in Punjab was the entry of Mahatma Gandhi in politics.

⁶ S.P. Sen (Ed), *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. I (A-D), Institute of Historical studies, Calcutta, 1972, pp. 289-290.

⁷ Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing : An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women Rights and Feminism 1800-1990*, New Delhi, 1993, p. 41.

⁸ Manmohan Kaur, *Role of Women in the Freedom Movement (1857-1947)*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, p. 96.

⁹ Radha Kumar, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

¹⁰ Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India : 1885-1947*, Macmillan India Press, 1983, Madras, p. 147.

¹¹ *Bhujangan Pattar*, Kairon, 1 Sep., 1917, p. 19.

Thus, in the 2nd phase of 1911-20, women of Punjab became actively participate in the politics. The instant factors which led to their involvement were the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919. From mid of 2nd phase 1914-18, some were either pro British or anti British. Though the entry of Gandhi in politics gave a boost to women to involve in freedom struggle but the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagah tragedy set the phase for active participation of women in freedom struggle.

During the 3rd phase in 1921-30, the women of Punjab hugely participated in the non-violent and Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22). They held the meetings, led the demonstrations, boycotted foreign commodities, adopted the slogan of Swadeshi and indulged in the picketing of foreign cloth shops and liquid shops. This participation of women in great numbers showed clear the doubt that the freedom movement was in the practice of becoming a mass movement. 'Sarla Devi Chaudhrani, Smt. Parvati Devi of Kamalia, Smt. Puran Devi, Smt. Gauran Devi, Mrs. Duni Chand, Smt. Amar Kaur, Smt. Luxmi Arya, Smt. Pushpa Gujral, Smt. Chand Bai, Smt. Lal Devi, Kumari Lajjavati and Lado Rani Zutshi many of the names of few women who participated in this movement in Punjab. This involvement of women was considered as a training programme for the future Satyagraha programmes of 1930-34 and 1940-42'.¹²

The next few years of 1940s spectator the third chief campaign of M.K. Gandhi – The Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement from 1940-1944. In these two movements, once again a great number of Punjabi women participated and assisted their male counterparts in their freedom movements.

The decade 1931-40 was the period of civil disobedience and women of Punjab became dynamic in disobeying the government polices by following the non-violent methods of Gandhi. The last seven years

¹² Manju Verma, *The Role of Women in the Freedom Struggle of Punjab*, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, pp. 60, 61.

from 1941 to 47 were those when the women of Punjab state came forward and powerfully struggle alongside men. These protester women were so caught up in this struggle, that they overlooked gender factors or put them side until independence had been attained in 1947. The women of Punjab were given praise for their actions as Rajkumari Amrit Kaur of Kapurthala, Punjab was selected as the first women health minister of the free Independent India.

Geographical Location of Punjab

The state of Punjab is a component of the world's first and the older society, i.e. The Indus Valley civilization. It is an earth of five rivers, productive mud and Gurus and warriors. Punjab is located in northwest India between 29'30" N to 32' 32"N latitude and 73' 55" E to 76' 50" E longitude. It is one side linked with bordered by Pakistan on the west, and by four Indian states - Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Himachal Pradesh on its northeast and Haryana and Rajasthan on its south. Punjab inhabits 1.54 percent of the country's total geographical area (50,362 square kilometers). However, because of its dangerous position in northwest India, the state historically provided as gateway of India — a wealthy purposes for many outsiders worrier.¹³

Physical Features of Punjab

Physically, Punjab may be separated into two parts; one is the Sub-Shivalik slip and the Sutlej-Ghaggar unadorned. The Sub-Shivalik strips cover-ups the upper segment of Ropar, Hoshiarpur and Gurdaspur districts whereas the Sutlej-Ghaggar plain holds the other districts of the Punjab. Punjab is derived its name from the five rivers that take off through this area, viz., the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum.¹⁴ This ground of five rivers is mostly abundant plain. Towards the southeast one locates semi-arid and desert land; a restraint of rolling hills expanding along the northeast at the feet of the Himalayas.

¹³ Planning Commission estimates of poverty for 1999-2000, *Ref: Human Development Report 2004*, Government of Punjab, India. P-61.

¹⁴ <http://punjabgovt.nic.in/ECONOMY/healthcare>. seen on March 21, 2014.

Climate

The state has a continental weather. Between November and February, daytime least temperature ranges between 5°C and 9°C. However, night time temperature infrequently drops to chilly position. Every day maximum winter temperature ranges between 19° C and 27° C. Humidity in winter season is low. The summers are very hot in Punjab with a normal daily temperature in May and June at 40°C. Temperatures occasionally attain 45°C. Yearly rain fall ranges from about 125 cm. in the Shiwalik Hills to about 35 cm. in the southwest Punjab. Amritsar receives about 65 cm. of rain per year, of which 70 percent falls through the monsoon time period of July to September.¹⁵ About 15 per cent of yearly rainfall is taking by cyclones between December and March.

Administrative Set-up

Chandigarh, the capital city of the state of Punjab is administered individually as a Union Territory since it is also the capital of adjoining state of Haryana. High Court of Punjab and Haryana is also established in Chandigarh but there are split secretariats of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh. Other administrative setup of Punjab state is given below:

¹⁵ *Human Development Report 2000*, Government of Punjab, India.

Table no. 3.1
Administrative Setup Punjab

Districts	22
Divisions	5
Sub-divisions	81
Tehsils	82
Sub-tehsils	85
Blocks	146
Cities(Census 2011)	74
Towns(Census 2011)	143
Villages(Census 2011)	12581
Zila Parishads	22
Municipal Committees	143
Improvement Trust	23
Municipal Corporations	10

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2013

In Punjab administration setup is 22 districts, 5 divisions, 81 sub-division, 86 sub-tehsils, 146 blocks, 143 towns and 12581 villages.¹⁶

Population

In 2011 census figures show that Punjab's population was 27743,338. During the last 10 years, the population in Punjab has increased by 40.07 lakhs, registering a decadal growth rate of 13.89 percent. The sex ratio had however; turn down from 893 in 1991 to 874 in 2001. The bulk of population is up from 403 in 1991 to 551 now.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Statistical Abstract of Punjab, Government of Punjab, Economic Advisor to Government, Chandigarh.*

¹⁷ *SRS Bulletin, Vol. 42, No, 1, October 2007, India.*

Table no. 3.2
Population of Punjab

Population	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Male	6007566	7266515	8937210	10788034	12985045	14639465
Female	5127503	6284545	7851705	9503935	11373954	13103873
Total	11135069	13551060	16788915	20281969	24358999	27743338

Sources: Census of India, 2011, Primary Census Abstract Data Highlights Punjab, Series 4.

The above table shows figures of male and female population of Punjab at 10 yearly intervals from 1961 to 2011 which has increased very fast. The present ratio is 13:12 between men and women.

Table no. 3.3
Growth Rate

Growth rate of males and females population in Punjab

Year	Male (Growth rate)	Female (Growth rate)	Total Growth rate
1961	6007566 (--)	5127503 (--)	11135069 (--)
1971	7266515 (20.96)	6284545 (22.57)	13551060 (21.70)
1981	8937210 (22.99)	7851705 (24.94)	16788915 (23.89)
1991	10788034 (20.71)	9503935 (21.04)	20281969 (20.81)
2001	12985045 (20.37)	11373954 (19.68)	24358999 (20.10)
2011	14639465 (12.74)	13103873 (15.21)	27743338 (13.89)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab

Growth rate of population of males and females in Punjab from 1961 to 2011 is 25 percent from 11135069 and 277433358. There is also increase of 16408269 people during 1961 and 2011.

Sex Ratio

The gender composition in Punjab (the number of females per thousand males) is at rest quite meager due to common social and cultural issues. Punjab is the state with second lowest sex ratio (895 females per thousand males) and is a lot less than the national average (943 females per thousand males). In 1991, Punjab's sex ratio has slowly enhanced. However in the 2011 Census, it caused a state of alarm crosswise the nation by reducing down to a pre-2001 Census figure of 876. The low sex ratio for India as well as Punjab discloses a long-term imbalance in the gender composition. Some Districts of Punjab also show a miserable picture as per Census of India, 2011.¹⁸

Table no. 3.4
Sex Ratio in Punjab
(Female per 1000 males)

Sex Ratio	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Punjab	854	857	879	882	876	895
India	941	930	934	927	933	943

Sources: Director Census Operations, Punjab

Comparatively the figure of sex ratio of Punjab is less than India. It is seen that, 1961 to 2011 Punjab sex ratio was always less than to India. There is no single time in history when Punjab ration is more than to national average.

¹⁸ Baseline Report on “*Women and Political Participation in India*” by NIAS and coordinated by IWRAW Asia Pacific Advanced (Unedited Version).

Sex Ratio (0 – 6)

Table no. 3.5
Sex ratio (0-6) age group in Punjab
(Female per 1000 males)

State	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Punjab	901	901	908	875	798	846
India	976	964	962	945	927	914

Sources: Director Census Operations, Punjab

The above table shows that ratio of children 0-6 age group has also done down from 901 to 846 in 2011 Punjab and India. It indicates that Punjab sex ratio about children is always less than India's sex ratio. It was also noticed that in the starting years of independence Punjab sex ratio is quite well but with the passage of time in gradually lesser.

Literacy

Punjab has shown a considerable upgrading in literacy rate over last the years. In general literacy rate has approximately doubled in the last 30 years. There has also seen an enhancement in the female literacy rate. The state has attained the literacy rate (75.84 percent) in the year 2011. Even though this, Punjab had 16th rank in terms of literacy among all the States/UTs at the national level.

Table no. 3.6
Literacy Rate in Punjab

Year	Male	Female	Total
1961	--	--	--
1971	42.23	24.65	34.12
1981	51.23	34.35	43.37
1991	65.66	50.41	58.51
2001	75.63	63.55	69.95
2011	80.4	70.7	75.8

Sources: Director Census Operations, Punjab

The above table shows that Punjab has done very well in removing illiteracy as the literacy rate has gone up to 80.4 percent for males and 70.7 percent for females as per 2011¹⁹ census which is indicator of human development also.

Marriage Patterns

Marriage patterns are main determinants of fertility and family planning commands. Conventionally, the female age at marriage has been comparatively higher in Punjab than the national average. The NFHS-2 shows that in 1998-99, for women aged 25 to 29, the median age at first marriage was 3.6 years higher in Punjab (20.0 years) than in the country as a whole (16.4 years).²⁰ Fast pregnancies reason of general health risks to mother and the child. Mothers with longer gaps help child continued existence and help decrease of fertility. NFHS-2 showed that the average interval between two most current births is highest in Kerala (38.1 months) and the lowest in Punjab (28.0 months).

¹⁹ National Human Development Report, 2001 & 2002, Planning Commission, Government of India. <http://mohfw.nic.in/NRHM/State%20Files/Punjab>.

²⁰ <http://wcd.nic.in/empwomen.htm>. seen on March 21, 2014.

The age at first birth and the age at last birth are two vital pointers that emphasize the length of the reproductive time in terms of beginning and ending of child bearing. A new trend shown towards restriction of reproductive life in Punjab, in recent times, from 9.0 to 7.4 years has been recognized by the NFHS.

Fertility Transition

The state has undergone considerable alteration of its fertility profile throughout the last three decades. After Kerala, Punjab is the second state in the country to have concentrated the total fertility rate, about by half, between early '70s to late '90s, whilst having totally dissimilar socio-cultural surroundings.

The refuse in fertility is general in the state; and is not restricted to any particular region or community. Punjab has a Total Fertility Rate of 1.7 next to the national figure of 2.68 children per woman (NFHS-3).²¹ Rural and urban regions in each district are experiencing evolution in fertility in dissimilar ways depending on the changes in the local circumstances that are frequently important inducements for the determination of family size. The important reduce in fertility in Punjab in spite of some of the key social pointers (such as strong son partiality, sizeable presence of socially backward population, relatively higher infant mortality) being set next to the decline, is a manifestation of primacy of involvement by selected growth factors namely the family planning programme, female literacy and wealth at the household level.

Economic Activity / Women and Work

The people of Punjab are identified for their capitalist spirit, hard work and flexibility. In a state like Punjab, where agriculture is the foundation of the economy and the support of the people, the lowest female work contribution rate recorded during Census 1991 remains a mystery. However, in the last years (1991-2011) the women's work participation rate has improved from 4.4 percent as reported in Census

²¹ <http://socialwelfare.delhigovt.nic.in/immoraltraffact.htm>. seen on March 22, 2014.

1991 to 18.7 percent throughout Census 2011.²² In Punjab, the female work participation rate is at rest much lower as compared with the national figures (25.6 percent). All the districts of Punjab have shown a substantial boost in work participation rates of women. However, invisibility of women's work, household tasks and other odd jobs, view the man as the most important bread earner and consider women as non workers. Even women themselves lean to consider their labor as 'family responsibilities' and are therefore, less probable to be occupied in rewarded work.

Table no. 3.7
Economic Status in Punjab

Year	Workers			Non Workers		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1961	3184334 (53.01)	281935 (5.50)	3466269 (31.13)	2823232 (46.99)	4845568 (94.50)	7668800 (68.87)
1971	3838517 (52.83)	7475 (1.18)	3912592 (28.87)	3427998 (47.18)	6210470 (98.82)	9638468 (71.13)
1981	6749646 (75.52)	178113 (2.27)	6927759 (41.26)	4132866 (46.24)	7368138 (93.84)	11501004 (68.50)
1991	5832852 (54.12)	265522 (2.79)	6098374 (30.07)	4934691 (45.78)	9085289 (95.60)	14019980 (69.13)
2001	6426028 (49.49)	1409704 (12.39)	7835732 (32.17)	6024832 (46.40)	9206693 (80.95)	15231525 (62.53)
2011	8074157 (55.15)	1823205 (13.91)	9897362 (35.67)	6565308 (44.85)	11280668 (86.09)	17845976 (64.33)

Sources: Statistical Abstract of Punjab

The above table indicates that financial position of men workers has been changeable from 1961 to 2011 slightly but over all status has almost stayed same. As regards the financial status of women workers is worried it was quite low from 1961 to 1991 but it has exposed fairly

²² <http://nrcw.nic.in/shared/sublinkimages/64.htm>. seen on June 14, 2014.

rise in 2001 and 2011 census. The monetary status of men non-workers has been quite standard since 1961 till 2011 but in respect of women non-workers it has been quite high throughout from 1961 census to 2011 census.

Women Political Participation

Political participation of women is important to concern that main concerns and matters of women are included into normal decision-making procedure. However, the number of women in political decision-making bodies is unusually low both in the Parliament and as well as the State Legislatures. This condition has resulted in maintenance of inequalities and favoritism against women. Absence of assenting action, lack of confidence environment in enabling the participation of women in state assemblies and parliament has the consequence of abolishing the satisfaction and exercising the right to political participation and addition to harmful the satisfaction of socio- economic rights.²³

Latest studies have exposed a miserable scenario concerning political contribution of women in Punjab, whether as legislators or as voters. As far as representation of women in Rajya Sabha is concerned, only one women representative has been selected in the Rajya Sabha from the State. In the State Legislative Assembly (SLA), the representation of women has never go beyond 7.43 since 1957. Out of the general elections behavior so far, no woman representative was chosen to the Lok Sabha (LS) in four of the elections. Further, another important sign of political participation, viz., as voters as legislators are given below:

²³ <http://nrcw.nic.in/shared/sublinkimages/12.htm>. seen on June 14, 2014.

Table no. 3.8**Representation of Women from Punjab in Lok Sabha since 1967**

Year	Total No. of Candidate	No. of Women Candidate	No. of Seats	No. of Successful Women Candidates
1967	75	3	13	2
1971	83	2	13	0
1977	79	1	13	0
1980	146	3	13	2
1984	74	5	13	1
1989	227	12	13	3
1992	81	4	13	2
1996	259	17	13	1
1998	102	9	13	1
1999	120	14	13	2
2004	132	10	13	2
2009	218	13	13	4
2014	253	20	13	1

Sources: Election Commission of India.

Data given in the above table shows the status approximately the women candidates who constructed for Lok Sabha 1967 beyond as also the women considered who won election from as various as 13 Lok Sabha seats from Punjab. No doubt 17 and 20 women contested in 1996 and 2014 elections respectively but merely one each could win the election. In 2004 election, maximum 4 women ever could win Lok Sabha election out of 13.

Table no. 3.9
Representation of Women in Punjab Legislative Assembly
Since 1967

Year	Total No. of Candidate	No. of Women Candidate	No. of Seats	No. of Successful Women Candidates
1967	602	8	104	1(0.96)
1969	471	8	104	0
1972	468	14	104	7(6.73)
1977	682	18	117	3(2.56)
1980	722	19	117	7(5.93)
1985	857	33	117	4(3.42)
1992	557	22	117	6(5.13)
1997	693	52	117	8(6.84)
2002	923	71	117	8(6.84)
2007	1073	56	117	8(6.84)
2012	1078	93	117	16(13.67)

Sources: Election Commission of India.

In the table with figures of the various State Assemblies of Punjab the difference between the percentage men and women candidates is very clear. In comparison to men the number of women candidates is very less in number and their success rate also has been insignificant.

As the indication in the above table shows that the representation of women legislators in the state assembly is approximately insignificant as compared with men legislators. It is obvious from the figures of the ten successive state assemblies (1967 to 2007) that the female representation never go beyond 6.84 percent in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha. Even a single women legislator was not elected to the 1969 Punjab Assembly Election. After the reorganization

of Punjab in 1966, first State Assembly election was held in 1967 in which only 0.96 percent of women candidates were chosen to the State Assembly. On the basis of the figures given above, it can be declared that women, who are at smallest amount half the population, have establish very little representation in the male dominated Vidhan Sabha of Punjab.

Table no. 3.10
Voting Tendency during Different Punjab Legislative Assembly Election

Year	Poll Percentage of Men	Poll Percentage of Women
1967	73.47	68.50
1969	74.54	69.61
1972	70.36	66.64
1977	66.82	63.65
1980	65.64	62.80
1985	68.20	66.72
1992	25.72	21.59
1997	69.51	67.84
2002	65.92	64.27
2007	75.36	75.47
2012	77.58	78.90

Source: Election Commission of India

Table 3.9 shows that the poll percentage of women as voters in Punjab in various legislative assembly elections is far improved in assessment to the total number of women candidates and representatives in the State Assembly. Though, the recent years have witnessed an increase in women voters but it has not been escorted by

modify of similar magnitude in the number of women occupying decision making situations.

Violence against Women

A comparison of the frequency and rate of crimes dedicated against women with other states proves Punjab to be a low-risk state. In 1996, Punjab's percentage involvement to all-India occurrences was 0.8 and was ranked 28th in the issue of violence committed against women.¹³ However, such figures require to be measured with the understanding that a lot of files also go unregistered. Furthermore, many of the crimes and violence may not be unconcealed acts viz., threats of wife, resorting to pressure tactics or even grudging women the use of health, employment, education and other opportunities. In such conditions, there is obviously a lack of liberty and this is most likely to reason psychological damage to the women. Infanticide and feticide are the harshest criminal offences perpetrated against women. There is a requirement to address these women sensitive matters, with much better consequence than the one given in the past.

Indian Scenario — Central Support

The Indian policy maker's easily understand that all the weak social gradations, given for equality of sexes within the constitution, and even agreed positive discrimination for maintain the female respect of this country. Subsequently, a number of other policies (National Health Policy, Nutrition Policy, National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, etc) and Laws / Acts and committees (Dowry Prohibition, Mental Harassment, Rape, Domestic Violence, Factories Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Contract Labour etc.) were created to support women of India. All these acts are compulsory on all the States. In adding to these laws, India is the participant too many UN charters like CRC, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and furthermore, which did work for the women welfare, development and support of women in the country, also including the State of Punjab. Various central state sponsored schemes

like STEP, AGP, etc were introduced in favour of women belonging to all states that include Punjab.

All these policies, laws or acts, charters, and schemes notwithstanding, the gender prejudice persists and women of the country undergo. Although it must be mentioned here that the position of women has changed now, significantly and many women took benefit of the circumstances and progressed with the favour of their family. Many development gauges of states (including Punjab) show noticeable developments over the years, but not sufficient has been complete to put women on a really equal share with men.

National Policies for Women

The awareness and realization of gender inequality and its impact on all development issues was realized after the First World Conference on Women (Mexico 1975), and upon deference of the account by the Committee on Status of Women in India (CSW) (1974), most of the laws of the country paid particular concentration to the main issues relating to women Like National Education Policy, Health Policy, Nutrition Policy etc. have kept particular commands for women's expansion and benefits. In addition to policies and directives etc for women components, a women specific national policy (2001) also came into reality for the advantage of Indian women in all states, including Punjab.

The turn down in sex ratio in India, over the last few decades has repeated the fact that there is a bleak gender inequality at the very essential levels, preliminary at birth. The kinds of favoritism against women range from social typecast to violence and female feticide. The basis reasons for such cruel gender inequalities are related to social and economic structure and practices. Therefore, women of all sectors or religions, especially the lower sections, face many difficulties in ahead admission to education, health and productive resources and so on. Therefore, they stay mainly marginalized, poor and socially disqualified.

With all these things in mind, the Government of India made the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women in 2001.

National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001

The in general objective of this Policy is to carry the improvement, enlargement and empowerment of women in all spheres. This Policy supports vigorous participation of all stakeholders for achieves its goal. Particularly, the purposes of this Policy comprise:²⁴

- i. Creating an environment during optimistic economic and social policies for engaged growth of women to permit them to understand their full probable.
- ii. The de-jure and de-facto pleasure of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on identical foundation with men in all spheres — political, economic, social, cultural and social.
- iii. Equal admittance to contribution and decision making by women in social, political and economic life of the state.
- iv. Equal entrance to women to health care, quality education at all levels, occupation and vocational direction, employment, equal payment, occupational health and security, social security and public office etc.
- v. Strengthening lawful systems aimed at removal of all forms of bias alongside women
- vi. Shifting public approaches and community practices by dynamic participation and involvement of both men as well as women.
- vii. Mainstreaming a gender viewpoint in the expansion process.
- viii. Elimination of favoritism and all types of violence against women and the girl child.
- ix. Construction and strengthening partnerships with civil society, mainly female's associations.

²⁴ National Resource Centre for Women, Dept of Women and Child Development, GoI
<http://nrcw.nic.in/shared/sublinkimages/65.htm>

National Level Legislations and Acts for Support of Women

India has mainly remarkable sets of Laws, be it IPC, Cr, P.C. or Personal laws etc. Indian women of all states including Punjab can take benefits of these laws time by time. Separately from general laws, there are seven women specific rules, connecting to rapes, kidnapping and kidnap, dowry deaths, torture, molestation, sexual harassment, importing girls and five special acts for carry of women victims of violence or exploitation. Moreover, observance in mind the rising challenges and also to recompense the restraint of legal system, other legislation or acts were passed for support of women.

Special Acts for women

The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, in 1956

In December 1954, the International meeting for “Suppression of immoral traffic of woman and girls bill, 1950 T1 was established in the Lok Sabha. In 1956 act, titled as “The Suppression of Immoral Traffic of Women and Girls Act, 1956” was approved and came into existence in 1958. The heading was additional edited to its present form “The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956” in 1986. The objectives of this act are as follows:

- 1) In 1950, the Government of India approved an International conference for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of others. Under Article 23 of the conference, traffic in human beings is forbidden and any breaking of the barring is an offence punished by law. Under Article 35 such a law has to be approved by Parliament as soon as may be, after the beginning of the Constitution.
- 2) Legislation on the topic of restraint of wicked traffic does survive in a little States but the rules are neither consistent nor do they go far adequate. In the others States, there is no bar on the matters at all.
- 3) In the conditions it was essential and desirable that a Central law should be passed which will not only secure consistency but also

would be adequately restriction for the reason. But a particular quality of the Bill is that it gives that no person or authority other than the State Government shall created or maintains any protecting home excluding under a license concerned by the State Government. This was to ensure the institution of homes which were actually lairs for prostitution.²⁵

The Dowry Prohibition Act, in 1961

In 1961 the Dowry Prohibition Act was passed, extends to all states except Jammu and Kashmir, for the reason of stop parties occupied in marriage from taking or giving dowry. Under the act, the meaning of dowry is as follows:

“In this ‘dowry’ act indicates that any belongings or expensive security that are given or decided to be given either directly or indirectly on marriage time (a) by one party to a marriage to the further party to the marriage; or (b) by the parents of either party to a marriage or by some other person, to either party to the marriage or to some other person; at or previous to or any time after the marriage in association with the marriage of said parties but does not comprise dower or Maher in the case of persons to whom the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) applies.”²⁶

In this Act, persons originate to be giving, taking, demanding or even advertising for dowry, can be imprisoned. The Act also states that any agreement made, for giving or taking dowry will be luxury as canceled. Further, if a dowry has been received by one person other than the woman in link with whose marriage it is known, that person shall transport it to the woman.

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, in 1986

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act of 1986, states that it is a punished by offence to “portray in any manner, the shape of a woman; her form or remains or any part thereof in such way as to have the result of being offensive, or disparaging to, or demeaning

²⁵ National Commission for Women, GoI <http://ncw.nic.in/page4.htm>

²⁶ Department of Women and Child Development, GoI
<http://wcd.nic.in/commissionofsatiprevention.htm>

woman, or is probable to deprave, corrupt or damage the public ethics or morals”²⁷.

The Act include the exclusion of announcement, publications etc which may hold such offensive representations of women, and which may be spread openly. Additional, this offence not only applies to individuals who represent woman in an insulting way, but to companies doing the similar. The Act applies all over the India, excluding the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, in 1987

Sati system, which means the burning alive of a widow, along with the body of her dead husband, is a terrible action. In fact, under this commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, the expression used to explain sati is “disgusting to the emotions of human personality and nowhere enjoined by any of the religions of India as a vital duty”²⁸. Therefore, in 1986, this act was approved, to prevent the amount of sati. The act is appropriate all over India apart from in Jammu and Kashmir.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, in 2005

This act “Protection of Women from Domestic Violence” was passed in 2005 and came into existence in 2006. The Act explains the expression aggression; enlarge its usually known meaning of physical cruelty, to fit in sexual violence, oral and emotional violence and financially cruelty of women. The Act chiefly covers women who are in a “domestic connection”. This is clarified in the Act as “a connection between two persons who live or have, at any top of time, lived jointly in a common household, when they are connected by consanguinity, marriage, or through a relationship in the life of marriage, acceptance or are family members living mutually as a joint family”¹⁹. Thus, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, lengthily covers all features of aggression against women (wives, sisters, daughters, mothers etc.) by the performer, and the actions of security given to

²⁷ National Resource Centre for Women, Dept of Women and Child Development, GoI <http://nrcw.nic.in/shared/sublinkimages/13.htm>

²⁸ Department of Women and Child Development, GoI <http://wcd.nic.in/wdvact.pdf>

these women, by the State and during particular protection officers deployed by the State.

Other Legislations for Support of Women:

National Commission for Women Act, 1990

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971

The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994

Legislations for Support of Working Women:

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (53 of 1961)

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

The Factories Act, 1948

Central Schemes for Support of Girls or Women:

Government Agencies (both central and State level) accountable for making policies, acts for gender equality, women's empowerment and towards bear of losses (women or girls) of violence use to realize a number of plans within the services or programmes like RCH, UEE, ICDS etc. Various schemes or plans are shaped for connecting the programmes with earth level actions through society based organization (CBO), Civil Society Organization (CSO), agencies, organizations and professional bodies etc. Number of centrally government support schemes related to all advance sectors like Balika Sammriddhi Yojana (BSY), Early Childhood Education (ECE), Total Literacy Campaign, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Support to Training and Employment Program (STEP) etc. are in place for support of Indian women of all states. In adding to these centrally government sponsored plans, many states have also initiated figure of proposals for selling with state explicit matters.

Punjab State Government Initiatives on Gender and Development Issues:

The National shames, Legislations acts are related in all States for apply and advantage of women. Under the conditions, the Punjab state

did not want to endorse any particular guiding principle or act for women of the State. However keeping in mind that State situation particular command, the state has recognized the Punjab State Commission for Women and launched a number of proposals for concerned women as also for expansion of women of the state. These steps are in adding to centrally sponsored methods.

Punjab State Commission for Women

This commission Punjab State Commission for Women was recognized in June 1998. The commission is working for protecting the Rights of Women, and also to give Justice to them. It also obtains up holders for enquiring into the unfair performs moving Women in the State of Punjab. Since the initiation of Punjab State Commission for Women, about 1280 case have been distributed away. The case that has been treaty with belongs to many kinds of categories like dowry demand, extra marital affairs, physically annoyance at work place, denial of property rights etc. The commission establishment also makes a visit too many jails of State to identify the circumstances of the Women prisoners and also suggest to the jail authorities about the necessary corrective measures. PSWC also provide free legal aid to deprived and meager women. PSWC also make visits to the many factories to know about the real situation of the women workers and also advocate.

Schemes in Operation for Women's welfare and Development in Punjab:

Bairi Rakshak Yojana

The purpose of this proposal is to improve distorted sex ratio, to steady population of the state and to reduce child death rate. Under this scheme, an Incentive of Rs. 500/- per month will be given to the girl child given the parents accept mortal method of sterilization after the birth of only one girl. An incentive of Rs. 700/- per month will be also available for two girls given to the family accept incurable technique of sterilization after the delivery of the second girl child. The incentive will

be obtainable till the age of 18 years except the recipient becomes an income tax charges.

Awareness programme for improving adverse sex ratio (ACA 2606-07)

The people of Punjab have attitude for boy child to succeed to their feudal assets, to look after them in the old age and as a basis of livelihood for the family. In order to control the propensity of female feticide and to get better the inequity in sex ratio in the state, which is 874 out of 1000 males, the department of social welfare shall make consciousness among the masses through camps, prepared at district and block level regarding serious adverse insinuation of gender inequity in the society.

Empowerment of Women - Mahila Jagriti Yojana

The most important purpose of the proposal is to strengthen the social and financial position of women, to make them self dependent, to expand saving custom and to help them adding their family income through monetary activities and to make them conscious about the plans which implemented by the State for the welfare and enlargement of women. Under these plan women self help groups have been created. These groups assume social and economic actions. Association are linked with banks and they can reward bank loans for socio-economic movements to make them self dependent.

Social Security to the Girl Child (Kanya Jagriti Jyoti Scheme)

This Scheme was started in 1996-97 in Punjab State. The main purpose of the plan is to betterment for girls and to decrease school withdraw rate. The girls born on or after 26.1.1996 in the families living below poverty line i.e. with annual income below Rs. 20,000/- are covered under this scheme. The family of the receiver is essential to adopt two girl child family norms and only one girl child will be sheltered under the scheme. The State Government invests Rs. 5,000/- for each recipient under Kanya Jagriti Jyoti proposal with Life insurance companies. At the age of six years the child starts getting a

scholarship of Rs. 1200/- per annum upto the age of 12 years, which will be increased at the age of 18 to 21 for Rs. 2400/- per annum. On annihilation of the format, beneficiary would be paid a lump-sum amount if she passes at smallest amount metric.

Nutrition (Kishori Shakti Yojana)

Under this scheme, is to prepare the teenager girls to recognize and learn the importance of personal hygiene location, hygiene, first-aid, fitness and nourishment, education, family life, child care etc. This design has two elements: - (1) preparation to adolescent girls; and (2) additional nutrition to the adolescent girls. In the year 2000-01, Government of India has authorized this design in 47 blocks.

Nutrition (under Nourished Adolescents Girls — ACA)

This pilot scheme was started to honour the declaration of the Prime Minister to give free food grains through TPDS to the families of under nourishes, pregnant and lactating women and teenager girls. The scheme has been in used up in two of the backward districts in each of the main states. In the Punjab State, two districts namely Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur have been selected for this purpose. All scheme of ACA is provided under by central government. The central government of India has accepted the accomplishment of this format during 2005-06 on channel basis for following years. This scheme is being applied as per strategy issued by the Planning Commission earlier with following two amendments:-

1. This plan has to be controlled only to teenage girls.
2. The file of beneficiaries has to be permitted by the Gram Sabha

Attendance Scholarship to SC Primary Girl Students

This scheme, the presence scholarship at the rate of Rs. 50/- per student for ten months in a year is honored to the scheduled caste girls who are studying in primary classes to the following situations:

1. Their parents should not have more than two kids in the family.
2. Their parents proved not have more than five acre of land.
3. Minimum 75 percent class attendance is required for this scholarship.

4. Their parents should not be income tax payer.

Swawlamban Scheme - Vocational Training programme for women

This Training Programme for Women aspire to improve the lives of poor, needy, justified women between the age group of 15 to 35 years by communicate preparation to them in conventional and non-conventional trades via electronics, watch meeting, essential and advanced computer teaching, garment making, secretariat practice, needlework etc. to ensure them to provide self employment at least in these areas. From 2005-06 years, this scheme has been shifted to the state level funding by Government of India. The department of social security, women and child development, government of Punjab has made Punjab State Social Welfare Board as nodal agency to apply this proposal.

Ashirwad to SC/Christian Girls and daughters of Widows at the time of their marriages (Replacement of Shagun Scheme)

This scheme, the girls who belonging to Scheduled Castes or Christian religion and daughters of widows of general category will be provided monetary assistance Rs. 15000/- per beneficiary from 1.4.2006 on the time of their marriage.

Financial assistance to widows and destitute women

In the year 1968 this scheme was started for the purpose of this scheme is to provide economic aid to the widows and poor women Rs. 200/- (now enhanced to Rs. 250) per month proposed below following terms:

- 1) Women under the age of 60 years who have no means of survival or have been miserable of her husband's hold due some basis of the unmarried women above the age of 30 years livelihood the life of misery are entitled to get the advantage of this proposal.
- 2) The monthly income of the hopeful, from all resource should be less than Rs. 1000/-.

Attendance Scholarship to Handicapped Girl Students In Rural Areas

In order to strengthen the position of the disabled girls in the rural areas and also to make them self dependent, incentive in the form

of turnout scholarship to the handicapped girl students in rural region shall be paid to cover the limited cost of identical and books etc. The state government is charitable scholarship to all handicapped students at the rate of Rs. 200/- per month up to 8th class and Rs. 300/- per month from 9th class onwards from non plan spending.

Setting up of Social Security Helpline for Women, Children, Older and Disabled Persons in each District

Women, children, older and disabled persons are the defenseless divisions of the society who are prone to favoritism, annoyance and abandon by the society and need instant defense and protection. The major purpose of the format is to give quality examines to women, children and older persons in need of particular care and protection and to ensure that suitable care is continued till they are transformed. A Toll free Helpline available at all times to them will give quality services where they could get referral services, free legal aid, police assistance, counseling, hospitalization and treatment etc.

To sum up together the central and state government have started huge number of proposals to take care of the weaker women, may be belonging to any category or caste to give them monetary assist as also a group of so various facilities like scholarships, free additional nutrition, medical aid and free lawful help so that they are socially, economically and physically guarded. There is need to livelihood consciousness among them so that they are in a situation to ask for these benefits as a material of right and nobody may take away from them what is fairly due to them.

CHAPTER – 4
PROFILE OF MALERKOTLA AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The present chapter has been divided into two parts. The first chapter deals with a brief socio-economic profile of the study area (Malerkotla town, its history, socio-economic profile) and the second part of the chapter deals with the socio-economic profile of the women respondents of Malerkotla constituency.

Part-1: History of Malerkotla Constituency

History of early Punjab reveals that Malerkotla once used to be one of the oldest princely states of Punjab. It used to be a Mohammedan Afshan state in Cis-Sutlej group. Malerkotla was established in the year 1454, almost a century before the establishing of Mughal rule in India, by Shiekh Sadruddin Sadar-i-Jahan that was a religious figure. Its boundary was mainly abridged in area afterward on when the Sikh Sirdars (chieftains) unspecified authority who confirmed themselves as the rulers of that part of territory which formerly belonged to Malerkotla state through the period of conflict and after the Mughal Empire was end. In the main time Sikh Sirdas comprehensive their areas by capturing villages fit in to this state during the time of confusion and disorder in the Punjab.

Malerkotla, was situated at a distance of 28 miles to the south of Ludhiana and 36 miles from Patiala and 77 miles from Ambala¹. It had its limitation in the north with the district of Ludhiana and in the east with it touches with territories of Nabha and Patiala states². At present times it had a population of about 135,424 populations and was almost certainly the second best small manufacturing town in the Punjab³. The total area of the constituency was 164 square miles and it comprised of 182 villages. Its soil used to be fertile, plain broken by sand drifts here

¹ www.malerkotla.co.in.seen on 21 May, 2013.

² www.malerkotla.co.in.seen on 21 May, 2013.

³ www.malerkotla.co.in.seen on 21 May, 2013.

and there and the Kotla and Bathinda branches of the Sirhind Canal connected its borders at recent time.

The Malerkotla Assembly Constituency now-a-days is one of the main constituencies of Malwa region in the today's punjab state. The word Malerkotla is a compound from two words Maler and kotla. Presently, the red coloured Moti Bazaar divides these two geological units of Maler and Kotla. A religious leader Sheikh-Sadar-Ud-Din who had come to India from Afghanistan in 1449 A.D, Firstly, shopped for sometime in Multan city and then as per the desires of his religious guide Rukh-i-Alam Shoreward, he moved to a place called Bhumsi (later known as Maler). In the 1454 A.D. on his way to Delhi, Bahlol lodhi stopped near the hut of the Sheikh who, it is believed wished him achievement in his detection of the imprison of the throne of Delhi. When Bahlol Lodhi became Emperor of Delhi in due route of time, he presented the land of his daughter to Sheikh Sadrudin in marriage. Bahlol Lodhi married his daughter Taj Murrasa Begum to the Sheikh and a jagir of 69 villages, which was shown as 12 villages and 57 asamees in the papers, was given in dowry to the daughter. A cash amount of Rs. 3 lacs per year as allowance was also fixed which continuous throughout the Lodhi Rule.....⁴ However, the correct location of these 12 villages and 57 asammes is not fairly clear now, for example some view these 12 villages as parganas of Maler, Payal, Balian, Sunam, Mansurpur, Jarly and Khazabad etc, while 57 asammes are full as the big landowner of the neighborhood. In point of fact, these 12 villages and 57 asamees are above 30 villages.

Various found papers and presented material said that the Sanads which Sultan Bahlol granted to in dowry Sader-i-Jahan under his own seal and mark, but unluckily, the creative Sanads are not existed in the state account.

The close relationship with the sovereignty king of Delhi brought the being of Sheikh from his unknown figure to importance and

⁴ Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of note in Punjab*, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore 1910, p.530

attention. Big and small rulers of then Punjab wanted his friendship and the ruler of Kapurthala, Rai Bahram Bhatti alias Kapura, who was considered as one of the most important men of northern India gave his daughter in marriage to the Sheikh in the year 1458. Lot of assets was also given to the woman as the harem for the Sheikh. These two marriages carried substantial wealth and larger responsibility of the state, bound the sheikh to dedicate more time in looking after worldly concerns and wellbeing of the people under his rule.

The rulers of Malerkotla state got the title of Nawab from the Delhi Emperor Aurangzeb during Wazid Khan's rule in 1657 for latter are military to the Emperor when Aurangzeb was marching towards hoer beside his eldest brother Dara Shikoh⁵.

List of names who ruled over Malerkotla Constituency from time to time was follow:-

1. Sheikh Sadruddin Sadar-i-Jahan (1449 A.D. - 1508 A.D.)
2. Sheikh Eisa (1508 A.D. - 1508 A.D.)
3. Khan Mohd. Shah (1538 A.D. - 1545 A.D.)
4. Khwaja Madood Khan alias Mohd. Ishaq Khan (1545 A.D.- 1566A.D.)
5. Nawab Fateh Mohd. Khan (1566 A.D. - 1600 A.D.)
6. Nawab Mohd. Bayzid Khan Bahadur (1600 A.D.-1659 A.D.)
7. Nawab Feroz Khan (1659 A.D. - 1672 A.D.)
8. Nawab Sher Mohd. Khan (1672 A.D. - 1712 A.D.)
9. Nawab Ghulam Hussain Khan (1712 A.D. - 1717 A.D.)
10. Nawab Jamal Khan (1717 A.D. - 1755 A.D.)
11. Nawab Shikan Khan (1755 A.D. - 1763 A.D.)
12. Nawab Bahadur Khan (1763 A.D. - 1766 A.D.)
13. Nawab Umar Khan (1766 A.D. - 1780 A.D.)
14. Nawab Abdullah Khan (1780 A.D. - 1784 A.D.)
15. Nawab Ataullah Khan (1784 A.D. - 1810 A.D.)
16. Nawab Wazir Khan (1810 A.D. - 1821 A.D.)

⁵ www.malerkotla.co.in/hist.aspx.

17. Nawab Amir Khan (1821 A.D. - 1846 A.D.)
18. Nawab Sube Khan (Mehboob Au Khan) (1846 A.D. - 1857 A.D.)
19. Nawab Sikander Au Khan (1857 A.D. - 1871 A.D.)
20. Nawab Ibrahim Au Khan (1871 A.D. - 1908 A.D.)
21. Nawab Mohd. Ahmad Au Khan Bahadur (1908 A.D. - 1947 A.D.)
22. Nawab Mohd. Iftikhar Au Khan (1947 A.D. - 1948 A.D.)

On 15th of August, 1947, separation of India took place giving birth to Pakistan. It led to separation of Punjab also into West Punjab and East Punjab followed by communal riots, the Muslim subjects of all Phulkian states and that livelihood in the then East Punjab wander to Pakistan. However, the Muslims living in Malerkotla or its locality continued to live here because of their special loyalty to the Nawab and there were no communal riots in this area of Punjab. As a result of it, Malerkotla staid the only Muslim dominated town in the Post-independent Punjab liberated from any type of communal worry or fatal riots.

The border of Present Assembly Constituency of Malerkotla was distinguished in the general elections in India and it is in survival as such since 1952. From the years 1952-56, it was a division of PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab States Union) state. When PEPSU was combined with Punjab in 1956, it develops into part of present Punjab state. At present time, authority of Malerkotla Constituency comprised the Malerkotla city, and 54 villages.⁶

Relations with Sikhs

In Malerkotla, there is removal of religious and racial clash from the public mind and the printed proof represents a procedure whereby the values of a nonviolent plural society are grounded in an idealized past. But, it is almost obvious that distant from being the “Island of Peace as it was called by the magazine “India Today”, Malerkotla and its

⁶ www.census2011.co.in. seen on 14 March, 2014.

Muslim rulers were regularly concerned in clashes and war with Sikhs.” Malerkotla’s dealings with Sikhs have been shifting with time. Relations of both communities are given below:

Sher Mohammad Khan and the *ha da narah*

The majority accepted ruler in Malerkotla’s history has been Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan, who lined from 1672 until his death in 1712. It was a confused and dangerous time in the history of Punjab. The increasing esteem and authority of the Sikh Gurus carried them into growing disagreement with the Mughals. Following the torment and following death of the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, at the order of the ruler Jahangir, hostilities between the Sikhs and the Mughals had reached at the crest. Periodic battles with the Mughals and later the attacked Afghan militaries of Ahmad Shah Abdali⁷ constant for various times. During the fighting Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan and the Malerkotla armed forces play a famous role accordingly to knowledge of the Nawab.

Amusingly, in spite of his clear support of Aurangzeb and the Mughal ruled in their fights against the Sikhs, Nawab of Malerkotla also elevates a voice alongside the brutality resorted by Mughal rulers which occurred only one event in Malerkotla’s history as The *ha da narah* or “cry for justice.”⁸ The *ha da naraha* was known by Sher Muhammad Khan after an exacting cruel fight with Guru Gobind Singh. After the Guru and his family bust through the blockade at Anandpur, his mother and his two younger sons, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, were estranged from the Guru. They were giving up, imprisoned, and taken to Sirhind fifty of where their destiny hangs in the equilibrium. Refusing to change to Islam, the *sahibzadas* (younger sons of the Guru) were fated to be bricked alive into a wall. Of all the assembled associates of Wazir Khan, the Mughal governor of that time Sirhind,

⁷ Daljeet Singh and Kharak Singh, *Sikhism: its Philosophy and History*.New Academic, Jullundur,1997.

⁸ Ratan Singh, *Bhangu Panthu Parkash*, New Delhi, Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan,1998.

Sher Muhammad Khan was the only one who sunbeam up for the sons, and said that their lives should be secured. He went so far as to announce the death verdict unIslamic, infringe the rules of battle. Although the petition was unsuccessful and the Guru's sons were sacrificed, this is by far the particular the majority prominent moment in Malerkotla's history of secularism and impartiality for the innocent.

Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji on knowledge about this communicates his genuine thanks to the Nawab of Malerkotla and consecrated him. In 1947, when riots ruined out all through the country, no such happening occurred in Malerkotla due to said blessings of the Guru.

The Namdhari Movement:

After the passing away of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and drop of his empire in Punjab, many movements were ongoing to improvement Sikhism. One of them was "Namdhari Movement" also well known as "Kuka Movement". This name was resulting from the way these people narrate Gurbani. The movement was spearheading by the leader of the sect, Baba Ram Singh. The movement was alongside the British Rule in India. In 1872, a group of Kukas (the followers of Kuka Movement) assault Malerkotla. Sixty eight Kukas were imprisoning out of which 66 were gust after bind them to the mouth of cannons at Malerkotla. People of Malerkotla build a beautiful Kuka memorial in Malerkotla in the respected memory of Saheed Kuka followers who scarifies their lives for independence of the country.

Location of Malerkotla

These days Malerkotla likes the status of a tehsil in Sangrur District of Punjab state of India. Malerkotla town itself is the Head Quarter of Malerkotla Tehsil. It is situated 36 km near the North from district Head Quarter, Sangrur and 103km from State capital Chandigarh near the East. Malerkotla is surrounded by Ahmedgarh Town towards North, Dhuri towards South, Sherpur towards West and Dehlon towards East.

Delimitation of Malerkotla constituency

Before the 1948, Malerkotla was a self-governing state with vast region of constituency of several villages. It was ruled by the Nawabs, one after the other, under the Mughal kings at Delhi and then beneath the British Government. It is a ordinary apply with state government to appraisal the authority of a constituency from time to time to slim down or demarcate or to draw it again or comprise new areas and eliminate old areas. Currently, under delimitation order no. 282/PB/2006 dated 19th June 2006, it has again been changed and its area has been downsized; now the jurisdiction of Malerkotla constituency comprises Malerkotla, sandaur and Malerkotla (MCI) of Malerkotla Tehsil. The jurisdiction of Malerkotla constituency is spread over to Malerkotla town and 58 villages, out of total 182 villages of Malerkotla Tehsil and in Malerkotla town there are 30 blocks.

Climate

The weather of Malerkotla is on the entire dry and is characterized by a short hot monsson in summer and a stimulating cold in winter. The year may be divided into four seasons. The cold season from November to March is go behind by the hot season from April to the end of June. The time from July to middle September constitutes the rainy season. The second half of the September and October may be termed the post-monsoon or modify period. The seasonal climate is favorable for unstable cropping outline due to altering weather conditions.

Temperature

After the peak of winter season in February, Temperature starts rising from middle of February in common and from the starting of March in exacting growing in Malerkotla quickly till June, which is usually the hottest month. Thus mean daily utmost temperature through June is around 104F (40° C) and this mean daily minimum temperature is approximately 80.6F (27° C). The heat is extreme in

summer season. On individual days, the day temperature may infrequently beat 116F (47° C) or 118.4F (48° C).⁹

Rainfall in Malerkotla

The standard yearly rainfall in the sangrur district is about 590 mm, the highest about 73 percent, declining in the months of July to September, July being the wettest month. The rainfall in the district augments from southwest near the northeast and differs from about 490 mm, at Sunam to about 670 mm at Malerkotla.

Industry in Malerkotla

There are not various industrial towns or industrial hubs in sangrur district. Malerkotla is the only small scale industrial town worth the name in the district. A large number of small-scale industrial units are functioning in the town. Malerkotla is known for the produce of a few cycle parts and agricultural implements. Similarly in the field of agriculture, particularly growing of vegetables, Malerkotla is a well-known place. The cauliflower of this area is promoted all through Punjab. Methi of the area is also of high quality and is famous for its taste and smell. The vegetables grown in Malerkotla are being supplied to Ludhana, Nabha, Patiala, Dhuri etc.

Population of Malerkotla

According to 2011 census, the population of Malerkotla town is 135,424.¹⁰

Table no. 4.1
Population of Malerkotla

Malerkotla	Population	Percentage
Total	135,424	100
Males	71,376	52.71
Females	64,048	47.29

Sources: Census of India.

⁹ <http://malerkotla.nic.in/html/districtataglance.html>

¹⁰ *Census of India, 2011.*

The above table no. 4.1 indicates that as per 2011 census, the population of Malerkotla town is 135,424 of which number of males and female is 71,376 and 64,048 respectively. Males constitute 52.71 percent whereas females comprise 47.29 of the total population. As per population of India according to 2011 census, Women comprise 940 per 1000 Men. Here the data of Males and Female are almost in the same ratio. It is a Muslim dominated constituency and the population of women needs to be improved vis-à-vis the population of men.

Sex ration of Malerkotla

As per 2011 census in the Malerkotla constituency there are 897 females per thousand males. In (0 – 6) age groups there are 952 girls per 1000 boys.¹¹

Table no. 4.2
Sex Ratio of Malerkotla

Malerkotla	Ratio per thousand	Percentage
Female Sex Ratio	897	89.7
Child Sex Ratio	952	95.2

Sources: *Census of India, 2011.*

Above table no. 4.2 gives the depiction of total females as 897 out of 1000 against girl children 952 out of 1000 and girls shine by (95.2-89.7) 5.5 percent in the substance of in general female population. It explains fine catalog in future for women livelihood in Malerkotla constituency.

Schedules Caste¹²

Table – 4.3
Scheduled caste Population

Malerkotla	No. of Persons	Percentage
Total SC	8,893	100
Males SC	4,677	52.59
Females SC	4,216	47.41

Sources: *Census of India, 2011*

¹¹ *Census of India, 2011.*

¹² *Census of India, 2011.*

Table no 4.3 above shows that out of total 8893 schedules caste people living in Malerkotla town, males are 52.59 percent and females are 47.41 percent. There is gap in the matter of male over female among the schedules caste. It clears that there is also negative approach towards women even in scheduled caste people. Since, the ratio of in general girls is civilizing it will have optimistic crash even on female SC women in future.

Literacy Rate

Table no. 4.4
Literacy rate in Malerkotla.¹³

Malerkotla	No. of Persons	Percentage of Literates
Total	81,937	69.10
Males	46,091	73.45
Females	35,846	64.21

Sources: Census of India, 2011

The total percentage of literacy rate in Malerkotla town as per Table no. 4.4 is 69.10 percent, out of which males literacy rate is 73.45 percent and females literacy rate is 64.21 percent. Which shows that as compared to literate males, females literates are less than. The main reasons behind low literacy rate among females are: parda system, conservative thinking, low income sources of the residents and just few of fortuities for educated girls for jobs locally. But in the recent years, Malerkotla town is in custom by Muslims though there are people from Sikh and other religions also. There are also a good number of colleges and schools in and around Malerkotla which offer full facility for education to young boys and girls.

Religious Profile

Malerkotla town has been a choked of Muslims since the times immemorial and there it being a lot inhabited by Muslim community is but normal. However, with the way of time and modify in financial,

¹³ Census report of 2011.

social, political and geographical provisions, people from other belief have also travelled to Malerkotla town and established here to live in shut agreement and agreement. Today Malerkotla is a sign of joint brotherhood and union.

Table no. 4.5
Religious Profile of Malerkotla

Religion	Population	Percentage
Muslims	92,765	68.50
Hindus	28,044	20.71
Sikhs	12,864	9.50
Jains	1,499	1.11
Christians	172	0.13
Buddhists	26	0.02
Others	54	0.05

Sources: Census of India, 2011

The above table no. 4.5 shows the point of people fit in to dissimilar religions living in Malerkotla. As it seems that clear from the table, Malerkotla is a Muslim majority city in Punjab just about and 68.50 percent of its inhabitants are following Islam as their religion. Hinduism is the next the main popular religion in Malerkotla with around 20.71 percent people next it. Sikhs come at 3rd place with 9.50 percent of the total people. Jains, christens, Buddhists and other comprise just 1.31 percent of the total population which is insignificant.¹⁴

Vocational Profile

These days' new colonies and little townships are coming up close to the work places, industrial commons and people are uneven from village to small and medium towns in search of job opening to earn their livelihood. Malerkotla, which once used to be a big center for businessmen and traders, is again increasing in its position and build.

¹⁴ *Census of India, 2011.*

The following table no. 4.6 gives the data about the occupation in which the people are regularly occupied at present.

Table no. 4.6
Vocational profile of Malerkotla

Workers	Male	Female	Total
Total Work force	39,780	4,950	44,730
Main Workers	37,858	3,912	41,770
Cultivators	1,209	84	1,293
Agri Laborers	1,503	233	1,736
Households Workers	1,182	156	1,338
Others	33,964	3,439	37,403

Sources: Census of India, 2011

As per data given in Table no. 4.6 there are 41770 main workers out of which 37403 are engaged in other jobs like self employment doing small scale business, SSI and cottage industries operational on daily salary etc. Malerkotla has a very lush land useful for rising vegetables. About 3000 workers are occupied straight or indirectly in rising vegetables and advertising them at Ludhiana, Nabha, Patiala, Sangrur and Locality. Some people do physical jobs in households.

Language Profile

People of Malerkotla town are primarily elderly Punjabi people and they frequently gossip Malwai Punjabi. The manager work is being done in Punjabi language in Gumukhi writing. Few additional languages like English, Hindi and Urdu are also being oral and used in executive work by at least 30 percent of population. There are some educational institutions still teaching Urdu to the Muslim children.

Semi-Urban Profile

In general study of Rural-Urban composition of the Malerkotla constituency reveals that it is mainly a semi-urban constituency. The urban voters contain 82708 (57.56 percent of the total electorate and rural voters form 60982 (42.44 percent) of the total electorate of this

assembly seats. Life style of the people is also simple and Malerkotla Towns is not ultra modern. By and large, it is a semi-urban town.

Caste Profile

Caste-wise profile of Malerkotla constituency shows that it is a multi caste constituency. Population of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs i.e. all the three religious groups of the constituency is separated into many sub-castes. The Hindus of this region regularly belong to the upper castes like Khatris, Banias and Brahmins, etc. Very few people belong to backward classes and scheduled castes. Among the Sikhs, there are numerous castes like Jats, Ramgarhias and Majbi Sikhs etc. likewise, the Muslims are separated into sub-castes like Syeds, Sheikhs, Pathans, Rajputs, Kambojs, Gujjars, Arains, Marasis, Kumhars, Nais, Lohars, Dhuhars (Punjab), Faquirs and Julahas etc. Among the Muslims, Kambojs form numerically the largest sub-caste. They comprise about 34 percent of the total Muslim inhabitants in the constituency. Next to them, are Rajputs who constitute about 10 percent of the Muslims of this area. We can, therefore say that Malerkotla is a group of many types of flowers connected together.

Occupation Profile

Malerkotla has obtained huge name and celebrity for doing agriculture. Cultivation of vegetables shaped here is marketed all through the state. Farmers are raising main crops of paddy and wheat. No river flows through this sub separation which may provide irrigation water, but this area is bounded by branches of Sirhind Canal which originates from Satluj river in Ropar. These are being used to irrigate the agricultural lands.

A big number of small-scale manufacturing units are recognized in and approximately Malerkotla which comprise the industrialized of cycle extra parts, sports goods, chill rolls, hardware goods, embroidery work and badges thread etc.

Malerkotla is also improved recognized as the vegetable assets of Punjab. It provisions vegetables not only to the area but also to other parts of the country.

Panchayat Raj System in Malerkotla

For the execution of diverse government development schemes, Sangrur region has been divided into 10 development blocks, namely; Bhawanigarh, Sangrur, Barnala, Sehna, Malerkotla, Mehal Kalah, Ahmedgarh, Dhuri, Sunam and Lehragaga. There is a Block Development and Panchayat Officer in each of the blocks of the district and the overall control is in hands of Deputy Commissioner Sangrur.

Malerkotla constituency, has two blocks where the control is in the hands Chairman of block samities. In First Block, there are 102 Panchayats which include General 43, General women 29, S.C. 15 and S.C. 13 and 2 village's seats are empty. In 2nd Block, there are 87 Panchayats which include General 39, General women 23, S.C. 16 and S.C. women are 9.

Like other states of India, Punjab has also a three-tier Panchayati Raj system. At the grass root level, there is Gram Panchayat elected by Gram Sabha, then there is a Block Samiti chosen by the Gram Panchayats. Then at the District level there is Zila Parishad chosen by Block Samities, so Malerkotla has also the necessary net work of Panchayat Raj Institutions for growth right from the village level.

Part second: Profile of the Respondents

In this part, socio-economic profile of the women respondents of Malerkotla constituency extremely examine. The demographic features of women, in addition giving us an approaching into their qualities make up, also allow us to look into their social background in conditions of the class and caste to which they belong. Educational levels, occupational position, income earning, family background do pressure the activities guide of individuals. These optimistic qualities in the educational and occupational spheres are construing as achievements and inspire confidence in individuals and rouse them to

obtain part in the communal activities. The inscriptive qualities like caste and religion also have an extremely important position to play in influential the position of a person mainly in the Indian circumstances. The behavior of elite women can be completely explained by creation a close examination of the surroundings in which they produce and expand. According to party, "It is a broad increase assumption of political sociology that social background and childhood of a choice creator will pressure his qualities and politics".¹⁵

In an effort to profile the respondents an attempt has been complete in this part to draft the essential parameters associated with personal life. The analysis contains and covers the personal aspects of the Sikh and Muslim women of Malerkotla constituency such as put of birth, age, caste, belief, profession, educational and party association and so on.

Age profile:

Age of a person is an important parameter of his or her political participatory behaviour and the ingredient of age has positive or negative crash on the similar. Political Participation, as such, involves complex patterns of behaviour rather than easy separate acts. Usually speaking, older people explain a higher degree of political participation than younger people.¹⁶ People in the age group of thirty-five to sixty-five are the politically the liveliest. People below the age of thirty are typically not concerned and concerned in mainstream forms of participation, because they frequently lack the money and time to contribute. Trends explains that the younger people twist out in elections less often than older people, Young people are fewer likely to participate in political activities because they have many other urgent engagements like study, career path, job or vocation etc. Their apathy to the matter is also prejudiced by lifecycle such as accommodation,

¹⁵ A. k. Lal and Sachidananda , Elite and Development, , Jain Publishing, New Delhi,1980, p.20.

¹⁶ Crittenden, John Aging and Political Participation, *The Western Political Quarterly* Vol. 16, No. 2, A Symposium: The 1962 Elections in the West (Jun., 1963), pp. 323-331

marriage, service, and so on, which they usually do not yet have in their untimely age or tender age. They have a very narrow beginning of politics which is controlled to official politics only. Such a incomplete thought inevitably makes government appear altogether immaterial in their lives. Eventually, it seems that young people and adults are not so dissimilar in their political attitudes, with the exception that young people have fewer opportunities to contribute politically and it has been seen that same participatory behaviour pattern has been pursued by the women¹⁷.

Table no. 4.7

Age-wise Distribution of Women Respondents

Age of respondents	Rural Muslim Women	Urban Muslim Women	Rural Sikh Women	Urban Sikh Women	Grand Total
18 to 35	26 (34.67)	27 (36)	34 (45.33)	41 (54.67)	128 (42.67)
36 to 45	23 (30.67)	19 (25.33)	21 (28)	18 (24)	81 (27)
46 to 60	26 (34.66)	29 (38.67)	20 (26.67)	16 (21.33)	91 (30.33)
61 to above	0	0	0	0	0
Total	75 (100)	75 (100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

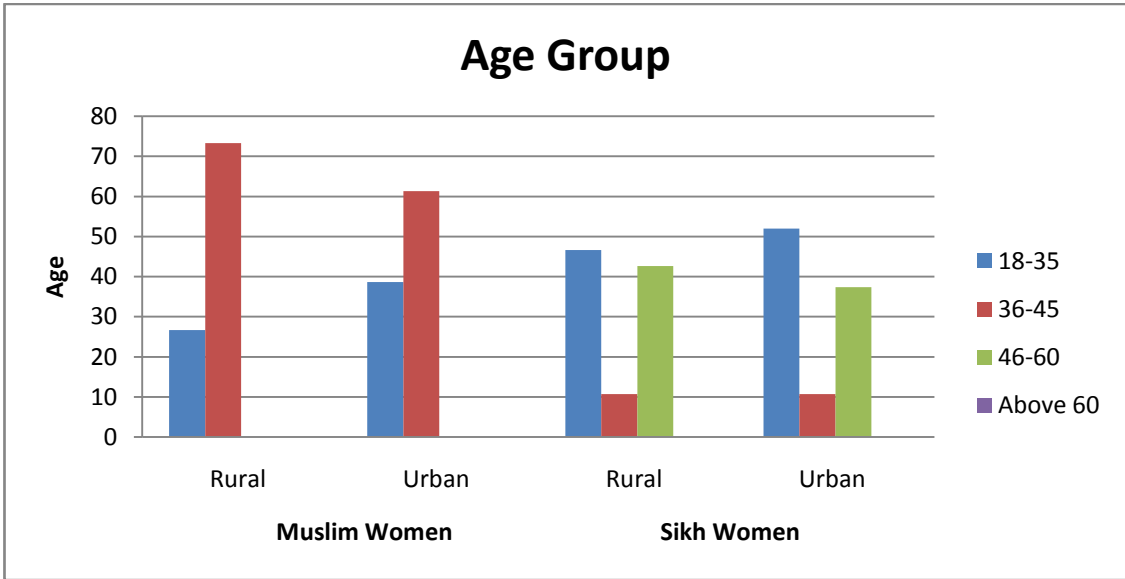
An analysis of age wise classification table 4.7 shows that women in the age group of 18-35 years have the largest representation 128 (42.67percent), in which include 34.67 percent rural and 36 percent urban Muslim women and 45.33 percent rural and 54.67 percent urban Sikh women. There are 30.67 percent rural and 25.33 percent urban Muslim women, 28 percent and 24 percent rural and urban Sikh women respectively which fall in the age group of 36-45 years. The age

¹⁷ Quintelier Ellen, *Differences in Political Participation between Young and Old People Contemporary Politics*, Vol 13, No. 2, June 2007., p.22.

group of 46-60 years has 34.66 percent rural Muslim women and 26.67 percent rural Sikh women where as it also constitutes 38.66 percent urban Muslim women and 21.33 urban Sikh women. However no respondent falls in the last 61 years and above age category. On the whole the above analysis shows that women in the age group of 18-35 years very high majority followed by the women in the age group of 36 to 45 and 46 to 60 who make almost the same majority. No woman respondent falls in the age group of above 61 years.

Political participation of women is mostly affected by age. As in the above table discussed women in younger age group (18 to 35), most actively participate in politics. They are more educated, more liberal viewpoint towards politics and much conscious about their rights and duties. In the age group of 35 to 50 women are shown less interest in politics, due to their household duties or family limitations. Above 50 women didn't show their interest in politics or such type of activities.

Graph of Age- Group



Educational Profile:

Education is an important factor for overall development of the personality and social upliftment of an individual. Therefore, it is rather essential to look into the educational profile of the women and their equal relationship between education and their

political participation in arrange view to charge whether letter education for women can be seen as a move in the stage of their appointment in politics. Preferably, higher level of political participation by better number of women can be seen as gender equity in social and economic policy, and thus endorse better lives for women usually. However, apart from education, other issue also subject to make women more active in politics. For example, in some countries, the very conflicting has been establish where educated and wealthy women have shown indifference to politics or a high degree of suspicion as to the efficiency of some type of political appointment ¹⁸. In the similar circumstance neo literate women have had an important crash on politics, as in the casing of women in the anti arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh in the 1990s. In other contexts with quite wide female educational contribution, spectator has renowned a 'gender paradox': women's social position is high, but their political participation is extremely low. Evaluate with other Indian states with greatly lower human expansion attainment on the part of women, Qualitative studies have suggested that cultural changeable are more significant than education in formative the rate and character of women's participation in politics. Accepted receipt levels of women in situation of power and power have significantly enlarged as additional women are establish in politics now days. The ways in which women and men are another way select into and treated within the political institutions are powerfully partial by culture. Ironically, tough kinship and support based systems are clever to recognize better numbers of women in politics on the grounds of their family standing and background than any method based on individual merit and it disguises male prejudice in political institutions. However, such systems do favour only well known family women and that too only in small numbers. Perhaps, what these unconvincing findings and comments demonstrate more than something else is that political institutions may vary in some key greetings from other social institutions the way they choose no men as members. Individual and

¹⁸ Cenwor, *Women's Political Empowerment and Decision Making*, Centre for Women's Research, 1994, Colombo.

group political skills and political resources are clearly improved by endowments of human capital (education being main among them) as well as material resources. But political skills and resources can also come from other sources: charisma, social capital etc. However, draw followers in politics also depends upon one's speechifying, personal nature and fame. As all know, the number of women in proper politics is not the best calculate of women's political participation. More regular study of other types of political participation by women, such as voting behaviour, lobbying activity, associational activity, and membership of political parties, is needed to illumine the factors endorse higher rates of women's appointment in these activities. Cross national proportional work on these features of political appointment is in its infancy, but these types of political participations are likely to be more very much related to women's educational levels than the number of lawmaking seats elected by women.¹⁹

Table no. 4.8
Educational Profile

Qualification of respondents	Muslim women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Illiterate	35 (46.67)	40 (53.33)	41 (54.66)	18 (24)	134 (44.67)
Up to 10 th pass	27 (36)	15 (20)	23 (30.67)	27 (36)	92 (30.66)
B.A pass	9 (12)	4 (5.33)	6 (8)	19 (25.33)	38 (12.67)
M.A pass	4 (5.33)	15 (20)	5 (6.67)	11 (14.67)	35 (11.66)
Any other	0 0	1 (1.33)	0 0	0 0	1 (0.33)
Total	75	75	75	75	300

Sources: Field Survey.

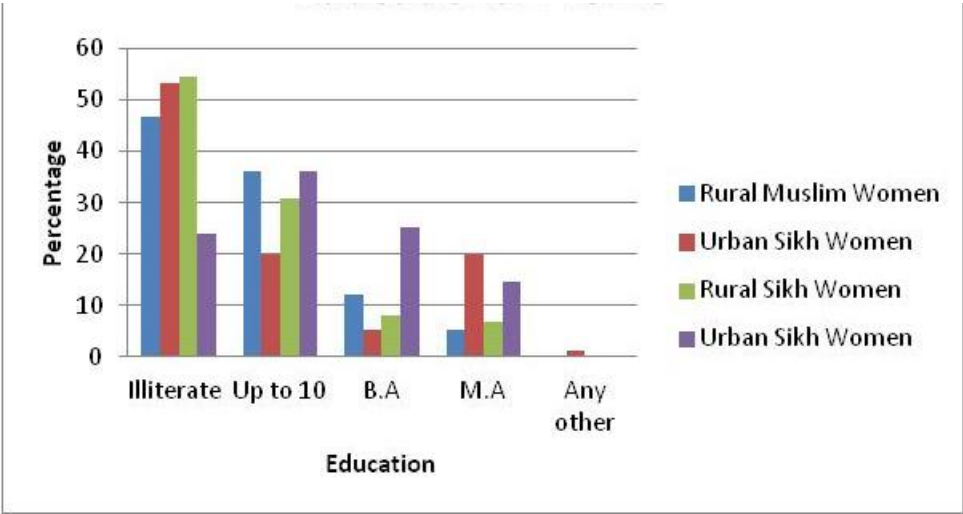
¹⁹ Anne Marie Goetz, Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality Women's Education and Political Participation Background, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003, p.4.

The above table shows educational profile of the respondents, majority of the respondents of Malerkotla constituency are uneducated in which 46.67 percent and 53.33 percent are rural and urban Muslim women and 54.66 percent and 24 percent are Sikh women respectively. 30.66 percent respondents from both Sikh and Muslim communities have only 10th passed. Further, 12.67 percent respondents from both communities who are complete their bachelor degree and 11.66 percent are done Mater degree. There are only one woman (0.33 percent) respondents from Muslim community who done their PhD degree.

The data shows that in the age group of (18 to 35years) are more educated comparatively to those above 35 years age. It is also seen that Muslim women are less educated compared to Sikh women. It also noticed the percentage of educated women of both the communities' bulk of women lives in urban areas more than that of rural areas. In Malerkotla constituency maximum numbers of women are uneducated or less educated because of orthodox approach of society about women.

Younger generations of both the Muslims and Sikhs are quite keen to get education and 80 percent for higher education. As a recent of development and attempt of central or state government, the education among women of the constituency is increasing day by day. It may be additional here that no established correlation has been found between women education and their political participation.

Graph of educational profile



Caste Profile:

As born out of Manu samriti, Caste system has go through in our social faltered very deep. It is a form of social stratification characterized by endogamy, non-commensality and traditional professions. Caste in Indian society refers to a social group where membership it is determined by birth. Members of such local groups are endogamous, i.e. they tend to come in into wedded relationships among themselves.²⁰ Caste is yet another factor which influences one's political participation to a large degree particularly in the Indian context. Many studies have been manner on the subject substance of caste system and political power and it has been exposed that higher caste groups have more political participation or leading participation in politics, whereas lower caste groups have relatively less participation in the political practice, but there are sure exceptional luggage also where low caste people have made a cavity in political arena. Two women MPs belonged to the "backward" castes and represented open constituencies. So the Caste has an important manner on level and degree of political participation and is a very vital determinant in this perspective.²¹

Table no. 4.9

Caste Wise Profile

Caste of respondents	Muslim Women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
General	20 (26.67)	29 (38.67)	35 (46.67)	39 (52)	123 (41)
B.C	55 (73.33)	46 (61.33)	8 (10.67)	8 (10.67)	117 (29)
SC	0	0	32 (42.66)	28 (37.33)	60 (20)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

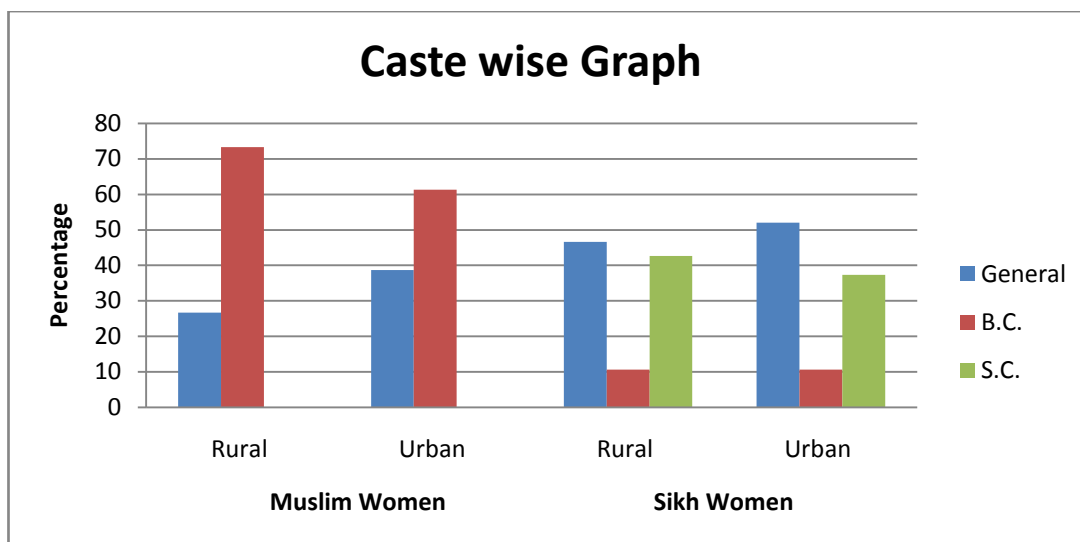
²⁰ J.Scott and G.Marshall(Eds.), *A dictionary of Sociology*, Oxford University Press, oxford, 2005, p. 66.

²¹ Rai, Shirin, *Class, Caste and Gender – Women in Parliament in India*, International Idea, Women in Parliament, Stockholm, 2002,

The above table 4.9 shows the caste wise composition of respondents in Malerkotla constituency. Out of 75 rural Muslim women respondents 26.67 percent belong to general category 73.33 percent to B.C category and no one belongs to S. C category and out of 75 urban Muslim women respondents 38.67 percent belong to general category and 61.33 percent to B.C category and no from S. C category. Similarly out of 75 Sikh women respondents from the rural areas 46.67 percent belong to general category and 10.67 percent to B.C category and 42.66 percent to S.C. category, and in urban areas, 52 percent belong to general category, 10.67 percent to B.C category and 37.33 percent to S.C category.

The analysis shows that Backward Classes dominate in Muslim community in rural and urban areas. Most of the sub-caste belong to this category, such as Kamboj, Rai, Lohar etc. whereas Pathan, Sheikh, Rajput belong to general category and there are hardly any Scheduled Castes who belong to Muslim community. On the other side, there is domination of Jats in Malerkotla constituency. Backward class percentage in Sikhs is very low as compared to general and SC caste in Malerkotla constituency. This is a very peculiar type of caste combination in this constituency.

As mentioned earlier, there is a majority of women from the backward classes. On the basis of trends tinted by the literature, data gained on women's participation in political activities, Interest in competition in elections and position of women membership in representative bodies, it can be said that caste profile and political participation have strongly connected with each other.



Marital Status:

Marital status shows whether a lady is married or unmarried and marital status can be a main reason in determining the political participation of women in India. It is supposed to influence the decision making which is a key factor in determining the political participation of women. However, it is often more demanding for women to admission and exercise their own rights and to take sovereign decisions. The data in respect of marital status of women of the respondents is given below:

Table no. 4.10

Marital Status of women

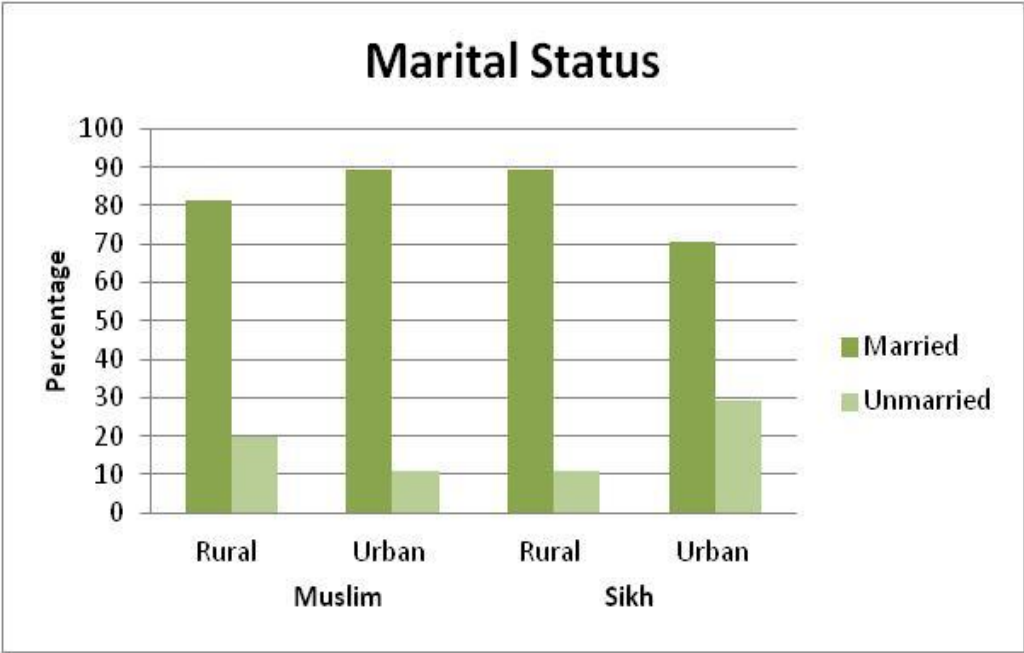
Marital Status of Respondents	Muslim Women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Married	61 (81.33)	67 (89.33)	67 (89.33)	53 (70.67)	248 (82.67)
Unmarried	14 (18.67)	8 (10.67)	8 (10.67)	22 (29.33)	52 (17.33)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

The table no. 4.10 represents that 81.33 percent of rural and 89.33 percent of urban Muslim women are married whereas only 18.67

percent rural 10.67 percent urban Muslim women are unmarried. Data shows the same trend in respect of the Sikh women in rural and urban areas at 89.33 percent in rural and 70.67 percent in urban areas for married women in Malerkotla constituency. There are 10.67 percent in rural and 29.33 percent in urban Sikh women are unmarried.

The majority of women are married in the randomly picked sample, both in the Muslim and Sikh women respondents. There are frequent factors counting pressures of family responsibilities and confidence which delay married women from political participation and additional rearing children by them create more hinder in participation in politics.²² On the basis of marital status of respondents, it is fact that only married women had the permission to contest the election. None of unmarried women contest the election ether.



Family Status

Family status is also another significant issue able to pressure many activities of women. There is a growing trend in favor of having nuclear families particularly in urban areas. The system of nuclear

²² Morale, Laura, *Joining Political Organisations: Institutions, Mobilisation and Participation in Western Democracies*, ECPR Press, UK, 2009, p.80.

families gives more freedom to women in taking decisions of their choice compared to the women who lived in joint families. They are forces from father-in-law, mother-in-law and other elder on decision making or voluntary choice of women and they can't enjoy political participation as her their choice. They have to go by the decision of Head of family or by the ordinary permission.

Table no. 4.11
Family Status

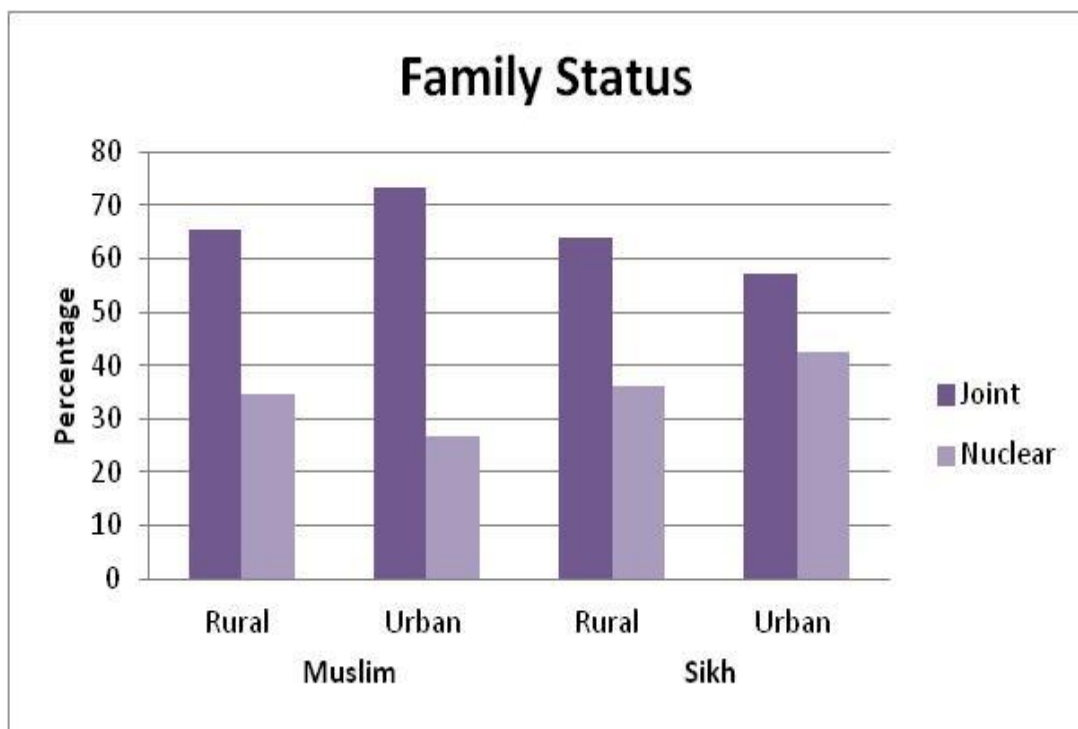
Family Status of Respondents	Muslim women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Joint family	49 (65.33)	55 (73.33)	48 (64)	43 (57.33)	195 (65)
Nuclear family	26 (34.67)	20 (26.67)	27 (36)	32 (42.67)	105 (35)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

The above table shows data collected from the respondents, the position about the women living in joint or nuclear families. The table indicates that out of 300 respondents, 65.33 percent of rural and 73.33 percent of urban Muslim women live in joint families. There are 64 percent rural, 57.33 percent urban Sikh women living in joint families. There are 34.67 percent rural and 26.67 percent urban Muslim women who live in nuclear families whereas 36 percent rural and 42.67 percent of urban Sikh women live in nuclear families. If we make over all comparison, 195 out of 300(65 percent) live in joint family and 105 out of 300(35 percent) live in nuclear families. It shows that joint family system is still prevalent and women have to adjust themselves in such traditional families.

The above graph represents the position shown in the above table in respect of respondents living in the joint and nuclear families. Data

collected through sample survey and presented in the table 4.11 shows that two third of the respondents (both form Muslim and Sikh women) live in joint families and only 1/3 of the total women (Muslim and Sikh) live in nuclear families. Women in nuclear families enjoy more freedom of political participation than those living in joint families. Family's status may influence the participatory behavior in expressions of more autonomy to women in nuclear families because it involves them more freedom to participate in political activities. However no noticeable evidence was found to establish direct link between living in nuclear or joint family and political participatory behavior of rural or urban women.



4.6 Occupation profile:

Occupation mirrors the position and status of a person or a group of persons. From the ancient time upper castes have belonged to higher profession and higher positions as well as lower caste have belonged to lower occupation and lower position and prestige. There are 135 Factors which Affecting on Political Participation of Women Scheduled caste

who get education and improved occupation and have enhanced participation in the power organization.²³

Table no. 4.12
Occupation profile

Occupation of Respondents	Muslim women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
House Wives	54 (72)	38 (50.67)	48 (64)	41 (54.67)	181 (60.3)
Doing job	4 (5.33)	16 (21.33)	8 (10.67)	21 (28)	49 (16.3)
Self Employed	6 (8)	6 (8)	2 (2.66)	7 (9.33)	21 (7)
Agriculturalist	0	0	12 (16)	0	12 (4)
Doing other vocation	11 (14.67)	15 (20)	5 (6.67)	6 (8)	37 (12.3)
Total	100	100	100	100	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

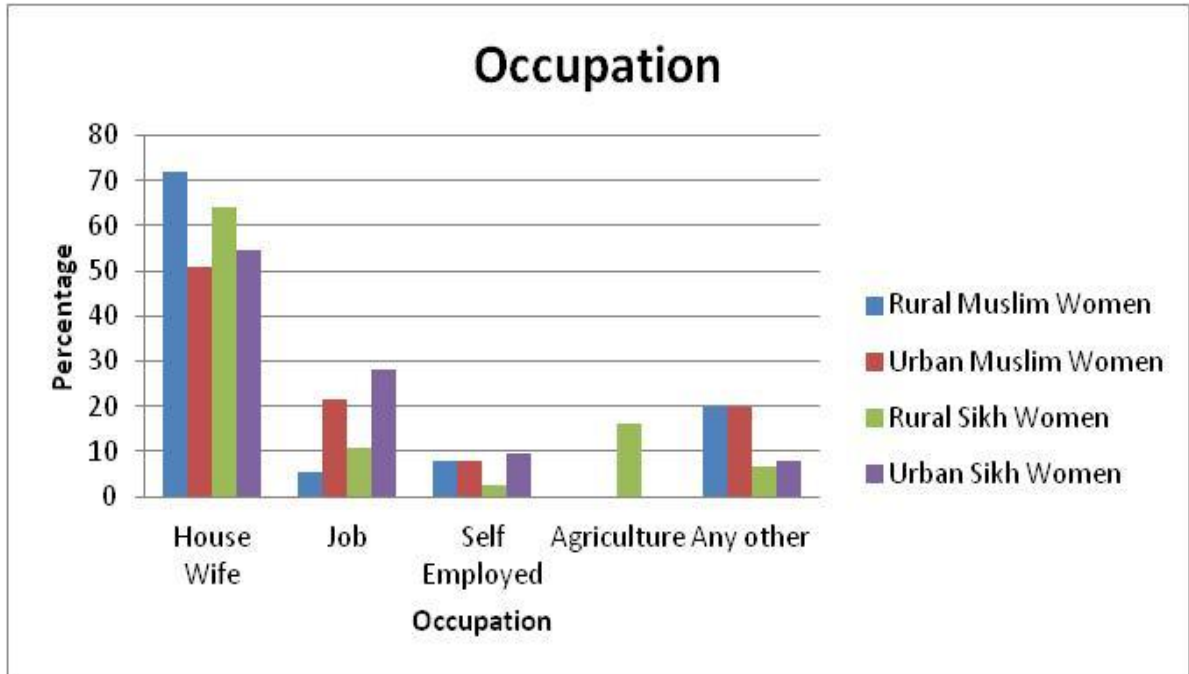
Above table no 4.12 shows that 72 percent of rural and 50.66 percent of urban Muslim women are house wives and on the other hand 64 percent of rural and 54.67 percent of urban Sikh women are also house wives. However, only 5.33 percent and 21.3 percent of rural and urban Muslim women and 10.67 percent and 28 percent of rural and urban Sikh women are employed.

Self employment is an important and powerful tool for empowerment of women which may hearten more political participation by them. Just only 7 percent of respondents from both communities (Sikh and Muslim) are self employed. They are doing self jobs like stitching, embroidery and handmade work etc. Only 4 percent Sikh

²³

http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/bitstream/10603/33107/10/10_chapter%206.pdf, seen on 11 December, 2015.

women in rural areas are engaged in agriculture. Women from both the communities doing other professions is now-a-days picking up due to various employment making programmes launched by the central or state government. It is quite helpful in their political participation.



The data given in the previous table is shown here above in the form of a chart or graph to make the position more clear and apparent.

Income Profile

Income is the use and savings chance gained by a unit within a particular timeframe, which is usually expressed in financial conditions²⁴. It has been noticed that the women having profitable jobs or earning attractive income from agriculture or business etc have more say in the society and they make most use of political participation with least prying appearance their husbands/families. They are best reserve persons for their families and like dominating status as compared to low income or no income women, may be Muslim women or Sikh women. The data given in table gives an overview of the various income groups within the sample.

²⁴ N. Barr, *Problems and definition of measurement: In Economics of the welfare state*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004, pp. 121-124

Table no. 4.13**Annual Income Profile**

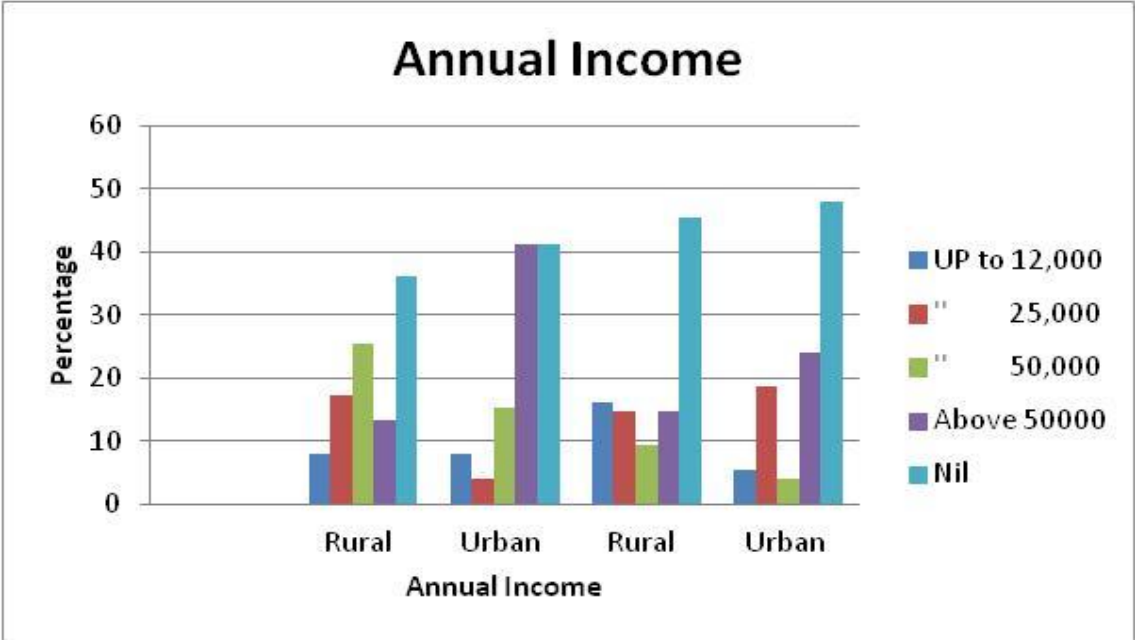
Income of Respondents	Muslim women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Respondents					
Income Up to 12,000	6 (8)	6 (8)	12 (16)	4 (5.33)	28 (9.33)
" " 25,000	13 (17.33)	3 (4)	11 (14.67)	14 (18.67)	41 (13.67)
" " 50,000	19 (25.33)	4 (5.33)	7 (9.33)	3 (4)	33 (11)
Above 50000	10 (13.34)	31 (41.33)	11 (14.67)	18 (24)	70 (23.33)
No Income	27 (36)	31 (41.34)	34 (45.33)	36 (48)	128 (42.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)	300(100)

Sources: Field Survey.

The above table shows the position of target group in respect of stage wise income distinctively each for Muslim and Sikh women. Surprisingly there is majority of women who do not earn anything. Their percentage is quiet high which includes 36 per cent of rural Muslim women and 41.33 percent of urban Muslim women. On the other hand there are 45.33 percent of rural 48 percent of urban Sikh women who do not earn anything. In the income group of upto 12000/-, 8 percent each of rural are urban Muslim women fall where as 16 percent and 5.33 percent of rural and urban Sikh women respectively fall under the category of income up to 12000.

There are 17.33 percent and 4 percent Muslim women in rural and urban areas respectively and 14.67 percent and 24 percent Sikh women in rural and urban areas respectively who get up to 25000 P.A. Number of rural and urban Muslim women earning up to 50,000/- is

high at 25.33 percent and 15.33 percent respectively where as rural and urban Sikh women who earn up to 50.000/- is comparatively low at 9.33 percent and 4 percent respectively. There is a large section of urban Muslim women who earn more than 50,000/- with 41.33 percent and rural Muslim women falling in the same group at 13.33 percent. On the other hand only 14.67 percent of rural and 24 percent urban Sikh women earn more than 50,000/- P.A respectively.



The above discussion of the Profile of Malerkotla shows that it has a unique and different socio of Malerkotla women. It has a different demography, social and religious culture, centrality of situation and historical importance. The present study shows that unique socio-culture a quality of Malerkotla constituency in which women respondents (both the communities) gives surprisingly responses about their socio profile.

CHAPTER 5
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN MALERKOTLA
CONSTITUENCY

Political participation is a process of growth of society. It refers to those acts intended to influence the behavior and actions of political decision makers. It embraces various activities designed to achieve this end¹. The word political participation is much relevant to the political system. As women are the integral part of society, therefore, their participation and engagement in political arena is an important marker of the maturity and efficacy of democracy in any country. The participation of women can be defined not only in terms of the equality and freedom with which they share political power with men, but also in terms of the liberty and space provided for women in the democratic framework. Social, Political, Economic empowerment of women has become the main agenda of governmental and non-governmental organizations in recent years. Political empowerment necessitates equal participation of women in political process and in decision making bodies. It plays a significant role in the survival of an ongoing democratic political system.

Women comprise almost half of the Indian population. In the data record, the percentage of males is higher than that of females. The population of India comprises 586.47 million (48.5 percent) females and 623.72 million (51.5 percent) males.² However, to our great dismay, in the Parliament as well as in the state Assemblies, women have not been given adequate representation. They have not been able to occupy more than 15 percent seats in the Parliament and state assemblies. Punjab is known as one of the richest states of the country and is passing through the

¹ Norman D. Palmer, Election and Political Development- The South Asian Experience, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976, p.57.

² Census report, 2011.

21st century however when it comes to the condition of women and political participation of women in political arena, it is not satisfactory. In the last assembly elections 2012, 14 female (11.97 percent) were elected out of total 117 members of legislative assembly. In the case of 2014 Punjab lok sabha election, only one women elected out of 13 seats. Evidently, this representation of women is not proportionate to the total population of women in Punjab.

Historically, Women have been performing multifarious roles since times immemorial in India. She is burdened with so many responsibilities and face societal restrictions. Thus, their role has become more important and central. The present chapter attempts to analyze the perceived role of women in political arena, their opinion about politics, their participation in different ways as well as the awareness and handicaps which women have to face. There are many problems pertaining to women's participation which are the product of particular mind-set and culture of male dominance which create the barriers that inhibit the entry and participation of women in active political process.

This chapter is divided into two parts. First part deals with the level of awareness of the respondents among the Sikh and Muslim women of Malerkotla constituency. The second part deals with the political participation of both the communities' women. For the purpose of the present study, Sikh and Muslim women of Malerkotla constituency in Punjab have been selected as the area of study. The entire population of Malerkotla constituency has been treated as the universe. This chapter attempts to gauge the level of political awareness and political participation of the women respondents. Among Sikh and Muslim women respondents' housewives, working women, member of any representative bodies who actively participate in politics in any kind have been comprised in research. The random sample of 300 women respondents has been taken comprising, 150 each from Sikh and Muslim

community. The Sikh and Muslim women are further divided into rural and urban women (75 each).

PART – 1 Level of Political Awareness

Since women level of political awareness always influence level the political participation. In order to explore and judge the level of political awareness of women respondents some questions have been asked to them. Like, how much interest they have in politics. Knowledge about current politics, media exposure and social media sites impact on women’s level of political awareness. Therefore, women’s level of political awareness influences their political participation.

Interest in Politics:

Interest of women in politics is a very vast area of study and it is also a multi-dimensional phenomenon which depends upon a number of factors. The level of interest of women in politics has shown an upward trend due to improved scenario of education, empowerment and other general conditions which are though not predictable but surely affect the status. The data given below shows the interest of women in politics in Ta

Table 5.1
Interest in politics

Interest in Politics	Muslim women (%)		Sikh Women (%)		Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	31 (41.33)	50 (66.67)	33 (44)	27 (36)	141 (47)
No	44 (58.67)	25 (33.33)	42 (56)	48 (64)	159 (53)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

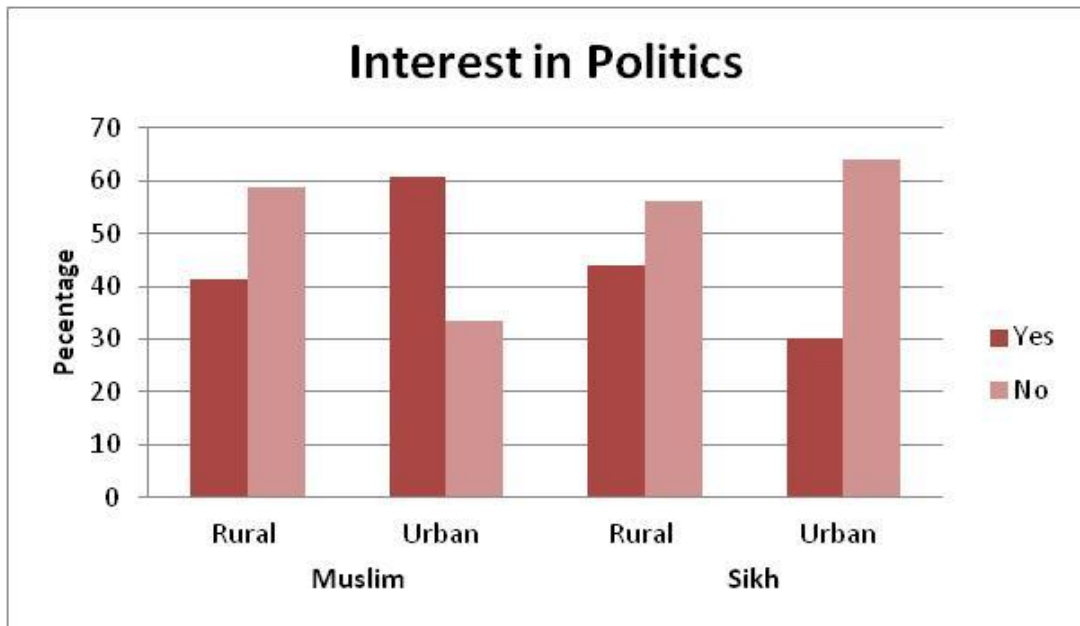
The table 5.1 shows that out of 300 respondents, 47 percent of respondents from both areas have shown their keen interest in politics. In which 41.33 percent of rural area Muslim women and 44 percent Sikh rural women as compared to 66.67 percent of Muslim urban and 36 percent of Sikh urban area women have shown interest in politics. Most of them belong to young age group (18-35). In younger age, their perception towards politics is liberal and wider. Educated women respondents have also shown their interest in politics and are more actively participating in politics. They know their rights and duties towards state and understand the importance of government and their policies.

Majority of the respondents (53 percent) have expressed that they had no interest in Politics. Among these respondents, 58.67 percent are Muslim women and 56 percent Sikh women in rural area as compared to 33.33 percent Muslim women and 64 percent Sikh women in urban area were not interested in politics. They are busy with their domestic duties. They also think that politics is male oriented actively and money oriented game. In it, women are not safe. It is also noticed that women in elder age (45 to 60 above) have shown no interest in politics. One of respondent housewife said that “ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਕੀ ਹੈ, ਨੇਤਾ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਵੇਲੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਝੁੱਠੇ ਵਾਅਦੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਫੇਰ ਅਗਲੀਆਂ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਤੱਕ ਭੁੱਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ” (what is there in politics for us. Leaders came to us during election time and make fake promise and forget them till next elections).³

Thus, the data reveals that majority of women have shown disinterest in politics but Urban Muslim women are more interested as compared to Sikh Urban women. As per as the interest in politics is concerned, various question selected to basis politics have been asked like education, age, family impact etc. it may be expressed that young women would have a higher degree of interest comparatively elder

³ Personal Interview, November 4, 2014.

women. It can also be noticed that interest in Politics is low in the age group of 60 above. Mostly women get interested in Politics during election times.



1) Knowledge about P.M, C.M and M.L.A of area or General Politics Awareness:-

In order to test the level of Political awareness of respondents, they were asked very simple questions. Interest in Politics generally leads to general awareness about the political-high ups and personalities. But the participatory behavior of women may not be strictly in accordance with the level of their general awareness about the representatives Table No. 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 shows the level of awareness of women of the Malerkotla constituency about the political representatives.

Table no. 5.2**Knowing the Name of Prime Minister**

Knowing Name of P.M	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Correct	51 (68)	45 (60)	52 (69.33)	55 (73.33)	203 (67.67)
Incorrect	24 (32)	30 (40)	23 (30.67)	20 (26.67)	97 (32.33)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5.3**Knowing the Name of Chief Minister**

Knowing Name of C.M	Muslim women %		Sikh Women %		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Correct	61 (81.33)	60 (80)	65 (86.67)	70 (93.33)	256 (85.33)
Incorrect	14 (18.67)	15 (20)	10 (13.33)	5 (6.67)	44 (14.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no.5.4**Knowing the Name of M.L.A**

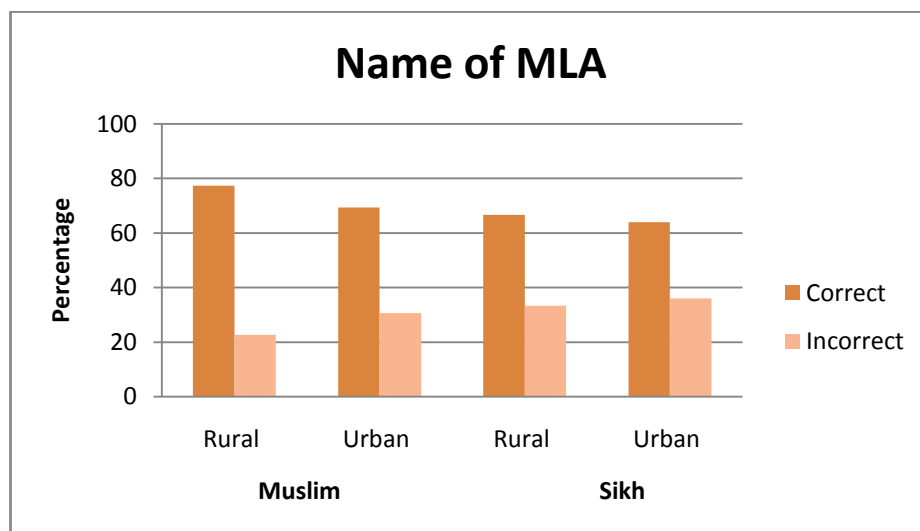
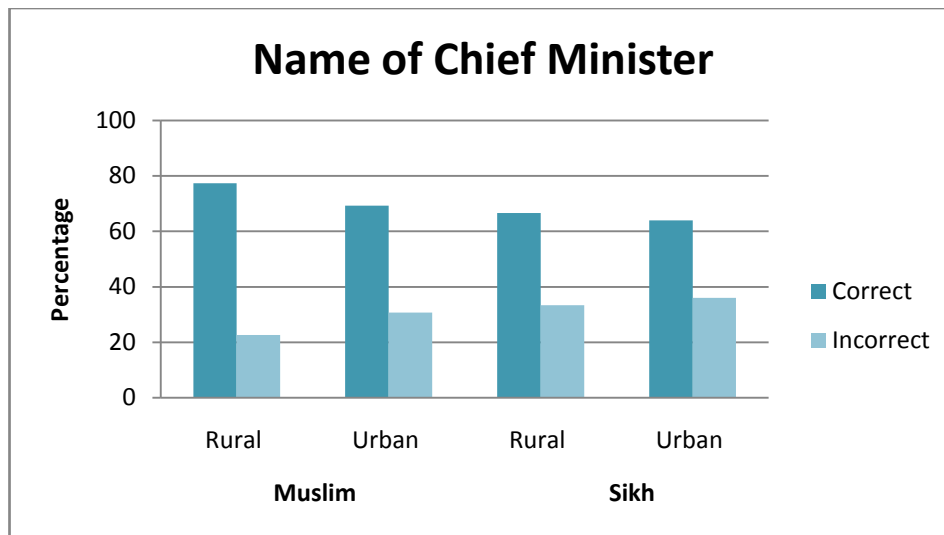
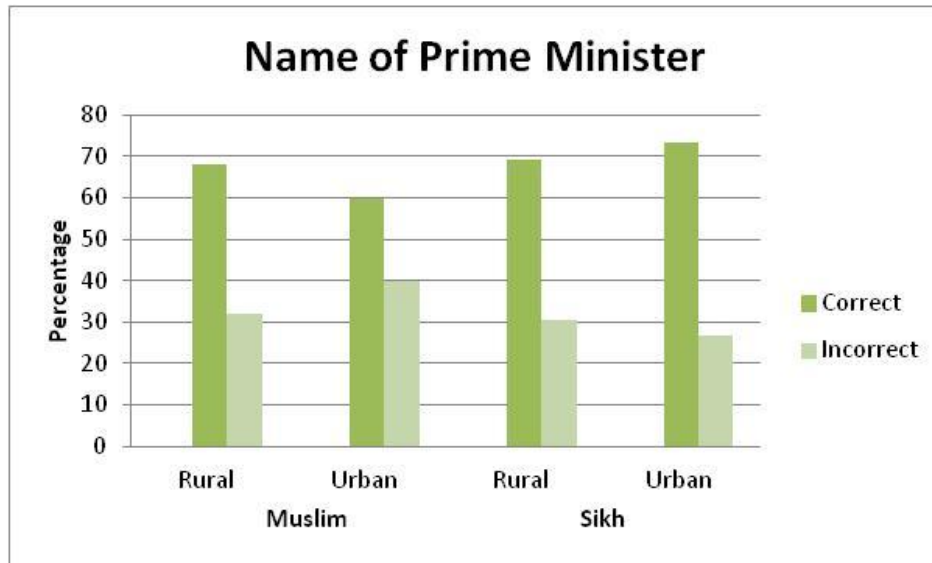
Knowing Name of MLA	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Correct	58 (77.33)	72 (96)	50 (66.67)	70 (93.33)	250 (83.33)
Incorrect	17 (22.67)	3 (4)	25 (33.33)	5 (6.67)	50 (16.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Prime minister is one who holds one of the highest rank in our democratic country, and he/she is elected indirectly by the members of parliamentary. Regarding knowing the name of P.M, it is observed that 67.67 percent gave the right answers know the name of Prime minister, among them 68 percent of were rural Muslim women 69.33 percent Sikh rural women and 60 percent Muslim Urban women 73.33 percent Sikh Urban women fall in this category. Out of total 300 respondents, only 32.33 percent women were totally ignorant about the name of P.M.

It is quite interesting to note that, an overwhelming majority of respondents that is about 72.67 percent women are aware of the name of C.M and only 27.33 percent women respondents of both communities are not aware about the name of chief minister of state. In other category 69.33percent women know about M.L.A of their area and 30.67 percent women respondents don't know the name of MLA of their area. The analysis of the data show that generally held assumption that rural population especially women population take more interest in state and local politics than national politics. That means, this assumption is seems to be true.

Thus, table shows that most of the respondent women either Sikh or Muslim, urban or rural are aware about Politics. Mostly women give correct answer. Muslim women are slightly better aware as compared to the Sikh women respondents. Women respondents from both sides are much aware about state politics compared to national politics. Women in the younger are the also quite aware about political participation. Since most of them are college going or doing the post graduates studies. The illiterate segment of women from the both communities has also been found to be quite aware about the activities but the tempo of awareness becomes many times more during the election time through Mohalla gatherings, Local TV news and campaigning by contestants.



2) Interest In Media:

The media are potentially powerful channels of information in a society. The messages they transmit can change or reinforce social mores and behaviours, and mobilize citizens to take progressive actions. So interest in media channels can elevate women participation to a considerable extent. The data shows the level of interest of respondents in various media channels. Lerner regards the developments of the mass media as the key in a society's march from a state of traditionalism to that of modernity.⁴

Table 5.5
Interest in Political News

Interest in News	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Local	34 (45.33)	7 (9.33)	22 (29.33)	18 (24)	81 (27)
Regional	8 (10.66)	7 (9.33)	16 (21.33)	14 (18.67)	45 (15)
National	4 (5.33)	28 (37.34)	11 (14.67)	15 (20)	58 (19.33)
International	10 (13.33)	12 (16)	7 (9.33)	15 (20)	44 (14.67)
Not Interested	19 (25.33)	21 (28)	19 (25.34)	13 (17.33)	72 (24)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

⁴ Ibid.

Table 5.5 elaborates that out of 300 respondents, 27 percent women respondents from both Sikh and Muslim have expressed the reason to listen/watch local news is that ‘these women are mostly in touch with those events which happened in their areas, they have a sense of belongingness with them and they have no language problem’. One respondent said that “ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਾਡੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿੰਨਾ ਦਾ ਅਸਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਲੋਕਲ ਖਬਰਾਂ ਸੁਣਦੇ ਹਾਂ” (we get information from this about our area which has impact on us, there for this listen to the local news).⁵

Furthermore, other 15 percent women respondents in which 10.66 percent rural and 9.33 percent urban Muslim women respondents and 21.33 percent rural and 18.67 percent Sikh women respondents have shown their interest in listening and watching local news. The reason behind it was that they feel that they have sense of belonging and don't face any language barrier. This figure also shows that Sikh women are more interested in regional news as compared to the Muslim women.

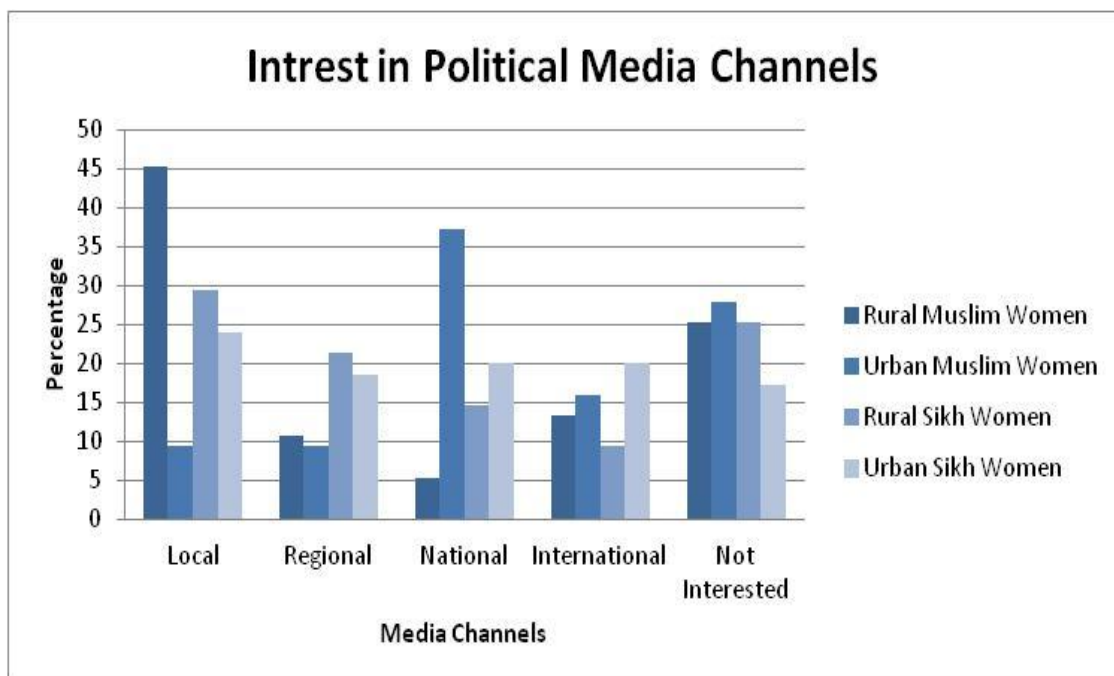
19.33 percent women respondents from the both Muslim (5.33 percent rural and 37.34 percent urban) and Sikh (14.67 percent rural and 20 percent urban) women respondents show their interest in national news. The reason for interest in national news is that they are educated and understand to Hindi language easily. However, only 14.67 percent of Muslim (13.33 percent rural and 16 percent urban) and Sikh (9.33 percent rural and 20 percent urban) women respondents shows their interest in international news. In this category mostly women are young and educated. They understand the English language.

Furthermore, 25.33 percent Muslim rural and 25.34 Sikh rural women respondents have no interest in any kind of news. Compared to

⁵ Personal Interview, 4 November, 2014.

this, 28 percent Muslim urban and 17.33 percent Sikh urban women respondents also have no interest in news. The main reason that as per tradition of joint families in both the communities where due to large size of family, there is hardly any time left to listen to the daily news on a regular basis for the women of the families. Some respondents expressed the view that, “ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਇੰਨਾ ਵਕਤ ਕਿਥੇ ਕਿ ਅਸਾਂ ਕੁਝ ਦੇਖੀਏ, ਸਾਡੇ ਏਥੇ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੁਕਦੇ ਸਾਰਾ ਦਿਨ” (We do not have so much time to do such jobs, as our domestic work does not finish the whole day).⁶

Thus, the analysis of the data shows that 73.33 percent Muslim and 78.67 percent Sikh women respondents have shown interest in news. Comparatively Sikh women are more interested to listen any kind of news as compared the Muslim women. But mostly women are interested in local and regional news because they are more comfortable in their mother tongue. Only educated women are interested in national or international news.



⁶ Personal Interview, 4 November, 2014.

3) Effects of social Media on political participation:-

Social media have become an integral part of public discourse and communication in the contemporary society. The fast development of social media has caused major changes pertaining the way people find groups of individuals with similar interests, the nature of information, the available news sources, or the possibility to require and share ideas.⁷

More recently, the prominence of social media has been particularly highlighted in politics, given the fact that the use of social networking sites (Facebook) and microblogging services (Twitter) are believed to have the potential of positively influencing political participation.⁸

Table no. 5.6

Effect of Social Media on Political Participation

Effect on Social Media	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Large extent	19 (25.33)	31 (41.33)	13 (17.33)	37 (49.33)	100 (33.33)
Reasonable extent	7 (9.33)	23 (30.67)	10 (13.33)	13 (17.33)	53 (17.67)
No effect	9 (12)	8 (10.67)	7 (9.34)	7 (9.34)	31 (10.33)
Don't Know	40 (53.33)	13 (17.33)	45 (60)	18 (24)	116 (38.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

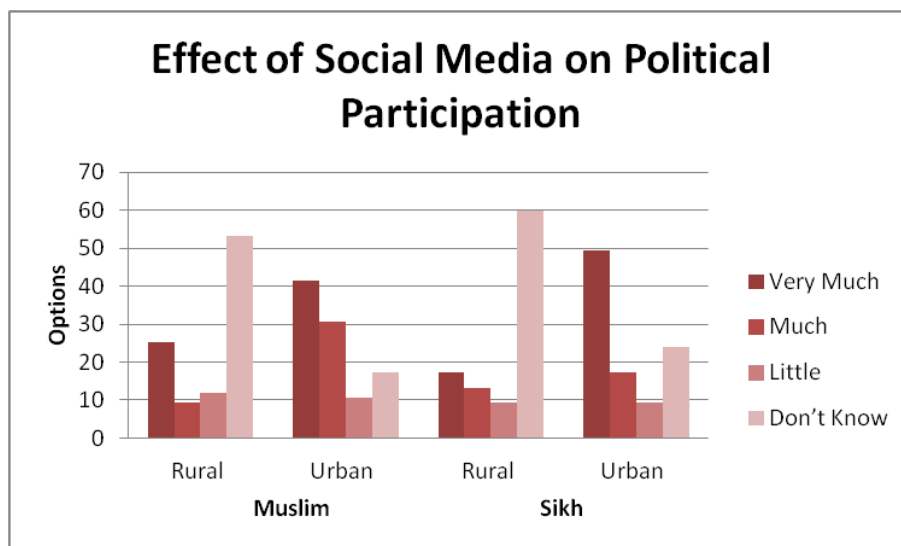
Source: Field Survey.

⁷ Stieglitz, S. and Dang-Xuan, L. (2012) "Social media and political communication: a social media analytics framework." Springer-Verlag 2012

⁸ Ibid.

The Above table 5.6 shows that out of 300 women respondents’ 33.33 percent of both communities agreed that social media sites have effect the level of political participation of women, especially in election time some important issues get viral on social media sites which gives vital information about government politics and etc. In this category, mostly young or educated women are involved. It is also noticed that these sites are used by urban area respondents as compare the rural area respondents. Only 10.33 percent women respondents said social media did not have effect on their participation reason of this is “ਇਹ ਸਭ ਵਿਹਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਹਨ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਡੇ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਫਰਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੈਂਦਾ”⁹

In this category, mostly middle aged women are fallen which either do not use these sites or if they have use, is again only for their entertainment or chatting purpose. Majority of the respondents i.e. 38.67 percent women those who belong to rural area, have shown their ignorance about social media sites, because they are less educated and mostly of them have no internet facility.



PART – B Political participation of Women Respondents:-

As active political participation does not mean only voting but includes a number of activities like taking part in election campaign and

⁹ Personal Interview, October 28,2014.

contest election, and having political discussion etc. The respondents were asked a number of questions related to all these aspects of political participation directly or indirectly. There are many types of political participations which are explained below:

1. Possession of electoral Identification

Since Possession of an electoral identification document is very important for participate in the political activities. Data given below reveals the status of possession of electoral identification documents.

Table 5.7

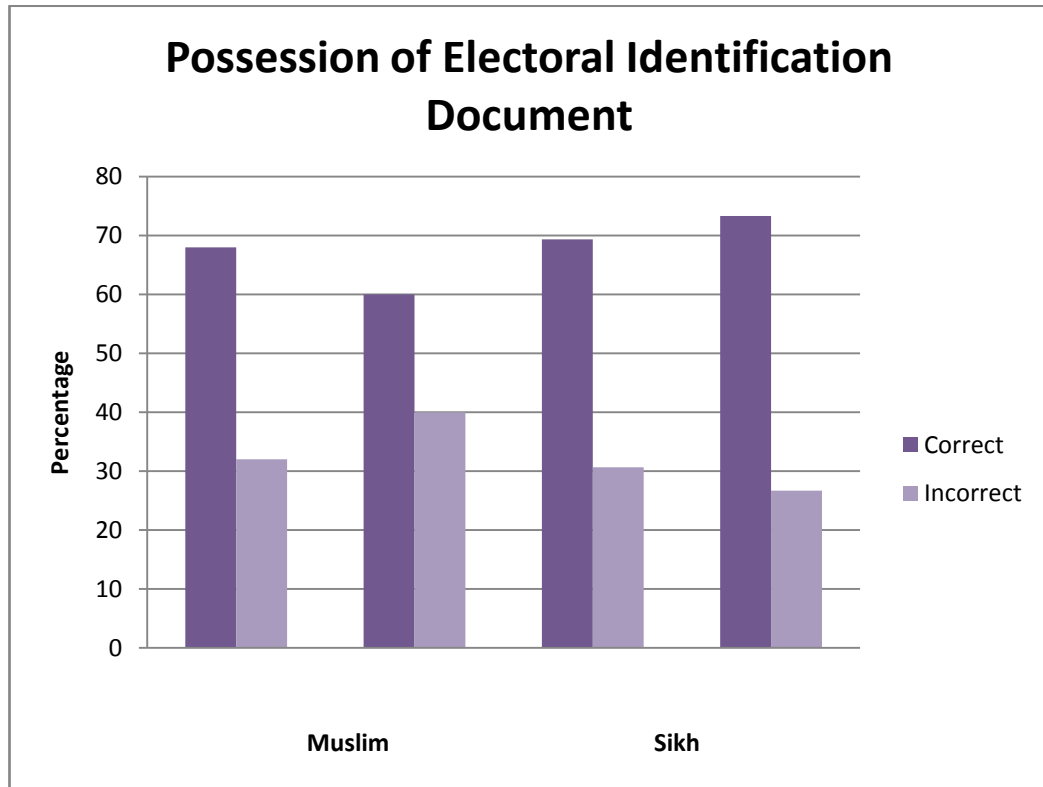
Possession of electoral Identification

ID Card	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	71 (94.67)	72 (96)	74 (98.67)	71 (94.67)	288 (96)
No	4 (5.33)	3 (4)	1 (1.33)	4 (5.33)	12 (4)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table 5.7 shows that majority of women respondents i.e. 96 percent who belong to both Sikh and Muslim communities have their own ID cards. They have shown keen interest into take part in local politics for which they got their ID Cards and secondly Male member know the importance of ID cards that is why they put emphasis to her female family members to get it issued. Only 4 percent of the total women respondents do not have any voter identity cards. In this category, mostly those women respondents fall which are uneducated or just attain the age of 18 irrespective.

Thus the table analysis shows that majority women have their ID cards either young or old ill irate or illiterate. The reason behind it was, the respondents have shown their keen interest in participation of at local level politics. Secondly, ID have very much important in daily life.



2 To Cast vote:

For many women the act of casting her vote is the only important occasion for political activity. The act of voting may bring to some people satisfaction in the sense that through voting they feel to be part of the political system. There are some people who have no such strong feeling about voting. They think that the time spent at the polling station is sheer wastage.¹⁰

¹⁰ B. Ganguly and Mira Ganguly, *Voting Behaviour in a Developing Society : A Case Study of West Bengal*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1975, p. 38.

Table No. 5.8
Use of Right to Vote

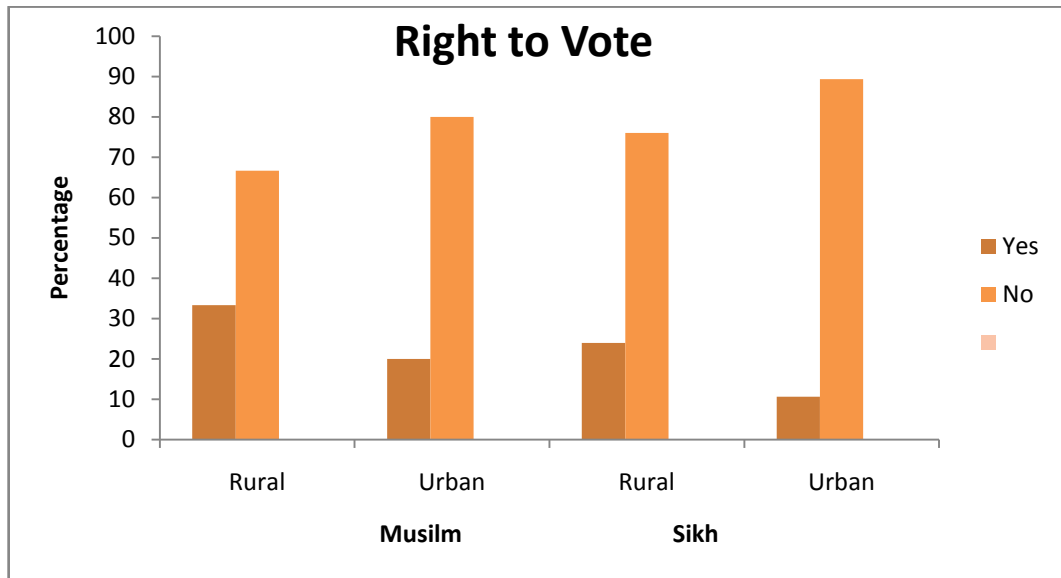
Use Right of Vote	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Always	60 (80)	50 (66.67)	70 (93.33)	52 (69.33)	232 (77.33)
Sometimes	05 (6.67)	03 (4)	00 (00)	08 (10.67)	16 (5.33)
Never	10 (13.33)	22 (29.33)	05 (6.67)	15 (20)	52 (17.34)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table 5.8 shows that majority of women respondents i.e. 77.33 percent from Sikh and Muslim communities exercise their right to vote. They know the importance of their right to vote. Mostly women respondents either Sikh or Muslim, literate or illiterate have shown keen interest in local politics, especially in election time. Interestingly, the women voters in rural areas cast their votes in larger number but it may not be so in the urban areas. May be a sense of lethargy and easiness be the reason for urban women to remain confined to their homes. It is also noticed that young women shown more interest to cast vote as compared the elder women respondents. 5.33 percent respondents said that they ‘sometime’ cast their vote because they prefer to do their household duty. They said that “ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਆ” (Politics is male oriented game)¹¹ Only 17.34 percent respondents never cast their vote. Surprisingly they are educated or urban women which think going for cast vote is wastage of time. These

¹¹ Personal Interview, November 5, 2014.

respondents explained that they don't feel any necessity of casting their votes because no one helps them after the election. Selfish leaders make false promises before elections and forget to fulfill them after the elections.



3) Influence of family on voting Right

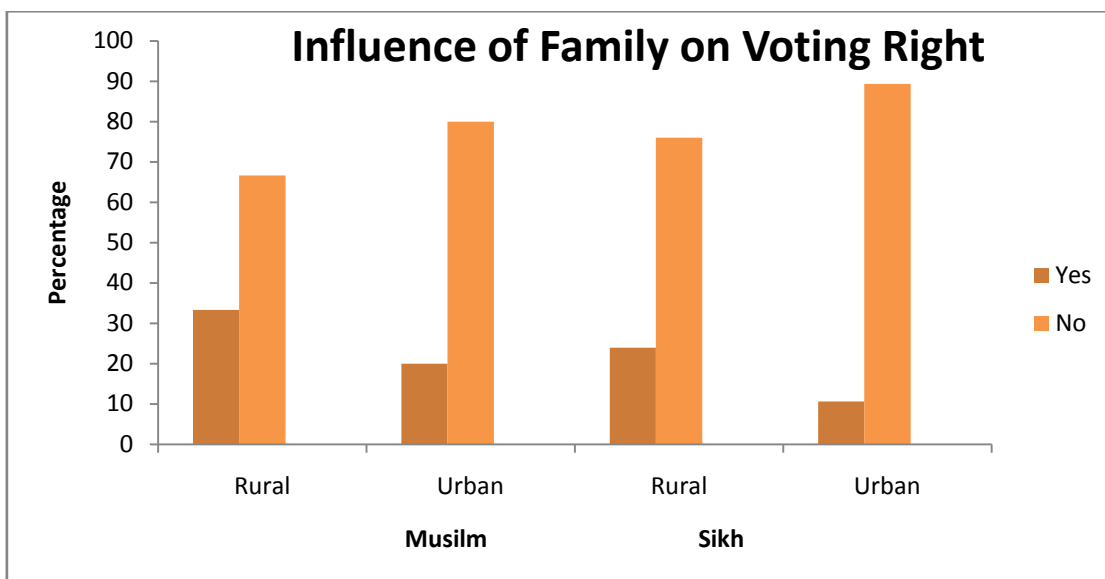
Strong family ties commonly culminate into possibly with lack of generalized trust. In addition, individuals with strong family ties do not engage much in political activity, and are less interested in public policies, and other social activities in general and the polity in particular. An extreme version of strong family ties is the amoral familism", which according to Banfield (1958) was a major determinant of underdevelopment. The strength of impact on family ties could then reduce social capital and as a result have development on many grounds. It ultimately establishes a relationship between family ties, trust and political participation in a clear way.

Table No.5.9
Influence of family on voting Right

Influence of Family	(Muslim women)		(Sikh Women)		Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	50 (66.67)	29 (38.67)	40 (53.33)	29 (38.67)	148 (49.33)
No	25 (33.33)	46 (61.33)	35 (46.67)	46 (61.33)	152 (50.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table 5.9 indicates that 50.67 percent Sikh and Muslim respondents are never pressurized by their family to cast their vote in favor of any particular candidate in the elections. They take their voting decision independently. Many of these are the educated women, who take their decisions independently. The number of these respondents is high in urban area respondents as compared to rural area respondents. On the other hand, 49.33 percent respondents agreed that they are pressurized by their family to cast their vote in favour of a specific candidate. Women are influenced by their family member's including husbands in such matters. The reasons for this are many fold mainly their illiteracy due to which they feel handicapped to make a reasonable choice of the candidate and they seek the advice of their husbands. Being illiterates they also lack confidence in taking suo-Moto decisions. Further being uneducated, unemployed and financially dependent on husband, it prompts their spouses to direct them to toe to the line of the family in casting the vote. In many joint families there is the system of unity of command. Head of the family gives the direction and all others follow the suit. So, there it becomes normal for a newly married woman to cast her vote on family pattern.



4) Participation in Election Campaign

Campaign is an important part of election process. In the democratic countries, elections are held without campaign but it's not possible at all now. Intensity and extent of campaign may certainly differ from one country to another and one occasion to another. But there is always some electioneering prior to the polling and in Malerkotla constituency like rest of Punjab; election campaign is done quite rigorously.

Table no 5.10

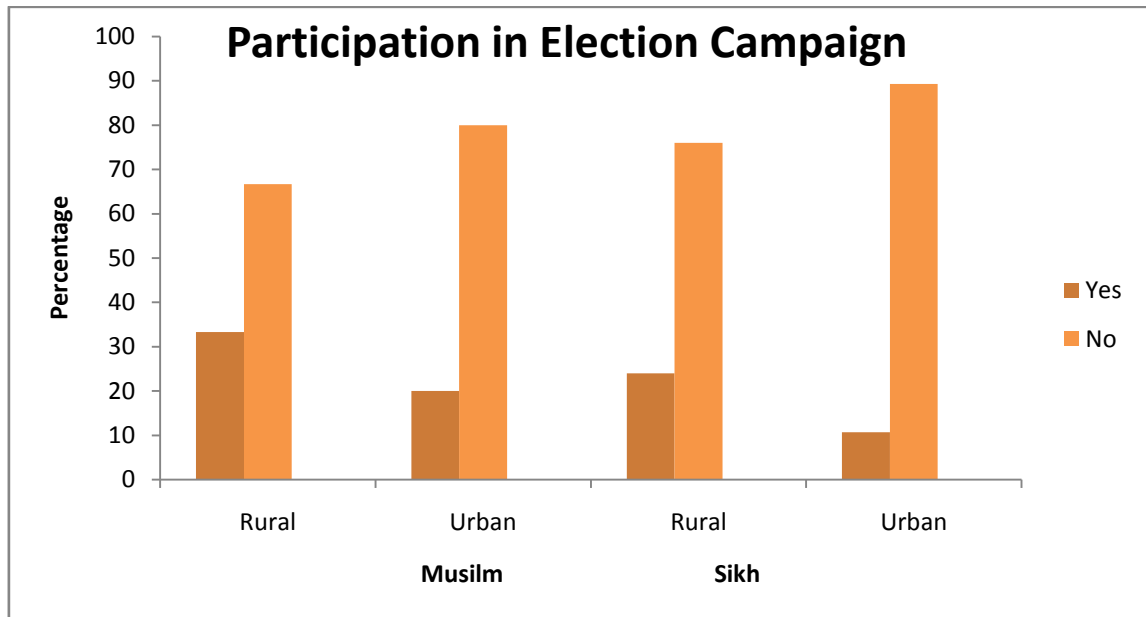
Respondent's participation in Election Campaign

Participation in Campaign	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	23 (30.67)	16 (21.33)	19 (25.33)	3 (4)	61 (20.33)
No	52 (69.33)	59 (78.67)	56 (74.67)	72 (96)	239 (79.67)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table 5.10 reveals that 30.67 percent Muslim rural women and 25.33 percent Sikh rural women involve themselves in election campaigns. On the other hand, 21.67 percent urban Muslim women and 4 percent Sikh urban women respondents also take keen interest in election campaign. Mostly women who participate in election campaign their family member or relative contests in election. Comparatively 69.33 percent Muslim rural and 74.67 percent Sikh rural women were strongly not interested in election campaign. Furthermore, 78.67 percent urban Muslim and 96 percent Sikh urban women respondents also don't campaign. This is not something unnatural because norms of the society (especially of Malerkotla constituency) which has conservative thinking do not permit women to lead the campaign from the forefront. Of course, they can be passive campaigners Malerkotla constituency is inhabited by Muslims and Sikhs mainly and other castes are relegated to lower positions. It is common with both the Muslims and Sikhs not to allow their female members to be exposed to public view. Further, on account of gender bias and inferior position of women, there is feeling of insecurity among them. The election campaigns are led by both men and women together and success of the campaign also depends upon cohesiveness with which people participate in it. Even in the male dominated society, women internally feel it is disgraceful and unworthy to lead the campaign with their male members. These reasons taken together; women in Malerkotla constituency do not take active participation in election campaigns. Among them some respondents of Sikh and Muslim community expressed the opinion by saying that *“ਅਸੀਂ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਘਰ ਘਰ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਵੋਟਾਂ ਮੰਗਦੀਆਂ ਚੰਗੀਆਂ ਲਗਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਤੇ? ਇਹ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਨੇ”* (it does no easy for us to

demand votes house to house like men folk, it is the domain of men only)¹².



There are people who have not, at one time or another, watched a play of some sort being staged. But this does not mean that all of them, or even some of them, have actively participated in the staging of play. The same thing may be said about an election campaign¹³. We tried to assess the level of participation of our respondents in election campaign. Only 61 respondents out of the total 300 reportedly participated in the election campaign, they were further ranked according to their involvement in the campaign activities. For further analysis these 61 respondent women from the both community have been taken who can be referred to as “active respondent”. For this purpose we asked the respondents six question about their role in campaign which are as follows:

- I. Requested the voters.
- II. Contribution/Collection of election funds.
- III. Participation/ Preparation in election meetings.

¹² Personal Interview, November 5,2014

¹³ B. Ganguly and Mira Ganguly, op. cit., p. 151.

- IV. Preparation/Distribution of posters/banners etc.
- V. Door to door election campaigning.
- VI. Attending political rallies.

1. Request the Voters

Out of total 61 women respondents from the two communities who participated in election campaign as many as 49(80.33 percent) claimed that they inspired the prospective voters to cast their votes. 82.67 percent rural Muslim and 63.16 percent Sikh rural, women requested to others to cast their votes. Compared to this 93.75 percent urban Muslim and 100 percent Sikh urban women also requested to others voters to do so. They told that women easy convinced by women. Because some of families didn't gives permission to their women to go in front of men. They said “ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਕਿਹਦੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਚੰਗੀਆਂ ਲੱਗਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ, ਹੁਣ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮਰਦ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵੋਟਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਇਹ ਚੰਗਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗਦਾ”¹⁴. However 19.67 percent women respondents in al don't do this. They feel that it's tough to request or convince someone for cast their vote. In this category 17.33 percent Muslim rural and 36.84 percent are Sikh rural women respondents. Furthermore, 6.25 percent Muslim rural and zero percent Sikh urban women respondents fall in the same category.

Table no. 5.11

Respondents Requested the Voters

Inspire for Voting	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	19 (82.67)	15 (93.75)	12 (63.16)	3 (100)	49 (80.33)
No	4 (17.33)	1 (6.25)	7 (36.84)	- (-)	12 (19.67)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

¹⁴ Personal Interview, November 5, 2014.

Thus the above data indicates that Muslim women respondents are more going for inspiring as compared the Sikh women respondents. It also seen rural women are much participates in it compared urban women.

2. Contribution/collection of election funds

The extension of a helping hand for collection of funds for election campaign of a candidate or party is an important index of the commitment of the Fund Collection” firstly contributing or giving funds from one’s own pocket and secondly collecting funds from the other donors. The respondents were asked to give their views on both these aspects.

Table no. 5.12

Giving Funds for Elections

Give Fund For election	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	3 (13.04)	6 (37.5)	- (-)	3 (66.67)	11 (18.04)
No	20 (86.96)	10 (6.25)	19 (100)	1 (33.33)	50 (81.96)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5.13

Collection of Funds

Collect the Fund	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	11 (47.82)	6 (37.5)	7 (36.84)	1 (33.33)	25 (40.99)
No	12 (32.13)	10 (62.5)	12 (63.16)	2 (66.67)	36 (59.01)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

One may point out in this context that giving election funds is normally done by the influential party elite or the core supporters of an independent candidate and normally the ordinary voter is not involved in this work. This is reflected in Table no. 5.11 and 5.12 as only 18.04 percent of the active participants answered in affirmative as far as contributing to election funds was concerned and for concern of collecting the funds 40.99 percent women actively did the job. Majority of women from both the sides did not contribute financially. Most of them replied the same answer that “ਅਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਆਪ ਅਪਣੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤਾਂ ਲਈ ਮੰਗਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਅਸੀ ਕਿਥੋ ਦਿਆਂਗੇ ਫੰਡ ਲਈ ਪੈਸੇ” (we demand for money for our needs, Now can we give funds)¹⁵. The percentage of respondents contributing or collecting funds for party/candidate is almost the same in both communities. It was also seen that many of the women involved in raising funds for the party/candidate in both communities.

3. Participation/ Preparation in election meeting

Election meetings are one of the important modes for approaching the electorate collectively. This is used to inform the electorate about the party, its programme and symbol, as also for introducing the candidates to the electorate. This is also important because it gives an opportunity to the candidate and the party to demonstrate to the rival candidates. It is for this reason that efforts are made to mobilize large number of people to attend a public meeting.

Here again two activities are involved as far as participation in meeting is concerned. One is that the persons are only attending an election meeting and second is that she not attends the meeting but also plays a role in organizing the election meeting.

¹⁵ Personal Interview, November 6, 2014.

Table no. 5.14**Participation in Election Meetings**

Participation in Meetings	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	9 (39.13)	6 (37.5)	9 (47.37)	2 (66.67)	26 (42.62)
No	14 (60.87)	10 (62.5)	10 (52.63)	1 (33.33)	35 (57.38)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5. 15**Preparation of Election Meetings**

Preparation of Meetings	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	8 (34.78)	5 (31.25)	4 (21.05)	- (-)	17 (27.87)
No	15 (65.22)	11 (68.75)	15 (78.95)	3 (100)	44 (72.13)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no 5.13 shows, When the 61 respondents were questioned regarding participation in election meetings they were almost equally divided with a slightly more percentage of those not participating. The overall percentage of participation women in election meeting is 42.62. Out of these 39.13 percent rural Muslim women and 47.37 percent Sikh rural women respondents admit that they attend election meetings. Comparatively 37.5 percent of urban Muslim and 66.67 percent of Sikh urban women respondents fall in the same category. 57.38 percent respondents from both communities include rural and urban women. In Table no 5.14, regarding the preparation of election meetings, the majority of the respondents 72.13 did not take active part. However,

27.87 percent of total women respondents are not involved in organizing the election meetings.

4. **Preparation/Distribution of posters/banners**

Like public meetings, election posters, pamphlets, and banners also play a significant role in popularize political parties, their symbols and their candidates. Posters can be appreciated by the literate masses, though their impact is not entirely lost on the illiterate masses also because they can be influenced by the visual impact if not the written words there on.

Table no. 5.16

Preparation of posters/banners

Preparation of posters/banners	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	11 (47.82)	5 (31.25)	15 (78.95)	2 (66.67)	33 (54.10)
No	12 (52.18)	11 (68.75)	4 (21.05)	1 (33.33)	28 (45.90)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5.17

Distribution of posters/banners

Distribution of posters/banners	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	8 (34.78)	4 (25)	4 (21.05)	- -	16 (26.23)
No	15 (65.22)	12 (75)	15 (78.95)	3 (100)	45 (73.77)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

During the election time, posters and banners are prepared on a large scale by party organization or by candidates. The Table shows that in preparation of poster and banner out of 61 respondents, 54.10 percent of women from both side active involved in election times. Candidates or parties give them cloth or other things for preparation the poster as they perfect in stitching or handmade craft. In the case of distribution of poster and banners, 73.77 percent of respondents from both sides avoid it. Because of illiteracy and conservative thinking of society, women avoid going outside and taking part in distributing poster and banners. They said that “ਇਹ ਸਾਡਾ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਆਦਮੀਆ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਆ, ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਕਰਦੀਆ ਚੰਗੀਆ ਥੋੜਾ ਲਗਦੀਆ... ਸਾਡੇ ਘਰਦਿਆ ਦੀ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਆ, ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਹੋ ਗੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ” (This is not our work, this is done by male, we will not proper for doing this...our family have also some respect in society..This can't be done)¹⁶

Thus, the tables shows that mostly women respondents do not take part in distribution of posters and banners but in preparation of poster and banners they actively doing that job in election time. It is also seen that Muslim women respondents are much involved comparatively Sikh women respondents.

5. Door to door election campaign

Participation in door to door campaigning is a more specific activity which perhaps indicates a higher degree of political involvement. The candidate are expected to do considerable door to door campaigning in order to meet the voters with the help of others persons.

¹⁶ Personal Interview, November 7, 2014.

Table no. 5.18

Involvement in Door to Door Election Campaign

Door to Door campaign	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	20 (86.96)	10 (62.5)	10 (52.63)	3 (100)	43 (70.49)
No	3 (13.04)	6 (37.5)	9 (47.37)	- -	18 (29.51)
Total	23 (100)	16 (100)	19 (100)	3 (100)	61 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5. 17 clearly show that almost 70.49 percent of women respondents from the both community participated in door to door campaign. The corresponding figures for Muslim and Sikh were 76.92 and 59.09 respectively. This shows that Muslim respondents had a slight edge here as around 7 percent more Muslim women respondents participated in door to door campaign as compared to the Sikh women respondents.

Thus the above few Tables showing the participation of the “active respondents” (61 out of the total sample of 300) help us in drawing the conclusion that the meetings, collecting the funds for the elections, distribution of campaign material and more door to door campaign. Very few of them contributed to party funds or participated in preparation of banners, organized the election meetings and participated in preparation of campaign material. It also seen that Sikh women respondents less participated as compared the Muslim women respondents.

5. Women are Capable for Leadership

Women possess the same key leadership quality as men, with many country women are stronger than men. Many of Indian women top leaders in Indian politics. Women’s participation in grass root level provided opportunities to women to participate in the decision-making process. Women’s participation proved to be the most effective

instrument in bringing about a change in their way of life in terms of economic well-being and adoption of new technology.¹⁷

Table no. 5.19

Women are Capable for Leadership

Capable for Leadership	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	52 (69.33)	68 (90.67)	60 (80)	72 (96)	252 (84)
No	23 (30.67)	07 (9.33)	15 (20)	03 (4)	48 (16)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)

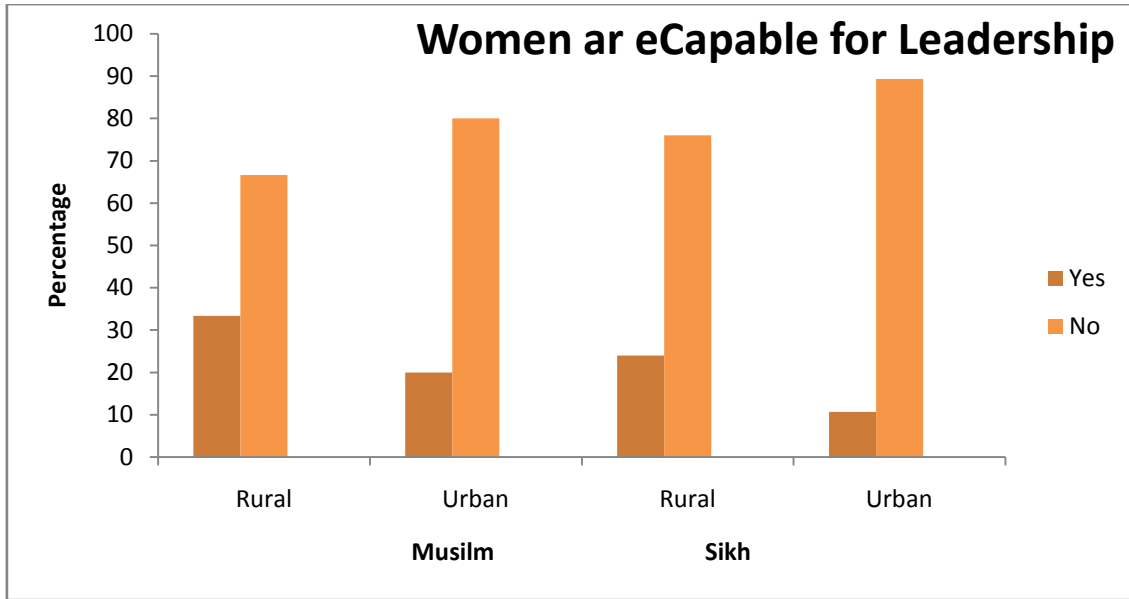
Source: Field Survey.

Table no. 5.18 depicts that, 84 percent of women both from Sikh and Muslim admitted that women have very much quality to become a leader. Out of this 69.33 percent are Muslim rural and 80 percent are Sikh rural women. Furthermore, 90.67 percent urban Muslim and 96 percent Sikh urban women respondents fall in the same category. From the response sheet 16 percent women of the total of 300 respondent women started rated that women are not capable for leadership.

Thus, the collected data reveals that both Sikh and Muslim women respondents are from rural areas said that women are capable but the number of urban women respondents is comparatively much above. The modern age belongs to women empowerment and uplifting of girl child the message. They said that “ਜੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਘਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਐਨੀਆਂ ਵੱਡੀਆਂ ਵੱਡੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਸਾਂਭ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਾਂ, ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਚੰਗੇ ਲੀਡਰ ਵੀ ਬਣ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਾਂ” (if we fulfill all responsibilities of our houses then we have capable to become a good leader)¹⁸.

¹⁷ A. Rajeshwari, PRIs and Women, in G. Palanithurai (ed.) (1996), Empowering People-Issues and Solutions, New Delhi: Kanishka, p.128.

¹⁸ Personal Interview, November 7, 2014.



6. Interest in Contesting Election

Interest in contesting elections is a clear-cut and strong parameter to gauge the will to participate in political activities. The data given in the table 5.19 shows the will of the respondents to contest elections.

Table no. 5.20

Interest in Contesting the Election

Contesting Elections	Muslim women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
MLA	6 (8)	13 (17.33)	4 (5.33)	7 (9.33)	30 (10)
MC	1 (1.33)	6 (8)	1 (1.33)	0	8 (2.67)
Sarpanch	23 (30.67)	0	12 (16)	3 (4)	38 (12.67)
Not Interest	45 (60)	56 (74.67)	58 (77.34)	65 (86.67)	224 (74.66)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

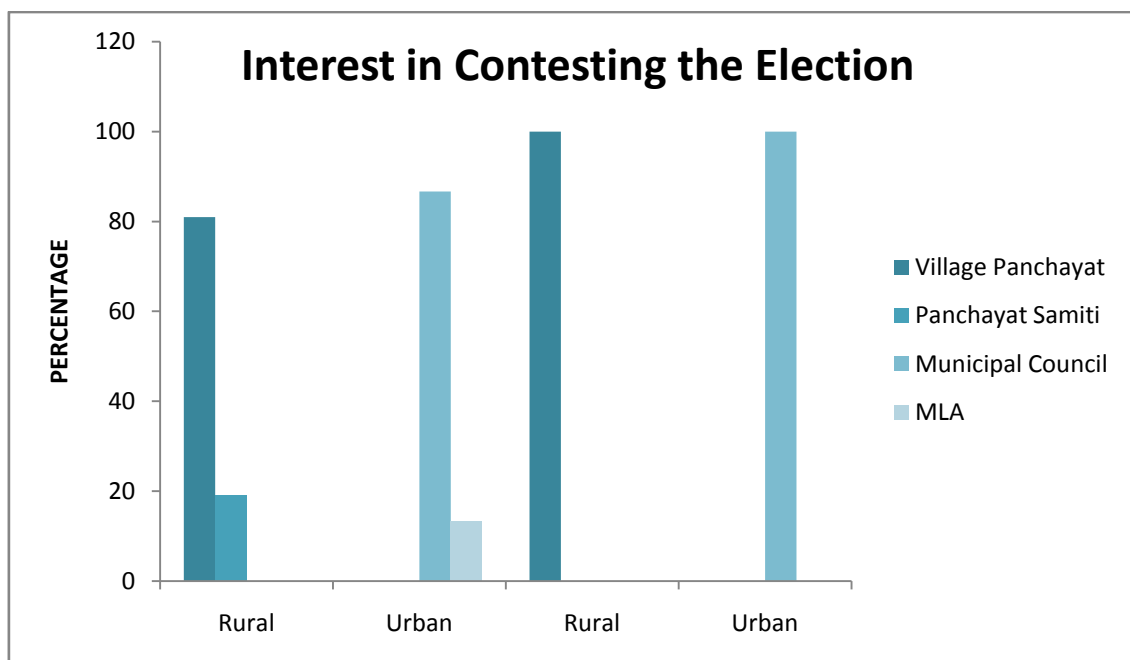
Source: Field Survey.

Table 5.19 shows the data on interest of Muslim and Sikh women in contesting elections at various levels. There are only 8 percent of rural and 17.33 percent of urban Muslim women who are interested to contest Legislative Assembly Elections and on the other hand merely 5.33 percent and 9.33 percent of rural and urban Sikh women are interested to contest elections in the same category. Surprisingly 1.33 percent from urban area and no Sikh women from rural area who have even now moved to the urban area are ready to contest elections of municipal committee. There is a fair number of Muslim women in the representative sample from rural area i.e. 30 percent who are willing to contest Panchayat election for Sarpanch at the village where as 16 percent of rural Sikh women are also willing to do so. There are women in urban Sikh category who have agriculture land in village are willing to contest Panchayat elections. But a large numbers of women with 60 percent, 74.66 percent, 77.33 percent and 86.66 percent of Muslim and Sikh women in rural and urban area are not interested to contest election for any of the above mentioned respective categories.

An analysis of data shows that mostly unmarried women are not permitted by their parents to contest the elections on ground of social privacy. Those who are married, they have to seek direct or indirect permission of their husbands to participate in the contest. Furthermore, they are not financially so strong as to meet with all election expenses. To make active participation in politics possible and to contest the election on party symbol or as an independent is something extra customary with these women, so they remain hesitant or disinclined to participate in the elections. The percentage of those contesting election came out to 25.34 percent as per the data collected. These are from that segment of women, who are mostly from established families having

orthodox background. Their perception about politics is also not very good. They think that politics is the dirty and male oriented game.

A large number of women in both communities, for instance, continue to be guided by consideration which says that their role outside the family circle is neither ‘respectable’ nor ‘healthy’. Some others say that politics is a dirty game and no one can salvage good moral character in this morass of evil. During field survey, some women respondents expressed the view that “ਔਰਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਚ’ ਆਉਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਜੀਵਨ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ” (with joining of politics by women means ends their homely life).¹⁹ Women still hesitate to become active members of political parties.



7. Effect of Religion on Voting Choice

Religion is an important factor in politics in India. It affects various political activities to a considerable extent. There are numerous types of political activities which are largely affected by religion. The establishment of a secular state in India by guaranteeing right to

¹⁹ Personal Interview, 7 November, 2014.

freedom of religion to everyone, treating every religion equal and non-recognition of any religion as a state religion has not been fully successful in preventing the role of religion as determinant of political behaviour in general and voting choice in particular. The existence of such political parties and neo-political groups as stand linked to a particular religion have been one of the reasons behind the continued role of religion as a determinant of voting choice. Religious pluralism of the Indian society is a major feature of the environment of Indian political system and it greatly influences the struggle for power among political parties. The selection of candidates is done with an eye upon the presence of a religious majority in a particular constituency. The candidates do not hesitate to seek votes by playing the religious card with co-religious voters and the secular card with members of others religious communities. ²⁰

Table no. 5.21
Effect of Religion on Voting Choice

Religion Effects	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	13 (17.33)	28 (37.33)	22 (29.33)	29 (38.67)	92 (30.67)
No	62 (82.67)	47 (62.67)	53 (70.67)	46 (61.33)	208 (69.33)
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

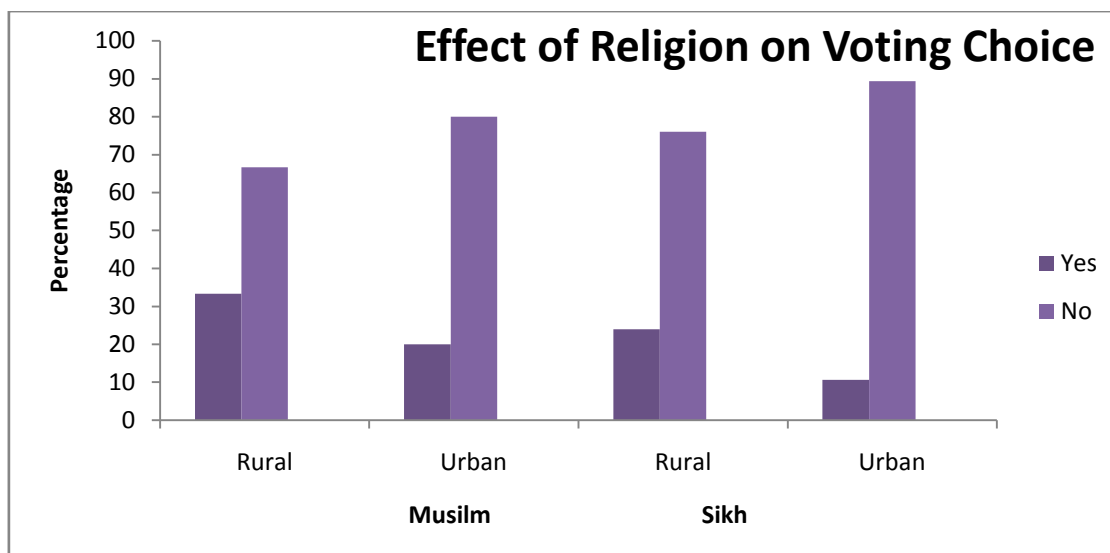
²⁰ Hazarika, Biraj ' Voting Behaviour in India and Its Determinants' IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 20, Issue 10, Ver. IV (Oct. 2015), PP 22-25

An analysis of the above data shows that only 30.67 percent respondents from both the communities admit that religion has impact on our voting choice. One respondent from rural area blatantly stated that “ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਜੀ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਵੋਟ ਪਾਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾ ਸਾਡੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪਾਵਾਂਗੇ” (we vote for a candidate to see the religion and shall vote in favour of a man from our religion).²¹ Religion is an important factor influencing politics in India. It affects various political activities to a large extent. Religious pluralism of the Indian society is a major feature of the environment of Indian political system and it greatly influences the struggle for power among political parties. Malerkotla being the minority dominated constituency. We can take into consideration the effect of the religion on voting choice here in this constituency.

However, on the other hand majority of the respondents 70.33 percent from the both communities have agreed that there is no impact of religion on voting choice. . It shows that women respondents of Malerkotla constituency have national or patriotic thinking. They are not guided by narrow consideration of religion in electing the candidate of their choice. There has not been any communal tension or conflict among the people on the basis of religion in any of general elections.

It can be in show in the above table 5.20 that respondent’s women of Malerkotla never take voting decision on religion grounds and vote as a neutral voter. But some respondents agreed that religion impact on their voting choice. In order to establish secular ethos, so that dream of a secular state may come true.

²¹ Personal Interview. 7 November, 2014



8. Membership of Political Party

Membership of any political party is another core type parameter of political participation. The data given below shows the information regarding the fact that whether the respondents are members of any political party or not. However, party membership could be taken as indicative of active participation in politics.²² The membership of all the political parties, in India, is more or less liberally granted. Such membership demands merely the payment of a small annual subscription and a written acceptance of the principles of the party concerned. Under the existing rules, government servants and servants of semi governmental organizations are prohibited from becoming members of political parties.²³

Table no. 5.22

Membership of Political Parties

Membership of political party	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	25 (33.33)	15 (20)	18 (24)	8 (10.67)	66 (22)
No	50 (66.67)	60 (80)	57 (76)	67 (89.33)	234 (78)
Total	75(100%)	75(100%)	75(100%)	75(100%)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

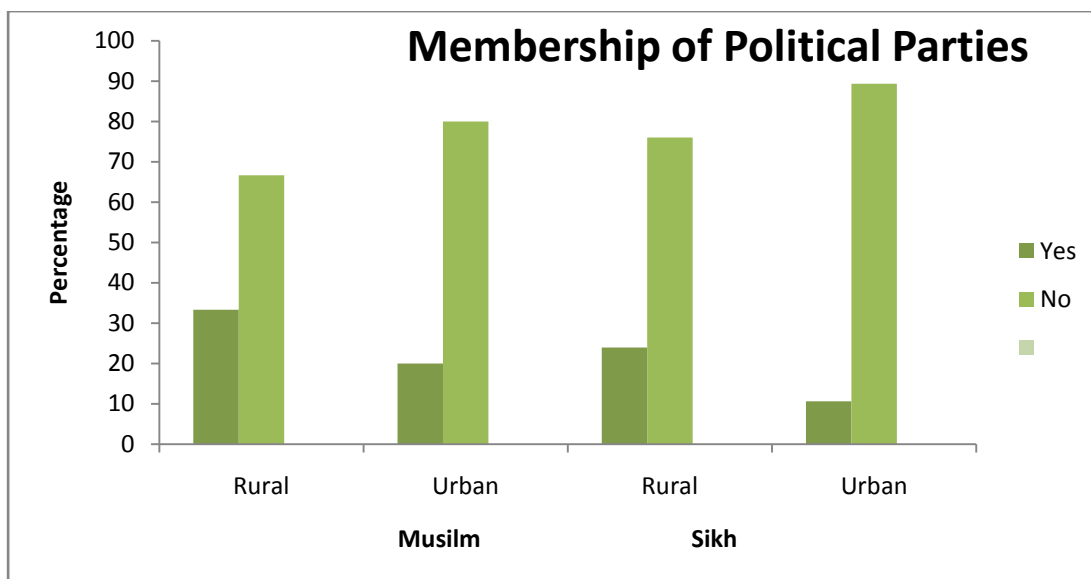
²² V. M. Sirsikar, op.cit., p. 210.

²³ Ibid.

An analysis of above table shows, out of 300 respondents' only 22 percent in which 33.33 percent rural Muslim and 24 percent Sikh rural respondents are member of a political party. Compared to this 20 percent urban Muslim and 10.67 percent urban Sikh women respondents have been found to be having political membership. Mostly their family members (male member) belong to any party and under their influence or compulsion they join the same political party and it may just be, an intimation of progress and change. However, majority of respondents 78 percent from both the communities do not have membership of any political party. They feel that it is just wastage of time. Politics is dirty game, women are not safe in this. The lack security reason and the crime against women have increased to such a great extent that women cannot move freely and participate in the party activities. Their society norms and culture also not permit them to join that kind of membership. Moreover in Indian society, women condition is not better even after 69 years of independents. Women feel that parties make fool at the time of election. No benefits are given to them as they join any party. One respondent even said that *“ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਕੰਮ ਧੰਦਾ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰੀਏ ਤੇ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਵੀ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਭ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਐਵੇਂ ਹੀ ਵਕਤ ਖਰਾਬ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਦਾ, ਐਨੇ ਵਕਤ ਚ’ ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਕੋਈ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ”* (we do their work at the cost of our own family chores but don't get anything, so there is no use of joining a party, we shall better do our own tasks).²⁴

Thus, the analysis of the data shows that many women do not want to be members of any political party. The most prominent reason behind this is their busy schedule at home and the family restrictions on them. This may be one of the reasons why 100 percent women do not take part in political activities.

²⁴ Personal Interview, 7 November, 2014



9. Membership of Representative Bodies

Complete information on membership of various representative bodies from the women in sample was obtained with the help of the questionnaire. Data given in the table no 5.22 contains information about the membership of women in the representative bodies.

Table no. 5.23

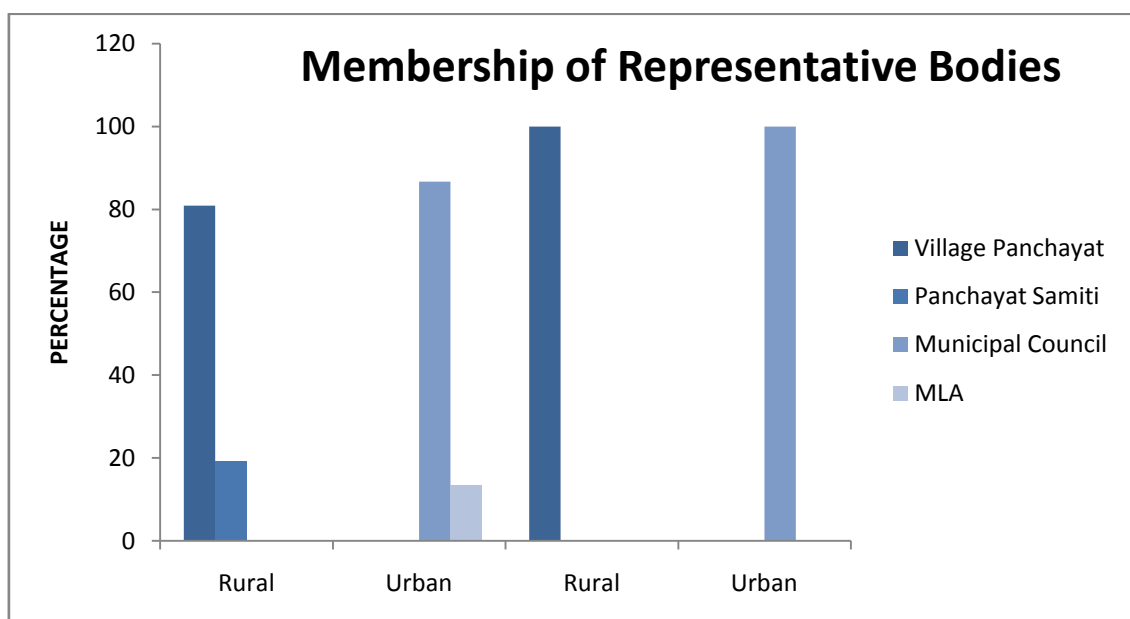
Membership_of Representative Bodies

Membership of Representative Bodies	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Village Panchayat	17 (80.95)	0	17 (100)	0	34 (62.97)
Panchayat Samiti	4 (19.05)	0	0	0	4 (7.41)
Municipal Council	0	13 (86.67)	0	1 (100)	14 (25.92)
MLA	0	2 (13.33)	0	0	2 (3.70)
Total	21(100)	15(100)	17(100)	1(100)	54(100)

Source: Field Survey.

The above table shows that out of 300 respondent women, only 54 respondents are members of any representative body. 62.97 percent members are from village panchayats. Out of this 80.95 percent are Muslim respondents and 17 percent are from Sikh communities. 7.41 percent are members of panchayat samiti in which 19.05 percent belong to Muslim community but there is no woman from Sikh community. In Municipal council of Makerkotla constituency, there are 13(86.6 percent Muslim women) and only one (Sikh women). In the history of Malerkotla constituency, only 3 women were elected for MLAs, Presently there are two MLA women from Muslim community and no one from Sikh community has ever become MLA.

As table shows that many women are from village panchayat or panchayat samiti, one of the main reasons of this is that Malerkotla constituency consists of Malerkotla town and 54 villages. In 54 villages 1/3 seats are reserved for women. Second reason behind it that is, they do not take any decision independently and wait for the order of their husbands to contest elections. Rural area women live in joint family system and they are mostly uneducated. They mostly obey their husband's decision. In Malerkotla town, there are 31 blocks in which 1/3 are reserved for women. It is seen that they are more independent as compared the village women members.



The above data shows the figure of representative bodies' members which are only 54 out of 300 respondents. We tried to assess, how these women do their work. They work as rubber stamp? , which problem they faced? , and how much they are aware about government policies. For this purpose we asked the respondents five question about their role which are given below:

a) Does your family like your Participation in Politics

Family is the smallest unit of society, but their impact on an individual is very strong. In Indian women, family plays a very important role. It's not matter in which position they had but their impact is always visible in our society, specially their husbands.

Table no. 5.24

Family attitude towards Political Participation

Participation in Meetings	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Positive	21 (100)	12 (80)	15 (88.24)	01 (100)	49 (90.74)
Negative	0	03 (20)	02 (11.76)	0	5 (9.26)
Total	21(100)	15 (100)	17 (100)	1 (100)	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

Table shows that out of the total sample (54 respondents), the majority of respondents 90.74 percent of the both the communities respond that their family attitude towards their political participation as member of representative bodies is fully positive. Most of them join politics with the permission of their husbands or family. As male members are heads of their families and they take decision on behalf of them then nobody from their family object to this decision. One of the respondents explained that “ਮੇਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਘਰਦਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਮਦਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਵਕਤ,

ਮੇਰੇ ਪਤੀ ਨੇ ਦਿੰਨ ਰਾਤ ਇੱਕ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਜਿੱਤ ਪਾਈ ਹਾਂ” (My family members had helped me fully at the time of election and worked for me day and night and I have been able to win only because of them)²⁵. Here, it is noteworthy to mention that in the opinion of the majority of women respondents which became clear in informal conversations with them the main reason for the very supportive attitude of their husbands or family is that they work as rubber stamps and all the work is done by themselves. Even one of them said very innocently (fully illiterate) that “ਜੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਮੈਂ ਵੋਟਾਂ ਚ’ ਲੜੀ ਸੀ, ਇਹ ਸਭ ਕੰਮ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹੁਣ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਣੀ ਵੀ ਨਜੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਕਦੇ ਘਰੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਦੀ... ਸਭ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹੁਣ” (I had contested elections because of my husband and I cannot even sign the papers and I have never step out of my house without my husband permission ... he looks after all my work)²⁶

Only 9.26 respondents from both side communities attitude towards their participation in politics are negative. One respondent (Mature MC) said: “ਬੱਚੇ ਪਸੰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਾਂ, ਉਹ ਕਿਹਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਮੰਮੀ ਹੁਣ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਘਰ ਅਰਾਮ ਕਰੋ, ਇਹ ਸਭ ਛੱਡ ਦਿਉ” (My children do not like me to do this work anymore, they told me mama now you should leave it these activities and take rest at home)²⁷.

Thus, in the majority view of the women respondents, the male members of the party are found to be cooperative or positive towards their involvement in politics. This is a positive dimension for women members and an important factor that can help in effective participation of women in politics.

One of urban MC respondent said that “ਸਾਡੇ ਘਰ ਵਾਲੇ ਹੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਚ’ ਆਇਏ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਦੇ ਸੋਚ ਨੀ ਸਕਦੀ ਸੀ, ਹੁਣ ਜਦ ਮੈਂ ਘਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੀ ਸੱਸ ਜਾਂ ਨਨਾਣ ਘਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਂਭ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕਦੇ ਕੋਈ ਤਕਲੀਫ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਈ, ਉਝ ਵੀ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਕਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਕੰਮ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ” (our families wanted

²⁵ Personal Interview, 10 November,2014.

²⁶ Personal Interview, 10 November,2014.

²⁷ Personal Interview, 10 November,2014.

us to join politics otherwise I could not think of it. Now when I am not at home, my mother-in-law or sister-in-law attends to my kids..They never told me that you should came home without doing your work)²⁸

b) Problem Faced in Domestic Field

Punjab is characterized by deeply entrenched gender inequalities in which the lower status of women manifests itself in a number of ways that affect the ability of women aspirants to participate in politics. These include social problems, anti oriented political culture, lack of finances and household burden create conditions which inhibit the ability of women to participate actively in political activities.

Domestic duties are the first preference of any woman. In 21 century in India when many of women are economically independent, they earn equal to their husbands but they never neglect their domestic duties. In case of household wives, their life is busy with their children and household duties. Even they don't have time for themselves. In order to identify the problems being faced by women member the tables makes clear that their political participation is also hindered by domestic duties.

Table no. 5.25

Problem Faced by women in Domestic field

Problem in domestic field	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	10 (47.62)	5 (33.33)	7 (41.18)	0	22 (40.74)
No	11 (52.38)	10 (66.67)	10 (58.82)	1 (100)	32 (59.26)
Total	21(100)	15 (100)	17 (100)	1 (100)	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

²⁸ Personal Interview, 10 November,2014.

As indicated in the above table, out of total 54 respondents, 59.26 percent from both the communities stated that they have not faced any problem. As earlier discussed mostly women come in politics with the permission of their husbands and family. Many of husbands help them in domestic matters. It is fact that politics is game of power and money. Mostly women come from wealthy family and they afford housekeeper or servant easily. In the absence of women member they take care of the household and children. Even some family relative women also help them. 40.74 percent of those women from both communities which faced lot of problems in domestic front. Their husbands do not help them in domestic field. They feel ashamed off in doing house hold duties as these are meant for women only.

It can be deduced that women member respondents are not comfortable in expressing their problems. It seems that they tend to conceal the difficulties faced by them. During informal conversation, it came out that practically speaking women face a large number of untold domestic problems in our family setup.

c) Perception towards 33 percent Reservation seats

It is argued that no real change in the position of women can be achieved until women enter political arena at higher levels. The reservation of seats for women in legislature would counter the forces of Indian political culture and tradition which discourage their participation in politics and would suitably alter the socio-economic position of women towards making women's participation in politics more possible.²⁹ Women are powerful and have got the strength to protect their rights, and when the time comes they will fight for them. Women are not superior to men but they certainly are equal to them. Sometimes men get some prejudiced ideas about women, and are

²⁹ Ramesh Chandra Mishra (2008), Role of Women in Legislature in India, New Delhi: Anmol Publication, p.188.

disappointed if women get superior posts of authority. In such conditions women can prove their caliber.³⁰

In order to form an assessment of the attitude of women legislators towards reservation, the respondents were asked to indicate their reaction to the issue of reservation of seats for women in State Assemblies and Parliament. The women representatives' perception regarding reservation to women in national and state legislature is analyzed in table 5.25 here below

Table no. 5.26
Perception towards 33 percent Reservation

Perception on Reservation	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Positive	13 (61.9)	10 (66.67)	09 (52.95)	1 (100)	33 (61.11)
Negative	0	01 (6.67)	0	0	1 (1.85)
Do not know	08 (38.1)	04 (26.66)	08 (47.05)	0	20 (37.04)
Total	21(100)	15 (100)	17 (100)	1 (100)	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

The above table 5.25 clearly indicates that 61.11 percent respondents (Sikh and Muslim women) gave a positive response that there should be 33 percent reservation in National and State Assemblies, whereas only 1.85 percent respondents said that they were against any such reservation. On the other hand 37.04 percent from both communities said that they don't know about this. Respondents have justified their views by giving statement in support of their position.

³⁰ Champa Limaye (199), Women, Power and Progress, Delhi: B.R. Publishing, p.54.

Another MC respondent gave her view in the following words, “ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰਾਂ ਰਾਖਵੀਕਰਣ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਂ, ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਠੀਕ ਹੱਕ ਮਿਲਦਾ, ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਔਰਤ ਅਤੇ ਮਰਦ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਫਰਕ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਘਟਾਯਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ” (I am fully in favour of reservation and they can get proper place and by this gap between men and women can be bridged)³¹. Mostly women respondents are in favour of 33 percent reservation.

But only one middle age Muslim community woman expressed her opinion in the following words “33% ਰਾਖਵੇਂਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਕੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਆ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਨ੍ਹੇ ਸਾਲ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ, ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਅਸੀਂ 33% ਹੀ ਮੰਗਦੇ ਆ, ਸਾਡੇ ਦੇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅੰਧੀਆ ਔਰਤਾ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੀਟਾਂ ਵੀ ਅੰਧੀਆ ਮਿਲਣੀਆ ਚਾਹੀਦੀਆ ਹਨ” (Nothing would happen with 33 percent reservation, we got freedom even now we demand only 33 percent, we should demand half of the seats and showed also get the same)³²

It feels very ashamed that some of women member (even village panchayat members or MC from both sides) respondent’s members, they even don’t know about reservation. Most of them are illiterates which are fully depending on their husbands. One of them felt very nervous to answer that question, she said “ਜੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਕੰਮ ਏਹੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੁਣ, ਮੈਂਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਕੁਝ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਦੇ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਇਹ ਕਦੇ” (all the jobs are done by my husbands, I don’t know anything, I have not heard any thing)³³.

Thus, it can be said if 33 percent seats are reserved for women at National and State level, then in the perception of the respondents, their benefit goes to women.

d) **Methods Adopted by Women to Solve the Grievances**

From the enquiry into the methods adopted by the women representative members to remove the grievances of people the study attempts to gain an insight into the women representative body’s

³¹ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

³² Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

³³ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

members own perception of their respective roles which they are supposed to perform. They are the representatives of the people, their role perception as panchayat samiti members, MC, MLA may prove to be very significant in understanding their perception about the social and political needs of the people. The following table shows the data regarding the methods adopt by women members.

Table no. 5.27
Methods Adopted to Solve the Grievances by Women
representative

Method Adopt to Solve Grievances	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
By self	5 (23.81)	8 (53.33)	3 (17.65)	1 (100)	17 (31.48)
Direct people to concern the authority	2 (9.52)	0	2 (11.76)	0	4 (7.41)
Assign to Assistant	0	0	0	0	0
Husband/father solve the problem	14 (66.67)	7 (46.67)	12 (70.59)	0	33 (61.11)
Total	21(100)	15 (100)	17 (100)	1 (100)	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

The first query of table shows that out of total 54 respondents, 31.48 percent women respondents in which 23.81 percent rural Muslim and 53.33 percent urban Muslim women respondents said that they personally solve the grievances of the people. Comparatively 17.65 percent rural Sikh and 100 percent from urban Sikh women respondents also agreed with the same

version. They solve grievances of masses by themselves because they think that people have trust in them. One young educated woman respondent confidently said “ਜੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਕਲੀਫਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਵੋਟਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੜਨ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਦਾ, ਜੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਕਰਦੇ ਵੀ ਅੰ ਤਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਤੇ ਯਕੀਨ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵੋਟ ਪਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਦੂਜੀ ਵਾਰ ਉਹ ਐਦਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਣਗੇ ਵੈਸੇ ਵੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਮੁੰਹ ਨਾਲ ਦੂਜੀ ਵਾਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਜਾਵਾਂਗੇ” (if we don't remove their problems, then what is the purpose of our contesting the election. We can go to them for votes only once and not again if we don't work)³⁴

Only 7.41 percent respondents including Muslim rural (9.52 percent), urban (zero percent) and Sikh rural respondents (11.72 percent) and Sikh urban respondents (zero percent) use to direct the people to concerned authority to solve their problem. That means they only instruct them how to solve their problem. One respondent tried to clear why they do so, she said, “ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਥੋੜਾ ਰੁਝੇ ਵੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਆ, ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਘਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਜਾ ਬੈਠਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਗੱਲ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਹੀ ਰਸਤਾ ਦੱਸ ਦੇਦਿਆਂ ਆ” (Sometimes we are busy in public work or home work or party work for meeting, but listen to the whole matter of the complainant and show him the right way)³⁵ One another respondents cleared her position by saying that “ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਅਨਪੜ ਲੋਕ ਇੱਕ ਚੀਜ਼ ਦੇ ਖਿੱਛੇ ਪੈ ਜਾਦੇ ਆ ਹੁਣ ਉਹ ਸਮਝਣ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਰ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਆ ਜੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਗੱਲ ਸਹੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਝਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਆਂ ਹੁਣ” (Sometimes illiterate people go mad after a matter and are not ready to understand, they are sent to the concerned authority).³⁶ No respondent assign people to their assistant because most of the respondents don't have any assistant.

On being asked whether their husbands help them to solve the grievances of people, a majority of 61.11 percent respondents in which 66.67 percent rural Muslim and 46.67 urban Muslim respondents agreed that their husbands help them to solve the problems of people. The percentage of Sikh respondents who take help of their husbands is 70.59 percent rural and no one from urban area respectively. Among them many of the Sikh and Muslim

³⁴ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

³⁵ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

³⁶ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

respondents were of the view that, “ਹੁਣ ਤੀਵੀਂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਕੋਟਾ ਜਾਂ ਕਚਿਹਰੀਆ ਦੇ ਚੱਕਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੱਟ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ, ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਸੀਂ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਕਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਚੰਗੀਆਂ ਲੱਗਾ ਗੀਆਂ? ਇਹ ਮੇਰਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਦੇਣ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀ ਬੁਰਾਈ ਹੈ”³⁷ Most of respondents work as rubber stamps; all the decisions are taken by their husbands. They only come to attend the meetings with their husbands, even sometimes only their husbands attend the meetings on behalf of them. One main reason behind this is that mostly respondents are illiterates. They don't have confidence to take independent decisions and they also depend upon their husbands financially.

Thus, the data given in the above table reveals that majority of women from both communities depend upon their husbands to solve the grievances of masses. It also seen that Muslim women are more dependent on their husbands as compared to the Sikh respondent women.

e) Participate in Decision Making Process

As a member of any representative body it is compulsory for them to take part in decision making process. Decision making refers to the ability to stand to a given position in two or more matters on the table. In Indian society, question about women in decision making process is always marked. It is important for the study to find out women members participation in decision making process. Thus, the female members were asked: “do you participate in the decision making process”. The response of respondents is compiled in below table:

³⁷ Personal Interview, 10 November, 2014.

Table no. 5. 28**Participation in Decision Making Process**

Participate in Decision making	Muslim Women		Sikh Women		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Yes	5 (23.81)	4 (26.67)	7 (41.17)	0	16 (29.64)
No	3 (14.28)	3 (20)	6 (35.29)	0	12 (22.22)
Sometimes	13 (61.91)	8 (53.33)	4 (23.54)	1 (100)	26 (48.14)
Total	21(100)	15 (100)	17 (100)	1 (100)	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey.

The analysis of data reveals that 29.64 percent of women respondents from both communities (Sikh and Muslim) take part in decision making process. They understand the value of their participation if they actively take part in decisions than they certainly improve the condition of women. But 12 percent respondents (Sikh and Muslim) women said that they do not participate in decision making. On the basis of informal interaction with the respondents it was observed that some of them are uneducated so they don't have knowledge about the procedure of meetings. Some of them don't attend the meetings because of their domestic duties. They also feel uncomfortable in seating with male members. 48.14 percent (Sikh and Muslim) respondents which sometimes attend meetings if they are busy with their family or other personal job then she can't attend the meetings. But they always attend the important meetings.

Thus, the table indicates that women from both communities show their interest in decision making process, as they know the value of it. They also think that if people elect them and show their faith that you have the quality to take decision for welfare then they don't let them down.

Suggestions for Improvement in Political Participation

Suggestions have also been obtained on improvement in status of women have been obtained. The points suggested for their opinion on improvement in status of women included Education for women, Economic Independence, Equal Share in Property Equal Share in Politics, Women Friendly Policy by Govt. and any other category.

Table no. 5.29

Suggested Measures for Achieving Equal Status for Women

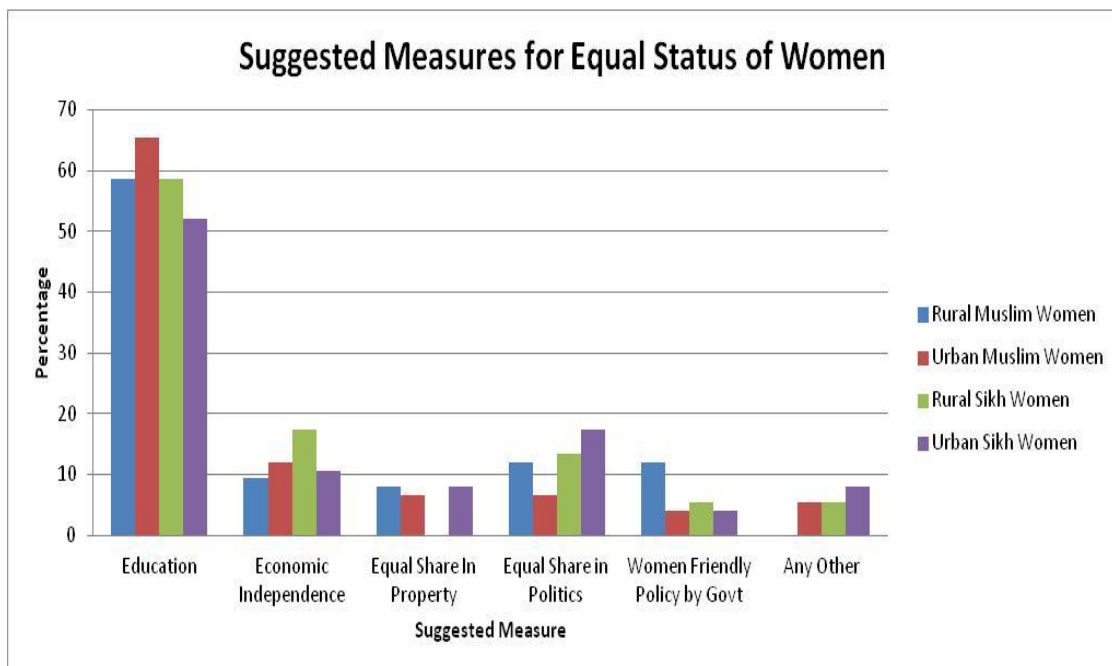
Suggestions	Muslim Women		(Sikh Women)		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Education	44 58.67	49 65.33	44 58.67	39 52	176 58
Economic Independence	7 (9.33)	9 12	13 17.33	8 10.66	37 12.33
Equal Share in Property	6 (8)	5 6.67	0	6 8	17 5.67
Equal Share in Politics	9 (12)	5 6.67	10 13.33	13 17.33	37 12.33
Women Friendly Policy by Govt.	9 (12)	3 4	4 5.33	3 4	19 6.33
Any other	0	4 5.33	4 5.33	6 8	14 4.67
Total	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	75(100)	300(100)

Source: Field Survey.

This table includes the suggestion of respondent for having an equal status for women. There are 58.66 percent of rural and 65.33 percent of urban Muslim women who think that women can have an equal status by providing better educational opportunities education 8 percent of rural Muslim women think that equal share in property is necessary for equal share status of women and 6.66 percent or urban Muslim women have the same opinion then 12 percent of rural 6.66

percent of urban Muslim women who think that equal share in politics will also contribute for having an equal status for women and 12 percent and 4 percent women feel that there should be an emphasis on women friendly policies by the government.

On the other hand, there are 58.66 percent Sikh women in rural 52 percent Sikh women in urban area who think that giving more educational opportunities is must for attaining an equal status for women in the society only 17.33 percent and 10.66 percent of Sikh women in the respective categories are of the opinion that more economic independence will be helpful in having equal status where as there no single women in rural and only 8 percent in urban area Sikh women who subscribe to the view that equal share in property will lead to an equal states. There are 13.33 percent in rural and 17.33 percent of urban Sikh women who think that equal states can be achieved by equal share in politics. There are only 5.33 percent, 4 percent Sikh women in respective categories who subscribe to the view that more women oriented policies will lead to an equal states for women in the society.



On the basis of the above analysis more than half of the respondents from each category are of the opinion that better educational opportunities help in improving of the women to a considerable extent. There are only few takers for more economic independence, equal share in politics followed by other options. This shows the progressive thinking of the respondent women of Malerkotla constituency who have suggested education as the most appropriate way for improvement in status of women

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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

India is the biggest democracy in the world, where women constitute nearly half of the population. There is no hesitation that democratic and secular India activity to provide necessary conditions for better participation of women in all fields of life. A democratic country in principle is a participative country in which command is shared and authoritative decisions relating to the society are taken by the representative of the citizens. In a democracy country, development is one of the primary functions of the state and the state is governed by the elected representatives of the citizens. As women constitute a most important segment of the population, their participation in the politics is not only essential for the success of democracy but also for the overall development and progress of the society and the nation.

The growth of women in India has passed through various stages. During early Vedic era, the Indian society was patriarchal; however, women enjoyed a significantly high status. In the post-Vedic, the basis of women's long subordination to men, especially in socially and legally perspective was organized. In the medieval era with the coming on the Muslim empire, the decline was more marked and more visible. Female infanticide, child marriage, purdah and sati had become very common. However, women of certain noble families were extended certain privileges like education active in politics. When the British rule established in India, the women position had reached the lowest depth. Women were denied equality in social, economic and political arena. However, some rare examples of extraordinary women like Rani Laxmi Bai, Chand Bai left a noteworthy impact in the political field. In the twentieth century, the great effort for freedom was initiated. Indian women proved to be enormously patriotic and entered politics in large scale. They even participated in the National struggle bravely.

During the National Movement when the leaders were arrested and jailed, women assumed leadership jobs. The participation of women in the national movement was quite unique. That time, when women in the West were challenging suffrage, motivated by the interests of their own gender group, our women's major concern was the liberty of their country. The principle of equal rights for women was accepted without any aggression or conflict when freedom came. Right to vote under the democratic constitution brought political equality for women.

The constitution of India has guaranteed equality, liberty and justice to women in the all spheres. But their political participation is not satisfactory till yet. In India, political participation of women's is low in the voting turnout, decision making process and as member of any representative body. There is huge gap between the constitutional guarantees and the real representation women. Even though, women constitute half of the total population, but their representation in the political arena has not been satisfactory. Women contesting elections still constitute only an insufficient percentage of the total number of contestants elected as a member of representative body. The percentage of women legislative leadership in various state assemblies of India has never exceeded even 15 percent. In Punjab, the depiction is as miserable as in the rest of India. Women are disgustingly underrepresented in the authoritative positions.

Women of Punjab have a long custom of participating in the political movement for struggle the independence of India. They had equally shared the ambitions of their countrymen and join the freedom struggle, not only to share their imaginations but also to hold suffering and misery, beliefs and sentence and power and responsibilities as a award for the reason they held dear. Since the establishment of the struggle for liberty, a large number of women of Punjab have made notable contribution in the extended and unique fight for India's

freedom movements and have left behind permanent marks of their achievements. Raj kumara, Amrit Kaur from Punjab became the first women minister in the centre Government.

Punjab is rich and wealthy state but patriarchal formation is strongly deep-rooted in its social life. The social cultures are such that women's work is restricted to the four walls of the house. Their main responsibilities still considered towards their children and their family. Due to cultural and social structure, public, social and political leadership have remained male monopolies. The major reason for the under representation of women in the state legislature is the socialization procedure which scheme politics as exclusively a male domain. Moreover, the nature of socialization procedure is such that politics is presented not only, as a male activity but also as something dirty. The term politics is given very marked derogatory connotations making it something mismatched with feminine traits. The increasing criminalization of politics and ever increasing role of money have further increased the thought that politics is gender definite activity and appropriate only for men.

Punjab is measured to be a developed state and has accepted women's leadership in theory but in real life there has been a strong tendency to exclude women from leadership positions. Although, thousands of women participated in the struggle movement for freedom and many came to fame on the national scène, yet it can be said the center of their anxiety was the National Movement and not the women's cause specifically. Women's huge scale participation in the national level and their recognition with the cause of freedom did not through a rational transition lead to their uniformly large scale participation in politics after the independence. It is a odd contradiction and paradox that after India independence through a strange reversal the women were made to be traditional to extremely orthodox patriarchal inhibitions.

This is obviously reflected in the fact that in Punjab, women have the right to vote and make up about half of the voters but they rarely achieve any office or have equal admittance to careers in politics. After independence, political arena in India commonly and Punjab specially, has been declared and captured by men. Women are thoroughly excluded from high positions in political parties and government offices and continue to play an unimportant role in high level political law making and decision-making bodies. The basically patriarchal reasons for the abolition of women are indeed marked by a very successfully engineered justification mechanism. There is big scale indoctrination of the instruction that politics is, by nature, a field basically suited to men, to which mean women should not be acknowledged and only in exceptional situations and within severely defined restrictions can be the conditional participation of women take place.

Punjab is religiously Sikh dominated state and Malerkotla is only constituency of Punjab where Muslim are in majority. Malerkotla is one of the 117 constituencies of Punjab Assembly. It used to be a Princely state. Malerkotla is a Muslim majority constituency in which approximately 68.50 Percent Muslims followed by 9.50 Percent Sikhs and others lives. A sample of 300 Women respondents has been taken up, comprising 150 each from Sikh and Muslim communities respectively. It is further divided into rural and Urban Women (75 each). The present study has tried to details in objective terms that particularly Sikh and Muslim women of Malerkotla constituency have had a unimportant and insignificant presence in political arena.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The main findings of the study are as under:

- Sikh and Muslim women of respondents has chosen for the study. The in general socio-economic status of these women is found to be low down, as is obvious from the profile of our sample of three hundred women respondents from Sikh and Muslim communities.

The data of age is concerned, it was found that age is the most significant element in one's overall orientation and in the decision making process of the women. Decision making process is broadly influenced by age factor, in as much as it was found that the women in younger age group i.e. 18-35 years of age, are more dynamically participating in politics and they have constructive perception about such participation because they consider more liberal and in the wider sense. This finding is substantiated mainly, in the light of most important reason that they have free viewpoint towards the socio-political matters being in the younger age. In general younger age group, women are more conscious and excited by the political happenings compared to others. Moreover, Women in this age group are generally educated and show keen interest in politics. They understand the importance of government and their policies. The women in the middle age group (above 35 years of age) do not take so keen interest because of certain handicaps or impediments in their way. Since they like rearing their children or bringing up their children, shouldering the responsibilities of the family and spouses, no spare time at their disposal for active political participation. Moreover, they lag behind in the education also. It is also found that the educated women, both from Muslims and Sikhs communities are more aware about politics. It has also been noted that in Malerkotla constituency, women in the age group of (18 to 35years) are more educated comparatively to those above 35 years age. The women in the age group above 60 years are least interested in political participation.

Education has been found to be of dominant importance in the matter of political participation for women in the constituency because it brings consciousness, awakening and an urge for political participation. During the field survey, it has been found that most of the women are uneducated. It is also observed that mostly women had got married at the earlier age even their education is not complete yet. It is a fact of Malerkotla constituency; the young generation of women of

both the communities is more educated comparatively elder one. It is also found in the survey that Muslim women are less educated as compared to Sikh women. So far, the percentage of educated women both the communities is concerned; it has been found that those living in urban areas are more educated as compared to rural areas. Thus through education women can see this world in better way.

As far as the caste wise composition is concerned an identical trend has been observed in Sikh and Muslim women. In Malerkotla there is no scheduled caste in Muslims but there are SC's in Sikhs. Both the communities have general categories and backward classes. Voting pattern is certainly affected if any particular caste is dominant and so is the impact of political participation. In Malerkotla constituency caste impact is seen in election time. Mostly people of Malerkotla constituency cast their vote accordingly their cast, women have also effected by caste.

The study also reveals that as far as occupation profile is concerned, it has been found that majority of women (from the both communities) are housewives and they financially dependent upon their husbands or fathers. But some of them who are working and earn for by self or their family; they are more financially independent and have unhindered political participation. They enjoy their independent entity in spite of being a family member and more aware about politics. They are not puppets in the hands of their spouses or parents.

Another important finding of the topic is that majority families in Malerkotla constituency still live in joint families from both the communities and remain busy in household jobs. The women neither find time nor have any interest in political participation. With the passage of time and change in the attitude and life style of the people, joint family system is withering away from the society having the way for nuclear families but there are still, all the important decisions are taken by the elder or male member of the families. Being dependent on their husbands for all types of monetary requirements, it is but natural

that they follow suggestions and advices of their spouses to remain away from political activities.

- The level of political awareness is found quite well among the Sikh and Muslim women respondents. There was no major detectable difference between the levels of political consciousness among respondents in the two communities (Sikh and Muslim). The level of consciousness about politics was judged by asking question like the names of leaders, political news etc.

As far as the reactions of interest in politics are concerned it is found that Sikh women respondents (40 percent) are comparatively less interested in politics to Muslim women respondents (54 percent). Interestingly, Muslim women respondents are show more interest in politics. But majority of women are from both communities shown no interest because they think politics is not game of women. It is a dirty game and there is no safe sailing for women in it. If someone has interest in something, only then he/she can be a part of it.

Another finding of the study is concerned, as far as the question of women's awareness about politics; the study reveals that women of Malerkotla constituency are quite aware about politics. Data shows that Muslim women (70.44 percent) are slightly better aware about politics as compared to the Sikh women (69.33 percent) respondents. Further analysis of the data reveals that to be specific, the level of awareness is more among the educated women because they read daily newspapers and have overload to local area public opinion about various elections and daily happening in political circles. Women in the younger age are also fairly aware about political participation because most of them are college going or doing the post graduates studies and they take knowledge through the peer groups or news. The illiterate segment of women from the both the communities has also been found to be to a certain extent aware about the political activities but the tempo of awareness becomes many times more during the election time through Mohalla gatherings, Local TV news and campaigning by contestants.

They also come to know the most recent political happenings from their spouses.

The Study reveals that both the Sikhs and Muslims communities' respondents are not very keen on watching latest news and show no interest in them. There are many reasons for not showing interest in news, newspaper etc, main reason for it is that as per tradition of joint families in both the communities of Malerkpota constituency, where due to large size of family, there is hardly any time left to listen to the daily news on a normal basis for the women of the families. Illiterates women have also showing no interest in it because they cannot read or understand any newspaper, may be in any language. So far the literate women are concerned, they also prefer to read Punjabi and Hindi newspapers, listen to news on radio and TV. There are even such women who come to know about the political news through the talking with other women or with their husbands during the free time as and when available to them. Also, it is seen that in free time, they do not prefer to listen to news. They prefer to watch TV serials or dramas and spoil in gossiping because they have no other entertainment source. But some women from the both religions (Sikh and Muslim) show their interest to listen to local news, because these women are regularly in touch with those actions which occurred in their areas. They have a sense of belongingness with them and they have no language difficulty. But, women respondents are show least interested in the National or International news and don't watch them because of time or language problem.

- As the main research question was concerning the level and pattern of political participation, a number of questions were asked about the different activities which are also included under the subheading of political participation.

Another important finding of the study is that the pattern of casting the votes by women from both communities is almost similar. Mostly there is hectic campaigning by different contestants and also

there is enormous support of the voters to their beloved candidates. The present tendency of voters is such that young women voters are keenly engaged and ensure that they must cast their votes. Women voters of younger age being educated have come to understand the importance of their votes and they hope to use this right to vote according to their awareness. Interestingly, the women voters in rural areas cast their votes in larger number but it may not be so in the urban areas. May be a sense of laziness and lack of time be the major reason for urban women to remain restricted to their homes instead of since to booth to cast their votes. One must exercise one's right to vote.

The present study reveals that even today most of the women can't take a judgment in whose favor they have to cast their vote. They seek the advice of the family head or their husband for the reason last they should earn for her and their children. The main reasons for this is their illiteracy, lack of awareness, lack of confidence, pressure of family members and ignorance about the government policies about women etc. Being illiterates also they don't have confidence to take their decisions by themselves. Further being uneducated, unemployed or unskilled and financially dependent upon their husbands, it prompts their husbands to instruct them to toe to the row of the family in casting the votes. In a lot of joint families there is the system of accord of command. Head of the family gives them the directions and all others members of the family follow them. So, there it becomes normal for recently married woman to cast her vote on family guide. Surprisingly, Sikh women (46 percent) are comparatively less than Muslim women (52.67percent) who are cast vote more independently.

The Study also finds that women from both the religions (Sikh or Muslim) strongly reject to participate in election campaigns (Muslim 74 percent), (Sikh 85.33 percent) women respondents did not participate in election campaigns, and only 20.33 percent of women (Sikh / Muslim) have participated. They campaign from side to side requested voters, door to door campaign and do contribution/collection of funds for party

or elections etc. but mostly women participate in campaigns at the request of the voters, preparation of the banners, door to door canvassing. For negative response to participate in election campaign is that on account of gender prejudice and inferior position of women, there is feeling of lack of confidence among them. Even in the male dominated society, women voluntarily believe it is shocking and worthless for them to guide the campaign with their male members. Surprisingly, it is seen that Muslim women are more lively in election campaigns as compared to Sikh women.

Another finding of the study is that majority of women are not interested in contesting elections. The study shows that among Muslims (67.33 percent) and Sikhs (82 percent) from both the communities' who do not want to take part in contesting elections. It is the historical fact that unmarried women are not allowed by their parents to contest the elections on ground of social privacy. Those women who are married, they have to look for direct or indirect permission of their spouses to participate in the contest in elections. Furthermore, it is also a reason that they are also not financially so strong as to meet with all election expenses. Women, who desire to take part in contesting election, these are from the family segment of society, which are mostly from established families having conventional background. Their awareness about politics is also not very good. They think that politics is the unsafe and male oriented game.

As per their membership of any representative bodies are concerned, the study shows that among the Women respondents from both the religions majority of respondents comprising are not members of any of representational bodies. Among them Sikh women are less in numbers and Muslim women are more in number as member of any representative body. The reason for very low participation is it seems that the same which are talked about for not contesting the election. Accordingly to the present study and based on the responses from the sample, there are many reasons for not participating in representative

bodies' i.e. family restrictions, lack of education, financially dependence on family members etc. The remaining only 18 percent women have leadership quality and they can follow, motivate and address the grievances of the people. It may be added here that most of the representative women do not be present at meetings, rather their husband's register proxy presence behalf of them. Even during in election campaign, voters came to know of them through the picture of their husbands in hold on the posters or banners.

The present study also reveals that among other factors, the religion is an important factor influencing politics. It affects various political activities to a considerable extent. Malerkotla being the Muslim minority dominated constituency, if we take into consideration the effect of the religion on voting choice, finding of our study reveals that minimum (30.67 percent) of the women from both the communities including rural and urban agree that religion does have impact on the voting pattern. However, maximum (69.33 percent) of the women respondents positively deny that there is any impact of the religion on voting option. It shows that women respondents of Malerkotla constituency have loyal to their nation. They are not guided by contracted consideration of religion in electing the candidate of their choice or opinion. There has not been any communal tension or problem among the people on the base of religion in any elections.

As far as the question about women leadership is concerned, it has been found from study that majority of women both from Sikh and Muslim communities admitted that women have very much competent to become a leader. The quality for leadership is uncommon and all are not rewarded with it. The collected data reveals that both Sikh and Muslim women respondents from rural areas said that women are fully capable but the number of urban women respondents is comparatively more who admitted women are also have quality of becoming a leader. From the response sheet, very few women respondents stated that women are not capable of leadership quality. The modern age belongs to

women empowerment and uplifting of women. The message from all of them is to afford alike status to women and undo the injustice which they have suffered so far.

As regards the question about suggestions for the improvement of women in political participation is concerned, the data shows that about half of total women respondents' had laid more stress on of education, as education plays important role in socio-political and economic fields. Through it, women have knows their rights and duties. Both communities women respondents also emphasis upon economic independence of women because it is important to improve the political participation of women first gave them their financially security. Some of the women respondents said equal shares in politics by reservation in Parliament, state assembly, quota in political parties etc must improve the women participation in politics. Since social environment is same for Muslim and Sikh women, therefore their thinking or traditions are similar, irrespective of any religion or class.

SUGGESTIONS

It will be suitable to enroll some of the recommendations for women to their improved political participation. These recommendations would be supportive for the active political participation of women in Malerkotla constituency and elsewhere:

- 1) One of the essential sources of empowerment of the women is education. Education can play a very important role in bringing about the attractive behavior alteration among the women and make them well prepared in terms of knowledge, capability and ability to deal with unusual political problems.
- 2) Political participation is very closely related to their economic independence. Women have to be economically independent to be capable to declare their point of view. The economic confidence will positively bring improved participation in politics of women.
- 3) A huge number of women are still unaware of the policies of the government, legal provisions and development schemes propose

for their advantage, due to this, they do not know how to protect their rights. A concentrated attempt will have to be made to educate them in this way. For this, state government and NGO's must take some responsibility to give them legal literacy to the common population particularly the women.

- 4) Media should play an important role in modern society, specially the newspapers and television. Declaration of women in a variety of films and T.V serials has a great psychological impact on their minds or behaviour. The media must play an optimistic role in development the women of their problems and solutions.
- 5) It was noticed during the field survey that the membership of women in political parties was very limited. It will be in the interest of political parties to connect women from all sections of society for the betterment of democracy. If women are connected, with party automatically, political participation can be easily improved.
- 6) Lawful empowerment approaches should be adopted by government as part of the resolution to advance women's admittance to justice. Investing more resources to recognize and design attain, strategies to encourage gender equality.
- 7) The women law implement machinery should be made really helpful with resourceful monitoring watchful system to apply the constitutional and legislative provisions.
- 8) A number of welfare programmes for women have been start during the last years but their genuine achievement at grassroots shows to be weak. The focal point has, therefore, to be on the performance and strengthening of machinery at various levels.
- 9) Women should be promoting to participate in politics. There should be reservation of seats for women both in the state assemblies as well as in parliament. Women should independently attach with politics, so that they can have a voice in nation building and help the reason of women in common.

- 10) There should be spread of higher education among the women so they come forward and participate more effectively in the functioning of Punjab legislative assembly. Education and training need to be provided to so women legislators so that they are made aware of rule and regulations of punjab vidhan sabha.
- 11) Indian society has been erected upon the myth that leadership is a male prerogative. Governments, business firms, trade unions, the legal system – equality of opportunity is established in law, it exists only in from unless and until the surrounding social context is changed.
- 12) In order to improve the status of women and to eradicate social evils, there is also a need to bring about a change in the mindset and psyche of parents, teachers, leaders, etc. towards girl child and women.
- 13) Skill oriented courses should be also encouraged at school and college level to make them able to earn their livelihood or to make them self-dependent.
- 14) A number of welfare programmers for women have been initiated during the last few years but their implementation at the grassroots seem to be weak. The focus has, therefore, to be on the implementation and strengthening of machinery at various levels

On the whole it may be concluded that though the government has been provided with constitutional safeguards and reservations but the common woman in Punjab is still not getting full benefit of the opportunities. Only the elite section of women is reaping the harvest. The poor, marginalized, simple women population has still not become politically aware and active. Still a good number of women don't turn for voting and also lag behind in other activities of political participation. Very few women offer for being a contender. They are rather discouraged by the family to come to the forefront and lead others. There is a need to create better awareness among the women masses, so that they can participate in the politics of the state more actively.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE- CUM-INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Part – 1

Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondent

1. Name of the Respondent:
2. Age:
3. Caste:
4. Area: Rural Urban
5. Marital Status : Married Unmarried Divorced
6. Educational Qualification:
Illiterate upto Matric Graduate Post Graduate Above
7. Family : Joint Nuclear
8. Occupation: Working Non-working
9. Religion : Sikh Muslim
10. Family Income (Annually) :.....

Part – B

Political Awareness

1. Do you have interest in politics?
Yes No
2. What is the name of the Prime Minister of India?
Correct Incorrect
3. What is the name of the Chief Minister of Punjab?
Correct Incorrect
4. What kind of news interests you?
Local Regional National International
5. How much social media effect on your political participation?
Large Extent Reasonable Extent No Effect Don't know

10. Does religion effect your voting choice?

Yes No

11. Are a member of any political party?

Yes No

If yes which party.....

12. Are you a member of any of the following representative bodies?

Village Panchayat Village Samiti Zila Parishad

Municipal Committee None of these

If yes then:

i) Does you family like your participation in politics?

Positive Negative

ii) Have you faced any problems in domestic field?

Yes No

iii) Has the reservation at Panchayat's Local badies governing institutions improved the position of women?

Yes No Don't Know

iv) Should 33% reservation to be given to women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies?

Yes No Don't' Know

v) What kind of method do you adopt to redress the grievance of people?

By self Direct people to concern the authority

Assign to assistant Husband or Father solve the problem

vi) Do you participate in decision making process?

Yes No Sometimes

13. In your opinion, what is the extent of improvement in the status of women in India after independence?

Improved a great extent improved some extent

Not improved at all don't know

14. What measures do you suggest for the equal status of women with men?

Education

economic independence

equal share of women in property

women friendly policy by government

any other.....

15. Give your suggestions how to improve the political participation?

.....

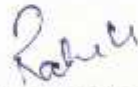
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DECLARATION

I Rahila certify that the work embodied in this Ph.D. thesis is my own bonafied work carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. and Head Dr. Jagroop Kaur, Department of Political Science, Punjabi University, Patiala. The matter embodied in this Ph.D. thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other degree/diploma.

Date: 2/02/2017

Place: Patiala



Signature of the Candidate

Rahila

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	AD	: After Death
2	AGP	: Awareness Generation Projects for Rural and Poor Women
3	BC	: Before Christ
4	BC	: Backward Class
5	BSY	Balika Sammridhhi Yojana
6	CEDAW	: Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Women
7	Cr.PC	: The Criminal Procedure Code
8	CSO	: Civil Society Organization
9	CSW	: Committee on Status of Women in India
10	ECE	: Early Childhood Education
11	ID	: Identification
12	IPC	: The Indian Penal Code
13	IPC	: The Crimes Identified Under the Indian Penal Code
14	LS	: Lokh Sabha
15	MLA	: Member of Legislative Assembly
16	NGO	: Non Governmental Organizations
17	PEPSU	: Patiala and East Punjab States Union
18	RMK	: Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
19	RS	: Rajya Sabha
20	SC	: Schedule Caste
21	SLA	: State Legislative Assembly
22	SLL	: The Crimes Identified under the Special Laws
23	STEP	: Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women
24	UN	: United Nations
25	UNO	: United Nation Organization