

Women Participation in Urban Local Governance: A Case Study of Lucknow City

Nasruddin and Asif***

ABSTRACT

In India, since long back, women were considered as oppressed section of the society as they were neglected for centuries. In pre-independence India, education among women was limited to only upper strata of society with few exceptions. After independence education among the women accelerated which play a dominant role in the women empowerment. It is a process in which women gain greater share and control over resources- material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money- and access to money and control over decision-making in the home, community, society, nation to gain power. The present research paper try to analyze the women empowerment through their representations in urban local governance on various parameters like the participation of women in Election of Municipal Corporation after the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992. This paper also tries to analyze the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the elected women representatives and also concerned with their role decision making, knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes and resource allocations in their wards.

Key Words: *Women Empowerment, Education, Governance, Demographic, Policies, Resource*

Introduction

In India, since long back, women were considered as an oppressed section of the society and they were neglected for centuries. In pre-independence India, education among women was slow and limited to upper strata of society it tremendously increased in independent India. The first task in post-independent India was to provide a constitution to the people, which would not make any distinctions on the basis of sex. Article 15(1) of the Indian Constitution guarantees equalities of opportunities for all citizens in matters of employment. Article 15(3) provides that the state can make any special provisions for women and children. Besides, directive principle of state policy which concern women directly and have a special bearing on their status

* Assistant Director, Regional Center for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES), Lucknow

** Assistant Professor (Contractual), Department of Geography, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

directly and have a special bearing on their status include Article 39(a) right to an adequate means of livelihood; (d) equal pay for equal work both men and women, (e) protection of health and strength of workers, men, women, children. Article 42 provides for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. It is really important to note that though the Constitution of India is working since more than sixty years, the raising of the status of women to one of equality, freedom and dignity is still a question mark. Hence, in current scenario, the empowerment of women is one of the central issues in the process of development of country.

Women's empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources- material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money- and access to money and control over decision-making in the home, community, society, nation, and to gain power. (Bisnath and Elson, 1999). According to the Country Report of Government of India, Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power (Batliwala, 1994). According to Cambridge English Dictionary empowerment means "to authorize". In the context of the people they have to be authorized to have control over their lives. When applied in the context of development the particular segment of population, the poor, the women, the vulnerable, the weak, the oppressed and the discriminated have to be "empowered" to have control over their lives to better their socio-economic and political conditions. Kabeer (2001) defines empowerment as the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. For women in India, this suggests empowerment in several realms: personal, familial, economic and political.

The 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, has given constitutional status to urban local bodies (ULBs) in India. The Act provides for reservation of one-third elected seats for women in ULBs and envisages an active role for women in local governance. There is also a one-third reservation for women of posts of chairpersons of these local bodies. This provision has given women a huge opportunity to participate in development and governance at the grass-roots level. Reservation of seats for women has brought a whole set of first timers into the political arena i.e. women with no experience of participating in political life before. A very active role for women in local governance is envisaged as compared to governance at the state and national levels in India. This is of great significance, since this grass-root level participation has considerably broadened the base of women's participation in politics at city level. Involvement of women in the political arena and in decision-making roles is an important tool for empowerment as well as monitoring standards of political performance at local level.

Therefore, the present research is proposed the women empowerment in urban local governance on various parameters like analyze the participation of women in Election of Municipal Corporation after the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, analyze the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the elected women representatives after elected in the Municipal Corporation election and also analyze the level of decision making, knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes and resource allocations in their wards.

Objectives of the study

The study will have the following main objectives:

- to analyze the participation of women in Election of Municipal Corporation after the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992;
- to study the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the elected women representatives after elected in the Municipal Corporation election
- To analyze the level of decision making, knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes and resource allocations in their wards
- To examine the issues, problem and challenges in implementation of municipal schemes in their wards.
- To suggest remedial measures for empowering the elected women representation in particular and women in general.

Data base and Methodology

The proposed research paper is based on primary data collected through field survey. Besides collection & analysis of primary data, secondary data and pertinent literature is compiled from published & documented sources including internet, official website and government records. The field survey conducted with the help structured interview schedules for elected women representatives. The interview schedule pertain to relevant questions, research and scales of the view perception related to socio cultural and economic background, decision making on various parameters, awareness and implantation of the schemes implemented my Municipal Corporations, etc. The data collected through both primary and secondary sources have been arranged and compiled in tabular form. Their percentages have been calculated and have been classified into various grades for the purpose of interpretation. Mapping has been done in the GIS environment using cartographic techniques such as Pie Diagrams and bar diagrams.

In Lucknow city there are 110 wards as per the year of 2015. Out of these 31 wards have been surveyed. The table 1 gives a detailed outlook about the total wards and surveyed wards of Lucknow city.

Table 1
Sample of Study

<i>Name of District</i>	<i>Name of Municipal Corporation</i>	<i>Number of Wards</i>	<i>Total Surveyed Wards</i>
Lucknow	Lucknow	110	31

Source: <http://sec.up.nic.in/reservation.aspx>

Study Area: Lucknow is the capital and largest city of the state of Uttar Pradesh and is also the administrative headquarters of Uttar Pradesh. It is the eleventh most populous city and the twelfth most populous urban agglomeration of India. Lucknow has always been known as a multicultural city that flourished as a North Indian cultural and artistic hub, The city has an elevation of approximately 123 meters above sea level. Lucknow district covers an area of 2,528 square kilometers. It is bounded on the east by Barabanki, on the west by Unnao, on the south by Raebareli and in the north by Sitapur and Hardoi, Lucknow is situated on the northwestern bank of the Gomti River.

Literature Review

A number of studies related to political participation of women has been conducted which depict various dimensions and aspects of political empowerment of women. The conceptualization of political participation has been undergoing drastic changes. Such changes will have a direct impact upon different modes of political participation. Citizens can participate in different and alternative ways to influence the government and the: political system. Until recently most survey studies of political participation confined their enquiry to a relatively limited set of political acts. Most of them asked whether a person had voted or not and some went on to ask about such behaviour as attendance at political meetings or rallies, working for a party, making a monetary contribution or seeking a public office (Milbrath&Goel, 1977).

Examining the modes of political participation Schonfeld has mentioned ten types of activities which include (1) running for or holding public or party offices, (2) belonging to a party or other political organization, (3) working in an election, (4) attending political meetings or rallies, (5) making financial contribution to a party or a candidate, (6) contacting a public official, (7) publicly expressing a political opinion to convince others, (8) partaking in

political discussion, (9) voting, and (10) exposing oneself to political stimuli (Schonfeld, 1975). Political participation is the mother and politics is the child. The former creates and determines politics and hence is of utmost importance both for the nation and the individual. The politics of the nation is determined therefore, by political participation in all its processes (Bala, 1999).

In India, there is a continued dominance of the upper class in education, administration and structures of government. The eighty-fourth constitution Amendment Bill meant to provide one-third reservation of seats to women in states and central legislative bodies and the controversies around it mirror the contradictions of Indian society (Raman, 2002).

Lawrence and Franklin (1990) in an article on socio-political participation and 'black' empowerment opine that when 'blacks' hold positions of political power they are more active and participate at higher rates than 'whites' of comparable socio-economic status. This conclusion is based on the finding that empowerment leads to higher levels of political knowledge and that it leads to a more engaged (i.e. trusting and valuable) orientation to politics

Karl (1995) in his book entitled "Women and Employment, Participation and decision making" opines that empowerment of women involves different interrelated and mutually reinforcing components: collective awareness and capacity building, skill development, participation and greater control over decision making and action to bring about gender equality.

Jeffrey and Frederick (1996) in their article explore the benefits and harm associated with role, reward, process and governance empowerment and makes recommendations for minimizing the harm while maximizing the benefit. According to them, the move towards empowerment is revolutionary as it may be in the practice of raising a number of significant ethical and moral issues because some people gain while others lose in this empowerment process. SaralaGopalan (1997) in her article titled "Empowerment of women, a case of Andhra Pradesh" identifies the factors responsible for women empowerment, argues that over and above the literacy level, knowledge and awareness put great pressure on empowerment. According to her, group formation is vital for collective strength and access to information.

Haider Rizvi (2006) in his paper on empowering women through reservation in urban local bodies refers to the 74th Amendment Act which provided one third reservation of seats for women in urban local bodies. He gives an example of Ghazipur Municipality of U.P and finds that only a few women are active in politics in urban local bodies though there is significant change over the period. He presents a package of recommendations for women empowerment in urban local bodies. The suggestions include capacity building, engagement of women in municipal services and functioning,

encouragement and promotion of caste and religion based professions and economic activities, regularization of bazaars and meals, access to market, information and self-help groups. Singh (2006) in his paper titled "Participation and empowerment of women (The gaps and the Biases)" focuses on three types of biases. They are bias against gender, bias against equality and bias against education. He reiterates the importance of the involvement of women in decision making which starts from the family and goes up to the Parliament. Therefore 1/3rd participation of women is the need of the hour. He states that by empowering women, we are not favoring the women, but we are favoring the society. The second and third biases relate to regional and social imbalance which can be rectified through education, training, group discussion and seminars.

Results and Discussion

The present study deals with Profile of Respondents and Their Perceptions, Sensitivities and Involvement in Civic Work in Lucknow. It includes Age and Marital Status, Education and Professional Qualification, Working Status and Political Affiliation, Reservation Policy and decision to contest, Support of respective political party, Councilors and their families, Councilors and their performance, Women councilors - their activities, Women Related Problems, Relations within civic body officials, Training of councilors, their participation in civic bodies, Civic bodies and women related issues.

As the questionnaire contains 70 items on which the response of the respondents was collected, it is not possible to discuss all of them separately rather they have been classified under various heads for the purpose of convenience and interpretation and also to arrive at a meaningful conclusion. The major heads on the basis of the information received have been identified are: Demography, Political Awareness, Political Activeness, and Perception

The present research paper is concerned with a brief analysis and interpretation of 39 wards of Lucknow where women are the councilors. The set is intermixed and integrated like a heterogeneous society. Apart from their regional identity, they have developed a distinct social, economic and cultural identity. However, note that out of 39, only 31 women gave the interview and remaining 6 Women Elected Representatives were denied giving interview by their husbands.

In India, only 3% of the married women and 4% of all households are found to be playing this role (Source: Times of India). The main reasons for the same were- Widowhood, Separation or Divorce. According to the latest census data, women also play this role, when their male counterparts are away for work in other cities-like that of Uttarakhand. However, states of

Table 1
Head of the Family

<i>Head of the family</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Self	1	3.22
Husband	26	83.88
Father	00	00.00
Mother	00	00.00
In laws	4	12.90
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Meghalaya and Kerala, it is the culture. Accordingly, Table 1 reveals that almost 84% households, husbands play the role of Head of the Family. Only 4% households were noted to have women playing the role of Head of the Family.

Table 2
Ages of the Respondents

<i>Age</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
20-30	8	25.81
31-40	11	35.48
41-50	6	19.35
51-60	5	16.13
60 and above	1	3.23
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 2 shows no significant difference when it comes to the age group of the respondents. Still, the highest participation rate was noted from the respondents aged between 31-40 years, followed by the respondents in the age group of 20-30.

Table 3
Marital Status of Respondents

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Married	30	96.77
Divorcee/Separated/Single	00	00
Widow	1	3.23
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Marriage is deemed essential virtually for everyone in India. Thus, it is no surprise to see that there is a high percentage of respondents who are

married. An important inference that can be made out from this trend is that only married women are playing a political role. Therefore, we can conclude that unmarried women (and therefore young) are not “allowed” to enter politics. It is only the permission of her husband and not her “free will” to play this part. (Table 3).

Table 4
Educational Level of Respondents

<i>Class</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Illiterate	3	9.67
Std 7 and below	9	29.03
Std 8 to 10	4	12.90
Std 10 to 12	6	19.35
Graduation	4	12.90
Post- Graduation	5	16.12
Others	0	00
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4 reveals that only 29% Women Elected Representatives have had the opportunity to study beyond the secondary education. Although it is important to note that the percentage of women receiving education above Class 8 till Class 12 was lower than the no. of illiterates or respondents who have only completed their middle school education taken together. In short, it can be concluded that maximum of the respondents fall in the first two categories, primarily a result of neglecting the importance of women education in India in preference for males who were considered as the only bread earners of the society.

Table 5
Occupation of Respondents

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Housewife	30	96.77
Business Women	1	3.23
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It is possibly the result of low education amongst them which has constrained the women indoors even in the Globalized India. Out of 31 Women Elected Representatives, only one was found to be contributing to the family income (Table 5).

Table 6
Religion of Respondents

<i>Religion</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Hindu	29	93.54%
Muslim	2	6.46
Sikh	0	0
Christian	0	0
Total	31	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Hinduism is the dominant religion of the Indian subcontinent, followed by Islam. The trend persists in the participation rate of Women Elected Representative at the ULB level. To elaborate, there were 94% Hindu participants, while 6% Muslim Women Elected Representatives in a set of 31 Women Elected Representatives, while there was complete absence of other religious minorities. (Table 6).

Table 7
Caste of the Respondents

<i>Caste</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
General	17	54.83
OBC	9	29.03
Schedule Caste	5	16.14
Schedule Tribe	0	00
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to the numbers in the table, there were 55% women in General Category, with OBC category Women Elected Representatives being the second in terms of majority, followed by SC Women Elected Representatives.(Table 7)

Table 8
Type of Family

<i>Type of Family</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Joint	9	29.03
Nuclear	21	67.74
Extended	1	3.22
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Nuclear Family is the most dominant family system that India now follows (almost 68%) while there were only few instances (29%) where the family of

a respondent was a Joint one. Note that proportion of extended family system was still lower (only 1 case) (Table 8).

Table 9
Political Background of Family Members

<i>Political Background</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	11	35.48
No	20	64.52
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It was surprising to note that despite Women Elected Representatives being associated with ULB, there was very low percentage of them whose families who have had a political background (only 35%). This signals that women may have not been made to enter politics; it was rather a choice of their own (Table 9).

Table 10
Family Member Associated with ULB

<i>ULB Member</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	4	12.90
No	27	87.10
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Just like lower percentage of Women Elected Representatives having their families with political background, there was a lower percentage of family members associated with ULB. This, pattern indicates that women are more successful in contesting elections than their male counterparts.(Table 10)

Table 11
If Associated with ULB as

<i>Member</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Mayor	0	0
Ward Member	3	75.00
Adhyaksh	1	25.00
Total	4	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

As the table reveals, majority of the family members of the Women Elected Representatives were associated with the ULB as a ward member. There was only one instance (or 25%), of households where the family member was even associated as an "Adhyaksh" with the ULB. (Table 11).

Table 12
Member of Political Party

<i>Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	12	38.71
No	19	61.29
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

If women are not empowered, the numbers in Table 12 should ideally reflect the numbers in Table.13. When compared, there was not much difference seen between the two tables. Thus, it can be easily concluded that, it is not the choice which is leading women to join politics but it is the family pressure which leads them to take such decision.

Table 13
Elected Due to Reservation

<i>Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	13	41.94
No	18	58.06
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 14
Category of Reservation

<i>Category</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
OBC	3	23.08
OBC Women Reserved	5	38.46
SC	1	7.69
SC Women Reserved	4	30.77
Total	13	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 15
You Think Reservation Has Minimized Gender Discrimination

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	23	74.19
No	8	25.81
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 15 reveals that there were 23 (or 74%) Women Elected Representatives who indicated that reservation does help in minimizing

gender discrimination. They added, it is only because of reservation that there is higher women participation noted in Urban Local Body elections

Table 16
First Tenure as Elected Representative

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	13	41.94
No	18	58.06
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

As per the numbers in Table 16, there were 58% Women Elected Representatives who have already had the experience of being a part of ULB before. Most of these women have fought only when the seat of their ward got reserved, thus, serving their second tenure. Hence, we can say that only when the seat is reserved, their family members have no choice but to let the woman of their family contest the elections.

Table 17
You Think that you are Equally Efficient to Men in Politics

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	27	87.10
No	4	12.90
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to the numbers in Table 17, 87% respondents believe that they are equally efficient with men in politics. However, it was witnessed that there were 13% instances, when they did not agree with the view and stated politics is meant for men, it's hard for a woman to manage household chores along with politics.

Table 18
Are You a Member of Any Social Organization?

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>% Yes</i>	<i>% No</i>
Are You Member of Any Social Organization	3	28	9.68	90.32
Do You Participated in Any Social Work	8	23	25.81	74.19
Have You Taken Up Any Developmental Plan of Society	10	21	32.26	67.74
Do You Visit Your Ward For Social Work	15	16	48.39	51.61
Do You Spend Some Time with Common People Specially Women in Your Ward	31	0	100	0
Are You a Member of Any Women Association	0	31	0	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 18 helps in quantifying the social and political activeness of the Women Elected Representatives of the ULB. To distress, out of first four questions, there was not a single question where a positive response could be witnessed in large numbers. Nevertheless, there were approximately 48% respondents who stated that they visit wards for social work. Furthermore, 100% of the respondents accepting that they spend time with common people especially women makes us conclude that these women must be preferring to allocate time to the women locals than the men.

Table 19
Views on Women's Freedom

	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Limited to Home Management	0	0.00
Given Full Freedom	15	48.39
Home First, Freedom Later	2	6.45
Freedom First, Home Later	7	22.58
Balancing Mix of Tradition and Freedom	7	22.58
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The group was divided with their view on women's freedom. Note that the idea of a woman receiving full freedom has been supported by not even 50% of the total respondents. However, when analyzed deeper, with the help of their level of education, political activeness and awareness, the opposite seems to be more realistic. Still, the idea of freedom first, home later and balancing mix of tradition and freedom were seen to receive the remaining support with equal degree (Table 19).

Table 20
Your Level of Contribution in the Development and Promotion of Following Activities

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Very Significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Less Significant</i>	<i>No Contribution</i>
Gender Issues	9	8	5	9
Drinking Water	22	8	1	0
Poverty Alleviation Program	17	4	7	3
Health and Sanitation, including Hospitals, Primary Health Centers and Dispensaries	21	7	3	0
Welfare of Weaker Sections and in Particular Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes	11	8	6	6
Social Welfare including Welfare of the Handicapped and Mentally Retarded	9	11	6	5

Source: Field Survey, 2015

As per Table 20, we can conclude that Lucknow has witnessed very significant contribution in issues related to Drinking Water (71%), Poverty and Alleviation (55%) and Health & Sanitation (68%). Note that contribution towards gender issues, welfare of the weaker sections and social welfare, received significant, (if not very significant contribution) by the Women Elected Representatives.

Table 21
Are You Aware About the Devolution of Functions and Finances Due to 74 Constitutional Amendment Act

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	3	9.68
No	5	16.13
Cannot Say	23	74.19
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 21 revealed that Women Elected Representatives have not at all shown interest in the “economic discussions”. It is probably due to this reason that we observe very low (or only 10%) respondents to be aware about the devolution of functions and finances.

Table 22
Whether District Planning Committee is Effectively Functioning

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	11	35.48
No	4	12.90
Cannot Say	16	51.61
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Certain questions that were put up in front of the Women Elected Representatives were to check their political awareness and activeness. Questions like above are examples of such measures. Table 22 shows that approximately 52% Women Elected Representatives were not aware about the same. The reason for such indecision is hidden in Table where we see that most of the respondents attend the meeting only occasionally. It is expected that had the respondents attended the meetings regularly, they would have been successful in making a strong conclusion about the performance of the committee. The table 3.52 reveals that 72% respondents were attended DPC Meeting regularly.

Table 23
Whether You are Active in Identification of Poor for Providing Benefits under Govt. Schemes and Programs

	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Very Active	15	48.39
Active	8	25.81
Neutral	8	25.81
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Lucknow, the capital city falls in one of the least developed states of India. Accordingly, there is lack of job and growth opportunities. Therefore, the numbers in Table 23 & 24 which shows that less than half of the respondents were active in the identification for providing benefits under government schemes and programs is likely to deteriorate the situation if not given weight age.

Table 24
Whether you were Active in Formation of Community Structures under SJSRY or NULM

<i>Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Very Active	1	3.23
Active	11	35.48
Neutral	19	61.29
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 25
Do You Provide Adequate Time for the Tackling of Local Issues

<i>Type of Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Yes	28	90.32
No	2	6.45
Cannot Say	1	3.23
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 25 shows that Women Elected Representatives have been cooperative in dealing with the local people. However, some of them stated that the burden of work and expectation of the locals makes them agitated, still, there were few who signaled that they remain neutral with the locals of their ward. As per table.25, we can see that almost 90% of the women elected representatives stated that they provide adequate time to tackle the local issues. However, as mentioned before, it was seen that their husbands or

other family members (male members) to be specific were the ones who were managing most of the work, indicates that it would be the male members which must be taking care of the issues more often than the respondents themselves.

Table 26
What Impacts Have You Experience after Being Elected

	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Increase in Social Recognition	18	58.06
Decision Making Process	4	12.90
Enhancement of Physical Amenities in the Residential Localities	6	19.35
Increase in Income	0	0.00
Improvement in Political and Bureaucratic Contact	3	9.68
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It seems the main cause for the respondents to join politics as shown in Table 26 “for good status” gets fulfilled to a great extent. In other words, 58% Women Elected Representatives indicated that they have felt increase in social recognition. However, the major indicators of women empowerment in politics, like- decision making progress; improvement in political and bureaucratic contacts remained negligible. Note that 84% women who indicated “social service” to be the most dominant factor that led them to join politics has also failed to witness much impact post their elections (Table 26)

Table 27
What Changes Have Come in Elected Representative post 74th Constitutional Amendment

<i>Response</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Increase in Participation of Women in Election	14	45.16
Women will Empower	17	54.84
Gender Issues Raised Strongly in Board Meetings by Women Elected Representatives	0	0.00
Any Other	0	0.00
Total	31	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The objective of this question was to ask how a woman herself views the impact post the policy of which she is also a beneficiary. Most of them believed that women participation has increased in Election post the Amendment Act. As a result, it is likely that women will empower with the help of the reservation in a longer run. Nevertheless, it was discouraging to know that Gender Issues still remained completely neglected in Board Meetings.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Indian polity has been striving for establishing democratic goals through modernizing its political and administrative institutions. With a change in development paradigms, the focus of development planning has shifted to participatory development with social justice and equity. It called for decentralized administration ensuring people's participation in decision making and giving priorities to their local needs. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992 made the provision for ensuring local self-governance through empowering local bodies. The constitution of 74th Amendment Act, 1992, has marked the beginning of a historical reform to decentralize power at the grass root level in urban areas of the country. This Act has provided a constitutional form to the structure and mandate of municipalities to enable them to function as an effective democratic institution of local self-government. One of its important objectives is to promote people's participation in planning, provision and delivery of civic services. It introduced some fundamental changes in the system of municipal governance with a new structure, additional devolution of functions, planning responsibilities, new system of fiscal transfers and empowerment of women and the weaker sections of the society. There have been significant changes in the institutional structure for the financing and management of basic services in the post decentralization period. Prior to 1994, the central government was not involved in any transfer of resources to the ULB's. This provision was made by 74th Constitution Amendment Act.

The paper argues that there is no difference between men and women mayors, chairpersons and councilors as regards their formal roles, they are similar. There are areas, however, where women can play a catalytic role in promoting the causes of social development including women and child development.

- Training programmes for women representative should also be organized at local level, as it is not practicable for women to go and attend training programmes at distant places.
- Husband or relative of women elected representatives should not be allowed in the training programmes
- Simple and practical training should be given in the form of group discussions instead of classroom sessions.
- Training for women representatives should focus on topics/aspects such as legal rights, duties and responsibilities of elected representatives, management & leadership skills, plan formulation and implementation, accounting procedure, budget; central & state

sponsored schemes; personality development, etc.. These training programmes enhance their confidence to take independent decisions.

- The content of the training programmes should be prepared after proper consultations and discussions between government officials and women organisations and both sides should be involved in the training process.
- Extensive use of local folk media, simple/local language and a variety of audio visual aids would greatly enhance the quality of training;
- Training may be supported by exposure visits both within and outside the State, organising workshops and seminars etc;
- Training should be regular, continuous, participatory and interactive;
- Training programmes being run in existing training institutions should be reviewed periodically.

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