



**MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR ELECTION TO PRIS AND THE
WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN HARYANA PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS, 2016- A STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (1992) has indeed been a landmark in the empowerment of women. They have been given 33 percent reservation of memberships and offices to ensure their better participation in the development process. The PRIs have been given the mandate of making plan and executing the plans of economic development and social justice given by the state legislative on those of 29 subjects listed in XIth schedule. The representation of women in Panchayat elections held in the 2005 and 2010 remained around 33 percent in all the three tier of Panchayat i Raj Institution (PRIs). The Amendment of Section 175 of Haryana Panchayat i Raj Act, 1994 in 2015 has been included the clause of minimum qualification of matriculation and middle pass for contesting these elections for women and of 5th pass for the women candidate belonging to schedule castes. It has been observed from the analysis that it has enhanced from 33 percent to 41.16 percent at the level of Panches, 41.46 percent at the level of SarPanches, 41.97 percent at the level of Panchayat Samitis and 43.50 percent at the level of Zila Parishads. An analysis of the category wise educational level of women representative at different level of PRIs has also been made in this exercise. Lastly, we have tried to trace the impact of the clause on the educational qualification for contesting the election on their participation in these elections.

KEY WORDS: *Panchayat i Raj Institutions, Women Participation, Educational Qualification.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Women constitute nearly half of the population of our country and constitute 48.46 percent of the total population as per census 2011. But their involvement in the politics is insignificant compared to men despite their vast strength women occupy a marginalized position in political system [7]. The success of developmental planning at grass-root level can never be achieved without incorporation of women in local self government institution. In the progress and development of the country equal status of women in every sphere is inextricably linked [11]. No country can march toward attaining the goal of justice, liberty and equality under the socialist, egalitarian and democratic framework of Indian constitution by ignoring nearly fifty percent of women population [8]. As found by Phukan [5] in his study that there is an active participation of women members of Jorhat Zilla Parisad (JZP). Majority of women attend the meeting conducted by JZP.



The participation of women in developmental activities, decision making is one of the important aspect of women empowerment [9]. Women are both agent and target of developmental process (World Bank) [12]. The effective participation of women should be in place to improve their socio-economic condition simultaneously. The 73rd constitutional amendment was a significant step towards opening up the space for women's political participation and ensuring their role in developmental activities at grass-root level. For complete involvement of the society,

participation of rural women was ensured with 33 percent reservation of seats for them. The entrance of elected women representative into grass-root politics through *Panchayat* i Raj Institutions (PRI,s) election have introduced in article 243 D, 73rd amendment of the constitution of India which provide seat reservation for Schedule Caste (SC)/ Schedule Tribes(ST) [7, 10]. The main intension of policy makers of this 73rd amendment is two-fold one is democratic justice and second is human resource [1-4]. These seats will be filled by direct election not less than one-third of total number of officers of chairperson in *Panchayat* at each level reserved for women (Government of India, 2010). In traditional caste *Panchayat* and village *Panchayat* s in British Scheme of local government women remained entirely excluded [1-4, 10]. After 73rd constitutional amendment Act, Government of Haryana enacted Haryana *Panchayat* i Raj Act, 1994 and a three tier system of *Panchayat* i Raj (*Zila Parishad*, Block Smiti and Gram *Panchayat* s) was formed. At state level the Department of Development and *Panchayat* coordinate the functioning of PRIs.

The amendment in act was made in year, 2015 (<http://www.harPanchayat.s.gov.in/>) in the section 175 of Haryana *Panchayat* Raj Act, 1994 and the clause of minimum educational qualification was inserted which provided that a person shall not be deemed to be disqualified if has not passed matriculation examination or equivalent examination from any recognized institution/board (<http://www.harPanchayat.s.gov.in/>):

- Provide that in case of women candidate or candidate belonging schedule caste the minimum qualification shall be middle pass.
- It further provided that in case of women candidate belonging to schedule caste contesting election for the post of *Panch*, the minimum qualification shall be 5th passed.

The paper has been divided into following five sections. Section 1 gives introduction including relevant work. In section 2, research methodology has been described. Section 3 describes the result analysis. Section 4 describes the major findings and conclusions.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Women participation in *Panchayat* i Raj Institutions in the years of 2005 and 2010 were around 33 percent. The Amendment of Section 175 of Haryana *Panchayat* i Raj Act, 1994 in 2015 has been included the clause of minimum qualification of matriculation and middle pass for contesting these elections for women and of 5th pass for the women candidate belonging to schedule castes. It is very much required to investigate the results of the Haryana PRIs election, 2016 to analyze the impact of change in education qualification clause on the representation of women in PRIs. The premise of this study is to analysis the category wise educational level of women representative at different level of PRIs.

2.1 Research Objectives

In the above context this paper seeks to analyze the specific objectives as under:

- a) The category wise level of education of elected women representative in all the three tiers of PRIs.
- b) To evaluate women representation of against the percentage of that in seats reserved for them in the state and,
- c) To compare women representation in 2016 with 2010 and 2005 elections.

2.2 Study area and Data Collection

For now, we have limited our study area to the state of Haryana because of the recent changes made in the education qualification for contesting the elections PRI. Haryana is one of the 29 states in India, situated in North India. It was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on a linguistic basis. It stands 21st in terms of its area, which is spread about 44,212 km² (17,070 sq mi). As of 2011 census of India, the state is eighteenth largest by population with 25,353,081 inhabitants. The city of Chandigarh is its capital while the NCR city of Faridabad is the most populous city of the state. It is bordered by Punjab and Himachal Pradesh to the north and by Rajasthan to the west and south. The river Yamuna defines its eastern border with Uttar Pradesh. Haryana surrounds the country's capital Delhi on three sides, forming the northern, western and southern borders of Delhi. Consequently, a large area of south

Haryana is included in the National Capital Region for purposes of planning for development. Haryana is a landlocked state in northern India. It is between 27°39' to 30°35' N latitude and between 74°28' and 77°36' E longitude. The total geographical area of the state is 4.42 m ha, which is 1.4% of the geographical area of the country. The altitude of Haryana varies between 700 and 3600 ft (200 metres to 1200 metres) above sea level. According to the 2011 census, Hindus (87.45%) constitute the majority of the state's population with Sikhs (4.91%), Muslims (7.03%) (mainly Meos) being the largest minorities. Haryana's sex ratio (child sex ratio) crossed the mark of 900 and reached 903 in December 2015 (<http://www.censusindia.gov.in/>).

Hindi is the sole official language of Haryana and is spoken by the majority of the population (87.31%). Punjabi is given the status of additional official language. Literacy rate in Haryana has seen an upward trend and is 76.64 percent as per 2011 population census. Male literacy stands at 85.38 percent, while female literacy is at 66.67 percent. In 2001, the literacy rate in Haryana stood at 67.91 percent of which male and female were 78.49 percent and 55.73 percent literate respectively. As of 2013, Gurgaon city had the highest literacy rate in Haryana at 86.30% followed by *Panchkula* at 81.9 per cent and *Ambala* at 81.7 percent. In terms of districts, as of 2012, *Rewari* had the highest literacy rate in Haryana at 74%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy was 79%, and female was 67% (<http://www.censusindia.gov.in/>). The state is divided into four divisions for administrative purposes: *Ambala*, *Rohtak*, *Gurgaon* and *Hisar*. Within these there are 21 districts, 62 sub-divisions, 83 tehsils, 47 sub-tehsils and 126 blocks. Haryana has a total of 154 cities and towns and 6,841 villages. The state has 416 *Zila Parishad* members in 21 districts, 2997 *Panchayat* Smitis Members in 126 Blocks, 6184 *SarPanches* and 60436 members *Panchayat* [6].

For the present study, data has been gathered from election results data provided by the elections commission of the Haryana state. We have used this data for our analysis because it a reliable and official source of data related to the PRI elections held in 2016 [6]. Moreover, participation of women has defined in terms of representation of elected women at all the three tiers of PRIs. The representative is categorized into three categories which include:

General (including minorities and others),
Backward Class (including Other Backward Class),

SCHEDULE CASTE

For the purpose of education wise categorization of the women representative, we have bifurcated it into four categories namely Middle, Matriculation, Intermediate and Graduation or above for the members of *Zila Parishad*, *Panchayat* Smitis, *SarPanches* and *Panches* etc. In addition to it, in the case of *Panches*, 5th pass is also included along with other levels of qualification as per prescribed in amendment of act. The tables 1 to table 4 described the data collected for the purpose of analysis. We have tabulated the data gathered at the level of *Zila Parishad*, Block Samitti, *SarPanch* and *Panchs*.

3. RESULT ANALYSIS

In this section, we have described the result analysis based on the collected data. Here, we have discussed the result analysis for all three objectives that we have set for this study.

3.1 Research Objective-1: *The category wise level of education of elected women representative in all the three tiers of PRIs.*

The representation of women in the PRI has been analyzed and described in percentage basis in all different categories in all the three tiers of PRIs which includes *Zila Parishad*, Block Samitti, *SarPanch* and *Panchs*.

3.1.1 *Zila Parishad*

The Haryana state has 416 *Zila Parishad* members in all 21 districts. Out of the total, 235 are male and 181 are female. Table 1 indicates the category-wise educational background of elected women representative at *Zila Parishad* level. It is evident from the Table 1 that:

- In General category (including others), 19.81 percent of the women members are middle passed, 38.73 percent are matric passed, 17.11 percent are intermediate and 23.42 percent are graduated or attained higher education. In General category most of the women representatives at *Zila Parishad* are matriculate or above.
- If we see the educational background of the women representative belonging to Backward Class (including Other Backward Class) at *Zila Parishad* level, 15 percent women members are middle passed, 45 percent are matriculate, 05 percent are intermediate and 35 percent are graduated. Only 15% women members are below the matric level metric passes and intermediate represent the least.
- In Schedule Caste (SC), 20 percent of women members are middle passed, 42 percent are matriculate, 14 percent are intermediate and 24 percent are graduated. The majority of women representative at *Zila Parishad* level are 10th pass.

3.1.2 Panchayat Smitis

The Haryana state has 126 Blocks in 21 districts and 2997 Block or *Panchayat Simiti* members. Out of the total members 1739 are male and 1258 are female. Table 2 indicates the category-wise educational background of elected women representative at *Panchayat Smitis* level. It has been observed that:

- In General category, 22.3 percent of the women members are middle passed, 52.7 percent are matriculate, 16.1 percent are intermediate and 8.9 percent are graduated. As it is evident from the table 2 that most of the women representatives at *Panchayat Simiti* belongs to General category are matric pass and very few are graduated or having higher education.
- In Backward Class, 31.6 percent women members are middle passed, 48.3 percent are matriculate, 13.6 percent are intermediate and 6.6 9 percent are graduated. The most of the women representative belonging to Backward Class at Block Simiti level are either 10th pass or 8th pass. Very few number of members are graduate or above.
- In Schedule Caste (SC) 29.1 percent of women members are middle passed, 49.9 percent are matriculate, 19 percent are intermediate and 3.9 percent are graduated. Here again, most of the women representative belonging to Backward Class at Block Simiti level are either 10th pass or 8th pass. Very few members are graduate or above.

3.1.3 SarPanch

The Haryana state has 6186 *SarPanches* in all 21 districts. Out of the total, 3621 are male and 2565 are female. Table 3 describes the category wise educational background of elected women *SarPanchs*. It has been found that:

- In General category, 29.8 percent of the women *SarPanchs* are middle passed, 48.61 percent are matriculate, 11.3 percent are intermediate and 10.7 percent are graduated or having higher education. As it is evident from the table 3 that the majority of the women *SarPanchs* are either 10th pass or below. Only around 22% women *SarPanchs* belongs to General category 12th pass or above.
- In Backward Class, 31.3 percent of women *SarPanchs* are middle pass, 45.5 percent are matriculate, 11.8 percent are intermediate and 11.3 percent are graduated or above. It has been found that mostly women *SarPanchs* belongs to Backward Class are only 8th pass or 10th pass. Only around 20% are having educational background above matriculation.
- In Schedule Caste, 40.61 percent of women members are middle passed, 35 percent are metric, 10 percent are intermediate and 9.83 percent are graduation or above. The maximum members in SC are middle passed and in graduate represent the least.

3.1.4 Member Panchayat (Panch)

The Haryana state has a total 60436 *Panchayat* members called as *Panchs*. Out of the total 34941 are male and 25495 are female. Table 4 shows the category-wise educational background of elected Women *Panchs* (*Panchayat* Members). It has been found that:

- In General category, 0.4 percent of the women *Panchs* are 5th pass, 25.9 percent are middle pass, 58.2 percent are matriculate, 10.3 percent are intermediate and 5.1 percent are graduated or above. As it is evident

from the table 4 that in General category most of the *Panchs* are metric pass and only 0.4 percent are below 8th standard.

- In Backward Class, only 0.4 percent women *Panchs* is 5th passed, 34.3 percent of women *Panchs* or *Panchayat* members are middle pass, 51.4 percent are matriculate, 9.80 percent are intermediate and 4.1% percent are graduated or above. It has been observed that majority of women *Panchs* are only 10th pass or less qualified.
- In Schedule Caste, 43.6 percent women *Panchs* are only 5th pass, 24.9 percent of women *Panchayat* members are middle pass, 24.7 percent are matriculate and 5.4 percent are intermediate and 1.3 percent are graduated or above. It has been found that majority of Schedule Caste *Panchayat* members are only 5th standard pass.

3.2 Research Objective-2: To evaluate women representation of against the percentage of that in seats reserved for them in the Haryana state

It has been observed from the analysis that women representation against 33% reservation given to them has been increasing at all level of PRIs including *Zila Parishad*, *Panchayat Samiti*, *Gram Panchayat* (*SarPanch* and *Panch*). In the 2016 Haryana *Panchayat* i Raj elections the women participation or representation is enhanced from 33 percent to

- 41.2 percent at the level of *Panchayat* member (*Panches*),
- 41.5 percent at the level of *SarPanches*,
- 41.9 percent at the level of *Panchayat Samitis* and
- 43.5 percent at the level of *Zila Parishads*.

It shows that instead of imposing educational qualification for contesting PRIs elections the women participation at every tier of PRI is good. It is not declined or limited only upto the minimum threshold i.e. 33%.

3.3 Research Objective-3: To compare women representation in 2016 with 2010 and 2005 elections.

We have also performed the comparative analysis of women representation in the Haryana PRIs election held in the years of 2016, 2010 and 2005. It has been found that:

- In comparison to *Panchayat* election 2016 where representation of women in *Zila Parishad* is 43.5%, in 2010 and 2005 elections the representation was 34.6% and 35.3% respectively. It is evident that the women representation has enhanced around 8.0 percent from the previous elections at the level of *Zila Parishad*.
- In comparison to *Panchayat* election 2016 where representation of women in *Panchayat Samiti* is 41.9%, in 2010 and 2005 elections the representation was 34.4% and 34.5% respectively. It is evident that the women representation has enhanced around 8.0% from the previous elections at the level of *Panchayat* or Block *Samiti*.
- In comparison to *Panchayat* election 2016 where representation of women at the level of *SarPanch* is 41.5%, in 2010 and 2005 elections the representation was 33.2% and 33.4% respectively. It is evident that representation of women has enhanced around 9% from the previous elections as far as *SarPanches* are concerned.
- In comparison to *Panchayat* election 2016 where representation of women as member *Panchayat* or *Panch* is 42.2 percent, in 2010 and 2005 elections the representation was around 37% and 36.9% respectively. It is evident that the women representation has enhanced around 6% percent from the previous elections as *Panchayat* member or *Panch*.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- It has been found that instead educational qualification for contesting Haryana PRIs elections (2016), women participation including all levels of PRI is better. It is around 41%. It indicates that society of Haryana (especially in villages) is showing interest to enhance the level of women participation in the development of villages.

- It has been observed that the average age of women representatives at the level of *Zila Parishad* is 33 years, Block *Samiti* is 31 years *SarPanch* is 32 years and *Panch* is 31. It shows that youth participation has been increased in 2016 elections.
- The average age of women representatives belongs to OBC caste at *Zila Parishad* level is 26 years.
- It has been observed that in the most backward district like Mewat the average age of women *Panch*, *SarPanch* and Block *Samiti* member is as low as around 30 Years, a minimum as compare to all other districts.

Moreover, during our interaction with women PRIs representative, they have raised some important issues like actual and effective participation of women representatives in village development planning and executing their duties is very less. Most of the time their male counterparts or relative or family members playing leading roles and effective participation in meetings is also very less. Most of the women representative also raised the issue of girl education, security and health. They are very keen to work towards improving it. They also very active to eliminate or reduce the *Ghunghat or Parda* tradition. All are agree upon the amendments made by Haryana regarding contesting PRIs elections. During this study we also found that most of the women representatives contested these elections due to their family reasons. Apart from reserved seats, the one of the important reason was no male person of their family was eligible due to minimum educational qualification for contesting election to PRIs 2016. Through this study, we suggest that family members should come forward and must give enough freedom and decision power to women representatives. In all committees related to planning, implementing and monitoring, women representatives must have their say. The issues related to women, children and minority must be given highest priority. The concept of SHGs should be promoted more because it is also empowering village women to come forward to participate in economical and social development. It is also incalctating the leadership skills in women. In future, we are planning to investigate various factors that must be addressed to enhance the women participation in village development.

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Table 1. Category-Wise Educational Background of Elected Women Representative at Zila Parishad

Caste/Category	8 th Pass	10 th Pass	12 th Pass	Graduation or above
General (including Others)	19.8%	38.7%	17.1%	23.4%
Backward Class (including Other Backward Class)	15%	45%	5%	35%

Schedule Caste	20%	42%	14%	24%
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(Source: <http://prielections.nic.in/>)**Table 2. Category-Wise Educational Background of Elected Women Representative at Panchayat Smitis**

Caste/Category	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Graduation or above
General (including Others)	22.3%	52.7%	16.1%	8.9%
Backward Class (including Other Backward Class)	31.6%	48.3%	13.6%	6.6%
Schedule Caste	29.1%	49.9%	19%	3.9%

(Source: <http://prielections.nic.in/>)**Table 3. Category-Wise Educational Background of Elected Women SarPanchs**

Caste/Category	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Graduation or above
General (including Others)	29.8%	48.6%	11.3%	10.7%
Backward Class (including Other Backward Class)	31.3%	45.5%	11.8%	11.3%
Schedule Caste	40.2%	35%	10%	9.8%

(Source: <http://prielections.nic.in/>)**Table 4. Category-Wise Educational Background of Elected Women Panchs (Panchayat Members)**

Caste/Category	5th Pass	8th Pass	10th Pass	12th Pass	Graduation or above
General (including Others)	0.4%	25.9%	58.2	10.3	5.1%
Backward Class (including Other Backward Class)	0.4%	34.3%	51.39%	9.8%	4.1%
Schedule Caste	43.6%	24.9%	24.7%	5.4%	1.3%

(Source: <http://prielections.nic.in/>)