PREFACE

Participatory democracy implies participation of citizens - male and female at all levels in the political process. Participation in the representative bodies like the legislatures is all the more important because these are the centers of decision-making. The behaviour and performance of representatives is influenced by several factors like the socio-economic background, recruitment process, perceptions, political culture and the larger political environment. Another significant factor that has a bearing on participation is gender.

Gender studies which are generally understood as women's studies, have increasingly been realised as important since the 1970s. There has been a tremendous growth in studies relating to women and society, women and family, women and work and women and politics. The chief reason for this growth is that men and women react to and influence differently the socio, economic and political systems and conditions though they belong to same country, community and even to same family. In most of the contemporary societies, women do not have any legal barriers in enjoying rights on par with men. But in exercising these rights, there are certain obstacles for women which men do not have.

There has not been adequate attention paid to gender comparisons in social and political behaviour studies. Hence, studies with focus on gender differences are few in number. Gender based studies of legislators are fewer. The perceptions and performance of male and female legislators differ in several respects. Apart from other factors, this is due to experiences based on gender and different sets of challenges thrown by political culture to men and women. Differences in experiences would cause differences in the nature and extent of
interactions; perceptions regarding individuals, groups and society; subjects of interest, particularly women related subjects; acting independently and in the methods adopted to solve various problems. Gender based studies of legislators are very useful for explaining the dynamics and for a meaningful understanding of legislative processes. Hence, a study of gender differences in the perceptions and performance of legislators in Andhra Pradesh is taken up.

The chief objective of the study is to identify gender differences among the legislators in Andhra Pradesh. For this purpose, the background, recruitment process, role perceptions and performance of the members of the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh are examined. These are the inter-related factors and any systematic study of legislators requires an examination of these. And in the absence of engendered analysis there is a possibility of endangering it.

**SAMPLE:** The Tenth Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh elected in 1994 is taken for purposes of analysis. Hundred legislators of whom, eighty two are men and eighteen are women form part of the sample. The Tenth Assembly had only eight women members in the beginning and three more women joined the Assembly successfully contesting bi-elections. Hence, it is proposed to increase the women's component in the sample. Accordingly, some women of earlier assemblies have also been included in the sample. Every effort was made to see that women's component in the sample as large as possible. Twenty schedules have been mailed to the home constituency addresses of the former women members. Only three out of these responded and returned the schedules after incorporating their views. Of the hundred members in the sample, 54, 16, 12, 10, 1, 1, 1 are from TDP, Congress, CPI, CPI(M), BJP, MIM and NTR TOP
respectively. Five of the legislators in the sample are independents. Care is taken to include members of all the parties irrespective of their strength in the House.

METHODOLOGY: The methods adopted for the study are empirical and comparative. An extensive schedule consisting of both close and open ended questions is used for collection of data through personal interviews ranging from two to three hours. The researcher had to spend a lot of time for fixing interviews and on several occasions, a minimum three visits had to be made for this purpose. For a clear understanding of the gender differences, simple tables are given wherever required.

The House performance is studied with the help of content analysis of the debates of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and on the basis of information obtained through interviews. While studying the House proceedings, the performance of the members other than those in the sample is also noted. Special focus is laid on identifying the subjects of interests and proceeding-wise participation of male and female members. The purpose, as mentioned earlier, is to study the gender differences and not to go deep into what they spoke.

CHAPTERISATION: A clear understanding of concepts prepares the ground for any systematic study. The first chapter is devoted to explain the concepts - Political Participation, Representation, Role Perceptions and Performance.

The second chapter is devoted to the review of literature relating to gender differences in attitudes and participation at both the citizen and elite levels.

A study of the socio-economic background of the representatives helps to understand their attitudes, policies and goals. The third chapter of this
dissertation deals with the socio-economic backgrounds of the legislators with the gender at the focal point.

Periodical elections to legislative bodies is a prerequisite for representative democratic systems. Selection and election of candidates constitute significant parts in the process of forming legislative bodies. The details of selection process, sources of expenditure, campaign issues and success factors are discussed in chapter four.

The fifth chapter is essentially concerned with gender differences in the perceptions of the respondents regarding various parts of House proceedings. Further, the subjects of interests, voting behavior, aspirations and constituency service.

For understanding the dynamics of male dominated political process and to identify the attitudinal change, it is necessary to elicit the opinion of male and female legislators regarding the role of women in politics. This aspect is covered in the sixth chapter.

Legislature is a forum for its members to effectively perform their representative roles. The performance of male and female legislators in the proceedings of the House, which include Motion of Thanks on Governor's Address, Question Hour, Matters of Public Importance., legislation and finance business are detailed in chapter seventh.

The major findings of the study are given in the last chapter.