CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Reservation of seats in the local body institutions for the women in all positions as per the provisions of 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India, no doubt, is created a metamorphosis in the activities of women in polity, economy and society, in the years to come. The initial apprehensions and doubts over the readiness of womenfolk to come into power-centres and to take up responsibilities of administering development on their own, have been dispelled by their huge participation in electoral process of the local body institutions1 in the elections held in 1996 and 2001 in Tamil Nadu.

The Constitutional Amendments providing one-third representation to women in elected bodies as well as reserving one-third of the offices of chairpersons for them in panchayats and municipalities have given opportunities for about 10 lakhs women to participate in the process of governance. To make women’s participation in society and politics a reality, enormous work remains to be done, given their present socio-economic condition.

The elected leaders and councillors of the local bodies in Tamil Nadu have started functioning in their respective domain. While discharging their duties they found problems due to various reasons. Of them, lack of training is more visible when compared with other problems they face. The rule of the game should be taught to them in order to make the elected leaders handle the office carefully and effectively so as to deliver goods properly to the people.
A study of the women elected representatives of local bodies in Karnataka between 1987 and 1990, conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences, gives an insight into women’s present position in the local bodies as elected members and the possibilities this holds for the future. The study also provides an insight into the nature of their participation, their present sociological and cultural compulsions and their leadership role in society. Since it has an all India bearing, it is important to go into these findings in some detail.

The study revealed that women from the dominant castes-formed 60 per cent of the elected women members in local bodies. In Karnataka, women had contested only for the seats reserved for them and not for the general ones.

There was predominance of younger members among the women compared to that among men. More than three-fourths of the women members were below forty-five years and more than half the members were in the age group of twenty-five to thirty-five. Incidentally, Karnataka was the first state to lower the voting age to eighteen. It is said that political parties had considerable difficulty in finding women candidates but found it easier to persuade younger women to enter public life than the older generation because of the latter's conservative and traditional outlook. This also means that the candidates were relatively inexperienced and new to the politics and public life.

The women who contested the 1987 elections were very often the relatives of political leaders. Usually a male member of the family had been instrumental in persuading the women to contest. During the election campaign, these women
were always projected as someone’s wife, mother, sister or widow, as the case may be. The elected women councillors have attributed their victory in the elections to the political party or its leader or the status of the male member of the family.

In education, elected women members lagged behind men. While 20 per cent of the men had professional and post graduate education, women with comparable qualifications totalled only 5 per cent. A majority of women members gave their occupation as agriculture, housework and social work. Most women preferred to indicate their profession as housewives. With their entry in politics, women had acquired the additional responsibility of public life along with household work. Some women found the conflicting roles a strain on their time and resources. This caused a feeling of guilt that they had not been able to fulfil their obligations to their families. In many cases women continued to have all their time for household chores as usual, because the men in their families were involved in discharging the political responsibilities on their behalf.

What the Karnataka study shows is that women have social handicaps and constraints of various kinds in functioning; effectively but with experience their effectiveness improves. Moreover, as more and more regular elections take place, the independence of women will increase; they will not be depending on their male family members for the support or the identity. Over the decades, the electoral process and thereby the grass-root level democratic process has been throttled and women’s innate abilities have not been allowed to blossom. From
this point of view what has been initiated through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments is the beginning of a silent revolution. Still there exists opposition for the reservation of seats in local bodies for women.

OPPONENTS OF RESERVATION FOR WOMEN

Those who oppose reservation of seats for women in local bodies brandish four main reasons in support of their stand. First, women who become members of panchayats and local bodies will disturb the harmony of homes and of family life. Even those men who tolerate women working in offices for fixed hours do not take kindly to them when their roles change to one of community leadership. This is because, then, the women have to attend to people’s problems as leaders. This means irregular hours of work and a twenty-four hours demand on their time. Therefore, who will look after the children and household chores, the men folk ask.

Second, women will become targets of attacks by anti-social elements when they move out of their homes or go outside their villages for work, meetings, and so on. A case was cited of in which a few local women leaders, obliged to spend nights away from home during their travel, were attacked by goons and even raped. Will any male family member allow his wife, daughter or sister to take part in a public role, which has such potential dangers, they ask. Here, it must be noted that Leelavathi, a women councillor belonging to communist party was murdered in Madurai by anti social elements.
Third, they mention that whenever women, hold elected offices, the male Officers are the ones who "dictate" what is or is not to be done. They take control of the entire situation and women elected representatives become the hapless victims of officialdom.

Finally, these opponents contend, even if women are elected in large numbers, the power equation will never change. "Instead of Ram Singh, Ram Singh's wife will be there" these villagers quip. However, the two local bodies elections held in Tamil Nadu during 1996 and subsequently in 2001 have provided chances for the election of women candidates for one-third of seats in both rural and urban local bodies. Women leaders and councillors, except a few have performed well, despite several constraints.

But it was found that only a few attempts have been made to study the role of women in politics, which focus only on women and Panchatiraj. It is pitiable to note that not even a single comprehensive study is available on the role of women councillors in urban local bodies. It is in this context this study entitled "URBAN GOVERNANCE AND WOMEN COUNCILLORS: A STUDY OF CHENNAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION", is undertaken.

WOMEN’S LOW REPRESENTATION

Before peeping into the role of women in urban governance it would be desirable to know the various causes of women's low representation in politics, which has a direct bearing on the attempt to understand women councillors in urban setting.
Women's low representation to the top decision making levels, be it at the Centre or State, is a tell-tale sign of the hiatus in the status of women as voters and as rulers. National perspective plan (1988-2000) also favoured 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Parliament and State assemblies, it was restricted to Panchayat and municipalities level to begin with.

Therefore, the question arises that what is keeping women away from participating in politics? Women's political participation, either as a political candidate or voter has been a neglected field of study. The committee on the status of women in India (1979) challenged a number of prevailing assumptions about women's political awareness. Female candidates had been generally characterised as more conservative than male candidates, more susceptible to religious appeals and heavily influenced by their husband's views. Most women do not have the courage to come forward without the support of a man. Society fosters the belief that women are incapable of taking their own decisions and our laws reinforce this.³

It has been often assumed that greater literacy, urbanization and exposure to mass media lead to greater political participation. It is necessary to know whether these assumptions are right or not.

No systematic research has been carried out to know the reasons for the lack of women's participation in politics and what can be done to encourage it and what can be the advantages of women's participation in politics. The dearth of research in this area highlighted the need for conducting a systematic study to find
out the reasons for the lack of women’s participation in politics, strategies to encourage women’s participation in politics and advantages of women’s participation in politics. Generally, following reasons were attributed for lack of participation of women in politics.

**PERSONAL REASONS**

(a) Women are ignorant about their rights and responsibilities.

(b) Women do not visualize politics as a career for themselves.

(c) Women are basically not interested in politics.

(d) Women’s reproductive roles prevent their political participation.

**SOCIAL REASONS**

(a) Women are unwilling to enter into politics due to the prevalence of goondaism, corruption and communalism.

(b) Women are not allowed to use famity wealth for political purposes.

(c) Men are unable to accept the political domination of women.

(d) Inadequate training opportunities are found for better participation of women in politics.

**POLITICAL REASONS**

(a) Fund collection for election is a great problem for women.

(b) It is difficult for women to establish contacts with party workers in male dominated party structures.4
WOMEN IN POLITICS

In fact, despite their vast numerical strength, women occupy a marginalized position in society because of several socio-economic constraints. This has inhibited effective participation of women in political processes and the institutional structure of democracy. According to the Document on Women's Development (1985), women's role in political structure had virtually remained unchanged, despite the rapid growth of informal political activity by them. Broad-based political participation of women has been severely limited due to the nexus of traditional factors such as considerations of caste, religion and feudal and family status. As a result, women were left on the periphery of the political process. With a few exceptions, women have remained outside the domain of power and political authority.

Although more women are entering politics particularly in villages, the middle class urban women are still negatively inclined to enter politics. Majority of the urban women are not prepared to participate in politics beyond voting. Family responsibilities, women's pre-occupation in the struggle to survive and the prevalence of violence and the role of money and muscle power in elections and women's lack of control or access over monetary resources are reported to be the main constraints.

In order to ensure their participation in politics, most women make use of their upper caste lineage and political connections, as widows, daughters, wives or
daughters-in-law of well-known politicians. This has been possible because of the view that women are mostly silent and ineffective participants.

Among the women who enter electoral politics, there are four distinct categories:

(i) Mainstream party women who also have connections with prominent politicians in their party.

(ii) Women who are members of the political parties but have no connections.

(iii) Women who have ambitions to enter the electoral politics but have not choice but to stand as independent candidates, and

(iv) Last but not the least is a few women who have moved up the party hierarchy on their own merit.  

REASONS FOR LOW PARTICIPATION AT GRASS-ROOT LEVEL

(1) Entry of a vast majority of women in governance on account of 33 percent reservation and this is a new development.

(2) Males in villages are not yet ready to accept women as members and chairpersons of Panchayats, especially those coming from ST/SC background.

(3) They often resort to the practice of fielding ‘dummy’ women candidates.

(4) Husband of an elected woman wants to speak on behalf of his wife.

(5) Men don’t give support to women.

(6) Men use women as ‘rubber stamp’.
Many women are not entering into politics because of the widespread exploitation and mudslinging involved in it.

In addition, the men are not willing to allow women to enter politics because of the power hunger, which has always exploited women.

Many women do not have the necessary infra-structural facilities and enough money to contest elections.

Women are not independent voters.

Women have a lack of knowledge about their rights and duties.

The women have a lack of knowledge about politics.

Women feel shy in going to the meetings and discussing issues because of the presence of men folk around.

Women are not well educated.

Women have a pressure of household work.

Women also have a pressure of domestic and social responsibilities.

Being women, they are less able to move around freely.

Majority of them make their choice on the basis of suggestions from male members of the family-husband and sons.

Women have a lack of training.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women's sizable involvement in politics due to reservation is a recent phenomenon. So, only a few studies are available, which discuss the role of women in local bodies, especially on the role of women in Panchayatraj. Hence,
an attempt has been made to survey a few studies on the role of urban councillors and municipal leaders, which would also applicable to women councillors in urban environment.

R.W. Jones has discussed the various aspects of Urban Administration and leadership in Indore in his book ‘Urban Politics in India’. Besides analysing the extent of State intervention in municipal functioning, he has highlighted the prevalence of faction-ridden politics that has lowered the image of the councillors in the public eye. Vishnuo Bhagwan has criticised the negative role of political parties in municipal government in his book ‘Municipal Government and Politics in Haryana – A case Study of Rohtak’. He has extensively studied municipal leadership and found it the need for revamping the urban local bodies to enhance the role of the councillors.” S.N. Mishra in his ‘Politics and Leadership in Municipal Government’ has concentrated in urban leadership in a medium sized town of Bihar and examined the socio-economic background of the councillors and its possible impact on the importance of leadership role.

The behaviour of the political executive i.e., elected representatives is influenced and conditioned by their life experiences, as Bendit and Lipset point out ‘To know who these power wielding individuals are is thought to be sufficient; it is a secondary matter or enquire into how they use their power. That they will do so in their self-interest is self evident, and the nature of this interest is inferred from the status they occupy. Hence social and economic status rather than competing strategies of the political struggles are regarded as their sufficient
cause of political decisions.\textsuperscript{9} "it is a wide spread assumption of political sociology", says Parry, "That social background and upbringing of a decision-maker will influence his attitude and policies.\textsuperscript{10} Various studies therefore aim at identifying the social origins educational levels and financial positions of these councillors who are at the helm of affairs in the urban local bodies.

R. T. Jangam and B. A. V. Sharma had conducted a study of urban leadership of a medium-size city of Jalna in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra State in which they found that the educational, socio-economic, political and organisational background possessed by the city councillors and the kind or extent in influence the background had in their ability to function as efficient or successful leaders. The findings of the study were that women councillors stood out as better equipped and more successful than the men councillors. The leadership was relatively young, bulk of the leadership was derived locally, the councillors level of education appeared to be rather low; leadership represented a fair cross-section of most religious and communal or caste groups in the city; the professional and business backgrounds of the councillors were varied; councillors having wealth in terms of money, land, house, business, vehicles etc. had a better social and economic standing and could wield a measure of influence with their colleagues and constituents and were better respected by the Municipal Officials and employees. The councillors had a considerably rich political background and organisational experience, leader lacked strong motivation and satisfactory public relations; they formed groups and cliques which pulled in different directions and
proceedings in the city council have suffered on account of strains and deadlocks, rowdism schemes, ugly protests and demonstrations and walkouts.\textsuperscript{11}

G. Ram Reddy and M. Kishtaih, in their study of the "urban political executive: The Social Background of the Chairman of Municipalities in Andhra Pradesh" in 1980 had tested the following hypothesis:

The political leadership in urban local bodies is controlled by the upper classes of the society and, therefore, the lower classes do not have a chance of attaining leadership; urban local bodies suffer due to their mostly uneducated leaders; and the unsatisfactory performance of urban local bodies is due to inadequate experience of their political executives in public office. The findings of the study were that an average city leader is from the upper social strata and is the son of the soil; he is middle aged with impressive educational background; either agriculture or business is his main occupations; he has a fairly good annual income; majority of them have long experience of municipal politics and they enter politics at a young age.\textsuperscript{12} These hypothesis may be verified in relation to elected women councillors of Chennai Municipal Corporation.

Zia-uddin Khan and Hoshiar Singh had studied the dynamics of three municipal councils in Rajasthan in 1984 and found that a substantial number of councillors were of 31-40 years age (higher age group) and a good number were in the age group of 21-30 years (young age group) and officials were mostly of the age between 31-50 years; the standard of education of the members appeared to be rather low; most of them were qualified up to middle or were below Matric.
those who were qualified commanded a certain amount of respect of their colleagues and the citizens as well; and officers' standard of education was also low. Further, there appeared to be a shortage of training and persons to manage municipal administration efficiently; the professional and business background of members was varied—they were advocates, vaidyas and even medical practitioners; however, service personnel and businessman were the dominating elite groups; and among the municipal members, the middle caste persons were the lowest in the rung of the upper caste group; wealth played a very significant role in city politics-councillors having wealth could wield a great influence among their colleagues and citizens.¹³

S.L. Kaushik has examined the role perception and role performance of councillors in urban governments in Punjab, and analysed the social-economic and political background of the leaders and their interface with the public. He has probed into relations between the deliberative and executive wings of municipal administration and found that a short of suspicion and mistrust prevails that leads almost to non-performance of the two wings; general apathy both on the part of the leaders and the municipal employees is on the increase to which general public is also generously contributing by sheer disinterestedness in municipal affairs: the totality of the situation at the local level is largely due to the quality of local leadership; there may be several other factors but the depleting power structure at the local level and the increasing interference by the district and state
level leaders. Hence, by and large, been responsible for the deplorable quality of urban leaders.

The other findings of Kaushik were that women councillors stood out as better equipped and more successful than the men councillors and enjoyed a better socio-economic background than men; majority of the councillors had urban background: the municipal councils appeared to have plenty of young blood; the councillors’ level of education appeared to be satisfactory; they represented a cross-section of all the religions and or caste groups in the state; their professional or occupational background varied. leaders having higher income have a better social and economic standing and can wield a measure of influence on their colleagues, municipal officials and constituents: their formal training was inadequate, most of the municipalities present collusion of cliques and factions, and irresponsible political behaviour on the part of the councillors, most the councillors had a rich political background and had the experience of participating in various socio-economic and political movements and agitations. 14

EMERGING TRENDS AND TRAITS IN MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP

Various studies conducted on municipal leadership and councillors in various states and the facts based on observations and experiences and reports appeared in the press point out some emerging trends. Prominent among them were summarized by Pardeep Sachdeva, as follows:

a) The leadership in the urban governments is relatively young, majority of the councillors belong to age group of 31-40. The lowering of the age of
franchise from 21 to 18 years is expected to bring in more of young blood to the municipal councils.

b) Women leaders have started showing keen interest in municipal affairs and their number in the municipal councils has shown an upward trend in recent times. Their number is expected to go up considerably with the spread of education among women and their participation in social services of various types such as child welfare, liberation of women, slum clearance and improving the lot of under privileged, protection of consumers' interests, conservation of environment etc.

c) More and more of the educated people are emerging as municipal leaders; some of them possess even post graduate qualifications; illiterate and uneducated people are no longer accepted as leaders as the citizens realise that uneducated councillors are not in a position to deliver goods.

d) In the absence of formal education at least of high school, the emerging leaders are conscious of their limitations to comprehend the municipal laws, rules and regulations and procedures of work. They, therefore, insist that the relevant records, resolutions and proceedings of the municipal council and its various committees and the communications received from the government should be in their mother tongue, in which they claim proficiency. They are also convinced that the acquisition of proficiency in one or more languages would enhance their comprehension of the working
to the municipal bodies and facilitate their communication with their constituents and the municipal officials.

c) Though joint electorate system provides for election of municipal councillors irrespective of their caste and communal affiliations, yet caste and communalism do play a substantial role in the election of leaders as municipal councillors from their respective castes and communities in some places. It will take some time to educate the electorate to vote for the leaders on the basis of their merit and personal qualifications rather than on extraneous considerations. Most of the emerging municipal leaders are returned on secular considerations but a few of them still make an appeal to the emotions of the voters to in the name of religion, caste and group considerations to support them.

i) The emerging leaders have begun to depend more and more on the support of political parties to be elected to municipal councils. They try to get the party ticket, symbol and the resources of their respective political parties in canvassing support in their favour. Some of the political parties compromise to unite to give a fight to their opposite parties and once their candidates are elected, they also agree to distribute the various offices in municipal council among themselves. The party discipline not being very rigid and exacting at the local level, those who are denied party tickets, rebel against the party command and contest the municipal elections on their own even at the risk of being thrown out of the party. Municipal
councillors of various political parties take decisions in the municipal council on partisan basis and indulge in favouritism and nepotism and other vices inherent in party system thus vitiating the atmosphere in the conduct of municipal affairs, which should be conducive to the well being of the entire city community and not of a particular group of people.

Municipal leadership comprises representative from all walks of life, professions, trades and business. But leaders from some profession such as medicine, engineering and teaching are very poorly represented, as they do not want to suffer the tribulations and trials inherent in fighting elections. Municipal leadership has begun to emerge among social workers, as they are able to win over the people with the appreciable work they have been carrying, on in their winning the election. It is high time that leadership should emerge from the rank of other professions as well especially those of college and school teaching personnel as they have enough of leisure to devote to comprehend the civic problems and other remedies to solve them.

Once municipal leadership was confined to men of wealth but now the leadership is emerging from among middle class and poor people as well because the citizens have come to believe that the representative from among themselves would be in a better position to understand their problems in the right perspective and strive to solve them to their best advantage.
i) It is unfortunate in some places emerging municipal leadership believes in the cult of money and muscle power, manipulation and use of malpractices like impersonation, booth capturing and rigging. This tendency needs to be nipped in the bud to enable the really devoted and dedicated leaders to come toward and take part in municipal affairs and administration.

j) It is appreciable that emerging leadership, especially the young leaders appear to have sufficiently strong motivation and direction. They are responsive to the needs and aspirations of the citizens. They visit their constituents and wards frequently, listen to their demands and grievances and do their best to get them satisfied and redressed by approaching the municipal authorities. They set good examples by giving the citizens a lead in organising various programmes for cleanliness of their localities, initiating various schemes for citizens' welfare on voluntary basis and inspiring them to actively participate in education and health programmes and keeping their environments clean for healthful living and making their cities beautiful.

k) The emerging leaders are also aware of the fact that their role performance would be judged by their constituents by their conduct as exhibited in the meetings of the council, their relations with the municipal bureaucracy and the citizens themselves. The leaders there have begun to appreciate the acquisitions of qualities of patience, reasonableness, resourcefulness and tact to deal with the municipal employees and of courtesy, cooperation and
concern to win popularity and support among their colleagues and constituents.

The emerging leadership is though, reflecting signs of improved quality, yet it leaves much to be desired. It is hoped that the perspective municipal leaders would have clear perception of goals, identification of problems and needs, devise means and measures for implementation of goals, secure cooperation and support of their colleagues, the administration and the constituents in order to prove themselves as effective and efficient leaders. The emerging leadership feels that they require comprehensive training to equip themselves with the knowledge of their rights and obligations and the techniques to comprehend the needs and problems of the citizens and methods to meet them. The State Governments should, therefore, lose no time in providing the desired training to municipal leaders if we want them to prove themselves as effective leaders. 

It has been viewed that reservation of seats for women provides political empowerment for women, which in turn gives women the capacity to influence decision-making process, planning, implementation and evaluation by integrating them into political system. This implies political participation, which includes right to vote, contest, campaign, party membership and representation in political offices at all levels and effectively influence decisions thereby leading to political empowerment. Reservation is one of the instruments of political empowerment as it guarantees representation. The passing of 73rd and 74th Amendments can be
considered as the greatest event for women’s empowerment as one-third of the seats are reserved for women in local bodies.  

The available literature at our disposal reveals the fact that the role of women councillors, especially in the urban governance, after the incorporation of 74th Amendment is not yet studied systematically. Further, the need to study this aspect is need of the hour as there are few women in the legislatures and parliament. Before taking such steps, it would better to access the performance of women in grass root institutions. So that necessary remedial measures can be taken to make women perform better at state and national level.

With this in view this study is undertaken with following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to critically analyse the roles performed by the women councillors in urban governance, particularly in Chennai Municipal Corporation. As such, the objectives of this study are as follow:

1. To analyse the various contexts of women representation in political processes.

2. To assess the role of women councillors in urban governance.

3. To critically evaluate whether the women councillors of Chennai Municipal Corporation understand their mandatory responsibilities and power assigned to them through 74th amendment.

5. To analyse the electoral performance of the women councillors, voter’s turnout, particularly women in the wards where women contested and

6. To suggest a few measures to enhance the capabilities of women councillors to take an active part in urban governance.

HYPOTHESES

This study is based on the following hypotheses:

a) Women Councillors of urban local bodies are capable of performing their duties as envisaged by 74th amendment.

b) Women Councillors are more people friendly and capable of meeting public demands.

c) Socio-economic backgrounds, interest in politics and patronage from family encourage and motivate the women councillors to perform their role.

d) Women Councillor’s participation in deliberative processes is varying according to socio economic capabilities. and

e) Women councillors are less articulating, less involved and less interested in the processes of urban governance and politics.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Role of Women Councillors in urban governance, particularly in Chennai Municipal Corporation is the focus of this study. Hence, data related to 52 Women Councillors of Chennai Municipal Corporation have been collected through a questionnaire, which consist of 35 questions pertaining to women
councillors' socio-economic background, their views regarding urban governance, people's demand concerning civic amenities, Women Councillors relationship with people, officials and politicians etc. Women Councillors have been interviewed at their home, ward committee office or in the Chennai Corporation. Questionnaire also consisted details regarding political affiliation, participation in the deliberation of the Council, their attitude towards male counterparts viz-a-viz and suggestions to enhance the civic amenities.

To enumerate people's perception of the Women Councillors another questionnaire was used. It consisted 25 items relating to people's view such as attitude of the Councillors towards public, performance of the Councillors, periodical visits to the ward, redressing the grievances and so on. Respondents were interviewed from each ward on simple random basis. The total number of respondents is 520 from 52 wards, thus 10 respondents from each ward.

Primary data such as details regarding Municipal election, number of Women contestants, elected Women Councillors, participation in Municipal Council and so on have been collected from the records available with the Chennai Municipal Corporation. Besides, secondary data like published books; reports, Journals and Newspapers reporting related to women Councillors, political participation and urban governance have also been used for this study.

The pilot study and pre-testing of the questionnaire were undertaken during the months of May-June 2002. Collected data have been tabulated and classified to establish casual linkages between variables.
In a way this study is an empirical research based on field data, observation and analysis.

STUDY AREA

52 wards of Chennai Municipal Corporation from where the Women Councillors have been elected form the study area for this research. Only from these wards 520 respondents were randomly chosen to enumerate people’s opinion on Women Councillors.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study exclusively deals with 52 Women Councillors of Chennai Municipal Corporation. Since a comparative study of six Municipal Corporations was not attempted a comparative perspective of Women Councillors of various corporations could not be given. Further, not even a single study was found on the Women Councillors of urban area and their role in urban governance. The researcher has to face many difficulties to enumerate the data regarding the Women Councillors.

However, as an initial attempt, this study may provide a starting point to make a comparative study of Women Councillors of various Municipal Corporations. As the mandatory provision of reservation for women in the political processes is a recent area of academic interest, this research would serve as a stepping-stone for the future researchers.
CHAPTERIZATION

The first chapter INTRODUCTION explains the importance of the study, aims and objectives of the study. Further, it also deals with the survey of literature, procedure of data collection, methodology, hypotheses, the study area and chapterization.

The second chapter, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND WOMEN traces the historical background of the struggle to get political representation for women. It also analyses the justification of reservation for women in political offices i.e. Panchayat to Parliament.

The third chapter WOMEN COUNCILLORS: THE NEW ROLE critically evaluates the socio-economic and political background of the women councillors elected to the Municipal Corporation of Chennai. An attempt has been made in this chapter to what extent women councillors are fitting in their role as Municipal Councillors as envisaged by the 74th Amendment.

The fourth chapter WOMEN COUNCILLORS AND ELECTORAL PROCESSES analyses the electoral performance of the women councillors in their respective wards. Besides, effort also been made to find out, to what extent women voters turned out, to support the women candidates.

The fifth chapter, ATTITUDE OF THE WOMEN COUNCILLORS enumerates women councillors’ attitude towards urban governance, political processes, peoples’ demand, official relationship and other such relevant factors that determine the efficacy of the women councillors.
The sixth chapter, *PEOPLES' PERCEPTION OF WOMEN COUNCILLORS* narrates the various views of the people from the study universe, which relate to women councillors' performance, ability to meet people's grievances, articulating peoples' needs in the Council and implementing several developmental schemes etc.

*The seventh chapter provides the SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION of this study. A few suggestions to improve the capability of the women councillors have also been given in this chapter.*
REFERENCES


4. Ibid., PP 5-7.


6. Ibid., P 16.


