CHAPTER-6

CONCLUSION
Participation in the political processes provides an opportunity to people to make the political system reflect their aspirations and ambitions and at the same time lends legitimacy to the system which is the hallmark of democracy. In fact no democratic polity survives or fulfills its ideals without the participation of the people. However, for a very long time, women were denied the opportunity to participate in the political process due to several historical reasons. This trend existed in most of the countries including the west. Democracy contrary to the authoritarian rule, the power in the people themselves, who in turn elect representatives by the exercising of their franchise thus, elections lie at the heart of the democratic process and are an expression of popular will. It is through the instrument of elections that notions of consent and representation are translated into reality by conversion of votes into seats in legislature. They guage the state of the national mind and open up channels between polity and society, between elites and masses, and between individuals and the government

During this period women became socially and politically aware due to the spread of education and modernization and started asserting their rights including political rights. In this changed scenario, emerged a number of feminist organizations which resorted to peaceful agitations to claim their rightful place in the socio-economic and political spheres. As a result, the Governments all over the world realized the importance and necessity of involving the women folk who constitute all most half of the mankind. This realization resulted in the initiation of legal, political and administrative measures in the direction of active involvement of women in the politico administrative process.

In India, while women constitute about half of the total population but subjected to several kinds of discrimination for centuries together, the realization for increased involvement of women in politics came late. It was during 1980’s, after lapse of three decades of Independence that the issue relating to women’s participation in political process came to the forefront and attracted the attention of the Government, policymakers and the society at large. The rapid increase in the efforts made in the involvement of women in the working of the political system at different levels enabled the women to come forward to take part in this process.
There is not only a significant spurt in the number of women as voters but also in the number of women as candidates contesting the elections at different levels and further their numbers holding key positions like Legislators, Ministers, Governors and soon have increased to a considerable extent.

There is no second thought on the role that the electorate plays in the elections, as well as in the selection of candidates but its behaviour has always been a cause of anxiety for it differs not only from an individual to individual but even from one country to another and within the country from one region to the other and from one place to another. At times, it even differs on the issues and problems of the place, region or country either as a whole or part. Factors like religion, caste, community and quality of the leaders also leave a great impact in influencing the behaviour of the electorate. On the same lines, speeches and visits of the leaders play a decisive role on the behaviour of the electorate. To state succinctly, variation in behavioural tendencies of the electorate cannot be ruled out for the simple reason that no two persons are alike or identical or same. It is in the context of variation in the behaviour of the electorate, in a democracy, elections, electorate, their voting behaviour and political culture play a predominant role and of paramount importance.

The vital aspects concerning democracy, elections, role of the electorate, political parties and other influencing factors like caste, religion and community have been widely studied by various authors and have even largely succeeded in identifying sensitive areas that need a deep understanding, correct perspective and careful handling. The other important aspects such as political culture, political and social processes have also been touched upon by a few writers. Whereas, the role of women voters, their participation in the election and their behavioural trends have not been studied in depth except by a negligible few that too in a peripheral manner. In as much as, the present study one which has been undertaken in the aforementioned direction assumes importance.

Warangal district, one of the 10 districts of the State of Telangana, was chosen as the area of the present study, which has a checkered political history, gained enviable prominence in the sphere of politics due to the nature of political events which dominated the general elections of the state, particularly to the Parliament from Warangal Constituency. The unique feature of the Warangal
Constituency is that right from the first General Elections to the Fifteenth general elections; it was a strong hold of the Congress Party, but Warangal districts strongly support from 1972 to 2014 separate state when 1972 Progressive Democratic Front candidate contested in this constituency won the Lok Sabha seat for the banner of separate state demand when 2004 TRS contested Warangal constituency and won the separate struggle banner Warangal is the center point of the Telangana struggle. Thus, as stated earlier the variation in the behaviour of the women electorate could usher in a new political era in the constituency. Such bewildering changes in the political scenes highlight and reinforce that the electorate’s behaviour and political culture play a predominant role in the elections and the outcome largely condition the level at which these two ingredients operate.

The status of women in India has been subject to the influence of the stages of civilization, and at every level, instead of exhibiting the features of ascendency it was subject to a gradual deterioration. The women along with men have played an important role in pre-vedic and vedic periods by actively involving in all fields of production. They enjoyed a position of significance both in public and private life till the advent of new set of social norms associated with the system of marriage and the concept of family.

Appearances of the latter in the social life of the community have responsible in the patriarchal structures, which have gradually relegated the position of women subordinate to men. All these developments transformed the society into a male dominated one the resultant effect was the reduction of the position of women to that of dependent and subservient being in all walks of life.

Deterioration in the position of women was reflected at different levels of human interaction in the society. As discussed, during the pre-independent period, they lost most of their privileges and were mainly confined to the four walls of family life. With the passage of time several other new forms of oppression that have come to dominate social life have left a deep dent on their decaying position. No major changes have taken place in the sphere and the same position continued till the dawn of Independence.
Dawn of independence, was seen not only as a political freedom to the country but also as a major milestone aimed at the emancipation of women from the position of bondage to that of a liberated one. It is to usher in such transformation as well as to bring in a total change in the society as a whole; a place has been carved for inclusion of the directive principles of state policy in the Constitution. Social reforms have also been initiated in this direction to liberate women from different kinds of cruel oppression. The all-round efforts to elevate the status of woman and accord her an equal partner status in the society are yet to yield positive results on the contrary continuation of anti woman sentiments waves in the socio economic and political spheres accompanied by class controls and male chauvinism have further alienated the status of woman to that of a discarded and rejected one.

To conclude, there has been a marked increase in voter turnout and election campaigning among women in India. While there have been significant gains among Indian women in these two areas of electoral participation, they continue to be under-represented in legislative bodies both at national and state level and within political parties. The under-representation of women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies and in crucial decision-making positions like important cabinet berths are clear pointers of their systematic exclusion from electoral competition on a gender basis. Though women head a significant number of national and state level political parties as party leaders, their representation within the rank and file of prominent political parties is not in significant numbers. Women who have made their presence felt in inner party structures are also relegated to the second rung leadership and have failed to break the “glass ceiling”. They rarely play any role in formulating policies and strategies in political parties and are assigned the job of keeping an eye on “women’s issues” that could bring electoral benefits and dividends for the party in future hustling.

Women’s movement and gender politics in India is currently divided over the question of affirmative action for women in Parliament and state legislatures around two main issues: first, the issue of overlapping quotas for women in general and those for women of the lower castes and, second, the issue of elitism. Affirmative action for women in legislative bodies it would go a long way in removing obstacles
that inhibit their participation in election competition and bridging the existing gap in the electoral political set-up.

These findings are exclusively validated and highlighted certain major and significant aspects of the study. On inquiry the knowledge of women voters regarding various aspects they have been asked to respond for various aspects and it has been found that:

1. 64 percent respondents, political background is from their laws side.
2. 80 percent respondents cast their vote in election because of their husbands and family suggestion.
3. 77 percent respondents do not have any political experience.
4. 75 percent respondents are illiterate they do not have knowledge about politics.
5. Majority of respondents 85% belongs to younger age group. From this analysis it can be said the most the women belongs to younger and middle age groups. These women cannot play an effective role because of low profile, poor orientation, lack of enthusiasm and lack of political background. There are certain obstacles like conservative approach, patriarchal culture and traditional social structures.
6. An important finding from the study is that majority of women have primary education and up to 10th class. The political and voting behavior pattern is significantly shaped by education. Further, effective socio political participation is possible with adequate education. Education gives a sense of confidence and encouragement to participate actively in politics. Similarly, this study has found that due to lack of education awareness, the women voters in Warangal Parliamentary Constituency are not being able to overcome the narrow and conservative ideas on social customs and traditions that have an adverse effect in their participation in political sphere.

7. Women voters’ awareness and perception towards politics plays a crucial role in any democracy. Most of the selected voter respondents are married, some literate and illiterate and belonging to all communities. One third respondents are house wives, most of them are conscious about the behavior of political
knowledge. They wish to elect an efficient political leader who works for the people and keeps his promises. Majority responded that they are casting vote according to their own wish without the influence of others.

8. The findings show that their husbands and family, as well as peer groups play an important role in the socializing process rather than one’s own family.

9. The role of the mass media also indicates that it is the peer groups rather than the family who shape the socialization process of women voters.

10. An important dimension of political culture is what a citizen expects from a system. The study shows that a sizeable proportion of the women voters have no clear cut expectations from the Government.

11. The qualitative nature of political culture also depends upon the kind of leadership the system inducts. Once again it can be seen that the women voter’s sizeable numbers could not mention the precise qualities of a good leadership. However, among those who could mention regarded good character and honesty as qualities which a leader should posses.

To conclude, there has been a marked increase in voter turnout and election campaigning among women in India. While there have been significant gains among Indian women in these two areas of electoral participation, they continue to be under-represented in legislative bodies both at national and state level and within political parties. The under-representation of women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies and in crucial decision-making positions like important cabinet berths are clear pointers of their systematic exclusion from electoral competition on a gender basis. Though women head a significant number of national and state level political parties as party leaders, their representation within the rank and file of prominent political parties is not in significant numbers. Women who have made their presence felt in inner party structures are also relegated to the second rung leadership and have failed to break the “glass ceiling”. They rarely play any role in formulating policies and strategies in political parties and are assigned the job of keeping an eye on “women’s issues” that could bring electoral benefits and dividends for the party in future Hastings. However, the silver lining over women’s participation in electoral politics in
India is the participatory upsurge witnessed among women as voters in the 1990s. The difference in voting based on gender remains significant, but the participation of women as voters is clearly on the upswing at the national level as more and more women have started exercising their electoral rights and participating in electoral competition. Similarly, women’s participation in formal politics has also increased in campaign activities during the election. Thus, the political participation of women in electoral politics and activities connected with it is witnessing a definite upswing as their increased participatory trends make it quite evident. The levels of political participation of Indian women as voters and as campaigners are determined by a host of factors as revealed by the NES 2004 such as interest in politics, importance of voting, voting discretion, social networking, exposure to media and demographics like location, educational attainments, economic class and employment status. A regression analysis of key determinants of women’s participation in the electoral process as voters revealed that the factor “vote matters” in electing a new government is one of the best predictors of Indian women voting in elections. The determinants that predict higher participation of Indian women in elections campaign during the electoral competition are different from the factors that determine their higher voting patterns. A regression analysis of women campaigners as the dependent variable with independent variables revealed that, “interest in politics” is one of the strongest predictors of women who campaign in elections. Women’s movement and gender politics in India is currently divided over the question of affirmative action for women in Parliament and state legislatures around two main issues: first, the issue of overlapping quotas for women in general and those for women of the lower castes and, second, the issue of elitism. Affirmative action for women in legislative bodies it would go a long way in removing obstacles that inhibit their participation in election competition and bridging the existing gap in the electoral political set-up. The key barriers that restrict women’s proactive participation in the electoral process, that need to be addressed on a priority basis, apart from affirmative action, are more representation of women in political parties, including them in the decision-making bodies and providing them key cabinet berths in government at the central and state level. Women should be promoted and encouraged by the concerted effort of government in partnership with civil society for enhanced and quality participation in formal politics. An increased political
participation by women in all spheres of political life and electoral competition in particular will not only ensure political parity and equality with men, but would also serve the larger issues concerning women, i.e., upliftment and empowerment of Indian women.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

On the basis of above findings of present study tries to make few suggestions which may be incorporated as policy measures in the future for desirable improvements in the status and empowerment of women voters.

**Creating Awareness**

Training and workshop have more significance. Women lack exposure to public affairs and public dealings. Training will instill and encompass awareness building aptitude, skill and understanding of administrative procedures spreading awareness about constitutional rights, function and duties, voter’s leadership development.

**Higher Literacy**

Study showed the majority of the women are illiterate. So primary aim of should be educated to them. Illiterate women are always poor therefore; all women voters should be educated up to certain level.

**Gender Sensivity**

Awareness camps and campaigns should be organized to bring a change in attitude and gender discrimination and that there is no difference between son and daughter.

**Positive Media Support**

Mass media plays a constructive role in enhancing women’s voters by giving a wider coverage to various activities and measures taken by women voters and by highlighting their problems and prospects, through audio video systems success stories of women leaders and their struggles and experiences may be shown to women so as to motivate and encourage rural women to shoulder voting responsibilities.
Providing Information

Women do not constitute a homogenous group. Local women groups, NGOs should act as facilitators and catalysts and play an active and positive role in providing information, skill and resources for evolving and establishing grass root women’s organizations. Such kind networks helps the process of strengthening women’s influence on development policy, enhancing political participation of women and highlighting women concern in decision-making bodies and also strengthening women movements.

Required Representation

It may be difficult to get the required representation of 33% of seats. Required representation here implies worthy candidates. To overcome the problem, two pronged formula can be adopted: (1) the candidates who register their names to contest prior to elections should be trained in special training camps. (2) There must be limitation for politician’s families and wealthy families to put female candidates in the fray.

Developing Confidence

So far as confidence is concerned, it will definitely be built sooner or later, if concerted efforts are made. When they will be associated in the decision making process and have enough say, will ultimately have confidence.

Think Independently

Women voters should think independently to vote for the capable person she should not get influenced by the choice of the family members. Rights to vote is a sacred duty performed with utmost caution. As many women do not understand the value and power of their vote, they exercise it in an ignorant manner. They should understand they are handing over the power of control for five years by voting the candidates.

Elections are not a marketing affair

Voters often get carried away the small baits laid by the greedy politicians. These ruin the spirit of democracy. The politicians are cashing the weakness and get
elected by spending large amounts by giving away the regular election tokens like cash, liquor to the males, sarees and kunkum bowls to women voters. The elected politicians are determined to earn multiples of money they spent on election. Women need to be educated on these traps laid by selfish politicians.

**Realizing the potential with in**

Women are bestowed with lot of inherent abilities including logical and analytical mind. Women also have inhibition. They must exercise all the innate abilities and chose the right candidate.
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