**Determinants of Voting Behavior of Women: A Study on Sylhet City**

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**Abstract**

Voting behavior is the highly specialized subfield by which one can participate in a democratic political system. Understanding the determinants of voting behavior of women is crucial to know about the electoral system of a democratic country. The aims of this present study were to investigate the factors why some women vote while others do not, to find out the most preferred electoral sector in which women vote, and to gain an overview about women's political participation by voting system.

The study employed mixed methods, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of 101 women voters from the Tuker Bazar union of Sylhet city. Additionally, ten in-depth interviews and observations were conducted to enrich the survey data.

The finding of this study reveals that voting behavior has many determinants such as demographic factors like age, education, employment status , marital status, income level and religion etc. and socio- politico and economic factors such as, influence of family and friends, women's right to vote, freedom of casting vote, facilities of transportation system and location of polling station, influence of religion and religious community leader, husband's pressure, social media influence, cultural norms and traditional gender rules, job security, candidates good will and qualification, campaigns and advertisements, influence of political parties and government policies, fear of conflicts and civic duty. Besides, other women do not vote for lack of interests or health reasons and are not registered voters. Additionally, the result explored that the most preferred electoral sector of women is local elections rather than others, and 32% of women said that political participation of women is neutral.

The result of this study will give some recommendations and directions for governmental bodies, political parties, and other political scientists to understand and take essential steps to improve women's participation in the election process of democratic societies.

**Keywords:** Determinants, voting behavior, women, demographic factor, Sylhet city, political participation.

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