

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY OF
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF
WOMEN IN SURAT**

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BY
SHARMISTHA CHAKRABORTY
REGN. NO: 2814

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF
DR. A. VENKATRAMAN
PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
VEER NARMAD SOUTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY, SURAT

VEER NARMAD SOUTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY
UDHNA-MAGDALLA ROAD, SURAT – 395 007

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VEER NARMAD SOUTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY
University Campus, Udhna-Madgalla Road, SURAT - 395007 (Gujarat) India.
વીર નર્મદ દક્ષિણ ગુજરાત યુનિવર્સિટી
યુનિવર્સિટી કેમ્પસ, ઉધના-માદગલ્લા રોડ, સુરત - ૩૯૫૦૦૭, (ગુજરાત), ભારત.
Telegram: VNSGU,
Telephone: +91-261-2227151 to 2227146, Fax: +91-261-2227312
E-mail: info@vnsqu.ac.in, Website: www.vnsqu.ac.in

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that **Sharmistha Chakraborty** has been registered for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** at the Department of Public Administration, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat. She has completed her research work under my supervision. I further certify that the work embodied in this thesis entitled "**Women Empowerment: A Study of Political Participation of Women in Surat**" is her own work and it has not been submitted to any other university/institution for the Ph.D. degree.

Date: 31/07/2017
Place: Surat


Dr. A. Venkatraman
(Research Supervisor)
Professor,
Department of Public Administration,
Veer Narmad South Gujarat
University, Surat – 395 007

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “**Women Empowerment: A Study of Political Participation of Women in Surat**” is a record of independent research work carried out by me under the supervision and guidance of **Dr. A. Venkatraman**. This work has not been submitted to any other University/Institution for the Ph.D. Degree.

Date: 31 / 7 /2017

Sharmistha Chakraborty
Sharmistha Chakraborty

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CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of human civilization women have had a prominent role in society. The process started at the Neolithic period. At this stage women were found to contribute maximum benefits in the development of human society. Their role was neither neglected nor given any inferior position. This practice continued up to the Vedic period,¹ when women were given enough education facility. At the Vedic age, male started dominating over women. They were used only as an instrument of producing next generation and entertain male counterpart. This is referred to as the historical dark age of womenhood.

After the long "Dark Age" western countries first witnessed the revival of womenhood. Their scattered dignity was repaired gradually with the cultivation of culture, education and socialistic aptitude. During the twentieth century this situation started slackening with the spirit of freedom movement in which women took voluntarily participation in the freedom struggle movement.

The 1985 Nairobi NGO-FORUM workshops observed that the growth of women's power and the sustainability of development² are

ecologically tied. The United Nation fourth world conference on women in 1995 identified environment as one of twelve critical areas for women. Five year later at the millennium summit in the New York world leaders promised "to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women" as effective ways to control poverty, hunger and diseases and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.

The 1990's gradually recognized of the centrality of women's empowerment to the success of developed programmes. The 1990 world conference on women empowerment declared education for all as a main objective. In this regard, the United Nation's resident coordinators were called upon to play a key role in facilitating inter-agency co-operation on gender equality and the empowerment of women with an operational activities at the country level. The struggle for women should go to reach the ultimate goal of their empowerment.

Women rights³ are the rights and entitlement claimed for women and girls of many societies worldwide. In some places, these rights are institutionalized or supported by law, local custom and behavior, whereas in others they may be ignored or suppressed. They differ from broader notion of human rights, though the claim of an inherent historical and traditional bias against the exercise of rights by women and girls in favour of men and boys may be valid. The women's rights include the rights to bodily integrity and autonomy, to vote, to hold public office, to work, to

birth control, to have an abortion, to fair wages or equal pay, to own property, to education, to serve in the military or be conscripted, to enter into legal contracts and to have marital and parental rights.

Although males seem to have dominated in many ancient cultures there are some exceptions. In Nigeria, Aka culture⁴ women may hunt even on their own and often control distribution of resources.

Empowerment

Empowerment refers to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender or spiritual strength of an entity.⁵ The subject of empowerment of women has become a contemporary issue all over world including India since last few decades. Inequalities between man and women and discrimination against women have also been age-old issues all over world. Empowerment focuses on mobilizing the self help on the poor and needy. Women empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth, their rights to have and to determine choices; their rights to have access to opportunities and resources; their rights to have the power to control their own lives; both within the home and outside the home.⁶ Empowerment is the process of obtaining basic opportunities for marginalized people, either by those people, or through the help of non-marginalized others who share their own access to those opportunities. It also includes actively thwarting attempts to deny those opportunities.

Empowerment also includes encouraging and developing the skills for self-sufficiency with a focus on eliminating the future need for charity or welfare in the individuals of the group this process can be difficult to start and to implement effectively.

The Concept and Profile of Women's Empowerment in India

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social development or environment in which one can make decisions and make choice either individually or collectively for social transformation. It strengthens the ability by way to acquiring knowledge, power and experience (Hashemi, Schuler and Riley, 1996).⁷ Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individual to think, take action and central work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of one lives. Empowerment includes control over resources (physical human, intellectual and financial) and over ideology. It is not merely a feel of greater self-confidence and an internal transformation of one's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barriers to accessing resources or changing traditional ideology (Pinto, 2001).⁸

Women empowerment is very essential for the development of society. As per the United National Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) the term women empowerment means:⁹

- i. Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.
- ii. Developing a sense of self worth a belief in one's ability to secure desired change and the rights to -control one's life
- iii. Gaining the ability to generate choices exercise bargaining power.
- iv. Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create a social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Thus, empowerment means a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. It is a multi level construct referring to individuals, organization and community. It is an internal, ongoing process centered in the local community involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation through which people lacking an equal shares of valued resources gain greater access to the control over these resources.

To empower, women education is most important tool.¹⁰ Education as means of empowerment of women can bring about a positive attitudinal change. It is therefore, crucial for the socio-economic and political progress of India. Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women. The constitution of India empowers the state to adopt affirmative measures for promoting ways and means to empower women. Education increases the economic, social and political opportunities available to

women. It forms of higher lifetime earning for women. However, these achievements are negligible as India still accounts for 30% of the total adult illiterates all over the world. Keeping girls out of the school is costly and undermines development. Poverty can be effectively tackled by educating girls. Educated women keep their concern about their children's education and nutrition.

The Aspects of Empowerment

Already women commissions, both at the Centre and in States have been established in India to be pro-active for the women's dignity and respect in the society. All such activities demand sincerity and commitment of the constituted organization. The various categories of empowerment play a dynamic role to empower the women in our society.

Economic empowerment¹¹ refers to programmes aiming directly raising people's income. For example, the total allocation for the "Rashtriya Mahila Kosh" which works towards credits support to poor women for innovative schemes is to be increased from Rs.100 crore to Rs.500 crore in 2015-16. State Social Welfare Advisory Boards (SSWAB) were established to maintain their programmes and activities. Sociological empowerment often addresses members of group that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision making process through, for example -discrimination based on disability, race, religion, or gender.

Legal empowerment happens when marginalised people or groups use the legal mobilisation i.e. Law, legal system and justice mechanism to improve or transform their social, political, or economic situations. According to "open society foundation" (an NGO) "legal empowerment"¹² is about strengthening the capacity of all people to exercise their rights, either as individuals or as member of a community. Legal empowerment is about grass root justice, about ensuring that law is available and meaningful to ordinary people.

One of the major steps is to associate the women in political process. Through the "panchayati raj" institutions, women have actively entered into political life in India. As per 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment acts, all local elected bodies reserve one third of their seats for women. Although the percentage of women in various levels of political activity have risen considerably, women are still under-represented in governance and decision making.¹³

The Status of Women in World

There are different areas in the world where women have demanded equality with men in the matters of education, employment, inheritance, marriage, politics and recently in the fields of religion to serve as preacher (Hinduism and Islam).¹⁴

The position and status of women all over the world has risen incredibly in the 20th century. We find that it has been very low in 18th and 19th centuries in India and elsewhere when they were treated like "object", that can be bought and sold. Women in India remained within the four walls of their household.

A long struggle over centuries has brought women the property rights, voting rights and equality in civil rights before the law in matters of marriage and employment. In India, women had not struggled much for voting rights like other countries. In addition to the above rights in India the customs of *purdha* (Veil system)¹⁵ female infanticides, child marriage, sati system, dowry system, johar and the state of permanent widowhood were either totally removed or checked to an appreciable extent after independence through legislative measures.

The status of women in China was inferior and about 45% of Chinese women had bowed feet in the 19th century. This caused limited women activities in the society. Due to social customs, men and women were not near to one another and the women of China were reluctant to be treated by male doctors. This resulted in a tremendous need for female doctors. In 1950 the People's Republic of China enacted the "new marriage law". This law raised the legal age for marriage for men to 20 and 18 for women and marriage could take place only after the consent of both parties.

In ancient Greece,¹⁶ the status of women varied from city state to city state. Athenian women were under the guardianship of their father or any other male family member; after marriage they were under the control of their husband. Spartan women enjoyed a status, power and respect that was unknown to the rest of the classical world. As men engaged in military activity, women took responsibility for running estate. Plato acknowledges¹⁷ that extending civil and political rights to women would substantially alter the nature of the household and the state. According to Aristotle, the labours of women added no value because 'the art of household management' is not identical with the art of getting wealth the one uses the materials which other provides.

In Roman society,¹⁸ it was patriarchal and women could not vote, hold public office, or serve in the military. The upper classes exercised political influence through marriage and gradually changed the status of women. However, before and during "biblical times", the roles of women were almost always severely restricted.

The Quran, provided guidance to the Islamic community and modified existing customs in Arab society. The Quran introduced fundamental reforms to customs law and introduced rights for women in marriage, divorce and inheritance. By providing that wife, not her family, would receive dowry from her husband which she could administer as her personal property.¹⁹

According to English Common Law, all property which a wife held at the time of marriage came into possession of her husband which was developed from the 12th century onward. In the late 18th century, questions of women's rights became central to political debates in both France and Britain. Some of the greatest thinkers of the enlightenment in the west, who defended democratic principles of equality and challenged notions that a privileged few should rule over the vast majority of the population, believed that these principles should be applied only to their own gender and their own race.

Right to Vote

During the 19th century women began to ask for the right to vote, the right to participate in their governments and its law making.²⁰ In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to give women the right to vote.²¹

A number of Nordic countries gave women the rights to vote in the early 20th century. Finland (1960) Norway (1913), Denmark and Iceland (1915), Netherland (1917), Canada, Czechoslovakia, Georgia, Poland and Sweden (1918), Germany and Luxembourg (1919), and the United States (1920), Spain gave women right to vote in (1931), France (1944), Belgium, Italy, Romania and Yugoslavia in (1946), Switzerland in (1971) and Liechtenstein in (1984). In Latin American countries gave women the right to vote in the 20th century. Brazil (1932), Argentina (1946). In India under

colonial rule, Universal suffrage was granted in (1935). Other Asian countries gave right to vote in the mid of 20th century. Japan (1945), China (1947), Indonesia (1955), in Africa women got right to vote in 20th century – Liberia (1947), Uganda (1958), Nigeria (1960) were some countries that provided voting rights to women.

Modern Movements

In 1960 women rights again became an important issue through the movement was called "Feminism" or "Women liberation".²² Reformers wanted the same pay as men, equal rights in law and the freedom to plan their families or not have children at all.

The International Council of Women (ICW)²³ was the first women organization to work across national boundaries advocating human rights for women. In March/April 1988, women leaders came together in Washington D.C. with 80 speakers and 49 delegates representing 53 women's organization from nine countries – Canada, U.S.A., Ireland, India, England, Finland, Denmark, France, and Norway.

Four world conferences have been held, the first in Mexico [International women's year, (1975) the second Copenhagen (1980), third in Nairobi (1985), and the fourth in Beijing (1995)].

There was a time when women's education was not priority even among the elite. Women are playing higher or bigger role in economic

field as workers, consumers, and entrepreneur. In India, more women are employed, though their share is still very low. Women are working in every field such as I.T., health, manufacturing, education, service sector.

The rapid pace of economic development has increased the demands for educated female labour force almost in all fields. Women are earning as much as their husbands do, economically strengthening their family.

Economically independent women have become confident about their personal lives.

Feminist activism²⁴ in India gained momentum in the late 1970s. In 1990s grants from foreign donor agencies enabled the formation of new women- oriented NGOs and self-help groups. NGOs such as Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)²⁵ have played a major role in the advancement of women's rights in India. Many women have emerged as leaders of local movements for example, Medha Patkar of the Narmada Bachao Andolan. The Government of India declared 2001 as the year of women's empowerment. The National Policy for the empowerment of women was passed in 2001.

The Status of Women in India

A brief view of how women are being empowered in the different states of India is given below. Government and NGOs have taken steps to empower the women in different states.

Women empowerment in Jharkhand adopts a multi-pronged approach. In Jharkhand legal awareness camp is organized in each block and district to solve their problems and create awareness among them.²⁶ "Mahila Samakhya" is one of most successful programmes for the women's empowerment. They empower women through education, health, legal training, economic empowerment and women's participation in local governance. They committed to empower each women to attain a just place in family, society and governance. At present they cover 4000 villages of 76 blocks and 11 districts. They started these programmes in integrated Bihar Hindustan Zinc organised two 4-days workshop for "Sakhi" women at Udaipur. A total of 150 rural and tribal women got together to participate in the specialised workshop of Hindustan Zinc's women empowerment campaign "Sakhi". The workshop was held for the "Sakhi" women self help groups from the villages of "Maton" and "Debari" in Udaipur district of Rajasthan.²⁷

After being voted to power in December last year for the second term BJP's government in Rajasthan took major step for the betterment of women. For this purpose the government launched several schemes. One of the schemes is aimed to ensure women empowerment through financial inclusion. This scheme was conceptualized in 2007.²⁸

Women empowerment in Haryana rests majority on the connectivities the state shares with Delhi the national and educational

capital of the country. Haryana shares Delhi's lucrative prospects of work for women, which helps more and more women to remain employed. In Haryana now, more women grab the best opportunities in empowerment in every sector of the country from agricultural to I.T. "A Sukhi Haryana" and "A Ray of Hope"²⁹ are indispensable when women are provided opportunities to balance the demands of the home and the challenges of their job which they have to juggle on a daily basis. This can be ascertained with more infrastructural advancement towards this holistic role that women play in the society.

In Assam the status of women and their empowerment in term of various indicators such as access to education, employment, household decision making power, financial autonomy indicates women enjoy better status in the state as compared to the women in India in term of decision making power at the house hold level, while the situation is reverse in case of their financial autonomy and sexual violence. Although government has undertaken a number of steps to educate women and to overcome old-age customs, there is need to create awareness towards achieving the desired goal of women empowerment in the state.

After assuming power in 2011, one of the key focuses of the West Bengal government has been empowering women. Through the various schemes, the new state government has ensured that women in the state lead a life of dignity and are treated as per with men. The social scheme

was launched on 1st October 2013 for the welfare of the women. The Kanyashree scheme³⁰ was inaugurated for the girls of age group between 13 and 18 and 19 for scholarship. A self-defence programme for school girls title "Sukanya" has been launched in association with Kolkata police. The state was the first to give empowerment to women by forming distinct policies. Regular workshops and seminars are being organized to give training to the women technically to make them financially empowered. "Swayamsidha" develops empowered women who will demand their rights from family, community and government have increased access to and control over, social and political resources, have enhanced awareness and improved skills and be able to raise issues of common concern through mobilization. Beside these Sarva - Shiksha - Abhiyan and Integrated child development scheme (ICDS) target children in general. Sukanya scheme has embarked, it is the project which is applicable for the girl child above 8 std they are trained in the "Martial Arts" to defend themselves in the face of any attack. "Swabalambam" trains poor and needy women of urban -slum and rural areas from weaker sections like SC, ST etc. their employment.

The empowerment of women is an important pre-condition for the development of humanity. Empowerment of women is an issue close to the heart of several people such as Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda. In the last eleven years under the pro-people, pro-active leadership the Gujarat government has taken a series of steps to further integrates the

women into the development journey of Gujarat, politically, socially and economically. The steps taken by Gujarat government in coastal areas to integrate women in initiatives such as seaweed cultivation. We can went back during the period of freedom struggle – a widow named "Ganga Ba" joined Mahatma Gandhi at "Sabarmati ashram" and introduced charkha. In Ahmedabad, Jasuben pizza, Lijjat papad, and Induben khakhra are well-known brands and very popular. On the question of women reservation Gujarat state assembly has already passed a bill for 50% reservation in local bodies.

Now in Gujarat awareness has risen among the younger women. The Gujarat government has allotted new houses in the name of women after the earthquake. In rural areas women have organized themselves 2,00,000 self help groups - Sakhi mandals with a financial commitment of about us 4 billion promising assured livelihood to women in rural Gujarat over a period of 3-5 years.

Gujarat government has taken many steps for women empowerment:³¹

- No discrimination between boy and girls: Beti Bachao campaign promoted to improve female\male ratio.
- Educating the girls child: Assistance worth RS 20 crore distributed to 50,000 girls from chief-minister "Kanya Kelavani Nidhi Fund" Vidyalakshmi bonds worth RS 118 crore given 11:85 lakh girls.

- Right to property: Registration fees worth RS 414 crore waived off for around 11,73,000 documents registered in the name of women.
- *Panchayati raj in public administration: Leading rural development* through 362 women *semares* gram panchayat.
- Competent representation in civic bodies: Gujarat is the first state in the country to provide 33% reservation for the women in civic body election. Bill for 50% reservation for women passed in the state assembly
- Fight against Malnutrition: Participation in fight against Malnutrition.
- Taking care of mothers.
- Mission Mangalam: Business purpose 1700 crore managed by sakhi mandals strong contribution of women in sectors such as milk co-operatives, education and health services.
- Active participation of over 6.5 lakh women in khel mahakumbh. 81 national awards won by women sports persons.
- Historic 70% voting by women voters in the state's assembly election of 2012.

Significance and Focus of Study

Women's empowerment is impeded due to various social, economic, historical, geographical, political and cultural factors. This result in their

minimal participation and even their exclusion, illiteracy, patriarchal views, lack of access and control over and income and other resources, restrictions in public spaces and not so sensitive legal systems impair their progress and empowerment. This is compounded by the absence or inadequate availability of infrastructural facilities and support services to facilitate their participation in different areas. There are no specific laws or policies that can strengthen their social, economic and political empowerment. The government has of course provided one-third reservation for women in local bodies to ensure their participation in local governance.

While there initiatives have created some space for women, there is not guarantee to a non-discriminative or conducive environment in which they can participate and get empowered. The effectiveness of women's empowerment continues to be evaluated against indicators that been defined by men from a male dominated perspective. While disadvantages continue to impede empowerment, the differences between the gender get widened because of the manner in which women empowerment is perceived.

The candidate has taken up the topic of study of women empowerment in Surat because of the following factors:

1. Surat has become a city of migrant labour in the last couple of decades and as a result the demography is skewed in favour of

males, since males have predominantly migrated from other states to Surat in search of job opportunities.

2. A large number of women, belonging to all economic categories, are engaged in some kind of economic activity in non-formal sectors, thereby contributing to the economic betterment of their families.
3. This (migration) coupled with rapid urbanization and economic betterment has brought about a "modern and western" outlook and values among the citizens of Surat.
4. To what extent such a change gets reflected in empowerment of women is an issue that needs to be examined and hence this topic.

Objectives

1. To relate how the concept of empowerment is directly related to social, political and economic factors.
2. To find out how the women of Surat, both literate and illiterate, are aware of their powers, rights and duties.
3. To find out whether privileged women are more empowered than the non-privileged women in society.
4. To examine whether women empowerment has helped to develop and advance in social, political and economic spheres and activities.

Hypothesis

1. The literate women is empowered than the illiterate women.
2. Women from privileged class are empowered than the women of non-privileged groups.
3. Women from non-privilege groups know their rights but they are not aware of how to execute their rights in the society.
4. Empowered women are independent with participation in social and political activities.
5. Economic prosperity is related to women empowerment.

Research Methodology

The study is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. The investigation was carried out through the collection of data on the basis of survey research method in which questionnaire and observation technique of data collection were adopted. For the study of the topic both primary and secondary sources of data has been utilized, because one source of data is normally considered insufficient to fulfill the requirements of the study.³²

Primary Data

This was collected using survey research. The total sample size was 360. Sample was drawn using stratified random sampling technique. The details of the sample is explained in the fifth chapter.

Secondary Data

The following source of collection of secondary data has been used.

- 1) Books
- 2) Research papers published in Journal
- 3) Information from Website
- 4) Articles publish in Newspapers and Magazines.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher has surveyed only women of different categories to ascertain their views of various aspects of empowerment. The women's perspective on empowerment is bound to be different from the male's perspective of what empowerment of women is and in that sense the study is from a "feminist" perspective.

Chapter Division of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into six substantive chapters. The first chapter is introduction to the topic of study. The candidate briefly describes the background of the study, the objective and methodology. The next chapter is a review of selected literature on women empowerment and examines the different aspects of empowerment. The third chapter deals with the background of Surat city and its developmental features. The fourth

chapter is a discussion on the social, economic and political aspects of empowerment. The fifth chapter is analysis of data and in the concluding sixth chapter the candidate has summarized and provided the findings of the study.

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CHAPTER – 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Empowerment is a word that has been used so often and so widely that its definition has become blurred. Activist groups use the term to rally behind different issues, while academic circles frequently cite the word in scholarly articles. But what do they mean when they say "empowerment" and whom do they want to "empower?" Empowerment is related to the norms, values and beliefs of a society; therefore empowerment can be revealed differently in different societies.

Empowerment needs to be viewed as a highly contextualized, multi-dimensional process of which women themselves have differing perspectives. Hence, it is important to understand subjectivities and the respective influencing factors in specific contexts, as well as how they interlink. Approaches to understanding empowerment as a relational and process concept take social structures and agency into account. The link to resilience sheds light on how project interventions and policies can target particular dimensions of empowerment to foster coping, adaptation and

transformative capacities so women can effectively participate in decision-making processes, which translate into resilience.

The concept of empowerment has historical foundations in several collective struggles for social justice, such as the Protestant Reformation, Quakerism, Jeffersonian democracy, capitalism, the black-power movement. In the mid-1980s, the notion of women's empowerment emerged as a way to challenge patriarchy. And, in the 1990s, the term was broadened from thinking of it as collective process to also understanding it as an individual process of self-transformation.

At the 1995 Fourth World Conference in Beijing, women's empowerment was introduced to an expanded audience of state actors and governments. The signatories of the conference pledged to advance women's empowerment worldwide. Their vision of women's empowerment stressed three main fundamentals:

- It was a socio-political process;
- Power was critical to empowerment;
- The process promoted shifts in political, social, and economic power between and across individuals and groups.

These fundamental notions of empowerment were incorporated into the growing literature on the conceptualization of women's empowerment.

Numerous studies on Empowerment of Women in India covering variety of problems and issues at micro, macro and regional levels, and almost all general aspects of related to women empowerment have been studied by social and political scientists. Some of the findings of these studies have been discussed in following paragraphs:

The struggle of women for better economic status and the structure of employment opportunities for women in rural as well as urban area, the author reveals that in spite of over two decades of planned economic development the structure of employment opportunities for women in the rural areas remain relatively unchanged. Nearly 80 per cent of the total female workforce is employed in agriculture but very little attention has been paid in practice by social planners to improve the social situation of these women.¹

The march of literacy failed to keep pace with the growth of population and the total number of illiterates among males and females at the end of each census decade exceeded the corresponding number at the beginning of the decade, although the percentage increase in literacy for the year was substantial. These studies, revealed that the problem of literacy in India is embedded more in illiteracy among females than among males and the problem here is compounded by a variety of cultural, economical,

sociological and even anthropological factors to keep women in economic subjection as long as is possible.²

The status of women from pre-independence period to modern period and changing pattern of society reveals that during the pre-independence period, two major movements which affected the position of women were the social reform movement of nineteenth century and the nationalist movement of the twentieth century. Both these movements raised the question of equal status of women. This further resulted in creating contradictory image of middle class educated women participating in long urban agglomerations, generate an impression that Indian women's status has improved substantially but in actual scene the problems of educated urban women become more serious since the discrimination and disabilities operate in a more subtle and covert ways.³

The working and living conditions of poor women in poverty with the changing social and economic conditions, has taken up various issues, like gender inequality, technology, invisibility, health, legislation, housing, political approach etc; revealed that awareness has spread with education, through slowly in the country, awareness of their rights and they being protected somewhere by someone is there in the back of their minds.⁴

The reasons for the ambivalent status accorded to women in Hindu society, remarked that as such female principle is worshipped along with male but women in flesh and blood are humiliated, depersonalized and subordinated. Women and Society is one of the most important areas of study among the researchers to analyse the social process and changing pattern of society, affecting Indian women in different ways. Any assessment of the status of women cannot be made outside the social structure. Social structure, cultural norms, and value systems are important determinants of women's roles and their position in society.⁵

The author analyses the theory of social movements, collective action and political mobilization in the book "The Empowerment of Women in India Grassroots Women's Networks and the State".⁶ She scrutinizes the experience of Swayam Shikshan Prayog [SSP – SPARC] for reliable information concerning the relative effectiveness of different forms such an effort could take. The author compares the SSP's operation with those of other grassroots organizations in India and elsewhere. Carefully assessing similarities, differences and outcomes. Author carries her theory as a tool box. The author explains the SSP's decentralized network structure at first glance and how it permitted its members to confront state bureaucracy.

The author's analysis provides more convincing explanations of SSP's redistributive activities than of its occasional successes in changing governmental policies.

'Empowering women'⁷ is an effort. That specifically spotlights rural Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes women who are disadvantaged as rural women as well as Dalits and Tribals. The author shows in her analysis that money is not the main problem in the context of women's empowerment but apathy, fear, ignorance and vulnerability as women within patriarchal patterns of social behavior is the issue.

Her assessment is that the government tends to measure "progress" only in terms of money, outlays or infrastructure without taking into account whether the ground parameters are actually changing.

The authors state that the effectiveness of an alternative strategy of development and empowerment of women that begins with awareness generation in empowering women psychologically first, with confidence, information and optimism and motivation rather than economic interventions is the need of the hour.

The volume on Women's Empowerment and Demographic Process is based on Female Empowerment and Demographic Process, moving beyond Cairo.⁸ It was co-organised by the three active members of IUSSP's Gender

and Population Committee. They have given a greater attention to the interrelationships between gender systems and population processes.

There is general consensus among the international population community that this commitment, along with the related goals of improving women's reproductive health and securing their reproductive rights, represented a paradigm shift in the discourse about population and development, even though there are differences of opinion about whether this is a positive change or not.

An important link between women's empowerment and the survival and health of children and social and economic conditions are based on an empirical analysis of Egyptian data. The women's autonomy is the issue of concern which focuses on rural India. Overall, this volume offers new directions for the population field both in term of research and policy.

The field of women's empowerment is undergoing rapid changes, both in terms of conceptualization as well as operationalisation. A large numbers of government as well as NGOs interventions have been launched in recent times. "Empowering Rural Women – An Approach to Empowering Women through Credit Based Self-Help-Groups"⁹ is an effort in this direction.

Self Help Groups have now been viewed as dependable vehicles for the delivery of rural credit. Low transaction costs, transparency and feasibility of the delivery system appear to be the decisive factors for financial institutions to work in partnership with the hitherto untouchable poor-credit-risks, the poor rural women. On the other hand the organizations are look upon credit and its delivery through the Self-Help-Groups as a means of empowerment of rural women.

This book is on "Empowering Women for Sustainable Development" by Leelamma Devasia and V.V. Devasia¹⁰ empowering women and sustainable development. It elucidates the struggle of women in some slum areas of Nagpur city to achieve social justice, economic independence and freedom through meeting their needs without compromising the ability of others to meet their own needs. CAD believes that sustainable development for women is that which lasts and hence dynamic enough to meet their special, individual, emerging and common needs.

According to the Nagpur Municipal Corporation, about 40% of population of Nagpur city falls below poverty line and of which 65% is concentrated in the slums. This is not only due to high concentration of the poor there in but also lack of educational, welfare, infrastructure and development facilities to the slum dwellers.

The book also deals with the capacity of continued delivery of services, maintenance of their improved infrastructures long-term institutional and grassroots administrative abilities.

Empowerment of Muslim Women by S.N. Pathak, A.K. Singh, S.P. Pandey¹¹ is a study conducted to examine the socio-economic status of Muslims women alongside suggestive measures for their empowerment. The present study has been conducted in the districts of Aligarh, Mau, Moradabad and Lucknow covering a sample of 400 Muslim women and suggesting measures for their empowerment. The book, explores the socio-economic status of Muslim women on the basis of empirical facts and deals with social empowerment of Muslim women. The authors deal with economic empowerment of Muslim women and provide a brief account of research findings and literature reviewed as well as gives a package of policy recommendations.

Discourse on Women and Empowerment by Vibhuti Patel¹² has adopted an interdisciplinary perspective to examine political economy of Gender and empowerment. The discourse on gender implications of micro and macro realities by authors focus on women's predicaments in the private and public spheres of life. It brings to the force women's agency in the midst of multifaceted hurdles posed by patriarchal powers. It shows how

patriarchy thrives on control of women's sexuality, fertility and labour for male hegemony over economic resources, psychological and emotional command and cultural dominance. This article deliberate on conceptual understanding on gender questions challenges to conventional social work approach to gender issues, survival struggles of women and girls from womb to tomb, pre-birth elimination of girls by sex selective abortion and pre-conception selection of son, increasing intensity newer forms of violence against children in the domestic arena and society. The articles analyse work profiles of women in the context of economic globalization, women workers in post independent Eritrea which means just and caring economy, women's right to land and housing, impact of productive loans in urban poor habitat in Mumbai and women's leadership in Micro-Finance.

"Empowering Women Panchayat Members" by D. Bandyopadhyay, and Amitabh Mukherjee¹³ deals with the 73rd constitutional amendment act recognizing the panchayats as institutions of self-governance at the district level and below has ushered position and process of basic change in architecture of the Indian polity. It has introduced a third stratum in the governance of the country, creating a multi-layered federal structure in addition to the union and the states. The amendment gives constitutional status to panchayats at the district and sub-district levels and enjoins upon

the state Governments to make them effective institutions of self-government. The RGF has played a proactive role in promoting Panchayati Raj. It established a Task Force on Panchayati Raj in March 1993 with the primary objective of catalyzing the operationalisation of the 73rd constitutional amendment act.

The overall aim of this hand book is to address the political and social learning needs of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). It contains both the philosophy and technology of building the capability and empowerment of the elected members of the PRIs, especially the Gram Panchayat.

"Administration for Empowerment and Welfare of Women" by Abha Jain and Shalini Shekhawat¹⁴ is a collection of scholarly articles on "Facts of Women's Empowerment" and reflects the general condition of women and how they have been a neglected part of the society. It also focuses on building awareness, constitutional provisions and the initiatives taken by the government especially in the area of democratic decentralization to create more opportunities for empowering women.

The second section analyzes the various policies and programmes undertaken to integrate women in the process of development. This section

evaluates the impact of developments plans and programmes carried out for the betterment of Indian women.

In the third section the authors described a dismal picture of the status of Indian women. This volume shows the need for a more effective administration machinery to create a more enabling environment for women.

This volume also draws attention to the role of media in perpetuating the prevalent inequalities in society and focuses on education as one of the dimensions of the empowering process. It highlights the need for training opportunities in light of the existing demands and for the removal of educational inequalities especially at the higher level. The articles in this section emphasize the major role of education in widening horizons and transcending the realms of inequalities in society. It has also brought the light that women not only need to occupy and partner more spaces in the political, social, economic and other decision making arenas, but that these spaces should be more meaningful for the welfare and empowerment of women in our country.

"Development and Empowerment – Rural Women in India" by Jaya Arunachalam, U. Kalpagam¹⁵ is the outcome both the working women's Forum (India) and the Institute together. They both have an enduring commitment to rural development in activism, outreach teaching and

research. Rural women's work in the region is overlooked by their male counterparts, but in fact they are much overworked both in housework and care of children. These women are also in general responsible for fuel, fodder and water collection and also collection of forest products. While they do much work they in general do not possess entitlements to property and resources. They also need to address issues of human development and the constraints they face in accessing better nutrition and health care in household and society. It must also recognize the link between empowerment and literacy and arrest the coercion in the form of social norms to keep the rural women voiceless and powerless.

The question of women subjugation has been predominant in the history of social welfare. "Women's Empowerment – Issues Challenges & Strategies – A Source Book" by Hajira Singh, Jaimon Varghese¹⁶ is authored important volume on empowerment of women. The most common problem which ails women today, is her lower status in the society which sometimes comes in the garb of privileges and handle with care attitude.

This volume is based on secondary data. This volume shows that women in India are divided in terms of caste, class, rural urban, educational, occupational and linguistic groups, but marginalization is the common thread of uniformity among them. Marginalisation begins with non-

recognition of women's work as economic activity. In agricultural sector their work is less paid. In the organized sector women have low access to education and training. Due to poor skills they develop poor self image and inferiority complex.

This book is on "Women Empowerment through Cooperative Sector" by Muzamil Jan¹⁷ deals with the women are half of India but due to socio-cultural practices prevalent have been left in the shadow. These practices have devoid them survival chances and strategies though they have been worshipped as "Shakti and Annapurna". According to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific [UNESCAP] India has the lowest female workforce participation in the region.

The co-operative movement has contributed to engagement of many people in the workforce but women have not been able to reap much benefit because of illiteracy, ignorance and male domination. Time use by women shows twenty-four hours engagement in work but most of it is unaccounted for. Even the household business they are involved in is considered non-productive as there are no monetary returns though they may be making savings from it.

In the book, "Political Dynamics of Women" by Puran Chandra¹⁸ has focused on political participation of women in theoretical and intellectual

perspective. He explains about the political life of women since independence and their representation in Parliament, state legislature and Panchayat Raj Institutions.

He expressed his view that women lagged far behind in all spheres of life. Generally, in all societies politics is considered as a male job and women leadership was either ignored or accepted hesitatingly.

The representative dimension of Municipal Political Leadership that is emerging scene in South India and the local leadership of women is the focus of "Leaders in Making".¹⁹ Women leaders in Panchayat Raj, political empowerment of weaker section are a need of hour.

The author in his book "Women Empowerment" by N. Dhahira Banu²⁰ depicts the political empowerment of women in India and the role of Non-Governmental Organizations in improving the political, social and economical status of women. According to him empowerment of women is the pressing need of the hour. It is least understood women play a significant role in the development and advancement of a country.

"Women in Indian Politics – Empowerment of Women through Political Participation" by Niroj Sinha²¹ deals with the concern at the marginal presence of women in politics. The concern has been voiced

through international for on the one hand and national and local level women groups and academics on the other.

The involvement of women in politics is now regarded as an important factor for a healthy democracy. No democracy can be termed as healthy, if half on the population does not participate in the political process. It is also being increasingly realized that participation as more voters is not enough. It has to be followed by large scale participation in the policy – formulation and decision making process.

This book is an attempt at analyzing the problems related to women's political participation in the Indian Context. Gender and patriarchy have been used as the conceptual framework. The environmental factors – socio-economic, political and cultural – are in some way or the other, directly related to the norms of gender and patriarchy.

"Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development" by E.D. Shetty and P. Krishnamoorthy²² speaks of humanistic and constitutional need in terms of empowerment in socially, economically, educationally and more importantly entrepreneurial in providing opportunities especially to the women below poverty line. Here the author described that women in the world are very much concerned with the issue of gender equality through women's empowerment. The results are

periodically assessed in the world conferences the last one held in Beijing in July 1995. In the terms of constitution, legal and administrative measures many steps were taken to improve the conditions of women since 1947. In the earlier stage the constitution did not make local self government in urban areas a specific constitutional mandate. Urbanization is a natural consequence of the economic changes that take place in a country. Our constitution and our laws give Indian women a number of "RIGHTS" and "GUARANTEES" protecting women's liberty, equality and freedom.

"Women Empowerment and Reproductive Behavior" by Arun Diwakar, Nath Bajpai and Shyam Kartik Mishra²³ is a study that focus on gender equality and empowerment of women. The study is based on the currently married women in reproductive group who has taken the experience of first issue residing in eastern U.P. here it was observed how much minimum education need for girls. Education is very important for women to take part in decision making process. More freedom and self-dependence enjoying women belong to such socio-economic class that does not between women empowerment and reproductive behavior.

S.R. Maheshwari's "Local Government in India"²⁴ is about history of local government described in detail. The administrative frame work

proposed describes the central and the state level organizations set up for dealing with affairs relating to the local government.

The personal administrative structure of panchayati raj institution. The study based on the history of urbanization and urban development. The administrative frame works of urban local govt. institution. It describes the federal form of local government and how the municipal administrative has been decentralized in various cities in India. It shows that local self-government can be more efficient or succeed if the people are well educated and gain best training for democratic government in a nation. The seed of education will ultimately yield a harvest in the field of politics though the grain be slow in ripening.

"Local Government in India Decentralization and Beyond" by Nirja Gopal Jayal, Amit Prakash and Pradeep K. Sharma²⁵ deals with decentralization and democratic participation in West Bengal, Karnataka, U.P., Chennai, Mumbai and Bangalore. Developing a quantities frame work for determining devolution of fund from the state government to local bodies.

Provides accountability in local Governance infrastructure developing in the industrial township of Faridabad and Gurgaon. Transport accountability and governance of Kerala and Karnataka. The salience of

poverty, participation, governance, provides alternative primary shooting system in U.P.

"Decentralization and Local Politics" by S.N. Jha and P.C. Mathur²⁶ focuses on issues in decentralized governance. A comparative analysis of development planning and implementation system in the states of India. Decentralized in developing countries. It provides institution aspects of Urban Government in India. Municipal decentralization and governance autonomy, accountability and participation. Provides decentralizations and local politics and women's participation in panchayat election.

The book on "Indian Local Government" by Bhargava, Baleshwar S. and S. Rama Rao²⁷ deals with local government and national development methods of allocating powers and functions of local govt. It describes different political parties and local government system of state government. It also describes entire urban local public sector's function and activity of political party in urban sector.

Thus, it is observed that literature on women empowerment notes the shifts in social, political and economic powers between and across individuals and groups.

The third chapter discusses the social, political and economic issues of women empowerment.

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CHAPTER – 3

A BRIEF PROFILE OF SURAT

Surat, the modern port city of today boasts of a great historical and cultural heritage. The history of Surat takes us back to the epic age of Mahabharata and Ramayana. According to mythological beliefs, Lord Krishna stopped in the city on his journey from Mathura to Dwarka. Surat has earned the reputation of an important industrial hub and commercial centre of the country. A glimpse on the history of Surat will prove that the city has always been a great trading centre. The great explorer Huen, the Chinese traveller, referred the Surat City as Sowrata and described it as a business town on the shore of Arabian Sea near Gujarat. The Brahmin Pundits of the thirteenth century called the city as Suryapur. Surat reached the highest point of prosperity during the sixteenth century. The Surat port was considered the important port by the European traders. The British and the Portuguese waged battles against each other to gain supreme control over the trading route. The French and the Dutch also arrived in the city with merchandising objectives.

The great Maratha warrior Shivaji attacked the city several times to usurp its wealth. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British gained overall control over the city. Surat reorganized itself after the independence and soon emerged as one of the significant cities in India.

The origin of the city can be traced to the old Hindu town of Suryapur during 1500–1520 A.D., which was later colonised by the Birgus or the King from Sauvira on the banks of River Tapi. Mughal period is considered to be the “Golden Age” of urbanisation, because the economic function, the economic interaction between the urban area and country-side, the growth of agriculture and manufacture accelerated its process of urbanisation and growth. Surat was one of the biggest port city during Mughal period. During the reigns of the Mughal emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, Surat rose to become a chief commercial city of India. As the major port on the west coast of India, Surat also served as the port for the Hajj to Mecca. At the end of the 16th century, the Portuguese fortress on the banks of the river built in 1540.¹

In 1514, the Portuguese traveller Barbosa described Surat as “a city of very great trade in all classes of merchandise, a very important sea port, yielding very large revenue to the King, many ships were frequented from Malabar and all other ports.”

In 1608, ships from the English East India Company started docking in Surat, using it as a trade and transit point. In 1615, following the Battle of Swally, Captain Best followed by Captain Downtown, overcame Portuguese naval supremacy and obtained an imperial firman establishing an English factory at Surat. In 1664 the Maratha King Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji attacked Surat, a key of Mughal power and wealthy port town. Surat was invaded again by Shivaji in 1670.² By 1687, the English East India Company had moved the presidency to Bombay. The British took control of Surat again in 1759, and assumed all government powers of the city in 1800.³

The British rulers took its control from the Mughals till the beginning of the 20th century. The city, located on the river Tapi, has about 6 km long coastal belt along the Arabian Sea. Because of these reasons, the city emerged as an important trade centre and enjoyed prosperity through sea trade in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Surat became the most important trade link between India and many other countries. Surat was also a flourishing centre for ship building activities. The whole coast of Tapi from Rander to Dumas was specially meant for ship builders. After the rise of the port at Bombay, Surat faced a severe blow and its ship building industry also

declined. During the post-independence period, Surat has experienced considerable growth in industrial activities along with trading activities.

By the early 20th century, the population had slowly climbed to 119,306 and Surat was a center of trade and manufacturing, although its previous industries, such as shipbuilding, were destroyed. In spite of the decline of shipbuilding, there were other industries like cotton mills, rice-cleaning mills and paper mills established. Fine cotton goods were woven on hand-looms, and there were special factories like silk-brocade and gold embroidery formed. These kind of things were manufactured and trading of these goods brought an electric mix of ethnicity to the city making Surat's culture unique. Surat is also home to the royal descendants of the Amejee family which settled in Gujarat. The family were known to have lineage to the Mughal emperors. The family governed the Manikpur district and were later known as the Bhana family.⁴

The entrance in to the city was through several gates. The three main leading gates were Cambay and Ahmedabad, another to Burhanpur and Naysari. Guardsmen were kept at each gate, to kept on eye on all incoming and outgoing persons. European travellers who visited Surat in 17th century have remarked that the houses of the rich people were not splendid.

Surat is an ancient city and port, and had been through centuries considered a centre of maritime trade. The city was very populous and full of merchants. The city had a very considerable number of foreign settlers. Apart from the Europeans, there were Turks, Jews, Arabians, Persians and Armenians. When the ships were arrived and departed from here, from the month of January to April the town was full of people. The population consisted of administrative merchants, artisans, weavers and agriculturist, which may be mainly divided in to three broad sectors, the Muslims, the Hindus and the Parsis, besides the foreigners.

The Hindus were in majority at Surat. They were occupied in trade and other line of work and also linked with administration and appreciated in revenue departments to the port where mathematical and commercial knowledge was necessary. Muslims were generally engaged in the administration – military as well as civil. The Parsis were in minority, rich and industrious people.⁵ They were active in trade, craft and manual labour at Surat. Most of the Parsis worked as weavers. They used to supply cloth to the English factory at Surat. Among the foreigners, there were many of from English, Dutch and the French people who had established their factories at Surat under the farmans of the Mughal Emperors.

Expansion of the City

During the early period, Rander was the principal commercial centre south of Bharuch. It was a very ancient town where Arabs from Kufa came and settled in the early thirteenth century. After the Portuguese started frequent raids to the city its fortune turned, and grew in eminence. It is believed that one Brahman named Gopi who was by profession a merchant settle in Surat and insisted others merchants to settled at Surat and build large houses and public places. Today a ward in the city is known by his name, i.e. Gopipura.

East India Company had the unusual distinction of ruling an entire country. On 31st December 1600, a group of merchants who had incorporated themselves into the East India Company were given monopoly privileges on all trade with the East Indies. The company's ships first arrived in India, at the port of Surat, in 1608. Sir Thomas Roe reached the court of the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir, as the emissary of King James I in 1615, and gained for the British the right to establish a factory at Surat.⁶ Gradually the British replaced the Portuguese and the city saw an expansion of their trading operations in India. Administratively the Gujarat region including the city of Surat has undergone a significant change over time. By the beginning of the twentieth century it became well connected by rail, roads

and bridges with the surrounding areas and with other important cities in the country.

The regional importance of the city along with Baroda and Ahmedabad has grown extremely in the recent decades because of its specific location what is called the "Golden Corridor" of industrial development. The corridor, some 450 kms long and 40 kms wide, extends from Vapi in the South to Mehsana to the north of Ahmedabad. Also it had trade links with prominent cities all over India.

Over the years the expansion of the physical boundaries of the city has been extremely large. From 1.78 sq. km in 1664 the city has expanded to 111.16 sq. km in 1986. The city before 1986 included the walled city and surrounding areas expanded in all directions. Development took place along the road and railway lines connecting Amroli and Ahmedabad in the north, Kamrej road and Bardoli road in the east, Udhna road in the south, Udhna Magdalla and Dumas in the south-west and Rander in the west. After the expansion in 1986, the city extended further mainly in the south and south-east. The city is divided by the river Tapi. The western part of the city which includes Jahangirpura, Jahangirabad, Rander, Adajan, etc. is connected by bridges with the eastern part.

Table – 3.1
Areal Expansion of Surat⁷

Year	Increase in area (sq. km.)	Total area of the city (sq. km.)
Before 1963	--	8.18
1963	13.77	21.95
1970	11.85	33.80
1975	21.75	55.55
1986	55.60	111.16
2011	--	326.515

During the post-independence period, Surat has experienced considerable growth in industrial activities especially in textiles along with trading activities. Concentration of these activities combined with residential developments has resulted in considerable expansion of the city limits. In 1850 the Government enacted an Act for the development of the city, according to which the Government was empowered to open a department related to Municipality and for that purpose Government appointed a committee called, "The Municipal Committee".

Population

Surat may be described as the diamond capital of India. Surat is also one of the major centres of textile manufacturing. By the early 20th century, the city's population had climbed to 1,19,000 and Surat was again a centre of

trade and manufacturing of its former industries of cotton mills factories, rice-cleaning mills, ginning and pressing cotton and paper-mills, hand-looms, silk-brocade and gold embroidery factories. The city has been ranked 8th largest city and 9th largest urban agglomeration [after Pune] in India, 3rd cleanest city of India and 4th fastest growing city of the world and 2nd largest city of Gujarat. The city is located 284 km of the capital Gandhinagar, 265 km south of Ahmedabad, 289 km north of Mumbai. Surat has been selected as one of the twenty Indian cities to be developed as a smart city. The growth of population in Surat is given below.

Table – 3.2
Population Growth of Surat⁸

Census	Population	%±
1871	107,100	—
1881	109,800	2.5%
1891	109,200	-0.5%
1901	119,300	9.2%
1911	114,900	-3.7%
1921	117,400	2.2%
1931	98,900	-15.8%
1941	171,400	73.3%
1951	223,200	30.2%
1961	288,000	29.0%
1971	492,700	71.1%
1981	912,600	85.2%
1991	1,519,000	66.4%
2001	2,811,614	85.1%
2011	4,591,246	63.3%

Table – 3.3
Population of Surat District & S.M.C from 1901 to 2011⁹

Census Year	Surat District	Surat Muni. Corp.
1901	6,18,537	1,19,306
1911	6,61,491	1,14,868
1921	6,64,032	1,17,434
1931	7,30,007	98,936
1941	8,80,684	1,71,443
1951	10,45,005	2,23,182
1961	13,13,823	2,88,026
1971	17,86,924	4,71,656
1981	24,93,211	7,76,583
1991	33,97,900	14,98,817
2001	49,95,174	24,33,835
2011	60,81,322	44,66,826

Social Profile

Gujarati people are an Indo-Aryan ethno-linguistic group of India that traditionally speaks Gujarati, an Indo-Iranian language. Gujaratis are very prominent in industry and key figures played an historic role in the introduction of the doctrine of Swaraj and the crucial victory of the 1947 Indian independence movement during the British-ruled in India. Throughout the history, Gujaratis have earned a reputation as being India's greatest merchants, industrialists and business entrepreneurs. In recent decades, larger numbers of Gujaratis have migrated to English speaking

countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States.

Early European travellers like Ludovico di Varthema (in 15th century) wrote on the people of Gujarat. He noted that many people followed the Jain religion. He described the Gujaratis:-- "...a certain race which eats nothing that has blood, never kills any living organisms, and these people are neither moors nor heathens, if they were baptized, they would all be saved by the virtue of their works, for their attitude never do to others what they would not do unto them."¹⁰

Orthodox Gujarati society which was mercantile by nature, was historically organized along ethno-religious and shaped lines into existence on the strength of Mahajan and for its institution of Nagarsheth. Historically, Gujaratis belonging to numerous faiths and castes, they dominated occupations such as shroffs and brokers whereas, Muslims and Parsis largely dominated sea shipping trade. This led to religious interdependence, tolerance and community cohesion which becoming the hallmark of modern-day Gujarati society.

The Gujarati people are predominantly Hindu. The major communities that Gujaratis belong to are Brahmins, Rajputs, Vaishyas (Bania), Patidars, Ahirs, Maldharis and Lohana.

Economic Profile

Surat has many locational advantages; it is located midway on the 500 km long Ahmedabad-Mumbai western railway corridor,¹¹ large natural gas reserves have been found in a region 50 km to the north of the city, as many as 40 express, mail and passenger trains pass through it, National Highway 8, which is one of the busiest inter-state trunk routes in the country, passes within 16 km of the SMC, the city is main important centre on the Ahmedabad-Mumbai corridor. There is a 225 km long industrial belt, starting from Vapi in south Gujarat to Mehsana in north Gujarat and Surat is at the centre of it. Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) being set up through Japanese investments in India.

One of the key commodities exported from Surat was textiles. In the 19th century, when Europe started to produce her own cloth for which they could not find markets, they restricted the import of textiles from India. Thus, from that time the exports from Surat declined and as well as the importance of the city as a port also declined in the 19th century.¹²

After the decline of business at Surat port, the entrepreneurs of Surat started looking for other options for economic revitalisation through technological modernisation. They first set up textile mill in the city in 1861.

The city revived its traditional industry of Brocade (Zari), a hand-woven fabric with silver and golden threads embedded in the weave. Previously the zari machinery imported from Abroad. Later Zari machinery manufacturing also started in Surat, which continues till today. In 1845, the number of workers in the Zari business was 4,000 while in 1947 there were 40,000 workers in Zari business in Surat. Thus from 1800-1947 there were two major industries in Surat, Textile Industry and Zari industry.

The 1961 census classifies it as a "manufacturing town with moderate services and low trade and transport". According to 1991 census, although manufacturing as still the most important sector, with 61% of the main workers engaged in this sector, the service industry is fast emerging as a dominant economic unit with 36.75% of total workforce.

Table – 3.4
Economic Profile of Surat¹³

Indicator	City (Municipal Corporation)
Per Capita Income (Rs.) at 2004-05 constant price*	NA
Urban Poverty Ratio (% of urban population)**	5.61
Unemployment Rate, 2011-12***	0.29
Work Participation Rate, 2011-12***	42.20
Work Status, 2011-12 (%)***	
Self-employed:	37.10
Regular/wage salaried employees:	57.05
Casual labour:	5.85
Sectional Distribution of Workers, 2011-12(%)***	
Primary	0.28
Secondary	66.10
Tertiary	33.63
Workers Classified by Major Occupation, 2011-12(%)***	
Legislators, senior officials and managers	27.93
Professionals	1.79
Technicians and associate professionals	6.05
Clerks	1.29
Service workers and shop and market sales workers	6.49
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	0.00
Craft and related trades workers	13.54
Plant & machine operators and assemblers	34.46
Elementary occupations	8.44
Workers not classified by occupation	0.00
Primary Commodity Manufactured#	Art Silk Fabrics, Jari Goods, Diamonds
Major Industries##	Machinery, Machine tools and its parts Textiles Chemicals and petrochemicals products
No. of sanctioned SEZ	1

Note: 3 year average of 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12

Source: *Directorate of Economics and Statistics of respective State Governments and for all India – Central Statistics Office

**Unit Level Data of National Sample Survey Organization, Household Consumer Expenditure in India, 68th Round, 2011-12

***Unit Level Data of National Sample Survey Organization, Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, 68th Round, 2011-12

#District Census Handbook, Census of India, 2011

##District Industrial Profile, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India

○ Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

The agricultural labour and urban labour are a common feature of the economy of Surat. Some entrepreneurs were predominantly Banias who invested in enterprise by either purchasing young boys or by extending funds and provisions to the needy families. Ratanji, Kalyan Nanabhia, Biju Bhaidas are some ship owners employers. The local merchant fleet of Surat and the several-armed navies of Gujarat also generated enormous employment opportunities.

In the beginning of the 20th century Surat started experiencing the growth of sub-urban areas namely Udhna, Athwa and Phulpada.¹⁴ In 1991 Surat district had 21,359 industrial units of which 19,352 units were located in Surat city alone. According to the recent estimates, around 45,000 small and big units in the textile sector with an approximate investment of Rs.4000 million are giving employment to 1,50,000 people. Diamond cutting and polishing is also a labour intensive industry employing around 2,50,000 workers or 50% of 0.5 million workers. There are 6,610 Zari industries which employ more than 15,000 workers. Besides, there are so many industries like dyeing, printing, textile machinery etc. which employ 85,000 people. Some people are involved in education line, IT sector, management sector, banking sector, etc.

Nature of the Industries in Surat

In Surat three categories of industries are running under the private sector, they are textile, diamond and zari. These major industries in Surat play an important role in shaping the economy of India. The industrial area in Surat is mainly occupied by textile industries. The textile industries in Surat are associated with production of yarn as well as manufacturing of textiles.¹⁵ The industries related to brocade and jari works have been set up in Surat. The city is also known for embroidery works done with the help of computer designs. The location of Surat has always favoured the growth of industries. In the ancient times it happened to be one of the important trading centre of India. Many of the major industries in Surat contribute in meeting the growing demands of the Indian market.

It is also known as synthetic capital of India hosts over 65,000 power looms and provides near about over 7 lakh jobs in the district. Surat is well known for its textile, diamond and zari industries. Many skilled and unskilled workers are working in these industries for many years.

India's second diamond trading centre is Surat. Diamond Bourse that operates from the city plays a major roles in trading unpolished diamonds and manufacturing polished diamonds. Presently, diamonds are polished at

Surat and traded at India's sole diamond exchange Bharat Diamond Bourse in Mumbai.

The Surat diamond jewelry industry operates in the field of manufacturing, importing as well as exporting. Nearly 15 lakh people are associated with the diamond jewelry industry of Surat. Surat diamond jewelry industry is flourishing due to increased number of customers.

Surat in Gujarat has become an important centre for industrial growth in the country. Major companies, i.e. organised sector industries like Larsen and Toubro, Reliance Petrochemicals, Kribhco, ONGC, Torrent Power, Shell have set up their manufacturing units in Surat city. One of the major company is Hazira.

Hazira is one of the major ports of India. It is known as the industrial hub of India. The town is located on the bank of the Tapti River, eight kilometers away from the Arabian Sea. It is a base for major industrial and shipping facilities like Essar, Kribhco, Shell, Larsen & Toubro, NTPC, ONGC, GAIL, Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation, Ultra Tech Cement and Reliance Industries.

There are 41,300 small and medium industries functioning in the district. Some of the main industries are textiles, chemicals, dying and printing, diamond processing, zari making, engineering and related

activities. Nearly 24,000 units in small and medium enterprises is related to textile industry in the district followed by repairing and service industry with more than 11,000 units. Most of the small scale industries are located in Choryasi (Western Surat), Mangrol and Olpad (Northern Surat), Mandvi (Central Surat) and Palsana (Southern Surat).

In Surat District during 1998-2007 machinery and engineering sectors has succeeded to attract maximum investments of Rs.12,567 crore contributing nearly 35% of the total investments.¹⁶ Large industrial units are contributing into industrial and economic growth of the district at present. There are nearly 500 texturising and 400 processing houses, 65,000 power looms and diamond units exist in the district. So, there is necessity of spare parts, machinery, and stores materials. There are 230 Medium Scale & Large Scale Industrial (MSI/LSI) units in Surat and Choryasi, 22 MSI/LSI in Olpad, 131 MSI/LSI units in Mandrol, 2 MSI/LSI in Kamrej, 116 MSI/LSI in Madvi and Palsana, and 8 MSI/LSI units in Mahuva tehsil are respectively operating in the district.¹⁷

Nature of Urbanisation

The proportion of population living in the urban areas is considered for measuring the level of urbanisation in a region, state and country. The population of urban area increases as a result of population growth in urban

areas that is partly due to natural increase of population and partly as a result of the migration from rural areas and small towns. Ramchandra (1989)¹⁸ identifies three process that effect on urbanisation, (i) the migration of people from rural villages to towns and cities, (ii) the migration of people from smaller towns and cities to larger cities and capital cities and (iii) the spatial overflow of metropolitan population into the peripheral fringe villages. These three process respectively the results in general process of urbanisation. Hindus and sections of the tribal population, who move towards urban areas from rural areas, this characteristic is common to all parts of India including Gujarat. A.M. Shah pointed out "there were more sanskritized caste in the urban areas of Gujarat more than in its rural areas".¹⁹ Economy of urban areas are improved and cities have been instrumental sustaining economic growth of developed as well as developing countries. At present half of the world population is urbanised and by the year 2030 it would be reach in 60%.

The level of urbanization is associated in some places with numerous, positive outcomes such as technological innovation, forms of creativity, economic progress, higher standards of living, democratic accountability and women's empowerment. Besides, rapid urbanisation lead by large cities is an indicator of increasing regional small and medium cities across the world. It

also affects the urban employment prospects in the proper regions and contributes to migration from the small and medium towns to the new cities.

Urbanization refers to the population shift from rural to urban areas, the society also adapts to the change. It is predominantly the process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people can live and work in central areas.

Urbanization is relevant to a range of disciplines, including geography, sociology, economics, urban planning and public health. The phenomenon has been closely linked to modernization, industrialization and the sociological process of rationalization. Urbanization creates enormous social, economic and environmental changes which provide an opportunity for sustainability with the “potential to use resources more efficiently, to create more sustainable land use and to protect the biodiversity of natural ecosystems.”²⁰

According to G. Hurdetol:--

- (i) Extending or widespread in migration from rural to urban areas because their traditional system of production has destroyed and urban areas provides job opportunities.
- (ii) The rapid growth of the cities and its size confident upon the process of urbanization.²¹

The Characteristics of Urbanization

- (i) Setting boundaries on urban areas that means there have boundaries in urban areas.
- (ii) Saving open space.
- (iii) Creating new town.
- (iv) Environment education restore on damage area.
- (v) Community based solid waste management.

How Surat Urbanized

Surat Urban Development Authority (SUDA)²² is the urban planning agency of Surat, formed in 1976, under Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act - 1976, which covers 722 km² area of 148 villages surrounding Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC).

Population growth rate of 76.02% was observed in the last decade as a result of rapid industrialization. Surat is well known as diamond city and is also famous for silk and jari industry. To get better job opportunities from all over India and mainly from U.P., Bihar, Orissa, Bengal people started migrating to Surat from their native places.²³

Due to the explosion of population individual vehicular growth also touched the heights. As on 31/12/2006 the vehicles registered at R.T.O. is 13.00 lakhs plus. This is equivalent to the highest growth rate of Delhi.²⁴

In the year 1664, the city was limited to the inner walled city covering an area of 1.78 sq. kms. In 1707, with the construction of the outer wall, the area of the city increased to 7.36 sq. kms. For the next almost 250 years the increase in the city area wasn't very significant and in 1963 the city covered an area of 8.18 sq. kms. in the same year 13.77 sq. kms. was added in the city area increasing its total area to 21.95 sq. kms. to 112.27 sq. kms. The present area of Surat city is 326.515 sq. kms.

The enormous growth of the textile, diamond, and other industries within the city, and setting up large scale industries in Hazira and other industrial pockets around the city have resulted in the increase in trade and commerce activities and uplift of the socio-economic status of the people of Surat city. This has lead to population growth and expansion of the city.

There are six corridors in Surat city. These corridors are (i) Kamrej-Varachha corridor (ii) Olpad-Rander corridor (iii) Hazira-Adajan corridor (iv) Sachin-Udhna corridor (v) Kadodara-Sahara corridor (vi) Dumas-Athwa corridor.

These six corridors include diversified activities of business, residence, commerce and industries. A mix type of traffic has been observed on these corridors. Different type of land - use pattern has been seen along these corridors.

Why Migration

Migration²⁵ has been a feature of all societies historically. There have been different forms of migration:- nomadic migration, migration for labour, migration due to war, displacement, etc. Globalization has today effect on the process due to increased opportunities at one hand and disruption of livelihoods and food security on the other. The people, including male and female, are moving from one place to other in search of survival, fulfilment their basic needs and find out of ways to create new identities and wanted to give better life to their families as well as themselves.

Every year, tribals of the hilly Dang district migrate to the plains of South Gujarat Surat in search of employment. Usually they are hired by the Sugar factories. They paid as per rate system, on the basis of sugarcanes they cut. But this migration is seasonal and lasts for six to eight months. They return to their villages as soon as the monsoon begins to carry out the agricultural activities.

Surat has emerged as the city of the migrant with nearly half of its population comprising of migrants. Surat attracts migrant workers from all over the state as well as those from Bihar, Orissa, M.P., east Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bengal. The demand for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour has resulted in migration to Surat. The construction sector is a major employment sector being the second largest employer in the country next to agriculture. This industry is basically characterized by the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. The workers who are semi-skilled and unskilled are mainly work in unorganized sectors and have migrated from the state of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka etc. In the matter of employment, the construction sector also plays a significant role. Due to the higher industrial development in city, the percentage of the migrant population is found to be higher. Skilled workers are working in organised sectors. In Surat workers are easily available in lower pay scale. According to Surat City Development Plan (2006-2012) more than half (55.85%) of the population of Surat city is migrant population.²⁶

Why Men Outnumber Women in Demographic Profile Ratio

Surat city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Surat Metropolitan Region. As per provisional reports of Census

India, population of Surat in 2011 is 6,081,322 out of male are 3,402,224 and female are 2,679,098. Surat city has population is 4,275,540 of which 2,362,072 are males and 1,913,468 are females.

Table – 3.5
Surat - Census Report – 2011

Description	2011	2001
Actual Population	6,081,322	4,275,540
Male	3,402,224	2,362,072
Female	2,679,098	1,913,460
Population Growth	42.24%	54.30%
Area (sq. km)	4,549	4,549
Sex Ratio (Per 1000)	787	810
Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Age)	835	859
Male Literates	2,687,468	1,709,305
Female Literates	1,883,942	1,143,035
Child Proportion (0-6 Age)	12.11%	14.05%
Boys Proportion (0-6 Age)	11.80%	13.68%
Girls Proportion (0-6 Age)	12.50%	14.50%

Source: Census of India, 2011

* District Census Handbook, Census of India, 2011

Surat is considered as the second most urbanised region in Gujarat. In spite of being the most literate district in Gujarat according to census 2011, Surat has a poor sex ratio and an equally low female participation in the workforce for a region known as the country's textile manufacturing and diamond processing hub.

Among the 26 districts in Gujarat, the most highest growth the population in a decade has been recorded in Surat. Today, Surat district's population is 60.8 lakhs with over 40 lakhs urban population.

However, Surat has the lowest sex ratio in the state with 787 women per 1000 males. One of the major reasons for the poor sex-ratio is the large number of migrant population. Most of the men come from distance place to work in Surat city without bringing their families. They come to Surat to seek livelihood in the proper industrial units. Surat which has the highest population density in the state with 1137 persons living in one square km. area. However only 15% of this populations are females. Surat, with only 4.10 lakh female workers, ranked third after Ahmedabad and Kutchh to employ the least percentage of women.

The traditional industries in Surat i.e. the textiles and the diamond processing units, largely employ men. This could be one of the reason why the number of female workers is less found in the workplace of Surat city.

Issues and Problems as a Consequence of Urbanisation in Surat

Urbanization is the shift from a rural to an urban society, bringing a large group of people into towns and cities. This process usually This process usually occurs when a nation is still developing. The trend toward

urbanization is a worldwide phenomenon.²⁷ The chief cause of global urbanisation is the new economic opportunities. It has both positive and negative effects on society.

Urbanization results increase of population those are migrated from rural to urban areas. People migrate to towns and cities in hope of gaining a better standard of living. They are very much attracted to urban life due to the pull factors and are dissatisfied by the push factors with rural living.

A higher concentration of people within a region can cause storage of important resources, such as food and water. Stores of petroleum and natural gas, as well as ecosystems destroyed by massive deforestation to accommodate growing populations, cannot be immediately replaced, increased industrial activity also raises pollution levels that contribute to respiratory health problems. A lack of appropriate sanitation and waste disposal systems increases the spread of infectious diseases.

Some of the problems that develop from urbanization are a strain on basic services, increased poverty, poor public education, sanitation problems, unequal wealth distribution, health hazards and violence. It causes environmental and economic problem on land and people. Urbanization indirectly affects the society by health problems as a result of food and water shortage.

Environment

Surat has faced floods, malaria, dengue fever several epidemics in its aftermath. In 2006, three-quarters surface area of Surat was flooded resulting in heavy loss. From factories and industries poisonous chemicals releases into the water to make it polluted. Number of vehicles run on the road spread noise and air pollution in the city. Environment gets damaged due to the smoke and chemicals released from industries which make harmful effect on human being. Most of the forest part was destructed due to the rapid urbanization. Peoples are suffering from skin, lung, stomach problems due to vast urbanization. Urbanization has led to polluted urban environment that affects the health and quality of life of the urban population.

Housing

The Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC)²⁸ aims to build around 11,000 affordable homes for the weaker sections those are economically poor. To achieve these goals the state government is to provide Rs.1.5 lakh for EWS unit, while the central government would offer Rs. 75,000 subsidy. Construction for these has been planned in phases and has begun in the first quarter of 2014. Gujarat Housing Board had recently constructed 2,132 flats

in Surat. As per the Urban Development and Housing Department and the Gujarat Government, plans are in pipeline to implement quality house for the 40% slum dwellers.²⁹ But these steps are also not sufficient for the people of Surat. According to the Surat Builder's Association (SBA) the reason behind this is the continuous expansion of the middle income group as compared to the higher income groups. Related to this is also the issue of lack of housing finance as reflected in the difficulty of getting loans to purchase and invest in housing. In Surat builders are also selling their houses at a very high rate, middle and lower middle class workers cannot afford to purchase such kind of houses for their families.

Transport

Compared to the high industrial growth rates that the city has experienced, the investment in public transport is somewhat inadequate. Moreover, private transport became cheaper, especially for short distances due to the abundant supply of auto rickshaws or shared rickshaws compared to the existing system of bus services.

To cope up with the growing need of more public transports, the Bus Rapid Transport System (BRTS)³⁰ was established, and its first phase was completed in March 2014.

Urbanisation and its consequent issues have thrown up challenges to women of Surat in terms of education, employment and empowerment. Moreover, due to skewed sex ratio caused by migration, challenges to women empowerment are emerging in different forms and magnitude in Surat.

The next chapter discusses the problems and challenges of women empowerment.

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CHAPTER – 4

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC & POLITICAL ISSUES

Empowerment refers to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender or spiritual strength of an entity.¹ Empowerment focuses on mobilizing the self for the poor and needy. The subject of empowerment of women has become a contentious issue all over the world including India since last few decades. Inequalities between men and women and discrimination against women have also been age-old issues all over the world. Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation. It strengthens the ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience. Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individuals to think, take action and control work in an autonomous way.

Empowerment in a psychological sense means the social influence, political power and legal rights for the individual. It is a multi level construct referring to individuals, organizations and community. It is involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation through which

people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to the control over these resources. It is not merely a feel of greater self-confidence but also an internal transformation of one's consciousness enables one to overcome external barriers to accessing resources or changing traditional ideology.

Social Issues

The culture and tradition of India is considered as old and great all over the world where people used to worship various female goddesses, saints, poets. India is the biggest democracy in the world. However, women backwardness is also noticeable in the Indian society because of the social issues, problems and restrictions against women. Women from middle class suffer more than the higher class family. Women in the Indian Society generally face problems of sex discrimination, high percentage of illiteracy, female infanticide, dowry system etc.

In Indian Society it is a big curse for the women to taking birth as a women, as they face lots of social issues and problems all through their life which is considered as the big struggle for them. From beginning of their life they face various issues. Female infanticide is the most common practice of killing girl child in their mother's womb in Indian Society. Women are

considered as burden for their parents in their childhood life and after marriage for their husbands. Another common thing or problem which women are faced from their birth is sex discrimination till their death. Illiteracy, engaged in household work, child rearing, rape, sexual harassment at workplace are some major issues for the women in India. Women are not getting proper food, they are suffering from malnutrition and disease in rural area.

There are various issues and problems which women generally face in the society in India. Earlier women were facing lot of problems because of male dominated patriarchal society system, practice of old traditional believes, etc. Women were only responsible to the traditional roles like child bearing and child rearing. Selective abortion and female infanticide, is a common practice for the women in India from the earlier time.

Sexual Harassments: It is the form of sexual exploitation of a girl child at home, streets, public places, transport, offices etc. by the family members, neighbours, friends or relatives.

Dowry and Bride burning it is another problem faced by the women of lower or middle class family generally after the marriage. In 2005 around 6787 dowry death cases was registered in India according to the Indian National Crime Bureau Reports.²

Disparity in Education: The level of education of women is less than man still in the modern age. Female illiteracy is higher in the rural areas where over 63% or more women remain unlettered. Education is the most important tool of empowerment of women as it can bring about a positive attitudinal change. It is therefore crucial for the socio-economic and political progress of India. Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women.

Domestic Violence:³ It is like widespread disease that affects almost 70% women of India. According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development it is caused by the husband, relative or other family member. Girls have no proper rights like boys in the society.

Child Marriage:⁴ Early marriage of the girls by their parents is highly practiced in the rural areas of India.

Inadequate Nutrition: Inadequate nutrition in the childhood affects girls belonging to the lower middle class or poor families.

Women are considered as inferior to men so they are not allowed to join military services. They are not allowed to take part in social activities.

Widows are considered as the worthless in the Indian Society. They are treated very poorly and forced them to take the instruction of the other family member at home, and bound them to wear white saree. They are not

allowed to take part any auspicious work. In early times, women were facing problems like child marriage, sati pratha, parda pratha, restriction to widow marriage, widows exploitation, devdasi system etc. Gradually these old practices from the society have disappeared but there are some other issues emerging in recent times. Women are continuously facing many problems even after having self-confidence, individuality, self-respect, personality, capacity, talent and efficiency more than men. They are facing many problems in their daily life even after they are given equal rights and opportunities like men by the Constitution of India. These are some of the problems modern women are still facing.

Violence against Women:⁵ Women are getting affected by the various violence almost every day which is disrupting the society. This is because the crimes are increasing day by day in the society according to the report of Crime Record Bureau of the Central Home Ministry. They even faced violence inside their house or outside the family etc.

Gender Discrimination: Women are considered as weaker section of the society than men and given less importance. Girls children are become real victims of the discrimination. Due to the patriarchal family system in India the discrimination of work between men and women in the areas like

nutrition, education, health care reducing of female population, job, public life, etc.

Problems of Female Education: Women education percentage is low in India especially in the rural areas because they are discouraged for higher education like professional and technical education.

Socio-Economic Issues

Problems related to Unemployment: Women are getting more problem in searching for suitable job. They become more liable to the exploitation and harassment in the work areas. Women who are uneducated have more fear to divorce and desertion by their husbands at any stage of life. They are bound to live their life with the fear of divorce because of economic reasons.

Poverty: It is a condition in which a household is not able to fulfill its basic needs for survival i.e. food, clothing and shelter. Since independence poverty is a wide spread condition in India. It is a serious issue for the country it needs to be taken into account that although the economy has shown some progress in last two decades. The growth rates are higher in Gujarat and Delhi as compared to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Half of the

population doesn't have proper shelter and sanitation system at home in villages, do not have secondary school and lack of proper roads.

Starvation: Starvation is a condition characterized by the deficiency in calorie energy intake and is a serious form of malnutrition which leads to death if not taken care about. Starving can take place in a country due to many reasons like war, famine, the discrimination between the rich and the poor. The Supreme Court has issued orders over the government to take measures like mid-day meal schemes and the provision of health care schemes for pregnant women.

Child Labour: Child labour means generally the employment of children in any work with or without payment. It not only happens in India but is also a global phenomenon. Over population, illiteracy, poverty, debt trap are some of the common cause's which are instrumental in this issue.

Multinational companies also recruit children in garment industries for more work and less pay which is absolutely unethical. Abolition of child trafficking, elimination of poverty, true and compulsory education and basic standards of living can reduce the problem to a great extent. The World-Bank and the International Monetary Fund⁶ can help in eradicating poverty by providing loan to the developing countries.

Though several Governmental and non-governmental bodies are working towards improving the existing situation in the social fields but the results are not very encouraging. Government and NGOs have taken but the practice is continuing. This is because this is the patriarchy system of our country which considers male as the superior authority and women as subordinate to them.

Though there have been several positive changes in the society such as girls going to school in vast majority and their employment ratio is also increasing, illiteracy as a whole is decreasing and conditions of SC/STs are also improving etc. but situation is far from satisfactory. And without changing the mind set and beliefs of the people it is very difficult task to change the society. For this purpose educating people about various social problems and try to changing their way of thinking is the best way to forward, but as far as social developments are concerned it is still one of the lowest ranked countries of the world Indian's Human Development Index (HDI) rank for 2013 is 135 out of 187 countries of the world.⁷ In fact many societies of the world have their social issues like India. In India there are different religious beliefs that adds to the socio cultural varieties of the country. India's social problems are also rooted in the religious practices and

beliefs of it people. These social problems have developed over a long period of times and are still continuing in one form or other.

Women empowerment is very necessary to make the bright future of the family, society or country. Women need fresh and more capable environment so that they can take their own right decisions in every area whether for themselves, family, society or country. Women empowerment is an essential tool to achieve the goals of development.

The most famous saying used by the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is “To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she moves, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves.” It should be promoted from the child hood in each and every family. Women need to be strong physically, mentally and socially. Better education can be initiated from childhood.⁸ The upliftment of women in the society needs healthy family to bring a holistic development of the nation. Still in many backward areas, there is a trend of early marriage and child birth because of the poverty, insecurity and illiteracy of the parents. In order to empower women various steps have been taken by the government to prevent violence, social separation, gender discrimination and abuse against women. Gender inequality is the main social issue in India, in which women are getting back in male dominated country. Women in all means should be the utmost

priority of the nation. Inequalities between men and women in the society generate lots of problems which become a big obstruction in the way to success of Nation.

Economic Issues

The economic empowerment refers to programmes aiming directly raising people's income. Women's economic empowerment that is, their capacity to bring about economic change for themselves, as it is increasingly observed that the most important contributing factor to achieving equality between women and men. But economically strengthening women—who are half the world's workforce – is not only a means by which to spur economic growth, but also a matter of advancing women's human rights. To increase their economic opportunities, women need access to more and better jobs, a business climate that supports them in starting and doing business, a financial sector that gives them financial support to their needs and greater livelihood security in times of food and fuel crisis. Women's economic empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable development, pro-poor growth and the achievement of all the MDGs.⁹

Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic

growth. Women make enormous contributions to economics whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home.

Many international commitments support women's economic empowerment¹⁰ like the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and a series of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions on gender equality. UN supports women's economic empowerment and with the growing body of evidence that shows that gender equality significantly contributes to advancing economics and sustainable development.

Gender discrimination means that women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and constitute a small minority of those in senior positions. It curtails access to economic assets such as land and loans. It limits participation in shaping economic and social policies, because women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue economic opportunities.

In all economic empowerment programmes, UN reaches out to women most in need, often by engaging with grass-roots and civil society organizations and marginalized groups that include rural women domestic workers some migrants and low-skilled women. The aims are higher

incomes, better access to and control over resources, and greater security, including protection from violence. As such the women and girls have restricted mobility, access to education, access to health facilities and lower-decision making power.

The impact of the patriarchal structure can be seen in rural and urban India, although women's empowerment in rural India¹¹ is less visible than in urban areas. This is of particular concern, since much of India is rural despite the high rate of urbanization and expansion in urban settings, face inequality at much higher rates and in all spheres of life. Urban educated women enjoy better access to economic opportunities, health and education and experience less domestic violence. Women of both urban and rural who have some level of education have higher decision-making power in the household and the community. Furthermore, the level of women's education also has a direct implication on maternal mortality rates nutrition and health indicators among children. The most notable ones are education level, caste and class divisions. Women from lower castes (backward and tribal communities) are particularly vulnerable to maternal mortality and infant mortality. They are often unable to access health and educational services, lack decision-making power, and face higher levels of violence.

Upper class and educated women have better access to health, education and economic opportunities whereas lower class, less educated women in urban settings enjoy these rights very less. Due to rapid urbanization and lack of economic opportunities in other parts of the country, some cities are also come under the slum-areas. Slums are informal sprawls and most of the time the area is not getting basic services such as clean water, sanitation health facilities. That is because slum dwellers mostly work in unorganized and informal sectors.¹²

India is one of the world's fastest growing economies, with women mainly from the middle class increasingly entering the workforce. Urban centres like Delhi and Bangalore have seen an influx of young women¹³ from semi-urban and rural parts of the country, living alone and redefining themselves. However, the story of economic empowerment for women is not a singular narrative; rather it is located in a complex set of caste, class, religious and ethnic identities.

The Global Gender Gap Report¹⁴ by the World Economic Forum in 2009 ranked India 114th out of 134 countries for inequality between men and women in the economy, politics, health, and education. On equal economic opportunities and women's participation in the labour force, India ranked 127 and 122 respectively. The number of women in the work force varies

greatly from state to state i.e. 21% in Delhi, 23% in Punjab, 65% in Manipur, 71% in Chhattisgarh, 76% in Arunachal Pradesh. The diversity of women's economic opportunities between states is due to the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of each state. Northern states like Delhi and Punjab lag far behind on gender equality measures, including the alarming sex ratio between male and female due to preference and sex-selective abortion, low female literacy rate and high rates of gender based violence.

In rural India women's economic opportunity remain restricted by social, cultural and religious barriers. Most notably inheritance laws embedded in Hindu and Shariat civil codes continue to marginalize women in the household and the larger community. Rural women particularly of lower caste and class, have the lowest literacy rates, and therefore do not have the capacity to negotiate pay or contracts and most often engage in the unorganized sector, self-employment or in small-scale industry. Self-help-group (SHGs)¹⁵ are a widely practiced model for social and economic mobility by NGOs and the government. SHGs provide women with the opportunity to manage loans and savings that can be used by the members for varying needs. SHGs also are used to promote social change among the members and the community at large. Members of SHGs also have used their experience in local institutions (Panchayat Khap).

Rural low caste and tribal women also make up 70% of domestic workers in India, India's growing economy¹⁶ has allowed for many upper and middle-class women to enter the workforce and while poor rural women have little access to education and training, there is a high demand for domestic workers in urban hubs.

Domestic workers are mostly illiterate, with little or no negotiating power for wage equity and are highly vulnerable to exploitation and sexual and physical abuse. There is a movement at the policy level to organize domestic workers and to create laws to regulate minimum wage, working hours and other measures such as life and health insurance.

Women are also visible in the construction sector in India and are taken their wages daily base system. Women construction workers are mostly poor and illiterate and have little negotiating power. They earn less than men, in the world India has one of the highest percentages women those who occupy managerial positions are under 3%. Most women work in low administrative positions and many women are migrated from rural to urban area for doing their job in industries or various places, now a days more and more women are entering the IT and other technical sectors. The movement aims to locate women's rights within the larger human rights framework, and by doing so moves away from looking at women's issues only within

the framework of violence against women and reproductive rights.¹⁷

Women's economic, social, cultural, rights (ESCR) attempts to look of the broader issues facing women namely poverty, housing, unemployment, education, water, food security, trade etc. By empowering women economically and socially ESCR provides for a broader discourse on rights that moves women's rights from a victim centered approach to one that cuts across other human rights issues.

Economic development reduces poverty, it increases the ability-distinct from will of households to withstand crises and the government ability to ensure their poorest citizens against sickness and hunger.¹⁸

There are many ways to define women's empowerment, but it can be defined in terms of the process of change through which women expand their ability to make strategic choices about their lives and to perform on equal terms with men in bringing about desired result to changes in the society in which they live. It is widely recognized that empowerment is a multidimensional process, encompassing changes in the political, social and economic spheres of life and that these different dimensions of empowerment are closely interrelated so that significant changes in one dimension is likely to generate changes in others.

Women economic empowerment relates to the capacity of women's strategic choice and agency in the spheres of life and that these different dimensions of empowerment changes in other spheres of their lives. There are a number of arguments as to why a focus on women's economic empowerment is important. First of all, gender inequalities in the division of labour between paid and unpaid work, women are not being paid at home for their household work. In society the women have subordinate status in society. They always depend along with their children on their male provision.

The economic empowerment of women is thus a matter of human rights and social justice. The economic empowerment of women is also critical for human development. There is now a well established body of evidence to suggest that women's economic empowerment, their access to and control over valued resources, for the well being of the family, including their own and their children's well-being. It increases the chances that they will seek family planning and reproductive health services, insure the certain contexts, reduce gender inequalities in household resources allocation. The economic employment of women thus contributes to the development of human capital and human capabilities, including their own.

The economic empowerment of women matters for poverty reduction.

This is not surprising, if women have lower levels of education and skills if they face discrimination in their markets for the sale of their goods, services and wages, labour as well as in their access to assets, technology and financial services, their efforts to earn a living for themselves and their dependents are likely to be rewarded more unfavourable than those of men with equivalent characteristics. Women are jointly doing the outside services with male they are prevent the crisis and are able to declining the poverty line. Investing in women's economic resources helps poor household to weather crisis and increases their changes of moving out of poverty.

Finally the women's economic empowerment is essential if they are to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth process on terms which recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible for them to negotiate a satisfactory distribution of the benefits of growth. It is possible to improve women's access to land, to jobs, to credit and so on in the ways which are dreaming and exploitative and do little changes their subordinate status within the home. In India Mobile crèches is a voluntary organization that has been in existence since 1969 to meet the child care needs of women workers in the construction industry.

SEWA¹⁹ has also been exploring different approaches to the provision of child care support to women in the informal economy who make up its membership (Kabeer, 2008).²⁰ One example of its efforts in this field is Shaishav, its village-based crèche programme which provide comprehensive child care services to children ages 0-3 among rural women workers in Gujarat.

For the upliftment of the society, some economic activities are well-designed to provide financial services to the poor-people, to tie themselves over a crisis to respond to investment opportunities, to ensure themselves against old age, sickness and to pay lump-sum money to their social and religious festivals. For lending programmes Micro-credit²¹ programme has been launched. Micro-credit programmes have expanded since 1980s.

There is a strong case for redistributive forms of social protection which are not tied to employment status and which would help to reduce the gap between “good” and “bad” jobs in the economy. The ILO suggested that such a social floor support old age pensions, child benefits, disability benefits, basic health support. This estimates indicates that such a package would cost a modest percentage of the GDP of most developing countries (4-10% if it included health support and between 2-5% if it did not).²²

It may be reduce poverty level. The importance of livelihoods in the lives of poor women and men come together in collective action. Trade union have not always come in the forefront of struggles around the rights of vulnerable workers, particular women. Some organize around specific occupational categories such as waste picker, janitors, migrant workers and so-on-organised struggle for economic rights.

The support for women's participation in networks, unions, business associations, market networks should be consisted something that cuts across all interventions to empowerment women.

Economic activities are related to production distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services to provide equally to men and women in the society.

The primary aim of the economic activity is the production of goods and services with a view to make them available to the consumer.

Profession is an occupation carried on by professional people like Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers etc.

Employment is a type of occupation under which one person provides his services, physical or mental to someone else in return for which he/she gets salary or wage. The person who employs is called employer and the person who is employed is called employee or worker.

Business is an economic activity concerned with production and distribution of goods and services with the aim to earn profit. It includes all those activities which are directly or indirectly concerned with the production, purchase and sale of goods and services. So the production, marketing, advertising, warehousing, insurance, banking etc. are all business activities. The ministries of the Government of India have come up with various schemes from time to time. These schemes could be either central and the state. A Central Sector Scheme launched in 1986-87 to help the poor and asset less women and provide employment on sustainable basis by mobilizing them in viable co-operative groups, strengthening marketing linkages, support services and access to credit. Since inception, around 250 projects have been provided financial assistance under the scheme. The ten traditional sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries, hand looms, handicrafts, khadi and village industries, sericulture, waste land development and social forestry. Kishori Shakti Yojna replaced Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) was approved by the Government on 16/08/2010.²³

Economic Empowerment of women is to be achieved through the formation and promotion of SHGs as to enable women to have access to micro credit and micro finance. Programmes like National Rural Livelihood

Mission of Sayam Sidha, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh. Financial institutions like NSCFDC²⁴/NBCFDC²⁵/NSKFDC²⁶ and nationalized banks is co-ordinated well and delivery of credit is timely.

New Employment-Oriented Economic Schemes²⁷

The Union Government lead by Shri Narendra Modi has become quite famous for launching a number of social welfare schemes throughout the country within a short span of time.

Digital India: Digital India Programme launched in August 2014 to change the face of India digitally and electronically. This would digitally empowered nation and economy. This programme which started in 2014 and it would complete by 2019.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna: On his first speech of Independence Day in year 2014. Prime Minister announced the famous yojna and ensures a bank account for every Indian. After this 15 million saving accounts were opened across the length and breadth of the country and all public sectors banks participating in it.

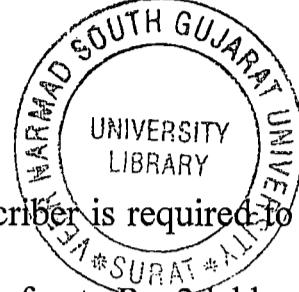
Make in India would also ensure that there are sufficient job opportunities for the youth who are struggling to get a decent job.

In Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna each M.P. would take out some part of their funds for the development of their constituencies. Through physical and institutional infrastructure the village of the country can reach up to their empowerment as a whole.

Atal Pension Yojna: Low cost benefits have been the core guiding principles of Narendra Modi lead Central Government in almost all the schemes they are launching. Atal Pension Yojna ensures old age pension to those who are not covered under any other pension or social security scheme.

Awas Yojna: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna is a primarily a welfare housing scheme launched by the central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi it ensures by the year 2022 the intention is to provide housing to all the citizen specially those are poor.

Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna: Anyone who is within the age group of 18 years to 50 years can get enrolled for PMJJBY, provided all have a functional saving bank account. Within the scheme, the policy holder would have to pay as a premium is Rs. 330 per year and they would be covered with a life insurance of Rs. 2 lakhs.



Suraksha Bima Yojna: By this scheme the subscriber is required to just pay Rs. 12 per year and enjoy a carefree insured life of upto Rs. 2 lakhs, if there is any accidental death partial or permanent disabilities.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna: It is one of the most promising and relevant schemes to empower girl child financially. According to the scheme the girl child below 10 years can open a saving account and their parents can operate it till they attain an age of 21 years. After that they can use it for their daughters higher studies or marriage.

There are many more schemes launched by the Union Government like:

- LPG subsidy
- Modi's Smart City Yojna
- School Nursery Yojna
- Gold Monetization Scheme
- Stand up India Loan Scheme
- One Rank One Pension OROP
- 7th Pay Commission

Political Issues

The term political participation has a very wide meaning.²⁸ It is not only related to “Right to Vote”, but simultaneously relates to participation in decision making process, political activism, political consciousness, etc. Women in India participate in voting, run for public offices and political parties at lower levels. Political activism and voting are the strongest areas of women’s political participation. To remove the gender inequalities in politics, the Indian Government has instituted reservations for seats in local government.

Women turnout during India’s 2014 parliamentary general elections was 65.63% compared to 67.09% turnout for men.²⁹ India ranks 20th from the bottom in terms of representation of women in parliament. Women have held the post of the president and the Prime Minister in India, as well as chief ministers of various states. Indian voters have elected women to numerous state legislative assemblies and national parliament for many decades.

The Constitution of India establishes a parliamentary system of government, and guarantees its citizens the right to be elected, freedom of speech, freedom to assemble and form associations and vote. The constitution of India attempts to remove gender inequalities by banning

discrimination based on sex and class, prohibiting human trafficking and forced labour, and reserving positions for women.

Women were substantially involved in the Indian Independence movement in the early 20th century and got independence from Britain. Independence brought gender equality in the form of constitutional rights but historically women's political participation has remained low.

Women's organizations in India first began to emerge in the early 1900s, and later in the 1970s after a period of limited activity from the 1950s to 1970s. One of the earliest women's organizations, Bharat Stree Mahamandal formed in 1910, and focused on helping women escape oppression from men. In 1927, the All India Women's Conference (AIWC)³⁰ was formed to advocate for women's education and was helpful in the passage of the Hindu Code of Bills between 1952 and 1960. Women were also active in the freedom movement in protesting British colonial rule over Indian holding protests and public meetings in support of Independence.

In 1950s, universal suffrage granted voting rights to all women. This is enshrined in Article 326 in our constitution. India is a parliamentary system with two houses, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Rates of participating among women in 1962 were 46.63% for Lok Sabha elections and rose to

high in 1984 of 58.60%. Male turnout during the same period was 63.31% in 1962 and 68.18% in 1984.

The gap between men and women voters has narrowed with a difference of 16.7% in 1962 to 4.4% in 2009. Voter turnout for national elections in the past 50 years has remained the same with turnout ranging between 50% and 60%. State elections have seen a growing trend in women's participation, and in some cases women's turnout is exceeding male turnout. Increased participation is occurring in both rich and poor states of India. The sex ratio of voters has improved from 715 female voters for every 1,000 male voters as the comparison in the year 1960s 883 female voters in 2000s. The Election Commission of India sought to increase voter turnout by including door-to-door voter registration and voter photo ID will be issued to increase voter turnout.

Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making, including decision making in political process at all levels will ensure the achievement of goal of women empowerment. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts reserved the one-third of seats in all local elected bodies for women as a sign of political empowerment. Over a million women has actively entered political life in India through the Panchayat Raj institution.³¹

There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. The percentage of women in various levels of political activities in India have been risen considerably, however women are still under represented in governance and decision-making process. Their power is restricted, as it the men who yield all the authority. Their decisions are often over-ruled by the government machinery. It is crucial to train and give real power to these women leaders so that they can bring the change in their villages regarding women. In recent years there have been explicit moves to increase women's political participation at top level. However the women's reservation bill is a sad story as it is repeatedly being scuttled in the parliament.

Participation of women,³² who constitute 50% of our total population, in politics and public life is very much negligible in India. Less number of women are present in positions like state and central cabinet, minister, governors, speakers, secretaries and legal advisers to the governments, ambassadors to other countries, IPS, IAS, IFS officers, judges in courts, mayors of big cities, office bearers of all India parties etc.

No political party of India has given position to women in accordance with their number in the total population. In some areas seats are reserved

for women as we find in Gram Panchayat, Jilla Panchayat, University Senate etc. Even in these areas women have not constituted themselves into a “Pressure group”. Hence, in our political life, we have caste-lobbies, minority lobby, linguistic lobbies, capitalist lobbies, etc. but we do not have “Women lobby” to bring pressure on the government. Some of the factors for low participation of women in public affairs are discussed below.

1. Increasing Violence and Terrorism in Politics

Political corruption, criminalization of politics, erosion of political values, disappearance of political decency, instability, lawlessness, terrorism and confusion have been increasing in our public life since 1980s. This state of confused political situation has discouraged women from taking active role in politics.

2. Minimum Representation of Women in Lok-Sabha

The representation of women in Lok Sabha has been very poor since 1962 elections. For ex: there were only 33% elected women members in the third Lok Sabha (out of 494 members) after the 1962 elections. In the 6th Lok Sabha out of 544 elected members there were only 19 women members and their percentage was only 3.4. In the 10th Lok Sabha (1991 elections) there were 39 elected women members and their percentage was 7.4.

In the 1996 Elections for the 11th Lok Sabha though the total number of women voters increased to 28.24 crores (47%) only 477 women candidates as against 14,250 men candidates contested for 543 seats. (In the 1991 elections for the 10th Lok Sabha 325 women candidates contested as against 8,374 men candidates for 521 seats). These figures tell us that only a small number of women are interested in political life.

In 1999 General Elections for the 13th Lok Sabha also women's participation was the poorest one. Though political parties were speaking in terms of 33% reservation for women in legislative bodies including the parliament, no political parties had given tickets to women is more than 10%. In some parties the percentage of women candidates was not even 2 to 3.³³

Poor Participation of Women in the Party – Politics

Not only in the legislative bodies but even within the framework of the political parties also the participation of women is very poor. Political parties are still male-dominated and unwilling to give sufficient representation of women.

The movement for women's suffrage began in the early 1990s in response to a national movement suffrage. Previously there was no

capability or right the Indians to vote either men or women during the British rule before 1947. After Indian Independence the Indian Constitution in 1950 officially granted women and men suffrage. Provincial legislatures had granted women the right to vote. Madras was the first to grant women's suffrage in 1921.

India has a federal form of government, with developed powers. The electorate votes to elect a national parliament as well as state assemblies. In 2012, India had a minimum percentage of 10.9% women elected representatives in the national parliament.

According to World Economic Forum's annual global gender gap index studies India has ranked in the top 20 countries worldwide for many years, with 9th best in 2013, this score reflecting more women participated in Indian politics than Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, France and United Kingdom.

To remedy low participation of women electors, India in 1994 established quotas in constitutional amendments (73rd & 74th) to reserve 33% of seats in local governments for women.

The Women's Reservation Bill³⁴ (108 amendment) has been introduced in the national parliament to reserve 33% of Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha seats for women. The bill yet to be passed by Lok Sabha. The

discussion of women's reservations began in the 1920s and continued into the 1930s until a compromise was reached with Britain to allow women in urban areas to vote.

The women's reservations were again introduced in 1974 by the United Nations Commission on the status of Women in India, but India did not fully establish quotas in local government until 1994. Local governing bodies in India are called Panchayati Raj institutions and one-third of seats and leadership positions are reserved for women. States such as Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Orissa, Jharkhand, Tripura and Uttarakhand have increased reservation to 50%. The National Government has also proposed to raise the level of women's reservations in PRIs to 50%. After the establishment of women's reservations, political participation went from 4.5 to 25-40% among women, and many women got the opportunity to serve as leaders in local government. In Orissa an Indian state, they had 28,069 elected women in 1992 and 28,595 elected women in 1997.

The issue of training has become an increasing concern with preparing women for the role of leadership. In Tamil Nadu women have lack of education and training to understand the procedures in Panchayats.

Family also plays a significant role in women's participation in government. Family can be barrier or support system for female elected officials in terms of connections. Family connections can help women seek elected positions at both the national and local government level. There has been concern over the role of women as proxies for male family members, but women may still have important effects on policy decisions.

Drinking water and road improvements are issues that are frequently raised by female elected officials. Women are likely to bring welfare issues such as violence against women, childcare, maternal health to consideration.

India has a multi-party system with 24 registered parties at the national level. Women involvement in Political Parities is tied to the increasing demand for equal rights.³⁵ In 2009, the INC nominated a woman to become first speaker of Lok Sabha and they also supported the election of Pratibha-Patil India's first female President. Some political parties have encouraged greater representation of women by developing women's leadership programmes, financial assistance for women candidates and implementing a 33% reservation for women in party leadership positions.

Women support was observed on by issues such as the "Uniform Civil Code", to extend equal rights to women and men regardless of religion.

Women's participation in political parties remained low in 1990s it was 10.12%.³⁶ Indian women have also taken the initiative to form their own political parties and in 2007 the United Women Front Party was created, and demanded to increasing the reservation of seats for women in Parliament to 50%.

Women only govern India's four political parties, From 1970s, 4.3% of candidates and 70% of electoral races had no women candidates at all. In 2013, it has been reported of the members of parliament 11% were women in Lok Sabha and 10.6% in Rajyasabha.

Gender inequality leading to deprivation of power among women continuous to be a political reality in India today. Women are excluded from decision-making at every step of the ladder, starting from the household to the top layer of policy making. Indian constitution attempts to remove gender inequalities based on sex and class and allotted fundamental rights for all citizens.

Comparison with the international level the level of women's participation in political decision making in India is very low.

One of the key challenges faced by Indian women a lack of education which is a obstacle to their political involvement. This gap can be fulfilled by providing quality of education to women in the country.

Once women are appropriately educated they can be aware about their rights and privileges as mentioned in the constitution. The issue of gender based violence and provision of safety and security of women should also be addressed on a priority basis to promote gender equality in the social and political arenas. Although the Government of India has initiated the National Mission of Empowerment of women in 2014 with the broad objective of gender empowerment, the progress of this project is not reach up to the mark. It is thus imperative to strengthen its functioning and implementation. In addition, there is need for capacity building of prospective women leaders by imparting leadership training to the female members of political parties. Some women are entering into the political field with the support from their family (through their parents, husband relatives). Some of them are entering into the political field by their own capacity and talent.

High levels of political participation is one of the major tools in the political empowerment usually associated with democracy which is beneficial both to the individual and to the society.

Reservation is the need of the hour to attain political empowerment in India. Right from 1996, the women of India have been waiting for the clearance of the “Women’s Reservation Bill” that would give them one third reservation in Parliament and the State Legislatures.

The Bill was introduced several times since then but it is in the hand of men folk who dominated parliament and the state Legislatures with a more than ninety percent majority.

The role of women in the sphere of decision-making has so far been insignificant to have any kind of multiplier effect. Their members in formal decision-making bodies have not increased many times. Statistical report shows that there has been only a marginal increase in the last few decades in the number of women candidates fielded during the elections.

The number of women parliaments has never exceeded 15% of all seats. At the state level their percentage is also very low.

Women have been treated by the political parties as per their interest and gains. This is the result of less number of women candidates playing an active role in the field of politics during elections. Even the few women who are elected are sided by the other political members and often they are allotted soft portfolios, such as welfare, education etc. In both cases women are lack access and control over apex bodies where decisions and policies are formulated.

The Indian constitution guarantees to all women the fundamental right³⁷ to equality and equal voting rights and political participating to both men and women. According to Preamble, the Indian Constitution is firmly

grounded in the principles of liberty, fraternity, equality and justice and contains a number of provisions for the empowerment of women.

Voting is a tool of political equality and it mobilizes women but voting by itself does not result in the desired end of equality. Therefore, the increase in electoral participation of women their representation in the formal political structures has must be changed.

The value of women's representation in governance and decision making process depends in the diversity of experiences women will bring to governance. Comprehensive representation would be obtained if women constituting half the population find a proportionate number of seats in Government. The spirit of the womenhood has be explored and developed so that it can be serve the purpose of the country.

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- ²⁵ NBCFDC = National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation was incorporated 13 January 1992. The corporation can assist loan for their self-employment ventures in the sectors like agriculture, transport and service etc. http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Backward_Classes_Finance_and_Development_Corporation.
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Justice and Empowerment. It playing a vital role in elimination of manual scavenging. Apart from it operating various loan and non-loan based schemes for the upliftment of target group – <http://www.nskfdc.nic.in/>

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CHAPTER – 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Empowerment enables to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender, spiritual strength of an entity. The subject of empowerment of women has becoming a contentious issue all over the world including India since the last few decades.

Women empowerments include some of the following:

1. To provide for basic minimum needs like nutrition, health, sanitation, and housing.
2. Changes in women's mobility and social interaction, control over decision making, labour pattern, education, employment and career development.
3. Creating awareness about their rights.
4. The society's attitudinal change.

Though the above four are not exhaustive, they represent a beginning towards empowerment. Some of the objectives set forth in this study are to examine how the concept of empowerment is directly related to social,

political and economic factors, to find out how the women of Surat, both literate and illiterate, are aware of their powers, rights and duties and to evaluate whether women empowerment has helped to develop and advance in social, political and economic spheres and activities.

Analysis and interpretation are important steps in the research process. The objective of analysis is to organize, classify and summarize the data so that they can be better comprehended and interpreted. Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information. One of the most important usefulness of data analysis is that it helps in keeping bias away from research findings. In this chapter the researcher has examined the data collected through survey of women respondents. The interpretation of the data analyzed is with reference to the objectives and hypotheses set forth in the study.

Sources of Data

To refute or validate the hypotheses the researcher collected data through survey research. Primary data was collected through survey of literate, semi-literate and non-literate women in Surat. This was supplemented by secondary sources that include books, journals and web references. In all 360 respondents from the age group of 16 to 75 were

administered structured questionnaire. The sample was selected using stratified random sampling - stratified on the basis of education, income, social background, employment/vocation and geographical area. It was also observed that out of 360 respondents, 138 respondents did not state their social background and therefore they were put under the general category. Thus the total of 274 respondents in general category also includes 138 respondents who did not state their social background and another 31 respondents were belonging to non-Hindu religion.

Analysis

The following tables (Table 5.1 to Table 5.8) provide the background of the respondents:

Table – 5.1: Age Group of Respondents

Age-group	Respondents	%
18-30	102	28
31-40	143	40
41-50	76	21
50-75	39	11

Table – 5.2: Social Background

Age-group	Gen	SC	ST	OBC
18-30	77	08	07	10
31-40	109	06	09	19
41-50	58	04	04	10
51-75	30	03	02	04
Total	274	21	22	43

Table – 5.3: Marital Status

Age-group	Married	Unmarried	Widow	Divorce
18-30	68	28	03	03
31-40	130	05	05	03
41-50	69	02	03	02
51-75	22	01	14	02
Total	289	36	25	10

Table – 5.4: Education Background

Age-group	Illiterate	Up to 5 th	Up to 10 th	Graduate	Post Graduate/ Ph.D.	Other
18-30	06	14	52	26	02	02
31-40	08	11	86	34	01	03
41-50	08	25	26	16	-	01
50-75	15	14	05	05	-	02
Total	37	64	169	79	03	08

Table – 5.5: Economic Background

Age-group	<5000	5000-10000	10000-20000	Above 20000	Others
18-30	58	22	19	02	11
31-40	61	29	24	05	25
41-50	22	08	05	04	26
50-75	11	04	04	02	18
Total	152	63	52	13	80

Table – 5.6: Privileged and Non-privileged Economic Background

Groups

Income level	Privileged	Non-privileged	Marginal
less than 5000	Nil	152	Nil
5000 to 10000	Nil	Nil	63
10000 and above	65	Nil	Nil

Table 5.6 shows the privileged, non-privileged and marginal respondents in terms of their economic background. Those whose income level is below 5000 are considered as non-privileged because their economic earnings are essential to fulfil the basic life needs of their families.

Table – 5.7: Privileged and Non-privileged Groups – On the basis of Economic and Educational Background

Privileged group (income >10000 and education 10th Standard pass and above)	Non-privileged group(income <10000 and education below 10th Std)	Others
63	217	80

In this case, the researcher classified the privileged and the non-privileged group on the basis of educational and economic background – that is those whose income is above 10000 and whose educational background is 10th standard pass and above as privileged and the rest as non-privileged group.

Table – 5.8: Area-wise Distribution of Respondents

Age-group	Adajan	City light	Godadra/ Parvat	Limbayat	Vesu
18-30	13	13	34	28	14
31-40	27	21	63	17	15
41-50	09	20	26	12	09
50-75	04	06	17	08	04
Total	53	60	140	65	42

It can be observed from the above tables that the 360 respondents represent different age-group, coming from varied socio, economic and educational backgrounds and the sample has been drawn from different areas of Surat City, adequately reflecting the demographic profile of the city.

Table – 5.9: Empowerment

	Respondents	%
Employment	76	21
Independence & Freedom	55	15
Decision making in family & workplace	182	51
To do anything	47	13

To the question on what empowerment means to the respondents, the responses are as shown in Table – 5.9. Women consider decision-making in both family and workplace as a primary feature of empowerment.

Table – 5.10: Factors Contributing to Empowerment

	Respondents	%
Education	109	30
Work Experience in any field	57	16
Education and work experience	172	48
None of these	22	06

To another question on what makes women empower, majority of the respondents stated that both education and work experience (i.e. employment) empower them.

Table – 5.11: Different Ways to Empower the Women

	Respondents	%
By giving training	191	53
Skill training	45	12
Vocational training	39	11
Personalized training	85	24

From table – 5.11 it is observed that respondents view training as a primary reason that help empowerment of women.

Table – 5.12: Views about the Independence of Empowered Women

	Response	%
a. Yes	202	56%
b. No	111	31%
c. Some	47	13%

Table 5.12 is the response of women to the query whether empowered women are independent and free in making decisions. While 56% of respondents say in affirmative, the rest do not agree and have stated that through education and employment ideally help empower women, in reality it is not.

It can be inferred from the above tables (table – 5.9 to table – 5.12) that education and employment help empower women and it provides them independence and freedom to decide, both at home and workplace. However, it is also a social reality that empowerment through education and employment alone does not guarantee freedom and independence. It is therefore a reflection of social attitude rooted in patriarchal society.

Table – 5.13: Literacy Level in Relation to Social Status

Literacy level	SC	ST	OBC	Gen	Total
Illiterate	8 (38)	8 (36)	6 (14)	15 (5)	37 (10)
Upto 5 th Standard	5 (24)	5 (23)	4 (9)	50 (18)	64 (18)
Upto 10 th Standard	6 (28)	4 (18)	11 (26)	148 (54)	169 (47)
Upto Graduation	1 (5)	3 (14)	18 (42)	57 (21)	79 (22)
Post Graduate/ Ph.D.	Nil	Nil	1 (2)	2 (1)	3 (1)
Others	1 (5)	2 (9)	3 (7)	2 (1)	8 (2)
Total	21 (100)	22 (100)	43 (100)	274 (100)	360 (100)

Note: Figures in brackets shows % in respective category.

Table – 5.14: Economic Background in Relation to Social Status

Income	SC	ST	OBC	Gen	Total
Less than 5000	09 (43)	11 (50)	12 (28)	120 (44)	152 (42)
5000-10000	07 (33)	05 (23)	13 (30)	45 (17)	63 (18)
10000-20000	01 (05)	02 (09)	07 (16)	36 (13)	52 (14)
above 20000	Nil	Nil	05 (12)	07 (02)	13 (4)
Nil income – Students/Unemployed Housewives and others	04 (19)	04 (18)	06 (14)	66 (24)	80 (22)
Total	21 (100)	22 (100)	43 (100)	274 (100)	360 (100)

Note: Figures in brackets shows % in respective category.

Tables – 5.13 and 5.14 depict the correlation between social status on one hand and literacy level as well as economic background on the other of women respondents.

Access to Education and Economic Facilities and other Social Rights

The following table shows the responses to the question on access to education and economic facilities and other social rights.

Table – 5.15: Access to Education and Economic Facilities and Other Social Rights

Access and Rights	Privileged (Both Economic and educational)	Non-Privileged (Both Economic and educational)	Others
Available	29 (46%)	64 (29%)	29 (36%)
Not available	34 (54%)	153 (71%)	51 (64%)
Total	63 (100%)	217 (100%)	80 (100%)

It is observed that even respondents from the privileged group feels that adequate access to education and economic betterment are not forthcoming and that they do not enjoy social rights (in terms of decision

making in the family or on education or employment). Though the percentage of such views is high among the non-privileged respondents, the general view that educated and employed women enjoy these rights and have access is not true.

Table – 5.16: Relative Independence of Respondents to Social Activities and Rights

Relative independence	Respondents	%
Yes	103	29
No	172	48
May be	85	24

Though 48% of respondents stated that there was no relative independence in performing social activities and rights, the non-privileged respondents stated they had more independence (about 54% of 217 respondents in this category), whereas 65% of the privileged group stated they have no independence. This also negates the myth that educated and economically independent women are empowered.

Socio-economic Perception among Women Respondents

Perception among respondents, both the privileged and non-privileged women groups, vary on issues relating to socio-economic issues like social

norms and values, education, social activities, employment, rights, awareness, economic empowerment etc. The researcher elicited responses from the respondents in order to find out the factors involved in the process of empowerment. Analyses of the following tables portray the perception among women respondents.

Table – 5.17: Perception about Non-privileged Group Women

	Respondents	%
Women without education	98	27
Women who are not aware of their rights	137	38
Women who feel inferior to men	125	35

From the above table 27% respondents view women without education, 38% respondents believe women who are not aware of their rights and 35% view women who feel inferior to men are considered as non-privileged group.

Table – 5.18: Perception about Rights Awareness among Non-Privileged Women

	Respondents	%
Yes	118	33
No	221	61
May be	21	06

From the above table only 33% respondents believe that non privileged women are aware of their rights.

Table – 5.19: Applicability of Rights to Non-privileged Women

	Respondents	%
Yes	205	57
No	122	34
May be	33	09

The above table shows 57% respondents opine that all rights are applicable to the women of non privileged groups.

Table – 5.20: Are Non-Privileged Women Inferior to Privileged Group

	Respondents	%
Yes	161	45
No	68	19
May be	131	36

It can be inferred from the above table that 45% respondents view that the women from non- privileged group are inferior to the women of privileged group; and also the fact that 36% respondents are inclined to have

a similar view, it can be summed up that women without education and economic independence consider themselves lowly in relation to those who are educated and economically independent.

Table – 5.21: Social Relationship between Privileged and Non-Privileged Group

	Respondents	%
Yes	168	47
No	132	37
May be	60	16

The above table depicts the responses with reference to social relationship.

Table – 5.22: Perception about Rights Awareness among Non-Privileged Women

	Respondents	%
Yes	72	20
No	186	59
May be	102	28

Majority of the respondents believe that non-privileged women are not aware of their rights. This may be because they attribute illiteracy, low self-esteem and lack of economic independence as a cause of low awareness.

Table – 5.23: Perception on Rights Awareness and Exercising the Rights among Privileged Women

	Respondents	%
Yes	86	24
No	213	59
May be	61	17

The fact that majority of respondents (59% and 17%) believe that women from the privileged group are not aware of their rights and know how to exercise the same, negates the common belief among the respondents that educated and employed women know more about rights than the non-privileged group.

Table – 5.24: Perception about the Status of Non-Privileged Group

	Respondents	%
They think they are equal to the women of privileged group	115	32
They know how to gain their rights	128	36
They think they are less than privileged group	117	32

The above table shows the perception about non-privileged women.

Table – 5.25: Are Non-Privileged Women Relatively More Free than the Privileged?

	Respondents	%
Yes	103	29
No	172	48
May be	85	24

From the above table it can be inferred that the respondents are almost equally divided on their views.

Table – 5.26: Basis on which the Women of Non-Privileged Group Feel they are More Free than the Privileged Group

	Respondents	%
Women from non-privileged group don't shows their social status	142	39
They can conduct themselves in a way that they like	101	28
They don't have to live up to other's expectation	117	33

The above table reflects what women think of non-privileged women and why they are relatively more free than the privileged women. The fact

that women (of non-privileged group) do not show their social status or conduct the way they want and do not have to live to other's expectations also reinforces the view that women from the privileged group are constrained to act and behave in a manner that reflect their social status!

Table – 5.27: Empowerment and Participation in Social Activities

	Respondents	%
Yes	176	49
No	81	22
May be	103	29

The belief that empowered women (i.e. educated and economically independent) are more eligible to participate in social activities reinforces the view that empowerment is an enabling factor in socio-political activities.

Table – 5.28: Are Social Activities Part of the Duty for Empowered Women?

	Respondents	%
Yes	271	75
No	63	18
May be	26	07

From the above table shows 75% responses feel that empowered women indulgence in social activities as a part of their duty, 18% opine that they do not indulge in social activities as the part of their duty and 07% respondents are uncertain.

Table – 5.29: Do Empowered Women Voluntarily Undertake Social Activities?

	Respondents	%
Yes	228	63
No	39	11
May be	93	26

From the above table it can be inferred that majority of the respondents perceive that empowered women voluntarily undertake social activities.

Table – 5.30: Does Participation in Social Activities make one Independent?

	Respondents	%
Yes	173	48
No	112	31
May be	75	21

The above table shows that 48% respondents feel that participation of women in social activities make them independent. The remaining feel that it may not be so.

Table – 5.31: Does Social Activities relate to Empowerment or Independence?

	Respondents	%
Yes	235	65
No	76	21
May be	49	14

Majority opine that social activities relate to empowerment or independence.

Table – 5.32: Various Kinds of Social Activities Women Undertake

	Respondents	%
Working in NGO	29	08
Help poor & needy women	256	71
Run adult education	31	09
Look after orphanage centre	44	12

The above table indicates the kind of social activities women undertake to bring development in the society.

Table – 5.33: Support/Restrictions for Women from Undertaking Social Activities

	Respondents	%
Support from family	43	12
Prevention from family	28	08
Cannot contribute fully due to house-hold work	289	80

The above table indicates the reasons for women from performing or not undertaking social activities.

Table – 5.34: Role of NGOs in Creating Awareness about Empowerment

	Respondents	%
Yes	154	43
No	123	34
May be	83	23

From the above table, 43% respondents believe NGO'S play an important role in education to better understanding of empowerment, 34% respondents expressed their views that NGO's do not play an important role and the rest were unsure.

Table – 5.35: Are Women with Economic Prosperity Empowered?

	Respondents	%
Yes	120	33
No	204	57
May be	36	10

The response to the above question was in negative. Majority of the respondents believe that economic prosperity has nothing to do with empowerment.

Table – 5.36: Education and Economic Prosperity

	Respondents	%
Yes	92	26
No	201	57
May be	67	17

To a question as to what helps women to attain economic independence and prosperity, majority of the respondents are of the view that education, and that took a minimum graduation, alone helps women to attain economic prosperity.

Table – 5.37: Economic Prosperity as the Backbone of Empowerment

	Respondents	%
Yes	255	71
No	90	25
May be	15	04

From the above table shows 71% respondents believe economic prosperity is the backbone of women empowerment, 25% respondents said it is not backbone of empowerment.

Table – 5.38: Main Hindrances in Economic Empowerment of Women

	Respondents	%
Progress in society	117	31
Encouraging the backward class women	120	34
Development in minorities group	123	35

From the above table it bring the result that 31% respondents view the hindrance in economic empowerment is lack of progress in society, 34% respondents say lack of encouraging the backward class women and 35% respondents say lack of development in minorities.

Table – 5.39: Women Empowerment Leads to Development of Economy in the Society

	Respondents	%
Yes	277	77
No	63	17
May be	20	06

The above table is self-explanatory. Through economic empowerment the women can change their status in the society and they can live their life by their own choice. They can give their children a good life.

Table – 5.40: Employment in Various Sectors

	Respondents	%
Private	109	30
Government	32	09
Self/ business/informal	137	38
Others (Housewives and unemployed)	82	23

The above table depicts the employment of respondents in different sectors.

Political Participation

Political participation includes participating in such social and political activities that can influence others through persuasion, through awareness programmes and of course by being members of political outfits like political parties and their related organisations. Women being elected representatives in urban or rural local bodies are one of the factors in political participation. The issues relating to women empowerment and political participation are varied and many and is not confined to having one-third elected representation in local bodies like panchayats or municipal authorities. Some of the issues to enable women to actively participate include the nature of participation, relative financial independence, support systems, awareness and literacy, role of NGOs, perception about political empowerment, and above all accessibility to the political processes. The survey, through the questionnaire, was intended to find out the issues and problems of women empowerment in political process and the analysis that follows indicate the respondents' perception about the nature and scope of political participation and the challenges they face in the process.

Tables – 5.41: Is there a Need for Financial Independence for Political Activity?

	Respondents	%
Yes	173	48
No	89	25
May be	98	27

From the above table shows 48% respondents have said that financially independent women can undertake political activity, 25% believe that there is no need for women to be financially independent for political activity, 27% respondents were unsure.

Table – 5.42: Do Empowered Women Actively Participate in Political Activity/Process?

	Respondents	%
Yes	120	33
No	166	46
May be	74	21

From the above table the view of respondents seems to be divided on the issue of empowered women's active participation in political activity.

Table – 5.43: Perception about Women Belonging to Minorities Group or Backward Classes Actively Participating in Political Activities

	Respondents	%
Yes	86	24
No	227	63
May be	47	13

The above table does not clearly indicate as to whether women belonging to minorities group or backward classes indulge more in political activities.

Table – 5.44: Literacy and Political Activity

	Respondents	%
Yes	108	30
No	146	41
May be	106	29

From the above table it is clear that the respondents opine that literacy is not an important factor to participate in political activities. This confirms a general perception that an individual need not be educated or even literate to be in politics.

Table – 5.45: Is participating in Active Politics a Choice of Empowerment for Non-Privilege Group?

	Respondents	%
Yes	180	50
No	146	41
May be	34	09

From the above table it is evident that equal number of respondents feels that for non-privilege group political activity is a choice for empowerment.

Table – 5.46: Perception about Women's Awareness of Political Empowerment

	Respondents	%
Yes	175	49
No	128	36
No opinion	57	15

From the above table shows 49% respondents feel women should be aware of political empowerment, 36% respondents feel that there is no need to make women aware of political empowerment and 15% respondents have no opinion.

Table – 5.47: Are Empowered Women Generally Successful in Political Activity?

	Respondents	%
Yes	225	62
No	83	23
May be	52	15

The above table shows that majority of respondents are of the view that empowered women are generally successful in political activity.

Table – 5.48: Forms of Women's Involvement in Political Activity

	Respondents	%
Voting	300	83
Member of political party	25	07
Propaganda	15	04
Creating awareness about the party	20	06

The above table indicates the nature and form of women's involvement in political activity.

Table – 5.49: Women and Party Politics

	Respondents	%
As Corporator	4	01
As working member	21	06
No involvement with party politics	335	93

It is clear from the above table that only 7% of the respondents are involved with political parties, either as corporator or as a member.

Table – 5.50: Women and NGOs

	Respondents	%
Yes	49	14
No	311	86

From the above table it is evident that only 14% respondents are connected with some NGO.

Table – 5.51: Nature of NGOs with which the Respondents are Associated with

	Respondents	%
Social education	10	3
Legal function	10	3
Management function	20	6
Create political awareness in minorities & backward class women	09	2

The above table portrays the nature of NGOs the respondents are associated with. The above two tables (5.50 and 5.51) clearly indicate that majority of the respondents are not associated with political parties or NGOs, but are aware of various facets of women empowerment.

Table – 5.52: Perception about the role of Women Party Workers and their Functions

	Respondents	%
Political consciousness	04	01
Knowledge of electoral politics	04	01
Participation in political party's functioning	16	04
Awareness of political party's ideology	16	04
No opinion	320	90

01% respondents think that political consciousness as well as knowledge of electoral procedure is the main function, 04% respondents think participating in political activities as well as awareness about political ideology of the party are main functions. It is observed that majority of the respondents have no opinion as they are not involved in any form of political activity.

Table – 5.53: Need for “Reserved Seats” for Women in Elected Bodies

	Respondents	%
Yes	259	72
No	101	28

From the above table majority believe in reservation of seats for women in elected bodies.

Interpretation of the Analysis

1. 68% of the respondents are in the age group of below 40, that reflects the demographic profile of the women respondents. This is also largely in conformity with the demographic profile of women in Surat, where in nearly 65% are in the age group of below 45.
2. As regard the distribution of the respondents on the social background factor, no conclusive inference can be drawn since 23% of respondents belong to SC/ST/OBC categories. Many respondents did not wish to state their social background and hence were included under the general category.
3. In terms of educational background, 28% of respondents can be considered as illiterate or having very poor literacy since they have studied only upto 5th standard.

4. The researcher classified the privileged and the non-privileged group on the basis of educational and economic background – that is those whose income is above 10000 and whose educational background is 10th standard pass and above as privileged and the rest as non-privileged group. Nearly 60% respondents belong to the non-privileged group, which again is similar to the universe (of the study).
5. The sample selected from different areas of the Surat city is almost similar to the population density of the city.
6. It is observed that the percentage of illiteracy is high in case of SC/ST categories and low in case of OBC and General categories. This reflects lack of awareness and opportunities among the SC/ST categories. The education level among OBC and general categories of respondents shows a relative higher percentage. This helps to infer that awareness and opportunities regarding education have not percolated to the SC and ST categories of respondents.
7. However the correlation between social status and economic background among different categories of respondents show negligible variation. This may be due to the fact that economic opportunities are available for varied type of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour, both in the formal as well as the informal sectors.

8. Respondents in the marginal category (income level between 5000 to 10000) earn to complement their family income for better economic benefits and those who are categorized as privileged group work and earn not to fulfil their basic needs but to show their independence, reflecting they are educationally and economically empowered.
9. Majority of the respondents consider empowerment as the right to take decisions, both in family and at workplace. This indicates the assertiveness as an attribute of empowerment among the respondents.
10. Education, work experience and formal training are identified as some of the ways to be empowered. The fact that only a small percentage of respondents believed that empowerment has nothing to do with the three aspects (i.e. education, experience and training) indicates that empowerment of women need to focus on these three core areas.
11. Majority of the respondents opine that there is inadequate access to education, economic opportunities and other social rights.
12. The myth that educated and economically independent women are empowered is negated by the fact that majority feel that empowerment has not taken place despite various efforts.
13. The perception about women belonging to non-privileged group is that they lack education and awareness and are inferior to the

privileged group of women as well as men, though they all are entitled to social rights and other privileges.

14. It can also be inferred that awareness of rights among the privileged women is not present as indicated by majority of respondents. In other words women who are educationally and economically better off are not necessarily empowered vis-à-vis social rights and independence.
15. It is pertinent to note that all respondents feel that women belonging to the non-privileged group are more free and independent than the privileged group because they do not have to (i) show their social status, (ii) live up to other's expectations and (iii) can exhibit unconstrained behavior.
16. Women of the privileged group are considered more eligible to participate in various social and public activities and it is also considered as part of their 'duty'. When probed further by the researcher, many said since they are educated and economically better placed it is their responsibility to give back something to the society.
17. Respondents believe taking up social activities is part of their empowered status, they would voluntarily take up such activities and it provides them a sense of 'independence'. It is also observed that

major hindrance to undertaking such activities is their preoccupation with domestic chores.

18. Education and economic prosperity *per se* does not make women empowered. Respondents feel that though these two factors are important for empowerment, awareness, access to opportunities and support systems are equally necessary to gain empowerment.
19. The respondents identified three factors as hindrance to women's empowerment, namely lack of progress, inadequate development of less privileged and minorities. What was meant by lack of progress was that the conservative nature of the patriarchal society is seen as a main factor.
20. Majority of respondents was employed either in the private sector or in government or were in self-occupation. Thus, they believe that economic stability is an essential condition for empowerment.

If social and economic empowerment serves as a base for women empowerment, the responses to political empowerment reveals that respondents have serious limitations on the issue of political activity and empowerment.

1. 48% of respondents feel that financial independence is needed for undertaking political activity, though majority of respondents do not

participate in political activities. Majority of respondents feel that social work, performed through NGOs or similar such agencies, also constitute political activity.

2. Women belonging to backward classes and minorities do not actively take part in politics and there is a strong perception that literacy has very little to do with politics. This also reflects the perception of the respondents about the contemporary political actors and activities.
3. The responses also indicate awareness about political empowerment is substantially high among the respondents, that non-privileged women need to actively participate in the political process to get empowered, and the view that political empowerment is a process in social and political development of women.
4. Though they perceive that empowered women can be successful in political activity, majority of them shy away from party politics and their active political participation is restricted to voting in elections.
5. Respondents think that political consciousness, the knowledge of electoral process as well as awareness about political ideology of the party is the main political functions. It is found that majority of respondents have no opinion regarding this matter as they are not involved in any form of political activity.

6. It is noticeable that on the matter of distribution of the reserved seats, 72% respondents show their positive answer. 28% respondents did not think the reservation of seats for women is needed in elected bodies.
7. Only 14% of respondents are involved with some NGOs and similar agencies reflecting the restriction the society imposes on them.
8. The researcher also observed that major hindrances to active political participation come from the family itself and also due to preoccupation with domestic chores.

The foregoing analysis of the responses validates some of the assumptions earlier put forward as hypotheses but also negates other hypotheses. The final chapter presents the conclusions and findings of the study.

CHAPTER – 6

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

Inequalities between man and women and discrimination against women have been age-old issues all over world. Empowerment focuses on mobilizing the self-help on the poor and needy. Women empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth, their rights to have and to determine choices; their rights to have access to opportunities and resources; their rights to have the power to control their own lives; both within the home and outside the home. Empowerment is the process of obtaining basic opportunities for marginalized people, either by those people, or through the help of non-marginalized others who share their own access to those opportunities. It also includes actively thwarting attempts to deny those opportunities. Empowerment also includes encouraging and developing the skills for self-sufficiency with a focus on eliminating the future need for charity or welfare in the individuals of the group this process can be difficult to start and to implement effectively.

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social development or environment in which one can make decisions and make choice either individually or collectively for social transformation.

Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individual to think, take action and central work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of one lives. Empowerment includes control over resources (physical human, intellectual and financial) and over ideology.

The candidate has taken up the topic of study of women empowerment in Surat because of the following factors:

1. Surat has become a city of migrant labour in the last couple of decades and as a result the demography is skewed in favour of males, since males have predominantly migrated from other states to Surat in search of job opportunities.
2. A large number of women, belonging to all economic categories, are engaged in some kind of economic activity in non-formal sectors, thereby contributing to the economic betterment of their families.
3. This (migration) coupled with rapid urbanization and economic betterment has brought about a "modern and western" outlook and values among the citizens of Surat.
4. To what extent such a change gets reflected in empowerment of women is an issue that needs to be examined and hence this topic.

Objectives

1. To relate how the concept of empowerment is directly related to social, political and economic factors.
2. To find out how the women of Surat, both literate and illiterate, are aware of their powers, rights and duties.
3. To find out whether privileged women are more empowered than the non-privileged women in society.
4. To examine whether women empowerment has helped to develop and advance in social, political and economic spheres and activities.

Hypothesis

1. The literate women are empowered than the illiterate women.
2. Women from privileged class are empowered than the women of non-privileged groups.
3. Women from non-privilege groups know their rights but they are not aware of how to execute their rights in the society.
4. Empowered women are independent with participation in social and political activities.
5. Economic prosperity is related to women empowerment.

Issues in Women Empowerment

Some of the main issues in women empowerment are rooted in social and economic factors like education, social and religious customs that are considered as hindrance, the inherent limitations of a patriarchal society, and absence of economic independence. Despite several efforts and initiatives by governments at the international, national and local levels the outcome falls short of the objectives. Voluntary efforts through NGOs to complement governmental initiatives too have met with limited success. Creating awareness and women education seems to be the only enabling way for empowering women.

It is in this context, the study was undertaken to find out the nature and status of women empowerment in a city like Surat. The city had a long history of European occupation, Mughul rule and industrial and trading activities. In present times, the urban agglomeration of Surat comprises of majority of migrant male population who have settled for economic prosperity. The social and economic fabric has brought with it developments in infrastructure, education, services and has also witnessed political awareness amongst its citizens. To what extent these factors influence empowerment of women is a moot question. The analysis done in the earlier chapters reflect the status on women empowerment.

Findings

1. Majority of the respondents are in the age group of below 40, which is largely in conformity with the demographic profile of women in Surat.
2. Many respondents did not state their social background and hence the researcher had to place them as belonging to general category. As urbanization and economic benefits accrue, individuals prefer not to disclose their social background (caste, sub-caste etc).
3. The percentage of illiteracy is high in case of SC/ST categories and low in case of OBC and General categories. This reflects lack of awareness and opportunities among the SC/ST categories. The education level among OBC and general categories of respondents shows a relative higher percentage. This helps to infer that awareness and opportunities regarding education have not percolated to the SC and ST categories of respondents.
4. The fact that economic opportunities are available for varied type of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour, both in the formal as well as the informal sectors is reflected in negligible variations in correlation between social status and economic background among different categories of respondents.

5. Respondents consider empowerment as the right to take decisions, both in family and at workplace indicating assertiveness as an attribute of empowerment among the respondents.
6. Education, work experience and formal training are identified as some of the ways to be empowered. This indicates that empowerment of women need to focus on these three core areas.
7. The myth that educated and economically independent women are empowered is negated by the fact that majority feel that empowerment has not taken place despite various efforts.
8. The perception that women belonging to non-privileged group lack education and awareness and are inferior to the privileged group of women as well as men, though they all are entitled to social rights and other privileges, may not be valid because they are aware about issues in empowerment.
9. Women who are educationally and economically better off are not necessarily empowered vis-à-vis social rights and independence.
10. Respondents feel that women belonging to the non-privileged group are more free and independent than the privileged group because they do not have to (i) show their social status, (ii) live up to other's expectations and (iii) can exhibit unconstrained behavior.

11. Respondents opine that women of the privileged group who are educated and economically better placed have a responsibility to give back something to the society.
12. Though women view that taking up ‘voluntary’ activities give them a sense of independence and empowerment, major hindrance to undertaking such activities is their preoccupation with domestic chores.
13. Education and economic prosperity *per se* does not make women empowered. Respondents feel that though these two factors are important for empowerment, awareness, access to opportunities and support systems are equally necessary to gain empowerment.
14. Conservative nature of the patriarchal society is seen as one of the factors that hinders women empowerment.

If social and economic empowerment serves as a base for women empowerment, the responses to political empowerment reveals that respondents have serious limitations on the issue of political activity and empowerment. It is observed that majority of the respondents are employed and hence the firm belief that economic stability is a necessity for other forms of empowerment including political empowerment.

1. Though majority of respondents do not participate in political activities, they feel that social work, performed through NGOs or similar such agencies, also constitute political activity.
2. Women belonging to backward classes and minorities do not actively take part in politics and there is a strong perception that literacy has very little to do with politics. This also reflects the perception of the respondents about the contemporary political actors and activities.
3. General awareness about political empowerment is substantially high among the respondents; that non-privileged women need to actively participate in the political process to get empowered, and the view that political empowerment is a process in social and political development of women reflects the attitude and ‘educated’ (not in the literate sense of the term) level of the respondents.
4. Though they perceive that empowered women can be successful in political activity, majority of them shy away from party politics and their active political participation is restricted to voting in elections.
5. Respondents think that political consciousness, the knowledge of electoral process as well as awareness about political ideology of the party is the main political functions. It is found that majority of

respondents have no opinion regarding this matter as they are not involved in any form of political activity.

6. It is noticeable that on the matter of distribution of the reserved seats, 72% respondents show their positive answer. 28% respondents did not think the reservation of seats for women is needed in elected bodies.
7. Only 14% of respondents are involved with some NGOs and similar agencies reflecting the restriction the society imposes on them.
8. The researcher also observed that major hindrances to active political participation come from the family itself and also due to preoccupation with domestic chores.

Validation of the Hypotheses

From the foregoing analysis and findings, hypotheses 1, 4 and 5 are found to be validated, whereas 2 and 3 are partly negated. The statement that women from the privileged group are more empowered than those from the non-privileged group is not validated because the latter do not face restrictions in their social behavior and do not have to show their social status. This gives the non-privileged women greater opportunity to assert their rights and other privileges. Hence the women of the non-privileged group are not only aware of their rights but also know how to secure the

same. Non-privileged women may not necessarily be literate but are aware of the issues in empowerment and therefore can be viewed as ‘educated’.

Scope for Further Research

The study opens up more areas in women empowerment for further research. Some of the areas can be in understanding and strengthening the methods and modes of women empowerment through education, awareness and training, focusing on enabling women to participate in social activities through NGOs, and examining how political participation (apart from voting during elections) can be increased at the grassroots level.

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APPENDIX – I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Detail

1. Name:- _____

2. Age:- _____

3. Marital status:- Married
 Unmarried
 Widow
 Divorce

4. Educational background:-

1. Illiterate or school drop out
2. Upto 5th standard
3. Upto 10 standard
4. Graduate and above
5. Ph.D.
6. Others

5. Economics background:-

1. Monthly income less than 5000/-
2. Income between 5000 to 10000/-
3. Income between 10000 to 20000/-
4. Income above 20000/-
5. Others

6. Social background:-

1. Open category
2. SEBC
3. SC/ST
4. Minorities
5. Others

Questionnaire

Q.1 Literacy and Empowerment:-

1. What is empowerment?
 - a. Employment
 - b. Independence & freedom
 - c. Decision making in family & workplace
 - d. To do anything
2. What is literacy?
 - a. Education
 - b. Experience in any field
 - c. Both of combination is literacy
 - d. None of these
3. Do you want to empower women?
 - a. Yes
 - b. NoIf yes, then how?
 - a. By giving education
 - b. skill training
 - c. Vocational courses
 - d. Personalized training
4. Does literacy empower women?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Some
5. How does literacy empower women?
 - a. They are aware of it
 - b. They are not aware of it
 - c. They are aware but do not want to be empowered
6. Are all empowered women literate?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. May be
7. How can be literate women empower?
 - a. Through awareness
 - b. Through training
 - c. Through workshop
 - d. Through seminar

8. Are empowered women independent?
a. Yes b. No c. Some
9. Can women be empower through literacy?
a. Yes b. No c. Some
10. Are literate women independent?
a. Yes b. No c. Some
11. What is your education?
a. Illiterate b. School dropout
c. Graduate and above d. other

Q.2 Women from the Privilege Groups:-

1. Who are privilege group women?
 - a. The women who is educated
 - b. The women who is aware of their rights
 - c. The women who thinks she is empower
2. Are all women from privilege groups empower?
 - a. Yes b. No c. Some
3. What is empowerment mean for women of privilege groups?
 - a. Right to freedom of employment
 - b. Is empowerment means only freedom?
 - c. Is empowerment means the reasons to exercise their rights?
 - d. Is empowerment means adjustment
4. Do women from privilege groups utilize their empowerment?
 - a. Yes b. No c. Some

5. Is empowerment the right of only privilege groups?
a. Yes b. No c. May be
6. What is empowerment means for the literate women of privilege groups?
a. To live life on their terms.
b. To live life on the term of the society
c. To live life without the concern of other
7. Is empowerment only for privilege groups?
a. Yes b. No c. All
8. Do women of privilege groups consider them equal to men?
a. Some b. A few c. All
9. Do women need to be empowered?
a. Yes b. No
10. Is empowerment essential for a women's identity?
a. Yes b. No
11. Do the women of privilege group having the equal advantage to men in their workplace?
a. Yes b. No c. Some
12. Do the women of privilege groups having access a special right or advantage in the society?
a. Yes b. No c. May be
13. Do the women of privilege groups enjoy their rights in the patriarchy society?
a. Yes b. No c. Some

Q.3 Women from the Non-privilege Groups & Rights:-

1. Who is the women from non-privilege groups?
 - a. Women without education
 - b. Women who are not aware of their rights.
 - c. Women who feel themselves below men.
2. Do women from non-privilege group know their rights?
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
3. Are all right applicable to the women of non-privilege groups?
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
4. Are non-privilege group women consider to inferior to privilege group?
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
5. Do privilege and non- privilege group women relate to each other according to social norms
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
6. Do women from non-privilege groups aware of their rights?
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
7. Do women from non-privilege group known to exercise their rights?
 - a. Yes b. No c. May be
8. What is the present status of the women from non- privilege groups?
 - a. They thinks they are equal to the women of privilege group
 - b. Do they know to gain their rights?
 - c. They do not think they are less than privilege group women

9. Are non-privilege women more free than the women of privilege groups?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
10. What makes women from non-privilege group more free than women from privilege group?
- a. Women from non-privilege group don't show their social status.
- b. They can conduct themselves in a way that they like.
- c. They don't have to live up to anybodies expectation

Q.4 Empowerment & Independence in Social Activities

1. Are empowerment women more eligible to participate in social activities?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
2. Is independent a part of empowerment?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
3. Do empower women indulge in social activities as a part of their duty?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
4. Do empower women find less time to indulge in social activities
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
5. Do empower women indulge in social-activities to promote their cause?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
6. Does independence empower you [women] to enjoy social activities?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be

7. Does participate in social activities makes one independent?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
8. Social activities may sometime hinder empowerment
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
9. Some social activities do not relate to empowerment or independence
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
10. Women need not be empower or independent to participate in social activities. What is your opinion?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
11. What kind of social activities you are doing?
- a. Working in NGO b. Help poor & needy women
 c. Run adult education d. Look after orphanage centre
12. Independence in the social activities.
- a. Support from family b. prevention from family
 c. Cannot contribution fully due to house-hold work
13. Do you think NGOs play an important role in education methods to better understand the concept of communication, empowerment and different activities?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be

Q.5 Economic Prosperity & Empowerment:-

1. Does women with economics prosperity are empower?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
2. Few women are empower by education. What do you think?
- a. Yes b. No c. May be

3. Women with the income group above 20,000 generally fall in the empower category.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
4. Very few S.C/ S.T women are economically empower
a. Yes b. No c. May be
5. Only graduates and above can attain economic prosperity
a. Yes b. No c. May be
6. Women with monthly income less than Rs 5000 cannot be empowered.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
7. Education plus hard work leads to empowerment.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
8. Minorities generally fall in the economically backward class.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
9. People in the open category need economical prosperity to be empower
a. Yes b. No c. May be
10. In today time economic prosperity is the backbone of empowerment?
a. Yes b. No c. May be
11. Do you agree that women should be economically empowered?
a. Agree b. Disagree c. Some
12. What do you think are the main hindrance in empowering women economically?
a. Progress in society
b. Encouraging the backward class women
c. Development in minorities group

13. Do you think that women empowerment leads to development of economy in the society?
a. Yes b. No c. May be
14. Are you an employed? In which sector?
a. Private b. Government c. Self business

Q.6 Empowered Women and Political Activity:-

1. For political activity women have to be financially independent?
a. Yes b. No c. May be
2. Educational qualification is not must for political activity
a. Yes b. No c. May be
3. Empowered women do not always indulge in political activity.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
4. People from minorities groups or backward classes indulge more in political activity.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
5. Literacy is not mandatory for political activity
a. Yes b. No c. May be
6. Political activity is the playground specially for non-privilege group
a. Yes b. No c. May be
7. Women should be made aware of political empowerment.
a. Yes b. No c. May be
8. Women should be made financially independent for political activity
a. Yes b. No c. May be
9. Women with monthly income less than Rs 5000 are not financially independent.
a. Yes b. No c. May be

10. Does empowered women are generally successful in political activity.
- a. Yes b. No c. May be
11. Are you involved in political activity? If yes then how?
- a. Voting b. Member of political party
c. Propaganda d. Creating awareness about the party
12. Are you a member of any political party? In which capacity?
- a. Corporator b. Mayor
c. Deputy mayor d. Working member
13. Are you a member of NGO?
- a. Yes b. No
14. If yes then in which category are you functioning?
- a. The function of social education
b. The legal function
c. Management function
d. Create political awareness in minorities and backward class women
15. As an active member of party what do you think the main impact on political variables of members in the political party?
- a. Knowledge of political consciousness
b. Knowledge of electoral procedure
c. Participation in political activities
d. Awareness of political body's formation
16. Do you agree about the "reserved seats" for female in the governance?
- a. Yes b. No