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Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Government First Grade College, Affiliated with Kuvempu University Tarikere, Karnataka, India A study of factors influencing women's political involvement in Davanagere district

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Abstract

Ensuring women's involvement in democratic and governance institutions is currently a top priority on the international agenda. Since independence, development planning has always placed a strong emphasis on the advancement of women. Overall economic growth was the main concern of policymakers over the first 20 years. This study's primary goal is to use a literature review to investigate women's political involvement in Indian politics from a comprehensive perspective. The key objectives of the study are to identify the causes of women's active political involvement in the districts of Davanagere and to develop an integrated research model for women's political involvement. 308 female respondents were chosen from the talukas in the districts of Davanagere, including both current and former election candidates and women respondents of the general public. Regression analysis was one of the study's statistical methods. It is found that the women involvement in political activities in Davanagere District is influence by Gender equity, Government promoting women's involvement, Influential behaviour, Political party support, Presence of democratic institutions, sharing political power and, liberty and space, Socio-historic forces, Training and women leadership pathways, Woman as family succeed, Woman literacy and Woman quota to contest in elections etc are the factors significantly influencing women's political involvement in Davanagere district.

Keywords: Factors, women, political, involvement, Davanagere district

1. Introduction

Despite making up over half of India's population, women are underrepresented in several governing and decision-making organizations (Abiola, I. A. 2019) [1]. Giving women an equal say in choices that impact them, whether at home or in government, is a key component in empowering them (Vissandjee, B., et al 2005) [34]. Voting is the only aspect of political involvement where men and women are equal (Ara, F. 2019) [2]. Every citizen directly or indirectly participates in decision-making in a democratic government, but women's involvement in the electoral system has been minimal in other areas, such as election contests, membership in representative institutions and political parties, and holding positions in government. The definition of "political involvement" is somewhat broad. It is connected not just to the "Right to Vote," but also to political action, political consciousness, and decision-making process involvement (Seshasayee, H. 2014) [27]. In India, women are more likely than males to vote, run for public office, and join political parties at lower levels (Das, B. P. 2021) [5]. Women's political engagement is strongest when it comes to voting and political action (Ghosh, J. 2021) [8]. knowledge democratic ideals is essential to gaining an effective knowledge of political involvement (Goyal, T. 2019) [19]. The achievement of the highest level of participation and empowerment is thought to need the existence of democratic ideals (Mohammad, S. and Huq. S 2016) [22]. Women's empowerment through political involvement is a crucial factor in providing a nation's political process a more refined form (Makowska, N. and Agnieszka, 2019) [20]. According to Vekta (2023) [31], political involvement is a voluntary activity that individuals at different levels do in an effort to affect political processes. Women make up about half of the population in every community, thus their participation is crucial since it not only gives them opportunities for empowerment but also opens the door to a robust democracy (Lal, D., Ojha, A., et al 2015) [19]. Fundamentally, political involvement relates to the right to vote, which ought to represent their place in civil society (Vijaya, G. 2021) [32]. It has been revealed that women's

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voting rates in India have been steadily increasing, which may reduce gender inequality in this area. In India, women are less likely than males to vote and seek public office and political parties (Das, M. 2022) [5]. Women's political engagement is strongest when it comes to voting and political activism. Women's involvement in election campaigns, demonstrations, talks, and debates has increased significantly (Islam, M.A. & Dubey, M. 2015) [10]. Women's voting turnout has increased, according to their involvement in official elections (Neha, S. 2021) [23]. Since ancient times. women's standing in India has fluctuated greatly; in ancient times, they were treated equally, but during the Middle Ages, they were forced to wear veils (the Parda System) (Kaur, H. 2022) [14]. Women's position in post-independence India has been improving ever since (Borah, M. 2022) [4]. In post-independence India, women have been actively involved in politics, daily home tasks, voting for improved government, and nearly every kind of economic activity (Borah, M. 2022) [4]. India has elected a female president, Pratibha Patil, and a female prime minister, Indira Gandhi. Women make up over 25% of the Indian cabinet in the current central government, holding positions in human resource development, trade, and external affairs (Malagi, R. B. 2017) [21]. Due to the reservation of seats for women, India has a sizable percentage of women in municipal politics (Panda, S. 2021) [25].

2. Literature Review

Adults in a democratic nation must have the authority and chance to participate in elections by running for office or casting ballots (Varghese, T. 2020) [30]. In 1947, India gained its freedom. All citizens over the age of 21 were granted the right to vote in 1947, regardless of their gender, caste, race, or faith. Voting rights existed prior to 1947, but only a small number of wealthy men and women could exercise them (Jyoti and Rao, D. 2020) [12]. By participating in decision-making in a growing context of consciousness and critical assessment to monitor and impact growth progress, political empowerment enables women to increase their mobility and break through isolation, develop selfconfidence and self-image, and establish their government presence (Vijaya kumari, R. and Rao, K.G. 2014) [33]. Indian women have a major role in grassroots activism. One instance of the Indian women's movement's success is the Chipko movement, which emerged in the 1970s and resulted in the region's preservation when women opposed the deforestation in Uttarkhand. Political parties' conventional campaign tactics have changed as a result of social media (Shanker, R. 2015) [28]. It gives politicians and candidates a platform to successfully communicate their views and plans to a large number of people in a short amount of time (Singh, A. 2021) [29]. By striving to change soci et al attitudes and providing additional venues for women to participate in political decision-making, the national government emerges as a key participant in encouraging women's engagement in politics (Jayashree, S. 2021) [11]. Successful governance requires the complete participation of all citizens, not just the existence of democratic institutions at the national level (Neha, S. 2021) [23]. Over time, women's voting rates have risen dramatically. However, this political term just declares that women's opinions are represented (Ekta, R. 2022) [7]. Due to their active participation in family and community activity, women are well aware of the actual problems that ordinary

people confront (Kaur, H. 2022) [14]. They gain perspective and understanding as a result, which can help promote sustainable development in general (Prem, N. S. R. 2022) [26]. According to Kapoor and Ravi (2014) [13], the reform reserved seats and leadership roles for women, tribes, and Scheduled Castes. The State Election Commission has granted panchayats the right to prepare electoral records and hold elections for a standard five-year period (Kumar, I. 2020) [18]. Information on women's involvement may be trusted with a high degree of confidence thanks to electoral changes that have been implemented, such as recording elections at vulnerable locations (Bhalotra, S. and Iyer, L. 2016) [3]. In addition to being useful for the election process, officials may use this data to pinpoint regions where women participate less often and implement corrective measures (Goyal, T. 2019) [19].

Sharing political power and giving women independence and space inside the democratic framework of electoral politics is a sign of equality and freedom that transcends gender boundaries (Khurshid, S. 2015) [15]. Women's involvement in politics includes involvement in trade unions, cooperatives, women's collectives, informal and formal politics, and elections. Forbes (1979) traces the beginnings of the Indian women's suffrage movement and notes that the influence of certain British women, rather than assessments of the needs of Indian women, led to organized women's demands to be treated on an equal footing with men (Ojha, R. 2014) [24]. The capacity to garner votes, or "winnability" in Indian politics, was the candidate attribute that the parties highlighted (Panda, S. 2021) [25]. In order to achieve this, a number of variables were deemed pertinent, including caste identification, financial resources, party service, candidate name recognition inside the constituency, and internal party support (Jayashree, S. 2021) [11]. Additionally, monitoring progress and gathering statistics at the municipal and state levels need the establishment of systems that report on gender-equality pledges and provide responsibility for raising women's political involvement (Vekta, R. 2023) [31].

The way forward must guarantee and uphold women's and girls' participation in political and decision-making processes (Bhalotra, S. and Iyer, L. 2016) [3]. Research indicates that women who are elected to office have a significant effect on legislation and make a difference for women and girls (Das, B. P. 2021) [5]. Women are frequently more inclined to seek inclusive policies, address constituent problems, advocate for improvements in the areas of health, community well-being, poverty alleviation, and family welfare, and work toward policy agreement. Research indicates that under specific circumstances, women in parliament are more likely to acquire funds for their constituency, reach across party divides, and sponsor legislation (Jyoti and Rao, D. 2020) [12]. The Indian government has implemented reservations for local government seats in an effort to address gender imbalance in politics. In addition to establishing a parliamentary form of government, the Indian Constitution ensures that its inhabitants have the freedom to vote, congregate and join groups, speak freely, and be elected (Malagi, R. B. 2017) [21]. Membership in political parties, electoral campaigning, party attending meetings and demonstrations, communicating with leaders, holding party positions, contesting elections, membership in representative bodies, influencing decision-making, and other related activities are all examples of political involvement, which goes beyond simply casting a ballot (Shanker, R. 2015) [28].

3. Statement of the Problem

An individual's voluntary involvement in both active and implicit forms is known as political involvement. Voting, campaigning, running for and holding public office at the official level, and participation in cooperatives and trade unions in the unofficial sector are all included. In order to make politics more inclusive and democratic, women's involvement in the process has been deemed essential. Ironically, women's roles in this setting have remained far from satisfying in Davanagere District, Karnataka State. Even though she is a well-known voter and activist, she does not have a place in the decision-making process, which is more noticeable. When women are empowered, they are able to take charge of their own lives, create their own agendas, make plans, and ask the community and government for support throughout this change. It is evident that a woman's role is essential to her development, as it is in many cultures, but it does not always emphasize the same position that applies to men. To examine women's status in Davanagere District political system this research has been taken up. Women's political empowerment and involvement in the power structure are still found insufficient Davanagere District. Empowering women through various programs and action plans at the municipal, national, and societ al levels is crucial for increasing their participation in politics.

4. Objectives of the Study

- 1. To extract the factors that determine women political involvement through literature review.
- 2. To explore the factors influencing women's political involvement in Dayanagere District.
- 3. To provide suggestions and recommendations for the effective political participation by the women in Davanagere District.

5. Hypothesis

- **H1:** There is significant impact of factors of women involvement and their active political engagement in Davanagere District.
- **H0:** There is no significant impact of factors of women involvement and their active political engagement in Davanagere District.

6. Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive research technique. For the study purpose the list of women voters were collected from the election office of Davanagere. The pertinent data is gathered through the primary and secondary sources to understand the women involvement in political activities in Davanagere District. Since this study is empirical in nature, which employs the purposive sampling approach, there were 308 women respondents, including general female voters and the candidates who have contested for MLA, MP, Zilla panchayath, and Grama Panchyath etc in the districts of Davanagere. For the data collection the geographic areas (Taluk) of Davanagere were targeted. The taluks of Davanagere district are Davanagere, Harihara, Channagiri, Honnali, Mayakonda, and Jagalur and women respondents from few villages in the same district.

7. Sample Size

Specific, consolidated numbers for total male and female voters across the entire Davanagere district for the 2025 roll are generally available in press notes or statistical reports on the CEO Karnataka website. For the 2023 Karnataka Legislative Assembly election, the total electorate in the state was 52,173,579 (26.2 million men, 25.9 million women, and 4,699 transgender voters). Continent random sample technique was followed for the present study.

District Name	Sr. No	Name of the Constituency	Previous Contestants (No of Woman) in various elections	General (Public) No. of Woman	Total
Davanagere	1	Davanagere	12	38	50
	2	Harihara	13	42	55
	3	Channagiri	17	37	54
	4	Honnali	19	29	48
	5	Mayakonda	16	32	48
	6	Jagalur	17	36	53
		Total	0.4	214	308

Table 1: Sample frame for the study

8. Data Collection and Analysis

In order to determine if candidates in a particular election were present in the prior election, we monitored candidates by name across the course of subsequent elections. The "5-point Likert scale," which is 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Cannot say, 4, and 5 = Strongly Disagree, was used to create a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions. The official language of Karnataka state, Kannada, was used for a semi-structured interview with open-ended conversation. The conversations with female lawmakers prompted studies to investigate the particular

motivations for their participation in the country's democratic transition. Using SPSS software, regression analysis was conducted to determine the link between factors that influence political engagement and women's active political involvement. By comparing the amount of shared variation, or covariance, among the items that make up an instrument to the amount of total variance, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine reliability. The concept was utilized to determine the instrument's reliability, and it was discovered that there was a significant amount of covariance between the items in relation to the variance.

			N	Model Summary									
Model	odel R R Square		Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate									
1	.854a .729		.719	.56407									
$ m ANOVA^b$													
I	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square F Sig.									
	Regression	1 249.825	14	17.845	56.089	.000ª							
1	Residual	93.218	293	.318									
	Total	343.043	307										
	b. Dependent Variable: women's active political involvement												
				Coefficientsa	_								
M 11				Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	4	G.					
	Model			В	Std. Error	Beta	l	Sig.					
		(Constan	t)	.731	.191		3.689	.000					
	Engag	ement in past elect	oral competitions	052	.033	062	-1.549	.125					
		Gender equ	iity	-2.544	.622	-3.233	-4.096	.000					
	Governi	nent promoting wo	men's involvement	2.555	.624	3.261	4.068	.000					
		Influential beh		-2.792	.211	-3.521	-13.118	.000					
		Political party	support	3.224	.286	3.726	11.237	.000					
	Pro	esence of democrat		126	.031	157	-3.966	.000					
					l			-					

-1.085

.032

.248

-1.752

2.037

-.003

.540

.426

Table 2: Factors affecting women involvement in Political activities

The regression analysis shows that, the value of "R" indicates high degree of correlation co-efficient (.854) between factors of women involvement and their active political engagement. R² measure the variation explained by the regression model is (.729) being moderate indicating model fits the data well. Significant of F change is less than 0.05 which indicates the factors of women involvement have significant relationship with their active political engagement. 14 variables of factors of women involvement were used to predict their active political engagement. Thus, answering the hypothesis H1: There is significant impact of factors of women involvement and their active political engagement in Davanagere District, is accepted. The coefficient table shows the contribution of factors of women involvement to the active political engagement. From the above table, the beta values demonstrate the unique contribution for the variables of women involvement such as Gender equity (β =-2.544) (p=.000), Government promoting women's involvement (β=2.555) (p=.000), Influential behavior (β=-2.792) (p=.000), Political party support (β =3.224) (p=.000), Presence of democratic institutions (β =-.126) (p=.000), Sharing political power and, liberty and space (β =-1.085) (p=.000), Socio-historic forces $(\beta=.248)$ (p=.034), Training and women leadership pathways (β=-1.752) (p=.000), Woman as family succeed $(\beta=2.037)$ (p=.000), Woman literacy ($\beta=.540$) (p=..000) and Woman quota to contest in elections (β =.426) (p=.000) were the variables able to predict women's active political engagement.

Sharing political power and, liberty and space

Social media

Socio-historic forces

Training and women leadership pathways

Woman as family succeed

Woman empowerment

Woman literacy

Woman quota to contest in elections

a. Dependent Variable: women's involvement in political activities

Regression equation

1

Women's political involvement = $\alpha + \beta 1(GE) + \beta 2(GPWI) + \beta 3(IB) + \beta 4(PPS) + \beta 5(PDI) + \beta 6(SPP) + \beta 7(SHI) + \beta 8(T&WL) + \beta 9(WFS) + \beta 10(WL) + \beta 11(WQC) + \mu$

9. Findings

.135

.151

.113

.261

.199

.034

.057

.042

It is found that the women involvement in political activities in Davanagere District is influence by Gender equity, Government promoting women's involvement, Influential behaviour, Political party support, Presence of democratic institutions, sharing political power and, liberty and space, Socio-historic forces, Training and women leadership pathways, Woman as family succeed, Woman literacy and Woman quota to contest in elections.

-1.301

.041

.306

-2.157

2.553

-.004

.511

.535

-7.925

.218

2.113

-6.687

10.308

-.065

10.146

9.783

.000

.823

.034

.000

.000

.949

.000

.000

- 1. It is discovered that women's empowerment initiatives are carried out by political parties as well as by several organizations, schools, and universities.
- 2. The government's encouragement of women's involvement in politics has been proven to be important in this study.
- 3. It has been determined that the installation of political party offices at the taluk levels in the chosen districts encourages women to participate in politics.
- 4. Women participate in political party-related activities because their literacy rates are nearly equivalent to those of males.
- 5. Assistance from the political party by submitting nominations to run in different elections.
- 6. Through the women's reservation and quota, the electoral commission and government regulations permit women to nominate for elections.
- 7. Historical events and historical factors, such as political family representation following the death of a family political leader or because of the leader's advanced age, have encouraged women to participate in politics.
- 8. These days, men are pushing women to participate in politics. For example, husbands are helping their wives run for office and run their campaigns during the gram panchayath election nomination process.
- 9. Women share political authority, freedom, and space to

- carry out political party-related tasks at the political party level.
- 10. Women's political engagement has been positively correlated with public awareness of gender parity.
- 11. Women are now able to participate in politics because to the development of leadership and political training programs.

10. Suggestions

- 1. Encourage a more diverse representation of leadership and ensure that female politicians and decision-makers have equal exposure.
- Encourage all women, especially the most marginalized ones, to have access to political processes and decisionmaking venues. Provide women and girls with gendersensitive leadership and training opportunities.
- Encourage diversity in public and private decisionmaking, civic participation, and leadership. Make sure there is no violence or prejudice based on gender in political settings.
- Encourage the creation of a safe and supportive political atmosphere where all women and girls may engage in public life at all levels without worrying about being harassed or physically or emotionally abused.
- Encourage women to take on leadership and decisionmaking responsibilities at all levels, especially in humanitarian crises and at peace talks.
- 6. Encourage women to take on leadership roles in the workplace by increasing their representation on corporate boards and in executive roles.
- 7. Encourage women's and girls' rights and involvement in peacebuilding, humanitarian crisis relief, and conflict prevention. Encourage all women, especially the most marginalized ones, to have access to political processes and decision-making venues.
- 8. Implement international agreements, guidelines, and protocols that seek to reduce harassment and violence that prevent women from ascending to leadership positions.
- 9. Implement policies and accountability mechanisms that track and report on government performance with respect to gender equality commitments.
- 10. In addition to empowering the girls and women involved, it helps their communities, nations, and the whole planet. In situations where representation is unequal, introduce gender quotas as a means of transition.
- 11. In addition to empowering the girls and women involved, it helps their communities, nations, and the whole planet.
- 12. In situations where representation is unequal, introduce gender quotas as a means of transition. Encourage women's and girls' rights and involvement in peacebuilding, humanitarian crisis relief, and conflict prevention.
- Incorporate men in training focused on supporting and promoting girls and women as leaders and decisionmakers.
- 14. Provide funding to grassroots groups that increase girls' and women's ability to engage in social, economic, political, and public life on an individual and group level.
- 15. Provide women and girls with gender-sensitive

leadership and training opportunities. Encourage diversity in public and private decision-making, civic participation, and leadership. Make sure there is no violence or prejudice based on gender in political settings.

11. Limitations

- 1. The study's scope is restricted to examining women's political engagement; it does not address the participation of males, youth, or the elderly.
- 2. The study region is restricted to Davanagere districts; the current research does not address women's political engagement in other Districts of Karnataka.
- 3. Because none of the candidates may divulge their political secrets throughout the study, the samples chosen for it may be skewed.
- 4. The study may also be limited by the absence of sophisticated statistical techniques for data analysis.
- 5. The time and cost is one of the major limitations to bring the quality out of the research.

12. Directions for the Future Research

Respondents to a survey on certain election candidates, such as female MLA candidates, can learn more about the variables influencing political engagement in their area. Future studies may start with a comparative investigation of the factors that influence women's political engagement across states or districts. The other relevant factors that are not included in this study can be used to conduct a multidimensional investigation.

13. Conclusion

In general, women's involvement in political processes indicates how equal and free they are to shape and share the authority and value that society accords to their male counterparts. Women's involvement in politics extends beyond their involvement in the electoral and administrative processes. However, it also encompasses all of the voluntary acts that have an impact on the political process, such as voting, lending support to political organizations, interacting with lawmakers, spreading political beliefs and opinions among voters, and other relevant activities. One major factor influencing women's modernity is their involvement in politics.

It makes it possible for women to break free from the constraints of tradition and solitary living. Additionally, it makes women more politically and socially conscious. Women in politics are capable of effectively representing the views of other women as well as comprehending and resolving soci et al issues, particularly those pertaining to women. A significant increase in female voter turnout in the last two elections, in 2014 and 2024, had a direct impact on the number of women running for office and winning seats in Parliament. It wouldn't be incorrect to argue that if there are more women in Parliament, they would be able to speak out against the many issues they encounter, and legislation will be created to address those issues. The women's reservation law has the potential to completely alter India's political system if it is ever implemented. The government's finest initiative to empower women may be this one.

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