

The Status of the Modern Woman of Dholpur and Karauli in the Changed Socio-Cultural & Political Scenario in Rajasthan

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Abstract

The woman in India, oft quoted for her sacrifice for her family and children, has seen several phases in her life. Her life has always been a mixture of pains and pleasures, sorrow and happiness. Much literature is there on the Indian woman, but no language in the world can exactly describe her worth. The literature available on the Indian woman reveals that she is an incredible creature with limitless patience and sacrifice. In ancient India, though patriarchal system was highly prevalent - all male domination -- women enjoyed a position of respect and reverence. There are evidences to suggest that woman power destroyed kingdoms and mighty rulers. It has been seven long decades since India gained independence but many Indians are still trapped in age-old traditional beliefs. Here, 'old beliefs' imply the mindset of people who still find themselves in the trap of girl-boy inequality. The history of politics witnesses the dominance of man over woman in all the ages. However, the women's passion to be important political figure in all the ages cannot be ignored. 73rd Amendment has brought about this long awaited moment. Women empowerment is probably the best social process which guarantees every woman of India the freedom from the shackles which prevented them from going ahead or from proving their potential in the various fields.

The research paper reflects the women's presence on the socio-political scene in India through the women of the Karauli and the Dholpur districts of Rajasthan. The attempt has been made to cover all the major aspects relating to women's joining politics and their services to the society at large in various capacities.

Keywords: Empowerment, Contemporary Political Scene, Gender Discrimination, Social Transformation, Awareness To Rights, Shackles, Dawn Of A New Life, Puppets

Introduction

As the other states and districts in India, the Karauli and Dholpur districts in Rajasthan too are not untouched by the women's joining the social process of women empowerment and their active participation in politics. At every level, the participation of the women of these districts can be seen. Both are considered to be the backward districts of Rajasthan. It is true that being tribal districts known for the Meenas and Gurjars in the districts there prevail ignorance, illiteracy and backwardness, but the recent trends and scenario are all changed. With the implementation of the reservation policy and the other schemes meant for the women, the backward woman in both the districts has started realizing herself and has started accepting new challenges by linking herself with education and various job opportunities that come to her hand. Once known for ignorance and illiteracy, she is full of awareness and curiosity, knowledge and all literate; once assumed to be born to be ruled by the patriarchal society, she is now ready to rule over the males; once a puppet in the hands of destiny, she is ready to make other dance at the dint of her eyes. Indeed, education, reservation for women, and the concept of women empowerment are great weapons in her hands with which she can survive in the male dominated society successfully and with honour. All this is taken by her as a dawn of a new life which can protect her from gender

discrimination. However, it cannot be denied that in both the districts, still there are several women who have joined politics, but who are forced to work under the guidance and instructions of the male members of their family and the male politicians.

Even now in most of the cases in both the districts as in other districts, women are actively prevented from participating in panchayat activities by male family members and other members of the panchayat itself. The male members often insist on attending meetings in place of the elected women representatives. Male panchayat members take advantage of the low levels of literacy and lack of knowledge and experience to take decisions in the absence of the elected women representatives and try to keep them out of important meetings. In case of most of the married women, it is found that their husbands handle all the work and activities and the women are pressurized to approve their decisions. Not only at the Panchayat level but at all the other levels of politics also.

The goal of women's empowerment cannot be accomplished by reservations alone. To expedite and speed up this process it is essential to implement some supplementary policies which may encourage the self-confidence of women, build women's capabilities and remove operational obstacles. To enable women to participate and function effectively at every stage, capacity building support is needed from the beginning of the election process and through the tenure of the elected representatives. An enabling environment is required for the recognition of women as leaders and the elimination of proxy candidates. Different initiatives have been taken for the success of women empowerment, but in Karauli and Dholpur districts, except certain exceptions, the situation of the women is more or less the same because the socio-economic status of women in patriarchal social system in the districts is still not improved even after seven decades of Independence. Anyway, it is hoped that with the passage of time, there will be a tremendous improvement and change in the status of the women in these districts. It is true that in papers there are several women political activists and elected representatives, but practice says that most of these women are still unfamiliar with their status and their working. If the concept of the women empowerment is to be made successful in the districts, it is essential for the male fundamentalists to change their attitude to women, to allow them to study politics and not to throw them into the fire and hell of child marriage.

Objectives of the Study

1. To be familiar with the history of the political trends in the specified districts of Rajasthan
2. To explore the past of the women in politics in the districts
3. To observe and study the ongoing socio-political trends in the study area
4. To study the impact of the ongoing social process of women empowerment in India, and particularly, in the study area

5. To attempt to understand and realize the impact of modern trends of politics on the women in the study area
6. To attempt to study and observe the advantages of the women's participation in politics in the study area
7. To observe and study the changing socio-political scenario from every imaginable angle.

Review of Literature

Pande (2001), says that awareness of rights and duties and participation are higher at the district level than at the village level. Ramesh Kumar (2001) points out that woman contests because she is somebody's wife, sister or daughter. After election, woman becomes a proxy candidate and depends upon the man who set her up for election. To Stephen (2001), empowerment leads to transformation of existing political culture. An NIRD study (2002) points out that a majority of women are still very far from enjoying the rights and opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution. Saxena (2002) argues that the Panchayats are searching for a role model, where all members men and women participate in decision making i.e., action and responsibility. Purohit, Arun Chaturvedi and Sanjay Lodha (2002) mention that 'due to large number of women representatives, new power centres have emerged in the State of Rajasthan. Sisodia's (2002) empirical study that the myth about rural women that their responsibilities are confined merely to kitchen and farms, is changed as a result of a big number of women joining the Panchayat elections. Angana Parekh (2003), says that The policy of two children hampers the very objectives of the Panchayati Raj which hopes to bring i.e., giving the power to the women and weaker sections. 'Empowerment of women', is therefore, an important approach adopted in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) for development of women. Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women Report (2017). India 148 in representation of women in government.

Hypothesis

1. The present political scenario is all changed from what it was earlier because of the women's active participation in politics.
2. Government policies, reservation for women, education, self-awareness and campaigning help women to join the field of politics.
3. With the arrival of women in the field of politics, in the politics of Rajasthan, and particularly of Karauli and Dholpur districts of Rajasthan, a new chapter has begun.
4. The female politicians and activists in all the political parties that exist in Rajasthan, are proving themselves much superior to the male politicians.
5. The women's entry in politics has put a risk to the male politicians in the specified districts who considered politics their monopoly.
6. The path of politics to the women in Rajasthan, and particularly, in both of the specified districts selected for the purpose is not easy.

Asian Resonance

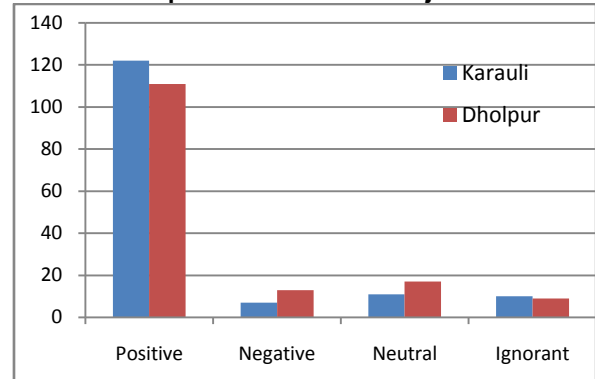
7. The women political leaders, activists and politicians in the specified districts have much challenge to overcome in order to be successful in the field of politics.
8. The desire to lead, to rule, to be self-dependent and to prove the potential in politics motivate the women to join the world of politics.
9. Family liabilities, devotion to parents, husband and children, social barriers and the fundamentalists' negative approach prevent the women from working successfully in the field of politics.
10. Some of the women are represented by the male members of their families, such as, father, brothers, husbands, sons or other male members of the family.
11. The division of women between politics and family brings several unknown problems to the women.
12. Both support and opposition of the family members for the women go side by side.
13. Results of the women's joining politics are both positive and negative.
14. The positive results can be seen in their making the family prosperous.
15. The negative results can be seen in the increasing rate of divorces of the women involved in politics, violence against women, corruption and the indifference of the women activists to their family.
16. Women join politics for the sake of improvement in the existing political trends.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted on 300 units of information, 150 each from Dholpur and Karauli districts of Rajasthan selected randomly. The sample size was 50% of the active women in politics in both the districts. In order to keep up the scientific spirit, all the steps of scientific method were followed. For the

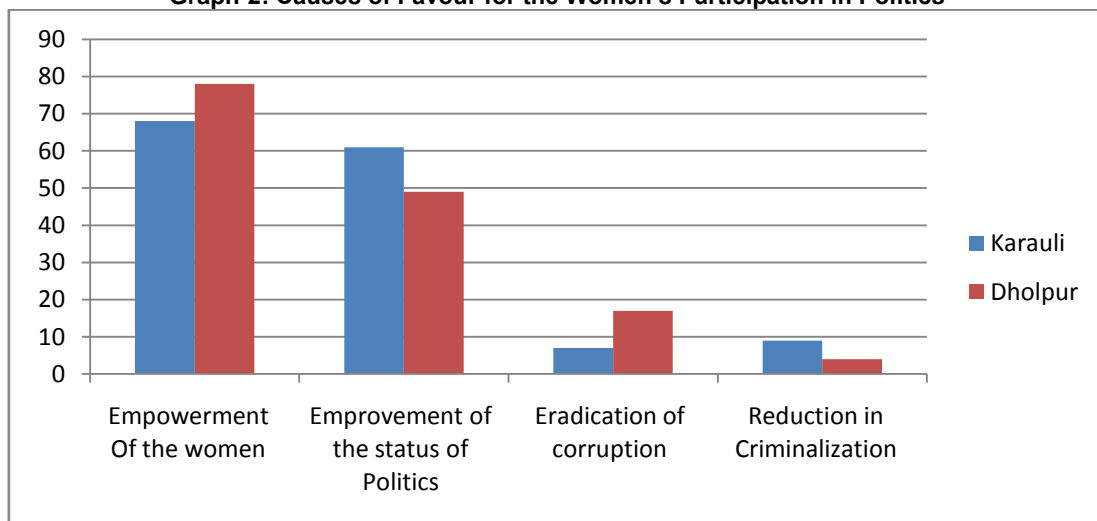
study, both the primary and the secondary data were used. The sources of the primary data was the schedule which comprised of about 80 questions touching all the major aspects of the women in politics in various capacities at various levels. The secondary data were collected from the books, newspapers, survey research reports, magazines and internet sites. In order to arrive at a judicious generalization the research scholar made participant observation.

Graph-1: Comparative Views on Women's Participation in Politics in Rajasthan



Graph- 1 reveals that 81.3% of the total 150 units in Karauli district and 77.7% in Dholpur district approve the women's participation in politics; 4.7% in Karauli District while 8.7% in Dholpur district disapprove it; 7.3% in Karauli District and 11.3% in Dholpur District fail to say anything on it and remain neutral; 6.7% in Karauli District while 6% in Dholpur District reflect themselves to be ignorant. The aggregate percentage of those who approve the women's participation is 77%; of those who disapprove is 6.7%; of those who remain neutral is 9.3%, and of those who remain ignorant is 6.3%.

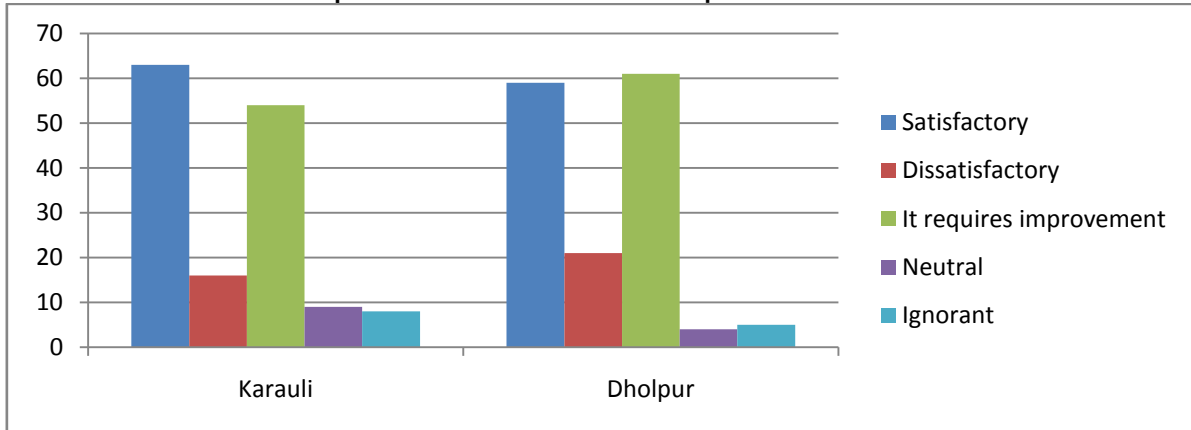
Graph-2: Causes of Favour for the Women's Participation in Politics



Graph-2 reflects the comparative views of the units of information from both the specified districts Karauli and Dholpur on the various causes of the favour for the women's participation in politics.

The greatest cause that is motivating the women in the specified study area to join politics is empowerment (73% Average).

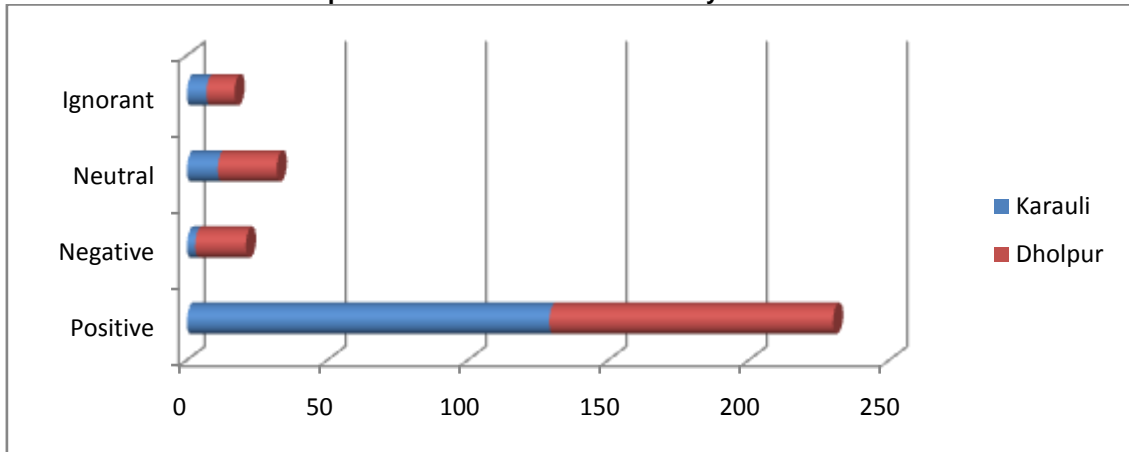
Graph-3: Views on Women's Participation in Politics



Graph-3 mirrors satisfactory response of the units of information about the women's participation in politics (40.65% Aggregate). However, 38.3%

aggregate of the units are of the opinion that women's participation in politics needs improvement.

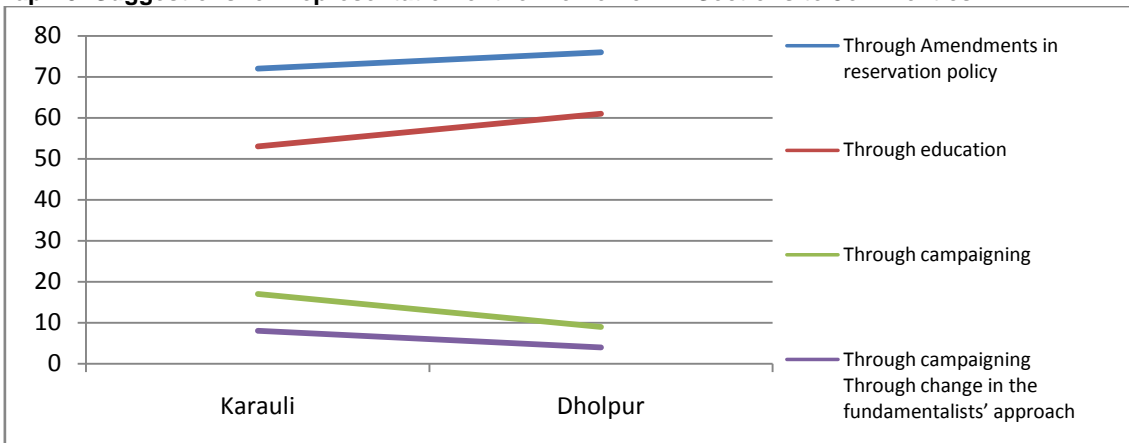
Graph-4: Views on Reservation Policy for Women



Graph-4 evidently reveals the faith of the units of information in the study area in the reservation policy (76.65 Aggregate). Probably they

find it an effective tool for the women to get over all their problem and to join the process of women empowerment successfully.

Graph-5: Suggestions for Representation of the Women of All Sections to Join Politics

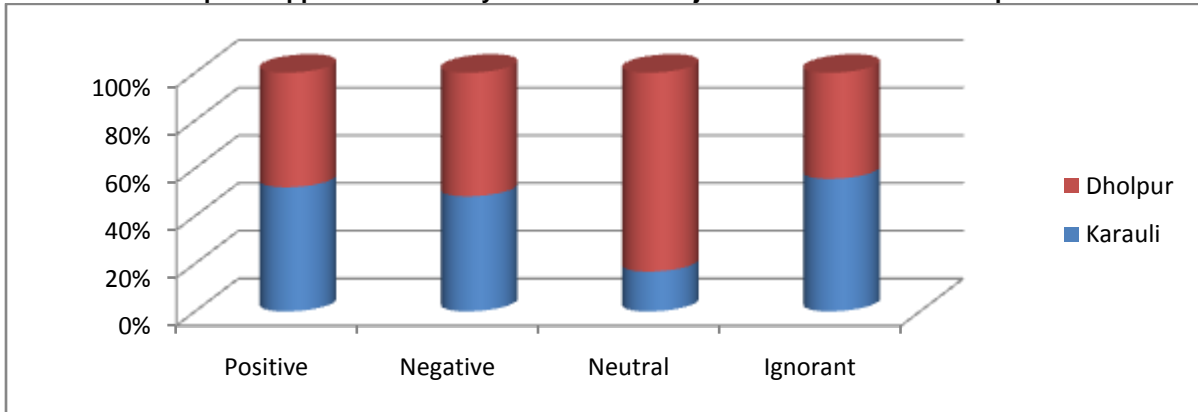


Graph-5 reflects that an aggregate of 49.3% of the units selected for the study believe that the women of all the sections of the society can join

politics when amendments are made in the reservation policy, and 37.95% aggregate suggest that only through education it may be possible.

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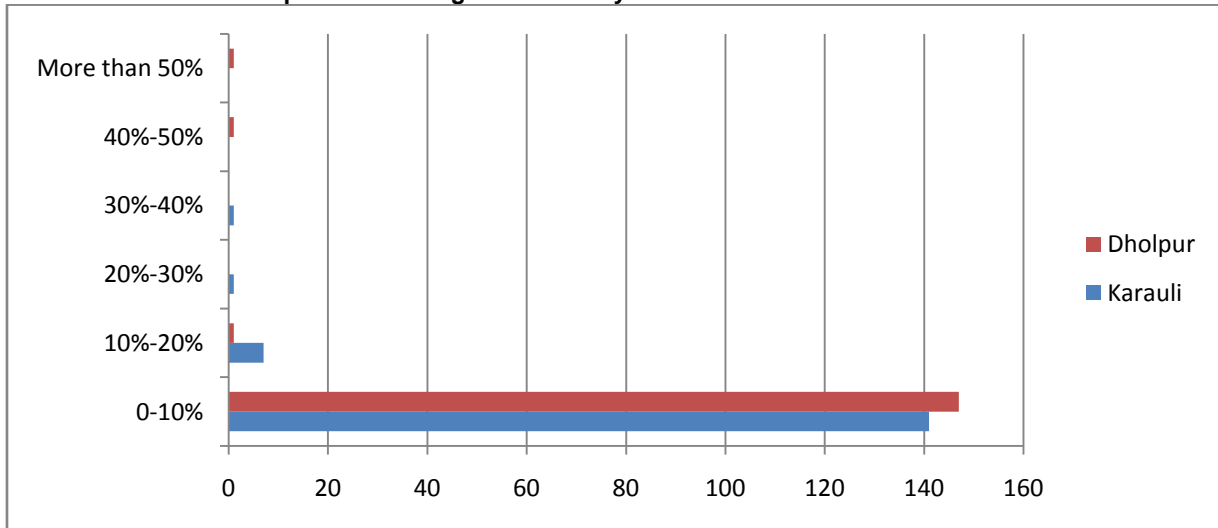
Graph-6: Approval of Society for Women of Rajasthan for Political Participation



Graph-6 has contrary views on the approval of the society for the women's participation in Rajasthan. An aggregate of 74.3% of the total units of

information agrees that the society approves it, while an aggregate of 18.65% of the total units disagrees to it.

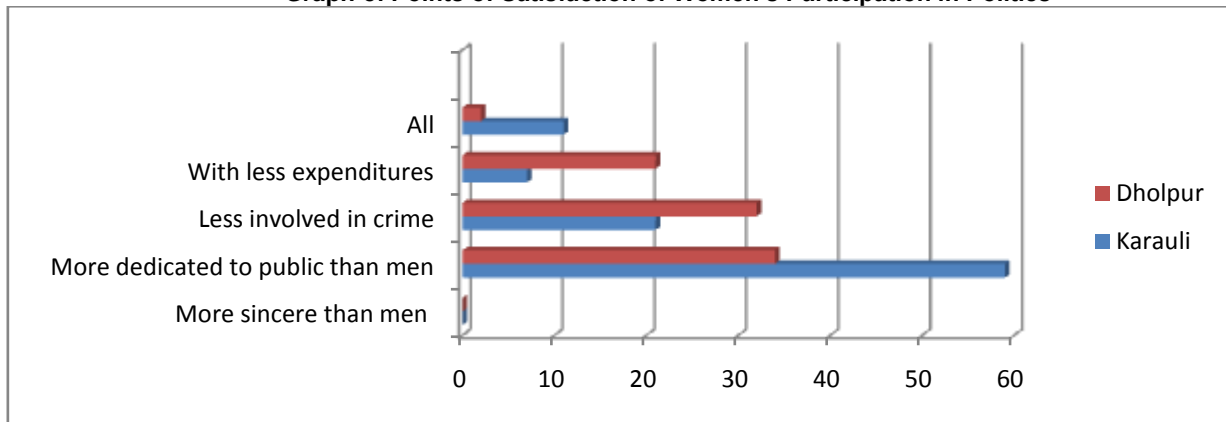
Graph-7: Percentage of Politically Active Women at Different Levels



Graph-7 is a shocking reflection of the fact that in the specified study area selected for the purpose only 0%-10% women are active in politics

which is approved by 96% aggregate of the total total units of information.

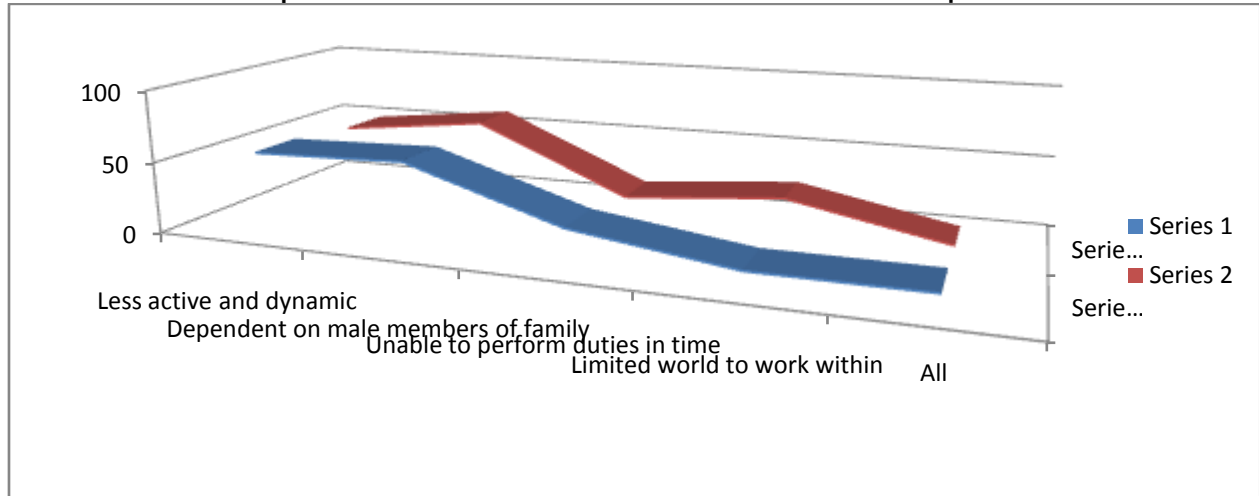
Graph-8: Points of Satisfaction of Women's Participation in Politics



Graph-8 is a reflection of the women's satiety that they are more sincere than men in politics (Aggregate 37.6%) and that they are dedicated to

public more than men despite their liabilities to their family and children (Aggregate 30.95%).

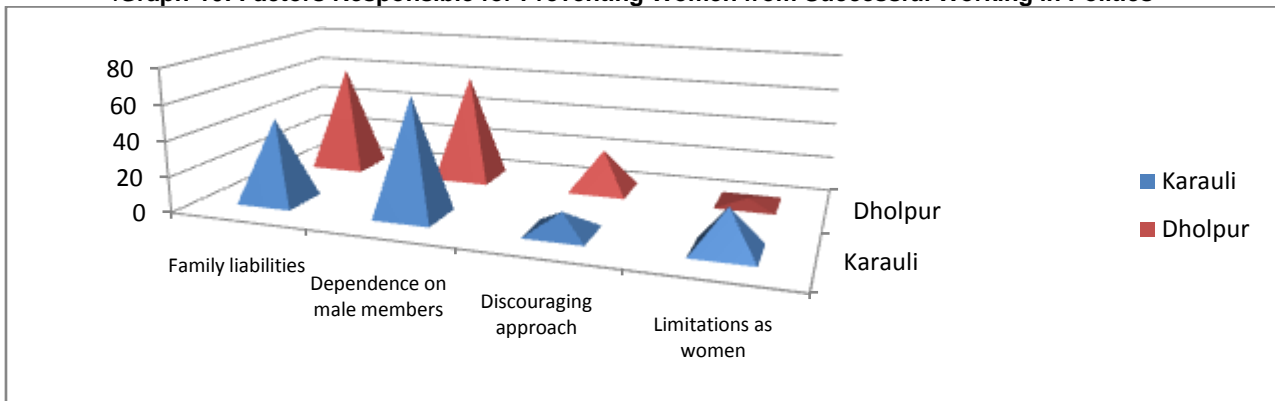
Graph-9: Points of Dissatisfaction of Women's Political Participation



Graph-9 is a mirror to the dissatisfaction of the women. As per the information received from the units, the women's dependence on male members of

the family for the political career (39.3% Aggregate) and so their being less active and dynamic (34.3% Aggregate) are the worst points of dissatisfaction

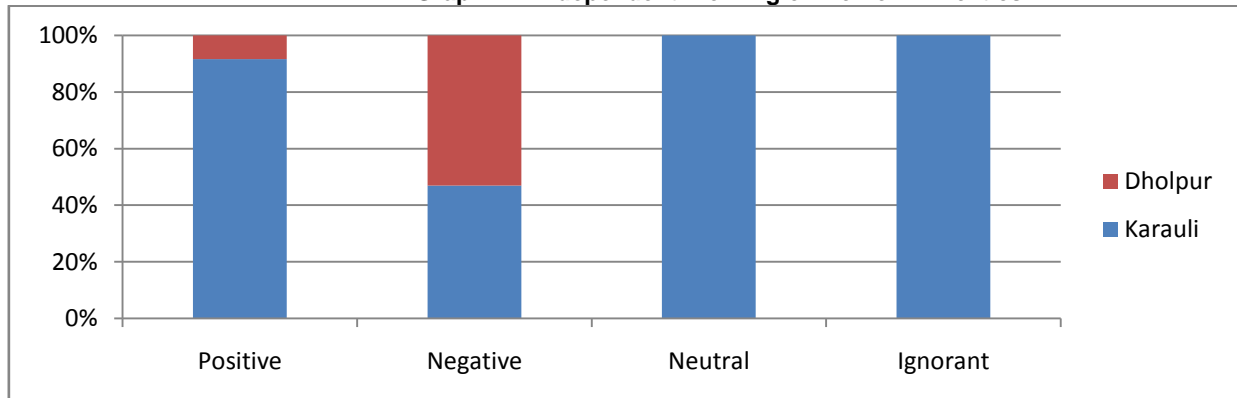
Graph-10: Factors Responsible for Preventing Women from Successful Working in Politics



Graph-10 is a frank sharing of the units selected for the study that their dependence on male members and their family liabilities prevent them working independently and successfully in the field of

politics (42.3% Aggregate). In fact, they find themselves dependent on the male members in the family for everything they want to do, and they are often bound to give priority to their family liabilities.

Graph-11: Independent Working of Women in Politics

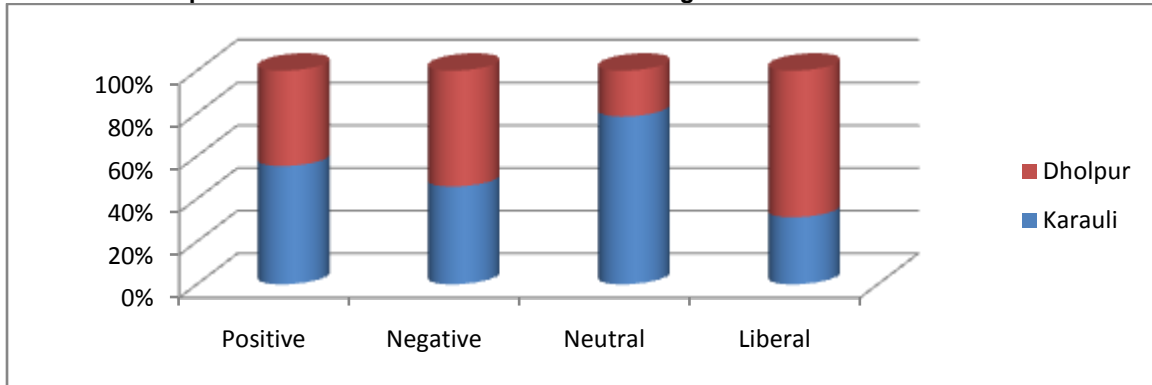


Graph-11 mirrors the agony of the women in politics in the districts of Dholpur and Karauli that despite much campaigning, the women are still in the hands of male members of the family, and

that even after they have joined politics they are not at liberty to manage themselves and their working independently (93.65% Aggregate).

Asian Resonance

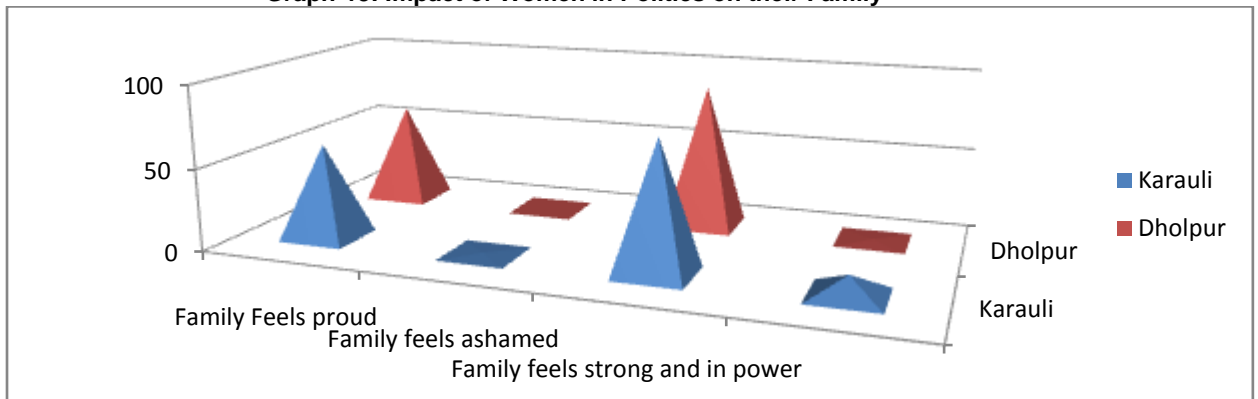
Graph-12: Reaction of Male Political Leaders Against Women in Politics



Graph-12 presents a mixed reaction of the male politicians against the women's joining politics (42.3% Aggregate). However, the majority of the units

of information believes that considering the women danger to their status, the male political leaders often discourage their participation in political activities

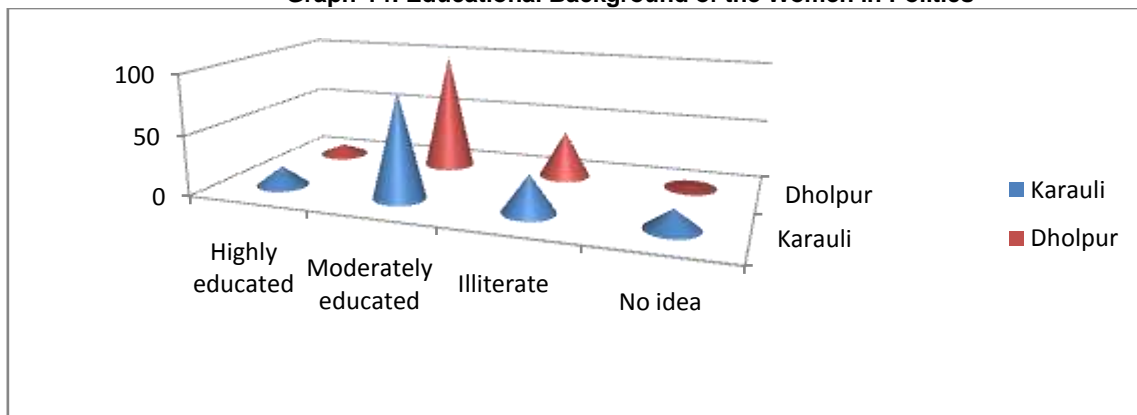
Graph-13: Impact of Women in Politics on their Family



Graph-13 mirrors the various types of impact of the women in politics on their family. In most of the cases, the families of such women pose themselves

to be strong and powerful and feel proud to be the families of such women (55.6% Aggregate).

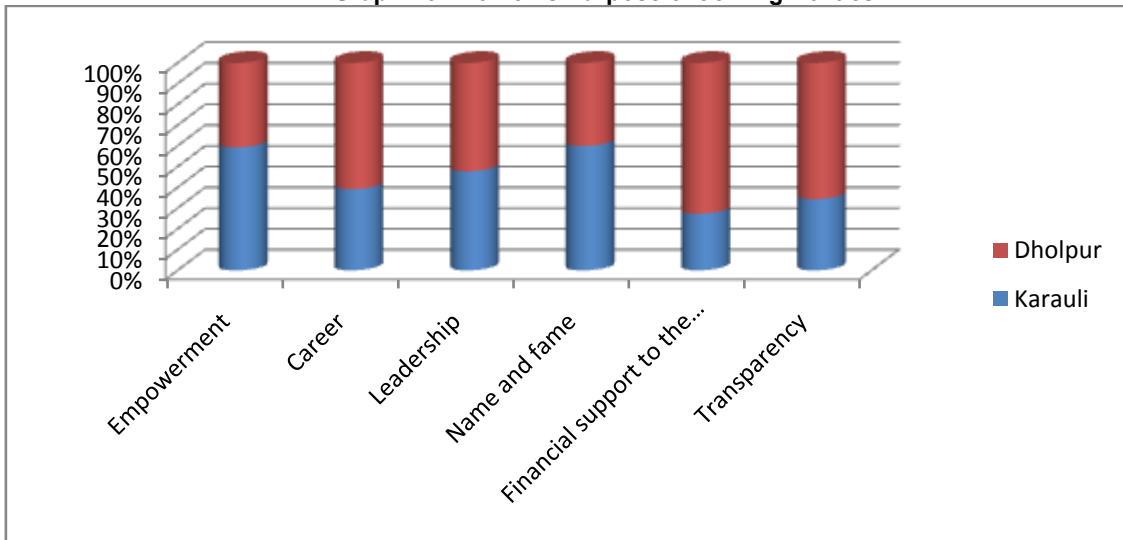
Graph-14: Educational Background of the Women in Politics



Graph-14 serves as a picture of the educational background of the women active in politics in the districts of Dholpur and Karauli. It is true that the women from different educational background

are active in politics in the study area, but it is the moderately educated women in the districts (Aggregate 62%) who are most active in the field of politics.

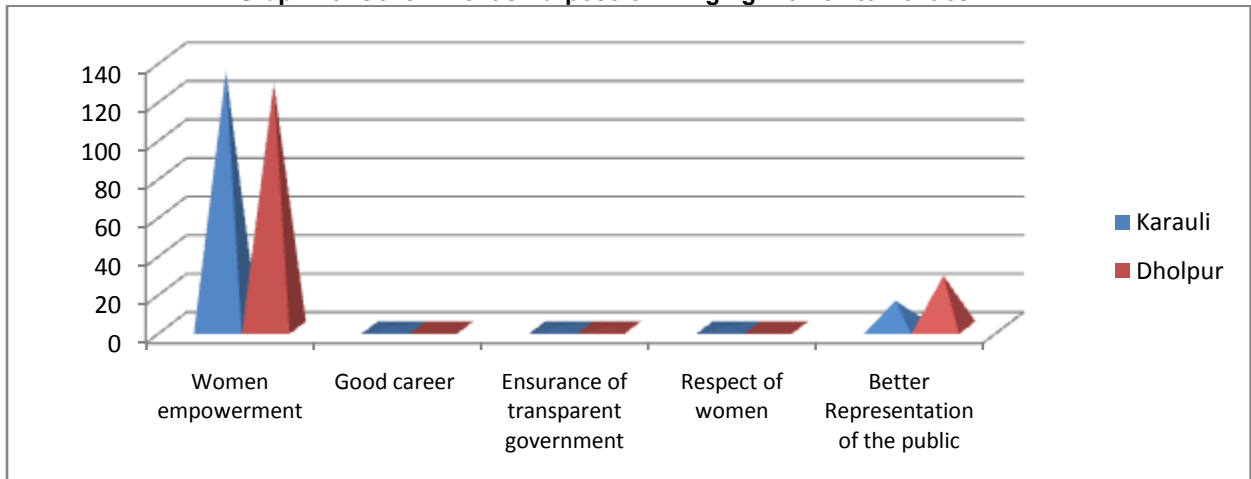
Graph-15: Women's Purpose of Joining Politics



Graph-15 displays that women join politics for the sake of empowerment, career, leadership, name and fame, financial support, transparency etc, but as reported by 22.3% and 30% aggregate of the

units of information respectively, it is leadership and name and fame that motivate the women to join politics. It reveals the passion of the women to lead.

Graph-16: Government's Purpose of Bringing Women to Politics



Graph-16 serves as a display of various government purposes to bring women to politics. Government is bringing women to politics to let them join the process of women empowerment, to let them have a good career in politics, to ensure transparency through them, for the sake of their respect and for better representation of the public. An aggregate of 86.7% of the units of information believe that the government wants the women to join politics for the sake of empowerment.

Key Findings

1. 81.33% units of information in Karauli and 74% in Dholpur (Aggregate 77%) approve the women's participation in politics.
2. In an aggregate, 40.7% units find the women's participation in politics in Rajasthan satisfactory.
3. Reservation policy for women has opened new vistas of politics for women.

4. With the passage of time, there is a tremendous change in the approach of the fundamentalists in Rajasthan to the women's participation in politics.
5. The percentage of the active women in politics at the different levels is only 0% - 10%.
6. In politics, women are more sincere than men.
7. The women still find themselves less competent than men. Hence, they are still dependent on male members of the family and outside the family (39.3%).
8. Self awareness, education, reservation policy, changed approach of fundamentalists and modernity are the things that motivate the women to join the process of empowerment.
9. The revolutionarily changing socio-cultural and political scenario is the result of the women's active participation in politics and their joining the process of women empowerment.
10. The women involved in politics and office bearers work only in papers, not practically.

11. Awareness, motivation by the family members, reservation policy and vote consciousness are the causes of satisfactory representation of the women from all the sections of the society.
12. Lack of awareness, criminalization in politics, doubts about the career and typical family background are the causes of dissatisfactory representation of the women from all the sections of the society.
13. For several reasons the male political leaders do not like the women in politics.
14. The women's participation in politics and their joining the process of women empowerment has a deep impact on the society they belong to.
15. Impractical, bovine, dependent (53%), shirkers and slow worker and uneducated (26.3%) women are not fit for politics.
16. The women active in politics in the study area and eager to join the process of women empowerment are from different educational backgrounds.

Conclusion

Dholpur district, with the reflection of the mixed culture of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, is somewhat different from the other districts of Rajasthan, while Karauli district reflects the typical culture of Rajasthan. Both the districts, however, are located near to each other at the distance of around 100 kms. Indeed, the process of women empowerment has several boons to the women in Dholpur and Karauli districts of Rajasthan. It has changed the destiny of the women. It is linking them to education, jobs and politics. As a result of all this, the present socio-cultural and political scenario in the districts is all changed. Now it is the dream of every woman to educate herself, to get some respectable job in private and public sector, to educate her children, to provide financial support to the family, to share the responsibilities of the husband, to prove her potential in the various fields, and particularly, to join politics for the sake of her contribution as a citizen to the politics of the nation. She is confident that she is capable of giving a clean politics to the nation, and that she can make the politics at the various levels free from those blurs for which, at present the politics is identified. However, despite much campaigning, constitutional amendments in favour of women and reservation policy for women, much is still left to be done and achieved. Theory says that at present the women in India have the same status as men, but practice is just opposite to it. The woman in both these districts, as in the other parts of the country, are facing a horrible gender discrimination and inequality, humiliation in the name of sex, dependence on the male members of the family.

The utopian concept of the women empowerment in India, and particularly in Rajasthan can be successful only when every woman irrespective of caste, religion or family status, is linked with education, job. The recent trend is that the women of all the ages and of all the castes and religions in the study area are equally interested in the field of politics. Many of them are actively engaged in

politics at various levels. Both the rural and the urban women are active in politics these days. Many factors are responsible for their joining politics, but the most important factor is their sense of self-independence and self-respect. They are willing to change their destiny through their active participation in politics. It is suggested that for the sake of self dependence and for the sake of an active participation in politics, the women in Dholpur and Karauli districts of Rajasthan, should be determined to overcome all those barriers that create obstacles and impediments in their path.

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