

POLITICAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN

Yesh Pal

Department of Political Science, Bhagwant University Ajmer, Rajasthan

Abstract

Cross-sectional comparisons of employed women and housewives have found significant differences in political opinions and political involvement, as well as differences on psychological variables such as self-esteem. This paper applies a quasi-experimental design to the 1972-1976 National Election Study panel, comparing employed women, housewives, and women who entered the labor force between 1972 and 1976, in order to examine the competing hypotheses of self-selection and socialization

CHAPTER I

CONCEPT OF POLITICAL ATTITUDE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A narrow definition of politics is termed as the electoral participation in a democracy. The various duties performed by an individual such as a voter or as an elected position holder are called political participation. This participation of an individual is very important for decision making in the public sphere which in turn is denoted as power. Politics is a game of power and power is the decision factor in molding relation in society. While the value and impact of women's position in voting and pattern of their exercise of this power cannot be underestimated women's participation and impact and role in their political activities are equally important. The activities of political participation are ongoing activities which take place during the policies, manufactures campaign issues, campaign methods and techniques and above all the choice of candidates by the parties in electoral tray. The women's role and participation in elections as voters and candidates or as ministers and decision makers is also affected by many other factors as well such as in private realm of family and marriage women have to keep silence they have to face many unrecognized battles for survival and development. There are deliberative gender discrimination such discriminations and struggles become an unavoidable factors in schooling employment and political contests etc. While some women are capable of resisting them, many other merely accept them. These are many who exercise independent judgment while perhaps many others succumb to situations.

It is therefore necessary to study the electoral participation of women as well as their participation in the peasant autonomous women's movements women's wings /units within political parties and interest groups etc. There are few outbursts as well as informal struggles of unorganized women etc. which one need to understand to really gauge women's political participation and awareness.

The present Indian socio economic conditions are not positive for successful involvement of women in political affairs. Women are politically less active and less dynamic. Political equality is not possible unless there is social equality. A better social economic and political condition of women is indispensable for political involvement. Those who have powers, martial knowledge and resources are in a position to involve in the decision making process

In India and some developing countries which have recently become independent women are enjoying a high and significant position. This could be possible because these women have participated in such struggles which had broken many socio cultural obstacles and inhibitions.

The 73rd constitutional amendment Act of 1992-93 have opened a new horizon for women to alter their right to be heard in the decision making process. Reservation has led to the recognition of the identity of women and their presence in the public life

In India a minority of women are generally politically aware of and capable of exercising the power of decision making. The reason for this awareness is confined to educated working and middle class women and that the uneducated rural and non elite women do not participate in politics not even in voting. If this is true of voting exercise of every citizen it is truer of these women emerging as active political figures and even more of those who are successful politicians.

Are these assumptions true anymore? What is the extent of women's participation in politics either as politicians or as voters? What is the nature of their participation and at what level? What are the factors that have helped them emerge as political figures and what type of discrimination and disadvantages did they have to face? How many women overcame these obstacles and how many were frustrated by them? An answer to these and other nagging questions on women's participation needs to be sought.

Very less research is been done on women politics in our country. It is as neglected as the women are in the Indian society. However the more important reason for less women studies is the lack of due weight accorded to the women in society. In today's Indian context women studies are very few in number and women politics as a field of research is its inception condition. The current study is an attempt to fill up this vacuum and throws light on the political behavior of women.

The low standard of women in society have caused occurrence of rape, molestation, dowry hilling female infanticide and domestic violence against women. Women's active role and involvement in decision making process will lead to the progress of standards of public life . These defects can be eradicated by empowering women. Awareness campaign should be created in support of women empowerment. The important responsibility to create awareness about the political empowerment of women is of Mass Media, Non-Governmental Organization, Political Parties, Self help groups and Mahila Mandals. There are several struggles in 21st century for the cause of gender justice by internationalizing struggles for equality by women and other oppressed people. The question of political participation of women in India in a dynamic manner deserves attention.

1.2 CONCEPT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Participation is both an activity and an attitude. Every political system has political participation as its important ingredient. These are various activities which are enlisted as political participation in all political systems. Political participation does not only mean use of right to franchise by maximum number of people. Political participation and involvement of the people in matters of state guarantees stability of political system and this stability of political system reinforces the legitimacy of political authority.

The political participation and active involvement of the people influences the decision making activity of the government. The citizen in democratic government are rational independent and interested political persons who can express their opinions independently regarding the persons aspiring for holding offices.

The basic way of participation in democracy is voting. The other ways or levels of political participation are as reading or listening or watching the mass media of communication, participating in political discussions, listening to political speeches, attending party meeting giving contribution to political parties, writing petitions or letters to public officials or news paper editors trying to influence the voters, contesting the elections for office etc.

1.2.1 MEANING OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The Behaviouralist have discussed the concept of political participation in political science. The arguments in favor of greater political participation are been extended by the republicans and democratic theorists from Rousseau onwards and are still in use by contemporary political theorists.

The classical view tried to show a distinction between state and individuals on the one hand and public and private on the other. Individuals favorable orientation to the state or government considers

participation as an attitude. Due to this view any American can give participant political culture. Political culture became prominent in political science only from 1950's. According to Gabriel Almond 'political culture is the particular patterns of orientations to political objects in which a political system is embedded. Orientations are determined by factors such as traditions, historical memories, motives, norms, emotions, and symbols. Orientations are predispositions to political actions. Almond and Verba later on developed types of political culture in which they tried to break down the orientations into cognitive orientations (knowledge and awareness of the political effects), effective orientations (emotions and feelings about the objects), and evaluative orientations (judgment about them). According to Almond and Verba the ideal and best political culture is the participant political culture where people are more oriented to input processes and active in policy making. According to Almond and Verba the British, American and Scandinavian political systems best represent this ideal.

Birch writes political participation is the participation in the process of government. Communications have a question to the liberal concept of participation. They say that liberals have an individualistic view and they consider government as their locus. According to the communarians running a community health club by a religious group or participating in a N.G.O. sponsored campaign for literacy can be seen broadly as participation in the political life of the community or civil society with different agents and levels of participation. Following the same logic political participation may be for serving political obligation of a democratic citizen to lead a participatory social life and just not for the civil obligations to the government on the question of law and order.

1.2.2 DEFINITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The term political participation has got several meanings. Political participation may be defined as those actions of private citizens by which they seek to influence or support government and politics. This is a broader definition of the term political participation because this term encompasses a wide range of activities viz from active roles of the people in order to influence political outcomes to ceremonial and support activities.

According to Almond and Powell "Political Participation is the involvement of the members of the society in the decision making process of the system."

Verba and Pye defined Political Participation as "Those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing selection of governmental personnel and the actions they take."

According to Mc Closly "Political Participation implies those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and directly or indirectly in the formulation of public policy."

The maximum political participation of the citizens decides the success ratio of democracy. In India Panchayati Raj is been introduced to make sure about the political participation of the citizens. This experiment of Panchayati Raj proves to be a training ground for citizens. It increases people's political consciousness, awareness of their rights and direct participation in self rule. The political system becomes legitimate due to the citizen's active participation in political affairs. As women comprise about half of the population it is pivotal and essential that a proper and equal attention should be paid to this section of the society as well. Men and women should be the equal partners in the nation building and political development. If womenfolk are not given equal rights and equal opportunities than it will be a failure of democratic political set up.

Democracy have a high potential if at least a minimum of people's participation in the decision making process is there. Norman D Palmer defines 'Political Participations as the involvement of the citizens in such political activities which directly or indirectly influence the behavior and actions of decision makers.

Political culture of a society and political participation of individuals are directly related to each other. Political Participation enables a citizen to show his disagreement and to criticize.

However if political participation is to have any concrete meaning, particularly in a democratic setup people should directly or indirectly take part in the decision making process which effect their day to day life.

1.2.3 LEVEL OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION (Lesser Milbrath)

Lesser Milbrath has given three levels of political participation. They are gladiatorial activities, transitional activities ad spectator activities. They are explained as follows.

1) Spectator Activities:

Voting, influencing other's vote, getting influenced by political stimuli, participating in political debates, wearing badges of political parties and distributing leaflets etc is called the spectator activities in which the number of people participating is very high whereas the degree of participation is very low.

2) Transitional Activities:

The activities such as hearing the lectures of the leaders ,donating to the fund of the party and maintaining contact with the leaders of the party are included as transitional activities. These activities are of the helpers and well wishers of the political parties.

3) Gladiatorial Activities:

This category includes activities such as electrons to political post, participation in the election to legislature, gathering fund for the party movements to increase membership and organization of meetings

everywhere to form public opinion in its favor etc. The degree of political involvement of citizen in these activities is very high but the number of people involved seems to be low as compare to spectator activities.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF REFORM MOVEMENT OF WOMEN

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Functioning of Democracy in Pakistan by Mohammad Waseem, from the Democracy in Muslim Societies, the Asian Experience by Zoya Hassan Sage publication Ltd, in 2007 (177-213):-

The basic approach in this was that the exact reasons for the decline of democracy or no growth of democracy in Pakistan could be traced as lack of strong legal restrictions, malfunctioning of parliament, political parties being weak as well as federalism being in turmoil situation. In his study Mohammad Waseem tried to reveal how democracy in Muslim societies with its goals and ways have gone away from its basic agendas of establishing the rule of public representatives. Instead democracy is increased conceived in terms of non violent characteristics of public life and absence of actual Islamic resurgence.

The behaviouralist approach in social science during the 1960 and 1970s made the social scientists to give up collective approach and adopt a new individualistic approach in which the locus of inquiry and research would be an individual. This individual is a decisive factor. Maximum patterns are decided by these individual in the form of voters, opinion holders and corporate or public office holders.

As opposed to the culturalists analysis of relationship between Islam and democracy the case of Pakistan points to the central position of the power structure and its institutional expression in Pakistan as the real source of Islamic ascendancy.

2. "Self-Sacrifice" versus "Self-Interest": A Non-Historicist Reading of the History of Women's Rights in India by Srimati Basu From: Comparative

Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East Volume 22, Number 1&2, 2002 p. 20-35:-

This study of Smriti Basu tries to pinpoint at a very crucial question of right to equal property inheritance by Indian women. She tries to reveal that this law of equal inheritance became unimplemented or impractical over

four post independence decades. Basu argued that women give up their property rights because they are bound by traditional patriarchal system. At the same time women consider that sacrificing their long term material gains is one way of showing their love and loyalty to their parents. The story of women's rights always shows a dichotomy between laws on one hand and sentiments and duty on the other.

3. The Contemporary Hindu Women- Overview of Tahira Basharat, University of Punjab, Lahore. (A Research Journal of South Asian Studies, Vol. 24, No. 2, July-December 2009, PP 242-249):-

In this article Tahira tries to show how in every religion women were given a secondary position. She also tries to reveal how with the passage of time, in the universe of all religions, womanhood has earned respect, honor, status and rights.

Historically speaking both muslims and non-muslim women tolerated exploitation and disrespect at the hands of their men folk. Comparatively muslim women were in acceptable and better position as their religion had protected their status, rights, and virtue.

Whereas the non-muslim women suffered a worthless and lower position due to their religion and holy scriptures. Today's political scenario has totally changed when we can find non-muslim women holding high position in governance.

It is very hard for the fundamentals to digest the fact that there is continuous elevation of women's political position. At present there is a hard time for the non-muslim women who are struggling to achieve social liberty and civil rights in all dimensions. Negation of their rights made them more rebellious. In the present scenario female politicians in India such as Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi have worked hard to get the respect and honor of the women. Feminism tends to focus on issues for women as class. In India the subjection of women is being co-related to the systemic oppression of the majority of the population. This is the result of the long set historical hierarchical stratification of the society as a whole.

4. An Article by Samita Sen on "Towards a Feminist Politics, the Indian Women's Movement in Historical Perspective" (the World Bank Development

Research Group Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network,

Policy Research Report on Gender and Development, Working paper Series No. 9 April 2000):-

Samita Sen in her studies tries to reveal that the women reform movement in India which started in 19th century reached its peaks during the period of freedom struggle. The Constitution of Independent India gave equal rights for women and universal adult franchise. This proved to be an important achievement of women's struggle. But the guarantees which were given by the Constitution couldn't bring many changes in socio material positions of most Indian women. A New Women's Movement articulated to mass and popular politics emerged in the 1970s. In spite of vigorous women's movement the structure of social and political institutions is determined by the deep rooted patriarchy which denied many equal opportunities to women. The Constitution of the nation state is an evidence of this consent and dichotomy between patriarchy and the women's movement.

In her studies Samita Sen also tries to show how the platform of Indian National Congress has opened up new horizons for women's movement. From

1889 every meeting of the Indian National Congress included some women. This gave a new opportunity for women to play new public roles.

5. "Women in Indian Politics Women are as Ever Underrepresented in the

Election Fray and in Party Structures but in Many Ways Most of them

Qualitative they have never been as important as they are today, by Jayati Ghosh (India's National Magazine from the publishers of "the Hindu"

volume 16-Issue 20 Sept. 20-Oct 08, 1999):-

The researcher tried to cover the case for the reservation of women. What has emerged quite clearly in current election process that various political parties are still dominantly male, women account for only five to ten percent of all candidates across parties and regions. This pattern of candidature is been observed for last 13 general elections in the country. There is a great opposition over the 84th Constitution Amendment Bill even last year also. In fact it is an ironic paradox that the parties which are very much in favor of women reservation bill have put up the same proportion of women as always and certainly not more than other parties that had opposed the bill. This is very much ironic that though Congress Party is headed by a women and though it is very much in favour of the reservation of women has only 10 percent of women candidates as compare to BJP at 7 percent women candidates as well as the communist party India (Marxist) have any 7 percent of candidates are women. The women members in most of the parties are very low in number. Their existence in decision making bodies as well as party decisions couldn't be felt. They are pushed back at the "women's wing" of the party where they are supposed to concentrate on so called "women issues" such as dowry and rape cases and sometimes price rise which are seen as concerns of especially "housewives."

6. "The Hindu Goddess and Women's Political Representation in South Asia.

Symbolic Resource or Feminine Mystique? By Stephinie Tawa Lama.(Csh

Delhi.com/team/download/ publiperso/STLR-RIS):-

As a French observer of women's political representation in South Asia the researcher was particularly interested in Freedman's work. Her observations drew me to question the impact if any of the Hindu Goddess a uniquely popular positive figure of feminine power- on political representation of women in two countries where non muslims ism is the religion of the majority: India and Nepal.

A cultural explanation is presented by a recent study of women representation in France and the United Kingdom. Freedman who is the author of the study has a hypothesis of his study that the responsible factor which keep women out of political field is political culture which proves to be as a hindrance for offering women any positive model of female power. In this paper the researcher proposes to locate the evidence of associations of women's political participation with the

Hindu Goddess over the last century in India and Nepal. With the help of this the researcher could co-relate the effect of goddess for women's political empowerment and the nature of functions she performs and the manipulation she undergoes.

7. Women's Participation in the Political Process by Zoya Hassan and Ritu Menon from "Unequal Citizen" published in India by Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2004.[206- 229] :-

In her studies, Hassan Zoya and Menon Ritu reveals that the Women's participation in elections and political activities is an important means by which Women gain status and autonomy, but their presence in party politics and leadership remains limited. Their low political representation, however, does not appear to have any correlation to their voter turnout or political awareness. Women are quite conscious of the importance of their vote and regularly exercises their franchise. Over the years, the number of women voters has shown a steady rise; while it's still lower than that of men, the gender gap has reduced from 16% to less than 10% over the past four decades. In the 1999 Lok Sabha elections, for example

58% female voters exercised their franchise. In their study women's involvement in political activities, the MWS asked a number of questions regarding their participation during elections and their willingness to contest in elections.

Respondents were asked about the age of voting. Overall, 53% of them were aware that 18 years is the correct age for voting; 25% gave no reply and 9% relied "20 years". Comparatively more Hindu respondents from both rural and urban areas were aware of the correct age of voting. Among Muslims, about 51% replied correctly but lack response amongst Muslims was higher.

8. Decision Making by Zoya Hassan and Ritu Menon from "Unequal Citizen" published in India by Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2004.[129-151]:-

In her studies, Hassan Zoya and Menon Ritu reveals that the Women's decision making capacity and their presence and participation in decision making within the family, in public, at work, and in decision making bodies, whether institutional or political are an important gauge of their autonomy and empowerment. Increasingly both the level and quality of their participation, especially at the political and policy levels has been a major plank of the international women's movement, which has consistently drawn attention to it and lobbied for it at national and international forums. The united nation system recognize it as a major policy initiative, and most international donor and lending agencies require a gender component whose primary objective is women's empowerment to be included in all the programs, activities, and organizations they support.

Some data on women in decision making have been compiled by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in their Human Development Reports, and a more detailed analysis is available in Human Development in South Asia. The Gender Question, from which we get a broad idea of comparative study by country. As with most such data, however, the true picture remains elusive, mainly because women's everyday experiences are not accounted for.

Their primary arena remains domestic, not the public, where few enumerators have ventured in order to capture the complicated, and sometimes contradictory, circumstances in which women negotiate bargain, concede, manipulate, and otherwise express agency.

The Indonesian Experience in Implementing Democracy by Adriana Elisabeth from "The Democracy in Muslim Societies" , the Asian Experience by Zoya Hassan Sage Publications Ltd in 2007 [75-107]:-

In her study Hassan Zoya reveals that the Muslims constitute the majority in Indonesia. Indeed, it is the largest Muslim community in the world. Yet their struggle for the establishment of Indonesia as an Islamic state based on the Shari'a by constitutional as well as violent means in the form of armed rebellion has been unsuccessful since the beginning of Indonesian independence. Nonetheless, on the part of many Muslims, particularly through a number of Islamic political parties, the aspiration for the Islamic state remain alive to this day, if by less than violent means, albeit with implications involving frequent cases of violence in society. The majority of Indonesian Muslims, most of whom are moderate, seem to be powerless in preventing the growth of militant

groups with their intolerance, intimidations and violent actions, particularly against non-Muslim communities in the country.

Functioning of Democracy in Pakistan by Mohammad Waseem, from the Democracy in Muslim Societies, the Asian Experience by Zoya Hassan Sage Publications Ltd in 2007 [177-213]:-

In her study Hassan Zoya reveals that the study of Pakistan and other contemporary Muslim societies has been de-contextualized in as much as the means and ends of democracy have lost touch with the agenda of establishing the rule of public representatives. Instead democracy is increased conceived in terms of non-violent characteristics of public life and absence of actual Islamic resurgence.

It is argued that a structural approach to politics has the necessary potential to explain the lack of democracy in that country, while it shared the structural dynamic of the state with India as a legacy of British colonialism; it also inherited certain distinct features, such as economic and political

underdevelopment of the territories constituting Pakistan, including Punjab as the catchment area for recruitment of the army. The partition of India was accompanied by a process of structural discontinuity in Pakistan as opposed to India, characterized by the predominant role of Islamic ideology as the *raison d'être* of the new state, relocation of the political center first at Karachi and then in Islamabad, and ascendancy of the migrant elite in the state system. Under these conditions, the institutional imbalance between the two state apparatus of the army and bureaucracy on one hand and Parliament and Political parties on the other, created a dichotomy between state and democracy. While state elite gave priority to national security, Islamic ideology, concentration of authority in the hands of the executive, the center and the president, and developmentalism in general, the political leaders focused on the agenda for representative rule, pluralism, and provincial autonomy, parliamentary sovereignty and a distributive mechanism for allocation of resources across ethnic and class division.

The Struggle for Democracy in Bangladesh by Amena Mohsin & Meghna Guhathakutra from the Democracy in Muslim Societies, the Asian Experience by Zoya Hassan. Sage Publications Ltd in 2007[46-74]:-

In her studies Amena Mohsin & Meghna Guhathakutra, Bangladesh, with a population of 135 million and as a per capita GNP of the only US\$ 350, is one of the least developed countries in the world. Eight percent of the population lives in rural areas. In the post-independence (1971) period, the reconstruction and the rebuilding of the war-devastated nation was topmost priority. Proverbs and poetry are important reflections of the state of a society. Bengali culture and politics are, in fact, quite enmeshed, and the state of politics in Bangladesh is well reflected by a proverb in Bengali popular culture that says, *jar naikononitishaeikorerajniti* (one who does not have any principle doe's politics).

One cannot blame the general people for such a perception. Since its birth, the political history of Bangladesh has been marred by violence; a nation born out of violence with an estimated death of 30 million and rape of 20 million, yet a dream of a golden Bengal has remained unrealized.

The liberation war of Bangladesh had politicized the Bangladesh Army. The liberation force which formed the nucleus of the Bangladesh army in the immediate aftermath of liberation war, in the past the military had intervened under such circumstances, even under much lesser pretexts, but the noninterference of the military, despite the continued deterioration of general law and order is indicative of the growing maturity of the military and also the power of society. The trajectories for the future of democracy in Bangladesh are mixed and complex. Intense political confrontation marked by pressures all over. Unless political parties come to a minimum consensus the non- state actors will appropriate the state.

A Workshop on "Women's Law and Strengthening of Counseling Centers" by Maharashtra State Commission for women and YASHADA (Pune).(mahilaayog.maharashtra.gov.in/new/policy.google.com)

Maharashtra State Commission for Women):-

A workshop on " Women's Law and Strengthening of Counseling Centers" was jointly organized by MSCW and YASHADA on 10th and 11th Jan 2011 at YASHADA Pune. This workshop meant for elected representatives from various Zilla parishads and Municipal Corporation of Maharashtra State. In this workshop it was insisted by Honorable Minister of Women and Development Department Mrs. Varshatai Gaikwad that knowledge about the basic legal rights of women should be imported to grass root level as well so that their participation as peoples representatives could be increased. The major role of the women in the political process as well as development of the country was also appreciated by the lady minster. The need for organizing such workshops is very urgent and organizers were appreciated for their efforts. A very important suggestion of this workshop was to have hotline services for women and commission sub centers at regional levels . It was expected by the organizers that it is the responsibility of everyone to implement National Policy for the empowerment of women.

CHAPTER III

PROFILE OF SELECTED WARDS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the geographical, historical, political and socio-economic profile of Maharashtra, Pune and selected wards is discussed. If you look back you can find that Indian history is an amazing one, full of conflicts, battles and tussles of strong and large power who ruled over the country for a long period. Much more light can be thrown on the facts of history. We have to collect evidences of these facts from the scriptures of Buddhists, temples of Hindu, libraries of Muslims as well as archaeological investigations. There is an urgent need of time that we need to know a lot about the history of our country otherwise we tend to fail to prove ourselves as a strong nation. If we go back to the deep roots of our history even in Alexander's time in 4th century we had a rich and glorious culture which was a part of attraction and curiosity of the people of Europe, Asia and Africa.

Indian women started displaying their active role in politics from freedom movement only. Margaret Alva suggested that the Universal Adult Franchise introduced after Independence was an outcome of two factors viz women's participation in freedom movement as well as feminism. Till 1909 when great discussions and deliberations were going on amongst Britishers and some nationalist leaders the issue of women's right to vote was still an untouched matter. Since there was spread of western education and the growth of news papers the mind set of Indian people was changed.

3.2 PROFILE OF MAHARASHTRA

3.2.1 Geographical Profile of Maharashtra

Map 3.2.1

Maharashtra is a state of India which occupies a good portion of the Deccan Plateau in the western peninsular part of the subcontinent. Maharashtra has Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa as its west. There are four geographical divisions of Maharashtra i.e. Konkan, the Sahayadri Ranges, Eastern Plateau and Northern Satpuda Ranges and Northern Satpuda Ranges and the flat terrain nearby.

We have "black cotton soil" in large number in Maharashtra. The important rivers which flow in Maharashtra are Godavari, Krishna, Bhima and Narmada, Tapi River. The average of rivers is 100 to 150 kilometers. The main minerals in Maharashtra are Manganese, Bauxite and Iron Ore. There are different kinds of soils in Maharashtra. Wild life is also found in Chandrapur and thick jungles in Sahyadri Ranges.

As per details from Census 2011, Maharashtra has population of 11.24 crore an increase from figure of 9.69 crore in 2001 census. Total population of Maharashtra as per 2011 is 112,374,333 of which male and female are 58,243,056 and 54,131,277 respectively. In 2001 total population was 96,878,627 in which males were 50,400,596 while females were 46,478,031.

3.2.2 Historical Profile of Maharashtra

The origin of the word Maharashtra could be traced back to Puranas such as Bramha Purana and Wayu Purana. The name Maharashtra is related to the area where Marathi language is spoken. If you go to see from the national point of view the Maharashtrian history is important for last 350 years. The history of Marathas under the leadership of Chattrapati Shivaji in 18th century is considered as synonymous to the history of India. Under Peshwas in the middle of Eighteenth century the Marathas proved themselves to be the king makers of Delhi. There was a breakdown of Maratha control in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. This is fantastic to note that when Britishers took over the power, it was from the hands of Marathas and not from Mughals. The Marathas could dominate not only south as but also north at that time. Therefore there is a solid reason to correlate history of India to history of Maharashtra.

If you look back you can trace that the State of Maharashtra was prosperous and flourishing state during the rule of Satvahanas, whose rule lasted for four centuries. The later rulers the Rashtrakutas, the Chaulukyas and Yadavas were Maharashtrian rulers. Rule of Mohammedans speaks about the second period of history of Maharashtra. After the fall of Bahamani Kingdom complete chaos was experienced in Maharashtra. Maratha Empire and Swarajya in Maharashtra was established by Shivaji, the young son of Shivaji Bhosle. Shivaji was given an inspirational training by his mother Jeejabai and tutor Dadoji Kondadeo.

The unification of people of Maharashtra was brought by Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj. In 1674, Shivaji became king and he declared his independence in 1707. The power was taken over by Peshwas and Pune became the capital. Leader of Maharashtra like Tata Tope, Nanasaheb and the Rani of Jhansi took active part in the revolt of

1857. The Indian National Congress received a strong support in Maharashtra. Ganesh Utsav and Shivjayanti were introduced by Lokmanya Tilak as public festivals with great zeal and enthusiasm. The main leaders of "Quit India Movement" of 1947 from Maharashtra were Raosaheb and Achutrao Patwardhan, Nanasaheb Gore, S.M Joshia and Yeshwantrao Chavan, Swami Ramanand Bharti, Nana Patil, Dhulapaa Navale, V.S Page, Vasant Patil, and Dhondiram Mali.

3.2.3 Socio-Economic Profile of Maharashtra

The population of Maharashtra includes people of all religions such as Hindus, Mohammendans, Christians, Parsis, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs, Lingayats and Jews. The majority community is the Hindu Community. Hindus again have various castes and sub castes. There are number of tribal and nomadic tribes also in Maharashtra.

Balutedari is well known in villages. This balutedari have divided the people in various castes and sub castes. These sub castes are also the result of customs ,traditions and professions. Some castes were supposed to be untouchables. They had a very low position in the society. There was division of profession on the basis of caste. The Brahmin Maratha and Kayastha were considered to be higher castes. The agriculturalists class was of the Marathas.

A movement against this social inequality was launched by social reformers such as Maratha Phule ,Agarkar ,Lokmanya Tilak, Shri Shahu Maharaj of Kolahapur and Dr. Ambedkar. The untouchability was declared illegal by the Constitution of India .Some castes were listed as scheduled castes and tribes were also listed as scheduled tribes. They were supposed to give maximum facilities and opportunities to elevate their status.

The literacy rate of Maharashtra is higher than the national average and the literacy among the women is higher as compared to many other states. Marathi is the regional and official language of Maharashtra. Rich cultural heritage is an indispensable feature of Maharashtra. Additions have been made in the field of religion ,architecture, language and literature, dance and drama folk music and folk dances and art.

In the last quarter of 20th century Maharashtra is been declared as India's leading industrial state due to its favorable and strong economic policies. Maharashtra has 42% of urban population. The important industries of Maharashtra are petroleum, sugar, textiles, steel, iron castings, pharmaceuticals and many more others.

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