

Interpretation of Political Representation of Women in Haryana Legislative Assembly (From 1966 to 2008)

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Abstract: *Many studies address women's political representation at the parliament level worldwide. In India, various studies have been done on women's electoral participation, the effects of 73 and 74th constitutions amendments on women's political participation in district, block, and rural levels, and women's political representation in parliament both upper house (Rajyasabha) and lower house (Loksabha). However, very few studies have been conducted on women's formal political representation at the state legislative assembly level. This study will attempt to present the formal representation of women in the Haryana (an Indian state) legislative assembly in various ways, such as female representation through a political party, constituency representation, and ministry representation. The data source of this paper is the Haryana Statistical Election Commission report and personal interviews with female MLAs. Descriptive methodology is used to present the objective of this research article.*

Keywords: Political representation, Haryana, legislative assembly.

1. Introduction

Currently, representation is the more significant word for social science scholars. At this time, all human beings want to be ruled by their representative, and the government also claims to be a good representative of groups of all social identities. Previously, the state and its population were small in size and number. So, every man could attend the royal court to present his interests. However, in modern democracy, the number of people and state sizes are too vast. So, all people cannot be together in place and discuss their interests. That is why, in contemporary democracy, the idea of representation comes from the political sphere.

However, we should clarify our ideas about representation words; these words are not limited to only the discussed sense. It can work for a company. In the starting period, it was neither related to democracy nor was it considered a right. However, in the 1950s-decade, representation was more prevalent in democratic government institutions. It is linked with justice and liberty. What is represented, and how can we equally represent all society groups interconnected? According to Hanna Pitkin, it is an idea that a particular human being represents a group of other human beings (Pitkin, 1968). In the seventeenth century, when central power became very ineffective, some people selected to present the interests of local-level people. However, during the French and American revolutions, the representation of words became more critical. Hobbes and Volfine defined representation as a need of society's existence. The historical reality of political culture can be understood as the rise and fall of the representation of a particular royal family in society. Hobbes, Webber, and Voegelin describe a representative as a person whose actions are not for him only but are ascribed to society; in that action, accountability is there.

Equal representation of the social groups in the legislature is

the central notion of modern democratic institutions. Almost decades ago, equal representation of marginalised groups emerged in the political scenario in the 1990s, and the idea of presence challenged the idea of politics. Ani and Young are pioneers of this theory. The idea of marginalised social groups emerges in politics. This reservation can be one way to solve this under-representation problem. Women are everywhere in the political world, but other marginalised categories vary from nation to nation, such as in America, Africans are marginalised, and in India, tribe and scheduled caste people are marginalised. (Waylen, 1996).

In her work, Hannah Pitkin did not directly present the idea of equal representation of all groups of society. Still, he gave similar views that representative should represent their constituencies. If there is any disagreement between representation and constituencies' casualties, in that case, representatives should prioritise the casualty's interests. This definitional discussion raises questions on what a representative is and what he did. The representative has two primary tasks: representing his constituency and working for the nation and its government. Pitkin understands this distinction with two German words: "vertreten", which means to act for another, and "darstellen", to stand for another. He studied descriptive and symbolic representation under the second category (Pitkin, 1967).

Before Pitkin's work, another prominent political scientist also defined representation similarly. During the American Revolution, John Adams described legislative representation as an exact mini portrait of people in every sense as they feel, like, think and act. Edmund Burke and James Wilson present similar viewpoints on the representative body. Political scientists depicted legislators' representation as the mirror or map of society. As a mirror is present as it is, things and maps present all kinds of landscapes and political boundaries as legislators' representation represents society in the legislative body (Putnam, 1976). On this behalf, scholars

started to criticise the unequal representation of the female sex, ethnic group, lower and middle-class men,

Women's participation in government institutions started with the right to suffrage. Women's suffrage rights go into two phases. In the first phase, western countries were due to the first phase of the feminist movement, and in the second phase of suffrage rights, women got from nations that were newly freed from colonial power after the Second World War. However, these two phases should have discussed women's participation in top-level governing bodies.

Women's participation in governing body demand started with the second wave of feminism in the 1970s decade.

Women's participation in politics was at most 100 years in the modern world before very few females participated in the politics of the states. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to give women voting rights. However, in 1906, Finland became the first country to elect women in parliament. In 1946, the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) was the first country to reach 10% women in the nation's legislative. After 1945, we found steady growth in women's legislative representation. However, in some countries, it was found that there was a fast-track growth in women's representation in the national legislature. Such countries use gender quotas to increase female representation and cross the line of 50%; their name is Rwanda and Bolivia. In the Asian scenario, the average representation of Asian countries is 20%. However, there is more variation. In 2005, according to an IPU report, Vietnam represented the highest percentage (27.3) of women in Asian countries, and Bangladesh represented the lowest percentage (2) of women in the lower house of parliament.

However, India got the 94th rank with 8.3% of female representation in the lower house of the Indian parliament (Julie, 2008; IPU, 2005; Pandit, 2010). South Asian regions present a paradoxical view of women's political representation. On one side of political parties or prime ministers are women such as Indira Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi in India, and Banjeer Bhutto in Bangladesh. Conversely, women's representational average is between six and eight countries (Omvedt, 2005).

India's representation of women in parliament compares favourably with that of many industrialised countries. However, Matland's research findings suggest a slight difference between the average number of women's political representation between less developed and developed countries; this is because of several factors, such as the educational approach of people and social and cultural behaviour (Matland, 1998). The percentage ranges from a high level in Eastern and Northern Europe (Bulgaria's Council of the People in 1975 was 37% female; Sweden's Parliament in 1975 was 21% female) to a low in Southern Europe (the Greek Chamber of Deputies and Italian Parliament were less than 3% female). In the United States, the number of women in the House of Representatives is 18 of 435 members (4.1%). Women in the Indian parliament are represented almost equally in some more advanced democratic countries and Asian countries but are underrepresented in comparison to male representatives (Katzenstein, 1976)

India is the largest democracy in the world, providing equal citizenship rights. In law, India has no inequality in society, but in reality, India has several inequities. One is gender inequality, which is deeply rooted in Indian society. Indian constitution article 325 gives all citizens the right to contest elections freely, and article 326 gives every Indian citizen the right to exercise voting rights. Women use Article 325 rights very well, but their right to participate in politics voluntarily still needs to be addressed. In other words, women still need to improve national and state-level political representation. It is because they are marginalised in every sphere of life. "According to a study on the status of women in India, which was commissioned by the UN development agencies based in India, "in India, women have little or no say in decision-making at all levels of society". In a general sense, the main cause of this marginalisation is women do not have power and proper access to intellectual and material resources. "The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action sets "agenda for women's empowerment" and calls for "removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making" and states that a "transformed partnership based on equality between women and men is a condition for people-centred sustainable development.

The more important question is why women's representation is studied at various academic levels. Women activists generally present three essential arguments for women's representation in politics: 1. Justice and equality 2. For bringing different perspectives and ideas to polity 3. Women can give women better representation. First, women constitute the world's population, and according to democratic resemblance theory, democratic government is a miniature of society. In the name of justice, women should participate in politics. Secondly, women have different values and experiences so that they can bring new ideas to government institutions. The third is that women are a marginalised group in society; they can understand and present their problems better. Also, men and women have different sets of interests, so how can they show women's interests in a better way? So, women should participate in politics in more numbers than they can solve their problems. (Child, 2003 & Norris & Levonduski, 1996). This third argument for women's political representation is challenged by recent research. They show that only women's issues do not bind women. They are performing all their duties. Politics is a means of socio-economic and political changes. It is the source of economic and social power. It provides a particular field for decision-making and practices from the panchayat to the national level. So, analysing the women's quantitative presentation in the Haryana state legislative assembly led us to recognise the political condition of women in Haryana state.

2. Data Sources of this Study

I used primary and secondary data sources to fulfil the research objective. As a primary source, I used the Haryana Legislative Assembly debate proceeding from 1966 to 2009, who and Who is a report of the Haryana Legislative Assembly from 1967 to 2005, a statistical report of every

election of the Haryana Legislative Assembly and personal interview with women members of the Haryana legislative assembly, in any case, women member is not available I interviewed her family member who is closer in her political career. I used secondary data from books and journal articles related to this research field to analyse primary data and support the argument.

Women members in the Haryana legislative assembly: -

Haryana came into existence after the separation of Punjab. As a political unit, the Haryana state began with effect from 1st November 1966. It is one of the northwestern states of India adjoining Delhi, the country's capital. The geographical area is 4.42 m ha, which is 1.4% of the country's size. Haryana formation time, the administration typically divides MLA and MP seats. However, in 1967, the constitution's formal seat allotment was done. For the new state of Haryana, the number of seats for Haryana Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha as per close (3) and (7) of People Representation Act, 1951 were fixed at 54 and 8 respectively, ten seats in Vidhan Sabha and 2 in Lok Sabha were reserved for Scheduled castes (Chahar, 1996) before giving a descriptive representation of women member of Haryana legislative assembly we will compare the Haryana state with all Indian state to find out the status of Haryana in women legislative representation. Haryana is lagging in women's political representation with the most patriarchal and backward states, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, in the 20th century. However, with the 2014th legislative assembly, Haryana became number one in women legislators' presentations and West Bengal and Chhattisgarh.

When Haryana was formulated in 1966, it was the house of 54 members. Out of 54 members, only three females are members of the legislative assembly. Their name is Chandrawati Shanno Devi and Parsanni Devi. Shanno Devi worked as deputy speaker of the Haryana legislative assembly from the 1st, which was very low in the starting period of the house; their total percentage was 1. November to 5th December, 1966. After that, she was appointed as the speaker of Haryana, and Haryana became the first state of the country to nominate a female as a speaker (Haryana et al., 1966-1967). Female representation was 1.08%. Representation of women in the formation year: I do not study in later territorial, party affiliation, and social backgrounds.

In the first election of the Haryana legislative assembly, only five female members were elected as M.L.A. out of 81 seats. They are Lakwati Jain, Parsanni Devi, Om Prabha Jain, Sumitra Devi and Sharda Rani. The percentage of females in the legislative assembly is 6.17. Out of 9 cabinet ministers, only Om Prabha Jain got ministry from 1967-1968. She became finance minister during this time. Haryana became India's first state with its first female financial minister. Due to political instability between senior leaders of Haryana, "on November 21, by a presidential proclamation under article 356 of the constitution, the United state Front ministry headed by Rao Virendra Singh was dismissed, the Haryana assembly was dissolved and president's rule imposed over the state (Chahar, 1996, p. 26). After nearly five months of rule, Haryana went for a contested mid-term election in May 1968. This time, only six females were elected as M.L.A. out

of 81 seats, and their percentage somewhat increased from 6.17 to 7.40. "Their name is Prasanni Devi, Om Prabha Jain, Lakhwati Jain, Rajkumari Sumitira Devi, Chandrawati, and Smt. Shakuntla. Om Prabha Jain became finance minister again, and Lakhwati Jain became the deputy speaker of the legislative assembly from 1968 to 1972 (Haryana et al., 1968).

The third time election for legislative assembly was held in Haryana in 1972. This time, women's representation was less compared to the 1968 mid-term election. Only five female contestants won the legislative assembly seat. Their percentage of representation is 6.17. The female legislators are Prasanna Devi, Lekhwati Jain, Sharda Rani, Lajjo Rani, and Chandrawati. Among five of the three who became minister, Sharda Rani became parliament secretary and state minister of home and health, Prasanna Devi became state minister of transport and education minister, Chandrawadi held revenue and public department, and Lekhwati Jain became the deputy speaker of the Haryana legislative assembly from April 1972 to April 1977 (Haryana et al., 1972-1977).

In 1977, the next legislative assembly election was contested. However, the legislative assembly seats were increased before the emergency under the Constitution article. "In 1972, a commission was constituted under the Delimitation Act headed by a retired Supreme Court judge. The commission fixed 90 seats for Vidhan Sabha, out of which 17 were reserved for scheduled castes and 10 seats for Lok Sabha by its order no. 22 dated September 7, 1974 (Chahar, 1996). This time, four female contestants won the election out of 90 seats. Their percentage is 4.44. All female election winners, this time, belong to JNP (Jansangh). Interestingly, only females from the Janta party got a seat in the legislative assembly. Several causes are behind this, such as the emergency imposed by the Indian central government. They are Kamla Devi, Sushma Sawraj, Shanti Devi Rathi, and Shankutla. Between 1977 and 1982, two cabinet ministries were established in Haryana due to political chaos. Firstly, it works under Ch. Devilal Chautla from 1977 to 1979 and second its work under Ch. Bhajanlal from 1979 to 1982. In the first Cabinet ministry, Sushma Swaraj became a labour and employment minister. At that time, under Kamala Verma, public health, printing, and stationery ministry. Shanti Devi Rathi became the state education minister in the second ministry (Haryana et al., 1977- 1982). Shusma Swaraj was just 25 and became the youngest cabinet minister in the Haryana legislative assembly. All female elected MLAs got ministry in this period.

In 1982, the sixth legislative assembly election was held. In this election, seven females won out of ninety seats. Their representation in the 1982 legislative assembly was 7.77%. Their name is Prasanni Devi, Shanti Rathi, Bananti Devi, Kartar Devi, Sharda Rani, Chandrawati and Shakuntla. Out of seven, five of them got ministerial positions. Prasanna Devi became the health and agriculture minister, Sharda Rani became the development and education minister, Kartar Devi served as state health and Ayurveda minister, and Shakuntla became the industrial and social welfare minister (Haryana et al., 1982-1987).

The 7th Haryana Legislative Assembly elections were held in 1987. This time, only five female candidates out of ninety seats won the membership of Haryana's legislative assembly. This time, their percentage is 5.55, relatively less than the previous election. Their names are Kamla Verma, Sushma Swaraj, Medhavi, Jasma Devi and Vidya Beniwal. Out of five, three of them served as state and cabinet ministers. Sushma Swaraj served as the food and supply minister, Kamla Verma as the health and Ayurveda minister, and Medhavi as the state medical education minister (Haryana et al., 1987-1991).

The election was held in 1991 for the next legislative assembly. Only six women contenders won the election out of 90 seats this time. Their total percentage is 6.66. They are Janki Devi, Kartar Devi, Shanti Devi, Chandrawati, Santosh Chauhan Serwan and Shakuntla Bhagwaria. Out of six female legislatures, only four females made their places in ministry. Shakuntla served as cooperation minister, Shanti Rathi as health minister, Kartar Devi got taxation and health department, and Santosh Sarwan became state development and Panchayat minister (Haryana et al. Proceeding 1991-1996).

For the ninth legislative assembly of Haryana, the election was held in 1996. In the 1996 assembly election, only four female candidates won the seat election. Their percentage is 4.44 among ninety seats. This is a very insignificant representation. Their name is kamala Varma, Kartar Devi, Krishna Gahlawat and Vidya Rani. Krishna Gahlawat became the social welfare minister and served from 1996 to 2000. Kamla Verma was the health minister, and Kanta Devi became the state Ayurveda minister (Haryana et al. Proceeding 1996-2000).

The 10th legislative assembly of the Haryana election was held in February 2000. Only four female contestants were elected out of ninety seats for this tenure. Their percentage remains the same as before in 1996. They are Vidya Rani, Anita Yadav, Sarita Narayan, and Veena Chibber. Not a single female got a cabinet or state ministry position this

time. Only women have had no ministerial jobs in 35 years of Haryana legislative assembly history during this tenure. There can be two reasons for this. First, out of four M.L.A., three females were elected to the legislative assembly for the first time. So, due to a lack of experience, they did not get any position in the legislative body. Second, one female was elected the second time and changed her party, so due to some politics, she did not get a position in the cabinet and state ministry.

The 11th Haryana Legislative Assembly elections were held in 2005. During this time, 11 female election contestants became members of the legislative assembly, and two became members through by-poll election in 2005 out of ninety seats. So, a total of thirteen females became members of the legislative assembly. Their representation in percentage is 14.44. This number is very high in the history of the Haryana legislative assembly. The first time 13 women came into the political field before their number never went high, six. They are Kartar Devi, Anita Yadav, Geeta Bhukal, Sharda Rathor, Shunkatala Bhagwaria, dr. Krishna pandit, Meena Mandal, Raj Rani Poonam, Sumita Singh, Prasanna devi, Savitri Jindal, Kiran Chaudhary and Rekha Rana. Except for Rekha Rana, all female M.L.A. belong to the Congress party, and she is the opposition party. Out of thirteen, nine females became first-time members of the legislative assembly in Haryana. Of thirteen females M.L.A., six members became the cabinet and state ministers. Sharda Rathor worked as Parliament secretary. Kartar Devi is the minister of health minister; Meena Mandal holds the position of cooperative, archaeology and library department; Dr Krishna Pandit served as Parliament secretary, and Health minister Kiran Choudhary becomes cabinet minister of state for forest, environment, tourism and sports, and Savitri Jindal served as urban development and revenue state minister (Haryana et al., 2005- 09)

Female representation in the Haryana legislative assembly and their ministerial position in number:

Year	Total number of female election contests	Total number of female election winners	In percentage, the female winner	Total number of females in ministry
1966	-----	3	1.08	1
1967	9	5	6.17	1
1968	12	6	7.40	2
1972	12	5	6.17	4
1977	20	4	4.44	4
1982	27	7	7.77	5
1987	35	5	5.55	3
1991	36	6	6.66	4
1996	90	4	4.44	3
2000	46	4	4.44	0
2005	60	13	14.44	6

Source: - Haryana Vidhan Sabha proceedings 1966 to 2008, Haryana election commission reports, from 1967 to 2005, personal interviews with female MLAs

The above table shows no rapid growth in women's participation in state-level politics. Haryana's women's political representation is only formal, which can be understood as women can participate in politics; there can be no more legal barriers but no guarantee for full participation. Their political participation can be understood with the

trajectory of stability. Paxton and Hughes used in their research work four primary paths to understand women's parliament participation: (1) no change, (2) incremental gains, (3) fast-track growth, and (4) plateau (Paxon & Hughes, 2016). Thus, no change in political conditions can explain Haryana females' participation as a member of the

legislature. Their number remains almost the same, with significantly less ups and downs. Their participation is an example of a high no change in trajectory. Virtually, they present 5% of the legislative assembly seats. The above table shows that the female number of M.L.A. never crossed the ten-digit in the twentieth century. However, from 2005 to 2009, the number of tenured women crossed ten digits, and this tenure became significant in the history of the Haryana legislative assembly. This tenure presents incremental gains in female participation in politics. Previous research suggests a cultural barrier that prevents them from taking advantage of resources.

However, their number as election contesters increased year by year. The tenth legislative assembly election provides a higher number of female election contesters. Their role in the decision-making process is quite good if we see it as a total number of elected members. We find the 2000 to 2005 tenure where female elected members still need to get ministry. It depends on many issues, such as the experience of females in legislative and party positions to which they belong. Their role in the church is not only bound to education and public health; some have financial, taxation, labour and employment, industry development, social welfare, sports, forest departments, speaker of legislative assembly, deputy speaker and work as state minister. The Haryana government did not make any gender base discrimination in the distribution of ministry. However, there is still a gender gap in participation in state-level politics. According to the female population and legislative assembly seat, more than their participation number is needed. Almost four or five female legislative members represent half the state's people. The government should take some steps for forwarding females in the decision-making process.

Cabinet minister recruitment is a significant part of exercising democratic power in Indian democracy. The cabinet minister centre is recruited by one of the prime ministers, and in the state legislative assembly, ministers are appointed on the preference of the chief minister and the suggestion of the party's high command. Women's ministerial representation is suitable according to the number of elected women in every election term. It is essential to find out how women members of the legislative assembly are recruited for ministerial positions. For presenting the data of Haryana legislative assembly cabinet ministers' positions through a gender perspective, we counted both cabinet and state minister women. They are becoming a minister in the state legislature or parliament. Previous experience in legislature plays an essential part because experience in parliamentary institutions provides skills and specialisation in these areas, so local and regional level and parliament-level experience are meaningful for holding a ministry (Blondel & Thiebault, 2009). Despite these experiences, political parties also play a significant role in ministerial recruitment.

Territorial representation of Haryana's female legislators: -

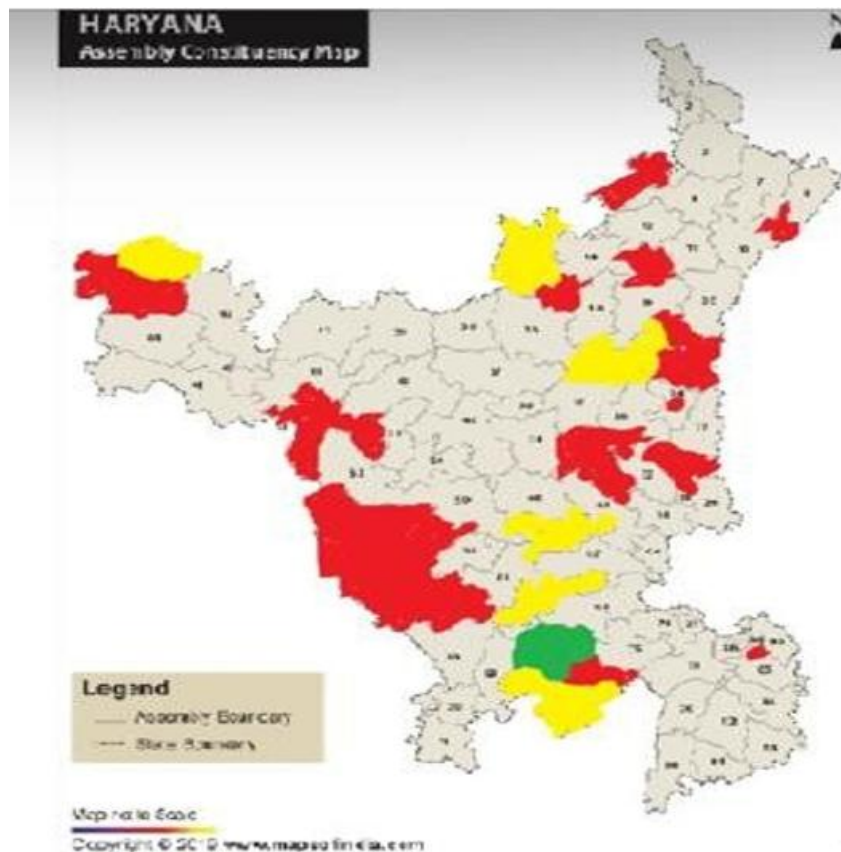
Every Indian state is divided into constituencies for both parliament and legislative assembly seats. The base of the constituency division is population; each constituency represents the same number of folks. One of the basic assumptions of territorial representation is that people within a constituency have similar and like-minded interests, and a representative they will elect by the majority will better represent the population. The below map shows the political participation of women in Haryana's legislative assembly with their belonging constituency. Red indicates the general category of female MLAs, yellow on the map symbolises the scheduled caste of females, and green indicates other backward class categories of female MLAs. Haryana's map suggests that the Other backwards class has enough population and a particular region called Ahirwal, but from 1966 to 2008, only one constituency showed female representation in the legislative assembly. In female representation, almost all seats are present by the general category of women. Schedule caste female representation is not enough; they only won that seat reserved for the scheduled caste. If we look at the map, we can infer that organised caste representation is good in the southern part, a less developed part of Haryana. If we compare a well-developed area with a less-developed place, we can find many females in the legislative assembly in a less developed part. Their ratio is 8:2 concerning the extended region.

Representation of women legislators according to their constituency

Geographically, we can divide Haryana into three parts – the first is Shivalik, the second is the plain area, and the last is the Aravali region. Shivalik and the direct area are economically forward, but the Aravali region is less developed than other regions. There is a general belief that economic development brings modernity and breaks the old system of thinking. However, in Haryana, we find opposite situations; because of economic growth, we have discovered lifestyle changes, but the female problem remains the same. Even though the Aravali region is less developed than other parts of Haryana, it elected more MLAs to different regimes.

Gurugram is a highly developed area of Haryana, but from there, no females were elected to the Haryana legislative assembly. Similarly, In Mewat region, two districts named Nuh and Palwal came; this part is a significantly less developed area of Haryana, which also did not elect a single number of women for legislative assembly from 1966 to 2008. So, the region's economic development does not matter for women's political representation.

Territorial representation of Women's MLA of Haryana from 1966-2008



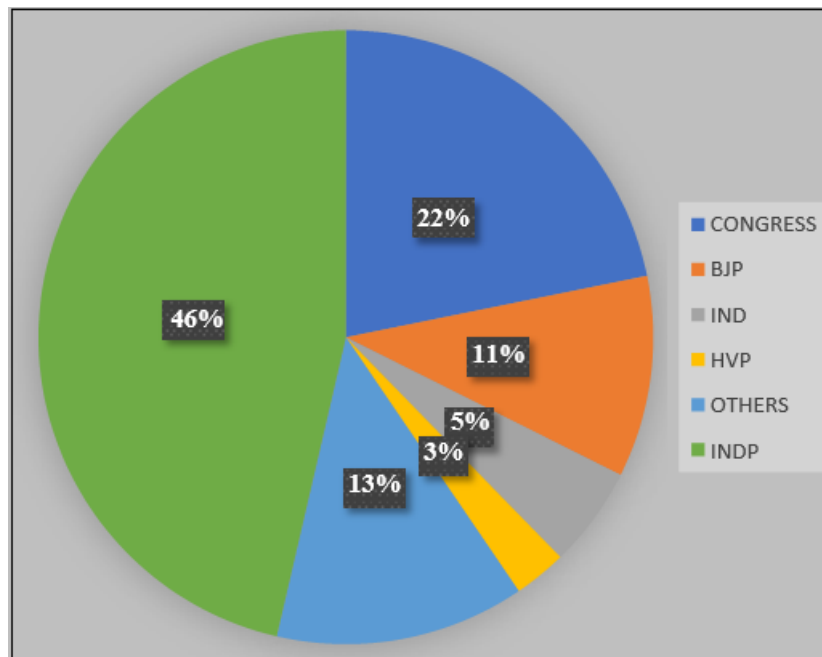
Source: www.indianmaps.com, Statistical report of Haryana election commission from 1967 to 2005

Suppose we explain the low female representation in the state legislative assembly. In that case, we can infer no direct correlation between economically developed regions and the female model. Metland's research findings suggest that higher GDP acquisition and per capita income with a proportional election system selected more women in parliament. Higher development gives women access to higher education, which makes them more professional. More professionalisation of women tends towards them in women's organisations and, finally, entry into a political party and governing bodies (Metland, 2010). The above map presents a contrasting scenario of Metland's findings. However, when we studied women's representation in the Haryana legislative assembly, we found no direct relationship between developed and less developed regions of Haryana state. The geographical variation in women's political representation can be defined through other lenses, such as their family's political, economic, and social backgrounds, educational statuses, occupational backgrounds, party approaches, and electoral systems. These are significant factors that determine the role of females in politics. These factors are defined in the later part of this thesis. In the upcoming paragraph, we will discuss the

political representation of females through political parties.

Representation of female election contesters through their political party

Three hundred fifty female election contestants from 1966 to 2005 for the legislative assembly. Out of 350 females, only 62 females were able to win the election. Hence, winning the election depends on various matters. Their participant number and winner number have considerable differences. There is a significant difference between male and female participation in elections. The above chart shows that independent female candidates are more contesting elections for state legislative assembly. The second number goes to Congress because, with time, Haryana's regional party merged with Congress, and the third is BJP; in 1982 Janta Party became BJP. The Indian national and local state parties present the remaining ratio. Their more independent number shows that political parties are not providing proper election contesting tickets to female candidates because they fear loss, and political parties generally prefer male party members.



Source: Statistical report of Haryana election commission from 1967 to 2005

Out of the total elected thirty-three women, twenty-one women means nearly one-third of the total women belong to the Indian National Congress; five women belong to the Bhartiya Janta Party, three women MLAs from the Indian National Lokdal, two from Haryana Vikas Party, one from Vishal Haryana Party and one woman legislators is opportunistic, she elected from almost major political parties. Women come into politics through two gates of a political party. They first established their political party, which included Mamta Benrji, Mayawati, and Jialalita. The second door for women to join politics is affiliation with regional and national parties (Pai, 2013). In Haryana, there is no example of any single party that women leaders established for state legislature elections. All female legislators become members of the legislative assembly with the affiliation of regional and national parties.

3. Conclusion

The analysis of women's political representation in the Haryana legislative assembly from 1966 to 2008 highlights a persistent trend of slow progress. Previous research on India showed the same result for parliamentary elections: the number of women election contestants rises by every term, but their elections remain the same, with some fluctuations (Jensenius, 2019). Despite removing legal barriers, cultural and societal factors impede women's full political engagement. Historical data reveals consistently low percentages of female legislators in Haryana, with occasional fluctuations. Notably, it was only during the 2005-2009 term that the number of female legislators exceeded ten, indicating incremental gains that remain insufficient compared to the state's female population. Geographically, representation of women in Haryana's legislative assembly has been uneven, with a predominance of general-category women and limited representation from Scheduled Caste women. Surprisingly, less developed areas like the Aravali region have elected more female MLAs than economically developed regions, challenging the notion that economic development directly correlates with increased female

political participation.

Various factors influence women's political participation, including family background, educational attainment, the occupations of male family members, and cultural beliefs. It is imperative to address these barriers to encourage greater female involvement in politics. Their analysis as a hindering factor of females in the legislature is further scope for research to explain the marginalisation of females in Haryana state-level politics. Furthermore, the prevalence of independent female candidates underscores political parties' reluctance to nominate women. Implementing reservation policies for female candidates within political parties could help bridge this gap and enhance female political representation. To achieve greater gender equality in politics, addressing cultural and societal barriers, promoting women's education and empowerment, and implementing reservation policies within political parties will be crucial steps towards meaningful and balanced female participation in decision-making processes.

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