



Study on the Political Consciousness and Awareness among the Women of Rhenock Area East Sikkim

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ABSTRACT:

The present study intended to find out the consciousness among the Women of Rhenock area of east Sikkim. Total 100 women were selected randomly and self-structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. The data revealed that the women in the area seem to be unaware and politically not conscious in various dimensions however the data regarding the responsibilities as a citizen, unfolded that the women are politically aware about their rights and duties as they vote regularly, consider voting as their right, raise their voices in social issues and support high reservation of women in the State Legislative Assembly.

Keywords: Political Consciousness, Awareness, Voting Rights, Women Seat Reservation, Rhenock, Sikkim.

Introduction:

Rural Women in India are one of the marginalised sections. Empowerment of women requires development in all aspects of life basically education and political empowerment. Political empowerment helps in the development of women in all aspects of their life. However political empowerment demands political consciousness awareness and political participation. The government has adopted and implemented various policies, programmes and measures to encourage them in political participation and develop political awareness and consciousness. The government of Sikkim has reserved 50% of seats in the panchayat for women in state. The government has also flagged numerous women NGOs and Self-Help Groups to empower women in rural areas. The present study has focused on the women participation in political activities of Rhenock area of east Sikkim. Rhenock is one of the bordering villages of Sikkim and west Bengal state comprising various ethnic communities. The area has also been recognised as the best functioning Panchayat by the state government in the year 2020.

Objective of the study:

The specific objective for the present study was to find out the political consciousness among the women of the Rhenock area of east Sikkim.

Research method, sampling and data collection:

The study undertook the descriptive survey, the sample was selected through simple random sampling technique. The investigator selected 100 women respondents from the area to examine the political consciousness. The study was delimited within the women folks of Rhenock area of east Sikkim. The self-structured questionnaire was administered with close ended questions. Questions were developed to extract the fresh data from the selected representatives. The data was further interpreted referring to secondary data.

Results and discussions:

As per the respondents, 75% of the women in the area do not participate in politics and only 25% of women showed their participation in it. Overwhelming response was recorded in the study regarding the voting awareness among the respondents as 100% of the respondent cast their vote and are regular voters.

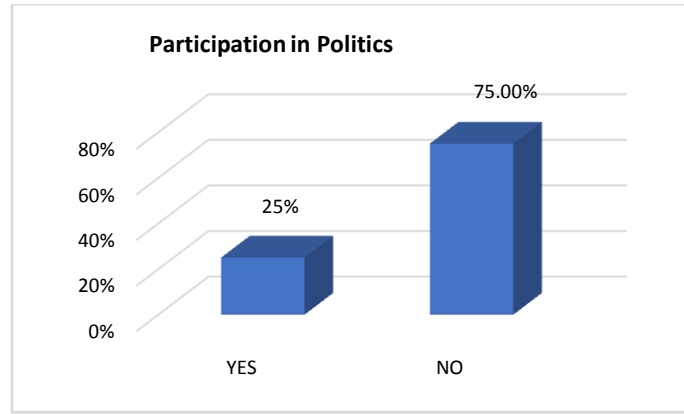


Figure 1: Participation of women in politics.

As per the data 84% of the women do not participate in political party campaign, whereas only 16% of the women are active in party campaign.

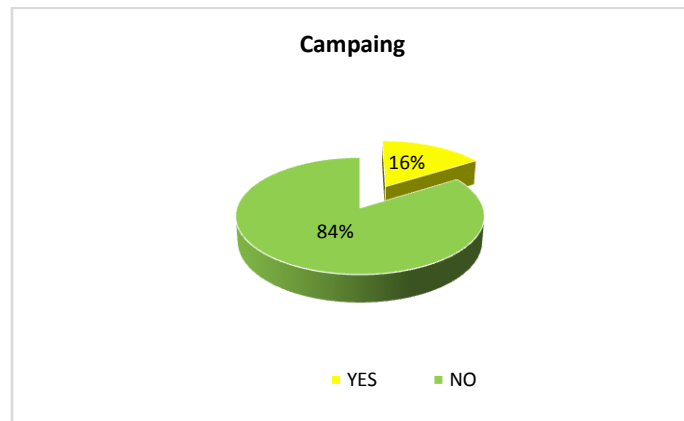


Figure 2: Participation in Political party Campaign

54% of the women raised their voice in matters concerning local problems whereas, 46% of women do not raise voice or protest in the problems concerning water and electricity supply, sanitation etc.

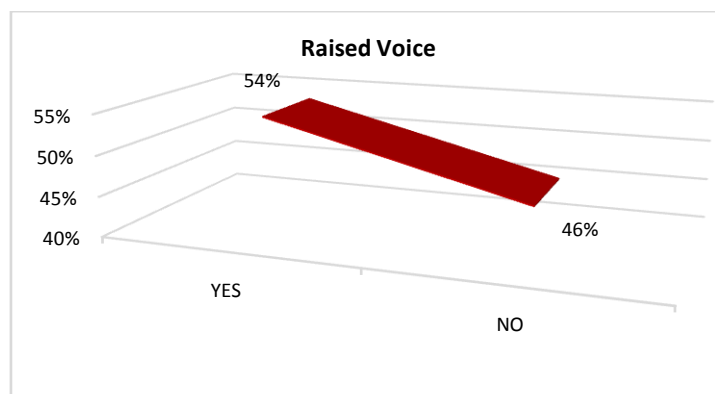
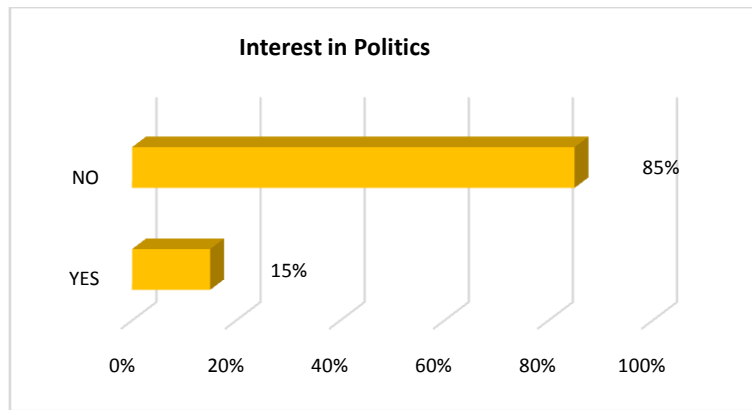


Figure 3: Raised voice in social issues

Analysis showed that 85% of women do not have interest in party politics.



Figurer 4: Interest in Politics

It was reported that more than half of the representatives i.e 52% of them are the members of Non-governmental Organisations.

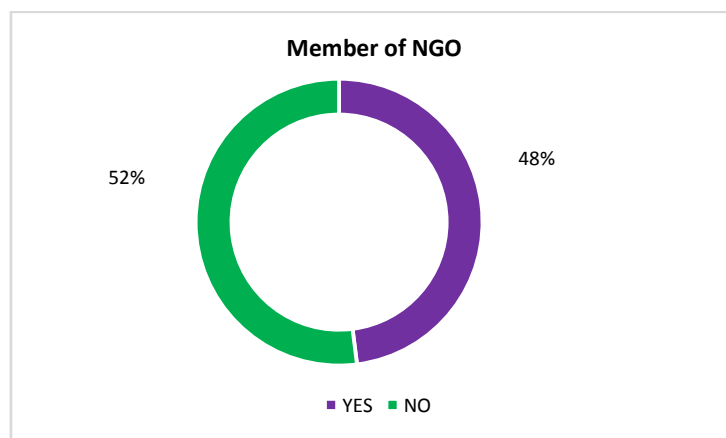


Figure 5: Member of NGO

62% of the women respondents do not support any political parties.

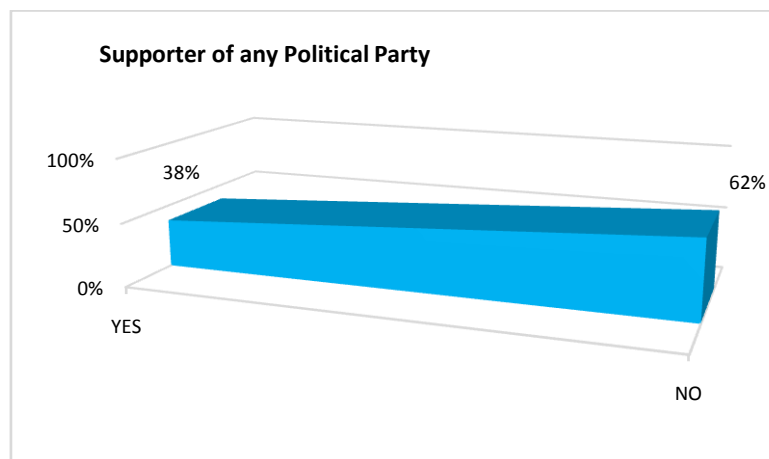


Figure 6: Supporter of any Political party

Information regarding the Gram Sabha of the area eg. the head of the Gram Sabha, whether the respondents attend Gram Sabha or not; The data displayed was mostly high among the women with 69% and 89% respectively.

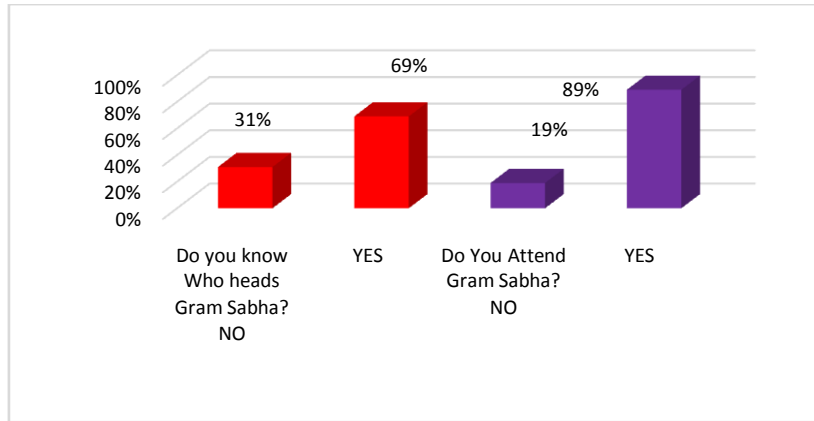


Figure 6: Information regarding Gram Sabha

78% of the respondents reported not to be in contact with politically influential persons but Visiting Panchayat office regularly and placing issues were reported maximum with 52%.

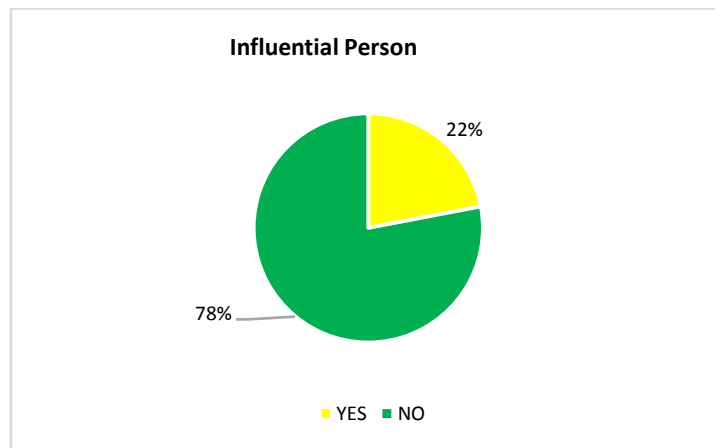


Figure 7: Influential Person

The respondents showed positive responses on the information related to the women seats in Sikkim Legislative Assembly. 82% know that the State has Women reserved seats in the State Legislative Assembly. 81% responded that there should be women seat in the State Legislative Assembly. When asked about the Women wing in the area, 75% of the women responded yes whereas 25% do not know about it. Among 51% of the respondents were the members of the Women wing and were much aware of its functions. The study also found out that the women have positive outlook towards Politics with 65% whereas 35% have shown disinterest.

It was found out that the 100% of the respondents were aware of their voting rights but somehow their decision of casting vote was either decided by their spouse or other family members apart from themselves ie 51% own decision and 49% others respectively.

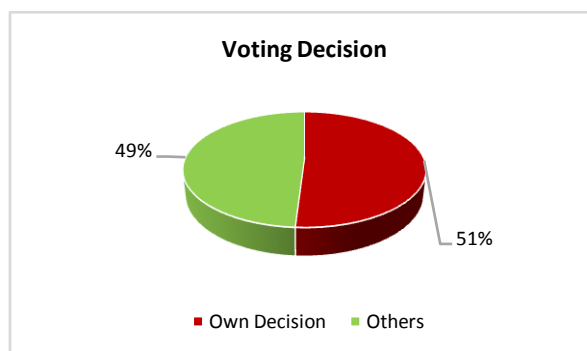


Figure 8: Voting decision

Agendas of any Political party is the pillar of its existence. Hence data regarding the agendas of the political parties of the area was also taken. It revealed that 58% of the women folks are unaware of the Agendas of their Political party.

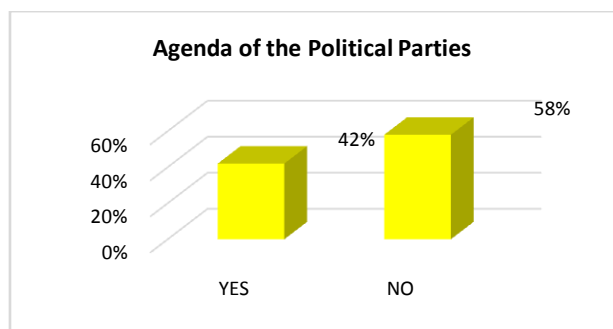


Figure 9: Agenda of the Political parties

Findings and discussions:

In the present study, it is revealed that women do not actively participate in the political activities and political campaign. It is also revealed that they are not interested in party political activities, neither they are member of any women political organisations and groups. They are also least aware about the agendas of the political parties. They are also not in touch with the local influential political leaders.

Whereas on the other hand, the data showed that they raised their voice and concerns over the local issues like water, health and sanitation. They very often visit the panchayat office. They are very much aware of gram Sabha and attend it. The women folks cast their vote regularly and considered it as their right. They also favoured seat reservation for women in State Legislative Assembly.

Hence it can be concluded that the women in the area are not aware about the party-political activities however if we consider the responses regarding the responsibilities as a citizen, the women are found fully concern through regular voting, considering voting as their right, raising their voices in social issues and supporting high reservation of women in the State Legislative Assembly.

Political empowerment is the only way for the overall development of a women. Though in Sikkim women folks enjoy equal liberty at par with male counterparts as compared to other Indian state, yet women in Sikkim still lack behind their male counterpart. As such, the government should aim to empower women through enhancing political reservation in the SLA. Women should be encouraged to engage themselves in party political activities such as political campaign and other party organisations and also educate them about the policies and agendas of the parties.

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