

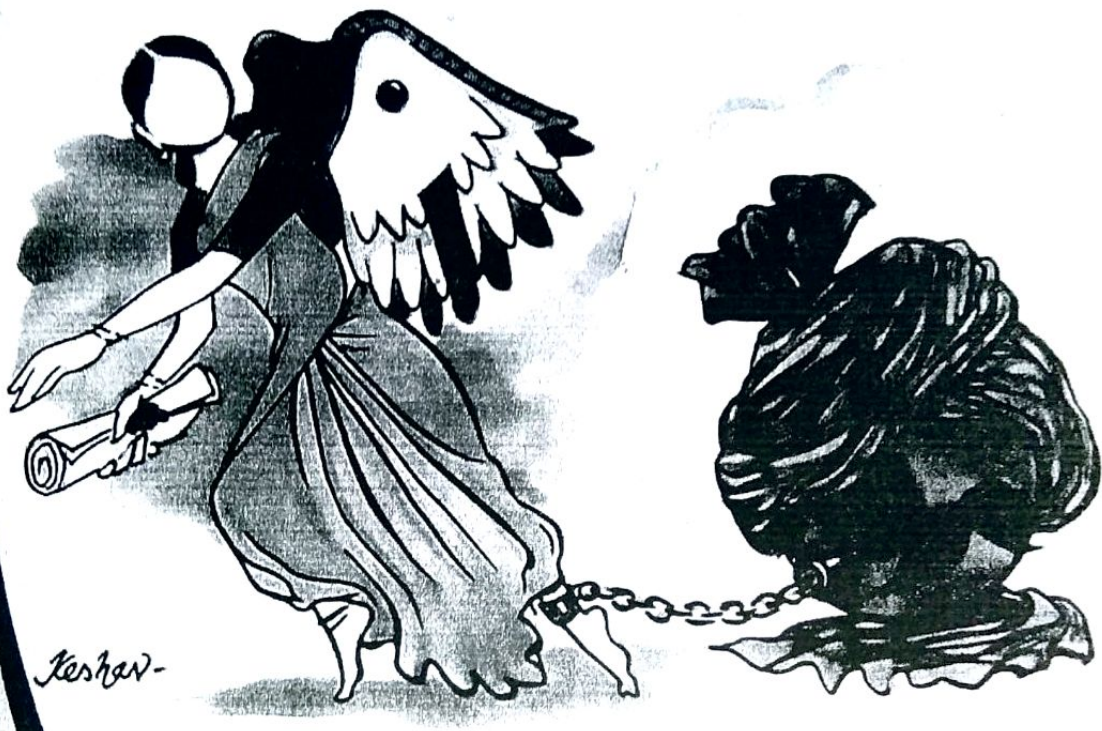
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Empowering Women in Politics: Does Political Attitude Ensure Better Leaders

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Abstract

Increasing women's representation in the government can empower women and an urged need to achieve gender parity. The present study aims at investigating the attitude towards politics among college students. The sample consists of 100 students from two colleges of arts and science in Tirunelveli district. Descriptive method using survey as technique was used to solve the present problem. Attitude towards Politics Scale (ATPS) developed and validated by V.Sasikala and S.Francisca (2016) had been used for collecting data. The data was analysed using mean, S.D and 't' test. The result showed that majority of the college students have a neutral attitude towards politics and there is no gender difference in their attitude towards politics.

Introduction

Indian culture held women in high and significant position. For successful functioning of democracy, partnership between men and women is essential. Increasing women's representation in the government can empower women and an urged need to achieve gender parity (Wikipedia). Unless women participate in the decision making process, equality cannot be achieved (Susan B. Antony). The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992-93 had opened a new horizon for women to exercise 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 public life. "In politics anything said ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman" says Margaret Thatcher. The 15th Lok Sabha elections have delivered a record 59 women members of Parliament, the highest since independence, raising their parliamentary participation to 10.9%. Seventeen of these women are under 40. Empowerment in politics is tied to the support improved status of women inside home and society. Political attitude formulations determine the pattern of socio-political behaviour. The present study focuses the attitude towards politics among college students.

Significance of the study

Gender inequality within families, inequitable division of labor within households, and cultural attitudes about gender roles further subjugate women and tend to limit their representation in public life. Women face a number of barriers such as low literacy, poor preparatory training, a high household work burden and conservative attitudes towards women in public office that constrain their ability to fulfill

their governance roles or that make them unlikely to re-contest. There is growing momentum among governments and civil society to foster and ensure women's participation and leadership in the political arena. Empowerment in politics could be a solution to overcome issues of discrimination and violence.

However, it does not guarantee effective participation or ensure that issues of concern. The formulation of attitude towards politics is a psychological concept that is concerned with the society in general and with individual in particular presence in the public life. Education can play a very crucial role in forming, shaping and affecting attitudes towards politics. The present study has been undertaken to find out the level of attitude prevailing among the college students who are going to be future leaders. Their knowledge about the politics and opinion over it forms a base for their active participation in political structure.

The present study incorporates the feminist role in political structure and brings an insights of both men and women attitude towards politics. The study also expects to augment the knowledge of the people towards politics which is the potential source for the educators and policy makers to strengthen and support in all aspects of formulating and plans and activities that will help to address some problems encountered in forming positive attitude.

Background of the study

Shahid Iqbal (2012) conducted a study on Exploring Political Attitude among Educated Youth: A Study at University of Sargodha. The finding of the study reveals that though the youth are dissatisfied with the current political set and disagree with the policies of the government they show positive interest towards politics. However, They are not optimistic about politicians and political parties. Further, Females show a lower level of interest than males but have led and volunteered more and been more civically involved than their counterparts.

Marijana Markovik (2010) conducted a study on Political Attitude and Personality in a Democratic Society. The findings showed that personality can be shaped, and that certain personality profiles correspond with democratic personality.

Shadman, Nazanin (2014) conducted a study on relationship between attitude towards Politics and the Quality of Political Translation. The research provided evidence that there was a significant relationship between attitude towards politics and English-to-Persian political translation of students. The findings of this study provide further evidence for the theoretical discussions ensuring that attitude is a contributing factor to translation.

Objectives of the study

To find out the level of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the college students with respect to gender.

To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the college students with respect to gender.

Hypotheses

The level of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the college students is low with respect to gender.

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the college students with respect to gender.

Methodology

The investigators have employed descriptive method using survey as a technique to study the attitude towards politics among the college students. Attitude towards Politics Scale (ATPS) developed and validated by V.Sasikala and Francisca (2016) was used for collecting data. The investigators had drawn a sample of 100 students from S.T.C college and Sadhakhappadullah college of Arts and science, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli district using simple random sampling technique through lottery method .

Percentage Analysis:

The level of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the college students is low with respect to gender.

Table. 1

Level of Attitude towards Politics and its dimensions among College Students

Variable	Category	Low		Average		High	
		count	%	count	%	count	%
Attitude towards Politics	Male	9	17.3	33	63.5	10	19.2
	Female	8	16.7	32	66.7	8	16.7
Attitude towards political participation	Male	10	19.2	36	69.2	6	11.5
	Female	9	18.8	29	60.4	10	20.8
Attitude towards Politicians	Male	6	11.5	38	73.1	8	15.4
	Female	5	10.4	36	75.0	7	14.6
Attitude towards Political Party	Male	10	19.2	32	61.5	10	19.2
	Female	7	14.6	35	72.9	6	12.5
Attitude towards election and voting	Male	9	17.3	34	65.4	9	17.3
	Female	7	14.6	39	81.3	2	4.2
MPS in total	Male	8	15.4	35	67.3	9	17.3
	Female	7	14.6	37	77.1	4	8.3

It is found that among the male and female undergraduate history students, majority have a moderate level of attitude towards politics.

Null hypothesis 1

To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of attitude towards politics and its dimensions among the undergraduate history students with respect to gender.

Table.2

Difference between the mean scores of Attitude towards Politics and its dimensions among college students with respect to gender.

Dimension	Category	Count	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
Attitude towards Politics	Male	52	21.81	5.16	1.004	N.S
	Female	48	20.69	5.94		
Attitude towards political participation	Male	52	16.77	4.30	.425	N.S
	Female	48	16.35	5.35		
Attitude towards Politicians	Male	52	21.98	7.37	.304	N.S
	Female	48	21.52	7.71		

Attitude towards Political	Male	52	24.12	6.59	-.298	N.S
	Female	48	24.52	6.97		
Attitude towards election	Male	52	19.23	3.55	1.499	N.S
	Female	48	18.10	3.93		
Total	Male	52	103.90	19.42	.650	N.S
	Female	48	101.86	22.13		

At 5% level of significance the table value is 1.98, S-significant, NS-non-significant)

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' values are lesser than the table value for gender. Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of attitude towards politics among college students with respect to gender.

Conclusion

There is no significant difference between male and female college students in their mean scores of attitude toward politics and its dimensions. The reasons may be that politics is governing structure for each and every one of a nation. Every citizen has their own due responsibility and duties. Education instills the importance of politics and the role of students as future citizens. This develops a positive attitude, confidence, faith, over politics, election and voting, politicians, political parties and active political involvement among both the gender which have balanced their attitude. Equality in the access of resources, education and training for women, wide spread media and internet keep all the students updated with political news and develop positive attitude. Hence, no difference exists among gender in their attitude towards politics and its dimension. Whereas the finding of **Shahid Iqbal (2012)** contradicts the present study and states that females show a lower level of interest than males towards politics.

Conclusion

"To measure the progress of the community by the degree of progress by which women have achieved"

-B.R. Ambedkar.

Holding back women from politics is holding a Nation from development. This present study is an affirmative action to ensure women's political representation is an important step in democratizing and engendering local governance. Women are the backbone of society they not only own the right to vote but also right to be elected. Men and women together with a positive attitude can make difference in the political structure that foster women's empowerment and promote gender equity and social

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