

# **A Study of Political Empowerment of Women in Jammu Division**

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## **Abstract**

**This study delves into the various aspects of women's political empowerment in the Jammu Division, specifically looking at how it impacts their academic, social, and economic empowerment. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act and other constitutional protections have not eliminated the persistent patriarchal norms, lack of education, and political underrepresentation that women in Jammu endure. This study uses a mixed-methods strategy, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques based on primary and secondary data. Results from a survey of 300 people show that women's political empowerment is associated with higher levels of economic participation, social influence, and academic achievement. The statistically significant results of the analysis of variance and correlation confirm the critical importance of women's political participation in improving their status in various domains. The study emphasizes the importance of Panchayati Raj Institutions as change agents and stresses the need for education, institutional support, and effective communication to help women become politically active. The results highlight the critical importance of immediate legislative changes, focused training, and mentoring initiatives to assist women seeking leadership roles. Achieving political empowerment is not a standalone objective, but rather a cornerstone of inclusive governance and greater gender equality. This research adds to the increasing amount of literature that calls for coordinated policy responses and long-term grassroots organizing to increase women's political engagement.**

**Keywords: Political Empowerment, Women's Participation, Jammu Division, Panchayati Raj, Gender Equality, Socio-Economic Development, Communication, Mixed-Methods Research.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Political empowerment of women has been regarded as one of the key determinants for their socio-economic development. As per Census 2011, women constitute 48.46 percent population (586.4 million) making them a powerful force in the electorate population that helps to determine the power structures in the society. However, women's political engagement has historically been limited, both at the global and local levels, due to the widespread belief that politics is primarily a male realm and an unwelcoming place for women. Women face a number of barriers in the political system making it difficult for them to assume leadership positions in public life. A reflection of women's systematic exclusion from politics is their underrepresentation in important decision-making roles.

Enhanced political representation of women gives them visibility and empowers them with participative decision-making. Panchayati Raj (PR) is an initiative that aims to empower women via empowering them to take an active role in local self-governance and social development. Significant reforms regarding women's political involvement have been brought about by the 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Indian Constitution. Despite several laws, development plans, and policy measures, women's exclusion in politics remains a clear and present problem.

The role of communication is considered crucial in shaping attitudes, beliefs and behavior of people to facilitate social change. Communication plays the role of a catalyst in political mobilization by moulding public opinion and contributing in the democratic process. Communication has immense potential for imparting awareness and facilitating political discourse. It acts as a change agent to facilitate the political participation and contributes in educating women about their powers and responsibilities and also in capacity building. Consequently, it is useful to investigate the many facets of women Panchayati Raj Functionaries (PRFs) in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and how communication plays a part in their political empowerment. Any form of empowerment has far-reaching effects on people's social, political, and economic life across all societies. Therefore, empowerment is a phenomena on a global scale. The idea of empowerment has gained traction in both rich and poor nations throughout the past few decades. A variety of issues connected to this concept have been receiving considerable attention from social science researchers. Many people believe that the longevity of a democracy is dependent

on how politically active certain groups of people are in that country. Tragically, throughout history, no society has granted political rights to women, despite the fact that they constitute almost half of the population. They were never given the green light to have any say in government affairs. As democracy expanded globally, along with universal adult suffrage, democratic institutions, and devolution of power, women started to get involved in politics in an effort to have an impact. People still think women can't hold their own in the cutthroat world of politics (**Desai & Patel, 1985**). The aspirations and ambitions of ordinary women, who have faith in their own strength to govern, come true when a small number of them join politics. This affirmation of faith in women's skills has placed some burden on their shoulders in positions of leadership. It is a fact that women in leadership positions face persistent obstacles when trying to carve out a role in policymaking and enforcement (**Kaushik, 1993**).

The position of women has clearly shifted on a global scale. Some countries have lately begun to see a shift. In the last several decades, women's concerns have gained more attention thanks to political figures, social reformers, feminist figures, and the global feminist movement that started in the 1960s. Intellectuals, politicians, development planners, feminist activists, and others started to think about freeing women from the centuries-old oppression and poverty (**Kumari, 1992**).

Since the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 was passed in India, there has been a noticeable increase in women's political engagement and empowerment. A watershed event in the fight for women's political equality was marked by this historic Act, which granted them 33.33 percent of the seats in legislative bodies at the municipal level (rural and urban alike). Concerned individuals had the belief that increased women's involvement in grassroots politics would inevitably lead to their advancement to positions of power. It is believed that women's grassroots political engagement will lead to several substantial changes in their financial status. In fact, empowerment has spread to nearly every part of modern Indian culture as a direct consequence of this Amendment Act. In the wake of this Act's enactment, women started demanding more senior leadership positions. The phenomenon of women's political empowerment is still stuck in the traditional social environment and hasn't gotten much attention. Additionally, the sociocultural setting of the country is always related to the political empowerment of women. Scholars need to spend more time researching political empowerment and its consequences so they may fully comprehend this phenomenon.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

(**Jain, 2023**) Women's empowerment encompasses social, political, and economic dimensions, promoting gender equality, self-declaration, and skill development. It arose from the need to counter patriarchal oppression and aims to enable women to meaningfully contribute to development. Empowerment enhances personal agency and impacts all areas of life, fostering freedom, justice, and equality. As noted by the World Bank (2001), gender equality is both a developmental goal and a means to reduce poverty and promote growth. Thus, empowering women is essential for holistic national progress. This research explores empowerment broadly, with a focused lens on the unique aspects of women's empowerment.

(**Dr. Swarooprani, K, 2023**) this research highlights the Indian government's significant role in promoting women's empowerment through education, awareness, and rights-based initiatives. By analyzing secondary data, it underscores how tools like literacy, decision-making opportunities, and political engagement enhance women's status. Despite societal challenges, empowering women involves fostering self-determination in education, economic independence, mobility, and public participation. The study emphasizes that a multifaceted approach is essential to achieving genuine empowerment. Overall, the government's contributions, though facing hurdles, have laid a foundation that, if strengthened, can lead to substantial and sustainable progress in empowering women across various domains of life.

(**Salman, 2023**) the indicators of democracy, though secondary, play a crucial supportive role in the political advancement and development of a nation. These indicators, rooted in internal constants, significantly influence national growth by enhancing political representation and participation. Their importance is evident in various models globally, including India, Brazil, and Malaysia, where such measures—especially those related to women's political empowerment—have proven effective. Thus, while these indicators may not be the primary drivers, they are essential elements in fostering a more inclusive and representative political landscape, ultimately contributing meaningfully to a country's development trajectory.

(**Tamuli & Mishra, 2023**) This research highlights that achieving gender equality is essential for sustainable development. Despite comprising half the population, women in India face economic, political, and social marginalization, with low representation in decision-making and rising violence against them. Their limited role in climate discussions further underscores systemic inequality. The study, based on qualitative and secondary data, emphasizes that empowering women is not optional but necessary for progress. Men's efforts alone cannot achieve sustainability; inclusive growth requires

active female participation. Policymakers must prioritize gender equality and harness women's potential to drive holistic, long-term development across all sectors of society.

**(Dar & Shairgojri, 2022)** This research highlights the role of consensus building and representation in empowering women within gender mainstreaming for good governance, ultimately contributing to national progress. A qualitative study using theme analysis reveals that legal authority and efficiency are crucial elements of effective governance. Good governance, as defined by some organizations, emphasizes democracy, participation, human rights, and social justice. While international agreements on women's rights have made progress, the implementation of policies remains critical for supporting disadvantaged women and addressing gender inequality. Political commitment and governance improvements continue to be central to achieving these goals both nationally and internationally.

**(Ghosh, 2022)** Using survey data, the study looks at how women's political empowerment in India has affected their access to formal financial services. It seems that a rise in political power leads to an increase in account activity of more than 7%. Additionally, an extra 0.5% increase in account activity might be attributable to improved account accessibility. The study delineates the channels via which empowerment might boost account usage. The findings of this study highlight the necessity for policies specifically designed to it is crucial to reduce the gender gap in the workforce and the financial sector. **(Neundorf & Shorrocks, 2022)** We analyze how changes in society and women's political participation impact public approval of female politicians. Using a new dataset of longitudinal data on 116 countries, both micro and macro, we demonstrate a link between social modernity and women's political empowerment. Some may fail to notice the connection between the two events upon seeing the recent social progress or women's political empowerment. Politics, society, and even childhoods today are not immune to these ways of thinking. We argue that changes in both politics and society are essential if more women are to be elected to public office.

## Objectives

- To examine the Impact of women political empowerment on women economic empowerment.
- To examine the impact of women political empowerment on women social empowerment.
- To investigate the relationship between women political empowerment, academic empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment.

## Hypothesis

- **H0:** There is no significant Impact of women political empowerment on women economic empowerment.  
**H1:** There is a significant Impact of women political empowerment on women economic empowerment.
- **H0:** There is no significant impact of women political empowerment on women social empowerment.  
**H1:** There is a significant impact of women political empowerment on women social empowerment.
- **H0:** There is no significant relationship between women political empowerment, academic empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment.  
**H1:** There is a significant relationship between women political empowerment, academic empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the Political Empowerment of Women, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain comprehensive insights. A descriptive research design was adopted to address the research questions systematically. Primary data were collected using structured online questionnaires, while secondary data were gathered from books, journals, and credible web sources. The study sample was selected using probability sampling for the quantitative component and purposive sampling for the qualitative aspect, ensuring both representativeness and depth.

The independent variables include academic, economic, social, and political empowerment, while the dependent variable is women's empowerment. Qualitative data collection was conducted first to explore key issues, followed by quantitative data collection for broader analysis. The mixed-methods design allows for triangulation, enhancing the reliability and validity of results. Data were coded, entered into spreadsheets, and analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Statistical techniques such as percentage analysis and ANOVA were used to interpret the data. The ANOVA test helped identify significant differences among groups based on empowerment categories. This methodology ensures a balanced, multi-dimensional exploration of the subject, providing both statistical strength and contextual depth to the study on women's political empowerment.

**RESULT**

**4.1 Demographic Frequency analysis**

**Table 1: Age groups**

<b>Age Group:</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18 – 25	<b>63</b>	<b>21.0</b>
26 – 35	<b>55</b>	<b>18.3</b>
36 – 45	<b>49</b>	<b>16.3</b>
46 – 55	<b>69</b>	<b>23.0</b>
56 and above	<b>64</b>	<b>21.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The table shows how 300 participants' responses were distributed by age. Most people (23.0%) are 46–55 years old, followed by 56+ (21.3%) and 18–25 (21.0%). The 36–45 age cohort has the lowest share at 16.3%, while the 26–35 age cohort has 18.3%. This distribution is evenly distributed by age, with a slight emphasis on middle-aged and senior demographics.

**Table 2: Education Qualification**

<b>Educational Qualification:</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No formal education	<b>66</b>	<b>22.0</b>
Primary education	<b>40</b>	<b>13.3</b>
Secondary education	<b>67</b>	<b>22.3</b>
Undergraduate degree	<b>65</b>	<b>21.7</b>
Postgraduate degree and above	<b>62</b>	<b>20.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In the table, 300 people's educational qualifications are shown. Some respondents have no formal education (22.0%), college degrees (21.7%), and postgraduate degrees or higher (20.7%). Secondary education is the most common. Only 13.3% of the lowest cohort has primary education. With the exception of a small number of people with only primary education, this distribution shows a diverse range of educational backgrounds.

**Table 3: Political Participation Experience**

<b>Political Participation Experience:</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Never participated	<b>66</b>	<b>22.0</b>
Occasionally participated	<b>60</b>	<b>20.0</b>
Actively involved in political discussions	<b>50</b>	<b>16.7</b>
Member of a political party	<b>60</b>	<b>20.0</b>
Holding/held a political position	<b>64</b>	<b>21.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The table shows 300 respondents' political participation. Twenty-two percent have never participated in politics, twenty percent occasionally, and twenty percent are party members. 16.7% engage in political discourse, and 21.3% hold political office. From complete non-participation to active political responsibilities, this distribution shows balanced political participation.

**Table 4: Place of Residence**

Place of Residence:		
	Frequency	Percent
Urban	<b>135</b>	<b>45.0</b>
Semi-Urban	<b>68</b>	<b>22.7</b>
Rural	<b>97</b>	<b>32.3</b>
Total	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The table illustrates the distribution of respondents according to their place of residence. Of the 300 individuals polled, the highest percentage (45.0%) lives in metropolitan areas, followed by 32.3% in rural areas and 22.7% in semi-urban regions. This distribution reveals a predominance of urban residents in the sample, while rural and semi-urban people nevertheless represent a considerable segment, indicating a varied geographic distribution.

**Hypothesis 1**

**H0:** There is no significant Impact of women political empowerment on women economic empowerment.

**H1:** There is a significant Impact of women political empowerment on women economic empowerment.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.494 <sup>a</sup>	.244	.241	.823
a. Predictors: (Constant), Women Political Empowerment				

The model summary table shows Women's Political Empowerment's correlation with the dependent variable. The predictor and outcome variable have a modest positive correlation (0.494). The R Square value of 0.244 indicates that Women's Political Empowerment explains 24.4% of the dependent variable's variance. Adjusted R Square (0.241) is slightly lower due to the model's number of predictors, suggesting explanatory power remains consistent. Finally, the estimate's standard error (0.823) shows the average difference between observed and predicted values, revealing the model's precision.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	65.074	1	65.074	96.075	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	201.843	298	.677		
	Total	266.917	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Women Academic Empowerment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Women Political Empowerment						

The ANOVA table assesses regression model significance. Women's Political Empowerment explains 65.074 of the variance, while the residual sum of squares (201.843) is unexplained. The regression has 1 degree of freedom and the residual 298 with mean square values of 65.074 and 0.677. The predictor explains Women's Academic Empowerment

variance, as the F-statistic (96.075) is high. The correlation between Women Political Empowerment and Women Academic Empowerment is statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.523	.209		7.288	.000
	Women Political Empowerment	.536	.055	.494	9.802	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Women Academic Empowerment

The coefficients table shows how political empowerment affects academic empowerment. The expected benefit of Women's Academic Empowerment without Women's Political Empowerment is 1.523. Unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.536$ ) indicates that Women Academic Empowerment will increase by 0.536 units for each unit increase in Women Political Empowerment. Women's Political Empowerment moderately improves Women's Academic Empowerment ( $Beta = 0.494$ ). The high t-value (9.802) and p-value (0.000) confirm this link is statistically significant.

### Hypothesis 2

**H0:** There is no significant impact of women political empowerment on women social empowerment.

**H1:** There is a significant impact of women political empowerment on women social empowerment.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.511 <sup>a</sup>	.261	.259	.697

a. Predictors: (Constant), Women Political Empowerment

The model summary reveals the robustness and explanatory capacity of the association between Women's Political Empowerment and the dependent variable. The R value (0.511) indicates a modest positive correlation between the predictor and the outcome variable. The R Square value (0.261) indicates that Women's Political Empowerment accounts for about 26.1% of the variation in the dependent variable. The Adjusted R Square (0.259) is marginally lower, accounting for the amount of predictors, indicating that the model continues to be a suitable fit. The standard error of the estimate (0.697) signifies the mean departure of observed values from projected values, offering insight into the model's accuracy.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.158	1	51.158	105.422	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	144.612	298	.485		
	Total	195.770	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Women Social Empowerment

b. Predictors: (Constant), Women Political Empowerment

The ANOVA table evaluates regression model significance. The regression total of squares (51.158) shows Political Empowerment's effect on Women's Social Empowerment, while the residual sum of squares (144.612) shows the unexplained variance. The regression has 1 degree of freedom and the residual 298 with mean square values of 51.158 and 0.485. The predictor variable's F-statistic (105.422) indicates strong explanatory power. Women Political Empowerment affects Women Social Empowerment statistically ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.942	.177		10.982	.000
	Women Political Empowerment	.475	.046	.511	10.268	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Women Social Empowerment						

The following table shows how political empowerment affects social empowerment. The constant (1.942) predicts Women's Social Empowerment when Women's Political Empowerment is zero. According to the unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.475), Women Social Empowerment rises by 0.475 units for every unit increase in Women Political Empowerment. Standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.511) indicates moderate to strong benefit. The high t-value (10.268) and low p-value (0.000) confirm this link's statistical significance.

### Hypothesis 3

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between women political empowerment, academic empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between women political empowerment, academic empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment.

Correlations					
		Women Political Empowerment	Women Academic Empowerment	Women Social Empowerment	Women Economic Empowerment
Women Political Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1	.494	.511	.623
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Women Academic Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.494	1	.345	.859
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Women Social Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.511	.345	1	.508
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Women Economic Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.623	.859	.508	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	300	300	300	300
. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The correlation table shows the strength and significance of Women Political, Academic, Social, and Economic Empowerment correlations.

Women Political Empowerment has a moderate positive correlation with Women Academic Empowerment ( $r = 0.494$ ) and Women Social Empowerment ( $r = 0.511$ ), but the correlation is significant with Women Economic Empowerment ( $r = 0.623$ ).

The correlation between Women Academic Empowerment and Women Economic Empowerment is strong ( $r = 0.859$ ). The relationship between women's economic and social empowerment is moderate ( $r = 0.508$ ). All correlations are statistically significant at 0.01 in the 300-person sample, indicating strong links between these variables.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Women's political empowerment has a substantial impact on their social, economic, and academic advancement in the Jammu division. Quasi- and quantitative research shows that women are more empowered when they are involved in political processes. Achieving comprehensive gender equality requires empowering women politically, since research shows that being involved in politics boosts women's self-esteem, opportunities, and ability to make decisions. Patriarchal norms, low literacy, and a lack of awareness persist for women even though the 73rd Amendment and other legislative measures have helped to alleviate some of these problems. On the other hand, statistics reveal that politically active people have more control over their lives in other areas, such as their finances and education. All other forms of empowerment can be built upon the solid ground of political empowerment. The promotion of inclusive governance and the guarantee of women's representation both contribute to the strengthening of democracy. That is why it is critical that policies and practices continue to prioritize increasing women's political participation. When women are empowered, it's not enough to simply create opportunities for them; they must also be supported, trained, and encouraged to confidently lead in all spheres of public life and government.

### Recommendations

1. **Capacity Building and Training:** It is imperative that women, particularly those holding public office, participate in ongoing training programs designed to improve their leadership abilities, policy literacy, and administrative acumen.
2. **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Media and grassroots campaigns should be directed towards informing women, particularly those living in rural and semi-urban areas, of their political rights and responsibilities.
3. **Support Networks and Mentorship:** Reducing dropout rates caused by social pressure or lack of guidance, create networks of influential women who can mentor and assist newcomers to politics.
4. **Policy Enforcement and Quotas:** To improve women's representation outside of local bodies, reservation policies should be strengthened and extended to higher governmental levels.
5. **Gender-Sensitive Governance:** Encourage gender-neutral, inclusive decision-making processes that guarantee women's opinions are heard when formulating policies.

The ongoing support from institutions, schools, and society is crucial for women's political empowerment in Jammu and beyond. This support should focus on challenging long-standing gender norms and creating platforms for equal participation.

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