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POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN CANDIDATES IN TRIPURA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS FROM 1972 TO 2018: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Any kind of representation and participation is an integral part of empowerment. Whenever we choose the word empowerment, we are talking about women who are still deprived, oppressed and persecuted. Apart from social and economic empowerment, political empowerment is needed, through which women can resolve their own problems. Political empowerment comes through political representation. Political empowerment will be widened, when the number of women's political representation increases. Tripura as a North Eastern Indian state merged with Indian union on 15th October, 1949 and followed Indian democracy with multi-party system. Political development of Tripura started with the full-fledged statehood status on 21st January, 1972 and the expectations of the people of Tripura full-filled after establishment of Tripura Legislative Assembly. The people of Tripura are trying to fulfill their hopes and aspirations through representation in the assembly elections. The present paper would try to know the status of political representation of women in Tripura Legislative Assembly elections from 1972 to 2018 and also analyze the role of political parties for giving preferences of women candidate as a leader in Tripura Legislative Assembly Elections.

Keywords: Political Representation, Political Participation, Women Empowerment, Tripura Legislative Assembly, Elections, Political Parties.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Swami Vivekananda, "A nation would not March forward, if the women are left behind." The traditional concept of Indian society was that the status of women remains lower than the men but this concept has been changing because women are making significant gains in the socio-economic and political sphere where increasing participation or representation is rapidly empowering women, changing perceptions regarding their contribution, boosting their confidence and improving their status and position in society. Political representation and grassroots democracy have been strengthened considerably by the 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments that have created new democratic institutions for local governance. After 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 which is popularly known as Panchayati Raj Act, it is not only provide autonomy to the grassroots but is also providing reservation of one third of seats for women in every panchayat. However, it is undeniable that women's representation and participation in the Indian Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies is very low compare to the male counterparts, though, the Constitution of India includes and protected the right to equality and equal opportunity for all (Article 14-18) in Part-III of the Indian Constitution. Number of reasons behind low representation of women in the State Legislative Assemblies, i.e., socio-economic barriers and obstacles, lack of consciousness and above all almost all national and regional political parties given less number of tickets to women candidates for representing their constituency compare to men. As long as women are able to participate in decision-making, it is not possible to empower women in the overall sense, and this is possible only when their representation increases in the Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies.

After independence, the power and position of women was limited due to struggling to break the shackles that bind them in socio-economic and political sector and challenging the unequal distribution of power in society. These struggles have been continuing till 1970s and after that the concept of women's empowerment has been emerged in the modern context that can be traced to the latter half of the 1970s when it was increasingly discussed and promoted by the third world feminists and women's organizations. Empowerment of women has become a relevant issue due to the magnitude of women's powerlessness and subordination in the contemporary social content. This term (empowerment of women) is usually used for improving women's condition, in real sense it may be applied to any disadvantaged group of society for bringing them to the same level of advanced section.¹

Generally, empowerment means equal status, opportunity and freedom to develop of a woman. The focus of empowerment is equipping women to be economically independent, self-reliant, have a positive self-esteem to enable them to face any difficult

¹ Das, S. (2014). Panchayat Raj Institutions as an Instrument for Women Empowerment in Tripura in P. Datta (ed.) Local Self Government in India: Problems and Prospects. Andhra Pradesh: Global Publishing House.



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situation and they should be able to participate in the process of decision making. Empowerment is the process by which the disempowered or powerless people can change their circumstances and begin to have control over their lives. Empowerment of women in all fields especially in political sphere is essential for their advancement and the foundation of a gender-equal society. Empowerment is probably the development of women of the following capabilities: firstly, decision-making power of their own; secondly, access to information and resources for taking proper decision; thirdly, allowing a range of options from which they can make choices; fourthly, ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making; and lastly, increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma.² According to Jakarta Declaration, "Empowerment of women is not only and equity consideration, it was also a necessary precondition for sustainable economic and social development. Involvement of women in the political arena and in decision making roles is an important tool for empowerment as well as monitoring standards of political performance."³ In a democratic set up, India follows multi-party system that plays an important role for empowerment for all section of the society by providing equal chance to participate and contest in all political institutions. Speaking of equal rights, women have a much lesser role in politics than men, especially in political decision making.

Tripura is one of the North-Eastern Indian states where monarchy existed for long period of time and this tiny state merged with the Indian union on 15th October 1949 and recognized as a "C" category state. Tripura became a full-fledged state on 21st January, 1972 and started the democratic journey with Tripura Legislative Assembly.⁴ The people of Tripura are trying to fulfill their hopes and aspirations through representation in the assembly elections started in 1972. The fertile soil of democracy in Tripura provides for the favourable germination of national and state political parties. After statehood, Legislative Assembly elections were held in ten (10) times from 1972 to 2018, where different national and state political parties have been contested in the elections. Although almost all the parties in Tripura have attempted to build women organizations of their party to secure their support but in practice, they have fielded much less proportion of women candidates in the Assembly elections giving them proportionately and much less representation in the legislative bodies than their actual population strength. The name of the political parties from where women candidates got the chance to contest in the assembly elections are: Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI (M)], Indian National Congress (INC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), All India Trinomool Congress (AITC), All India Forward Bloc (AIFB), Lok Janashakti Party (LJP), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Janata Dal (United) [JD (U)], Lok Jana Shakti Party (LJNSP), Janata Party (JNP), Amara Bangalee (AMB), Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)(Liberation) [CPI(ML)(L)], Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist) (SUCI), Tripura Upajati Juba Samity (TUS), Tripura State Congress for Democracy (TCD), Indigenous Peoples' Front of Tripura (IPFT) and Independent (IND).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature is made on the studies related to women representation and participation in the political institutions. Representation indicates a relationship between one who represents and those who are represented. Regarding the participation of women legislators in the Tripura Legislative Assembly, women members were more or less dependent on their party policies and decisions and thus in nowhere they have shown their courage to cross party line while raising any questions or showing any activities in the house. Most of them remained silent for the entire sessions as their respective party did not allow them to participate in the debate or any other issues.⁵

Political representation and participation of women encompasses many political activities like freedom to speak out, assemble and associate; the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs; and gets the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government. The utmost development of any society depends on the status of the women in different socio-political, economic and cultural spheres. In this way women can empower of their respective societies. Empowerment is both a means to an end and end in itself. "Women's empowerment can positively influence the lives not only of women themselves but also of men, and of course, those of children."⁶ Political representation of women can be measured in three different dimensions: their participation as a voter, their participation as an elected representative and their participation in the actual decision-making process. Women's representation is essential in decision-making for women's interests to be incorporated into governance. Not only are these, through political representation women are being empowered. Prof. C.B. Majumder opined that 'the

² Parveen, A. (2010). Empowerment of Women in India, Competition Success Review, March. Indian Journal of Millennium Development Studies-An International Journal, Serial Publications, Vol. 3, Sep. 2008.

³ United Nations (1997). Agenda for Development. United Nations, New York. Pp. 47-49.

⁴ Banik, P. (2012). Legislative Assembly of Tripura: A Survey. Kolkata: Levant Books.

⁵ Roy, K. How far Women Legislators have Successful to raise their Issues in the Assembly: A Study on Women Legislators of Tripura Legislative Assembly. IJMER. Vol. 10, Issue 2(3), February, 2021, pp. 28-32.

⁶ Sen, A. (1999). India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity. London: Clarendon Press.



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active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy.⁷ Elections have become ‘a part and parcel of the Indian political life. Elections are now taken for granted’.⁸ The growth of parties is a leading factor in modern political life. The party organization is the pivot around of the democratic government which is made to move. Political parties take their growth form different social, economic and religious factors and are positively influenced by the different circumstances through which the country moves ahead on the path of progress.⁹ For women empowerment political parties play a vital role for improving their condition by giving chance to participate and contested in the political institutions. The number of women representatives in Tripura Legislative Assembly remained very less numbers for the last five decades. Political participation of women requires that they would be involved in active decision making in political arena. Two important political activities reflect to some extent, the status of women in terms of their political awareness and empowerment: (a) Participation of female voters in the election process; and (b) The number of female contestants and winners in the Lok Sabha, Bidhan Sabha and Panchayat elections. The negligible representation of women in the Legislative Assembly of the state may be either an index of their powerlessness or their subordination to male counterpart.¹⁰ Women will not be able to improve their condition if they are not in a position to understand the causes of the existing inequality in all sectors economic, social, political, legal and educational. The demand for greater representation of women in political institutions in India was taken up in a systematic way with the setting up of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) which published its report in 1976. The CSWI report recommended that women’s representation in political institutions, especially at the grassroots level, needed to be increased through a policy of reservation of seats for them in legislatures.¹¹ Legislative Assembly of Tripura reflects the continuing patriarchal values on the part of the political parties towards the question of political representation of women. Thus, it is necessary to analysis the women representation in the Tripura legislative assembly elections from 1972 to 2018 and role of political parties for giving preferences of women candidate of those assembly elections.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER: The main objectives of this paper are-

- To know the status of political representation of women in Tripura Legislative Assembly elections from 1972 to 2018.
- To analyze the role of political parties for giving preferences of women candidate as a leader in Tripura Legislative Assembly Elections.

IV. METHODOLOGY

According to the nature of the topic, descriptive method is used as suitable research method for this study and data has been collected from various secondary sources. Secondary sources have been collected to the offices of the Chief Electoral Officer, State Election Commission, Tripura, Department of Census, Govt. of Tripura and websites of Tripura Legislative Assembly. Apart from that related published book, journals, articles, research works, reports, newspapers and websites have been used for this study.

V. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN TRIPURA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS FROM 1972 TO 2018

Tripura attained full-fledged statehood status on 21st January, 1972 through a series of constitutional changes. Tripura Legislative Assembly (TLA) is the highest political institution in the state where the total assembly constituency is sixty (60). Women candidates have been participated in the assembly elections since 1972 but, their representation and winning rate was very minimal compare to the male counterparts. First objective of this paper is to know the status of political representation of women in Tripura Legislative Assembly elections from 1972 to 2018. For that it is needed to analyze the women representation in the TLA since 1972 and which is discussed in the following tables:

⁷ Majumder, C. B. (2005). Political Empowerment of Women in Tripura: An Overview. in the Journal Ishani (The North Easterner). Vol.1. No.4.
⁸ Sirsakar, V. M. “Electoral Process in Poona 1967: A Study of Parties, Politics and Votes” (Unpublished Manuscript, Poona: Dept. of Political Science, University of Poona). p.182.
⁹ Das, H. H. (2003). Comparative Politics. New Delhi: National Publishing House. p.342.
¹⁰ De, A. & K. Das. Political Participation of Women in Tripura since Independence. IJSS: 8(2), June, 2019, pp. 69-78.
¹¹ Report of the Working Group on Empowerment of Women (for XI Plan) (2006), Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.



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Table- 01: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1972

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	4-Barjala	Basana Chakraborty	INC	3733	6812	55.67	Won
2	4-Barjala	Gouri Bhattacharjee	CPI(M)	2307	6812	34.40	Not Won
3	9-Agartala Town I	Renuka Chakraborty	INC	2742	7577	36.19	Not Won
4	29-Rajnagar	Lakshmi Nag	INC	3265	9427	34.63	Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 01 shows that four (04) women candidates have contested in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1972, where three (03) women candidates were contested from INC party and one (01) candidate contested from CPI(M). Out of four women candidates two (02) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Barjala and Rajnagar constituency. The two winning candidates were Smt. Basana Chakraborty and Smt. Lakshmi Nag secured 55.67 percent and 34.63 percent of votes respectively and both of them were elected from the Indian National Congress (INC) party. The achievement of INC is reflecting through their performance in the legislative assembly election in 1972, where 50 percent women seats won contested by the total women candidates.

Table- 02: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1977

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	4-Barjala	Gouri Bhattacharjee	CPI(M)	8178	13911	58.79	Won
2	6-Agartala	Baby Gupta	INC	1281	15662	8.18	Not Won
3	13-Pratapgarh (SC)	Rama Das	TCD	336	16360	2.05	Not Won
4	27-Kalyanpur	Manju Dasgupta	IND	54	12626	0.43	Not Won
5	32-Radhakishorepur	Prativa Dey	IND	118	10030	1.18	Not Won
6	37-Shantir Bazar (ST)	Lakshmi Nag (Barman)	JNP	1725	14919	11.80	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 02 shows that six (06) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1977, where only one (01) women candidate, Smt. Gouri Bhattacharjee has been elected as a CPI(M) candidate from Barjala constituency and secured 58.79 percent of votes. Among the women contesting candidates, only 16.66 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 1977 and which was minimal.

Table- 03: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1983

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	1-Simna(ST)	Kripa Rani Debbarma	TUS	4828	14114	34.02	Not Won
2	4-Barjala	Gouri Bhattacharjee	CPI(M)	8160	16551	49.30	Won
3	4-Barjala	Basana Chakraborty	IND	4904	16551	29.63	Not Won
4	4-Barjala	Sanaka Poddar	IND	32	16551	0.19	Not Won
5	26-Pramodnagar(ST)	Manju Dasgupta	BJP	143	17818	0.80	Not Won
6	29-Teliamura	Gita Choudhury	INC	6835	16090	42.48	Won
7	33-Matabari	Bibhu Kumari Debi	INC	9195	16016	57.41	Won
8	47-Salema (ST)	Ratna Prava Das	IND	758	15551	4.87	Not Won
9	48-Kulai(ST)	Ratna Prava Das	IND	680	16579	4.10	Not Won
10	58-Pencharthal (ST)	Ratna Prava Das	IND	5343	15336	38.84	Won
11	60-Kanchanpur (ST)	Ratna Prava Das	IND	109	14006	0.78	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 03 shows that eleven (11) women candidates have been contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1983, where four (04) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Barjala,



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Teliamura, Matabari and Pencharthal(ST) constituency. The four winning candidates were Smt. Gouri Bhattacharjee from CPI (M) secured 49.30 percent of votes, Smt. Gita Choudhury from INC secured 42.48 percent of votes, Smt. Bibhu Kumari Devi from INC secured 57.41 percent of votes and Smt. Ratna Prava Das elected as an independent candidate secured 38.84 percent of votes. Among the women contesting candidates, only 36.36 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 1983 and out of four (04) winning women candidates' three (03) candidates belongs the Indian National Congress party.

Table- 04: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1988

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	4-Barjala	Gouri Bhattacharjee	CPI(M)	10020	22212	45.11	Not Won
2	6-Agartala	Bibhu Kumari Debi	INC	12776	25696	49.72	Won
3	6-Agartala	Gita Debbarma	BJP	126	25696	0.49	Not Won
4	6-Agartala	Putul Goswami	IND	99	25696	0.39	Not Won
5	14-Badharghat	Ila Bhattacharjee	CPI(M)	13597	27763	48.98	Not Won
6	57-Jubaraj nagar	Biva Rani Nath	INC	7591	16169	46.95	Won
7	58-Pencharthal (ST)	Minati Rao	IND	4040	19188	21.05	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 04 shows that seven (07) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1988, where only two (02) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Agartala and Jubaraj nagar constituency. The two winning candidates were Smt. Bibhu Kumari Devi and Smt. Bibha Rani Nath got 49.72 percent and 46.95 percent of votes respectively and both of them were elected from the Indian National Congress party. The achievement of INC is reflecting through their performance in the legislative assembly election in 1988, where 28.57 percent women seats won contested by the total women candidates.

Table-05: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1993

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	7-Ramnagar	Chhaya Bal	CPI(M)	10018	23967	41.80	Not Won
2	8-Town Bordowali	Purnima Bhattacharjee	INC	9404	20633	45.58	Not Won
3	11-Mandai Bazar (ST)	Dipti Debbarma	IND	244	22988	1.06	Not Won
4	12-Takarjala (ST)	Kartik Kanya Debbarma	CPI(M)	10783	20970	51.42	Won
5	14-Badharghat	Sipra Roy	BJP	628	37952	1.65	Not Won
6	19-Boxanagar	Tahera Begam	INC	6858	19681	34.85	Not Won
7	35-Rajnagar(SC)	Sefali Das	INC	12067	27424	44.00	Not Won
8	42-Ampinagar (ST)	Minati Roy	AMB	337	21598	1.56	Not Won
9	47-Salema (ST)	Ranita Sangma	AMB	965	20488	4.71	Not Won
10	52-Chandipur	Jyotta Rani Nath	IND	31	21659	0.14	Not Won
11	57-Jubaraj nagar	Biva Nath	INC	7732	19961	38.74	Not Won
12	60-Kanchanpur (ST)	Minati Roy	AMB	3531	19653	17.97	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 05 shows that twelve (12) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1993, where only one (01) women candidate, Smt. Kartik Kanya Debbarma has been elected as a CPI(M) candidate from Takarjala (ST) constituency and secured 51.42 percent of votes. Among the women contesting candidates, only 8.33 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 1993 and which was very minimal.



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Table-6: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 1998

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	3-Bamutia (SC)	Urmila Biswas	CPI(M)	9691	22466	43.14	Not Won
2	4-Barjala	Chhaya Baul	CPI(M)	13407	31943	41.97	Not Won
3	6-Agartala	Krishna Rakshit (Datta)	CPI(M)	14036	32852	42.72	Not Won
4	12-Takarjala (ST)	Baijayanti Kalai	CPI(M)	9420	19460	48.41	Won
5	13-Pratapgarh (SC)	Amita Malakar	BJP	2412	40188	6.00	Not Won
6	14-Badharghat	Sipra Dey	BJP	1905	39331	4.84	Not Won
7	14-Badharghat	Shibani Bhowmik	IND	49	39331	0.12	Not Won
8	18-Charilam (ST)	Ranita Sangma	AMB	118	21805	0.54	Not Won
9	22-Dhanpur	Pratima Bhowmik	BJP	1253	23692	5.29	Not Won
10	25-Asharambari (ST)	Sandhya Rani Debbarma	CPI(M)	11907	16962	70.20	Won
11	26-Pramodnagar (ST)	Rabani Debnath (Debbarma)	AMB	505	21986	2.30	Not Won
12	28-Krishnapur (ST)	Rabani Debbarma	AMB	133	18058	0.74	Not Won
13	34-Kakraban	Anima Das	IND	23	21584	0.11	Not Won
14	44-Raimavelley (ST)	Pakhi Tripura	IND	286	24327	1.18	Not Won
15	47-Salema (ST)	Himani Debbarma	BJP	1205	19014	6.34	Not Won
16	47-Salema (ST)	Ranita Sangma	AMB	209	19014	1.10	Not Won
17	51-Fatikroy	Gouri Rani Chanda	IND	25	20273	0.12	Not Won
18	54-Kurti	Himani Nath	CPI(ML)(L)	120	21495	0.56	Not Won
19	56-Dharmanagar	Sima Paul Choudhury	INC	8330	23214	35.88	Not Won
20	57-Jubarajnagar	Biva Rani Nath	INC	9209	20802	44.27	Not Won
21	58-Pencharthal (ST)	Nirupama Chakma	INC	8944	23366	38.28	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 06 shows that twenty-one (21) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 1998, where only two (02) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Takarjala (ST) and Asharambari constituency (ST). The two winning candidates were Smt. Baijayanti Kalai and Smt. Sandhya Rani Debbarma got 48.41 percent and 70.20 percent of votes respectively and both of them were elected from the CPI (M) party. Among the women contesting candidates, only 9.52 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 1998 and which was very minimal.

Table-7: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 2003

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	4-Barjala	Kalyani Dey (Mitra)	CPI(M)	17821	37508	47.51	Not Won
2	5-Khayerpur	Lakshmi Nag	INC	12390	28819	42.99	Not Won
3	6-Agartala	Shibani Bhowmik	IND	193	35709	0.54	Not Won
4	8-Town Bordowali	Papri Halder	LJNSP	150	22594	0.66	Not Won
5	12-Takarjala (ST)	Baijanti Kalai	CPI(M)	3101	16442	18.86	Not Won
6	12-Takarjala (ST)	Kartik Kanya Debbarma	NCP	557	16442	3.39	Not Won
7	20-Nalchar (SC)	Putul Das	AMB	415	23533	1.76	Not Won
8	21-Sonamura	Tutan Bhowmik	JD(U)	272	25729	1.06	Not Won
9	22-Dhanpur	Pratima Bhowmik	BJP	551	27956	1.97	Not Won
10	23-Ramchandraghat (ST)	Padma Kumar Debbarma	CPI(M)	9003	14998	60.03	Won
11	31-Salgarh (SC)	Mira Das	INC	10643	27024	39.38	Not Won
12	31-Salgarh (SC)	Kanak Prava Das	INC	104	27024	0.38	Not Won
13	32-Radhakishorepur	Sefali Choudhury	IND	162	25754	0.63	Not Won
14	45-Kamalpur	Bijoy Lakshmi Singha	CPI(M)	11208	20432	54.86	Won
15	45-Kamalpur	Basanti Sinha	AITC	210	20432	1.03	Not Won
16	50-Pabiacherra	Swapna Das	INC	10729	25266	42.46	Not Won
17	56-Dharmanagar	Sima Pal Choudhury	INC	11345	25514	44.47	Not Won
18	57-Jubarajnagar	Biva Rani Nath	INC	11363	24123	47.10	Not Won
19	58-Pencharthal (ST)	Nirupama Chakma	INC	10790	26517	40.69	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 07 shows that nineteen (19) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 2003, where only two (02) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Ramchandraghat (ST) and Kamalpur constituency. The two winning candidates were Smt. Padma Kumar Debbarma and Smt. Bijoy Lakshmi Singha got 60.03 percent and 54.86 percent of votes respectively and both of them were elected from the CPI (M) party.



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Among the women contesting candidates, only 10.52 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 2003 and which was very low.

Table-8: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 2008

Sl. No	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Pol. Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	1-Simna (ST)	Rita Rani Debbarma	AITC	254	26321	0.98	Not Won
2	3- Bamutia (SC)	Papri Podder Biswas	AITC	271	33272	0.81	Not Won
3	5-Khayerpur	Putul Ghosh	AITC	615	37919	1.62	Not Won
4	6- Agartala	Milan Chakraborty	BJP	528	41361	1.28	Not Won
5	6-Agartala	Shibani Bhowmik	IND	389	41361	0.94	Not Won
6	7-Ramnagar	Nilima Ghosh	BJP	595	31732	1.88	Not Won
7	8-Town Bordowali	Papri Halder	LJP	187	26070	0.72	Not Won
8	8-Town Bordowali	Maya Saha	AIFB	344	26070	1.32	Not Won
9	9-Banamalipur	Basanti Sinha	AITC	36	22595	0.16	Not Won
10	13-Pratappah(SC)	Putul Rani Mitra	LJP	880	59691	1.47	Not Won
11	17-Golaghati (ST)	Suchitra Debbarma	AITC	315	25886	1.22	Not Won
12	17-Golaghati (ST)	Kartik Kanya Debbarma	IND	222	25886	0.86	Not Won
13	20-Nalchar (SC)	Sukla Das	INC	12216	28147	43.40	Not Won
14	20-Nalchar (SC)	Purabi Barman	IND	465	28147	1.62	Not Won
15	24-Khowai	Gayetri Debnath	IND	167	28320	0.59	Not Won
16	25- Asharambari (ST)	Dhanbhakti Jamatia	BJP	419	24242	1.73	Not Won
17	26-Pramednagar (ST)	Shila Debbarma (Bhowmik)	AMB	280	27726	1.01	Not Won
18	29- Teliamura	Gouri Das	CPI(M)	14816	29570	50.10	Won
19	31- Salgarh (SC)	Mira Das	INC	12284	30997	39.63	Not Won
20	33-Matabari	Bibhu Kumari Devi	INC	14381	31088	46.26	Not Won
21	34- Kakraban	Basana Adhikari	BJP	478	28296	1.69	Not Won
22	35- Rajnagar (SC)	Radha Rani Das (Bhowmik)	BJP	580	39077	1.48	Not Won
23	41-Sabroom	Rita Kar (Majumder)	CPI(M)	19181	33622	57.05	Won
24	45-Kamalpur	Bijoy Lakshmi Singha	CPI(M)	11704	24561	47.65	Not Won
25	48-Kulai (ST)	Sabitri Debbarma	CPI(M)	14829	31883	46.51	Not Won
26	50-Pabiacherra (SC)	Sukumani Malakar	IND	648	33961	1.91	Not Won
27	52-Chandipur	Kaberi Sinha	BJP	834	31121	2.68	Not Won
28	55-Kadamtala	Bijita Nath	CPI(M)	12656	28027	45.16	Won
29	56-Dhamanagar	Anamika Roy Saha	AIFB	143	30952	0.46	Not Won
30	57- Jubarajinagar	Biva Rani Nath	INC	13094	28719	45.59	Not Won
31	58-Pencharthal (ST)	Basirun Reang	CPI(ML) (L)	279	34049	0.82	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in]

The above table 08 shows that thirty-one (31) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 2008, where only three (03) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Teliamura, Sabroom and Kadamtala constituency. The three (03) winning CPI (M) candidates were Smt. Gouri Das secured 50.10 percent of votes, Smt. Rita Kar (Majumder) secured 57.05 percent of votes and Smt. Bijita Nath secured 45.16 percent of votes. Among the women contesting candidates, only 9.67 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 2008 and which was very minimal.

Table-9: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 2013

Sl. No	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	5-Kayerpur	Nilima Ghosh	BJP	698	41345	1.69	Not Won
2	8-Town Bordowali	Shibani Bhowmik	SUCI	170	39116	0.38	Not Won
3	9-Banamalipur	Gita Roy	BJP	441	33981	1.30	Not Won
4	19-Charilam (ST)	Himani Debbarma	INC	15138	32350	46.79	Not Won
5	26-Asharambari (ST)	Dhanbhakti Jamatia	BJP	815	29934	2.72	Not Won
6	28-Teliamura	Patal Kanya Jamatia	IPFT	422	36571	1.15	Not Won
7	28-Teliamura	Gouri Das	CPI(M)	18357	36571	50.20	Won
8	40- Sabroom	Rita Kar Majumder	CPI(M)	21404	38318	55.87	Won
9	40- Sabroom	Bhalu Rani Dey	BJP	712	38313	1.86	Not Won
10	41-Ampinagar (ST)	Patal Kanya Jamatia	IPFT	426	29823	1.43	Not Won
11	45-Kamalpur	Bijoy Lakshmi Singha	CPI(M)	19204	37546	51.15	Won
12	49-Chhamanu (ST)	Zaidami Tripura	INC	14375	31241	46.01	Not Won
13	51-Fatikroy (SC)	Tunu Bala Malakar	CPI(M)	17899	34976	51.18	Won
14	55- Bagbassa	Bijita Nath	CPI(M)	17991	35095	51.26	Won
15	59-Pencharthal (ST)	Purnita Chakma	INC	15584	32902	47.36	Not Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in]

The above table 09 shows that fifteen (15) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 2013, where five (05) winning CPI (M) candidates were Smt. Gouri Das secured 50.20 percent of votes from Teliamura constituency, Smt. Rita Kar (Majumder) secured 55.87 percent of votes from Sabroom constituency, Smt. Bijoy Lakshmi Singha secured 51.15 percent of votes from Kamalpur constituency, Smt. Tunu Bala Malakar secured 51.18 percent of votes from Fatikroy (SC) constituency and Smt. Bijita Nath secured 51.26 percent of votes from Bagbassa constituency. The achievement of CPI (M) is reflecting through their performance in the general assembly election in 2013, where 33.33 percent women seats won contested by the total women candidates.



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Table-10: Participation of Women Candidates to contest in the Tripura Legislative Assembly Election, 2018

Sl. No.	Constituency No & Name	Name of Women Candidate	Political Party	Votes got	Valid Votes	%	Status
1	6-Agartala	Panna Deb	AITC	302	44249	0.68	Not Won
2	6-Agartala	Krishna Majumder	CPI(M)	17852	44249	40.34	Not Won
3	8-Town Bordowali	Shibani Bhowmik	SUCI	202	38913	0.52	Not Won
4	8-Town Bordowali	Ratna Datta	INC	1303	38913	3.35	Not Won
5	9-Banamalipur	Shephali Debnath	SUCI	63	35163	0.18	Not Won
6	9-Banamalipur	Mita Saha	AMB	80	35163	0.23	Not Won
7	9-Banamalipur	Kuheli Das (Sinha)	AITC	116	35163	0.33	Not Won
8	14-Badharghat (SC)	Jharna Baidya	CPI(M)	23113	52566	43.97	Not Won
9	23-Dhanpur	Lakshmi Nag (Barman)	INC	832	40135	2.02	Not Won
10	23-Dhanpur	Pratima Bhowmik	BJP	16735	40135	41.70	Not Won
11	26-Asharambari (ST)	Suchitra Debbarna	AMB	282	32897	0.86	Not Won
12	28-Teliamura	Gouri Das	CPI(M)	14898	38173	39.03	Not Won
13	28-Teliamura	Kalyani Roy	BJP	22077	38173	57.83	Won
14	34-Rajnagar(SC)	Radha Rani Das (Bhowmik)	IND	194	39316	0.49	Not Won
15	36-Shantirbazar (ST)	Baneti Reang	INC	446	41812	1.07	Not Won
16	40-Sabroom	Rita Kar Majumder	CPI(M)	18877	40759	46.31	Not Won
17	45-Kamalpur	Bijoy Lakshmi Singha	CPI(M)	17206	38418	44.79	Not Won
18	48-Karamcherra (ST)	Ranjanbati Debbarna	INC	739	34527	2.14	Not Won
19	51-Fatikroy (SC)	Tunu Bala Malakar	CPI(M)	16683	37325	44.70	Not Won
20	52-Chandipur	Kaberi Singha	BJP	18143	38305	47.36	Not Won
21	55-Bagbassa	Bijita Nath	CPI(M)	18001	36925	48.75	Won
22	58-Panisagar	Rani Singha	AITC	249	32189	0.77	Not Won
23	59-Pencharthal (ST)	Nandini Chakma	INC	644	35376	1.82	Not Won
24	59-Pencharthal (ST)	Santana Chakma	BJP	17743	35376	50.16	Won

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 15th January 2022.

The above table 10 shows that twenty-four (24) women candidates have contested from different political parties in the Tripura legislative assembly election of Tripura in 2018, where three (03) women candidates have been elected in TLA from Teliamura, Bagbassa and Pencharthal (ST) constituency. The three winning candidates were Smt. Kalyani Roy secured 57.83 percent of votes from BJP party, Smt. Bijita Nath secured 48.75 percent of votes from CPI (M) party and Smt. Santana Chakma secured 50.16 percent of votes from BJP party. Among the women contesting candidates, only 12.5 percent women won in the legislative assembly election in 2018 and which shows very low participation women candidates.

Second objective of this paper is to analyze the role of political parties for giving preferences of women candidate as a leader in Tripura Legislative Assembly Elections. Political parties have given preferences to the women candidates in the assembly elections since 1972 and which is discussed in the following table and line graph:

Table- 11: Contesting women candidates from different political parties from 1972 to 2018

Political Parties	Tripura Legislative Assembly Elections from 1972 to 2018										Party wise Total Contested
	1972	1977	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003	2008	2013	2018	
CPI(M)	01	01	01	02	02	05	04	05	05	07	33
INC	03	01	02	02	04	03	07	04	03	05	34
BJP	-	-	01	01	01	04	01	06	04	04	22
AITC	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	05	-	03	09
AIFB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	02	-	-	02
LJP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	02	-	-	02
NCP	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	01
JD(U)	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	01
JNP	-	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	01
IPFT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	02	-	02
TUS	-	-	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	01
TCD	-	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	01
LJNSP	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	01
AMB	-	-	-	-	03	04	01	01	-	02	11
SUCI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	02	03
CPI(ML)(L)	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	01	-	-	02
IND	-	02	06	02	02	04	02	05	-	01	24
Total Contested	04	06	11	07	12	21	19	31	15	24	150
Total Won	02	01	04	02	01	02	02	03	05	03	25

Source: Election Commission of India, data Compiled from various tables from [URL: http://ceotripura.nic.in] Accessed from 23rd February, 2022.

The above table 11 shows that women candidates contested Tripura Legislative Assembly elections from 1972 to 2018 under the banner of different national and regional political parties. INC has given preference to the thirty four (34) women candidates for contesting assembly elections of Tripura from 1972 to 2018, followed by thirty three (33) women candidates contested under the banner of CPI (M) Party, twenty two (22) women candidates contested under the banner of BJP Party, nine (09) women candidates



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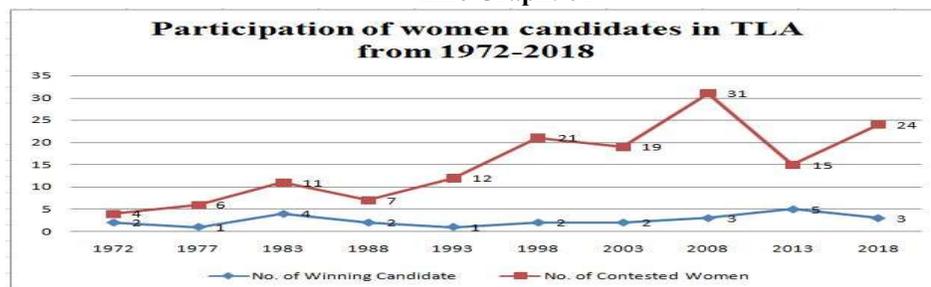


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contested under the banner of AITC party, two (02) women candidates contested under the banner of AIFB party, two (02) women candidates contested under the banner of LJP party, one (01) women candidate contested under the banner of NCP party, one (01) women candidate contested under the banner of JD (U) party, one (01) women candidate contested under the banner of JNP party, Two (02) women candidates contested under the banner of IPFT party, one (01) women candidate contested under the banner of TUS party, one (01) women candidates contested under the banner of TCD party, one (01) women candidates contested under the banner of LJNSP party, eleven (11) women candidates contested under the banner of AMB party, three (03) women candidates contested under the banner of SUCI party, two (02) women candidates contested under the banner of CP(ML)(L) party and twenty four (24) women candidates contested under the banner IND party. It has been found from the above table is that only national political parties like INC, CPI (M) and BJP have given tickets to the women candidates for contesting the assembly elections in Tripura. Though, the successive ratio of women candidate is very negligible.

In 1972 assembly election, out of total four (04) women contesting candidates' only two (02) women candidates have been elected from INC party. In 1977 assembly election, out of total six (06) women contesting candidates' only one (01) women candidate has been elected from CPI (M) party. In 1983 assembly election, out of total eleven (11) women contesting candidates' only four (04) women candidates have been elected from different parties like CPI (M) (01), INC (02) and Independent (01). In 1988 assembly election, out of total seven (07) women contesting candidates' only two (02) women candidates have been elected from INC party. In 1993 assembly election, out of total twelve (12) women contesting candidates' only one (01) women candidate has been elected from CPI (M) party. In 1998 assembly election, out of total twentyone (21) women contesting candidates' only two (02) women candidates have been elected from CPI (M) party. In 2003 assembly election, out of total nineteen (19) women contesting candidates' only two (02) women candidates have been elected from CPI (M) party. In 2008 assembly election, out of total thirtyone (31) women contesting candidates' only three (03) women candidates have been elected from CPI (M) party. In 2013 assembly election, out of total fifteen (15) women contesting candidates' only five (05) women candidates have been elected from CPI (M) party. In 2018 assembly election, out of total twentyfour (24) women contesting candidates' only three (03) women candidates have been elected from different parties like BJP (02) and CPI (M) (01).

Line Graph: 01



The above line graph shows the participation of women candidates in the TLA elections from 1972 to 2018, where comparing to contesting ratio winning ratio was very minimal. Total one hundred fifty (150) women contesting candidates' only twenty-five (25) women candidates' have been elected in TLA elections from 1972 to 2018, where winning percentage of women candidates is only 16.67 percent which is very negligible compare to the male counterparts.

VI. CONCLUSION

Political representation is a process through which women can hold their position in the political institutions and then able to take the different decisions for their upliftment and development. Status of women cannot be improved unless women are adequately represented in decision making bodies. Women's political representation at grass-root political institutions (Panchayat and Municipalities) was possible through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendment Act (1992), where a landmark provision of reserving not less than one third of the total number of seats in the local bodies for women. The then CPI (M) government took an important step for the political empowerment of women in 2010 by unanimously passing two bills in the Legislative Assembly to reserve fifty (50) percent seats for women in three-tier panchayat (Fifth Amendment Bill) and municipal bodies (Fourth Amendment Bill). The current BJP-IPFT government has taken a historic decision for the economic empowerment of women in 2022 to reserve thirty-three (33) percent seats for women in employment. The expectation of the present BJP-IPFT government is to reserve at least one-third of the seats in the Legislative assembly for women, so that the political empowerment of women can be accelerated. And in the case of women's representation in the Legislature, political parties should give preference or priority to the women candidates for their all-round development. Once Swamiji said, "To conquer India by 500 men, it may take 50 years, whereas by 500 women it can



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take only few weeks.”¹² Swami Vivekananda view reflects the potentialities of women, which empower them to achieve the goal successfully within a short span of time.

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