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**AUGUST NEWSLETTER SPECIAL
FOCUS:**

EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY

Education plays a very important role in the functioning of a democracy; it has been established since the inception of the state and democracy. In Greece and India, it was Aristotle and Lichhawi respectively who had established democracies with help of the intellectuals of that time. Since that time, there has been a constant debate is going on about the relationship of education and democracy.

In the last presidential elections of the US, the word 'Post Truth' had been coined by the supporters of Hillary Clinton who had lost the elections. Through this, they had tried to legitimize their loss as a win because they believed that they had won the popular perception. The same strategy has also been followed in India where the opposition tried to undermine the win of the Modi government by counting the percentage of the votes. All these strategies are devised only after gathering enough information and having knowledge.

In recent times, the issue of education is still playing an important role in the functioning of the democracy and different aspects of it in different settings has been discussed in this edition of the Center of Policy Research and Governance's newsletter.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

In the 21st century, the United States of America is looked up to as a great superpower in the world; even called the hegemonic power at times. With being a strong advocator of liberal democracy, the general elections of the country are bound to attract international interest. The approaching 59th quadrennial presidential elections have once again sparked global interest this year surrounding the two most popular, competing parties - the Republican Party and the Democratic Party and their presidential nominations, the current U.S., President Donald Trump and the former Vice President of the U.S., Joe Biden respectively. Furthermore, the elections have grabbed the special attention of all Indians with the selection of Kamala Harris as Joe Biden's running mate. Kamala Harris has an Indian descent and this selection makes her the first Asian - American and African - American woman to run for the Vice President of the USA. She will be competing against current Vice President, Mike Pence



While the general elections of the USA are in the process of being conducted, it is important to understand that the election procedure and the type of government elected are very different from India where Parliamentary form of government prevails and the President is an indirectly elected ceremonial head. In the USA, the President is the head of the government and is closely supported by the Vice President, who supports them as their running mate during elections. There are three important criteria one must match before contesting for either the President or the Vice President of the nation. The first one refers to the candidates being a 'natural born' citizen of the country which refers to all those who are born in the territory of the nation, or born to at least one U.S. citizen, in or outside the nation. The second clause further strengthens the first point by making it compulsory for a candidate to be a resident of the country for over fourteen years. Lastly, it demands all potential applicants to be above the age of thirty five years before contesting for elections.

Talking elaborately about the vast procedure of the general elections, it majorly starts with members of different political parties announcing their plans to run for the position and campaigning all over the nation to win the favour of their party mates. State level elections also known as primaries and caucuses take place where registered party members vote for their party's nominee. The nominee is often revealed at the respective parties' national conventions once all members cast their votes which are tallied to get the results. The selected Presidential

nominee then chooses their running mate, i.e. their nominee for the Vice President. They then together travel the country campaigning and bringing forth their agendas and views to the public. In this process, candidates take part in several rallies, activities, fierce debates where their own thoughts and opinions come forward. Being an indirect vote, parties' nominees do convince people to root for them and vote during the elections, however, the public from different states does not directly vote for them but for electors who go on to form an electoral college. It is this Electoral College which represents the people's view and votes for the President, sometime in December. To be elected as the President, a candidate must secure a majority of electoral votes i.e. 270 out of 538 votes. The winner of the elections takes office from 20th January, which is referred to as the inauguration day.

The elaborate procedure followed in the United States of America for the selection of the President and Vice President of the country might be extensive, lengthy, and quite different from India, however, such mechanisms are required for a big and powerful country like itself. But one element that helps all candidates survive as well as ace their political journey towards the presidency of the nation is - Education. Being one of the largest democracies in the world, the USA is bound to promote education; it is given primacy, for it is a prerequisite for the survival and success of the former. Similarly, education fosters a democratic temper in the minds of people. Democratic values like liberty, equality, fraternity justice, the dignity of the individual, co-operation, sharing of responsibility, etc. are applied to education to make it more effective, meaningful, relevant, and useful.

Education of one not only instills and strengthens patriotism and national love but also makes them understand better about the different needs of the people and the citizens based on different elements of democracy; it is something which is required in all candidates and would only assist them in policy making for the betterment of the public, if elected. Only once a candidate or nominee is educated enough and knows the requirements of the people well can convince the public that the democratic state would live up to its origin - the rule of the people, and fulfill all their demands.

Education of Presidential and Vice Presidential applicants is also important for them to actively take part in one of the biggest parts of the campaigning process, which is through Presidential Debates. Debates between the leading candidates, especially from the two most dominant parties of the country takes place in the second half of an election year and consist of them taking opposing stands and debating on several important and controversial topics. The heated debates, responses, and rebuttals gave an insight and a better understanding of the nominees' knowledge about the issue, views, and possible solutions of the same. Conventionally, three Presidential and one Vice Presidential debates take place. A strong foundation of education is required for the nominees to not only ace the debates and persuade eligible voters but also while interacting with

media personnel and rallying. Every word, sentence, action, or thought of a nominee is paraded before the public and they are only a reflection of one's education.

The importance of education is always visible in a country promoting democracy. The majority of the USA's Presidents were college graduates and well-read people. For one of the most powerful countries of the world, its leaders need to be well educated as it not only helps them in clear thinking, speech, writing, developing their personality and leadership skills but also assists them in recognising and fulfilling the demands of the people and move forward towards development and greater heights. Strongly agreeing with Nelson Mandela's words, "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world", we realise the significance of education in a democracy and are able to understand their intimate relationship better.

EDUCATION AND ITS IMPACT ON POLITICS

Individuals who are instructed can comprehend the outlandish idea of such segregations with leaders and their method of reasoning and accomplish something conclusive about it. A pioneer who isn't presented to worldwide governmental issues, financial aspects and different features of strategy making, has no information on how things are being done in cutting edge nations and is just keen on momentary advantages for himself/herself and the prompt network that chosen the person in question to control. With an informed individual in any event there is some expectation that presentation to the world through the media of instruction and individual intrigue will help in some positive reasoning and appropriate distinguishing proof and goal of issues.

Government officials are our delegates, who make choices on our part. Teaching them about the laws of the nation will likewise cause them to comprehend their cutoff points; what they should or shouldn't do. In a nation like India, lawmakers should be impartial and unbiased about subjects like religion and station to forestall collective mobs or fights and empower the nation to develop and contend with the world, and this mindset must be accomplished by somebody who is instructed about the prerequisites of the general public while all the while monitoring their cut-off points.

As every field has some qualification to be a part of it, politicians who lead the nation or a country ought to be educated for the betterment of society. Now that everything is being digitalized and technology has improved a lot, they must be updated to improve the growth of the nation. Mere experience can make them handle the problems, but can't solve them with appropriate decisions. So, experience with minimum qualification of education is necessary for a person to be an efficient politician.

Politicians should be people with high education because many leadership attributes are gained through education. Leaders with no education cannot cope up with the change hence it hinders country development. An educated leader is necessary for the country's bright future and prosperity. Politicians become powerful administrators after winning elections. Then they need basic knowledge and education to perform the works. A minister having no capability to read and understand files may be unable to make proper decisions on a regular basis. It is not good for the country, but common in many developing countries.

Along these lines, training is a feasible and most significant part of our present world situation. We view the government official as a capable individual who can direct us and settle on legitimate and proper choices. In any case, if the legislators don't have an appropriate scholarly foundation what sway he will have at the nearby or national or universal level. Low qualified lawmakers can't adapt up to worldwide changes and won't be ready to comprehend the political circumstances with different nations of the world.

The circumstance in India shows that there is no training required to assume the office of a MP or MLA in our nation as the Constitution while referencing the different qualification conditions doesn't specify anything about instructive capability. The province of Rajasthan is the principal state to fix a base instructive capability for challenging decisions to Panchayati Raj Organizations. To balance this with a worldwide picture, the vast majority of the Chinese lawmakers are having science degrees correspondingly greater part of legislators in Asian nations like South Korea, Malaysia, even Taiwan have all around qualified government officials. Presidents Obama and Putin were among the world's most taught political pioneers.

EDUCATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Knowledge is power. This insight formulated by philosopher Francis Bacon during the Enlightenment is at least four centuries old. His statement has lost nothing in terms of relevance and significance: Knowledge is power, and education is the fundamental precondition for political development, democracy, and social justice.

It was the educated and the middle class that set protests in motion - particularly the younger among them: 20-35 year-olds, often students or academics, who participated in politics. Education empowers, and education promotes greater participation. There is no development

without education. The world community has long since recognized this fact and developed clear political demands and consciousness on the subject as well. The second Millennium Development Goal specified by the United Nations says that all human beings should have access to basic education.

In the long run, no illegitimate regime will be able to withstand the power of a well-educated majority. Once such a populace is in place, it opens up the possibility of greater participation and democratic change. If the citizens lack education and the ability to compare independent information, and as long as people cannot network and engage in open exchanges with each other, the dictators and autocrats can feel secure.

EDUCATED SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE:

As the political scenario gets more complex in today's world and its consequences more detrimental, scholars have pushed forward the idea that political decisions should be taken by those who are knowledgeable. The masses who are ignorant of the intricacies of the system of government and are not well equipped in the social sciences should not be given the power to decide. For if they decide wrongly, the results can be too harsh to bear. Thus, the educated or knowledgeable class should only have the authority to make the decisions. This is called the system of Epistocracy. It is seen in the works of J.S. Mill, Plato, and Aristotle. The research paper seeks to explore the system of Epistocracy and the ideas put forth by scholars as J.S. Mill, Plato, and Aristotle in its support.

The role of knowledge in political decision-making has been a central topic in political theory and social science for centuries. One central branch of these discussions has focused on the role of religious knowledge and authority in political rule and variations of "theocracy" or "rule of priests". However, arguably, in many contemporary societies the most crucial knowledge source is scientific and professional knowledge. Thus, Epistocracy is a system in which the votes of people who can prove their political knowledge count more than the votes of people who can't. In other words, it's a system that privileges the most politically informed citizens. The central principle of Epistocracy, on the contrary, is that only politically competent individuals should possess political rights, that is, a right to vote and run for office, because each right presupposes a responsibility and only competent citizens can be assumed to be responsible for their actions. Therefore, according to Epistocracy, political rights are not birthrights and citizens should gain these rights. Epistocracy forces all citizens, including politicians, to be knowledgeable and consistent in their arguments as well as to recognize the individual rights of all humans.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIA AND ROLE OF EDUCATION IN IT

INTRODUCTION:

Contemporary scholarship on Indian political maps is a growing participatory trend among various social groups of the population. It compares past election data to understand the increasing interest and participation of the Indian electorate in politics. However, the research on exactly why this happens is inconclusive and still developing. One of the most important factors influencing citizens to participate actively in political campaigns in the US and India is education, according to a survey. The researchers found the higher a person's level of education, the more likely they were to work for a campaign or party. The report also found that gender matters: women are less likely to participate. "Those who live in rural areas, who are older, and those who are more educated are more likely to have worked for a campaign in the last national election," the researchers wrote in the report.

There is a strong link between education and political participation. People with proper schooling and more education are more likely to participate in political events consistently and they will be motivated to talk about certain issues which enhance political engagement. This is especially true when it comes to freedom of speech. People with higher education are more likely to be motivated to take action on free speech issues. Poverty is one main issue where there are relatively few differences between those who have more education and those with less education.

Furthermore, India has already embarked upon a journey to be the largest democracy in the world. Hence, in the recent times it is important to look after the political aspect and study the position in which India is and have a good learning of the factors which can influence it. This study majorly focuses on education as one of the key parameters in influencing political participation in India and its role in politics.ⁱ

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS:

"If politics is a conversation, everyone has a voice." Here's how you can use yours more efficiently.

- **Voting**
Voting is essential for any type of democracy. This needs to be transparent and it should be fair. In many parts of the world, there are some debates regarding the voting process. People are asking how it should be conducted.
- **Pressure Groups:**
Pressure groups play an important role to influence parliamentarians. They are an essential part of any democracy. We have seen many such instances in India and another part of the world when under the pressure of these groups either bill has been introduced or withdrawn. The pressure groups involve citizenry to put pressure on government on the issue of public concern.
- **Protest/Agitation**
The protest and agitation are also the part of the democracy. Their primary aim is to put pressure on the government by organizing agitation and public protests.

Public representative, common people also attend these demonstrations to support the cause and make voice heard. These protests also help political parties to increase their voices.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIA:

Elections in India have led to considerable enthusiasm among the masses. Since the first general election in 1952, many people have evinced keen interest in voting. As many as 1,635,000 votes were declared invalid in the first election. Many voters because of illiteracy, left the ballot papers on the floor of the booths or on top of the ballot box. But it can by no means be ignored that they were keenly interested in the electoral affairs and many disabled people reached the booths with other's help just to cast their vote. The success of democracy truly depends on the participation of people in elections. To look at the complete picture, there is no denying the fact that a large number of people have taken in elections but it is equally true that many others have often pulled them away from getting involved in elections.

Reasons for Lower Participation:

The usual method of political participation is to exercise the right to vote in the elections. Yet a large number refuse to be a part of it. Political Scientists have mapped out four reasons for such contempt.

- First, they say apathy, which means the individual's indifference towards or abstention from electoral affairs.
- Second, there may be certain cynicism rooted in suspicion towards and distrust of the motive and activities of others. This attitude develops because of the feeling that politics is a dirty game and that the politicians are, usually, unscrupulous persons.
- Third, there may even be a degree of alienation or hostility towards politics. In such cases, the person keeps a distance from the active political system.

- Fourth, there is also a sense of anomie - a feeling of personal ineffectiveness and divorced from society.

It is because of these reasons that some people keep themselves away from the centre of affairs. It is significant that in the parliamentary election of 1984, voter participation was the highest (64 per cent), but subsequently, the figures remained between 55.3 percent and 62 per cent. A recent report reveals that the voter-participation in some provinces has reached 70 per cent, but the overall figure is not at all sufficient when compared with the 80 to 90 per cent polling in Western countries.

EFFECTS OF EDUCATIONAL MOBILITY ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIA:

It is believed that education enhances participation directly because it helps in developing skills. The same logic can be applied in politics as well, education helps individuals to develop their communication, their ability to read and write, their decision-making and teaches them how to cope in an organizational setting.

India is well-known for its diversities. With such vast diversity, inequalities come out naturally. Economic and social inequalities in India have been visible over many years. These inequalities translate into opportunities of personal and professional growth for individuals who have access to the pre-requisite resources but leads to discrimination on the basis of the standard of living for the unprivileged and disadvantaged section of the society. In India changes in political, economic and social life is a result of education inequality.

Those who are educated take the maximum benefit out of the system and take maximum concessions from those in authority. Educational inequality has made some powerful enough to amass wealth and with that dictate and change economic policies to suit their interests.

It has been proved that an increase in educational mobility of the respondent positively influences her/his political interest and political participation in election campaigns. Educational mobility refers to the difference between the education level of the respondent and his/her father. "Positive educational mobility" means the respondent has greater educational qualifications than his/ her father, while "negative educational mobility" implies the converse. "No educational mobility" signifies that they have the same level of education.ⁱⁱ

POLITICS AND EDUCATION IN THE PAST:

Historically, the relationship between politics and education has worked well. Politicians offer a vision of the sort of society they want, and education has been one of the major means of achieving it. When the vision of politicians and society (or at least those who had the right to vote) was to have wealth concentrated in the hands of a small number of people and a social structure that didn't change, the education system delivered that. Only the children of the rich

and powerful received a formal education. When the vision of society needed more highly educated people, the school system was changed to deliver it. Then, when formal education for girls was introduced, the curriculum still reflected the role society expected of women. Perhaps the biggest change to the education system was in the years after the Second World War, with the need to rebuild industry and society and advances in technology. For the first time, the economy needed a significant number of well-educated people, and society wanted a country of greater opportunity. The 1944 Education Act and the tripartite system that followed were designed to deliver that.

POLITICS AND EDUCATION TODAY:

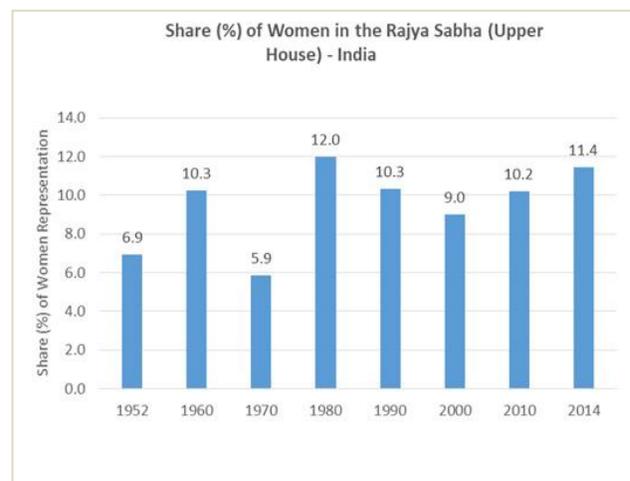
Now, we face the need for even greater change. We need even more highly skilled people so we can compete in a global economy, and we understand better the social consequences for individuals and society when children are failed at school. Across the political spectrum there is a view that we need an education system that has universal high standards and is inclusive, and the public have far higher expectations than used to be the case.

However, politics has always been better at gate keeping than gate opening. It is well practised at building education systems that allow a few to reach the top, but it is much less sure of the levers it needs to use to deliver high standards for all. Yet there seems to be emerging agreement across the political parties as to what those levers might be.ⁱⁱⁱ

EMERGING TRENDS:

Democracy has deepened further in last seventy three years in India and its credibility has vindicated itself. Participation of the weaker section, especially S.C. and S.T. has increased manifold thereby consolidating democratic process. The pattern of representation in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha reflects that every segment of the population is getting represented. Earlier, only educated middle class used to get a chance to be elected as people's representative. However, in recent years, the trend has changed and women, S.C., S.T. and farmers too, are getting chance to contest and win election. Political participation of minorities, Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes have increased. Defection, President Rule, election related violence etc. have become a rarity. Right to information, right to education, Panchayati Raj act have really empowered and enlightened the common public.^{iv}

The Economic Survey called for more women participation in decision-making process in the country. It has been pretty clear that the



women participation in political matters has been 49% of population, the numbers have been considerably poor. The survey for 2017-18 tabled in Parliament said factors such as domestic responsibilities, prevailing cultural attitudes regarding roles of women in society and lack of support from family were among main reasons that prevented them from entering politics.

The general election of 2014 was pretty historic in many terms such as it got the highest turnout of voters (67.7%) since the first general election took place in 1952, even better than the polling percentage of 64% which was witnessed in the general election of 1984-85.

The enhanced female participation has an interesting tale of its own. If there were such developed states as Delhi and Goa in the top with regard to registering a substantial rise in it, there were such so-called “backward” states as Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh which also came on top whilst indicating the increased trends in women participation. This goes on to prove the fact that whether it was from the advanced states or so called backward states, women made their presence felt in terms of turning up for voting. The women voters wanted to make sure that they are as much part of mainstream politics as their male counterparts. The urge to be recognized as a ‘force to reckon with’ was prevalent as much with the big city female voters as was with the small town ones. The participation of the female voter saw ascendancy in 22 of the states during the Lok Sabha election as compared to the 2009 general election.^v



Since independence the Indian government has been giving special attention to uplift socio-economic conditions of SC and ST people of the Indian society and therefore, through planned action a number of welfare schemes and programmes have been adopted for their betterment. The policy of reservation for the weaker sections has been taken into account through constitutional measures by the Government.

Participation by the people in various political activities is generally considered to be the main focus of all democratic systems in our country. In fact, inputs of the political system, such as demand and support, political socialization, recruitment, interest, articulation etc. are functions of political participation. Government should increase the share of expenditure on education from 3.4% to 6% of GDP. Lastly it can be said that we shall be able to enhance the social and political awareness of the backward people without any doubt if people from all walks of society come forward with a wholehearted effort to increase the total literacy rate.

In order to overcome the disadvantages of being in groups designated as Scheduled Castes, measures have been taken to provide an opportunity to these groups to participate in the functioning of the panchayats, both as ordinary members and as president. Reservations have been in the same proportion as their population in the state, and also include reservation of seats for women.



CONCLUSION:

Educating the citizens of India is likely to have a positive impact on the education levels of the coming generations as well. By increasing access to educational opportunities, India is more likely to foster well-educated and well-informed citizens who will be able to make thoughtful political choices. As noted by scholars of Indian politics, the recent participatory trends are still constrained by demographic factors such as caste, class, gender, income, locality, etc. Although it has emerged recently as one of the important factors in determining political interest and political participation, education alone may not be able to ensure such a citizen focus. India is a diverse country, and more often than not, factors of social caste and economic class do play a major role in determining interest and participation in politics. However, being educated can give a sense of responsibility to citizens to exercise political choice and demand accountability from representatives of the government.

Hence, it can be concluded that a literate person is far more likely to have an interest in politics, and that interest translates into participation in election-related activities more than for a person who is illiterate.

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The Centre of Policy Research and Governance (CPRG), India strongly believes that in the 21st century an India deprived of gainful opportunities, necessary for the flourishing of a young and emergent India, will prove to be an impediment in the development of human capital and preservation of global security. CPRG thus works towards providing gainful opportunities in an effort to promote the involvement of young people in policy making and politics.



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