

## **CHAPTER – VI**

# **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF THE MUSLIMS IN MURSHIDABAD DISTRICT; A FIELD STUDY**

### **1. Introduction**

### **2. Studying the Block Profile of the District**

#### **2.1. Demography of Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

#### **2.2. Demography of Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

### **3. Political Participation of Bengali Muslims (1978-2008) – An Analysis of Panchayat Raj Election Result of Suti II Block**

#### **3.1. Reasons Behind Political Participation of the Bengali Muslims in the District**

### **4. Nature of Political Participation of the Respondent in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat – A Brief Empirical Analysis**

#### **4.1. Nature of Political Participation of the Respondent In Umrapur Gram Panchayat – A Brief Empirical Analysis**

#### **4.2. Variations in Political Participation in Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur Gram Panchayat – A Brief Summarization**

#### **4.3. Comparative Study of Nature of Participation in Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

### **5. An Empirical Study of Participation of the People's Representative of the District**

### **6. Conclusion**

### **Notes and References**

## 1. Introduction

Indian democracy despite its various pitfalls has over the year's unleashed forces of democratization among various social groups including marginalized ones. Political participation is an activity that shapes, affects or involves the political spheres. Participation is an activity where people strongly committed to politics are more likely to participate on a regular basis. Political participation includes voting, volunteering for a political campaign, making a campaign donation, belonging to activist groups and serving in public office. Most democratic citizens feel that some level of political participation that delivering vote is admirable and acceptable. Here in this chapter, the researcher will try to analyze the reasons why the Muslims electorates participate in politics. It may infer that some participate because they believe strongly in a particular idea, for many participation is a responsibility of democratic citizenship, or a person might work to promote issues and causes that personally profit that person or it may infer that some electors simply enjoy public activity, either because of the activity itself or because of the friends they make while politically engaged. Another way to think about this issue is to consider the person who votes because he or she desires to have an impact on the government. At the same time, many electors do not participate in politics because they believe that one vote does not make a difference. At the same time, however, if everyone who votes ceased to believe in the power of voting to effect change, then no one would turn out for elections and the democratic process would stop functioning. Lack of participation indicates satisfaction with the status quo – if they were upset about an issue people would participate. In a democratic society, people have the freedom to not participate. Many people were apathetic, do not know much about politics and do not care to vote. People do not participate because of alienation that is they feel that no one in power listens to their views and that the government is at best, indifferent to them.

In any modern political system<sup>1</sup>, elections occupy the most central place. The nature, periodicity and rate of participation of Muslim electors in elections are viewed as an important factor demonstrating the representative character of democracy in India. Democratic nations throughout the world in general have adopted universal adult suffrage, wherein every adult, without any additional qualification or conditions has the right to vote in general elections held periodically. Democracy cannot operate by proxy. Every conscious citizen aware of the value and utility of the vote took part in elections and choose their representative for the development of the country. Through political participation the disadvantaged groups could draw the attention of the government to secure the rights of the

community at large. Stability of a democratic society depends on the nature of civic culture which is identified as political culture. This includes orientation towards political system in both the political and governmental senses, pride in aspects of one's nation, expectation of fair treatment from governmental activities, ability to talk freely and frequently about politics. It is an emotional involvement in elections, tolerance towards opposition parties, valuing of active participation in local governmental activities, parties and civic associations. It is defined as self confidence in one's competence to participate in politics, civic co-operation trust and membership in the political associations. The participatory theory of democracy<sup>2</sup> believes in active participation of people in decision-making process which is an ideal form where the citizens ruled themselves. But in a modern state whose size and population are large, whose problems are complex, the best governing technique is the representative democracy. This representative democracy has to function in the interest of all the groups in the society. The practice of electoral democracy places a hard dilemma before minority groups. If the members of the minority want to participate as fully equal members of the polity, they must integrate themselves into the larger groups and play the games of politics according to the majority's rule, but they do so at the risk of seeing their minority identity and culture disappear. If on the other hand they insist on retaining their solidarity and group identity, they must act as a cohesive unit, a tactic which will undermine their separateness from the larger society but at the risk of continued isolation and political impotence<sup>3</sup> for the group. Democracy<sup>4</sup> ensures the rights of all religious minorities and Indian state uses both coercion and persuasion to generate consent for development and try to collaborate with the affected groups in a fair way through various state-sponsored development schemes.

Although the rate of electoral participation varies in each state, the researcher has concentrated the study in the district of Murshidabad – the district with majority of Muslim population. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to analyze the reasons and nature of political participations of the Muslims of the district and to what extent they are integrated with Indian politics. Measuring the degree of participation of the Muslim community in electoral process is a difficult task. But here the election results of Panchayati Raj from 1978 till 2008 were analyzed of the Suti II block of Murshidabad district to find out the reasons for participation of the Bengali Muslims of the district. Empirical data were gathered from two Gran Panchayat – Aurangabad II and Umrapur of Suti II block to

analyze the nature and variations in political participation among the respondents of the district.

## **2. Studying the Block Profile of the District**

In this section the researcher introduces the historical importance of Suti 2 block, its demography and the respective gram panchayat selected by the researcher. Here the researcher also introduces the respondent's characteristics, the reasons to choose the two specific gram panchayat for the purpose of survey in order to gather data for empirical analyses for the research.

Suti II block is memorable for the historical battle of Gheria<sup>5</sup> fought in 1740 in which Ali Vardy defeated Serferaz Khan at the head of 30,000 cavalry and infantry and with a numerous train of artillery. It was also famous for battle in 1763, which lasted for 4 hours and in which Mir Kasim was defeated by the British soldiers. Near Suti an excavation has been made during Sriraj's time which joins the Ganges and Bhagirathi. In 1839 it was proposed to government to form a new 'zillah' of which Suti was to be the capital comprise of six thanas from Murshidabad and eight from Bhagalpur. In Du-Perrine's time Suti was famous for the tomb of a Fakar Morte Zeddin. The important places of Suti II block were -

- a) Jagtai Goswami Thakurbari Mandir - It was established by Jibendra Krishna Goswami, it was nearly two hundred years old mandir (temple). It was established in Jagtai before the advent of British in India.
- b) Bajitpur Devmandir - Here the old idol and mandir was called 'Sarbeshwar' mandir and some pictures were portrait in the mandir wall of war of 1763 fought between Mirkasim and the British troops. It was 250 years old mandir premise and seven persons were stoned in the mandir wall (mahanta or the saints) during those period.
- c) Ancient Well - In Aurangabad nearly 250 years old well with underground staircases were found in this block. Many historical events were carved out in Arabic languages which are demarcated in the walls of the well.
- d) Bagshipara Rajbari - The one fifty year's old zamindar house of Bagshirapara stands today bearing the old memories of the rajas of those times. Today the house is in dilapidated condition.

e) Mahesail Lake - It was another historical place in the south-east direction of the block. Here the war of Giriwar was fought.

The district bears an excellent example of communal harmony. Apart from the celebration of Id festival, Hindu and Jain festival (Purjasa) is also celebrated here. This block is famous for the puja of 'Sarbeswar Dev' and the occasion continues for one week along with mela (fair) where people of all community participate and enjoy the festival. In Aurangabad 'Ananta Brahma' puja continues for 7 days with the participation of the people of all community. The region is famous for 'Pir' festival in Chabghati and Kutal festival in Daharpar. People in this region together enjoy the Kalipuja, Basantipuja, Doljatra (holy festival) which shows excellent resemblances of communal harmony.

Suti II block lies between 24.6231357 latitude and 88.0086695 longitudes. In the north it is bounded by Samsanganj block, in the south by Suti I block, in the east by the border of river Ganga and in the west by Jharkhand. The block is the sub-divisional town of parliamentary constituency of Jangipur in the district of Murshidabad. The block covers<sup>6</sup> a total area of 1127.95 square kilometer. The block comprises of ten gram panchayats (GP) – The total area covers by the GP are Urapur (46.41 sq.km), Kasimnagar (2.5 sq.km), Mahesail I (15 sq.km), Mahesail II (7.75 sq.km), Bajitpur (12.95 sq.km), Laxmipur (31 sq.km), Jagtai I (2.2 sq.km), Jagtai II (5.64 sq.km), Aurangabad I (2.5 sq.km), Aurangabad II (2 sq.km) respectively.

[See Map – VIII – p.483]

The main rivers of this block are Bhagirathi, Kanksa and Falgu. The block comprises of 48 mouzas among which 35 of them are inhabited mouzas. As per 2011 census the total population of the block are 278111 among them 139682 are male and 138427 are female and 2 others. Total literacy of the block is 128407 (46.17%) among which 70580 are male and 57825 are female and 50457 (18%) partially can read and write. Illiterates in the block comprises 99247 among which 43634 (35.686%) are male illiterates and 55613 (36%) are female illiterates. According to 2011<sup>7</sup> census of the block profile total electors are 144421 among which 72716 are male and 71705 are female. The total workers<sup>8</sup> of this block is 85717 among which 47558 are male and 38159 are female. 3944 of them are main cultivators among which 3908 are male and 36 of them are female. The total number of household workers are 74701 among them 23844 are male and 50857 are female. In this block most of the household workers are beedi manufacturer (beedi workers).

There is only one block primary health care in Mahesail I GP, two primary health centers, 31 subsidiary health centers, three family welfare centres and 146 anganwari centers. The district has only 1 block level veterinary centre with clinic in Jagtai I GP and 10 veterinary sub-centers in various GPs. The block lacks in proper medical facilities according to the demand and there are no sufficient health care units, trained nurses and doctors in the hospital. As per as population of the district is concerned the block lacks in educational institutions. There are 84 primary schools, 1 junior high school, 5 high schools, 2 higher secondary schools, 2 high madrassas, 53 sishu siksha Kendra, 27 child labor schools, 6 Madhyamik siksha Kendra and 2 rural libraries. The main crops of this area are paddy, wheat, jute, and mustard seed. The total cultivable land is 7300 hectors. The main fruits cultivated are mango and lichi which covers an area of 530 hectors of land. There is river lift irrigation in Mahesail II GP (Bamuha Gram). There are 7 deep tube wells used for irrigation purpose – three at Kasimnagar GP, none in Mahesail I GP, one in Laxmipur GP, and one in Mahesail II GP and one in Jagtai II GP area. There are 5 commercial bank branches in Aurangabad I and II GP, Bajitpur and Laxmipur GP, two gramin banks in Aurangabad I and Mahesail I GP and one co-operative bank at Kasimnagar GP. There is no heavy industry in this region except beedi industry. There are 58 registered small scale industries (beedi, mustard oil, ice-cream unit, wheat grinding unit, repairing unit) in Aurangabad I and II GP and among which the beedi industry is considered as most popular industry in this area. There are approximately 250 unregistered small scale industries in this region. The district has no fishery related industry but covers 600 hectors of river in water area from which 9 metric ton fish is produced to feed the local needs of the block. Roads are well connected with Suti II block and with national highway 34. With the exception of Kasimnagar and Umrapur GP most of the GP roads are connected with the highways.

### **2.1. Demography of Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

In Suti II block there are ten gram panchayats. Among which two gram panchayats Umrapur and Aurangabad II were selected by the researcher as the area of study. Umrapur gram panchayat is selected as an under-developed GP and Aurangabad II as most developed model in Suti II block. The researcher has measured the two GPs one as mostly developed and the other as under developed according to the criteria of development index. Suti 2 block is famous for beedi production. Here the rate of population is high, educational attainment is low, income level is low, access of cheap labor and the area has no heavy industry. The region lacks in agricultural land and alternate source of income according to

the population ratio hence the people stick to this beedi making profession as their only means of livelihood. The accessibility of cheap labor paves the path for inhuman economic exploitation of the beedi workers which the researcher considers as a problem to be focused on. This exploitation leads to poor living condition, poor social and cultural status lead to lack of education and apathy towards education resulting in overall backwardness of the area.

Aurangabad 2 gram panchayat is considered as most developed gram panchayat among all the ten gram panchayats. The area<sup>9</sup> covers a total area of 2 square kilometer. It consist of 18 gram sansad namely<sup>10</sup> Moulavipara North, Moulavipara South, Collegepara, Natunsarai, Kalitala Purba, Kalitala Paschim. Nutan Khanabari, Nutan Khanabari Purba, Khanabari, Benpara Uttar, Benepara Dakshin, Mechuabazar and Dhunepara, Dosadpara, Sheikpara and Dariapur Paschimpara, Dariapur (Paschimpara, Uttarpara Dakshinpara), Daharpar Paschimpara, Daharpar Purbapara and Daharpar Paschim. The destiny of population is very high and total population is 20,038 among which 2016 are BPL families and 3068 are the families above poverty level (APL). Literacy rate is 82%. Total voters are 15150 among which 7499 are male and 7651 are female. The GP comprise of 5084 number of household. Among the total population, 17940 people are Muslim and 2098 comprises Hindu, Jain and Christian people in this area. Among total household of 5084, 2612 houses are with toilet and 2020 are without toilet.

There is no sufficient agricultural land only 8 acres of land is used in agricultural purpose. Most of the houses are well built, 95% of houses are pucca and 5% kachha with thatched roof and mud. 4 km roads are concrete road, 1.25 km is pucca road and 1.5 km is kuchha road. There is only one post office and two banks in this GP. To boost economic activity of the women 72 self help groups were established, but most are in inoperative condition. This GP people received benefits from centrally sponsored scheme such as from MGNREGA – 130 families, from NSAP – 226 families and in IAY – 175 families are benefitted till now. Irrigation system is not well developed. There are more than 100 tube wells all over the gram. Drinking water is obtained from tube well and purified tap water is supplied to the area from Panchayat Samiti. Among the workers most of them are beedi workers. From the record, it is found that out of 5700 workers, 5650 of them are beedi workers, 250 are daily wage laborers, 50 are household workers and 120 of them are engaged as artisans or in other profession outside the gram (village). Roads are well constructed and connected with NH-34. There are buses, tracker, auto rickshaw and private cars to communicate from highways and railway station to other places of the GP. Though

not sufficient in number but there are 7 primary schools, 3 health centers, 8 SSKM (Sishu Siksha Kendra), and 2 High schools. To educate the child labor, three child labor schools were established in this area. There are 34 ICDS (Integrated Child Developmental Scheme) centers and one school for handicap children and 1 school to teach the aged person. This Aurangabad II gram panchayat is selected by the researcher as an icon of most developed model in compare to other GPs in Suti II block. Hence by taking the views of the respondent of Aurangabad II GP and Umrapur GP the researcher will try to bring a comparison between the two regarding their political participation and attitude.

In this GP we have select one gram sansad Kalitala (Purba and Paschim) comprises of 1574 voters among which 768 are male and 806 are female. We have interviewed 150 respondents on the basis of systematic random sampling method by collecting the voter list of this sansad in order to assess their political participation and attitude towards state and politics. Here in the table below we are showing the respondent's details. [TABLE -6.1]

[See Map – VI- P.481]

**AURANGABAD - 2 GRAM PANCHAYAT RESPONDENT DETAILS (GRAM SANSAD - KALITALA PURBA AND PASCHIM)  
TOTAL - 150**

SEX	AGE	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	INCOME	OCCUPATION	TYPES OF FAMILY	MARITAL STATUS	CAST	
MALE-94	18-30-52	ILLITERATE-4	BELOW-3000/=54	BEEEDI WORKERS-90	NUCLER -120	MARRIED -117	PECHI -97	
		PRIMARY-15		PRIVATE JOB HOLDER-15				
	31-40-38	UPPERP-PRIMARY-31		STUDENT-25	EXTENDED -4	UNMARRIED -33	BADI -38	
		SECONDARY -35		GOVT.SCHOOL TEACHER- 10				
FEMALE-56	41-50-16	HIGHER SECONDARY-20	3001-5000=54	COLLEGE TEACHER-3	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	
		GRADUATE-35		GOVT.CLERK-5				
	51-60-32	MASTERS-8		5001-10000=24	LAWYER-1	JOINT-26	WIDOW- 7	OBC -25
		LAW DOCTOR-1		10001 & ABOVE=18	DOCTOR-1			
TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	TOTAL-150	

**TABLE-6.1**

## **2.2. Demography of Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

In Suti II block, this GP is the most underdeveloped gram panchayat. The area lacks in proper drainage system and there is no good communication or well connected roads with NH-34 (national highway). The area is severely affected from flood each year after rain and its agriculture was heavily affected. The socio-economic condition of the people is not good. The total area coverage<sup>11</sup> of this GP is 46.41 square km. Literacy rate is comparatively low than Aurangabad II, literacy rate is only 47.67%. Here the total populations are 34633 among which 17380 are male and 17253 are female. There are 6926 number of household where 3628 are listed as BPL and 3298 in APL list. Among the total population, 330987 are Muslims and 1536 are Hindus (including SCs). Here the numbers of voters are 20874 among which 11650 are male and 9224 are female. Out of total household, 4236 houses are without toilet and only 2690 houses are with toilet. From the centrally sponsored scheme, 1236 families received the benefit from NSAP and 270 families received aid from IAY schemes. Out of the total houses 35% of houses are pucca and 65% are kachha houses build of mud. Most of the houses have no toilet and water in their house and they live in poor sanitary condition. More than 20 km of roads are kuchha, 9 km is morum road, 3.5 km is concrete road and 3 km is pucca road. There is only one bank and one post office in this area.

Some agriculture is done in this area. Only 38 acres of land is used for agricultural purpose, but there is no proper irrigation system. The cultivators fetch water from ponds and digging shallow tube wells around the field at their sole initiatives for water supply in the field. Most of the areas are covered by mango and lichi gardens. A part of the land is used to grow crops like rice and seasonal vegetables, potatoes, onion and commercial crop like jute. Water for drinking purpose is obtained from ponds and shallow tube wells but this water is free from arsenic. Around 50 tube wells are there in the GP which is inadequate in compare to huge area of this panchayat.

This GP comprise the largest area covering 22 sansads. The sansads<sup>12</sup> are Baruipuni, Sheikpara, Umrapur Ullapara and Kakshapara, Umrapur Chanditala, Baruipuni Dakshinpara, Baruipuni (Uttarpara, Purbapara, Paschimpara, Sheikpara), Umrapur Uttarpaschimpara, Umrapur Dakshinpaschimpara, Umrapur Jaigirpara, Umrapur Dakshinpara, Umrapur Purbapara, Umrapur Tewaripara, Sahajadpur Uttarpurbapara, Sahajadpur Pathanpara, Sahajadpur Mandalpara, Sahajadpur Paschimpara, Bahagalpur

Purbapara and Madyapara, Bahagalpur Paschimpara, Bahagalpur Paschimmahajanpara or Sankarpur Madhya Dakshinpara, Bahagalpur Purbamahajanpara, Bahagalpur Purbapara, Bahagalpur Madhyapara and Bahagalpur Uttarmadhyapara. In this GP no attention is given by state government to improve the communication of this area. There is no industry in this region except small scale beedi industry. Poor communication makes the area isolated from highway roads, good schools, colleges and local market. There is no bus service and the GP is connected with ferry service provided by GP office but not at regular interval. The people of this region are deprived from good educational institution, medical facility and the GP is affected from flood each year.

There are only 12 Primary schools, 3 sub centers, 1 SSK and 1 MSK (madrassa sishka kendra) and one high school. There are 38 ICDS centers. Due to the geographical location of the GP, there are no well-connected routes which results in poor communication, lack of business or trade activity in this GP. According to GP record, there are 19043 workers and among them 3220 are cultivators, 14580 are beedi workers, 799 are household workers, 252 are daily laborers and 110 are artisan and 82 are stone cutters. There is even no trained medical practitioner, hospital in this area and the people had to travel a very tedious route to come to the nearest hospital located at Mahesail I GP which results in the death of the people in this area. The early marriages, child labor, early drop out from schools are a regular picture visible in this region. Some people earn money by cutting stone which they brought from Pakur (Jharkhand) and supplied to Jharkhand which leads to pollution in the area. Some people stick to the profession of brick making by cutting the agricultural land illegally without any kind of governmental intervention which lead to depletion of lands which are prone to flood. Hard labor and low economic status makes the people of this area apathetic towards education resulting to high illiteracy rate in this block. Thus we choose Umrapur GP as our area to be focused on and to study their political participation and attitude in compare to the most developed GP of Aurangabad II in Suti II block of Murshidabad district. The researcher has select one gram sansad Sahajadpur Paschimpara which has total of 1083 voters of which 536 are male and 547 are female. Respondents of this sansad are chosen on the basis of systematic random sampling method by collecting the voter list of this sansad. In the table below we have shown the respondent's details of this sansad. [TABLE-6.2]

[See Map – VII – p. 482]

**UMRAPUR GRAM PANCHAYAT RESPONDENT DETAILS (GRAM SANSAD - SAHAJADPUR PASCHIMPARA)**  
**TOTAL – 100**

SEX	AGE	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	INCOME	OCCUPATION	TYPES OF FAMILY	MARITAL STATUS	CAST
MALE-53	18-30-56	ILLITERATE-58	BELOW-3000/= 42	BEEDI WORKERS=92	NUCLER=86	MARRIED=74	PECHI=49
		SOME INFORMAL EDUCATION - 7					
	PRIMARY - 4	AGRICULTURAL LABOURER – 6		EXTENDE D=2	UNMARRIED=19	BADI=41	
	UPPER PRIMARY – 7						
41-50-13	SECONDARY - 12	3001-5000=24	ENGINEER – 1	JOINT=12	WIDOW=7	OBC=10	
51-60-11	HIGHER SECONDARY - 7						
FEMALE-49	61-70- 5	MASTERS – NIL	5001-10000=26	DOCTOR=1	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100
	71& ABOVE- 3	MEDICAL TRANEE- 3	10001 & ABOVE= 8				
			DOCTOR - 1				
TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100	TOTAL-100

**TABLE-6.2**

### 3. Political Participation of Bengali Muslims (1978-2008) - An Analysis of Panchayat Raj Election Result of Suti II Block

Competitive politics operating through the system of free elections has drawn very differently situated people into the political process. Here the result of Panchayati Raj election of Suti II block has been collected to study political participation of the Muslims of Murshidabad district. The researcher has also try to interpret the level of political consolidation of the Bengali Muslims of the district in the political process of the country from the data collected from reliable sources.

**Table – 6.3**

#### **Panchayati Raj Election Result - 1978**

<b>Gram Panchayat</b>		<b>Panchayat Samiti</b>		<b>Zilla Parishad</b>	
<b>Total Electors and Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Votes Polled and Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Total Electors and Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Votes Polled and Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Total Electors and Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Votes Polled and Percentage (%)</b>
<b>95971</b>	<b>94549 (98.85%)</b>	<b>95521</b>	<b>94271 (98.69%)</b>	<b>95366</b>	<b>94368 (98.97%)</b>
<b>Hindu- 39432 (41.08%)</b>	<b>40.53%</b>	<b>Hindu- 36512 (38.22%)</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>Hindus-34216 (35.87%)</b>	<b>35.5%</b>
<b>Muslim- 54377 (56.65%)</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>Muslim- 57117 (59.79%)</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>Muslim- 59161 (62.03%)</b>	<b>61.6%</b>
<b>Others- 2162 (2.25%)</b>	<b>2.32%</b>	<b>Others- 1892 (1.98%)</b>	<b>1.92%</b>	<b>Others- 1989 (2.08%)</b>	<b>1.87%</b>

**Source:** - 1. Panchayati Raj Journal, January-December, 1979, January-December, 1980, January-July, 1981, 1982, Government of West Bengal, 2. Statistical Abstract, 2008, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal (Data given Religion wise and Block wise of the respective district) and 3. District Census Handbook, 1971, Murshidabad, Government of West Bengal Publication, 1977. and 4. Ganasakti Newspaper, 1978, (4<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> June).

Hence from the total result of 1978 Panchayat Raj election in GP election result (table -6.3), it may be inferred that out of the total electors, 98.85% cast vote in the election. Out of

41.08% Hindus, 40.6% cast their vote. Out of 67% Muslims, 56% deliver their vote and out of 2.25% people from other community, 2% cast their vote. In the same way it may be inferred from the result of Panchayat Samiti election that out of the total electors of 95521, 98.69% cast their votes. Out of 38.22% Hindus, 36.92% cast their vote, among the Muslim voters of 59.79%, 58.49% cast their vote and from other community members out of 1.98%, 0.7% cast their vote. Similarly, from the result of Zilla Parishad it is found out of the total electors 98.97% cast their vote. Among the Hindus of 35.87%, 34.86% cast their vote, among 62.03% of Muslims, 61.02% cast their vote and from other community member of 2.08%, 1.07% cast their vote. The above table of election result shows that in all GP, PS and ZP with the exception of few all Muslim voters cast their vote which proves them as responsible citizens of democratic India.

**Table – 6.4**  
**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 1983**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
<b>96491</b>	<b>95246</b> <b>(98.70%)</b>	<b>96001</b>	<b>94681</b> <b>(98.62%)</b>	<b>95925</b>	<b>94736</b> <b>(98.76%)</b>
<b>Hindu- 38488</b> <b>(39.88%)</b>	<b>39.36%</b>	<b>Hindu- 36294</b> <b>(37.80%)</b>	<b>37.47%</b>	<b>Hindus-32164</b> <b>(33.53%)</b>	<b>33.1%</b>
<b>Muslim- 55197</b> <b>(57%)</b>	<b>56.45%</b>	<b>Muslim- 58002</b> <b>(60.4%)</b>	<b>59.56%</b>	<b>Muslim- 61750</b> <b>(64.37%)</b>	<b>63.57%</b>
<b>Others- 2806</b> <b>(2.90%)</b>	<b>2.89%</b>	<b>Others- 1699</b> <b>(1.76%)</b>	<b>1.59%</b>	<b>Others- 2011</b> <b>(2.09%)</b>	<b>2.09%</b>

**Source :-** 1. Ganasakti Newspaper, 1983 (29<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> May) and (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> June), 1983, 2. Panchayati Raj Journal (January-December) 1983, 3. Panchayati Raj Journal Special Issue 1985 and 1986, Government of West Bengal, 4. Census of India, 1981, Series -23, West Bengal, Part XIII –B, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal. 5. District Census Handbook, 1981, Census Operation, Government of West of West Bengal, 6.

Statistical Abstract, 2008, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal  
(Data given Religion wise and Block wise of the respective district)

The above table (table no.6.4), shows that in gram panchayat election out of the total electors, 98.70% of people cast their vote in the election. Out of 40% Hindus, 38.6% cast their vote, out of 57% Muslims, 56% cast their vote and among 2.95%, people from other communities, 1.62% cast their vote. In the same way, it may be opined that from the result of PS election, out of total electors of 96001, 98.62% cast their vote. Out of 38% Hindus, 36.36% cast their vote among 60% Muslims 59.06% cast their vote and from 2% of people from other communities, 0.42% cast their vote. Similarly in the ZP election result it may be inferred that out of the total electors 98.76% cast their vote. Out of 34% Hindus, 32.3% cast their vote. Out of 64% Muslims, 63.14% cast their vote and out of 2.09%, 0.86% from other communities cast their vote. Hence it shows absolute turnout of Muslim population in this election according to the result of three tier panchayati raj system.

**Table – 6.5**  
**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 1988**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
<b>96990</b>	<b>95990</b> <b>(98.96%)</b>	<b>96510</b>	<b>95330</b> <b>(98.77%)</b>	<b>96490</b>	<b>95440</b> <b>(98.91%)</b>
<b>Hindu- 41252</b> <b>(42.5%)</b>	<b>42.05%</b>	<b>Hindu- 39980</b> <b>(41.42%)</b>	<b>41.56%</b>	<b>Hindus-36924</b> <b>(38.26%)</b>	<b>37.84%</b>
<b>Muslim- 53723</b> <b>(55.39%)</b>	<b>54.81%</b>	<b>Muslim- 55366</b> <b>(57.36%)</b>	<b>56.65%</b>	<b>Muslim- 58555</b> <b>(60.6%)</b>	<b>60.07%</b>
<b>Others- 2015</b> <b>(2.07%)</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>Others- 1164</b> <b>(1.20%)</b>	<b>0.56%</b>	<b>Others- 1011</b> <b>(1.04%)</b>	<b>1%</b>

**Source:-** 1.Panchayati Raj Journal October, 1988 No. 2, No. 3, Government of West Bengal, 2.Census of India, 1981, Series -23, West Bengal, Part XIII –B, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal.3. District Census Handbook, 1981, Census Operation, Government of West of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1983, 4.Statistical

Abstract, 2008, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal (Data given Religion wise and Block wise of the respective district)

Hence from the total result of 1988 election in GP election (table 6.5), it may infer that out of the total electors, 98.96% of people cast their vote. Out of 42.5% Hindus, 41.5% cast their vote, out of 55.39% Muslims, 54.39% cast their votes and out of 2.01% members of other communities 1.07% cast their votes. In PS, the result shows that out of the total electors, 98.77% cast their votes. Out of 42% Hindu, 40.21% cast their vote, out of 57% Muslim voters 56.15% cast their vote and out of 1.2% members of other communities, .01% cast their votes in the election. In ZP result (table 6.5) out of the total electors 98.91% of voters cast their votes. Out of 38.36% Hindus, 37.27% cast their vote, among the Muslims of 60.6%, 56.29% of them cast their votes and out of 1.04% voters from other communities 0.05% voters cast their votes in the election.

**Table – 6.6**  
**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 1993**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
<b>97490</b>	<b>96340</b> (98.82%)	<b>96957</b>	<b>95737</b> (98.74%)	<b>96952</b>	<b>96002</b> (99.02%)
<b>Hindu-36925</b> (37.97%)	<b>37.55%</b>	<b>Hindu- 32124</b> (33.13%)	<b>32.58%</b>	<b>Hindus- 34122</b> (35.19%)	<b>38.65%</b>
<b>Muslim-58443</b> (59.94%)	<b>59.29%</b>	<b>Muslim- 63701</b> (65.70%)	<b>65.16%</b>	<b>Muslim- 60698</b> (62.60%)	<b>62.37%</b>
<b>Others- 2122</b> (2.17%)	<b>1.98%</b>	<b>Others- 1132</b> (1.16%)	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>Others- 2132</b> (2.19%)	<b>2%</b>

**Source:** - 1. Panchayati Raj Journal October, 1993 No. 4,(30<sup>th</sup> May-28<sup>th</sup> June) and No.5, (November-December) Government of West Bengal, 2.Paschimbanga Panchayat Nirbachan Parisankhayan O Parjalochana, 1993 Kolkata, Government of West Bengal 3., Census of India, 1991, Series – 26 West Bengal

Part XII- B, Government of West Bengal, 4.District Census Handbook, 1991, Census Operation, Government of West Bengal.

Hence from the result of 1993 in GP election (table 6.6), it may infer that out of the total electors, 98.82% of people cast their vote. Out of 38% Hindus, 36.71% cast their vote, out of 60% of Muslims, 58.78% cast their votes and out of 2 % members of other communities 1.01% cast their votes. In PS election out of the total electors, 98.74% cast their votes. Out of 33% Hindu, 32.04% cast their vote, out of 66% Muslim voters 64.61% cast their vote and out of 1.6% members of other communities, .09% cast their votes in the election. In ZP result we find that out of the total electors 99.02% of voters cast their votes. Out of 35% Hindus, 34.23% cast their vote, among the Muslims of 63%, 61.64% of them cast their votes and out of 2% voters from other communities 1.23% voters cast their votes in the election.

**Table – 6.7**

**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 1998**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
98314	88314 (90%)	97914	85699 (87.52%)	97832	85417 (87.40%)
Hindu- 33905 (34.48%)	30.96%	Hindu- 36206 (36.97%)	32.35%	Hindus-38408 (39.25%)	32.26%
Muslim-62261 (63.32%)	56.87%	Muslim- 60406 (61.69%)	54.17%	Muslim- 58254 (59.54%)	52.01%
Others- 2148 (2.18%)	1.99%	Others- 1302 (1.32%)	1%	Others- 1170 (1.19%)	1.03%

**Source:** - 1. Panchayati Raj Journal October, 1998 No. 4, Government of West Bengal, 2. Paschimbanga Panchayat Nirbachan, 1998, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal, 3. Census of India, 1991, Series – 26 West

Bengal Part XII- B, Government of West Bengal, 4.District Census Handbook, 1991, Census Operation, Government of West Bengal.

Hence from the result of 1998 in GP election (table 6.7), it may infer that out of the total electors, 90% of people cast their vote. Out of 35% Hindus, 24.32% cast their vote, out of 63.32% of Muslims, 53.16% cast their votes and out of 2.18 % members of other communities 0.98% cast their votes. In PS out of the total electors, 87.52% cast their votes. Out of 37% Hindu, 24.51% cast their vote, out of 62% Muslim voters 59.23% cast their vote and out of 1% members of other communities, 0.04% cast their votes in the election. In ZP result out of the total electors 87.40% of voters cast their votes. Out of 39.25% Hindus, 26.57% cast their vote, among the Muslims of 60%, 56.86% of them cast their votes and out of 1.19% voters from other communities 0.49% voters cast their votes in the election.

**Table – 6.8**  
**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 2003**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
<b>98740</b>	<b>88572</b> <b>(89.70%)</b>	<b>98367</b>	<b>86258 (88%)</b>	<b>98368</b>	<b>89051</b> <b>(90.52%)</b>
<b>Hindu-33071</b> <b>(34%)</b>	<b>30.49%</b>	<b>Hindu- 34152</b> <b>(34.71%)</b>	<b>30.43%</b>	<b>Hindus-32231</b> <b>(32.76%)</b>	<b>29.65%</b>
<b>Muslim-63569</b> <b>(64%)</b>	<b>57.31%</b>	<b>Muslim- 62073</b> <b>(63.10%)</b>	<b>55.36%</b>	<b>Muslim- 64384</b> <b>(65.45%)</b>	<b>59.27%</b>
<b>Others- 2100</b> <b>(2%)</b>	<b>1.99%</b>	<b>Others- 2142</b> <b>(2.17%)</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>Others-175</b> <b>(1.78%)</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

**Source:-** 1.Panchayat 6<sup>th</sup> Election Result -2003, West Bengal State Election Commission, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal, 2.Director of Census Operation, 2001, Census of India; 2001, Series-A, Vol. Maldah, Murshidabad, Bardhaman, Nadia, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal, 3. Statistical Abstract, 2008, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal (Data given Religion wise and Block wise of the respective district)

From the result of 2003 GP election (table 6.8), it may infer that out of the total electors 89.70% of people cast their vote. Out of 33.49% Hindus, 23.2% cast their vote, out of 64.38% of Muslims, 62.02% cast their votes and out of 2.12 % members of other communities 0.17% cast their votes. In PS, out of the total electors, 88% cast their votes. Out of 35% Hindus, 22.42% cast their vote, out of 63% Muslim voters 60.18% cast their vote and out of 2% members of other communities, 0.10% cast their votes in the election. In ZP result out of the total electors 90.52% of voters cast their votes. Out of 33% Hindus, 23.29% cast their vote, among 65% Muslims, 58% of them cast their votes and out of 2 % voters from other communities 0.68% voters cast their votes in the election.

**Table – 6.9**  
**Panchayati Raj Election Result - 2008**

Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti		Zilla Parishad	
Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)	Total Electors and Percentage (%)	Votes Polled and Percentage (%)
142938	131848 (92.24%)	101085	92138 (91.14%)	109444	100081 (91.44%)
Hindu- 45032 (31.50%)	29.05%	Hindu- 33124 (32.76%)	29.85%	Hindus-32916 (30.07%)	27.49%
Muslim- 94782 (66.30%)	61.19%	Muslim- 65775 (65.06%)	59.33%	Muslim- 74386 (67.96%)	62.17%
Others-3124 (2.18%)	2%	Others- 2186 (2.16%)	1.96%	Others- 2142 (1.95%)	1.78%

**Source:-** 1. Result of Panchayati Raj Election, 2008 (District Murshidabad), Election held on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 and election commission of India website:- [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in), 2. Director of Census Operation, 2001, Census of India; 2001, Series-A, Vol. Maldah, Murshidabad, Bardhaman, Nadia, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal, 3. Statistical Abstract, 2008, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal (Data given Religion wise and Block wise of the respective district)

Hence from the total result of 2008 election in GP election (table 6.9), it may infer that out of the total electors, 92.24% of people cast their vote. Out of 32% Hindus, 23.76% cast

their vote, out of 66% of Muslims, 58.56% cast their votes and out of 2 % members of other communities 0.56% cast their votes. In PS election out of the total electors, 91.14% cast their votes. Out of 33% Hindu, 23.92% cast their vote, out of 65% Muslim voters 62.22% cast their vote and out of 2% members of other communities, 0.68% cast their votes in the election. In ZP result out of the total electors 91.44% of voters cast their votes. Out of 30% Hindus, 21.53% cast their vote, among 68% Muslims, 52.42% of them cast their votes and out of 2% voters from other communities 0.59% voters cast their votes in the election. The election results show that all the Muslim respondents in all the three tier election cast their vote. From 1998 till 2008 the data shows slight decrease in participation rate among the voters. We can infer that either the voters become apathetic towards democratic process of the country or they left the place in search for education or job opportunity but otherwise the election record shows fair rate of participation in Panchayati Raj election.

**Table- 6.10**  
**Result of Panchayati Raj Election – Suti II Block**

Year	Gram Panchayat				Panchayat Samiti				Zilla Parishad			
	Contested		Elected		Contested		Elected		Contested		Elected	
	Total	Muslim	Total	Muslim	Total	Muslim	Total	Muslim	Total	Muslim	Total	Muslim
1998	509	332	149	98	97	56	26	18	11	4	2	1
2003	530	317	141	88	93	56	26	18	5	2	1	1
2008	489	296	125	79	57	39	14	11	11	6	2	1

**Source:-** 1. Panchayat General Elections, 1998, West Bengal Government of West Bengal, 2. Panchayat 6<sup>th</sup> Election Result -2003, West Bengal State Election Commission, Kolkata, Government of West Bengal, 3.Result of Panchayati Raj Election, 2008 (District Murshidabad), (Election held on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2008) and 4. Election commission of India website:- [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in)

In the above table (6.10), the data shows that in the following years from 1998 to 2008 the Muslims are contesting the elections regularly and elected in all the three tiers of Panchayat raj elections. The result in Suti II block shows that competitive electoral politics has erode all the class solidarity of the community hence showing a fair turn up in registering their names in the elections.

**3.1. Reasons behind Political Participation of the Bengali Muslims in the District**  
Political participation is an important aspect of political culture and the individuals take part in the political process so that their actions are going to have an influence on politics in

some way. It is one of the ways in which the citizens can contribute to their communities and be an active member of society. Various forms of participation includes voting, attending a rally, signing a petition or sending a letter to a representative, contesting elections, taking part in election campaign, contributing to election fund, attending election meetings, distribution of posters, blogging about a political issue, joining as an activist, acting as interest group or public consultations. But the most common forms of political participation include voting, protest and public consultations.

In a democracy voting is the single most important form of political participation<sup>13</sup> that a person can take part in because it ensures that politicians are elected by the people rather than being assigned to their positions of power by someone else. Through protest individuals can express their opinions with the hope that their actions will influence or initiate change in a particular area of politics. Public consultations is another form where meetings are organized where ordinary citizens get the chance to meet with the politicians or elected officials in order to make their opinions and feelings known. This often motivates an individual to contest an election from the party of his own choice and to get elected as representative of the people. As long as the activity involves ordinary citizens expressing their opinions and views towards politics we can probably assume that it is a form of political participation. Political participation<sup>14</sup> gives opportunity to every citizen to express their political beliefs so that they might influence others. These civic activities are known as political participation and they are a critical part of democracy. Political participation includes knowledge and interest in politics, identification with the political unit, sense of political competence or efficacy, sense of civic duty and political behavior as well. Expressing support for government<sup>15</sup>, working in a government project, voting in ceremonial elections is considered as participatory acts.

From the West Bengal Panchayati Raj Election result, it must admit that the Bengali Muslims are taking part in the political process in maximum number in terms of contesting elections or through casting votes. In 1978, in first Panchayati Raj Election among 56.65% of Muslims voters, 56% of them cast their vote in Gram Panchayat election. Among 59.79% of Muslim voters, 59% of them cast their vote in Panchayat Samiti election. Among 62.03% of the total Muslim voters, 61.6% turned out in the Zilla Parishad election. Similarly the election results in these years – 1983, 1988, 1993 shows that the maximum Muslim voters cast their votes. But from the year 1998 till 2008 shows a slight declining in voting percentage. The Gram Panchayat election result of 1998 shows that out of 63.32% Muslim

voters, 56.87% cast their vote. In Panchayat Samiti election 54.17% votes polled, out of 61.69% of total Muslim voters. In Zilla Parishad election out of 59.54% of total Muslim voters, 52.01% cast their vote. Hence from the result it may be inferred that in the years in 2003 and 2008 there is a slight decline in voting percentage in the election among the Muslim voters. After studying the election results it may be concluded that from 1998 till 2008 there is a curtailment in delivering votes because the voters become apathetic towards democratic process of the country or they left the place in search of qualitative education or for job opportunity. Hence the election result shows the gradual decline in the voting percentage in the district. In the last 2008 election in Gram Panchayat result there is a curtailment of 5.11% votes, in Panchayat Samiti result there is a curtailment of 5.73% votes and in Zilla Parishad result there is the loss of 5.79% votes from the Muslim voters. Though there is a loss of nearly 5% to 6% votes still the Muslim voters cast their vote in the election showing the fair rate of participation in all three tiers of Panchayati Raj election. Hence the participatory attitude of the Bengali Muslims of Murshidabad in modern democratic societies prove their mindset that they are well establish in the democratic setup of Indian society and participating in all kinds of political activities especially by contesting elections, casting votes and associate them with political parties. They cast vote because participation<sup>16</sup> is not committed to any social goals but is a technique for setting goals, choosing priorities and deciding the process of the goal attainment. It not only communicates the needs and desires of the citizens to the government, but also has other more direct benefits that is receiving educational benefits and receiving the benefits of securing the rights in the society.

The Muslims voted to consolidate themselves politically<sup>17</sup> and for influencing the political process directly. The political leaders from minority community try their best to create a consciousness among the Muslims and make them aware of the problems which the Bengali Muslim community is facing at present. Turnout in election indicates rightly that they try to increase their bargaining power to protect the community rights. The Muslim voters of the district are continuing with their political support towards traditionally developed Congress party and other secular parties. They inculcate the belief among themselves that Congress as a national party will ensure the rights of the Muslim community. After the desolation of Muslim League, they developed a sense that congress as a national based party would ensure the rights of the Muslim community though the party were mostly dominated by the members of majority community. From 2008 election

onwards, the data shows the rise of other political parties<sup>18</sup> like All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), Welfare Party of India (WPI) and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), but these parties could not secure a stable position in this district though these parties had a strong base in other parts of India. Perhaps Muslims in this district in order to make their political base strong do not support the newly formed party in the district. From the election result it may be opined that the Muslim populations with a commanding majority in the district want to influence the politics of the country in a significant way. This can be well interpreted with the election results of 1978 and 1983, where the Muslims supported the CPI (M) candidates but after that from 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003 and 2008 election<sup>19</sup> result shows Muslim's support for Congress party.

The participatory attitude of the Bengali Muslims of Murshidabad proved that they are well accomplished with the norms of democracy<sup>20</sup>. They believe in political participation as it is the way to express the needs and desires of the citizen to the government or as the means of receiving the benefits of the community<sup>21</sup>. Successful turnout in the election proves that competitive electoral politics has probably begun to breakdown the isolation of the Muslim electorate from the political process. More than one Muslim candidate contesting from the same constituency indicates that the Muslim community does not operate as a monolithic<sup>22</sup> entity (community isolated from other major community) in politics. It also proves that those who contesting the election do not depend on the support of the community but contest the election out of their own social needs. The election result also shows their change in mentality that is communal solidarity is clearly being pressurized by electoral competition. Contesting an election also broadens their horizons, extends their area of concern and hence promotes the slow integration<sup>23</sup> of the community with the secular society. As table no. 6.10 shows that in the years 1998, 2003 and 2008 election many candidate from Muslim community are contesting the election and are get elected in all three tiers. The Muslim community through their support towards national parties wants proper empowerment, governmental jobs, and educational facility and wants to get rid of inequality, social insecurity, all kinds of minority syndrome and want to achieve honor and prestige from society. Though political parties having minority overtone<sup>24</sup> sometimes misuse community's sentiment still the Bengali Muslims have faith in India's largest inclusive democratic tradition and hence try to remain with the political party in power.

Hence it may be rightly conclude that consociational theory of Indian democracy proves that participatory democracy can work successfully in plural multi-ethnic societies because autonomy and rights<sup>25</sup> of all groups are given priority. The Muslim community of Murshidabad district want to live in a secular and democratic society, they feel the need for inter-democratization in the society, and they even want to understand the dialectical relations<sup>26</sup> between majority and minority community and try to remove minority complexity from within the community to integrate with the Indian society. Electoral participation of the Muslim community of Murshidabad proves that the community is truly integrating<sup>27</sup> into the Indian society. Through voting they want to ensure a stable and secure government in order to secure their rights in the society. Participatory acts of this district prove that the electoral system is a pillar of Indian democracy and the community's participation in the election proves that they believe in Indian democracy and they have enough confidence in the election system.

The election result and the participation of the Muslim voters in this district shows that state is becoming a more important agent in social mobilization<sup>28</sup> of the electorate by creating political awareness, exposure to campaign, propaganda, political involvement through modern means of communication all motivate the voters to cast vote for national parties of their own choice. To be more precise it may say that electoral participation exposed the fact that the Muslims are merging towards integration because of their basic faith in the democratic regime. The Bengali Muslims remain so long marginalized within their own community<sup>29</sup> by upper caste Muslim elite (Ashrafs) and this marginalization of the Bengali Muslim community (Atraps) act as a political force for the wider participation in electoral process. Identities, individual or collective are always constituted in relation to a group or in imagination to a specific community. Here the interesting thing is that the Bengali Muslims socially and culturally so distinct from the non Bengali Muslims that no concrete social and group ties develop between them. This is the reason that communal politics do not motivate the Bengali Muslims or force them to act with communal fervor towards Indian state and politics. Due to this fractured identities<sup>30</sup> between the Bengali and non-Bengali Muslims the Muslims citizens try to obtain a secure and stable position in the domain of Indian politics. Hence the Bengali Muslims of this district adopt the national values and integrate into political process. Bengali Muslims develop an integrative attitude towards Indian democracy<sup>31</sup> from very early times, where they are influenced by Bengal's syncretism, its tradition and its plural culture and hence after partition also they adopt an

integrative attitude - a concept to adopt every norm, ideas and principles of India's democracy. Hence their electoral participation proves that though there are inadequate Muslim representations in India, but in West Bengal (Murshidabad) it shows cent percent turnout in elections. Muslims in Murshidabad thus cast vote in all Panchayat elections and through political interaction they try to develop a good relation with politicians and bureaucrats to ensure their benefits in the society.

The Bengali Muslims of Murshidabad district develops a secular identity<sup>32</sup> and hence they no longer sustain the myth of 'collective monolithic group'<sup>33</sup> as portrait by non-Muslims and parties having communal or minority overtone rather the Bengali Muslims show secular mentality by supporting the national parties as it shows in all the election results of Panchayati Raj. They want to prove that active participation will make their position strong and they will able to act as a dominating force<sup>34</sup> in Indian politics. Our state through myths of origin (India is the land of both Hindus and Muslims), constitutional law and practices fosters an idea of citizenship within the Muslim community that erodes all kinds of distinctiveness from Muslim mind so that every single Muslim can adopt an idea of oneness. Hence through participation<sup>35</sup> in election, the Bengali Muslims shows that they adopt a unique and diversified culture of Indian tradition and integrate within the domain of politics.

Indian democracy possesses multicultural trend<sup>36</sup> and includes all cultural groups into one unit and the Bengali Muslims has integrated in the process. The Muslim society in Bengal is formed in an inclusive way within its own community. In India the faith and confidence of the minority community develops because our state provides fundamental rights and privileges for minorities as well as for all from article 25-30 in our constitution. Political rights of all individual are well secured by the Indian state. The process of growth and economic development creates huge pressure on the state and state fails to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots which result in unequal development and hence some groups lag behind in the developmental process. The Muslim community faces the challenge of higher levels of relative deprivation in different spheres of life and remain as under-privileged group. In studying the political participation of the Muslims in Murshidabad district where they are relatively in backward position in all spheres like in education, in economic sphere and cultural activities, it is find the community cast vote regularly in the panchayat elections to show their faith in the democratic governance. Sometimes the community becomes the victim of vote battle. The leaders ensure support to

the community representative but refused to give them formal recognition in all spheres of activity or in mainstream politics. Hence in 1971 and from 1972-1977 in West Bengal Legislative Assembly election<sup>37</sup> the Muslim voters supported the Muslim League candidates for example Khondokar Nazrul Hoque won the election from Beharampur. The Muslim League leaders remain successful in mobilizing the masses of the district in their favor to secure a favorable position in politics. These leaders make promises to satisfy the needs of the community like to provide good opportunity in education, jobs and to ensure various financial benefits like minority scholarships. They try to limit the cultural interaction which lead to homogenization of the community and make the gulf of majority and minority more prominent. To make the community distinct from others they tried to draw an artificial boundary of 'us' and 'they' in the society. But in the district with the exception of these years the leaders from secular parties has won the election. From 2006-2011 assembly election Moinul Hoq from congress, Toub Ali from CPI (M), Jane Alam from RSP, Abul Hasnat from RSP, Abu Hena from congress, Anisur Rahaman from CPI (M), Unus Sarkar from CPI (M), and Emani Biswas from TMC has won the election. This proves that the Bengali Muslim community of Murshidabad district possesses an inclination to cast vote for secular parties than parties having minority overtone.

A cursory view of the state of affairs among Muslims reveals that the community<sup>38</sup> by and large remains trapped in feudalized social mores, suffers from ghetto-mentality and inferiority complex and is unable to meet the challenges of modernity. It is indeed paradoxical that the community desires to live in a secular and democratic polity without democratizing itself and without visualizing any role for itself in the wider agenda of democratization of Indian society and state. The Muslim community of Murshidabad feels the need for inter democratization in the society and to understand the dialectical relations between majority and minority. Hence the community believes that they shall fight minority complex<sup>39</sup> from within the community so that they can remove their social differentiation from 'others' (majority) and to eliminate the existence of a single collective<sup>40</sup> 'Muslim mind', and can integrate with the plural majority of Indian society. Electoral participation of the Muslim community proves that they are truly integrating into the democratic fabric of the society at large. Hence it may infer that through participation in electoral process they organize themselves politically and express 'group solidarity' in a meaningful way. The community behaves as a 'cohesive political unit' and vote much more than other communities to influence the electoral process and to realize group goals.

Indian democracy may be a puzzle for those who support John Stuart Mill's proposition that democracy is next to impossible in multi ethnic societies<sup>41</sup> and in linguistically divided country. India's democracy is characterized by grand coalition government or consociation model that includes representatives of all major linguistic and religious groups and their rights were secured by the state. But in the district Muslims in political structure does not adhere to the consociational principles rather they were integrated with government's policy of grand coalition which is functioning quite smoothly in the state. Sacchar Committee report<sup>42</sup> states that functioning of the state in an impartial manner is an acid test of its being a 'just state'. But India's developmental process reduces economic and social gaps and provides the space for the minority groups<sup>43</sup> to make their own space. To boost developmental process state tries to reduce poverty level, increase the levels of literacy, education, health and hence state ensures confidence to the minority community. Hence from the election result from 1978-2008 it may infer that the Bengali Muslims show their confidence and faith in Indian state and democracy which ensures rights to all minorities guaranteed under constitutional provisions.

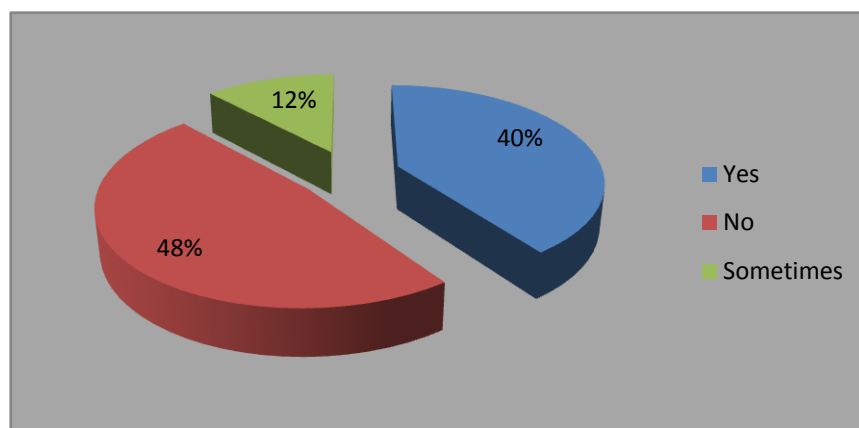
#### **4. Nature of Political Participation of the Respondent in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat - A Brief Empirical Analysis**

With a view to assess the political participation of Muslims in the district a survey research method with semi-structured schedule has been adopted by the researcher the primary objective being to study the political participation and attitudes of Bengali Muslims in the district so far as the secular concept of Indian democracy is concerned. For the purpose, Suti II block has been selected considering the convenience of the researcher in terms of her accessibility to the field of study, the time constraints and other factors that may act as barriers towards conducting the survey honestly and with sincerity. Further in order to keep the sample sizes manageable two Gram Panchayats have been selected from the block adopting the stratified random sampling method on the basis of a development-underdevelopment syndrome. It is in this perspective that the present limited study has been undertaken which is confined to seek political participation and adequacy in representation in Panchayati Raj institution in two gram panchayats – Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur gram panchayat. From Aurangabad 2 gram panchayat one gram sansad Kalitala (Purba and Paschim) has been chosen consisting of 1574 voters from which 768 are male and 806 female. Among 1574 voters the researcher reduced the sample size to 150 in order to collect data regarding political participation through the collection of voter list and applying

systematic random sampling method to obtain data from the respondent. Two kinds of interview schedule with both structured and unstructured questionnaire has been administered to conduct the interview – one for the respondents and other for the elected representative in this gram sansad to collect data from the respondents and political leaders with an aim to study respondent's interest in politics, the degree of their political interest, political ambition, and political awareness, of Aurangabad 2 gram panchayat.

**Figure-6.1**

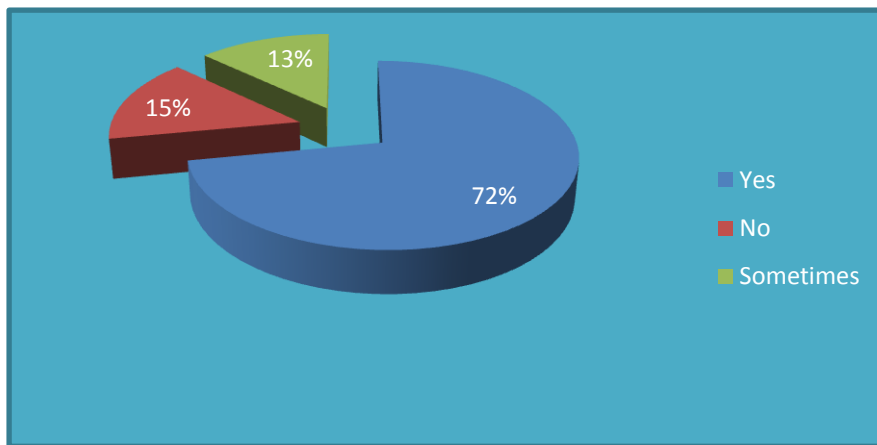
**Interest in Politics of the Respondents**



So far as the interest of people in politics is concerned, it shows that 40% express their interest towards politics, 48% shows no interest in politics and 12% give no answer to it. Those who show interest say that they have interest in election result; they even discuss politics with their friends, keep in touch with the political news watching television and listening to radio, and also express their desire to stand in elections with an objective to bring betterment of their community through political participation. Rest remain as a silent spectator and those who have little or no interest in politics say that politics is nothing but the wastage of time and they need to concentrate on their economic activities and career to ensure their betterment.

**Figure-6.2**

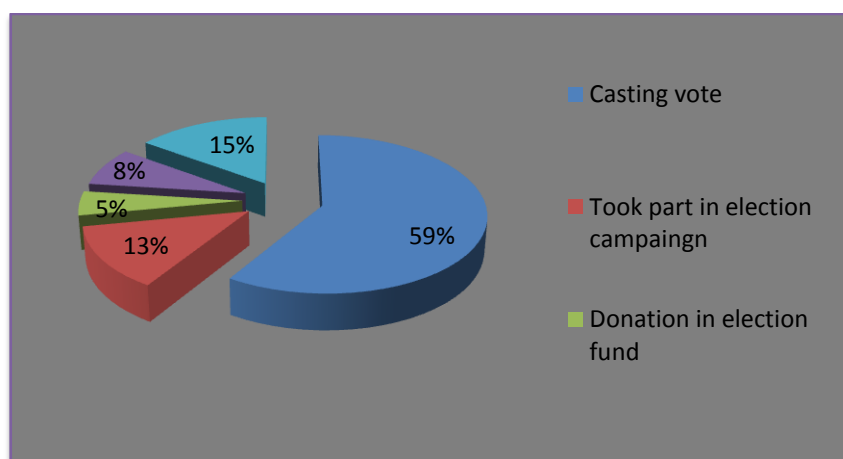
**Electoral Participation of the Respondents**



So far as the electoral participation of the respondent is concerned it is found that 72% of the voters cast their vote in periodic election, 15% do not cast their vote and 13% sometimes cast their vote in the elections. Those respondents who are out stationed participants do not vote regularly, but some who do not cast vote because of their apathy towards voting and lack of faith in democratic governance of the country.

**Figure- 6.3**

**Types of Participation in Politics of the Respondents**

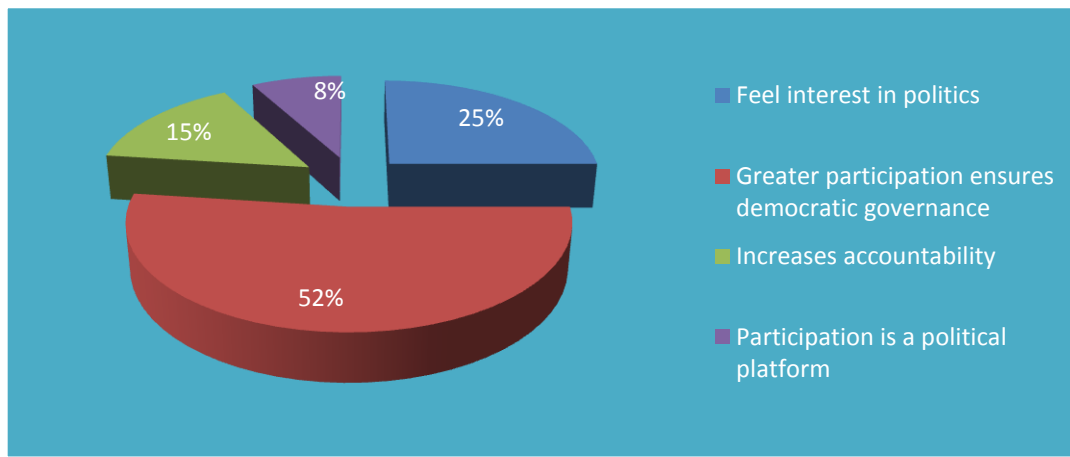


Participation in politics have different variations ranging from casting vote, taking part in election campaign, donate to party funds, selection of the candidate, request others to cast vote in favor of candidate of their choice and collect subscriptions for elections. So far regarding the types of participation in politics is concerned it is find 59% of the electors participate in politics by casting vote, 13% take part in election campaign, 5% donate to

party fund, 8% attend the election meetings and 15% prepare and distribute posters and slips of the respective political parties they work for. Some respondent attend the election meetings, help in organizing election meeting, campaigning the party agenda from door to door to raise political consciousness of the ordinary people towards political parties and elections.

**Figure- 6.4**

**Reasons Towards Political Participation Among the Respondents**

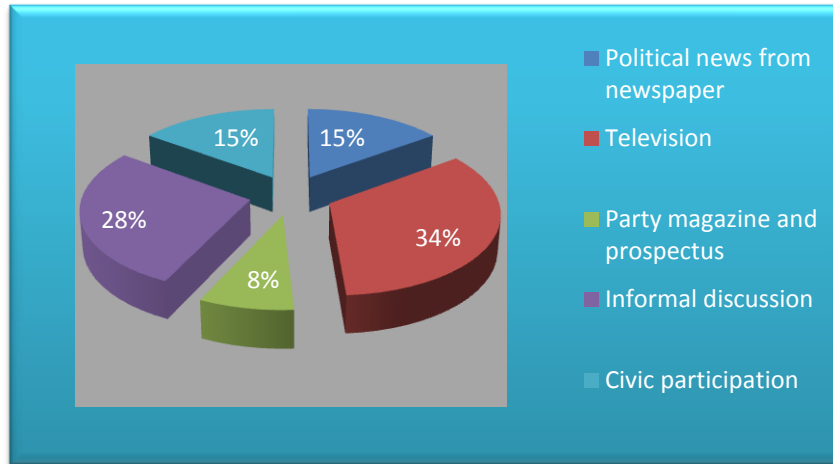


The voters participate in politics because they feel interest in politics, they believe that greater participation means better democratic governance and through attending the meetings of gram sabha, they can express their views and exchange their opinion regarding issues related to politics and elections. Most of the respondents take part in formal participation by casting vote, some in informal participation like donation to party funds or take part in election campaign. So far regarding the reasons towards political participation is concerned we find from the above figure that 8% of the respondent says that participation is a political platform, 15% says it increases accountability, 25% have interest in politics and 52% participate in politics because they believe that participation is a political platform through which their interests will be secured. Through participation in gram sabha meetings they can discuss their problems of their village, can suggest remedies for it and if possible can exchange their helping hands or to assist the government to implement developmental schemes or project for the people. Even through discussion and taking part in organized meetings of the political parties, the common people will be able to know about various schemes of rural developmental programmes and the ways to take maximum advantage from it. Hence people participate in politics. Casting vote according to the respondent is not

the only way to show citizen's responsibility towards government, but the people shall also engage themselves in two-way idea exchanging process between the elected representative and people to ensure better governance.

**Figure- 6.5**

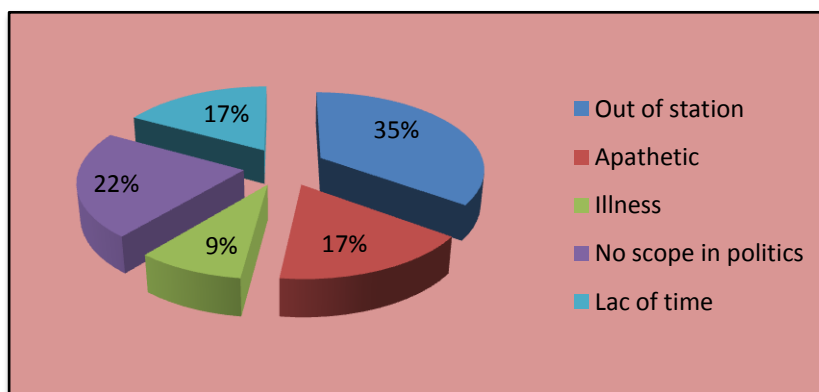
**Agencies that Increases Political Consciousness of the Respondents**



The agencies like newspaper, television, party magazines, informal discussion and civic participation increases political consciousness of the respondents. So far as political consciousness of the respondent is concerned 15% get aware through news in paper, 15% through civic participation, 34% through television, 8% through party magazines and 28% in informal discussion. All these agencies raise the political consciousness of the respondent in the district and motivate the voters to cast vote meaningfully in all elections.

**Figure- 6.6**

**Reasons for Lack of Participation of the Respondents**

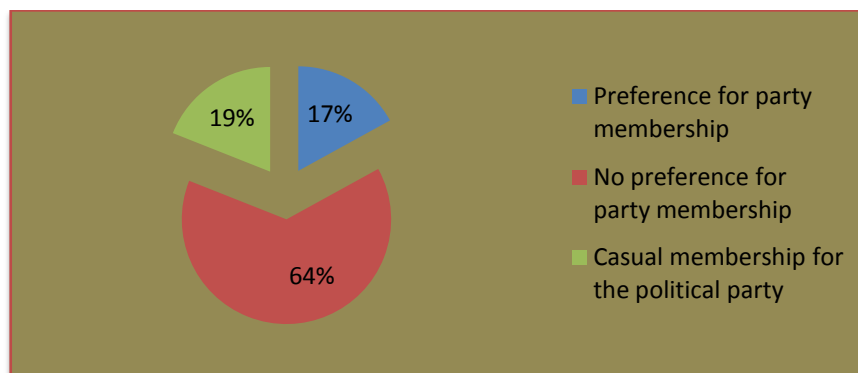


In conducting the interview in Aurangabad 2 gram panchayat, the researcher finds that out of 150 respondents, 23 of them do not cast vote. In the above figure 23 respondents is taken as 100% who do not cast vote. So far as reasons for lack of participation of the respondents

is concerned 17% do not vote due to lack of time, 35% do not vote because they are out station candidates, 17% are apathetic towards voting, 22% feel that there is no scope in politics and hence they feel no interest towards political participation because it is nothing but the wastage of time and 9% do not participate due to illness. Apathetic voters opine that politics give no scope to the citizen and they themselves have to find ways for their good future and casting vote will not simply change their life and status. Hence they believe that it's better to think to lead a better future, to find ways of economic development rather in wastage time in casting vote. This is also true that the respondents who do not reside in the village due to education or job purpose can not vote in all the elections. These are the causes for not participating in politics.

**Figure- 6.7**

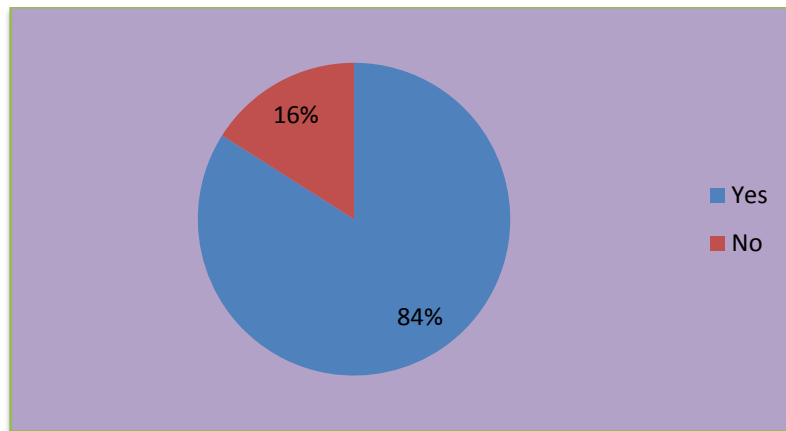
**Preference for Party Membership of the Respondents**



In this gram panchayat the voters are all aware of the parties contested and wined seat in last panchayati raj election in 2013 from their area. The respondents are all conscious of the name of their gram panchayat prodhan elected from their area, MLA from Suti 2 block and elected representative of Zilla Parishad and Sabhapati of Panchayat Samiti. The respondents are also aware of the party affiliation of the elected representative from their area and also aware of their political activities. To be precise the respondents are all politically conscious voters and are not strongly affiliated towards any particular political party. So far as preference for party membership of the respondent is concerned out of total respondents only 17% has party preference, 64% has no party preference and 19% has casual membership. Most of the respondent is casual party workers; they join party rally or campaign for the party, distribute slips, posters from door to door for some monetary gains. But most of the respondents try to remain aloof from politics. The respondents in this GP are politically conscious voters and change their views according to the activities of the party and elected representative in their area.

**Figure- 6.8**

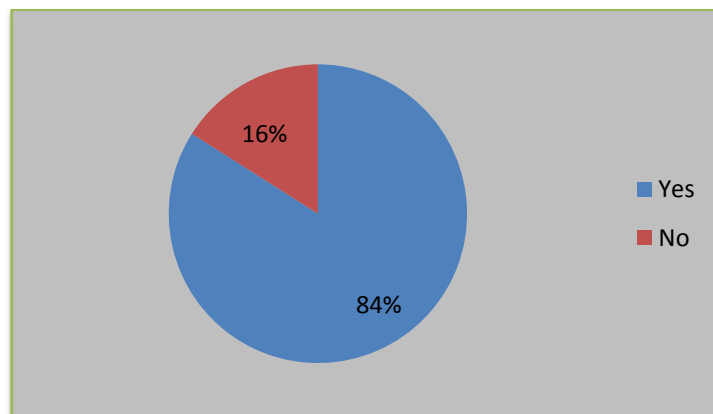
**Interest in Election Result of the Respondents**



So far as the interest of the respondent in election result is concerned 16% of the respondents opine that they have no interest in election result but 84% shows interest in election result. The respondents say that they are not satisfied with the candidate who stood in the election and they are not suitable to contest or win the election. Most of the people vote to a specific party and not to the candidate. Sometimes the elected candidates lack in administrative knowledge hence can not ensure benefits for the people of the area. Others who show interest in voting result remain satisfied with the election result because they believe that the elected representative will ensure benefits to the people.

**Figure- 6.9**

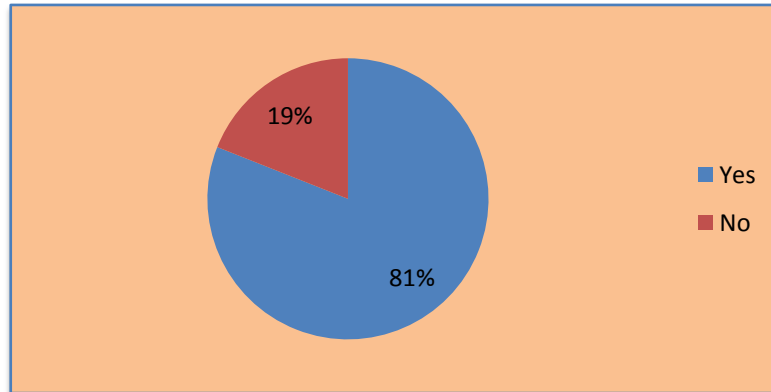
**Awareness of Rural Development Schemes Among the Respondents**



So far as the awareness of rural developmental schemes is concerned 84% of the respondents are not aware of these governmental schemes. Most of the people are literate in this gram panchayat and know all the rural schemes like IAY, MGNREGA, NSAP, and take advantage of these schemes like they receive house building loan, widow and old age

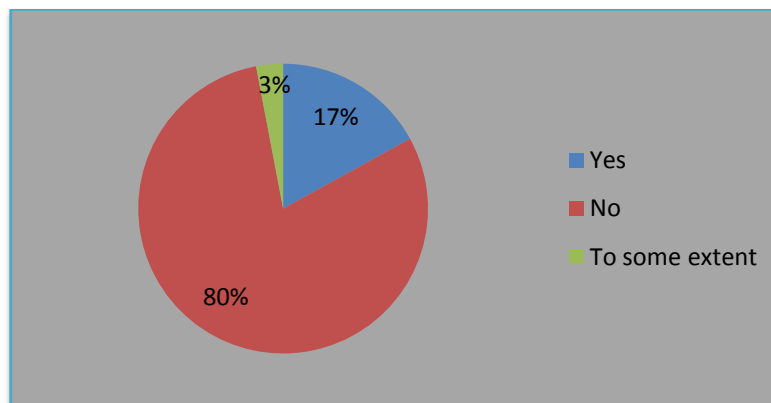
pension, receive medicines and dietary supplements for the children and pregnant women of the village from panchayat office and funds for house building purpose.

**Figure- 6.10**  
**Respondents Opinion of Receiving the Benefits of 100 days Work**



So far as the benefits of 100 days work is concerned 19% do not receive this benefits of 100 days work but 81% receive the benefits from the government. The migrant workers who do not reside in the village, their names have not been enrolled properly and they possess no job card. Rests of the respondent who possess valid job card receive the benefits of 100 days work in their area, and they are aware of various governmental schemes.

**Figure- 6.11**  
**Respondents Opinion of Receiving the Assistance from GP Prodhan in Economic**



So far as assistance from the prodhan in respective gram panchayat is concerned the respondents say that they are not getting any assistance due to central negligence in delivering funds to the state. 80% of the respondent says that the Gram Panchayat prodhan cannot help them in economic gains rather they have to find ways through their own initiative. 3% says that to some extent Gram Panchayat prodhan is responsible because he can channelize funds for 100 days work, 17% says that prodan is responsible for enrollment

of names of the individual, to provide them with job card and even responsible for creating job demand and space for the people so that apart from beedi making the people can receive the benefits of 100 days work from the government to ensure their economic gains in an area where there is lack of industry and agriculture.

To see the strong inclination towards participation on the part of the respondent in this gram panchayat, the researcher ask the people whether public opinion has any impact on the functioning of the government or individual's participation in politics and voting, the respondent agree with the researcher. Friends, family members, discussion of politics with aged person of the locality shapes individual's political attitude. Educational level also influences individual's political behavior. Public opinion sometimes motivates the functioning of the government for example in gram sabha meetings when some proposals are given meant for public welfare then it may or may not influences governmental decision. As the people of Aurangabad 2 GP is educationally and economically developed possess political consciousness and interests, joined gram sabha meetings regularly, keep touch with political news discuss politics with friends and civic participation is high in this area which make the respondent politically aware which we find among the respondents through their active participation in politics.

#### **4.1 Nature of Political Participation of the Respondent in Umrapur Gram Panchayat – A Brief Empirical Analysis**

Political participation determines and shapes the political life and hence participation is defined as a civic duty. Political participation implies those actions of citizens by which they seek to influence or to support government and politics. Realizing the importance of participation it must be mentioned that political awareness is the essential precondition for political participation. Here the researcher tried to find out political interest of the respondent which is closely associated with their political ambition. An individual with some positive interest in politics may have some political ambition it necessarily does not require any political background. The researcher also tried to analyze the degree of political interest among the respondent. In this study, the researcher also focused on the partisan preference which is the necessary prerequisite for political participation. It is partisan preference which actually provides the basic impetus for participation in politics.

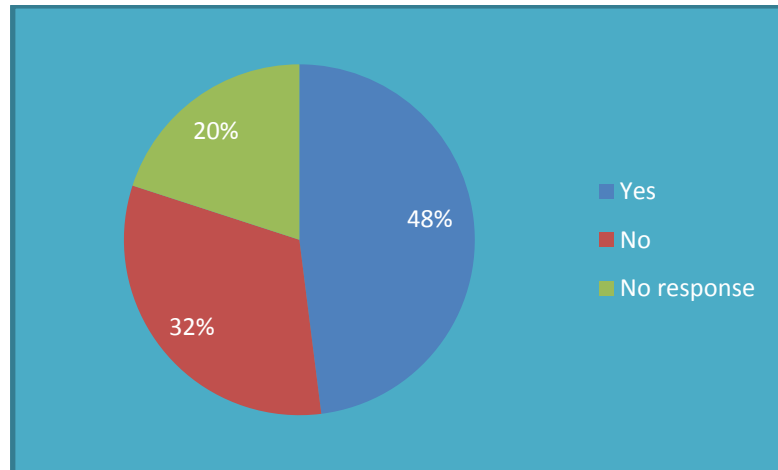
The researcher has attempted to examine the sense of political efficacy of the respondents because it is a kind of subjective feeling of individuals that if they so desire

they can affect the decision making process which is positively related to participation. Political efficacy is the feeling that political and social change is possible and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change. To make an analysis of political consciousness of the respondent, the researcher has undertaken a survey method to assess whether the opinion of the voters has any impact on government or whether they have a proper understanding about the working of panchayati raj institution.

Umrapur GP has been selected purposely by the researcher to study the nature of participation as the most underdeveloped gram panchayat in Suti 2 block. From this gram panchayat one gram sansad Sahajadpur Paschimpara has been selected which has the total voters of 1083 from which 536 are male and 547 are female voters. From this area the researcher has select the sample size of 100 through systematic random sampling method from voter list. Here research has been conducted with both open and closed ended questionnaire to obtain an empirical analysis of political participation of the respondent in Umrapur gram panchayat.

**Figure- 6.12**

**Interest Towards Politics Among the Respondents**

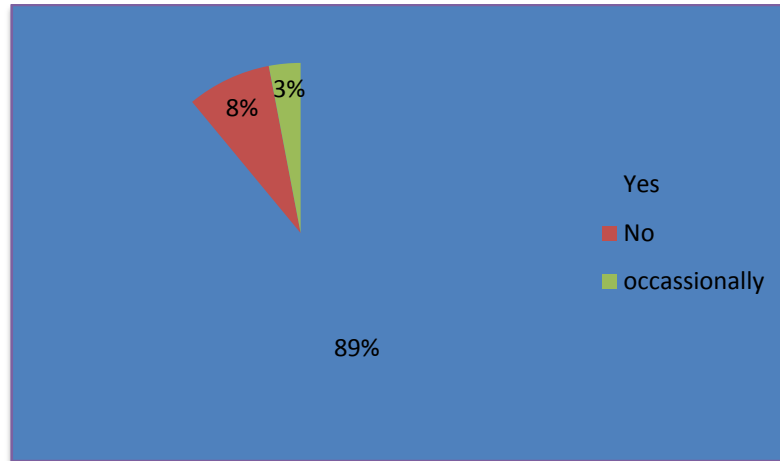


So far interest towards politics is concerned in Umrapur gram panchayat, 32% of the respondent express that they possess no interest in politics, 20% remain silent regarding their interest in politics and 48% says that they have interest in politics. Due to low political knowledge, low educational attainment the respondent could not provide any answer whether they possess any interest in politics or not. 48% voters say that they feel vote is their political right in a democratic country and hence they take part in active politics and

have lot of interest in political matters. Rest of the apathetic voter expresses no interest in politics.

**Figure- 6.13**

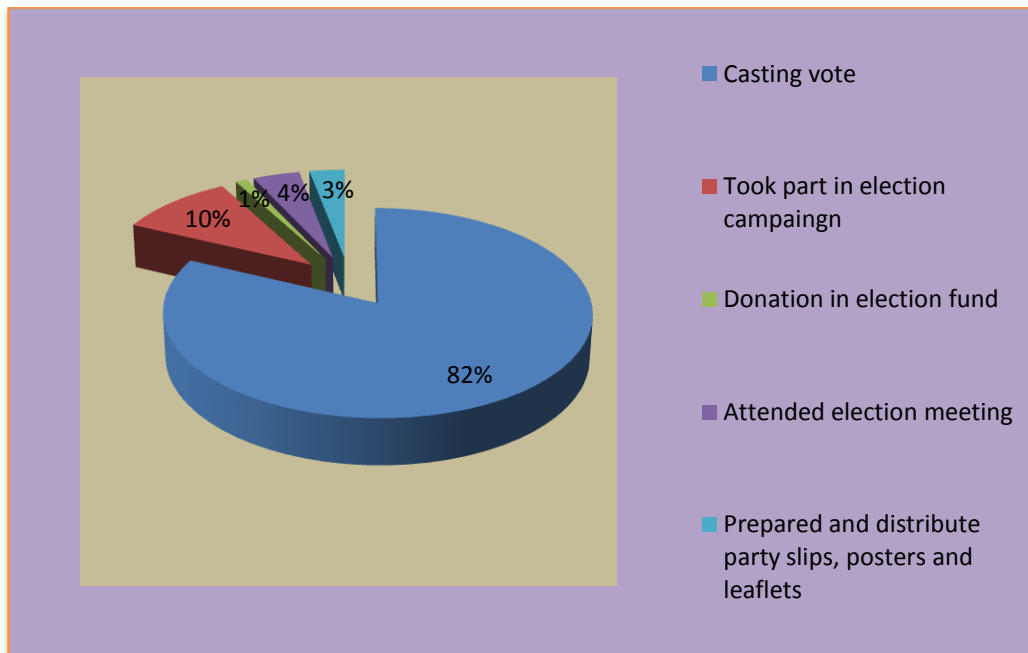
**Respondents Interest in Casting Vote in Election**



Umrapur gram panchayat is economically and educationally is in backward position. So far as electoral participation of the respondent is concerned 89% of the respondent cast vote as they feel that vote is the right of every citizen to express their ideas, 8% do not vote because they feel that vote makes no difference in their life and status 3% occasionally vote because they do not reside in the area but comes occasionally. Vote to these respondents of this area comes as an occasion, they like so much of gatherings, election campaigning for the party and they feel an urge to cast vote. They believe that through voting they can make a difference in the governmental work which will bring development in the area. It may be inferred that the respondents are very much loyal to the candidates and they cast their vote to express their opinion.

**Figure- 6.14**

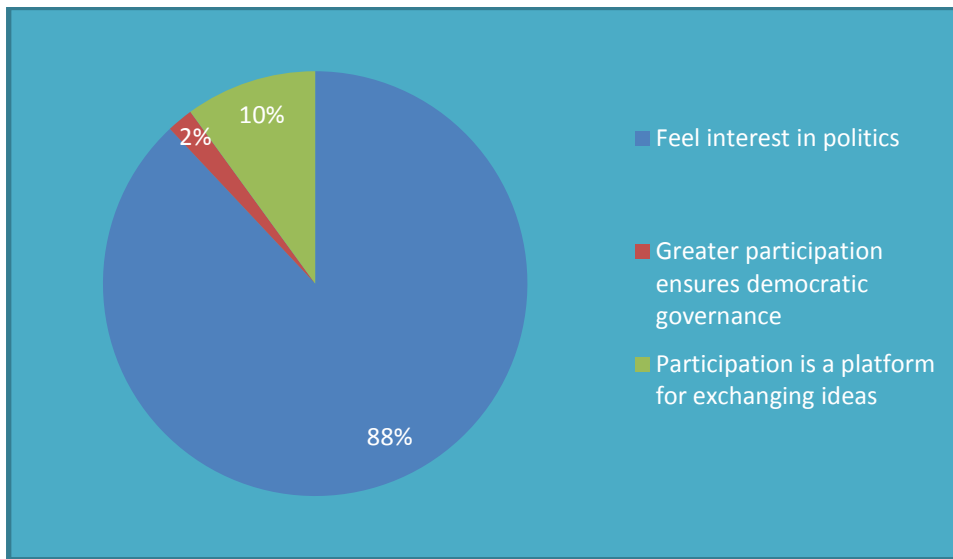
**Types of Participation in Politics Among the Respondents**



The respondent of this area participate in politics by casting vote, took part in election campaign, donate to election fund, attend election meetings and prepared posters and slips for the party and distribute it from door to door to make the people conscious about politics in this region. The respondents opine that through participation in politics the problems of their GP will be focused and proper attention will be given to bring development in the area. Most of the respondent is ignorant about good governance, the function of welfare state and are not conscious about their rights. They participate in politics but in a passive way. Most of the voters in this area are manipulate by the political leaders or mohalla leaders with whom the voters share their problems. The respondent cast vote to those candidates to whom they are directed to cast vote. In most of the gram sabha meetings the respondents remain silent or agree with the views of their elected representative in their gram panchayat. So far as a type of participation of the respondent is concerned 82% only cast vote but remain aloof from all political activities. 10% take part in election campaign, 1% make donation in election fund, 4% attend the election meeting or the meeting of the gram sansad to discuss political issues and 3% involve in preparing and distributing slips, posters and party leaflets at the time of election to raise political consciousness of the voters in this backward area.

**Figure- 6.15**

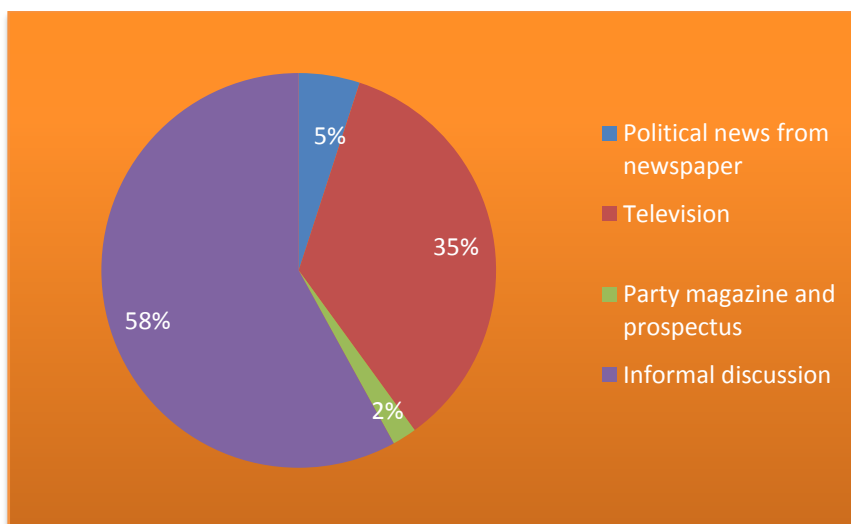
**Responses of the Respondents Towards Political Participation**



So far as the responses of the participants is concerned 88% have interest in politics so they participate, 2% feel that greater participation ensures democratic governance and 10% feels that participation is a platform for exchanging ideas within the elected representatives and the people for better functioning of government. Political participation is a way through which they can express their grievances and secure their rights.

**Figure- 6.16**

**Agencies That Increases Political Consciousness Among the Respondents**

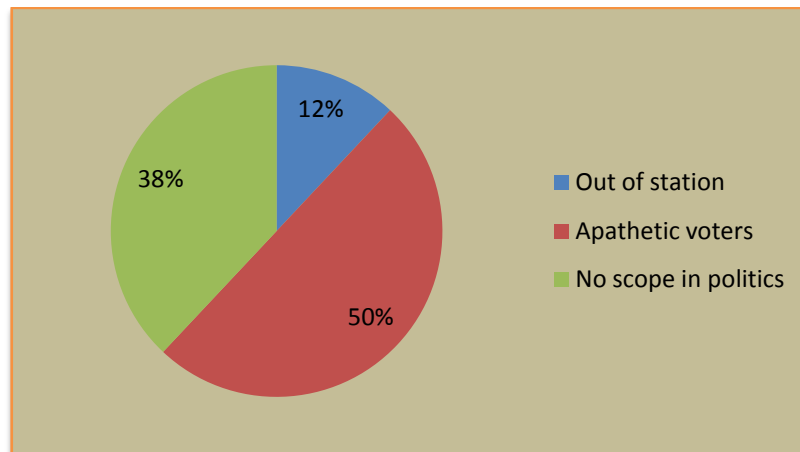


The above figure shows 58% gain political awareness through informal discussion, 35% through television, 5% from newspaper and 2% from party magazines and prospectus. Here civic participation plays an important role in rousing political consciousness of the people. People after regular prayer in mosque, gather together and engage in political discussion

through which they become aware of the activities and functioning of various political parties. Through this group discussion the respondents become aware of the national and international news to gain the political consciousness in this underdeveloped area.

**Figure- 6.17**

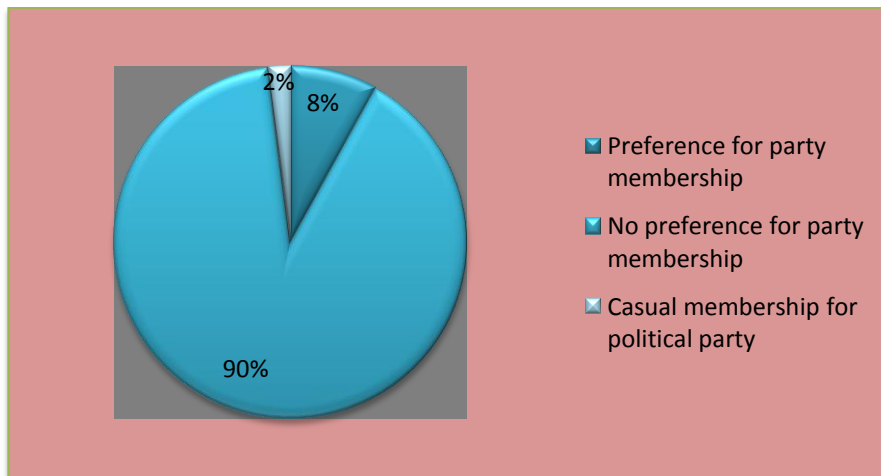
**Reasons for Lack of Participation Among the Respondents**



In conducting the interview in Umrapur gram panchayat, the researcher finds that out of 100 respondents, 8 of them do not cast vote. In the above figure 8 respondents is taken as 100% who do not cast vote. So far as reasons for lack of participation of the respondents is concerned in this gram panchayat 50% of the respondents are apathetic voters, 12% can not vote because they are outstation voters and 38% feel that there is no scope in politics. Some respondent do not vote because they do not like party candidate. Though they know that casting vote is their political right still does not vote because they possess no faith in democratic governance which is full of corruption. Some voters opine that due to family problems or illness they do not cast vote, and some of them say that they do not understand politics so they do not cast vote.

**Figure- 6.18**

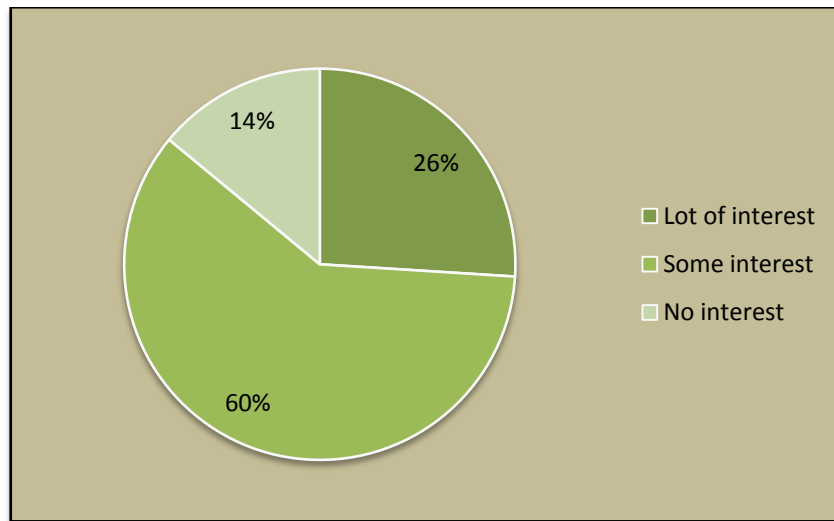
**Preference for Party Membership Among the Respondents**



So far as preference for party membership is concerned party loyalty in this GP is very strong. Here the CPI (M) candidate has won the panchayat election and the candidates motivate the people in such a way so that they develop a strong party preference in this GP. Moreover the educational attainment of the respondent is low so they get easily motivate by the party activist. Hence 90% of the voters have strong party affiliation, 2% possess casual party affiliation and 8% has no preference for any particular party. Most of the respondents in this area believe that the party they prefer will ensure development like construction of tube wells in their area, will run charitable society to provide ambulance at free of cost, provide safe and pure drinking water, maintain the roads which has been neglected by the state government so far and hence they possess a strong party loyalty and preference towards left party in this area. Those who possess little or no party affiliation feels that party affiliation or loyalty to one particular party hinders the way to elect proper political representative who will work for the benefits of the people in this backward region.

**Figure- 6.19**

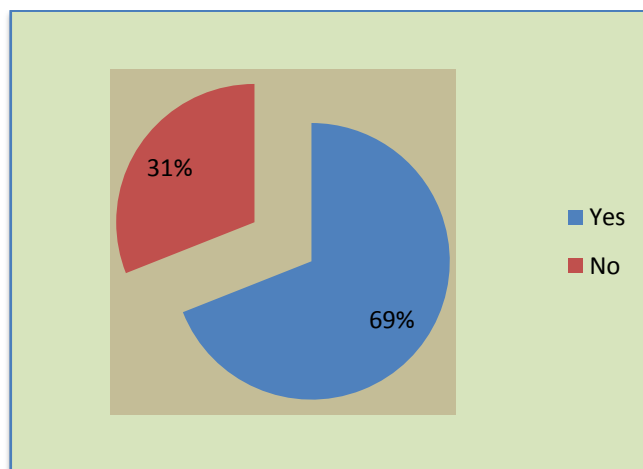
**Respondents Interest in Election Result**



The above figure shows that 60% of the respondent has lot of interest in election result, 26% has some interest and 14% possess no interest in the election result. The respondents are very much eager to hear the name of the winning candidate whom they cast vote and hence though they are not politically conscious still had lot of interest in election result. Those who have no interest in election result are the apathetic voters and possess no or little interest in politics. Some of the respondent has some interest in politics that is they are eager to see the levels of development in their area through the initiative of their gram panchayat prodhan.

**Figure-6.20**

**Respondents Awareness of Rural Developmental Schemes**

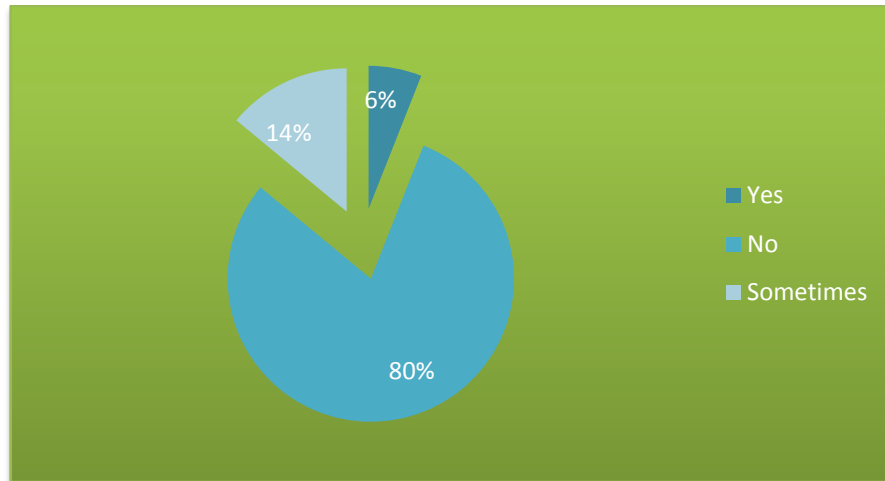


Among the total respondents of this area 69% are conscious about the rural developmental schemes and 31% are not conscious about the rural governmental schemes because of their

low level of political and educational attainment and hence deprived from receiving governmental grants like IAY, MGNREGA and financial assistance given in rural area for Nirmal Bangla Prakalpa mission to construct individual and community toilet.

**Figure- 6.21**

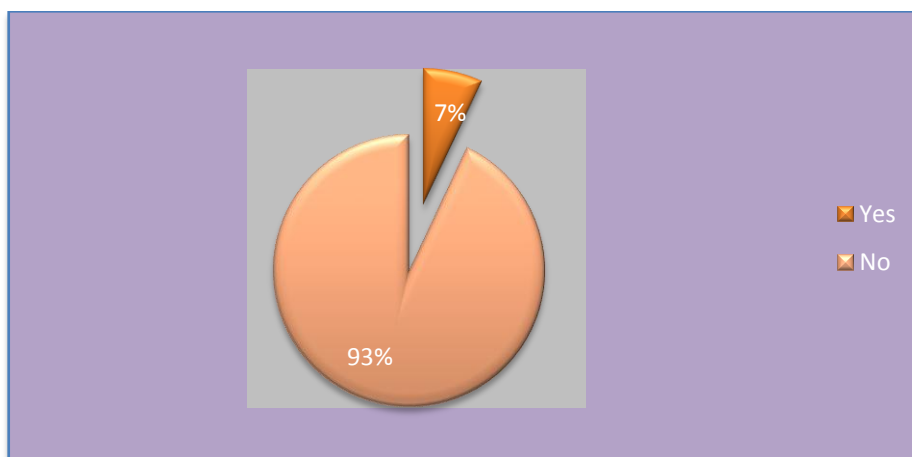
**Respondents Opinion Regarding Benefits of 100 Days Work**



So far as benefits of 100 days work is concerned in the rural area 80% of the respondents say that they do not receive the benefits of 100 days work, 6% says they receive the benefits and 14% says they receive the benefits sometimes. This is an obvious fact that some workers are casual workers they do not have any job card and hence receive no benefits at all, but most of the people receive no benefits because the entire schemes has withheld temporarily from the government and those who receive the aid actually receive it from GP prodhan at his personal initiatives which they misunderstood as governmental benefits in this GP.

**Figure- 6.22**

**Respondents Opinion Regarding Assistance from GP Prodhan in Economic Gains**



The above figure shows that 93% of voters opine that gram panchayat Pradhan do not help in achieving any economic gains and only 7% says that prodhan helps in economic gains of the respondent. The prodhan with his efficiency can divert funds for the area from state government or a central scheme to give aid to the people for building homes or to arrange funds in the pension schemes for the aged people from panchayat office.

To see the inclination towards participation or partisan preference, the researcher make an enquiry to the respondents that whether public opinion has any impact on the functioning of the government or influence individual's participation in politics or in casting votes. The respondents remain indifferent to give any answer to this question. Here the respondent does not participate very actively in gram sansad meetings. Lack of educational and political consciousness among the respondent fails to foster strong public opinion among them. Hence they are easily motivated by the political parties and hence the respondent develops a strong allegiance to party candidates. The respondent belong to the ordinary family and they have no political background nor their family members are involved in politics hence have little knowledge about what politics is and hence says that their prodhan with his own initiative and party funds ensures many benefits to them like help them to construct tube wells; provide drinking water to these remote areas of the district and provide medical facilities to the people. Hence without any judgments the respondents cast vote to these candidates in this gram panchayat.

#### **4.2 Variations in Political Participation in Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur Gram Panchayat – A Brief Summarization**

Competitive politics operating through the system of free elections has drawn millions of very differently situated people into the political process, opening up opportunities for them in sharing and controlling power and in claiming a share in the divisible benefits it offers. Hence people are politically motivated. Variations in political participation occur due to various determining factors or independent variables like participant's educational background, occupation, age and income. For the purpose of testing relationship between independent variables and participation reliance has been made on chi-square test to determine how the independent variables determine the political participation of the respondent in Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur gram panchayats. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables has been considered significant both at the .05 and .01

level of significance. If chi-square value is greater than table value then null hypotheses is rejected and if chi-square value is less than the table value then null-hypotheses is accepted.

**Table- 6.11**

**Occupation and Interest in Politics in Aurabgabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

Occupation	Interest in Politics			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	Indifferent	No		
Beedi Workers	55	16	20	90	60
School Teacher	2	-	8	10	7
College Teacher	-	-	3	3	2
Private Job Holders	-	-	15	15	10
Doctor	-	-	1	1	0.5
Lawyer	-	-	1	1	0.5
Student	3	2	20	25	16
Governmental Clerk	1	-	4	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 65.14, df = 14$$

In table 6.11, the researcher tried to find an association between occupation and interest in politics in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of occupational groups and B= three kinds of orientation towards politics in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of eight occupational groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses  $H_1$ : three different kinds of orientation towards politics are associated. The table shows that the observed  $x^2$  value (65.14) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 23.685 and 29.141 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is rejected. From the above test it may infer that there is significant association among various occupational groups and their orientation towards politics in the society in Aurangabad2 Gram Panchayat.

**Table- 6.12****Occupation and Interest in Politics in Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Occupation	Interest in Politics			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	No	Indifferent		
Beedi Workers	32	40	20	92	92
Agricultural Labor	-	6	-	6	6
Doctor	-	6	-	1	1
Engineer	-	6	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 9.37, df = 6$$

In table 6.12, the researcher tried to find association between occupation and interest in politics in Umrapur Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of occupational groups and B= three kinds of orientation towards politics in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of four occupational groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= three different kinds of orientation towards politics are associated. The table shows that the observed  $x^2$  value (9.37) is less than table value of  $x^2$  which is 12.592 and 22.457 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is less than table value so null hypotheses is accepted and there is no significant association among various occupational groups and their orientation towards politics in the society in Umrapur Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.13****Income and Political Ambition in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

Income	Interest for Political Power			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	No	Indifferent		
Below 3000	2	16	36	54	36
30001-5000	8	13	33	54	36
5001-10000	8	11	5	24	16
10001 and Above	15	2	1	18	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 62.05, df = 6$$

In table 6.13, the researcher tried to find association between different income groups and their interest to acquire political power in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of income groups and B= three kinds of expression towards political power in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of four classes of income groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= three different kinds of orientation towards attaining political power are associated. The table shows that the observed  $x^2$  value (62.05) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 12.592 and 22.457 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is rejected and there is significant association among the income groups and their interest towards political power (political ambition) in the society in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.14**

**Income and Political Ambition in Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Income	Interest for Political Power			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	No	Indifferent		
Below 3000	1	36	5	42	42
30001-5000	1	17	6	24	24
5001-10000	5	14	7	26	26
10001 and Above	6	2	-	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

$X^2 = 38.41, df = 6$

In table 6.14, the researcher tried to find association between different income groups and their interest in politics for political power in Umrapur Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of income groups and B= three kinds of expression towards political power in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of four classes of income groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= three different kinds of orientation towards attaining political power are associated. The table shows that the observed  $x^2$  value (38.41) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 12.592 and 22.457 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is

rejected and there is significant association among the income groups and their interest towards political power (political ambition) in the society in Umrapur Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.15**

**Education and Political Awareness in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

Education	Political Awareness			Total	Percentage (%)
	High	Medium	Low		
MA	6	2	-	8	6
Graduation	19	11	5	35	23
Law Graduate	1	-	-	1	0.5
Doctor	1	-	-	1	0.5
Higher Secondary	8	12	-	20	14
Secondary	7	20	8	35	23
Upper Primary	6	9	16	31	21
Primary	8	3	4	15	10
Illiterate	-	3	1	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

$X^2 = 64.14, df = 16$

In table 6.15, the researcher tried to find association between education and their political awareness in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= educational attainment of the respondent and B= three kinds of political awareness in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of nine different levels of educational attainment are independent against the alternative Hypotheses $1$ : = three different levels of political awareness are associated. The observed  $x^2$  value (64.14) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 26.296 and 39.252 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is rejected and there is significant association among the educational attainment and political awareness in the society in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.16****Education and Political Awareness in Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Education	Political Awareness			Total	Percentage (%)
	High	Medium	Low		
MA	-	-	-	-	-
Graduation	1	-	-	1	1
Law Graduate	-	3	-	3	3
Doctor	1	-	-	1	1
Higher Secondary	2	4	1	7	7
Secondary	2	7	3	12	12
Upper Primary	2	3	2	7	7
Primary	-	3	1	4	4
Illiterate	2	22	34	58	58
Some Informal Education	-	-	7	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 46.88, df = 18$$

In table 6.16, the researcher tried to find association between education and their political awareness in Umrapur Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= educational attainment of the respondent and B= three kinds of political awareness in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of ten different levels of educational attainment are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= three different levels of political awareness are associated. Here the observed  $x^2$  value (46.88) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 28.869 and 42.312 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is rejected and there is significant association among the educational attainment and political awareness in the society in Umrapur Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.17****Age and Party Preference in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

Age	Party Preference			Total	Percentage (%)
	Strong	Medium	Low		
18-30	18	14	20	52	35
31-40	19	7	12	38	25
41-50	3	7	6	16	11
51-60	8	8	16	32	21
61-70	6	2	-	8	5
70 and above	4	-	-	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 24.77, df=10$$

In table 6.17, the researcher tried to find association between age and party preference of the respondent in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= age of the respondent and B= three kinds levels of party preference in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of six different category of age groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses  $H_1$ : three different levels of party preference are associated. Hence it is seen the observed  $x^2$  value (24.77) is greater than table value of  $x^2$  which is 18.307 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is greater than table value so null hypotheses is rejected and there is significant association between age and partisan preference in the society in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.18****Age and Party Preference in Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Age	Party Preference			Total	Percentage (%)
	Strong	Medium	Low		
18-30	42	10	4	56	56
31-40	8	2	2	12	12
41-50	9	3	1	13	13
51-60	7	2	2	11	11
61-70	4	1	-	5	5
70 and above	3	-	-	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

$$X^2 = 12.41, df=10$$

In table 6.18, the researcher tried to find association between age and party preference of the respondent in Umrapur Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= age of the respondent and B= three different levels of party preference in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of six different levels of age groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses $1$ := three different levels of party preference in the society are associated. The observed  $x^2$  value (12.41) is less than table value of  $x^2$  which is 18.307 and 29.588 both at .05 and .01 level of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is less than table value so null hypotheses is accepted and there is no significant association between age and party preference in the society in Umrapur Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.19**

**Occupation and Forms of Participation in Politics in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat**

Occupation	Forms of Participation					Total	Percentage (%)
	Cast Vote	Election Campaigns	Donation to Party Fund	Party Activist	Join Election Meeting		
Beedi Workers	52	16	-	14	8	90	60
School Teacher	10	-	-	-	-	10	7
College Teacher	3	-	-	-	-	3	2
Private Job Holder	9	3	-	-	3	15	10
Doctor	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.5
Lawyer	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.5
Student	18	4	-	-	3	25	16
Governmental Clerk	5	-	-	-	-	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

$X^2 = 21.4, df=28$

In table 6.19, attempt has been made to find association between occupation and forms of participation in politics among the respondent in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of different occupational groups and B= 5 different forms of

participation in politics in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of eight different occupational groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= five different forms of participation are associated. The observed  $x^2$  value (21.4) is less than table value of  $x^2$  which is 41.337 and 56.893 both at .05 and .01 levels of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is less than table value so null hypotheses is accepted and there is no significant association between different occupational groups and forms of political participation in the society in Aurangabad 2 Gram Panchayat.

**Table-6.20**

**Occupation and Forms of Participation in Politics in Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Occupation	Forms of Participation					Total	Percentage (%)
	Cast Votes	Election Campaigns	Donation to Party Fund	Party Activist	Join Election Meeting		
Beedi Workers	50	20	-	8	14	92	92
Agricultural Laborer	6	-	-	-	-	6	6
Doctor	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Engineer	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

$X^2 = 6.26, df=12$

In table 6.20, the researcher tried to find association between occupation and forms of participation in politics among the respondent in Umrapur Gram Panchayat. Here are two attributes A= classes of different occupational groups and B= 5 different forms of participation in politics in the society. On the basis of above information, it is to test null hypotheses  $H_0$ ; among the respondent of four different occupational groups are independent against the alternative Hypotheses1:= five different forms of participation are associated. The observed  $x^2$  value (6.26) is less than table value of  $x^2$  which is 21.026 and 32.909 both at .05 and .01 levels of significance. Thus it may be concluded that chi-square value is less than table value so null hypotheses is accepted and there is no significant association between different occupational groups and forms of political participation in the society in Umrapur Gram Panchayat.

Hence while comparing the nature of participation in the two respective GPs it is found that educational attainment is an important variable in determining political consciousness among the respondent in the two GPs. Similarly, income age and occupational status influences the mode of participation and hence we find the differences in the two gram panchayat respectively. In Aurangabad 2 GP the researcher found that high educational level leads to good political consciousness, party preference varies according to age, people with good occupational status do not always take part in all forms of participation but possess high political ambition and people of high income groups have interest in politics have a desire to acquire good political status and possess high sense of political efficacy. On the contrary, respondent's age, income, occupation, education felt an impact on their participatory level. Low education results in low political awareness, no variations in party preferences is found according to the age, whatever is the respondent's occupation they take part in all forms of political participation as it is found in Umrapur GP where educational attainment is very low. Whereas respondent belong to high income groups want to acquire political power and shows much interest in politics. The respondents possess strong sense of political efficacy. Hence the researcher concludes that in electoral politics, respondent's educational level, their age their income and occupational status acts as a strong determining factor influencing the nature of political participation among the respondent and it motivates the respondent towards attending the electoral participations or in other forms of competitive politics in India's democratic system of governance.

#### **4.3 Comparative Study of Nature of Participation in Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur Gram Panchayat**

Democracy finds its meaning only when the politically conscious people participate in choosing the rule makers of the nation. Aristotle considers democracy as the worst form of government because to him democracy is the rule of the illiterate and unaware people. Hence, political consciousness is an important criterion for the successful running and working of a democratic government. In order to understand the quality of working of democracy, it is essential to study the political consciousness of the people because only the conscious people can make a democracy effective. Political; consciousness is not an isolated phenomenon; it includes political interest, sense of political efficacy and partisan choice. Hence, in this section an attempt has been taken to compare the nature of political participation in two gram panchayat – Aurangabad 2 and Umrapur purposely chosen by the researcher as one is developed and the other underdeveloped gram panchayat in Suti 2

block. The researcher intends to analyze the relationship between socio-economic attributes like age, education, occupation, income which creates or lessens interest in politics, political awareness and sense of political efficacy among the respondent in two gram panchayats.

**Table- 6.21**

**Education and Political Consciousness of the Respondent in Aurangabad 2 GP**

Education	Political Consciousness			Total	Percentage (%)
	High	Medium	Low		
<b>High</b>					
MA	6	2	-	8	6
Graduation	19	11	5	35	23
Law Graduate	1	-	-	1	0.5
Doctor	1	-	-	1	0.5
<b>Medium</b>					
Higher Secondary	8	12	-	20	14
Secondary	7	20	8	35	23
<b>Low</b>					
Upper Primary	6	9	16	31	21
Primary	8	3	4	15	10
Illiterate	-	3	1	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table 6.21 it may infer that education is an important variable that increases political consciousness among the respondent. In Aurangabad 2 GP respondents with high level of education possess high political consciousness and hence it is not very easy for the party leaders to mobilize the respondents easily. The respondents are all aware of various kinds of rural developmental programmes like MGNERGA, IAY, 100 days work, old age pension schemes and pensions given to widow. Out of 45 respondents with high educational attainment, 27 of them have high political consciousness, 5 low political consciousness and 13 with medium political consciousness. Out of 55 respondents with medium level of educational attainment, 15 have high, 32 have medium and 8 have low level of political consciousness. Out of 50 respondents with low educational attainment, 14 have high, 15 have medium and 21 have low level of political consciousness. Hence political consciousness varies with educational attainment.

Electoral participation is also high where the electors possess political knowledge. The voters are well concern about the candidates who contest elections from various political parties, can express their interest regarding the electoral result, the developmental works done in the GP by the leaders or the negligence of the GP prodhan in bringing development in the gram sansad. The voters are well aware of the functioning of the government. The electors participate as a conscious voter that is why they are exercising their voting rights and they are well aware whom to cast vote. The voters knew that vote is their political right which gives them the opportunity to choose right and responsible government. They had some expectations that through elections they can choose right and responsible government who will ensure development in the GP like improvement of roads, electricity, drainage system, drinking water, improved schools, medical facilities in the block, facilities in the primary health centers by providing trained nurses, life saving drugs, doctors to ensure benefits for the people. Through party magazine, reading newspaper, watching television (political news) and through civic participation the respondents are well aware of politics. The respondent attends gram sabha meetings to express their views for area development programme, point out the problems of the gram panchayat and even suggest measures to adopt by GP prodhan to ensure development in the area.

**Table- 6.22**

**Education and Political Consciousness of the Respondent in Umrapur GP**

Education	Political Consciousness			Total	Percentage (%)
	High	Medium	Low		
<b>High</b>					
MA	-	-	-	-	-
Graduation	1	-	-	1	1
Law Graduate	-	3	-	3	3
Doctor	1	-	-	1	1
<b>Medium</b>					
Higher Secondary	2	4	1	7	7
Secondary	2	7	3	12	12
<b>Low</b>					
Upper Primary	2	3	2	7	7
Primary	-	3	1	4	4
Illiterate	2	22	34	58	58
Some Informal	-	-	7	7	7

<b>Education</b>					
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6.22 shows that in contrast to Aurangabad 2 gram panchayat in Umrapur there is low political consciousness and low educational attainment among the respondents. Out of 5 respondents attending high educational level, 2 have high and 3 have medium consciousness, out of 19 with medium level of educational attainment, 4 have high, 11 have medium and 4 with low consciousness. Among the respondent of 76 with low educational attainment, 4 have high, 28 have low and 44 have low political consciousness in this GP. Due to lack of education, the respondents are not aware of various governmental projects. The respondents are subject to political mobilization by the leaders also. The respondents do not attend the gram sabha meetings and are not very much aware of the functioning of the government. This is true that all the respondent cast their vote but not according to their political knowledge but they cast vote for the candidate of their choice unanimously in the desire that they can overcome their economic problems. There is very little political apathy in this GP and to the respondent vote comes like an occasion and so they all cast vote though they have very little political knowledge. People with low educational level think that politics is difficult which is beyond their reach and understanding, so they cast vote to the candidate whom they prefer most in their GP. Though this GP is underdeveloped, lacks in all facilities like proper schools, roads and communications, medical facilities, electricity and affected in flood so the respondent lacks proper political environment hence gets easily motivate by the party leaders. Respondents belong to high educational and high income groups lacks in political consciousness in this area. The respondents having good economic status provide their children qualitatively good education outside the district and hence those respondents gradually become apathetic towards politics in the long run even though they are highly educated.

**Table- 6.23****Income and Interest in Politics in Aurangabad 2 GP**

Income	Interest in Politics			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	No	Indifferent		
<b>Low</b>					
<b>Below 3000</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>30001-5000</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Middle</b>					
<b>5001-10000</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>High</b>					
<b>10001 and Above</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that income is another important variable in political participation. In table 6.23, in Aurangabad 2 GP, we find that people in high income groups have interest in politics. Among 18 respondents of high income groups, 16 have interest in politics, 1 has no interest and 1 remains indifferent to politics. Among 24 respondents of middle income group, 15 have interest, 3 have no interest and 6 are indifferent to politics. Among 108 respondents of low income group, 29 have interest, 68 have no interest and 11 remains indifferent to politics in this GP. The respondents, who possess interest in politics cast vote, take part in election campaigns, attend political meetings, attend gram sabha meetings, discuss political issues with friends and relatives, and study political news. Some take part in active politics by motivating the people in casting vote as they think it as their political rights. Respondents belong to high income groups are expose to different media, internet facility and get aware with the political news and hence develop their interest in politics where the people belong to middle and low income groups are deprive from these facilities. Interest in politics also includes political ambition and political efficacy which is also high in this GP among the respondents of high income groups mainly due to high educational attainment which make the respondent politically aware and which creates interest in politics among the GP people. Respondents belong to high income groups also possess high level of political efficacy. Political efficacy may be defined as the feeling that individual's political action does have or can have an impact upon the political process. Participants too believe that individual citizen can play a part in bringing about change in governmental decision. The respondents of this GP share their problem with the elected representative of

the area and try to exert influences on the working of the panchayat. Hence it is the educational and income level of the respondent which makes the sense of political efficacy strong among the respondents.

**Table- 6.24**  
**Income and Interest in Politics in Umrapur GP**

Income	Interest in Politics			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	No	Indifferent		
<b>Low</b>					
<b>Below 3000</b>	17	16	9	42	42
<b>30001-5000</b>	13	5	6	24	24
<b>Middle</b>					
<b>5001-10000</b>	12	10	4	26	26
<b>High</b>					
<b>10001 and Above</b>	6	1	1	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that 48% of the respondents possess interest, 32% possess no interest and 20% are indifferent towards politics in this area. Here from the above table 6.24 it may say that out of 8 respondent of high income group, 6 have interest in politics, 1 has no interest and again 1 respondent is indifferent to politics. Among 26 of middle income group, 12 have interest, 10 have no interest and 4 remain indifferent to politics. Similarly, among 66 respondent of low income group, 30 has interest, 21 has no interest and 15 is indifferent to politics in this GP. Those who are indifferent to politics or possess no interest at all argue that they lost their faith in all governmental activities or in the fake promises of the elected representatives since no development is ensured in the GP which is still consider as most underdeveloped GP in the block. The responded think that casting vote or taking part in politics is nothing but the wastage of time.

In Aurangabad 2 GP the people have interest in politics want to achieve power or to exert their influence on decision making process of the government and want to make other people too politically conscious about their voting rights and political participation. But in Umrapur GP, the respondent of high or middle income group want to achieve political power, have interest in politics but do not have the strong mentality to influence the

governmental decisions and hence do not always take part in political discussion or attend the meetings of the gram sabha. Even the respondent who belong to high and middle income groups have political interest but do not have much interest to rouse political consciousness of the community at large. Rather it is found respondents who belong to high income groups maintains a little distance from the general mass in this area but in Aurangabad 2 GP there is a trend of political assimilation in the society and hence the respondents do not get politically motivated by the leaders but participate in politics according to their own perception. But due to lack of political assimilation in Umrapur the respondents gets politically motivated by the leaders due to lack of political knowledge. Though the respondent have much interest in politics or in acquiring political power sense of political efficacy is not so strong among the respondents due to lack of political assimilation even among the people belong to high income groups. Educational level is low in Umrapur GP and hence no proper mental development and political awareness developed within the respondents. They failed to realize the fact that as a voter they could create a difference in the working of government. Hence they very often attend or do not attend the Gram Shaba meetings out of their political ignorance which acts as a platform for expressing their views to the elected representative. Though the respondent have the desire to acquire high political status, but political ambition is not so strong among the respondents even among the people belong to high income group due to the fact that the GP is mostly underdeveloped with low educational attainment of the respondent and lack of political motivations and knowledge. Most of the respondent in this GP has to work hard for their survival and has to face so many challenges that they do not have sufficient time and opportunity to discuss about politics even for the people who belong to high and middle income groups though many of them possess political ambition.

**Table- 6.25**

**Occupation and Participation in Politics in Aurangabad 2 GP**

Occupation	All Forms of Participation in Politics			Total	Percentage (%)
	Yes	Indifferent	No		
Beedi Workers	52	11	27	90	60
School Teacher	4	-	6	10	7
College Teacher	1	-	2	3	2
Private Job Holders	-	-	15	15	10
Doctor	-	-	1	1	0.5

<b>Lawyer</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Governmental Clerk</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table 6.25 shows that 18 respondents remain indifferent towards participation and feel that participating actively in politics is the wastage of time and energy, 64 of them participate in all kinds of political activities and 68 never take part in any kind of political activities. Hence it may be inferred that occupation does not determine all kinds of participation in politics of the respondent. In this GP respondents like doctor, engineer do not show their interest in all forms of participation. But at the same time some white collar Job holders and students show their interest in politics like school teachers, college teachers and government official. This area is considered as most developed area in Suti 2 block. The respondents who belong to professional section having good status maintains distance from others in the area or stay outside the district for job and thus except casting vote in the election they find no interest or no time for participating in election campaigning, distributing posters, slips of the party in election, donation to election fund or distributing party manifesto from door to door or arranging and attending party meetings. But the other white collared job holders like the government employee, school and college teacher feel that it is their social duty to rouse the consciousness of the local people of the GP and hence take part in all forms of participation.

**Table- 6.26**

**Occupation and Participation in Politics in Umrapur GP**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>All Forms of Participation in Politics</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Indifferent</b>		
<b>Beedi Workers</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Agricultural Labor</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Doctor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Engineer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 6.26 it may be inferred that in this underdeveloped GP it is found that ranging from white collar professionals to agricultural laborer or the beedi workers take part in all forms of participation in this area to increase political consciousness of the respondent. Hence in this GP occupational status do not hinders political participation. Though political efficacy and political ambition is low among the respondent of this GP, but due to the interest in politics the respondents take part in all possible forms of political participation to rouse political consciousness in this underdeveloped and backward region. Rather it is found the agricultural laborers, and the beedi workers express no interest in participation due to their shortage of time or political ignorance.

**Table 6.27**  
**Age and Partisan Preference in Aurangabad 2 GP**

Age	Party Preference			Total	Percentage (%)
	Strong	Medium	Low		
<b>Low</b>					
<b>18-30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>31-40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Middle</b>					
<b>41-50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>51-60</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>High</b>					
<b>61-70</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>70 and above</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table 6.27 it may be inferred that age is another important variable which determines partisan preference in the two respective GPs. In the above table it is found that respondent in varied age groups shows different levels of party preference. Respondents in younger age do not have strong party preference; they change their party preference whereas the respondents in old age have a strong party preference. The respondents of younger age possess more political consciousness, they are aware of political happenings could compare the work of the political parties by studying party ideology and hence change their party preference in compare to the aged voters of this gram panchayat.

**Table 6.28****Age and Partisan Preference in Umrapur GP**

Age	Party Preference			Total	Percentage (%)
	Strong	Medium	Low		
<b>Low</b>					
<b>18-30</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>31-40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Middle</b>					
<b>41-50</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>51-60</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>High</b>					
<b>61-70</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>70 and above</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table 6.28 shows that in this area, the respondent does not have any party preference, here age is not the determining factor. The respondent of both the younger and old age more or less possess a strong party preference. The researcher inferred that due to low educational level, lack of proper exposure to political environment the respondent are easily get politically mobilized and hence fails to develop their own opinion for preferring or not preferring the party. They are guided by the traditional stigma of the society to support the party of majority preference in this underdeveloped gram panchayat.

In this study of political participation of the respondent in these two respective gram panchayat it is found that there are differences in modes of participation in both the gram panchayat – one which is most developed model and the other the most underdeveloped model in Suti 2 block in Murshidabad district and the variables like the respondent's income, education, age and occupation strongly determines the various modes of participation of the respondent in the district.

### **5. An Empirical Study of Participation of the People's Representative of the District**

The concept of leadership is one of the basic and perennial issues of politics. Personality of the leaders, their dominating role and their functions influences the political participation of the voters. Here in this section, the researcher tried to focus on political participation of the

elected representatives of Suti II block. Here an interview has been conducted with the semi-structured interview schedule with the elected representative of this block. The interview covers gram panchayat prodhan, elected representative of Zilla Parishad, Sabhapati of Panchayat Samiti and member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Suti 2 block. The interview aims to collect data from the elected representative to assess their role in satisfying the expectations of the people.

The GP prodhan of Umrapur Rakibul Islam opine that he possesses suitable environment to enter in politics at the age of twenty eight. He organizes gram sabha meetings to know the problems of the people. He tries his best to channelize funds from state government to ensure development in his area. He takes initiatives to receive funds from state government allotted for backward area for development of roads, to improve communication, and to set up primary schools. According to him development of the area depends on political awareness of the leader and he tries his best to impart party's ideology within the people in a right way to build a corruption free political environment. Efforts are taken by him to improve agriculture and irrigation, health centers and to give medical facility in his region. According to him he tries to reduce the gap between the elected representatives and people to run the governmental machinery smoothly. In other GP, in Umrapur and Kasimnagar the prodhan who are elected from CPI (M) party opine that though the region is treated as backward among all the gram panchayats so they receive money from Nirmal Bharat Prakalpa, state funds for building primary schools and to improve the health centers in this region. But they are of opinion that the area is underdeveloped due to poor communication, no well constructed roads, houses, drinking water, and the state government does not pay any attention to bring development in this region, in spite of their demand set forth before governmental representatives and officers. The next underdeveloped GP is Kasimnagar, the prodhan says that he starts politics from 2000 and wins the election in 2013 from congress party. The prodhan Masiur Rahaman says that in Baliaghata and Kasimnagar region, he initiate steps to prevent flood, development of roads, and development of educational institution and arrange medical camps for eye treatment by channelizing funds from state government. He wants to remain as GP prodhan from Congress party and will try to receive funds from state government for developmental schemes for the underdeveloped area.

The GP prodhan of Lakhmipur Alkez Hossain and Bajitpur Farida Yesmin, the prodhan of Mahesail II Nabirul Islam, prodhan of Aurangabad 2 Bablu Hossain win the

election from congress ticket but join TMC later on. The prodhan of Laxmipur Alkez Hossain joined politics at early age but he has wined the elections in 1993, 98 and 2013 as Congress member, but could not bring development in the GP and hence joined TMC to ensure betterment in the GP. As elected representative he says he is bound to ensure development in the area especially to give medical facility to the area people. He channelizes the fund from state government to develop roads after joining TMC and hence intend to bring betterment for the people in the long run. The GP prodhan of Bajitpur Farida Yesmin though wined from congress but joined TMC to bring more funds in her GP. She says she will try her best to deliver ration card to all the people of her GP. She herself faced a lot of trouble in conducting her education due to poor communication and the schools are far from her village, hence she joined TMC, the party in power to motivate government to construct schools for girls and to bring development of the area. The GP prodhan of Mahesail II Nabirul Islam in order to bring betterment in the area intends to provide drinking water, health facility, to stop child marriage and to foster education in the area. To ensure development he later on joins TMC party. He joins the ruling party to receive funds for the developmental program. He has a mentality to work for all members of the GP hence demand 100 days work and registration of the names of the job card holders properly. The GP prodhan Bablu Hossain of Aurangabad 2 GP has change his party membership to initiate developmental and welfare programmes for his GP members. The GP prodhan told the researcher that the people took active part in electoral participation, as their democratic rights and did not face any problem in delivering vote. The leader tries to mobilize the masses during elections in right way. The leader never impose his decision on the common people but try to understand their problems through mutual discussion in gram sabha meetings or by visiting from one house to other.

In Mahesail I GP Rashmoni Das, the prodhan wined the election from congress party and did not change her party affiliation. She opines that she will try to bring the scheme of 100 days work in her GP. She organizes party meetings regularly to rouse the consciousness of the people. The GP prodhan of Aurangabad I Sabina Yesmin from congress, in Jagtai II Krishna Das from congress and in Jagtai I Jadav Singha from congress give the researcher the same answer that they want to bring development in the area. The GP prodhan also face no problem in conducting their duties in their area or in the GP office. But all the 10 GP prodhan of this block told the researcher that developmental schemes are all given by state or central government to the higher authority like zilla parishad and panchayat samiti

member so they all tried their best to bring development, but their power is so limited that they could not solve the problems of the GPs and had to depend upon the governmental funds for the developmental purpose. The prodhan try to motivate the voters to look at politics from positive angle so that through election democratic government can work successfully in the rural areas. The GP prodhan says that true decentralization of power will not be ensure as long as the GP prodhans will be given the economic powers to ensure developments in the area.

Most of the panchayat prodhan opine that they join politics because they have interest in politics and ideological belief of the party. They have a favorable political environment which inspires them to join politics and to ensure development for the people. But most of them have no family background in politics; they just compell to join politics out of party pressure and inspiration or having some motivation to receive political benefits. Most of the GP prodhan has change their party membership after winning the election to get political privileges or to work better for the people. It may be infer that in order to hold more power in politics the gram panchayat prodhan changed their party affiliation. This is true that the leaders tries to bring political consciousness among ordinary masses, organize gram sabha meetings regularly tries to bring development for their area, organize party meetings and organize electoral campaigns. This is very true that the democratic governmentns have been serving with much difficulty due to the mass appeal of the leaders and the exercise of their broad political powers. By personifying new national values and giving adequate attention to developmental activities the leaders encourage the masses for participating in politics. The GP prodhan of Bajitpur, Laxmipur, Mahesail I, and II, opine that centrally sponsored schemes are really helpful for the people of the area, but some scheme has curtailed for the time being for enrolling the name of the candidates in governmental registrar. In Jagtai I and II prodhan told that funds received from central government can not be utilized due to lack of schemes and requirement of work can not be placed properly so the money has to be given back. GP prodhan of Aurangabad I and II say though people are not receiving the benefits of 100 days work but they are receiving benefits from centrally sponsored schemes like house building loan, loan to built toilet in individual house and widow and old age pension.

Anikul Islam, Sabhapati of Panchayat Samiti (Murshidabad district), a CPI (M) candidate has a sound political background. He has come to politics because of inspiration from his father who was a party activist. According to him two-way communication will be

possible through high rate of people's participation. It is through arranging gram sabha meetings it is possible to rouse political consciousness of the people. According to the leader all centrally sponsored schemes shall be utilized properly to give maximum benefit to the people and to increase better governance. He is elected as panchayat samiti sabhapati from CPIM party in 2008 and 2013. From then onwards he channelizes state governmental funds for agricultural development; he undertakes door to door campaign to make people aware of their democratic rights and to increase their motivation towards casting vote during election. He argues that it is true that the Muslims believe in secular politics and extend their hands in successful working of democratic government. He tries to develop good communication in backward area especially in Umrapur and Kasimnagar region and he tries to motivate state government to construct a bridge from Baliaghati to Umrapur for easy communication which is temporarily connected by ferry. He arranges gram sabha meetings regularly to discuss the problems of the area. He tries to enlist the names of those candidates who are not included in BPL list. He says development lacks due to shortage of funds. Government shall share power and funds with the elected representatives so that they could ensure development in the area. Decentralization of power can reduce an invisible gap between the participants and government to ensure development of the district.

The elected representative of Zilla Parishad Mohidul Islam stood and wined the election from congress party and he himself took part in rousing the political consciousness of the people in Suti 2 block. To ensure community development, he tries to divert governmental funds for the development of roads, development of educational institution, arranging free coaching centre for the minority and other backward students of the area. According to the elected representative of the Zilla Parishad the people of the district take part in election, some shows interest for contesting elections and all of them take part in electoral participation. As a responsible citizen they cast vote to show allegiance to the state, they believe that through electoral participation community's overall development will be ensured. The respondent are also aware of the fact that through GP office they can receive the benefits of 100 days work, benefits from IAY (house building) scheme and benefits from MGNREGA scheme of government. It is the duty of the leader to safeguard the interest of the citizen. It is extremely difficult for the leader to generate consent by manipulating public opinion for that it requires a long political apprenticeship. Hence the representative inculcates within the people respect for democratic values and tries to fulfill

the aspirations of minorities. As the leader he tries to promote equal rights for all, and try to empower people politically.

Democracy is a system which accommodates the interest of all people even the minorities is not excluded. But the purity of politics in the post independent era is driven towards nepotism, political corruption and authoritarianism. Democratically elected governments are facing challenges by communal forces and riots. Failure of governmental institutions in promoting the security and protection of the citizen make democracy hollow. This situation compell the marginalize sections including minorities to seek alternatives and thus merge with non-congress coalition government in centre. Hence as an elected member of zilla parishad Mohidul Islam opine that the district people must remain aware of the political undercurrents to fight against the corruption in Indian politics. And he tries to raise the confidence of the people towards secular parties. Indian democracy is committed to social justice that is transparent, accountable to people and adopt constructive and peaceful means to secure the economic and political rights of its citizen. More awareness camp is to be organized to influence the voters to cast more votes to the national party who will promote development for them. He says that well constructed roads, electricity education and health facility shall reach to the remote areas of this block like Umrapur and Kasimnagar gram panchayat. Women's participation in politics is also an important factor in the district. As most of the people of the district belong to beedi workers family he tries his best to secure their future through various developmental schemes given to his office by government. As democracy ensures the political rights of the people it is the duty of the elected representative of the district, to raise political consciousness and direct the masses towards secular politics of the country.

MLA of the district Emani Biswas has elected from the congress ticket from Suti 2 block but later on joined TMC party. Regarding his view towards political participation, he says he himself undertake social work for the community and tries to bring betterment for all. He works as party convener in the district to promote political consciousness so that the Muslims can take part in mainstream secular politics. As a member of legislative assembly, he tries to bring state funds for development of agriculture and fishery in the district. To solve the area problem he joins TMC government to channelize funds for the betterment of the district. He says that the district has communal free atmosphere and all voters take part in election. It is his duty to make people aware of the responsibility of the government towards citizens and at the same time citizen's responsibility towards government. He

possesses grievances against BJP government as the people in the district fail to receive the benefits of 100 days work. He develops Motijhil Project and renews it for tourism industry. For development of the area, he built 4 primary schools and takes initiative to construct Agricultural Marketing Office, takes precaution to prevent river erosion and undertake developmental project in Umrapur GP. He takes several measures to improve health care centers in the area. His priority is to boost economic growth in the region. He says “we didn’t fight war of independence just to get rid of the British – the objective was not merely to alter the hands that were ruling, it was to change the style and way of ruling”. Hence, the mission of TMC government is to remove corruption and its irrepressible menace which corrupt the bureaucracy and governing process. As a people’s elected representative from the block he and his government try to form a well nexus between the ruling and the ruled and to remove all leaders of corporate mentality. As a leader he possesses an idea not of flawed developmental vision rather to develop healthy democratic society where multicultural democracy can work successfully and to produce a society capable of providing universal justice for all so that all the community people merge with electoral process of the country.

All the representative of the district argues the same thing that the Muslim respondent irrespective of their socio-economic status and their way of living, they take part in secular politics and supports the national leaders of their choice. Their attitude towards politics, Indian state and government is very positive. They possess a very strong sense of electoral participation. In the interview with the researcher, the leaders opine that the people cast vote since they feel that vote is a political right and the elected representative of their area will help to ensure development of the region. The agencies that raise political consciousness of the respondents are newspaper, television, magazine, party literature help in increasing and raising political awareness among the respondent. But some respondent do not take part in politics because they feel no improvement will be achieved by participating in politics. Their socio-economic, educational, political needs will not be fulfilled. They want to invest in earning money other than participating in politics. The area lacks in primary health centers, educational institution and people are economically, educationally backward and hence they believe that all their problems will be solved through taking part in election. By exercising their political right they want to secure a better standard of living and hence ensure their support towards democratic government.

## **6. Conclusion**

Thus to conclude the researcher pointed out that political participation is a term which is applied to the activities of people like casting vote to select political representative, took part in election campaign, contesting an election, donation to party funds, distributing party manifesto, posters, slips and much more. Sometimes the term is applied more to define political orientations than activities that are having interest in politics, having political ambition and having a sense of political efficacy. Political participation is a voluntary action aiming in influencing the selection of political representative. In this analysis in the district the researcher find to make participation effective, the political leaders sometimes manipulate the voters but the respondents also participate voluntarily.

The extent to which individuals participate in politics and their attitude towards participation depends to a large extent on the social circumstances like individual's education, their economic status, their profession and age respectively. Respondent's interest in politics, political orientation, awareness, partisan preference, and involvement in participation, interest in political news or in political discussions determine electoral participation. Hence it may be inferred that the Muslims of the district are politically aware and integrated into the democratic process as it can be interpreted from the election record of panchayat of the Suti 2 block in this district. It is the duty of the democratic government to protect the rights and ensure the scope for the development of these minorities so that they can participate in political, economic and cultural life of the nation. The secular framework of our country provides opportunities for the minorities to safeguard their interest and hence we find the support of the Muslim voters towards government, state and politics. It fosters a positive mentality within the Muslim mind which results in political integration of the community in the district. Electoral politics erodes the communal solidarity of the community and hence we find an increase rate of participation in politics in Murshidabad district. The elected representative of the gram panchayats try to ensure the rights of the people and try to bring development in the region to fulfill the expectations of the respondents in the district. Muslims active representation in politics and political participation proves that the community no longer remains as monolithic entity (though the community people are culturally heterogeneous), but proves themselves as homogenous group integrate with India's secular politics. The successful rate of political participation proves that the ideas and institutions that govern in their name were thoroughly de-feudalized. Hence in the context of Murshidabad district, it may be mentioned that the leaders or the elected representatives of the community try to remove the 'minority

complexity', from the minds of the respondents and hence can foster an idea which leads to the assimilation of the Muslims with the majority culture of our country. Hence in the district the researcher finds a picture of true electoral participation which proves the successful working of India's democracy.

## Notes and References

1. Sinha Niraj, (1994), Women in Indian Politics, New Delhi, Gyan Publishing House, pp. 62-63
2. Narain Iqbal, (1976), Cultural Pluralism, National Integration and Democracy in India, Asian Survey, Vol.16, No.10 (October), pp. 903-917
3. Assadi Muzaffar, (1998), Wooing Muslims: BJP's Minority Conference, EPW, Vol.33, No.23 (June 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>), pp.1367-1369
4. Dasgupta Abhijit, (2009), On the Margins: Muslims in West Bengal, EPW, Vol.44, No.16 (April 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>), pp.91-96
5. Bandopadhyaya Bijoy Kumar, 'History of Murshidabad District', in Bandopadhyaya Bijoy Kumar ed.(2003), Murshidabad Zilla Gazetteers, West Bengal, Ministry of Higher Education, Government of West Bengal Pub. pp. 80-81 (appendix)
6. Record from Suti II Block Office, Dafahat, Aurangabad, Murshidabad, Government of West Bengal
7. Census of India, (2011), West Bengal, Series – 20, Part XII – B, District Census Handbook, Murshidabad, Directorate of Census Operation, West Bengal (pp.26-32) Census of India website: - [www.censusindia.gov.in](http://www.censusindia.gov.in) , (2011) Report, Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioners, India and Election Commission website: - [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in) (57 Suti, Part No. 1-96) and Record from Suti II Block Office, Dafahat, Aurangabad, Murshidabad, Government of West Bengal
8. Record from Suti II Block Office, Dafahat, Aurangabad, Murshidabad, Government of West Bengal
9. Aurangabad II Gram Panchayat Office, Aurangabad (Anchal Office, Aurangabad)
10. Commission website: - [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in) (57 Suti, Part No. 114-131)
11. Umrapur Gram Panchayat Office, Umrapur (Anchal Office, Umrapur)
12. Commission website: - [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in) (57 Suti, Part No.1-22)

13. Ahmed Imtiaz, (1967), Indian Muslims and Electoral Politics, EPW, Vol.2, No. 10 (March, 11<sup>th</sup>), pp.521-23
14. Mahajan Gurpreet, (1998), Identities and Rights; Aspects of Liberal Democracy bin India, New Delhi, Oxford Press Publications, pp.33-34
15. Mann E.A, (1992), Boundaries and Identities; Muslims Work and Status in Aligarh, New Delhi, Sage Pub. Pp.168-73
16. Siddiqui.M.K.A, (1974), Muslims of Calcutta; A Study in Aspects of their Social Organizations, Calcutta, Government of India Pub. pp. 4-6
17. Ansari Iqbal, (2006), Political Representation of Muslims in India: 1952-2004, New Delhi, Manak Pub. Private Ltd. pp.387-89
18. Result of Panchayati Raj Election, (2008) (District Murshidabad), Election held on 8<sup>th</sup> May, (2008) and election commission of India website:- [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in)
19. Panchayati Raj Journal October, (1988) No. 2, No. 3, Government of West Bengal, Directorate of Panchayat, Kolkata, Information and Cultural Department, Basumati Press Publications, Panchayati Raj Journal October, (1993) No. 4,(30<sup>th</sup> May-28<sup>th</sup> June) and No.5, (November-December) Government of West Bengal, Directorate of Panchayat, Kolkata, Information, Panchayati Raj Journal October, (1998) No. 4, Government of West Bengal, Directorate of Panchayat, Kolkata, Information and Cultural Department, Basumati Press Publications, Panchayat 6<sup>th</sup> Election Result (2003), West Bengal State Election Commission, Kolkata, Paschimbanga Rajya Committee, Communist Party of India Publications, Government of West Bengal, Result of Panchayati Raj Election, (2008) (District Murshidabad), Election held on 8<sup>th</sup> May, (2008) and election commission of India website:- [www.ceowb.nic.in](http://www.ceowb.nic.in)
20. Alam Anwar,(2003), Democratization of Indian Muslims; Some Reflections, EPW, Vol.38, No.46 (November 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>), pp. 4881-4885
21. Shakir Moin, (1980), Electoral Participation of Minorities and Indian Political System, EPW, Vol.15, No. 5/7 (Autumn Issue, February), pp.221-223,225-26
22. Islam Rafikul, (2007), Ganatrantraer Prasadhani Paribartan, Janatar Adalat, Bengali Quaterly Journal (9<sup>th</sup>, January, Special Issue), pp.8-14

23. Rowena Robinson, (2008), Religion Socio-Economic Backwardness and Discrimination: The Caste of Indian Muslims, *Indian Journal of Industrial Relation*, Vol.44, No.2 (October), pp. 194-200
24. Khalidi Omar, (1993), Muslims in Indian Political Process; Group Goals and Alternative Strategies, *EPW*, Vol.28, No.1/2 (January 2<sup>nd</sup> -9<sup>th</sup>), pp.43-47, 49-54
25. Chatterjee Roma, (2007), *Living With Violence – A Anthropology of Events and Everyday Life*, New Delhi, Rutledge Pub. pp. 26-27
26. Shail Mayaram, (2005), *Muslims Dalits and the Fabrication of History; Subaltern Studies*, New Delhi, Permanent Black Publications, pp.1-9
27. Assadi Muzaffar, (1998), Wooing Muslims: BJP's Minorities Conference, *EPW*, Vol.33, No.23 (June 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>), pp. 1367-1369
28. Kumar Sanjay, (1996), Muslims in Electoral Politics, *EPW*, Vol.31, No.2/3 (January 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>), pp. 138-141
29. Rahim.M.A, (1978), *The Muslim Society and Politics in Bengal (1757-1947)*, Dacca, The University of Dacca Press Pub. Pp.96-98
30. Vasta Ellie, (2000), *Citizenship, Community and Democracy*, New York, Macmillan Press Pub. Ltd. pp. 9-11
31. Blair Harry. W, (1973), *Minority Electoral Politics in a North Indian State; Aggregate Data Analysis and the Muslim Community in Bihar (1952-72)*, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.67, No.4 (December), pp.1275-1287
32. Besant Rakesh, 'Introduction', in Besant Rakesh ed. (2010), *Oxford Handbook of Muslims in India: Empirical and Policy Perspectives*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press Pub. Pp.7-8
33. Gossman Patricia.A, (1999), *Riots and Victims; Violence and the Construction of Communal Identity Among Bengali Muslims (1905-47)*, USA, West View Press Pub. pp. 1-8
34. Brass Paul, (1991), *Ethnicity and Nationalism; Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi, Sage Pub. p.22

35. Kumar Sanjay, (1996), Muslims in Electoral Politics, EPW, Vol.31, No.2/3 (January 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>), pp. 138-141
36. Md. Noor, “Indian Muslims”, in Md. Noor ed. (1999), Indian Muslims – Precepts and Practices, New Delhi, Rawat Pub. Pp.62-64
37. Banerjee Dilip, (1990), Reprint, (2009), Election Recorder – An Analytical Reference; Bengal and West Bengal (1862-2009), Kolkata, Star Publishing House, pp.934-935
38. Alam Anwar, (2003), Democratization of Indian Muslims: Some Reflections, EPW, Vol.38, No.46 (November 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>), pp.4881-4885
39. Brass Paul, (1991), Ethnicity and Nationalism; Theory and Comparison, New Delhi, Sage Pub. pp. 22-24
40. Hamid Abdul, (1967), Muslim Separatism in India, A Brief Survey, Lahore, Oxford University Press Pub. pp. 77, 283-84
41. Raisuddin Md. (2009), Rajnitite Musalmander Utthan O Patan, Yubapratashya, Bengali Yearly Journal (11<sup>th</sup> August), pp. 9-12
42. Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India (Sachar Committee) – A Report, (2006), (by justice Rajindar Sachar), 17<sup>th</sup> November), Prime Minister’s High Level Committee, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India Pub. New Delhi.
43. Engineer Irfan, (1995), Politics of Muslim Vote Bank, EPW, Vol.30, No.4 (January, 28<sup>th</sup>), pp.197-200)