

## PARTICIPATION IN POLITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

Political institutions are concerned with the distribution of power in society (Bottomore, 1962; 147, 150) and political behaviour of the people. In the primitive type of society, political behaviour was organized and influenced by religion and kinship (Bottomore, 1962). Advent of tribal chief is taken as the initiation of political participation of the members (Karim, 1972;160). Political participation plays a very important role in human society. In the historical context of the subcontinent there was self government in the villages. With social development these traditional self-governmental bodies were replaced by panchayat in India (Oscar, 1965; 26), basic democracy, union parishad in Bangladesh and Pakistan (Sobhan, 1968). Though, it is taken that villagers are politically inert but at the time of great movements as 'Quit India' (Desai, 1978 ; 45-53) 'satyagraha', 'swadeshi' movement, 'Dandi- march' independence movement in India, 'Trebaga movement', in Bengal and Assam, 1969 mass upsurge, 1971 war of liberation, participation in rural works programmes in Bangladesh, the villagers played active role.

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Studies in rural polity and participation by Kogekar and Park (1956), Someji (1959), Firth (1957), in India found that things were influenced by caste, religion, even threat and bribes, factionalism, regionalism, etc. Weiner (1957) found in Indian situation that party system was not of final or rigid type. Jones (1957) found that middle class members were active in politics and holding major proportion of selected representatives. Beteille (1966) found in his study in Tamil Nadu village of Sripuram, India, that non-brahmin middle class with educated background dominated the political scene. Dube (1958) found the existence of a rural elite with some education, land property and having contact with outside the village. Bhatnagar (1972) found that educated background dominated the political scene. He found that educated were more participating in politics and preferred to have educated leaders while illiterates preferred traditional political system.

Srinivas (Mathias, 1968; 18, 43) found in Bihar that educated class took part in local politics in Taluka and District levels. In Bangladesh also the student leaders took part in national and local politics. Sukla (1963) found education as basis of political participation of the middle class. In the village educated got political power (Shipman, 1971; 263).

In the modern age, national movements were started by the educated middle class in India by the Bengali 'Bhadralok', 'Chita Pavan' of Maharashtra, 'Tamilian Brahmin' (Basu, 1974; iv, 114). Waverstein (1968; 8) found that nationalist movement started with educated middle class. Ayub (Chopra, 1971; 40, 59) found in Bangladesh that the liberation movement was led by educated middle class having rural peasantry background.

In Bangladesh context, Karim (1976; 115-138) found the rise of an educated muslim middle class around the beginning of this century who was leading the country in all fields. Chowdhury (1978) finds the influence of education in village politics along with groups. In Bangladesh, families having educated members who can arrange official patronage dominate the village scene by occupying key posts. Huq (1978; 144) finds the importance of

bari-kinship group, family, as the basis of political participation. In his study of two villages of Bangladesh, Zaidi (1970; 126-134) found in every village there were 5 to 10 traditional informal pradhans or matabbar (village leaders) or sardars who would mitigate and control the village affairs. They are selected generally on the basis of family, bari, kinship, age, wealth, locality. Karim (1976; 141-157) finds such a type of village traditional informal leadership. Huq (1978) also reports of such a type of 'sardars' in village society.

With the introduction of new political system of 'Basic Democracy' in the early sixties and introduction of rural works programmes the village scene is changing. Traditional leadership is changing. People having some formal education and otherwisely influenced and dominate the village polity. In the developmental works, government tries its best to make the general people participate *en masse* to boost up the village economy for rural upliftment (Planning Commission-Five Year Plans), through development package deal of agrarian modernization which include, modernization of agriculture, rural health and sanitary service, mass education, women's emancipation, and introduction of directly elected representatives to the local bodies. In the present study, it is assumed that education will have an impact on these rural development projects.

Thirteen questions were asked to 319 respondents. The responses out of the total 13 questions were evaluated (appendix). Maximum scores out of thirteen questions were 26 (2x13) and minimum 13 (1x13) as more participating responses scored two and less participating scored one (Gore etal 1970: 136-137). After evaluation of the total replies, the total scores were dichotomized around mean (arithmetic mean 18.2), as 19 and above as high, 18 and above as low. The hypothesis that has been put forward for testing reads as follows:

*"The more educated a person is, the more he/she will be participating in civic, political and rural developmental works."*

Data are being presented in the following tables.

## 2. Participation in civic, political and rural development works

Table : 1 Association Between Levels of Education and Participation in Civic, Political and Rural Developmental Works

Participation	Higher		S.S.C		Primary		Illiterate		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
High	29	93.54	37	68.51	43	53.09	36	23.52	145
Low	2	6.46	17	31.49	38	46.51	117	76.48	174
Total	31	100.00	54	100.00	81	100.00	153	100.00	319

Data in table 1 reveal that 29 of the total 31 respondents of higher level of education have high participation, percentage being 93.54 and two respondents have low participation, percentage being 6.46; 37 of the total 54 respondents of the S.S.C. level of education have high participation, percentage being 68.57 and 17 have low participation, percentage being 31.49; 43 of the total 81 respondents of the primary level of education have high participation, percentage being 53.09 and 38 have low participation, percentage being 46.91; 36 of the total 153 illiterate respondents have high participation, percentage being 23.52 and 117 have low participation, percentage being 76.48. These data reveal certain direction in the sense that percentage of high participation grows up with the growth of the levels of education, highest percentage for higher level of education(93.54) and lowest (23.52) for the illiterates. It also indicates the direction that though in smaller proportion, some illiterates have participation. The data can be presented in a clear, precise and simple way by dichotomizing the total respondents into 'Literate' consisting of all the three levels of education of higher S.S.C. and primary, on the one hand and 'Illiterate' on the other. This follows a 2 x 2 contingency table.

Data in table 2 confirm the hypothesis. Among 166 literate respondents, 109 have high participation, percentage being 65.67 and 57 have low participation, percentage being 34.33 ; among 153 illiterate respondents, 36 have high participation, percentage being 23.52 and 117 have low participation, percentage being 76.48, respectively. The association ( $\chi^2=57.006$ ) is significant at .001 level ( $Q = 0.722$ ). The nature of association is positive.

Table : 2 Association Between Education and Participation of the Respondents on 'Polity and Participation'

Participation	Literate		Illiterate		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
High	109	65.67	36	23.52	145
Low	57	34.33	117	76.48	174
Total	166	100.00	153	100.00	319

$$Q = 0.722$$

$$\chi^2 = 57.006, df, 1, p.001$$

Now the question arises that how far this association between education and high participation in polity, civic and development works is genuine. This may be due to some other antecedent variables as sex, age, bari status, occupation and income. In order to find out an answer to such a question and to find out independent, relative and cumulative effects of variables of education, sex, age, bari (bangsha family) status, occupation and income on "Polity and Participation", data are represented according to the cross tables that follow taking education as constant in every table as the technique suggested by Hirschi and Selvin (1967) and Morris Rosenberg (1968; 169-182).

### 3. Participation when controlled for sex

Data in table-3 show that among 152 female respondents, 48.69(74) are literates and 51.31 (78) are illiterates and among 167 male respondents 55.09 percent (92) are literates and 44.91 percent (75) are illiterates. Thus the

percentage of literates is more (55.09) among male than females (48.69). The data show that education and participation are positively associated for both male respondents ( $\chi^2=27.080$ ,  $Q=0.696$ ) and female respondents ( $\chi^2=29.130$ ,  $Q=0.746$ ) though there is variation in percentage between male and female groups, males being more participating (68.48) than females (62.17). The table also shows that in both male and female groups, literates have more percentage of participation (68.48) for males and (62.17) for females, respectively. This indicates the effect of education on participation in polity, civic and rural development works independent of sex.

Table : 3 Association Between Education and Participation in Polity, Civic and Development Work

Participation	Male					Female				
	Literate		Illiterate		Total	Literate		Illiterate		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%		Freq	%	Freq	%	
High	63	68.48	21	28.0	84	46	62.17	15	19.23	61
Low	29	31.52	54	72.0	83	28	37.83	63	80.77	91
Total	92	100.00	75	100.00	167	74	100.00	78	100.00	152

$$Q = 0.696$$

$$\chi^2 = 27.080, \text{df. } 1, \text{p.}001$$

$$Q = 0.746$$

$$\chi^2 = 29.130, \text{df. } 1, \text{p.}001$$

Within both males and females, literates have larger proportion of participation than illiterates. The percentage difference is 40.48 (68.48-28.0) for males and 42.94 (62.17-19.23) for females. In other words, when sex is controlled, education has an independent effect on participation. Conversely, when education is controlled, sex has also some independent effect on participation. Among both literates and illiterates, males are more participating than females. The percentage difference is 6.31 (68.48-62.17) for literates and 8.77 (28.0-19.23) for illiterates. Thus, sex has also some effect independent of education though the proportion is smaller in comparison to that of education.

Now relatively which variable is more effective, education or sex ? This is the question of relative effect and Rosenberg (1968; 169-182) suggested to compare the proportion in two "counter directional" groups. The proportion of participation among male illiterates is 28.00 and that of females literates is 62.17. Thus female literates are more participating and more change-oriented than male illiterates. The same fact can be represented by ranking the percentage.

	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Participation in percentage</b>
1.	Male literates	68.48
2.	Female literates	62.17
3.	Male illiterates	28.00
4.	Female illiterates	19.23

Above figures can be used to calculate the average percentage difference. The average effect of education, controlling sex, is 41.71. It is the average of (68.48-28.00) and (62.17-19.23). Conversely, the average effect of sex, controlling education is 5.52. It is the average of (68.48-62.17) and (28.00-19.23).

The cumulative effect of education and sex is 49.25 (68.48-19.23). It is the difference of two "extreme consistent" groups (Rosenberg, 1968; 180).

Thus, education has positive independent and higher effect on **participation and change in village, irrespective** of sex difference.

#### **4. Participation when controlled for age**

Among 176 low age group respondents, 54.54 percent (96) are literates and 45.46 percent (80) are illiterates and among 143 respondents of high age group 48.96 percent (70) are literates and 51.04 percent (73) are illiterates. Thus, the percentage of literates is more (54.54) in low age group than that of high age group (48.96). The data in table 4 reveal that table education and participation in polity, civic, and rural development works are positively associated in both low age group ( $\chi^2 = 31.531$ ,  $Q = 0.721$ ) and high age group ( $\chi^2 = 24.771$ ,  $Q = 0.720$ ), though there is variation in percentage. The table also shows that irrespective of age groups, the literates have high participation percentage being 68.75 for low age group and 61.42 for high age group. This indicates the effect of education independent of age.

Table :4 Association Between Education and Participation in Polity, Rural Developmental Works When Controlled for Age

Participation	Low Age					High Age				
	Literate		Illiterate		Total	Literate		Illiterate		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%		Freq	%	Freq	%	
High	66	68.75	21	6.25	84	46	62.42	15	19.23	61
Low	30	31.25	56	73.75	83	28	37.58	63	80.77	91
Total	96	100.00	80	100.00	167	74	100.00	78	100.00	152

$$Q = 0.721$$

$$X^2 = 31.531, \text{df. } 1, p.001$$

$$Q = 0.720$$

$$X^2 = 24.771, \text{df. } 1, p.001$$

Within both the groups of high and low age, literates are more participating than illiterates. The percentage difference is 42.50 (68.75-26.25) for low age and 40.86 (61.42-20.56) for high age group. In other words, when age is controlled education has an independent effect on participation. Conversely, within each of the literate and illiterate group, age is also related to participation. Among both literates and illiterates, low age group is more participating than high age group. The percentage difference is 7.33 (68.75-61.42) for literates and 5.69 (26.25-20.56) for illiterates. Thus, when education is controlled age has some independent effect, though proportion is smaller in comparison to that of education.

Which one of these two variables is more effective ? This is the question of relative effect. It is the proportion in two "counter directional" groups. The proportion of participation among low age group illiterates is 26.25 while it is 61.42 among high age literates. Thus, the high age literates are more participating than. low age illiterates. The same fact can be represented by ranking the percentage.



	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Participation in percentage</b>
1.	Low age literates	68.75
2.	High age literates	61.42
3.	Low age illiterates	26.25
4.	High age illiterates	20.56

Above figures can be used to calculate the average percentage difference. The average effect of education, controlling age, is 41.68. It is the average of (68.75-26.25) and (61.42-20.56). Conversely, the effect of age, controlling education, is 6.51. It is the average of (68.75-61.42) and (26.25-20.56).

The cumulative effect of education and age is 38.19 (68.75-20.56). It is the difference of two "extreme consistent" groups.

Thus, education is positively associated with participation and change in polity, civic and rural development works, irrespective of age variation.

### **5. Participation when controlled for bari status**

Among 170 respondents of nichchu bari group 50 percent (85) are literates and 50 percent (85) are illiterates, and among 149 respondents of unchu bari group, 54.37 percent (81) are literates and 45.63 percent (68) are illiterates, respectively. Thus the percentage of literates is more (54.37) in unchu bari group than nichchu bari group (50.0). The data in table- 5 reveal that education and participation in polity, civic and development works are positively associated for both unchu bari group ( $\chi^2 = 31.636, Q = 0.770$ ) and nichchu bari group ( $\chi^2 = 25.852, Q = 0.680$ ) though there is variation for bari groups, The table shows that irrespective of bari groups, the literates have higher percentage of participation , it is 64.70 for nichchu bari group and 66.67 for unchu bari group. This indicates the effect of education independent of bari groups.

Table : 5 Association Between Education and Participation in Polity, Civic and Development Works When Controlled for bari status

Participation	Unchu (High) Bari					Nichchu (Low) Bari				
	Literate		Illiterate		Total	Literate		Illiterate		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
High	54	66.67	14	20.59	86	55	64.70	22	25.89	77
Low	27	33.33	54	79.41	81	30	35.38	63	74.11	93
Total	81	100.00	68	100.00	149	85	100.00	85	100.00	170

$$Q = 0.770$$

$$X^2 = 31.636, \text{df. } 1, p.001$$

$$Q = 0.680$$

$$X^2 = 25.852, \text{df. } 1, p.001$$

Within both the groups of baris, literates have larger proportion of participation and change than illiterates. The percentage difference is 46.08 (66.67-20.59) for unchu bari and 38.81 (64.70-25.89) for nichchu bari group. In other words, when bari status is controlled, education has an independent effect on participation and change in polity, civic and rural development work. Conversely, within each of the literate and illiterates groups, bari status is also related to participation and change. Among literates the percentage difference is 1.97 (66.67-64.70) and it is 5.30 (20.59-25.89) for illiterates. Thus, when education is controlled bari status has some effect on polity and participation though in a smaller proportion in comparison to that of education.

Which one of these two variables is more effective? This is the question of relative effect. It is the proportion in two "counter directional" groups. The proportion of participation (change) among unchu bari illiterates is 20.59 and that of nichchu bari literates, it is 64.70. Thus, nichchu bari literates are more participating than unchu bari illiterates. The same fact can be represented by ranking the percentage.

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Participation in percentage</b>
1. <u>Unchu bari</u> literates	66.67
2. <u>Nichchu bari</u> literates	64.70
3. <u>Unchu bari</u> literates	20.59
4. <u>Nichchu bari</u> illiterates	25.89

The above figures can be used to calculate the average percentage difference. The average effect of education, controlling bari status, is 42.45. It is the average of (66.67-20.59) and (64.70-25.89). Conversely, the average effect of bari status, controlling education, is 3.64. It is the average of (66.67-64.70) and (25.89-20.59).

The cumulative effect of education and bari is 40.78 (66.67-25.89). It is the difference of two 'extreme consistent' groups.

Thus, education and participation is positively associated irrespective of variation in bari status.

## **6. Participation when controlled for occupation**

Among 220 agricultural occupants, 41.37 percent (91) are literates and 58.63 percent (129) are illiterates and among 99 non-agricultural occupants, 75.76 percent (75) are literates and 24.24 percent (24) illiterates. Thus, the percentage of literates is more in non-agricultural group (75.76) than that of agricultural group (41.37). Data in table-6 reveal that education and participation (change) in polity, civic and rural development works are positively associated for both non-agricultural group ( $\chi^2 = 19.162$ ,  $Q = 0.796$ ) and agricultural group ( $\chi^2 = 27.799$ ,  $Q = 0.543$ ) though there is variation among occupations of agriculture and non-agricultural groups. The table shows that irrespective of occupations, the literates have high percentage of participation (change). It is 74.69 for non-agriculturists and 58.24 for agriculturists. Thus, data in table-6 indicate the effect of education on participation (change) on polity, civic and rural development works independent of occupation

Table : 6 Association Between Education and Participation in Polity, Civic and Development Works when Controlled for Occupation

Participation	Non-agricultural occupation					Agricultural occupation				
	Literate		Illiterate		Total	Literate		Illiterate		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%		Freq	%	Freq	%	
High	56	74.69	06	25.00	62	53	58.24	30	23.26	83
Low	19	25.33	18	75.0	37	384	1.76	99	76.74	137
Total	75	100.00	24	100.00	99	91	100.00	129	100.00	220

$$Q = 0.796$$

$$X^2 = 19.162, df. 1, p.001$$

$$Q = 0.543$$

$$X^2 = 27.799, df. 1.P. 001$$

Within both non-agricultural and agricultural occupants, literates, have larger proportion of participation than illiterates. The percentage difference is 49.67 (74.67-25.00) for non-agriculturists and 34.98 (58.24-23.26) for agriculturists. In other words, when occupation is controlled, education has an independent effect on participation. Conversely, within each of the literates and illiterates, non-agriculturists are more participating in polity, civic and rural development. The percentage difference for literates is 16.43 (74.67-58.24) and illiterates 1.74 (25.00-23.26). Thus, when education is controlled, occupation has also some independent effect on polity and participation.

Which one of these two variables is more effective? This is the question of relative effect. It is the proportion in two "counter directional" groups. The proportion of participation among non-agricultural illiterates is 25.00 and that of agricultural literates is 58.24. Thus, agricultural literates are more participating than non-agricultural illiterates. The same fact can be represented by ranking the percentage.

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Participation in percentage</b>
1. Non-agricultural literates	74.67
2. Agricultural literates	58.24
3. Non-agricultural illiterates	25.00
4. Agricultural illiterates	23.26

The above figures can be used to calculate the average percentage difference. The average effect of education, controlling occupation is 42.33. It is the average of (74.67-25.00) and (58.24-23.26). Conversely, the average effect of occupation, controlling education is 9.9. It is the average of (74.67-58.24) and (25.00-23.26).

The cumulative effect of education and occupation is 51.41 (74.67-23.26). It is the difference between two "extreme consistent" groups.

Thus, education is positively associated with participation and change in polity, civic and rural development works irrespective of variation in occupation.

## **7. Participation when controlled for Income**

Among 183 respondents of low income group, 38.26 percent (70) are literates and 61.74 percent (113) are illiterates and 136 of the high income group 70.51 percent (96) are literates and 29.41 percent (40) are illiterates. Thus, the percentage of literates is more in high income group (70.51) than that of low income group (38.26). The data in table: 7 reveal that education and participation (high) in polity, civic and rural development works are positively associated for both high income group ( $\chi^2 = 8.905$ ,  $Q = 0.515$ ) and low income group ( $\chi^2 = 36.276$ ,  $Q = 0.762$ ) though there is variation in percentage between high and low income groups. The table also shows that irrespective of income groups, literates have higher percentage of participation. It is 69.80 for high income group and it is 60.0 for low income group. This indicates the effect of education, independent of income.

Table : 7 Association Between Education and Participation in Polity, Civic and Rural Development Works when Controlled for Income

Participation	Hith Income					Low Income				
	Literate		Illiterate		Total	Literate		Illiterat		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%		Freq	%	Freq	%	
High	67	69.80	17	42.50	84	42	60.00	19	16.81	61
Low	29	30.20	23	57.50	52	28	40.00	94	83.19	122
Total	96	100.00	40	100.00	136	70	100.00	113	100.00	183

$$Q = 0.515$$

$$X^2 = 8.905, \text{df. } 1, \text{p.}001$$

$$Q = 0.762$$

$$X^2 = 36.276, \text{df. } \text{p.}001$$

Within both high income and low income group literates are more participatory than illiterates. The percentage difference is 27.30 (69.80-42.50) for high income group and 43.19 (60.00-16.81) for low income group. In other words, when income is controlled, education has an independent effect on participation. Conversely, within each of literate and illiterate group, income is also related to participation. Among both literates and illiterates, high income group is more participating than low income group. The percentage difference is 9.80 (69.80-60.00) for literates and 25.69 (42.50-16.81) for illiterates. Thus, when education is controlled, Income has also some independent effect on participation in polity, civic and rural development works.

Which one of these two variables is more effective; education or income? This is the question of relative effect. It is the proportion in two "counter directional" groups. The proportion of participation among high income illiterates is 42.50 and that of low income literates is 60.00. Thus, low income group literates are more participating than high income group illiterate respondents. The same fact can be represented by ranking the percentage.

	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Participation in percentage</b>
1.	High income literates	69.80
2.	Low income literates	60.00
3.	High income illiterates	42.50
4.	Low income illiterates	16.81

The above figures can be used to calculate the average percentage difference. The effect of education, controlling income, is 35.25. It is the average of (69.80-42.50) and (60.00-16.81). Conversely, the effect of income, controlling education, is 17.75. It is the average of (69.00-60.00) and (42.50-16.81). The cumulative effect of education and income is 52.99 (69.80-16.81). It is the difference of two "extreme consistent" groups. Thus the association between education and participation (change) in polity, civic and rural development works is positively associated irrespective of variation due to income.

## **8. Summary and Conclusions**

From above discussions, it can be found out that education is positively associated with the participation in polity, civic and rural development works in the villages. The educated persons are working as agents in this regard. The hypothesis that has been put forward is **confirmed** by the analysis of data.

The findings are in consonance of the findings by other studies as Karim (1976), Beteille (1966) Srinivas (1966), Bhatnagar (1972), Pandey (1975), Dube (1958), Desai (1978), Jones (1957), Ayub (Chopra, 1971), and Huq (1978) and other studies as mentioned in the previous section.

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## Appendix

### PARTICIPATION IN POLITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Q. Nos.	Scores
1. B. Education, G. Spirit of social work	2 (Two)
A, C, D, E, H	1 (One)
2. Yes or positive	2 (Two)
Negative or No	1 (One)
3. Supporting education and social works	2 (Two)
Others	1 (One)
4. Supporting education, and social work positive	2 (Two)
If supporting family, age, wealth	1 (One)
5. If happy with educated or spirit of work group	2 (Two)
If happy with family and the like group	1 (One)
6. Events supporting modern views	2 (Two)
Events supporting traditional views	1 (One)
7. Positive	2 (Two)
Negative	1 (One)
8. Self	2 (Two)
Others	1 (One)
9. No	2 (Two)
Yes	1 (One)
10. B. C. D.	2 (Two)
Meeting at the times of election or not meeting and others	1 (One)
11. Positive	2 (Two)
Negative	1 (One)
12. Positive or as a leader	2 (Two)
Negative	1 (One)

Maximum = 26 (2 x 13)

Minimum = 13 (1 x 13)

Higher scores stand for more change-oriented and participating.

Dichotomized at arithmetic mean = 18.2

19 and above as high participating and change-oriented.

18 and below participating and low change-oriented.

TABLE : 1 Scores in Participation, Polity and Rural Development

Level of Education	Scores			Total
	13-17	18-22	23-26	
Higher	0	6	25	31
S. S. C.	13	19	22	54
Primary	34	33	14	81
Illiterate	111	29	13	153
	158	87	74	319

TABLE : 2 Total Respondents and Total Population

Level of Education	Male	Female	Total	% with Population	Total Population
Higher	20 (34)	11 (19)	31	60	53
S. S. C.	31 (77)	23 (58)	54	40	135
Primary	41 (205)	40 (200)	81	20	405
Illiterate	75 (500)	76 (520)	153	15	1020
	176 (816)	(797)	319		1613