

CHAPTER - III

POLITICAL AWARENESS

C H A P T E R - III

POLITICAL AWARENESS

In the previous chapter a back ground survey of Solapur district, Solapur city and economic, political and cultural aspect of the city is made. General Information about two important co-operative spinning mills was taken note of. This study aims at undertaking a study of political awareness and political participation of workers in the two mills. Therefore it will be quite proper to discuss the concepts of political awareness and political participation.

Awareness depends upon knowledge of certain things. The knowledge varies from person to person. Therefore , awareness varies from person to person. Awareness has different aspect such as economic activities, cultural activities, political activities and so on.

The awareness about political process and activities may be broadly termed as Political Awareness. To clarify the concept of political awareness a defination of Political awareness is given by Austin Ranney as, "Closely related

to a citizens sense of obligation to participate in politics are his feelings about his ability to do so and the likelihood that his participation will some impact". That is his political awareness.¹ Austin Ranney has listed three factors identifying political awareness of an individual. They are, -

1. Individual sence of obligation to participate in politics:- It means that an individual should feel that it is duty to take part in the political activities. Ofcourse this will vary from individual to individual. Thus Political Awareness will vary from individual to individual.

2. The feeling of the individuals about his ability to take part in the political activities:-

Different persons have different abilities and inclinations such as to undertake part in the political activity. Besides this a person may have inclination and ability to do so but he may have confidence or lack of it. On this depends the levels of Political Awareness of the individual.

3. Likelihood that his participation will some impact:-

The third factor is related with the possibility of

*1. Modern Political Analysis - New Academic Publishing Co.
6th Edition, page 375.

impact of his participation in political activities. The anticipation about the likelihood of the impact of his political participation may vary and thereby political awareness of an individual may be different from person to person. These factors together point out the level of political awareness of an individual.

The growth of Political awareness require a congenial atmosphere. A totaliterian state gives almost no scope to free Political awareness. On the other hand in a real democratic state there is full scope for the development of political awareness.

In totaliterian states there is a little scope for the public opinion. People's awareness in politics is also restricted. The news papers, radio news, television news and books are censored by the Government. Thus there is no freedom is given to the people. But in democratic states like England much scope is given to the public opinion. Every person has freedom to make propaganda of his party. Generally there is no censorship on radio news and television news, and press by the Government.

In India some restrictions are imposed on radio and television to broadcast news against government, but people can write, speak against Government. Thus in democratic state people enjoy the real freedom.

There are some social factors which influence awareness of the people. They are as below : -

EDUCATION : -

Education is one of the important factors to increase political awareness among the people. Persons who lack education and sophistication about politics tend to shut out political awareness.¹

SECULAR POLITICAL CULTURE : -

The process of secularisation of political culture means increasing political awareness of the people enabling them to have a growing information about their political system and their role as a political actor in it, "It is through the secularisation of political culture that these rigid ascribed and diffuse customs of social interaction come to be over-ridden by set of codified, specifically political and universalistic rules". In India the child marriages, sati system, bigamy, untouchability etc., are wiped out by enacting the laws.

*1. Lestar W. Milbroth, M.L. Goel - Political Participation
education Page 41.

COMPARATIVE PROSPERITY : -

Comparative prosperity is one of the factors to increase the awareness of the people. In every society there is competition in every respect among the people. Therefore, through this competition the awareness can be increased.

INTEREST IN POLITICS : -

Political awareness depends upon interest of a person in politics. If a person has no interest in politics he cannot take active part in politics. However in every society some persons are apathetic. They do not want even discuss political events. But in some families the members of family discuss current political events. Some persons decide to contest election and after they have elected they want to participate in the governance of the state. However some persons have interest in delivering speeches on politics, some have interest in writing articles on current political events. Then having interest in politics is one of the important factor to enhance the Political Awareness.

FAMILY : -

The most closely knit group is the family and family experience has the profound impact on a persons expose to Political awareness and has active level in politics.

- - - - -

EFFECTIVE MASS MEDIA : -

The mass media such as Radio, television, newspapers are very important to increase the political awareness of the people. By listening radio news and viewing the news on television people may get knowledge of current political affairs. The news papers are the cheapest means by which one can get the knowledge of current world affairs as well as political activities also.

INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT : -

At present there is a lot of growth of industrials and due to industrial and technological development the political awareness of the workers is increased. In every industry Labour union is established and the Labour union is very much related to the political parties. For example, AITUC connected with the Communist party. Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh connected with Bharatiya Janata Party and INTUC is connected with Congress (I) Party. Besides this some of the workers are the members of the different political parties. The workers discuss among themselves the current political events when they come together. Thus on this back-ground the Political awareness may increase among the people.

NATIONAL LEADERS : -

The national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Subhashchandra Bhowse, Pandit Nehru, Smt. Indira Gandhi, Jaiprakash Narayan,

Atalbihari Vajapee, Jyoti Basu, L.K. Advani are very important national leaders. Their lectures and preaching helped to increase the Political Awareness among the people.

Thus the above factors help increasing Political Awareness of the people.

Political Awareness forms the basis of political Participation, a conceptual discussion is undertaken in the next chapter.