

WOMEN AND POLITICS IN INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Many different meanings of "political participation" have been proposed. One definition of political engagement is the actions people do to have an impact on who leads their country and what policies are implemented. Voting, researching issues, engaging in conversation and evangelizing, going to meetings, donating money to a party fund, and corresponding with legislators are all examples of these actions. Joining a political party formally, helping to register new voters, giving and giving speeches, working on campaigns, and running for public or party office are all examples of "active" types of engagement.

Historically, political scientists have given practically little thought to the issue of women's underrepresentation in government. Sexist preconceptions have contributed to the silence around issues of women's representation. The traditional gender roles at home have been seen as a precursor to the male-dominated political sphere. The traditional view is that women's lack of representation in government is due to their prioritization of home and family. Women's participation in politics has not been seen as a pressing problem since it has been thought that they would mirror the political stances and cultural references of their husbands and dads.

Keywords: *Women empowerment, Sex-stereotyping, Inter-parliamentary Union*

INTRODUCTION:

Women's empowerment, decentralization, and good governance have all risen to the forefront of developmental discourse during the 1990s. Women's demand for empowerment stems from the reality that they are not afforded the same opportunities as males in the political and economic sectors. Despite the fact that all social issues are tied to political choices, women's involvement in the political process, particularly decision making, is more significant. Women continue to be denied their citizenship rights and obligations because of the persistent gender imbalance in decision-making, which also serves to marginalize women and their interests. In recent years, it has been widely accepted in the development community that economic growth and social improvement are most likely to occur when the majority of the people is aware of development goals and objectives and considers itself to be a direct beneficiary of the invested resources. As a result of expansion, Once such a comprehensive policy and programs stemming from it are in place, it is crucial to establish an integrated policy and strategy that targets economic, social, and political empowerment, bearing in mind the philosophy of empowerment. As a result, women will be able to experience growth in all areas, ushering in full emancipation.

OBJECTIVE:

This study aims to highlight the presence of women in parliament as a means of highlighting women's political engagement. In this article, we compare the status of women in politics

across several regions, including India, Asia, the Brics, the SAARC, and the rest of the globe. The study's other primary objective is to explain the changing dynamics of women's political participation and their underlying causes. Simultaneously, a connection between women's political participation and advancement has been sought.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Nie and Verba recognized the value of involvement and seen how it improves individuals' feelings about their government and their own place in society. They believe that it is detrimental to one's sense of self to feel powerless over one's own life and the choices that must be made.

Milbrath and Goel argued that electing public officials is a minimum need for keeping government responsive to citizens' needs and interests. They also note that people would be better people if they engaged in politics and public discourse since doing so helps to establish a better and more noble character in the people.

Almond and Verba (1972) 'The Civic Culture' authors look at all of civil society and come to the same conclusion: political culture is formed all at once thanks to the interplay of systemic factors. Members of the political system, therefore, tend to adopt the norms and customs of the system in which they operate. According to their definition, a democracy is a political system in which citizens participate in making major policy choices. The average citizen is supposed to be involved in political life, to understand the decision-making process, and to voice his opinion.

Mc Glen and O'Connor offered a significant cross-sectional analysis of women's representation in American politics. Using research mostly from the 1970s and 1980s, the writers analyze several aspects of women's attitudes. At least three factors have been proposed to explain the gender gap in political attitudes: unfavorable cultural assumptions about women's roles in politics, women's lack of preparedness for political engagement, and discrimination on the part of male political leaders.

Again, research on "Women and the Public Sphere" demonstrates that even when women have public sector jobs, their jobs are seen as "secondary" to their "real" responsibilities at home and in the community. Consequently, the job model 59 for males and the gender model for women have emerged as separate sociologies of employment.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A GENERAL UNDERSTANDING

Karl Marilee (1995), focuses on three aspects, which results in empowerment. These are:

1. Awareness
2. Capacity building and skill development
3. Participation and control.

This includes the ability to plan, make choices, organize, manage, and carry out activities, as well as the confidence to interact with and influence the people and institutions in one's environment. This entails having input and influence on decisions made far away from one's own neighborhood and society. This motivates change that improves conditions for women

and men. Empowerment, in a nutshell, is the process of gaining knowledge and skills that enables one to take an active role in society, to make better decisions, and to put those decisions into action. The following example exemplifies the concept of agency beautifully:

Woman's role in Politics in India : A historical Perspective

Beginning in the early 19th century, a new age of women's independence began in India. British control, a capitalist economy, and contemporary western culture all contributed to a cultural awakening in India, particularly in Bengal, that aimed to remove societal oppression of women. When the social reform movement's main current converged with the battle for political independence of the nation, it breathed fresh life into the campaign for women's liberation. Despite the fact that women now have the same legal and constitutional rights as males thanks to post-independence reforms, their situation has not improved. According to one research, women were able to participate in and take on greater roles in the revolutionary politics of the nationalist movement. After independence, however, women were once again relegated to a secondary and subservient role since no national commitment to women's liberation was created or disseminated. In the early years after independence, women made up just 4-5% of the legislative body; by 2014, that figure had risen to 11.2%. This shocking lack of female participation in the Union Parliament should serve as a wake-up call and a catalyst for a sweeping reform of the country's political culture.

Women in parliament in 2013 - Report by Inter-parliamentary Union:-

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is a worldwide group of parliaments that promotes democratic government by elected representatives. The International Political Union ranks countries on the number of female lawmakers in their lower chamber. Rwanda, Andorra, and Cuba topped the 2013 rankings. The International Parliamentary Union (IPU) released its annual report on the status of women in parliament, which rated India 108th out of 188 nations. When compared to her close neighbors, India did badly. Nepal rated 24th in the South Asian area, ahead of China (55) and Pakistan (66).

Country	Women in Lower House(%)	Global Rank
Nepal	33.2	24
China	23.4	55

Pakistan	20.7	66
Bangladesh	19.7	71
India	11.0	108
Sri Lanka	5.8	131

Source: Times of India, 26 November,2013

India's position in terms of woman's participation in politics at various regional forums:

Region	Rank
Global	103 out of 141
Asia	13 out of 18
SAARC	5 out of 8
BRICS	4 out of 5

Women make up 22.4% of parliaments worldwide on average. India had a meager 12% representation and finished 103rd out of 141 nations. India is one of 18 nations in Asia, and it is at position 13 overall. India has the terrible fifth place among the eight SAARC nations. With 20% of each, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal each have much higher representation of women in their legislatures.

For India to establish gender balance in the highest elected body in the nation, there is some catching up to do in the area. We turned to the BRICS, an up-and-coming powerhouse made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, when SAARC failed to provide relief. Brazil, which only has 9% women, does worse than us than India, which is now ranked fourth among these nations.

India's position in the world:

In order to assess India's performance on this metric, we examined statistics on women in national Parliaments (directly elected powerhouse) from the Inter parliamentary Union, an international organization of parliaments. While debunking widespread misconceptions about many nations, the results also force us to face the fact that we still have a long way to go before providing women with an equal opportunity to participate in political decision-making.

In 1997, India ranked 62nd out of 177 nations in the Women in Parliament reports of the inter-parliamentary union. India was ranked 107th out of 188 nations in 2007. India's position dropped even more in 2017 to 149 out of 193 nations.

According to the report published on December 31, 1997 by the IPO, India was ranked 62nd, followed by Nepal at 87, Sri Lanka at 75, Pakistan at 95, Bhutan at 96, and Pakistan at Bhutan. Sri Lanka was ranked last among the surrounding nations.

According to research published on November 9th, 2013, Nepal ranked highest among south Asian nations, taking 47th position out of 193. China came in at position 73, while Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh came in at positions 73, 90, and 53, respectively. India was ranked 149th out of 193 nations in the same survey. These stories highlight the deplorable condition of Indian women in politics.

Their representation in Lok Sabha climbed from 22 seats in the elections of 1952 to 61 seats in 2014. a remarkable 36%-point improvement. However, since there are nine males out of every ten Lok Sabha lawmakers, there is still a significant gender gap. In 1952, 45 women ran for 489 seats; 22 of them were elected, representing 4.5% of all candidates. Out of the 543 seats that were up for election in 1991, 37 were won by winners, making up 7.10% of all members. Women ran for 355 of the 543 seats in 2004; 45 of them were elected. Women's involvement increased to 9% in 2009. 61 women will hold leadership positions in the 16th Lok Sabha in 2014, a record amount when compared to the 59 women MPs elected in the last general elections. Women leaders make up only 11% of parliament members, well below the 33% threshold that the Women's Reservation Bill wants to enact.

The findings of the national election research about the characteristics of women's votes in Indian elections have progressed. One of them relates to the 1990s participative boom among women and other excluded groups. At the national level, there has been a dramatic reduction in the gender difference between male and female voters (men at 67% and women at 66%). The success rate of female candidates has, however, been greater in the previous three general elections, with the greatest percentage occurring in the 14th Lok Sabha.

NEED FOR WOMAN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT:

The party system and unequal gender power relations are fundamental components of India's primary political distinction, and they both contribute to the marginalization of women in electoral politics. They still face discrimination within the ranks of major political parties as well as when it comes to seat allocations for candidates in elections. Reviewing the involvement of women in the different voting processes in this context is essential in order to understand why it is still unequal and skewed even after six decades of independence. worldwide initiatives to improve the status of women in politics.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

Women have achieved great progress in the previous several decades in politics, the labor market, mental health, and education for girls. Women now make about 22% of parliamentarians globally, up from 11% 20 years ago. Around the world, there are 17% female ministers, and in 2015, there were 18 female heads of state. Politics engagement by women has a positive societal impact. According to research, women in politics bring up topics that males tend to ignore, such as the education of girls and the representation of women in parliament. It has been noted that the likelihood of an agreement being reached is more likely to be delayed by at least 15 years in situations where women are unable to participate in the peace process. The national and state governments of India have created strategies and initiatives for empowering women in recognition of this principle. Realizing that political empowerment of women makes the pursuit of gender equality feasible. Women made up 4.4% of Lok Sabha members in 1952; they currently make up around 11%, which is still less than the global average of 20%. This poor representation may be due to national and regional parties' policies of not allocating seats to women. India's electoral system will thus need to be completely overhauled.

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