



International Journal of Innovative Research in Science Engineering and Technology (IJIRSET)

(A Monthly, Peer Reviewed, Refereed, Scholarly Indexed, Open Access Journal)



Impact Factor: 9.935

Volume 15, Issue 7, July 2026

Women Empowerment and Participation in Indian Politics

Rekha Choudhary¹, Prof. Sangeeta Mathur²

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, School of Arts and Humanities, Career Point University, Kota,
Rajasthan, India¹

Professor and Dean, Department of Political Science, School of Arts and Humanities, Career Point University, Kota,
Rajasthan, India²

ABSTRACT: The research article is an attempt to analyze the function of women's participation in national politics and also tries to understand whether or not women's voices and issues are clear to the public as matters of importance in India. The methodology adopted is based on the information collected from the secondary data published by the Election Commission of India at different times and published articles in journals etc. Secondary data will help to make an idea of the role of the women in Indian politics. To know the reality of the effect in depth study with primary data will be of great help. The major findings of current study illustrate that the women's participation in Indian politics gradually increases and that will help to lift up women empowerment. The major outcomes of this study may be helpful to the original decision makers of Indian Election process such that women's participation in national politics will increase in future for empowering women.

KEYWORDS: Women, Empowerment, Political Representation, Indian Politics, Decision Making.

I. INTRODUCTION

"Women represents half the potential talents and skills of humanity and they're under representation in decision making is a loss for society a whole." Political participation is a comprehensive phenomenon that needs understanding of the dynamics of the state, gender and intersectionality (Vidhya, 2023). The practices of women to get manage the resources, executive the decisions and opportunities that shape their lives are known as women empowerment. Political empowerment is central to this process, as it ensures women's participation in governance and policy formulation. India that is known as the world's largest democracy, granted universal adult franchise at independence in 1947, enabling women to vote and participate in elections on equal footing with men. However, descriptive representation of women's with numerical presence in elected bodies has remained limited at superior levels of governance.

The present study in paper is focused on the objectives which explore:

1. The historical evolution of political participation of Indian women.
2. Constitutional legislative frameworks and policy measures supporting representation.
3. The impact of reservation policies at local and national levels.
4. Challenges and future prospects for women's political empowerment.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the Vedic Period (1500-1000 BC), women were rewarded as mother goddess (shakti), a representation of life with a prodigious capacity for tolerance and sacrifice, and such they were accorded a respected position in society. Early women have had freedom to select their husband and 'Swayamvar' has gave that option (Vanshika and Roy, 2021). The roots of political participation in women can be observed back to the nineteenth century reform movement (Maroju Rama Chary, 2012).

A significant role in India's freedom struggle was played under leadership of women such as Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, and Kasturba Gandhi. Indian Constitution, adopted in 1950, guaranteed equality before the law (Article 14) and prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex (Article 15).

India also witnessed women occupying high constitutional offices, including Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister and Pratibha Patil as President. Despite these milestones, women's overall representation in Parliament remained low for decades.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is primarily based on secondary data. The appropriate secondary data is screen collected from the variety of resources including Election Commission of India's report, Parliamentary reports, newspapers articles and research papers from different national and International journals and from various Government websites and reports.

IV. CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND POLICY MEASURES

4.1. Indian Constitution (1950): The Indian Constitution established the foundation for gender equality by guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities to all citizens, irrespective of gender. Articles 15(3) and 16(2) specifically agree to particular provisions for women and children, setting the stage for further legislative action.

4.2. The Representation of the People Act (1951): This act, designed to regulate elections, has undergone several amendments to include provisions that support women's participation. It aims to ensure fair representation and has been instrumental in shaping electoral policies regarding women.

4.3. 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992): These amendments were landmark reforms that mandated one-third of the seats in Panchayats and Municipalities be reserved for women. This legislative measure significantly increased women's representation at the grassroots level, facilitating their meaningful engagement in local governance processes.

4.4. The Women's Reservation Bill (Proposed): The Women's Reservation Bill seeks to allocate 33% of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures to women. This proposed bill reflects continuing efforts to tackle the underrepresentation of females in higher legislative institutions and to encourage their participation at both the national and state levels.

4.5. The 2001 National Policy aimed at Advancing Women's Empowerment: This policy outlines the government's commitment to enhancing the socio-economic and political status of women. It aims to address various aspects of women's empowerment through education, health, and economic opportunities. These legislative and policy measures represent essential steps to attain the gender equality in political participation, though challenges remain in fully realizing their intended impact (Chand and Singh, 2017).

V. IMPACT OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

5.1 Grassroots Governance

Studies signify that the females' leaders in Panchayats prioritize issues such as consumption water, edification healthiness, hygiene and cleanness, and domestic violence. Their leadership has improved local governance outcomes and enhanced accountability.

5.2 Social Transformation

Political participation increases women's visibility in public life, challenges patriarchal norms, and inspires other women to engage in politics. It promotes self-confidence, financial independence, and decision-making power within families and communities.

5.3 Policy Influence

Women legislators made the significant task in advancing gender-sensitive legislation, such as:

- Safeguarding of females from Home Violence Act
- Sexual Nuisance of Females at Workplace Act

Greater representation can ensure stronger advocacy for gender budgeting, maternal health, and equal pay policies.

VI. CHALLENGES TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Despite progress, several barriers persist:

- 6.1 Patriarchal Social Norms:** Traditional gender roles limit women's mobility and leadership opportunities.
- 6.2 Proxy Representation:** In some cases, elected women representatives are guided or dominated by male members of their families.
- 6.3 Financial Constraints:** Electoral political affairs need important financial resources, which many females do not possess.
- 6.4 Violence and Harassment:** Females in political affairs frequently encounter digital harassment and politically motivated violence.
- 6.5 Low Representation in Parliament:** Female's demonstration in lower House still falls very short of equal proportion.

VII. COMPARAYIVE PROSPECCIVE

7.1 Representation of Female Members in the National Parliament: Consequently, women's representation in the National Parliament remains limited. Females account for roughly 15.1% of the Lok Sabha (lower house) and 14.4% of the Rajya Sabha (upper house) till 2014. Despite, being the largest, India stands at 144th position internationally in terms of female's representation in countrywide legislatures, according to Inter- Parliamentary Union data.

7.2 Representation of Female Members in the Parliament of Foreign Countries: Existence of female members in parliament is highest in Nordic countries (42.5%), followed by America (22%), Europe (19.5%), Asia (18%), Sub-Saharan Africa (18%), the Pacific (15%) and lastly in Arab states (9.4%). Globally, comparatively countries such as Rwanda and Sweden have achieved 61.3% and 47% women representation in parliament through constitutional quotas which confirmed the prospective of gender focused policies to guarantee enhanced representation. Nordic countries like Sweden and Norway also demonstrate high levels of sex fairness in politics (Yasmeen, 2024). India's quota-based approach is considered as a model for enhancing representation in developing democracies.

VIII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study draws upon:

- **Liberal Feminism:** Advocates equal opportunities and legal reforms.
- **Participatory Democracy Theory:** Emphasizes inclusive participation for democratic legitimacy.
- **Critical Mass Theory:** Suggests that a threshold (around 30%) of women is necessary to influence policy outcomes effectively.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

The consequent recommendations should be implemented on grassroots level to improve women's representation in politics.

1. Capacity-building programs for representatives of elected women
2. Political party reforms to ensure greater ticket distribution to women.
3. Stronger measures to prevent political violence and harassment.
4. Promotion of education and leadership training for young women.

X. CONCLUSION

Women's political representation serves as both a mean and outcome of empowerment. Even though India have attained major progress through constitutional amendments and reservation policies, substantial challenges remain. The recent enactment of the Women's Reservation Act signals a transformative shift toward inclusive governance.

Sustained political will, social reform, and institutional support are essential to ensure that women's representation translates into genuine empowerment and gender-just democracy.

REFERENCES

1. A.B. Vadja (2023) The Journey of Women Empowerment through Political Participation in India-An Holistic Approach. Journal of Social Science and Humanities Volume 01, Issue 03 Jul-Sep, 2023 ISSN: 2583-9284 Pp 09-15
2. Vanshika and Roy A.S. (2021). Power, Opportunity and Status of Women in the Golden Vedic Era. Elementary Education Online. Vol 20 (Issue 6): Pp 4046-4055.
3. Maraju Rama Chary (2012). Women Representation in Indian Politics: A Historical Perspective, Journal of Political Science, Jan. - March, 2012, and Vol. 73, No. 1 Pp. 119-132 Published by: Indian Political Science Association.
4. Subhash Chand and Manoj Kumar Singh (2017). Women Political Employment in India. International Journal of Advanced in Social Science and Huminity.(IJASSH) Vol.No.4, Jul-Dec, 2017 ISSN: 2455-5150 Pp 112-115
5. Smt. Yasmeen (2024). Representation of Women in Indian Parliament and State Legislatures (Current statistics and challenges). International Journal Of Novel Research And Development (www.ijnrd.org) Vol. 9 (12) Pp 523-537
6. Government of India. Constitution of India.
7. Ministry of Panchayati Raj Reports.
8. UN Women. Women in Politics Reports.
9. Election Commission of India Data.
10. Scholarly articles on gender and governance in India.



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

 9940 572 462  6381 907 438  ijirset@gmail.com



www.ijirset.com

Scan to save the contact details