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Increasing women's political participation in India

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Abstract---The equality of men and women is a matter of human dignity and a crucial aspect of the advancement of society. "Women's empowerment" refers to having full control over one's actions. India has been witnessing the empowerment of women for the past twenty years. The Government of India declared 2001 as the 'Year of Women's Empowerment' to promote a vision in which women are treated as equal partners with men. Throughout history, policy approaches have evolved from the concept of 'welfare' in the seventies to 'development' in the eighties, and to 'empowerment' in the nineties. This study focused on India's economy is growing at a phenomenal rate with a flourishing democracy. India has undergone socioeconomic and demographic changes with the contribution of women.

Keywords---women's politics, women's empowerment, contributions of women.

Introduction

With the emergence of the information age, global concerns about women's roles in computing have gained a great deal of traction. The early 20th century saw many female programmers play a crucial role in the evolution of computing. During the time when computer applications exerted an increasing influence on society, these concerns fuelled public policy debates on gender equality. Technology can empower women in a multitude of ways. Its many branches have provided extensive job opportunities in recent years. Our country's IT sector today is the top career destination for people, with leading international companies setting up branches across the country.

Objectives

- Women's contribution to the 21st century is explored.
- To promote the involvement of women in politics and economics.

Women in Politics

Women are taking an increasingly active role in politics and political activities after independence. The India Constitution grants women the right to run for legislative and executive posts, as well as the United Nations passing their Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1952. The World Plan of Action adopted in Mexico City in 1975 put forward several proposals to increase recruitment, nomination, and promotion of women in various branches of government, public institutions, trade unions, and pressure groups. Political parties showed a great deal of interest in women's participation in politics and public life during International Women's Decade. Since the dawn of the 21st century, women are increasingly expressing interest in political activities and issues since they are informed about political issues. Interested women differ significantly by region and by group.

India's population is almost half that of its women, yet they are underrepresented in various governance and decision-making bodies. Empowering women involves giving them equal voice in decisions that affect them, whether at home or in government. Among the dimensions of political engagement, voting is the only one in which women and men are equal. The level of women's participation with respect to the electoral system had been minor in other spheres such as electoral contests, membership in representative institutions and political parties, and holding positions in government. From 1950 to the present, women have consistently had a lower weighting than men in all parliamentary elections. Furthermore, the proportion of women among total voters has always been lower than the proportion of women among the nation's total population.

Women in leadership

Leadership positions at the highest levels are underrepresented by women. Women's representation in parliament increased gradually from 2008 until 2020 and reached a new record of 25 percent. There have never been more than 15% of women in positions of power in both houses of parliament. As shown by the 17 general elections held so far, a low percentage of women have been elected to the Parliament, state legislatures, political parties, and other decision-making bodies. The number of women in Parliament, in Cabinet positions, in High Courts and on the Supreme Court has been less than 8%. Among administrators and managers, fewer than 3% are women. Parliament, Assemblies, and the Council of Ministers have all had an average percentage of women representation of around 10%. Women's political mobilization and election participation are two important aspects of electoral participation since the first General Election in 1952, voter turnout has steadily increased.

According to the United States Census Bureau, women's participation in elections increased by 12% between 1952 and 1980, compared to a 6% increase in men's turnout. Women turned out to vote in general elections in India in 2004 in a proportion of 48%. According to the Electoral Commission, the proportion of women voters has steadily increased since 1952, when 37.1% of all female voters participated in the first election. It is interesting to note that the difference

between females and males voters was 15.9% in 1952, but has significantly declined through successive elections and is now 0.3 percent. Data available from the Election Commission of India in the 17th Lok Sabha election in India indicates that men turned out on average at 68.3%, while women turned out on average at 68%. It demonstrates that an increased number of women are not represented in the legislative bodies, as shown by this increase in voter turnout. The following tables show how many women are in Parliament's two houses.

Table 1

Women's Representation in Lok Sabha					
Lok Sabha	Year	Total Seats (No)	Members (No)		% of female
			Males	Females	
I	1952	499	455	22	4.4
II	1957	500	473	27	5.4
III	1962	503	469	34	6.7
IV	1967	523	492	31	5.9
V	1971	521	499	22	4.2
VI	1977	544	525	19	3.4
VII	1980	544	516	28	5.1
VIII	1984	544	500	44	8.1
IX	1989	517	489	28	5.29
X	1991	544	505	39	7.02
XI	1996	543	503	40	7.36
XII	1998	543	499	44	8.07
XIII	1999	543	494	49	9.02
XIV	2004	543	492	51	9.51
XV	2009	586	534	52	9.11
XVI	2014	573	505	68	8.81
XVII	2019	540	462	78	8.50

Table 2

Women's Representation in Rajya Sabha				
Year	Total Seats (No)	Members(No)		% of female member to total
		Males	Female	
1952	219	203	16	7.31
1957	237	219	18	7.59
1962	238	220	18	7.56
1967	240	220	20	8.33
1971	243	226	17	7.00
1977	244	219	25	10.25
1980	244	220	24	9.84
1984	244	216	28	11.48
1989	245	221	24	9.80
1991	245	207	38	15.51
1996	223	204	19	8.52
1998	245	230	15	6.12
1999	245	226	19	7.76
2004	250	222	28	8.88
2009	234	213	21	9.10
2013	242	214	28	8.84
2015	242	211	31	8.71
2020	268	241	27	11.00

In India, competitive elections and democracy have not led to more women involved in politics and better representation. Candidates selected by different parties are overwhelmingly men, while women represent a meager percentage of all candidates. Based on the percentage of women representing the Lok Sabha, it varies from 4.4 in 1952 to 8.1 in 1984, then drops to 5.2 in 1989 before rising to 7.9 in 1998 and 9.02 in 1999 and then increases to 9.5 in 2004 and 14% in 2019. Among members of Rajya Sabha the proportion of women was 7.3% in 1952 and 15.5 percent in 1991, only to decline again to 6 percent in 1998 and rise to 9 percent in 2009. Nonetheless, the proportion of women rose gradually to 11 percent in 2020. Generally, women are underrepresented in Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) and state assemblies. In other words, in spite of an increase in the number of women voting, formal representation of women has not changed much. To ensure that women are represented in parliament, the Women's Reservation Bill was introduced during 1996 in the Lok Sabha. It was reintroduced and passed during the Rajya Sabha in 2020. There was a pending legislation in the Parliament of India till today, which proposed to amend the Constitution of India so that 33 percent of seats are reserved for women in the lower house of the parliament, Lok Sabha, and in all state legislative assemblies.

Women Politicians

In independent India, there were several women nationalists appointed to high-level government positions including that of ministers, governors of provinces, and emissaries to other countries. First enshrined in the Constitution, AIWC women seated in high political offices include Sarojini Naidu - first governor of Uttar Pradesh, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, first minister of health, Hansa Mehta, Indian representative to the UN Human Rights Commission and Sharifa Hamid Ali, UN representative to the Commission on the Status of Women. India's first Ambassador to the United Nations was Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who was elected to be the first woman President of the General Assembly. She was among many female patriots from powerful families who were recognized for their contributions. From 1963 to 1967, Sucheta Kriplani served as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, making her the first lady chief minister in India. It was under Indira Gandhi's regime that the United Nations released the Report of Towards Equality, which was considered to be one of India's most influential documents. She was described as one of India's most popular leaders. Her bill introduced by the first woman legislator (1927–28), Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, made women's issues a priority.

There have been some women who have served as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu six times during the period 1991-2016, including Sheila Dixit, former Chief Minister of Delhi, Jayalalitha, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) Chief Minister Rabri Devi of Bihar (1997-2005) served for three terms, while her daughter-in-law Vasundhara Raje (BJP), daughter-in-law of Rani Gayatri Devi of Jaipur (2003-2008), served as Chief Minister of Rajasthan. Following her tenure as Governor of Rajasthan, Prabha Patil became India's first female President (2007). She was the first woman to hold the position of speaker of the Lok Sabha, an Indian diplomat, politician, and government official. Sonia Gandhi, the leader of the Congress Party, Sushma Swaraj, and Mayawati are few noteworthy Mamta Banarjee of West Bengal, Uma Bharati of Madhya Pradesh,

and the Bahujan Samaj Party of Uttar Pradesh. While the number of Indian women politicians occupying high positions in Indian politics is small, they serve as role models and inspiration for women who wish to pursue careers in politics.

There are a number of social and economic constraints preventing women from participating in political processes. Their history, geography, politics, and culture are influenced by economic, historical, geographical, and cultural factors. Participation was minimal and exclusion was influencing. The triple burden, women's illiteracy and discrimination were factors. The paternalistic values, the lack of control and access to income and other resources, and the restrictions they face. Insensitive legal systems and public spaces continue to undermine their effective political participation. A lack of adequate infrastructure and support services aggravates this problem. They will be able to participate more easily. As women often rise in positions of power, public participation and decision making will empower them. From business owner to farm manager to army commander Organizations. Women take on roles and occupations previously dominated by men more and more often. Political parties have also shown effectiveness in becoming more aware, training and reforming Enhancing the role of women as leaders. Women lack representation in elected office despite their participation While their involvement in formal political structures has increased, they have remained largely unchanged.

Conclusion

If a nation is serious about progress, it cannot ignore capacity building and education Increasing women's empowerment. A gender sensitive approach is, therefore, a prerequisite. All levels of the organization have been strengthened. Many females in India have entered areas that were traditionally male dominated. This domain is considered to be male. Increasing numbers of women are taking on leadership roles within a number of fields. These include fields such as aeronautics, medicine, space, engineering, law, politics, education, and business etc. Currently, women in India are emancipated and granted equal status with men. Politics, socialization, domestic, and education touch all walks of life.

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