

IMPACT OF CASTE ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIA



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ABSTRACT

Women make up about half of India's population and make significant contributions to human development. Women are an essential part of the development dialectics and provide both the source and the energy for development. However, massive shackles of cultural preconceptions have strengthened the rigidity of the patriarchal culture and delineates the involvement of women in the development discourse more systematically around the world. The patriarchal society reduces the opportunities for women to advance their status, particularly in countries with lower levels of education and cultures that are more conservative, such as India. In spite of the fact that there have been a large number of affirmative actions, Constitutional privileges, international treaties protection, various women's rights movements, educational development of women, and feminism driven protest against the vulnerability, significant changes have been made in educational development, economic empowerment, and social recognition to some extent but not to an adequate level. To a considerable extent, however, women's empowerment is limited to their representation in the domains of decision making and policy making. Therefore, the political participation of women became necessary to guarantee the empowerment in all of the spheres of activity and to ensure that the gender dimension of the requirements could be addressed and enacted as policies for the empowerment of women who have been subjected to humiliation and dishonour in public spheres. Not only does the Constitution guarantee women equal voting rights, but it also substantially acknowledges the contributions women have made to the country.

Keywords: caste, women, political, participation

INTRODUCTION

Even though the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution increased the room for women's participation in the political sphere, this expansion of space has not yet percolated into the Constitutions of the Legislative Branch or the Parliament, which have more power in

amending the Legislations that affect the people. The shifting political dialectics have highlighted the necessity for more female engagement in the political arena in order to broaden the scope of opportunities for the empowerment of women. The act of voting is only one facet of citizens' participation in political processes; there are many other ramifications as well. In general, political participation originates from the freedom to communicate out, assimilate, and connect; the capability to participate effectively in the conduct of public affairs; and the prospective to contest as a candidate, engaging in campaigning, to be elected, and to preserve democratic procedures at all levels of government. Women and men are accorded the same level of entitlement to participate in the political process when democratic processes are put into place. But the fact of the matter is that women are prevented from participating more actively as a result of the entitlements offered in democratic systems. As a result of the patriarchal system's suppression of women's involvement in political engagement, which in turn hinders their participation in the formulation of policies and in their own empowerment, The knowledge that women have a role in politics was formed as a result of the efforts carried out by feminists across the industrialized countries.

SIGNIFICANCE OF WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Women's empowerment was defined by a variety of elements related to socioeconomic criteria; nonetheless, empowerment relied greatly on the power to make decisions both in the home and in society. Therefore, women's political engagement is the most essential parameter that may be used to enhance the empowerment of women than any of the other characteristics that are restricted to the empowerment of women. The term "political involvement" refers to active engagement in democratic processes, namely those in which members of a society have a say in the formulation of policy and, either directly or indirectly, in the manner in which information is disseminated to the public. Exercising one's right to vote is, without a doubt, one of the most important political commitments a person can make; however, political participation encompasses far more than simply casting a vote; it also includes electoral campaigning, attending party conferences, demonstrations, communication with leaders, maintaining celebration positions, running for office, membership in representative bodies, influencing policy making, and a variety of other associated activities. Therefore, political participation can also be defined as the voluntary participation in political activities, such as membership, voting, and taking part in the pursuits of political events, legislative bodies, or politically influenced movements. This definition fits better with the second definition. ³ Not only does the engagement of women in political decision making benefit the women themselves, but it also empowers the rest of society. Through the correct empowerment of women, which includes political engagement as an important and fundamental component of women's empowerment, gender discrepancies attributed to cultural biases might be eliminated, which would lead to the elimination of the gender gap.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN- A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Women in political discourse find themselves in insufficient situations all over the world due to the fact that the difficulties are the same everywhere; yet, the intensity of the issues is greater in nations that generally lean toward having a rigid cultural set-up. The ratio of women legislators in relation to the overall membership of the Parliament is rather low, with the exception of more industrialized nations such as Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, which are ranked higher on the human development index (HDI). As can be seen from the current state of affairs, just 244 women have been elected anywhere in the globe to serve as the head of either a state or a government in the past century. In terms of the ability to vote and to run for office, it had taken close to a century's worth of struggle for women to finally

achieve such achievements. New Zealand was the first country to grant women the right to vote in 1893, while Finland was the first country to let women run for office in 1906. Both of these milestones occurred in different countries. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women was significantly responsible for legalising the political rights of women, including the ability to compete in elections. Women should have the right to vote in all elections on equal terms with men and free from any discrimination, as stated in the first and most important article of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women. A variety of women's rights activity in different parts of the world, in addition to the international treaties, has expanded the opportunities for women to take part in political life. In addition, the efforts of non-governmental organizations and groups concerned with the public and political life of the country have helped to increase the breadth of opportunities for women to participate in politics. Only 24.3 percent of all national legislators were women as of February 2019, according to the most recent reports that pertain to women in politics. This represents a modest improvement from the 11.3 percent of women who had parliamentary seats in 1995 around the globe. Up till the year 2019, there are 27 countries on the planet with a representation of women in single or lower houses of parliament that is less than 10 percent. Additionally, there are 3 chambers that do not have any provision for women's representation at all. The situation on a global scale appears to be insufficient. Rwanda has the greatest percentage of female legislators in the world, with 61.3 percent of seats in the lower house being held by women.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION TO WOMEN IN INDIA AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The Constitution of India makes a significant and conscientious leap forward from the traditional subordinate position entailed within the clutches of cultural dogmatism of women in the society, and it considers every woman to be equal to her male counterpart as a citizen as well as an individual component of the democratic system of India. This is a profound and conscious advancement from the traditional inferior position entailed within the clutches of cultural dogmatism. In the preamble to the Constitution, it is implied that males and females are entitled to equal rights and privileges as citizens of India. These include the right to have liberty of independent thought and expression, equality before the law, and access to opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To identify the determinants of political participation of women apart from Caste and Gender Issues
- 2 To examine the challenges of functional aspects of women political participants at grass-root level.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Panda (2010) has undertaken the research study to investigate the implications relevant to the involvement of women in politics, as well as the difficulties and successes that this implies. The research shed light on the relationship that exists between the home environment and the degree of dominance of psychological variables for the political activity of women activists. The outcome that was derived from the careful consultation and interrogation of the thematic and empirical analysis indicates that involvement or inclination and participation in political activity result from the interface between the individual's environment and their psyche. This

conclusion was reached as a result of the meticulous consultation and interrogation of the thematic and empirical analysis. The study also suggested that women have a lower interest in activities with a political orientation, and as a result, they contribute in a smaller number. Women, like males, who have distinct personalities, interesting characteristics, and an interest in politics.

David Hirschmann (2011) has undertaken the research study to investigate the implications relevant to the involvement of women in politics, as well as the difficulties and successes that this involves. In-depth consideration was given in the study to the question of whether or not research techniques concerning African women and their political engagement should be more adaptable and comprehensive. There is a need to change the western connotations of politics, which typically centre on aggregated notions of both "the state" and of "women," and from an excessively centralised a concentration on government, and moving to comprise a larger appreciation of informal establishments, unusual modes of involvement, uneven tradeoffs, and even manipulated politics prevails in African countries. This shift is necessary because of the fact that politics in Africa tends to be manipulated. In addition, it is of the utmost importance to make certain that the room for women-focused connotations in political participation is reduced, but it is also essential that the women's informal methods of involvement in the process be legitimised within the context of the more comprehensive framework of political participation and empowerment. In addition, it is imperative that women be given the opportunity to participate in the process in which they shape their own identities.

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Palanithurai.G (2001) have decided to do a research study in order to investigate the inferences that are associated with women's political engagement, as well as the difficulties and successes that are associated with it. The study provided evidence of the difficulties and limitations that are experienced by women in positions of political leadership. The study reveals how the women political leaders have been confronting the problems on various fronts, including the family system, society, political party, bureaucracy, Panchayat Council, and Gram Sabha. The study also highlights that the difficulties have been taken from the reports of the training programme that has been conducted for the women political leaders by the Rajiv Gandhi Chair for Panchayat Raj Studies. The women in authority have detailed the conditions they require. They insist that there be some kind of support framework. The study

provides specific information about the challenges faced by the Panchayat administration in relation to the difficulties faced by women. In addition, the research highlighted the multiple challenges that elected female members face as a result of patriarchal culture. The research also stressed the need of collaborative efforts for the advancement of women's rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The procedures that were chosen to carry out the research are an essential component of each and every investigation. In the study, both primary and secondary sources provided information, and both sets of data were used. Primary data were acquired from Women Political Leaders in Tamil Nadu, such as present and previous Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly. The literature, books, articles, and other academic publications that were used to compile the relevant Secondary Data are referred to as "literature." For the purpose of collecting Secondary Data, a variety of sources, including the Anna Centenary Library, the Madras Connemara Library, the Madras Institute of Development Studies Library, the Madras University Library, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Library, the Annamalai University Library, the Presidency College Library, Google Scholar, and various other research online databases, etc., were used.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

Statistical tools like percentage analysis, cross tabulation chart analysis, frequency distribution as well as adequate statistical tools have been deployed to analyse the collected data.

The determination of the samples' identities was carried out using the method of purposeful sampling. The information requested has been gathered from 175 female lawmakers located around the state of Tamil Nadu. More than 250 female politicians were first approached for the poll, and 175 of those individuals have already granted their agreement to participate in the study and supply the required information.

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the 175 selected female politicians in Tamil Nadu through the structured survey which was carried out for the purpose of the study all throughout the state. The data pertaining to socioeconomic circumstances, the perspective of political participation, the probability of a conducive environment, the challenges and constraints confronted in political operation as a result of being a woman, and the degree to which the Constitution and legitimate protections are afforded to women in order to conceive of effective space for political operations. In general, the gender gap emerged as a result of various cultural clutches and value systems in the society. These cultural clutches and value systems eroded the equality and nullified the minimum space for women to exhibit their contribution in political and other development spheres. In general, the gender gap emerged as a result of various cultural clutches and value systems in the society.

Marriage is considered to be a social responsibility in Indian society, and it comes with a number of rights and entitlements. This is the major and famous institution that is surrounded by rites and activities of cultural significance. In the Indian social order, marriage is an essential component of personal development, and it is deeply ingrained in the progression of the family system and kinship. After marriage, women are compelled to adjust their will and

preferences in order to accommodate a variety of constraints and pressures.

Marital Status of the Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
Married	116	66.3
Unmarried	21	12
Divorced / Individual	20	11.4
Widows	18	10.3
Total	175	100

In Table the empirical authentication that was taken from the structured empirical survey illustrates the insights that were constrained to the socioeconomic factors of the women political personalities that were conveyed for the study. The individual's attitude, conduct, and social interactions can be significantly impacted by socio-demographic information, such as gender, which plays an important role in this process. It is also an important factor in determining the privileges that are displayed or repeated in their conduct with regard to the social structure. The conclusions that may be drawn from the structured survey show the marital status of the female politicians who participated in the study and reported their information. Among the female politicians with whom we corresponded, 66.3% had married lives, whereas 12% led single lives.

EDUCATION

Education is the most important tool for illuminating people's mental processes and changing their worldviews. The term "education system" refers, for the most part, to the formal educational framework, which includes the official procedures of both education and assessment. Education in India is broken up into a number of distinct subfields, such as primary education, secondary education, higher education, vocational education, and skill development, amongst others. Education has a hopeful and good impact on the quality of people's lives as well as the social lives of those people.

Educational Qualification of the Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
Up to Primary School	11	6.3
S.S.L.C	46	26.3

Higher Secondary	37	21.1
Degree	46	26.3
Professional Courses	35	20
Total	175	100

The empirical verification that was received from the structured empirical survey is displayed in Table 4.6. This table illustrates the perceptions that belong to the socio-economic factors of the women political figures that were communicated for the study. The knowledge about a person's socioeconomic status and neighbourhood is one of the most important factors that might have an effect on that person's attitudes, behaviours, and social interactions. It is also an important factor of the privileges that are exhibited in or mirrored by their conduct in relation to the social system. The conclusions that can be drawn from the structured survey show the educational background of the female politicians who participated in the poll and provided responses.

OCCUPATION

As a type of physical and mental activity of the individual against the motivation for livelihood, a person's employment is recognised to be a major component in socioeconomic variables. Occupational status is the prominent component in socioeconomic variables. Both the source of income and an indicator of one's socioeconomic standing, it serves both functions. Occupational mobility in Tamil Nadu improved as a direct result of the government's affirmative initiatives, the growth of social organisations, and the advancement of educational opportunities. The shift in professional mobility out from traditionally held sectors and into new fields not only empowers individuals but also illuminates the path to societal advancement and upward mobility. A profession is an activity that requires specialised knowledge and training in a particular area of science or study in order to improve one's abilities and competencies.

Occupation Status of the Parents and Spouse of Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
Government	16	9.1
Private	26	14.9
Unskilled Labour	18	10.3
Skilled Labour	20	11.4

Agriculture	59	33.7
Business	36	20.6
Total	175	100

The empirical authentication that was acquired from the structured empirical survey is displayed in Table 4.7. This table demonstrates the perspectives that belong to Socio-Economic Variables of the Women Political Personalities that were Communicated for the Study. The knowledge about a person's socioeconomic status and neighbourhood is one of the most important factors that might have an effect on that person's attitudes, behaviours, and social interactions. It is also an important factor of the privileges that are exhibited in or mirrored by their conduct in relation to the social system. The inferences that were drawn from the structured survey display the occupational status of the parents (in the case of women politicians who had never been married) and spouses (in the case of women politicians who had been married) of the women politicians who participated in the survey and communicated their responses. According to the data collected, the percentage of women politicians whose parents or spouses work for the government is 9.1%, whereas the percentage of women politicians whose parents or spouses work for private enterprises is 14.9%. Parents and spouses of women politicians who are either skilled or unskilled labourers accounted for 11.4% and 10.3% of the total population, respectively. Similarly, the percentage of female politicians whose parents or spouses worked in agriculture was 33.7% and the percentage whose parents or spouses worked in business was 20.6%. The observation that was reached from the deductions that were offered suggests that a significant proportion of the wives and parents of the selected women MPs are employed in either the agricultural or commercial sectors.

INFORMATION ON POLITICAL PROFILE OF THE CHOSEN WOMEN POLITICIANS

Position Held in the Political Party of Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
State Level Position	16	9.1
National Level Position	11	6.3
District Level Position	56	32
Local Level Position	63	36
No Position Now	29	16.6

Total	175	100
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Table presents the results of an observed empirical verification acquired from a structured empirical survey. This verification shows the viewpoints relevant to the political profile of the selected women political figures who were communicated for the study. The political profile-oriented material frees up the growth of political activities, the factors that motivated an individual to become involved in politics, and the years of experience gained across a variety of political activities that have been manifested in the political arenas. It is also a notable factor of the women politicians to engage more actively in the political activities that are now taking place and to increase the political engagement of women. The inferences drawn from the structured survey reveal the viewpoint held by women politicians who participated in the poll and voiced their thoughts.

Political Affiliation of the Selected Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
National Parties		
BJP	18	10.3
INC	18	10.3
CPI	10	5.7
CPI(M)	11	6.3
State Parties		
AIADMK	38	21.7
DMK	36	20.6
PMK	11	6.3
DMDK	8	4.6
NTK	6	3.4
VCK	6	3.4
Others	13	7.4
Total	175	100

Source: Survey data

Table 4.9 displays, based on the needed data gathered from the structured empirical survey, the perspectives relevant to the political profile of the selected female political personalities

who were communicated for the study. The knowledge that is directed toward a political profile may help release the growth of political activities, elements that are driven to get involved in politics, and years of experience gained across a variety of political activities that are then manifested in the political spheres. It is also a notable factor of the women politicians to engage more actively in the political activities that are now taking place and to increase the political engagement of women. The conclusions drawn from the structured survey reveal the political affiliation of the chosen female politicians who participated in the study and spoke with the researchers. According to the data collected from regional political parties, 21.7% of the female politicians who participated in the poll stated that they were affiliated with the AIADMK party, while 20.6% of them were affiliated with the DMK party. Both the PMK and the DMDK had female politicians make up 6.3% and 4.6% of their respective parties.

Table 4. 1 Person Persuaded to become Politician of Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
Family Members	37	21.1
Political Leaders	62	35.4
Friends	11	6.3
Teachers	8	4.6
Relatives	11	6.3
Self-inclination	46	26.3
Total	175	100

The viewpoints that belong to the political profile of the selected women political figures that were conveyed for the study are displayed in Table 4.10 and were collected via the observed verification that was acquired from the structured empirical survey. The political profile-oriented information motivates the growth of political activities, the factors that compelled a person to become involved in politics, and the years of experience gained across a variety of political activities that have been expressed in the political domains. It is also a notable factor of the women politicians to engage more actively in the political activities that are now taking place and to increase the political engagement of women. According to the data collected from the structured survey, the Women Politicians who participated in the structured survey communicated with the Person Who Was Persuaded to Become a Politician individually. The information obtained indicates that 21.1% of the women politicians who communicated for the study stated their family members persuaded them to get involved in politics, 35.4% of the women politicians who communicated opined political leaders charismatic approach persuaded them to get involved in politics, 6.3% of the women politicians who communicated opined their friends persuaded them to get involved in politics, and 4.6% of the women politicians who communicated stated their teachers persuaded them to get involved in The observation that was obtained from the inferences that were given suggests that a significant portion of the women politicians who communicated implied that self-inclination and family members have persuaded them to become involved in politics. This is due to the fact that a significant portion of the women politicians are the heirs of the political

leaders. As a result, they have naturally taken advantage of the favourable conditions to get actively involved in politics.

Number of Years Active in Politics of Women Politicians Communicated

Classification of Women Politicians Communicated	No's	Percent
Up to 10 years	36	20.6
10 years to 20 years	78	44.6
20 years to 30 years	24	13.7
More than 30 years	37	21.1
Total	175	100

Source: Survey data

Table 4.11 presents the findings of the empirical verification received from the structured empirical survey. These findings demonstrate the perspectives relevant to the political profile of the selected women political personalities conveyed for the study. The information that focuses on a political profile can help unleash the development of political activities, the factors that propelled someone to get involved in politics, and the years of experience gained across a variety of political activities that have manifested themselves in the political spheres. It is also a notable factor of the women politicians to engage more actively in the political activities that are now taking place and to increase the political engagement of women. The conclusions that can be drawn from the structured survey demonstrate that the female politicians who participated in the poll had been involved in politics for a certain amount of years. According to the data collected, 20.6% of the female politicians who participated in the study said they have been actively involved in politics for up to 10 years, 44.6% said they have been actively involved in politics between 10 and 20 years, 13.7% said they have been actively involved in politics between 20 and 30 years, and 21.1% said they have been actively involved in politics for more than 30 years. The observation that was made from the inferences that were given suggests that the majority of the women politicians who communicated suggested that they have more than 15 years of experience in active politics. This is because they have been participating in a variety of activities, such as demonstrations and other active political activities, in order to bring awareness of their party's stance to the general public and also to enhance the political participation of women in an efficient manner.

CONCLUSION

Politics are largely run by men all throughout the world, and women are grossly underrepresented in both wealthy and developing nations. There are several institutional barriers that make it difficult for women to participate in political activities in a manner that is satisfactory to them. In India, the inflexible cultural concerns firmly afflict into gender biased society and showed tremendous implications on women's actions in public domain and political engagement. As a result, the severity of cultural clutches is greater there than in other countries. It is also generally known that gender equality in political involvement is an essential component of modern democratic government that is now in existence. On the

basis of the standards and norms that have been established internationally, men and women should have equal rights and opportunities to participate fully in all aspects and at all levels of political processes. This should be the case at all levels. In spite of the significant strides that have been achieved in a number of countries toward granting women the right to vote and the opportunity to run for political office, women still make up fewer than 11% of the members of parliament.

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