

## Women and Politics

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Women are the essence of society; nonetheless, prejudice and oppression have constricted their potentials. Factors such as culture, religion, marital status, and patriarchy contribute significantly to the oppression of women (Hentschel et al., 2019). In the socioeconomic environment, there appears to be a great transformation between men and women in American society, given the obligations granted to women at the expense of males. The underplay of women is primarily ascribed to oppression from the larger society as it is typically patriarchal.

One of the foundational tenets of both democracy and evangelicalism is the right to freedom. This, along with religious advancements in the 19th century, produced a country that was constantly looking for new ways to enhance its institutions. Never doubt that a small number of thoughtful, dedicated citizens can alter the world, to paraphrase Margaret Mead. In fact, nothing else has ever done it. Various groups of people banded together to fight for their rights and end practises that were depriving them of their freedom during the first wave of the reform era in the 19th century (ushistory.org). They battled for international peace, educational equality, improved prison conditions, labour rights, the eradication of slavery, and women's rights. The success of each of these reforms contributed to the rise of the United States as the world's superpower. The Women's Rights Movement, which has allowed modern women to enjoy advantages like voting, the right to own property, and careers once reserved for men, was the reform that had the greatest impact of all. The success of each of these reforms contributed to the rise of the United States as the world's superpower. The Women's Rights Movement, which has allowed modern women to enjoy advantages like voting, the right to own property, and careers once reserved for men, was the reform that had the greatest impact of all.

### Political activism

Women's organisations in India started to appear in the early 1900s, and then again in the 1970s, following a decade of irregular activity from the 1950s to 1970s. Bharat Stree Mahamandal, one of the earliest women's organisations, was established in 1910 to assist women in overthrowing male supremacy. Women's associations were historically founded with the assistance of men, which restrained the expansion of traditional gender roles while limiting the access of women to the workforce and to higher education. The All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was established in 1927 to promote women's education. Between 1952 and 1960, it backed the passage of the Hindu Code of Bills. Women

participated in the independence movement by organising demonstrations and public events against British colonial rule over India.

In the 1970s, a new wave of feminism emerged in response to issues with gender inequality and India's sluggish economic growth. The Committee on the Status of Women in India's 1974 report had a big impact on the resurrection of the gender equality movement. The study concentrated on the disparities between men and women in India's employment, literacy, and wage disparities. The portrayal of persistent prejudice against women in India in the report served as a trigger for the women's movement. Women's movement issues about gender inequality have consistently been centred on the Women's Reservation Bill, the Uniform Civil Code, and notably sexual abuse of women. In India, the number of formal and informal women's organisations has increased at the regional, national, and state levels. Women's organisations in India seek to address a range of issues, including sexism, poverty, the environment, and women's empowerment. The AIWC, one of the most well-known women's organisations in India, was founded in 1927. It is intended to educate Indian women and give them power. The Sarda Act, Maternity Benefit Act, and Hindu Code Bills were all passed with the aid of the AIWC, an organisation with more than 100,000 members and 500 branches in India.

Problems preventing participation by women

The degree to which and the manner in which women participate in politics are significantly influenced by cultural and societal barriers like violence, prejudice, and illiteracy.

Sexual violence

Threats of violence, in the opinion of Martha Nussbaum, are a major impediment to women's political engagement. In India, sexual assault is on the rise as a result of problems with marriage and education. Women experience sexual abuse. Domestic abuse, child marriage, and poor literacy rates have all limited Indian women's economic opportunities, which has also increased the prevalence of sexual violence in that nation. According to a 2011 research, "24% of Indian men have at some point in their lives engaged in sexual violence, 20% have coerced their partners into having sex with them, and 38% of men have physically abused their partners." The high incidence of sexual assault is said to be related to the fact that it commonly goes unpunished and is acceptable in marriages.

According to Martha C. Nussbaum, many women's ability to actively participate in different types of social and political connections, speak in public, and be perceived as respectable people whose worth is equal to that of others is undermined in the larger community by violence and the threat of violence.

Discrimination

The Indian Constitution forbade caste and gender discrimination, yet it is still a significant barrier for women to enter politics. A 2012 survey of 3,000 Indian women found that barriers to participation, particularly in running for political office, include illiteracy, family obligations, and adverse attitudes of women as leaders. The challenges faced by Indian women, such as their limited access to resources and information, can be evidence of discriminatory views. In their homes or communities, women depend on the knowledge of the men. Because they are in charge of running the home, women also lack leadership

experience. Many Indian women choose not to engage for a variety of reasons, including the size of their home responsibilities. Women have less opportunities than men to work in businesses and develop their leadership abilities. Men have historically ruled India, therefore there isn't much of a public space for them in politics.

Discrimination is further supported by class. When running for public office, Dalit women, who are members of India's lowest caste, frequently experience discrimination. Seats must be reserved for Dalits and Scheduled Castes according to Indian law, yet women who hold political office face harassment and prejudice. Denying information, remaining silent during meetings, and, in some cases, petitions calling for the removal of elected officials are all examples of harassment Dalit women suffer.

### Illiteracy

In the entire world, India has the highest percentage of illiterates. The United Nations estimated that 25.6% of Indian adults lacked literacy as of January 2014. Indian women's literacy rates are much lower at 65.46% compared to men's rates of 82.14%. Women with poor literacy abilities could find it difficult to comprehend politics and current events. Lack of education has prevented illiterate women from effectively exercising their political rights, which has led to unfair problems like the exclusion of women from voter registers. In relation to engaging in politics, martial claimed that "literacy is linked to women's capacity to interact with and collaborate with other women because literacy is often associated with the capacity to travel beyond the house and to stand on one's own outside of it.

Women still confront substantial obstacles in politics, notwithstanding the advancements made in this area. The absence of women in governmental positions is one of the main problems. Only a small portion of political leaders around the world are women, who are underrepresented in parliament and other political roles. The double standards that frequently confront women in politics present another difficulty. Women are frequently subjected to harsher criticism than men for the way they act, look, and live their personal lives. Due of this, it may be challenging for women to establish their credibility and respect in the political world. Women in politics also confront considerable obstacles due to sexism and prejudice. Sexist remarks and harassment are frequently directed at women, which can make the workplace unfriendly. Women's ability to succeed in their political careers may also be hampered by discrimination based on their gender, colour, and other characteristics.

### Progress Made towards Gender Equality in Politics

Despite the challenges faced by women in politics, progress has been made towards gender equality in recent years. In many countries, there have been efforts to increase the representation of women in political positions. For example, in 2018, Ethiopia appointed its first female president, Sahle-Work Zewde, and Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in parliament worldwide.

Efforts have also been made to address sexism and discrimination in politics. In many countries, there are laws and policies in place to protect women from harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Organizations such as the United Nations have also been working to promote gender equality in politics through initiatives such as the Women in Politics Map.

#### Oppression Of Women in Education and In the Workplace

Hazel and Kleyman (2019) state that women make up 47% of the workforce in the United States, and 40% of households with children include mothers who also work full-time. But according to Meara et al. (2019), women only make 82 percent of what males typically make in a full-time or weekly job. Gender disparities in economic participation and opportunity have a direct impact on gender wage discrepancies. Women are more likely to be unemployed or work in unpaid roles and remain economically dependent on men around the world (Hazel & Kleyman, 2019). In addition, women are less likely than men to hold leadership positions. Despite making a considerable economic contribution, they continue to face severe discrimination in the workplace.

The fact that women are still underrepresented in educational fields traditionally associated with men, such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), contributes to the ongoing discrimination of women in the workplace. Due to gender inequality, women are less likely than males to be admitted to programmes like Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), which hinders their ability to grow in technical positions at work (Makarova et al., 2019). Despite the fact that STEM occupations are among the most profitable and in great demand, women are much less likely than males to register in STEM programmes and pursue a college education in these fields (Makarova et al., 2019). Women are still deterred from seeking these lucrative career opportunities by female oppression and sexism in school, as well as the sometimes hostile environment of academic departments.

#### Oppression Of Women in Politics

Women hold a very small percentage of positions requiring decision-making in politics and institutions all across the world. The limited number of female candidates and gender stereotypes add to the challenges women confront in elections (Milazzo & Goldstein, 2019). The nature of politics contributes to women's subjugation in the political field. According to Paxton et al. (2020), the low number of women in the political area contributes to political gender blindness; the organizational position of women propagates the field's socially constructed prejudices. Second, privileged men created political categories and ways to address issues that were important to them. Women-led positions are particularly vulnerable to male criticism and sabotage. The patriarchal dominance of politics is mirrored in the very restrictive and dogmatic conceptions of politics, which ignore the importance of women to the field. Women's engagement in politics has been hampered by claims of inferiority at both the micro and macro levels.

#### Development and Achievements of the Women's Rights Movement

The goal of the American Revolution was to free the citizens from the citizens, but even though women during that time took equally significant risks, they were denied civil, marital,

educational, occupational, or religious freedom ([ushistory.org](http://ushistory.org)). When Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott joined forces to create the first-ever women's rights movement, this unequal treatment of women finally came to an end. They were both inspired by the gender-based prejudice they experienced at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. This was the initial reformation of women's rights in the United States.

Women were viewed as being less capable, prospective, and too sensitive to work in politics. Due to this, women received their voting and election rights far later than men. Women's civil rights were a key emphasis of the 1848-founded Women's Rights Movement. The ability to vote, however, soon took centre stage as the only means of enacting the other reforms. Only white women were given the right to vote when the 19th amendment was ratified in 1919, but as the battles raged on, all other women gained the right to vote and to run for office by 1965. Today, it is difficult to envisage such a society because women vote and hold a sizable proportion of high-ranking political positions. . Most recently, Kamala Harris became the first female vice president. Hillary Clinton was the first American woman to seek for president and came close to winning. Women have a calming effect on the regions they are in charge of. Compared to men, they have more egalitarian, caring, and other-focused sociopolitical attitudes while still being pro-traditional morality.

#### Impacts of Women in Modern Politics

Gender equality, a wide range of policy challenges, and the types of solutions put forth have all been significantly impacted by the involvement of women in politics. According to research, the gender of the legislators has a significant impact on the types of policy goals. As a result, the country has passed more laws addressing the issues of the underprivileged as a result of the rise in the number of women in politics. Additionally, additional laws improve living conditions and give family, people of colour, and women top priority. Women typically embrace a less hierarchical, more participative, and collaborative style of leadership than males do. For instance, compared to only 17% of male parliamentarians, 25% of female MPs in the U.S. report receiving stronger support from their female colleagues in the opposition party (Allen 18). Working across party lines helps to offer democracy to all citizens more successfully.

Additionally, compared to men, female parliamentarians are better equipped to recognise and handle issues affecting women and society as a whole. According to Hessami and Lopes da Fonseca (9), they view the government as a tool that assists them in managing the issues faced by underrepresented groups. Legislators in the United States concur that policies have grown more sensitive and responsive to constituent needs as a result of the presence of women in these roles.

According to studies, Congresswomen sponsor at least three more measures than their male counterparts do on average each term. Additionally, according to the Congressional Research Service (11), they co-sponsor 26 more bills per term than Congressmen do. Due to their creativity, their districts also receive 9% more funding than districts run by men. For residents of districts with female mayors, this adds up to an additional 49 million dollars (Kliff par. More funding translates into greater development for these areas. They are also in charge of the laws that have raised the bar in areas as important as health and education.

Compared to only 6% of male legislators, 14% of female legislators said that healthcare was one of the most pressing issues that needed to be addressed (Allen 26). To ensure that all human needs are as well represented as possible, there must be this kind of balance in the houses.

Women now have control over their bodies, particularly their reproductive and sexual functions, as a result of the changes brought about by women's rights movements. By informing women about the many birth control options, the birth control movement produced a new vision for women's liberation and put it into action. Modern women have control about whether they choose to become mothers and when, thanks to these early conflicts. Depending on their health and financial situation, individuals are free to choose how many children they want to have. With this, the population can be controlled, and more people are able to have children, which reduces the load on the government.

### Conclusion

Patriarchal ideology is one factor that nurtures the oppression of women in different socioeconomic and political spheres, thereby promoting gender inequality. The patriarchal worldview oppresses women in various ways, undermining their importance while supporting male dominance. From recent developments in the socioeconomic and political contexts, it is clear that women and men are equally capable and should, therefore, be treated equally. With the guarantee of equal rights to both men and women, the latter will have greater exposure to opportunities to realize their potentials without patriarchal hindrances.

As a result, the women's rights movement was crucial because it encouraged more women to participate in politics. Their involvement is essential to the growth of the country and the delivery of democracy as it should be. It is clear that they have had an influence thus far because there is more equality in education, not just in terms of gender but also in terms of ethnicity and sexual orientation. They have been in the vanguard of the struggle for better healthcare systems, and the country is now more deliberately addressing the problems that minorities face. The widespread shift in policymaking and the varieties of solutions given are evidence of their compassionate and empathic nature. The empowerment of women to excel in their chosen fields is the most effective development tool there is.

Finally, men must be allies in the fight for women's political participation. Male politicians and political parties must actively support women and promote their participation in politics. Men must also be held accountable for their sexist behavior towards

Women's participation in politics is crucial for achieving gender equality and promoting democratic values. Despite the progress that has been made in the fight for women's rights, women remain underrepresented in political leadership positions around the world. In this essay, we will explore the challenges women face in politics, the reasons for their underrepresentation, and how to increase the participation of women in politics.

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