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Kuriakose Varkey

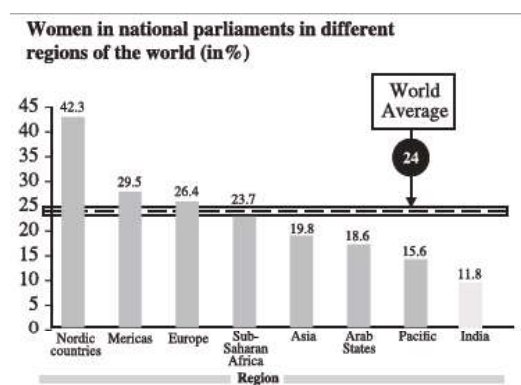
Assistant Professor, Dept of English
University of Engineering & Management, Jaipur

Introduction

Women are the basic pillars which the families are built; nonetheless there is predominance of patriarchal social set up in Indian society. Women are the better counterparts and equally important in all respects, and are better players in every spheres of activities. In this regard how can they be driven back in politics? Women politicians play a great role to inspire and emancipate the younger generations to be the part of moral politics. It is the time's need to highlight the role and future of women politics in the main stream. Political participation by women is generally political activism and voting is the strongest one. In these days, they become the stronger pillars in public offices and political parties rather better than the men. *'As per the Inter parliamentary Union (IPU), women make up very less percentage of representation in 17th Lok Sabha and the reports of the Election Commission of India (ECI), women representation in Parliament is below 11% in 2021'*(1). And all the representation in various State Legislative Assemblies became 9%, unfortunately it is behind Pakistan, Nepal and Nepal. The strike rate in the voting percentage of women is gradually increasing. It is the need of the hour to have more representation of women in policy making bodies, and to work for reducing the gender gaps in politics. Policy makers, civil society and general public have to do hard work in this regard.

Political leaders like Mayawati and J. Jayalalithaa were assaulted on many occasions. Notwithstanding the assault by the men from

the power, they strongly fought with their opponents with their strong willpower. Jayalalitha was attacked in the TN assembly, her sari was pulled. Mayawati allied with her bitter enemy, SP, and fought elections, and won many seats in the assembly and Parliament. There were whispers and derogatory remarks against Smriti Irani from the opposition and male counterparts on many occasions. There are toxic remarks about women politicians through social media. A study conducted recently found that women politicians face 27 times more online misuse than males. Women in politics face a lot of criticism in many respects and there is a quick jump from being attacked and the news related to women being under the microscope. India lacks women's representation in law-making bodies as compared to the world nations. The following diagram shows the representation of women parliamentarians in different regions of the world.



2. (Web)

India is the country which has the least representation of women parliamentarians as compared to the other above mentioned countries. Even the Arab nations are far better positions than India in this regard.

Reasons for under representation of women in Indian politics

The reason for the drastic dip in women representation is as the party systems prevails in India. Almost all the political parties have no mood to send their women leaders to the parliament and legislative assemblies. Indian politics revolves around the axis of male dominations, notwithstanding the presence and strong

leadership of many of the female leaders. There is a strong perception that women cannot perform well in politics as men. Women politicians are suppressed in many ways: - they are harassed in many grounds, mentally and physically, which deter them from entering in politics. They are subjected to violence even from their own party members. It was a misconception in the middle class families in India that ladies are not meant for ruling the nation and thereby they are skeptic to enter into politics. And moreover, undoubtedly there is less support from the male members of the family. That is the reason they are tied in the family. Yet another reason for the less female representation in politics is less literacy rate. As compared to the males the female literacy is low. Current female literacy rate in India is estimated 59.3% only while male literacy is 78.8%. Even among the educated women, some are not politically motivated. Politics is not the profession of women, rather many other works than politics. *'A recent law which reserves one-third of seats for women in the lower chambers of the national and state-level legislators is yet to come into effect'* (3). *"In local and self- governments 33% reservations are made for women, it is only due to the lawful enforcement, they get representation in local governments and there also some of the posts are actually regulated by their husbands. It may be due to their illiteracy, inefficiency and lack of confidence. In the previous election of 2019, women comprised only 9% of all candidates'* (4). Women representation in parliament is 20th from the bottom level, notwithstanding some of them held various high positions like the post of Prime Minister, President of India, Chief Ministers of various states, Governors of States and union ministers and many. Many political parties in their election manifesto declare their vows of the women reservation up to 33% in the parliament and legislative assemblies, but all become a line in the water. In the real sense the male domination never wants to see the actual power of women. They don't want to be ruled, and can't think about the female domination in any field. Certain political parties, shares the seats for women which have zero percentage of winnability. Some religious outfits are against women politics and they never

vote for women candidates and still it becomes a tough job for the women. Women politicians have been subjected to oppression from their counterparts. It reveals the dominance of men in the political spheres. All political parties never want women in the Parliament and various state legislatures. It shows that men disrespect women and keep aloof them from law making bodies. An ORF report says thirty years since constitutional amendments reserved one-third of seats for women in local bodies, and 20 seats have expanded reservations in panchayati raj institutions to 50%. Reservations for women is more often pitted as sharing power, but it is in fact bringing power prospective to policy making. Dr. J. Jayalalitha focused on women welfare and brought many welfare schemes in her second term in Tamil Nadu as the Chief Minister in 1990s. Even she had suspended some officials for manipulating the funds of the schemes for women. In Rajasthan, The Ashok Gehlot Govt. started certain schemes like Indira Rasoi in the name women welfare. More representation of women in Indian Parliament will not only focus on women's issues such as health and education but also improve the dignity of women in the society. It is the time to improve the political education of women and to bring them in social life. Left parties have taken lot of endeavors in this regard through their cadres. From booth level to Polit bureau, they have given opportunity to women. Brinda Karat and Subhashini Ali are the best examples. But it is painful to discuss the matter of Gauramma, as she had been harassed in her party male members in 1980s. She was the Chief Ministerial candidate then. Due to the extreme fight and harassment from the male dominations, she lost the post and was come to the hands of E.K. Nayanar. Even as the family politics reigns, the daughter in the family is neglected and the son becomes the competent one. In India there is 'bhai –bhatijawad' is prominent. *"We don't need to worry too much, because we are still going to be in control. We can symbolically give away these seats to women, when we know it's going to be their brothers, husbands, or fathers who are going to be pulling the strings."* (5)

Contributions of Women Leaders of post Independence

During the time of freedom struggle, the contributions of Sarojini Naidu, Madam Bhikaji Kama, and Begam Hazrat Mahal etc are noteworthy. Even after the Indian independence, the role of many women leaders like Indira Gandhi, the Iron Lady of Indian politics, is written in the golden letters of our country. She was the first lady Prime Minister of India, who had a strong vision regarding India's poverty alleviation. She brought the theme and slogan 'Garrebi hatavo' and 'Desh Bachhavo' (Remove poverty, save country) in 1971 election. The commitment to poverty alleviation was followed by 20 Point Program. Notwithstanding the imposition of Emergency in the year 1975(it is regarded as The Black Day of country), Indira Gandhi is one among the popular women rulers who has a global status till now. There are many other women leaders like Ms. Mayawati, Ms. Mamta Banerjee Dr. J. Jayalalitha and undoubtedly Mrs. Vasundara Raje of Rajasthan, all play significant roles in the Indian politics. These women politicians work in their respective states and give courage to many young women leaders to step into politics. Young women politicians are motivated by these great women politicians and they are encouraged to leap into politics. Mrs. Mayawati, who has the legacy of the Great Dalit leader, Kanshi Ram who had consolidated scheduled castes and tried to study their problems, challenged the authority of the upper castes especially in UP and other North Indian states. Mayawati is the ardent follower of Kanshi Ram and works for the upliftment of the so called downtrodden people in the society. Once these people were untouchables, but her untiring efforts brought them into the main stream of life. Even she could win the elections in her state and tried to spread her area of influence to many other states. Mayawati is the pioneer of social engineering and tried to connect with the Brahmins to come into power. Kerala's communist leader K.R. Gauramma, a pioneer leader who was the member the Cabinet Minister in the first ministry led by E.M.S. Namboothiripadu, it was the first elected Communist Ministry in the world. Followed by her, many other women leaders were shown active interest in politics at various times. K.K. Shailaja Teacher, who played an active role to prevent the attack of Nippa

Virus and Covid19 in the state, and she has won so many internal awards from the global community. Even the UNO, appreciated her works and was adorned with many awards. The people who were residing abroad, hailing from Kerala State were about to run from their working countries and wanted to take shelter in their home state during the time of Covid 19. It was only due to the promise and inspiration from the state government and then state health minister, Shailaja Teacher. We see many aggressive women leaders like Mamta Banerjee, Smriti Irani, and Supriya Sule. All play significant roles in their respective states and won a lot of acclaim from sectors.

The current status and future

The perception of the society has to change, and the women should know their rights, only then there is a chance of political upliftment for women. Political education is a time's need and all political parties and their students' wing should think about the women participation. The students union like SFI and left wing politics is keen to give respect to girls. In recent JNU elections, many girls become the winners and decorate different posts. *"It's important to remember that there are more women in elected office in India than anywhere else in the world, and in fact, probably more than the rest of the world combined."*(6). In these days more political parties are trying to uplift women through political arena. In West Bengal politics, the name of Meenakshi Mukherjee is note worthy. CPI (M) has fielded her for their candidate for Lok Sabha elections along with many other young women candidates. As she is a fire brand politician, the party looks their future in the state through her efforts.

In local and self governments, the law has passed for 50% reservations to women and the government tries to make 33% reservations for women in the Parliament and various state legislatures. Currently it is reported that only 11% women are in Lok Sabha and 10.6% women are in Rajya Sabha. Major political parties like BJP, and Indian national Congress are ready to give 50% reservations to women in parliament and legislative assemblies. Political parties feel the necessity of enough women

representation in law making bodies as near about 50% of the voters are women. Without winning the heart and support of women, it will become a difficult task for other sex to regulate the political and electoral equality. And if we do not hear the call of women from the other side, how can we establish social equality and protect democracy.

Conclusion

The role of women is unquestionable in Indian political affairs and the works they have done for the emancipation of womanhood is indispensable. The role played by the women in the past and contemporary age gives moral boost to many young girls for making politics as their career. Politics becomes a profession for many younger women, and past inspires them to select politics as their passion. In India, women have great opportunity and bright future in politics if they choose positive politics for their career. Woman politics has a stronger role to extend the democratic values to maintain the social system. It is pivotal to social and political organizations to give powers to the women in the all spheres of activities, and the women have great future and roles in the political field.

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