

GLOBALIZATION ERA: WOMEN POLITICS IN INDIA

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Introduction

The present paper is an attempt to bring out women Political Participation in Globalization Era with reference to India. Women Empowerment is a major social phenomenon which requires an understanding of its multi-dimensional influence, including our family structures and units. The 2011 Census contains an important message because it is far from a balanced gender ratio.. The challenge is to work towards a balanced population and if these prejudices are to be overcome, the rights of women need to be protected. Greater access to education, health, skill building, credit facilities and opportunities for decision making and legal rights should be made available to women to empower them in Globalization Era. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in our Constitution which guarantees equality to women, and empowers the State to adopt measures of positive determination in favour of women for removing the cumulative socio-economic, educational disadvantages faced by them. Within a framework of democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. The government has several programmes which cover welfare and support services, awareness generation and gender sensitization. These programmes play a supplementary role to other developmental programmes in health, education, agriculture and rural development sectors. All these efforts are directed to make women economically and socially empowered Globalization Era, so that they can become equal and active partners in Politics and national development along with men. Women Empowerment, Globalization, Constitution, Local bodies.

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Globalization

Globalization has opened up broader communication lines and brought more companies as well as different worldwide organizations into India. This provides opportunities for not only workingmen, but also women, who are becoming a larger part of the workforce. With new jobs for women, there are opportunities for higher pay, which raises self-confidence and brings about independence. This, in turn, can promote equality between the sexes, something that Indian women have been struggling with their entire lives. Globalization has the power to uproot the traditional views towards women so they can take an equal stance in society. Traditionally women stayed at home taking care of domestic needs and children. Now most of the women are setting out of their private spaces to earn a living. Globalization has created certain needs based on capitalist sentiments. Advertising everyday reinforces new needs and creates a vicarious lust for more and more consumer good in the masses. Therefore, the women need to work and contribute to the household income to afford a certain lifestyle. Technology that may seem outdated to the United States is viewed as modern technology to India. With the aid of satellites and computers, SEWA has been able to reach more women to share self-help knowledge. Even the telephone is advancement to many women in their business ventures. Different non-profit organizations have been brought to India from around the globe. These organizations have given women the skills they need to advance, such as literacy and vocational skills. The women also gain business skills that inform them about career opportunities. Today, in our country women are becoming Politics at all levels of the Government and they have key role of national politics influenced by the Globalization.

Women in India and Constitutional Provisions

In Our Country got Independence in the year 1947, it became a republic. The Constitution of India adopted a parliamentary form of government. The government functions at different levels. At the apex level, there is the national government and governments at states and union territories. At the centre, the parliament consists of two houses i.e. the Upper House called the Rajya Sabha or the council of states and the Lower House called the Lok Sabha . At the state level, the upper house is called the Legislative Council and the Lower House is called the Legislative Assembly. Each state has its own local self governments known as Panchayati Raj Institutions both at urban and rural areas Rural Panchayati Raj Institution has three tier structures

consisting of the Zilla Panchayath at the district level, Taluk Panchayat at the taluk level, and Gram Panchayat at the village level.

The Indian constitution is one of the greatest documents ever produced came into force in the year 1950 guarantee justice, liberty and equality to all citizens. The preamble of the Constitution of India resolved to secure to all its citizens justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and to worship, equality of status and opportunity and to promote among them fraternity assuring the dignity of individual and the unity of nation. To attain this, the Constitution guarantees fundamental rights. Specific articles and amendments have been enacted to ensure that women and children enjoy the Constitutional rights. The Constitution not only grants equality of treatment to women but also calls upon the state to adopt measures favoring women neutralizing the socio- economic, educational and political disadvantages that they face. The following are the various provisions in the constitution which ensures equality between men and women.

According to Article 14 guarantees equality before law and equal protection of law with in the territory of India. This Article stands for absence of any discrimination by law or in their administration. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth. It is a guarantee against every form of discrimination. According to article 15(3), nothing shall prevent the state from making special provisions for the benefit women and children. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity for all citizens in matter relating to employment or appointment to any office under state. Secondly no citizen shall, on grounds of religion, race, cast, sex, decent, place of birth residence or any of them, be eligible for, or discriminated against in respect of any employment or office under the state. Article 39- a) guarantees right to an adequate means of livelihood for all citizen. Article 39 b) guarantees equal pay for equal work for both men and women. c) that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizen are not forced by economic necessity to enter occupations unsuited for their age or strength. Article 42 guarantees just and humane condition of work and maternity relief. This is in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 51-A clause (e) says that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India- to promote harmony and sprit of common brotherhood amongst all the

people of India, transcending religious, linguistic and religious or sectional diversities, to renounces practice derogatory to the dignity of women.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment has added the following articles to the Constitution providing reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Article 243-(D) (2) states not less than 1/3 of the seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to S. C or as the case may be S.T. Article 243-(D) (3)-extends political reservation to women not less than 1/3 of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats shall be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a panchayat. Article 243-(D) (4) extends reservation to elected offices as well. The office of the chairpersons in the panchayats or any other level shall be reserved S.C and the S.Ts and women in such a manner as legislature of a state may, by law provide.

The legal Constitutional framework in India would appear a combination of Communitarian perspective on one hand and that of liberal democracy on the other hand. In spite of such provisions in the Constitution, the decades following independence witnessed a decline in the women's participation in politics. These rights appeared illusory as there was a shift from the aims of the Constitution. Gap started widening in all political spheres.

Article 325 and 326 guarantees political equality, equal right to participate in political activity and right to vote, respectively. While the latter has been accessed and enjoyed by large number of women, the right to equal participation is still a distant dream. The lack of space for participation in political bodies has resulted in their presence in meager numbers in this decision making bodies.

Post independent women continued to play a significant role in less conventional activities such as environmental movements, anti-alcohol agitations, peace movements and even revolutionary activities which equally effect power relationships as they have the capacity to influence the state. Yet politics proved to be a very inhospitable terrain for women and continues to be the male domain where entry to women is severely restricted. Representation of women in

parliament and state assemblies remain at a very low level. Their representation is 10.8% in parliament. No doubt a few seats have been given to women but it has not been in proportion to women's strength in population.

Women turnout during India's 2014 parliamentary general elections was 65.63%, compared to 67.09% turnout for men. India ranks 20th from the bottom in terms of representation of women in Parliament. Women have held the posts of president and prime minister in India, as well as chief ministers of various states. Indian voters have elected women to numerous state legislative assemblies and national parliament for many decades. In contrast to the exclusionary policies followed by parties and the poor representation of women in legislative bodies both at the national and state levels, their participation as voters has seen a significant push in the late 1990s and reached an all-time high in the recent Lok Sabha election. It becomes imperative in this context to review the participation of women in the various stages of elections to find out why it continues to remain uneven and distorted even after six decades of independence.

The political participation of women can be analyzed using a triangle model deconstructing their electoral interactions at three stages within the framework of general elections. At the top are women in the Lok Sabha. Their representation has increased from 22 seats in the 1952 election to 61 seats this year, a phenomenal increase of 36 percent. In 1952, women constituted 4.4 percent of Lok Sabha members, and now account for around 11 percent. Both national and regional parties are following the policy of exclusion of women in allotting seats. The reason for not giving tickets to women candidates at the national and state level is based on the perception that they lack the 'win-ability' factor.

Table 1 presents the participation of women in the two houses of parliament.

Table No.1

Year wise membership of women in the Lok Sabha

Year	Members in Lok Sabha		
	Total Members	Female	%
1952	489	22	4.4

1957	494	27	5.4
1962	494	34	6.7
1967	494	34	6.4
1971	521	22	4.2
1977	521	22	4.2
1980	544	28	5.1
1984	544	44	8.1
1989	529	28	5.3
1991	509	36	7.0
1996	541	40	7.4
1998	545	44	8.0
1999	543	48	8.8
2004	543	45	8.1
2009	543	59	10.9
2014	543	61	11.2

Source: CSDC Data Unit. <http://www.India stat.com/2014>

The Table 1 shows the percentage of women in the Lok Sabha in relation to the total number of seats. In the year 1952 it was 4.4%, it increased slightly in 1957 to 5.4% in 1962 it was 6.7%, 6.4% in 1967 to fell again to 4.2% in 1971, 4.2% the same in 1977 and increase slightly to 8.1% in 1984. Then it decrease to 5.3% in 1989 to slightly increase 7.0% in 1991, 7.4% in 1996, 8.0% in 1998, 8.8% in 1999, to decrease to 8.1% in 2004 and increase to 10.9% and 11.2% in 2009 and 2014 respectively. This table shows that the percentage of women representatives in the Lok Sabha is improved to positive trend and women's representation has not crossed 15 percent till date.

Table No.2.

Number of women ministers in various cabinets of the government of India

Year	No. of women Ministers
1952	3

1957	3
1962	5
1967	5
1971	3
1977	2
1980	8
1984	5
1989	1
1991	5
1996	5
1998	4
1999	9
2004	10
2009	7
2014	7

Source: www.parliamentofindia.nic.in

The Table 2 shows the representation of women in the Council of Ministers, Government of India since 1952. The representation of women has been very low in the ministries that were formed and women were given less important portfolios like health, welfare, local government etc. In 2014, women occupied only 7 out of 45 Ministerial positions in the Central Council of Ministers, which is a little more than 15% against around 10% women ministries in 2004. The women representatives have been improved in election by elections recent decade of our country, it will be positive trend of our society.

Women Contestants

The Table 3 depicts the total percentage of women who have contested the Lok Sabha elections since 1952 till 2014.

Table No.3.**Women as contestants during various elections (1952 to 2014)**

Year	Males	Females	Total	Females (%)	Women registered electors over total registered electors(%)	Votes polled by women over total votes polled (%)
1952	1831	43	1874	2.3	45.0	38.8
1957	1473	45	1519	3.0	47.2	38.8
1962	1915	66	1985	3.3	47.3	46.6
1967	2302	68	2369	2.9	48.0	55.6
1971	2698	61	2784	2.2	47.7	49.1
1977	2369	70	2439	2.9	48.0	54.9
1980	4478	143	4629	3.1	47.9	51.2
1984	5406	162	5574	3.0	48.2	58.6
1989	5962	198	6160	3.2	45.7	57.3
1991	8374	326	8668	3.8	47.5	51.3
1996	13353	599	13952	4.3	47.5	53.4
1998	4476	274	4750	5.8	45.9	57.7
1999	3976	284	4648	6.1	47.7	55.6
2004	5050	355	5435	6.5	47.7	53.6
2009	7514	556	8070	6.9	47.7	55.8
2014	7583	668	8251	8.1	65.54	55.8

Source: Parliamentary Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

The Table 3 shows number of women contesting elections is very low compared to men. It increased from 2.3% in 1952 to 8.1 in the year 2014, compared to the population, the percentage of women contestants is very low. Even today, more than 92% of the total contestants are men. But interestingly the percentage of women winning elections has always been higher than men.

In the 14th Lok Sabha elections 11.2 female contestants won the elections. Political parties deny tickets to women candidates presuming that they are not capable of winning elections. These results show that the percentage women winning elections is more than the percentage men winning. Many factors are responsible for this state of affairs. History of freedom movement shows that a large number of women participated in freedom movement. But after that it went on decreasing. The ideology of the Nehru-Gandhi era has totally disappeared. Gender roles have become major obstacles in women's political empowerment. Traditional division of labour, illiteracy, economic barriers, the type of electoral system, lack of sufficient training etc have been keeping women away from politics. Apart from this, elections have become a very costly affair. Women are not able to generate large amount of money required to fight elections. Centralization of powers and corruptions have become major obstacles for women to participate in politics.

Vibuthi Patel observes that, among the majority of Women's Rights Groups, politics is equated with politicking, dirty maneuvering and manipulation and therefore power and politics remain an anthem to them.⁸⁹ Political parties are reluctant to field women candidates. The gender biases of political parties are the major hurdles for women gaining decision making power. Women find it difficult to establish strong foothold in politics without party base. Women backed by family and husband are recognized by the parties. Veteran women politicians are sidelined. No serious efforts are made to mobilize women as a political group. Women in India have made major inroads in various male dominated professions. In the field of business, art, medicine, engineering, law and culture, women are given opportunity to prove their skills. But they have failed to gain ground in the field of politics.

All these trends indicate that women's representation in politics requires special consideration. Today, even best women parliamentarians feel sidelined and powerless within their parties except a few. Male party leaders have shown little willingness to include women in party decision making bodies or help to create a conducive atmosphere for women's participation in their own organizations. Therefore special measures are required. Otherwise our democracy will remain seriously flawed if it fails to give adequate space for women. Political parties and other organizations should encourage women's participation in politics and in the exercise of political

responsibilities. The strategy should be to encourage a still greater number of women in decision – making power. In this background the demand for 33% reservation for women in legislature becomes important.

Conclusion

Today we are showing that all fields of women's entering and done to success of everything. The present paper is an attempt to bring out women Political Participation in Globalization Era with reference to India. Women Empowerment is a major social phenomenon which requires an understanding of its multi-dimensional influence, including our family structures and units. The 73rd and 74th Amendment to the Constitution of India with 33.33% reservation for women has given opportunity for the entry of large number of socially marginalized category such as women to enter into the domain of local institution and their performance is very encouraging.

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