

Periodic Research

Women Participation in Electoral Process of India- Impact of 73rd and 74th Amendments (1992) at National Level

Abstract

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the issue of political empowerment of women gained momentum throughout the world. In 1990, the United Nation's Economic and Social Council endorsed a target of 30 per cent women in decision-making positions in the world by 1995. This target was far from being met by 1995, only 10 per cent of the world's parliamentarians were women. Today, around 16 per cent of the world's parliamentarians are women still far from the target of 30 per cent. In India, normatively, women have been given an exalted position in society. During ancient times they were treated at par with men even in political and philosophical spheres. However, down the centuries, the position of women in society deteriorated and politically they were pushed to the background. Women's participation in the political process is critical both to the strengthening of democratic traditions and to their struggle against oppression. Political activism for women, as for other underprivileged groups, is integral to social transformation. It is not sufficient just to be given political space at the local and lower levels of governance. The struggle for women's reservations at the higher levels of political office must continue. The enactment of the 85th Constitutional Amendment Bill is still a distant dream. The struggle for equality in economic, social and political spheres will continue until they are achieved.

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Introduction

India has adopted and enacted the Constitution in 1950 guaranteeing to its citizens 'Justice, Liberty, Equality of Status and of Opportunity and Fraternity assuring dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the Nation. In addition, the State is under obligation, as per the Directive Principles of State Policy to provide enabling conditions and secure minimum standards to its citizens, in furtherance of the fundamental rights.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the issue of political empowerment of women gained momentum throughout the world. In 1990, the United Nation's Economic and Social Council endorsed a target of 30 per cent women in decision-making positions in the world by 1995. This target was far from being met by 1995, only 10 per cent of the world's parliamentarians were women. Today, around 16 per cent of the world's parliamentarians are women still far from the target of 30 per cent.

Indian Perspective

India is also a signatory to several International Treaties and Conventions. One of the important Conventions impacting women is The International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which has been ratified by a majority of UN member states. India has ratified the treaty in the year 1993.

In India, normatively, women have been given an exalted position in society. During ancient times they were treated at par with men even in political and philosophical spheres. However, down the centuries, the position of women in society deteriorated and politically they were pushed to the background. It was only in the twentieth century, particularly during the freedom movement under the charismatic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, that involvement of women was accepted as the natural course in India. In fact, Gandhiji's notions and approach towards the role of women in the freedom struggle stood in sharp contrast to the age-old prejudices against them ingrained in the Indian psyche. The social condition of women

was quite appalling in those times and it was primarily due to the conscious efforts of the leadership, at the forefront of the freedom struggle that women fought against the might of the British Empire in partnership with men. Gandhi *ji* believed that women have to play a much meaningful role in politics, making it more accountable, transparent and corruption free. Writing in *Harijan* on 21 April 1946, he emphasized the need to enrol women as voters, impart or have imparted to them practical education, teach them to think independently, release them from the chains of caste that bind them so as to bring about a change in them...If they will do this, they will purify the present unclean atmosphere." He prophetically said, "as long as the women of India do not take part in public life, there can be no salvation for the Country"

But the fact is that politics is still predominantly a men's business, with men making up 84 percent of parliamentarians. And in India, in the present Lok Sabha there are only 61 women, constituting 11.23 per cent of the House and in the Rajya Sabha there are only 31 women members constituting 12.7 per cent of the House. India, with a population of around one billion persons is the second most populous country in the world after China. Located in South Asia, the country is spread over an area of 3.2 million square km, which makes it the seventh largest country in terms of area. A federal, republican and democratic form of government based on the ideology and principle of secularism, socialism, justice, equality, liberty, brotherhood has been adopted in the country. As per the Modernization theory, both man and women are the integral parts of the social, economic and political set up of a state. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, Plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels. Keeping this theoretical background in mind, this paper seeks to focus on the share of women in the electoral process of India and any change /shift it took after the landmark reservation under 73rd and 74th Amendments.

Structure of Governance

On attaining independence in the year 1947, India became a republic country and adopted the parliamentary form of Government. The Government

functions at different levels. At the Apex is the National or Central Government, followed by 29 State Governments and 7 Union Territories. Each State has its own local self-government. These three levels of Government jointly discharge the functions of administration. At the centre there is a parliamentary form of Government consisting of two Houses, i.e., the Upper House called Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lower House called Lok Sabha (House of People).

Women's Participation in Political Activities before Independence and After

The roots of women's participation in politics can be traced back to the nineteenth century reform movement. This movement emerged as a result of conflict between the Indian bourgeoisies, trying to wrest control from the British. This class made attempts to reform itself, mainly by campaigning against caste, polytheism, idolatry, animism, purdha, child marriage, sati etc., perceived as elements of primitive identity. Raja Ram Mohan Roy focused on two issues, namely women's education and abolition of sati. In the early 1850s, a campaign on widow remarriage was launched resulting in the passage of a Bill in 1856, which allowed widow remarriage. This Bill though helped the situation of widows, denied them the right to their husbands' or his family's properties. Several eminent women reformers participated in this movement as well as in the religious reform movement of this period. Pandit Ramabai, Manorama Majumdar, Sarala Debi Goshal who started Bharata Stree Mahamandal for the education of women, Swarna Kumari Debi who started the women's organisation Sakhi Samiti in 1886 for widows are few examples.

The *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal (1905-8) marked the beginning of women's participation in nationalist activities. Many of the women were from families involved in nationalist politics. Middle class nationalist women contributed jewellery, money and even grain to the movement. They took active part in the boycott of foreign goods and in revolutionary activities.

The movement for independence also gave rise to the question of women's suffrage. In December 1917, Annie Besant and few other women met Mr. Montague to demand voting rights for Indian women. During the same period several all-India women's organisations came into being. In 1917, Annie Besant, Dorothy Jinarajadasa, Malathi Patvardhan, Ammu Swaminathan, Mrs. Dadabhoi and Mrs. Ambujamal founded the Women's Indian Association. Described as the first truly feminist organisation in India, it strongly supported the Home Rule Movement. In 1926, the All India Women's Conference was formed and became extremely active on the question of women's suffrage, labour issues, relief and nationalist work. India became independent in the year 1947. In all the elections held since independence, women had the voting rights. Women play a dual role in politics – as voters and political representatives. Though the foundation for political participation of women was laid down during the nationalist movement, there was no follow up or concerted effort to broaden the political base by incorporating women into political processes

after independence. The space for women in the political arena has declined since independence and their participation in politics has been limited to family connections rather than convictions and commitment. Women have been promoted to political positions only when there were no other male member available to continue the family's distinctive place and thus, as a devise to perpetuate the privilege of the family. By putting women in these positions, the family could still have control over the powers rested with the office. The framers of the Constitution perhaps believed that law would lead to social change and bring about equality between the sexes. Yet inequality and discrimination continues to persist in all spheres of public and private life. This is quite evident from the fact that the participation of women in politics and in other decision-making bodies after attaining independence is very limited. Given this situation, the State has to take some corrective actions to ensure that women participate equally in the political sphere. Also, it is imperative to adopt certain affirmative action to eliminate the existing discrimination to ensure political equality as guaranteed in the Constitution.

Reservation for Women in Local Bodies

Given the low representation of women in politics, there has been a consistent demand for more meaningful ways to increase their representation in decision-making bodies. In pursuance of this notion of empowerment of women, the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1993 and the Constitution (Seventy-fourth Amendment) Act, 1993 reserved seats for women at the local level bodies, namely, the Panchayats and Municipalities with the hope that these measures will set the trend to provide women their legitimate place in public life. After these amendments, Articles 243 D and 243 T were added to the Constitution to provide that not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by the direct election in the local bodies

(Panchayats and Municipalities) would be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in the local bodies. This, indeed, makes a historic beginning for the effective participation of women in the decision-making process at the grassroots level. In the elections to these local bodies, more than one million women were having been elected every five years. In 2006, 9,75,116 women were elected to Gram Panchayats; 58,094 women to Panchayats at Intermediate level; and 5779 women to Panchayats at the District level. It is but natural that a larger number of women have participated in these elections and this signifies a very encouraging trend for women's empowerment. Though it has taken time for women to translate their numerical strength into active participation in the rural and semi-urban areas, the results have been truly astounding. Before reservation, the percentage of women in this area was merely 4.5 per cent, which after reservation has gone upto 40 per cent. As per the *Fifteenth Anniversary Charter on Panchayati Raj*, "Today more than 26 lakh representatives stand elected to the three levels of Panchayats. Of these, over 10 lakh are women. The last fifteen years of Panchayati Raj, have thus succeeded in empowering marginalized groups who have gained political representation and valuable experience. Many of them have successfully taken on the challenge of governance and brought about enduring social change through their close links with the community. Women have prioritized issues of health; education and access to basic services and in some cases have been able to ensure a significant change in living conditions for the entire community. The efforts and work of several women representatives in Panchayats in Maharashtra, Gujarat and West Bengal have been widely acclaimed. In our study we will compare the data before the amendment and after the amendment and see whether any impact of this empowerment has filtered into assembly level and national level.

Table-1

Participation of Women in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha

Year	Members in Lok Sabha			Members in Rajya Sabha		
	No. of Seats	No. of Women	Percentage	No. of Seats	No. of Women	Percentage
1952-57	499	22	4.4	219	16	7.3
1957-62	500	27	5.4	237	18	7.6
1962-67	503	34	6.7	238	18	7.6
1967-71	523	31	5.9	240	20	8.3
1971-76	521	22	4.2	243	17	7.0
1977-80	544	19	3.4	244	25	10.2
1980-84	544	28	5.1	244	24	9.8
1985-90	544	44	8.1	245	28	11.4
1990-91	529	28	5.3	245	24	9.7
1991-96	509	36	7.1	245	38	15.5
1996-97	537	34	6.3	245	20	8.2
1997-98	545	40	7.3	245	19	7.8

Source: Election Commission of India.

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Below table shows number of woman elected to lok sabha after implementation of 73rd and 74th Amendments.

Table - 2
Number of Women Elected to Lok Sabha

General Elections	No. of Women Elected	Percentage
Twelfth	44	8.07
Thirteenth	49	9.02
Fourteenth	51	9.51
Fifteen	59	10.5
Sixteen	61	11.23

The table shows that there is increase in percentage but it is way below the world average of 20%.

No significant jump is observed even after 20 years of reservation in local bodies.

In Rajya Sabha

Similarly, in the Rajya Sabha, in 1952, the number of women members was merely 15 constituting 6.94 per cent of the membership of the House. Over the years, the percentage of women has increased and now, out of 244 members, 31 are women constituting 12.7 per cent of the House. In

the Rajya Sabha, the representation of women has never crossed 15 percent.

Table -3
Women Members of Rajya Sabha and Their Percentage

Year	Number	Percentage
2000	22	9.01
2002	25	10.20
2006	25	10.41
2008	23	9.50
2014	31	12.7

Source: Who's Who, Rajya Sabha

Percent participation in Rajya sabha is even more depressing as it shows the mind set of political parties towards woman empowerment. The parties in power only want to give token representation to woman members. Most of the parties lacks the female pressure groups.

When we compare the representation before and after the amendment it does not show any trend. Again and again it is observed that there are no female lobbies in national parties thus representation of women is more or less static.

Representation of Women in State Legislatures

Below table further shows the dismal record of female representation

Table-4
Male-Female Representation in Selected State Assemblies

State	Latest year's for which data is available	Total	Male	Female	Percent Female
Andhra Pradesh	1999	294	266	28	9.52
Arunachal Pradesh	1999	60	59	1	1.67
Assam	1996	122	116	6	4.92
Bihar	2000	324	305	19	5.86
Delhi	1998	70	61	9	12.86
Goa, Daman & DIU	1999	40	38	2	5.00
Gujarat	1998	182	178	4	2.20
Haryana	2000	90	86	4	4.44
Himachal Pradesh	1998	68	62	6	8.82
Jammu & Kashmir	1996	87	85	2	2.30
Karnataka	1999	224	218	6	2.68
Kerala	1996	140	127	13	9.29
Madhya Pradesh	1998	320	294	26	8.13
Maharashtra	1999	288	276	12	4.17
Manipur	2000	60	59	1	1.67
Meghalaya	1998	60	57	3	5.00
Mizoram	1998	40	40	0	0.00
Nagaland	1998	60	60	0	0.00
Orissa	2000	147	134	13	8.84
Pondicherry	1996	30	29	1	3.33
Punjab	1997	117	110	7	5.98
Rajasthan	1998	200	186	14	7.00
Sikkim	1999	32	31	1	3.13
Tamilnadu	1996	234	225	9	3.85
Tripura	1998	60	58	2	3.33
Uttar Pradesh	1996	424	404	20	4.72
West Bengal	1996	294	274	20	6.80

Source: Election Commission of India's Website (www.eci.gov.in)

The situation shows no improvement even in 2008-2013 election .Find below the data which suggest that female representation is a

token representation only a meagre 14% and some states it is only 0%.

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Table-5
Representation of Women Mps/Mlas State-Wise

Sl. No	Name of state	Year of last general election to Legislative Assembly	% of Women Contestants	Seats won by women (%)	Registered Women electors (%)	Women votes polled (%)	Women votes polled as % of registered women electors
1	Andhra Pradesh	2009	8.21	11.6	29207416 (50.45%)	20871787 (49.58%)	71.5
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2009	5.73	3.3	372796 (49.71%)	287422 (49.88%)	77.1
3	Assam	2011	8.66	11.1	8786483 (48.31%)	6584353 (47.61%)	74.9
4	Bihar	2010	8.71	14.0	25464746 (46.19%)	13875175 (47.74%)	54.5
5	Chhattisgarh	2013	8.42	11.1	8308557 (49.18%)	6423948 (49.09%)	77.3
6	Goa	2012	4.65	2.5	515194 (50.20%)	435725 (50.19%)	84.6
7	Gujarat	2012	5.82	8.8	18148715 (47.63%)	12613257 (45.97%)	69.5
8	Haryana	2009	5.65	10.0	5967308 (45.49%)	4243222 (44.70%)	71.1
9	Himachal Pradesh	2012	7.41	4.4	2234980 (48.50%)	1702953 (50.27%)	76.2
10	Jammu and Kashmir	2008	4.95	3.4	3097492 (47.93%)	1823212 (45.94%)	58.9
11	Jharkhand	2009	7.18	9.9	8513795 (47.18%)	4642565 (45.16)	54.5
12	Karnataka	2013	5.94	2.7	21367912 (48.91%)	15057361 (47.98%)	70.5
13	Kerala	2011	8.55	5.0	12073117 (52.02%)	9027923 (38.90%)	74.8
14	Madhya Pradesh	2013	7.74	13.0	22064402 (47.31%)	15465338 (45.62%)	70.1
15	Maharashtra	2009	5.93	3.8	36117261 (47.54%)	20669389 (45.59%)	57.2
Sl. No	Name of state	Year of last general election to Legislative Assembly	% of Women Contestants	Seats won by women (%)	Registered Women electors (%)	Women votes polled (%)	Women votes polled as % of registered women electors
16	Manipur	2012	5.38	5.0	890886 (50.95%)	724790 (51.86%)	81.4
17	Meghalaya	2013	7.25	6.7	759608 (50.51%)	671826 (50.78%)	88.4
18	Mizoram	2013	4.23	0.0	350333 (50.71%)	287676 (49.92%)	82.1
19	Nagaland	2013	1.07	0.0	590150 (49.24%)	538968 (49.09%)	91.3
20	Odisha	2009	10.02	4.8	13119010 (48.24%)	8514722 (47.91%)	64.9
21	Punjab	2012	8.63	12.0	8383335 (47.19%)	6614316 (47.55%)	78.9
22	Rajasthan	2013	7.92	14.0	19307320 (47.29%)	14566391 (47.15%)	75.4
23	Sikkim	2009	8.98	12.5	143222 (47.65%)	118598 (46.92%)	82.8
24	Tamil Nadu	2011	5.20	7.3	23408812 (49.68%)	18377708 (49.82%)	78.5
25	Tripura	2013	6.02	8.3	1157284 (49.07%)	1075622 (48.72%)	92.9
26	Uttarakhand	2012	7.99	7.1	3024346 (47.42%)	2060193 (48.33%)	68.1
27	Uttar	2012	8.52	8.7	57232002	34500316	60.3

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	Pradesh				(44.89%)	(45.46%)	
28	West Bengal	2011	9.71	11.6	26748122 (47.52%)	22589207 (47.37%)	84.5
29	NCT of Delhi	2013	8.77	4.3	5321572 (44.58%)	3466248 (43.98%)	65.1
30	Puducherry	2011	3.21	0.0	419890 (51.79%)	365161 (52.26%)	87.0

In 2008 the average percentage of elected women in State Assemblies is 6.94 per cent, the highest being 14.44 per cent in Haryana and the lowest being 1.34 per cent in Karnataka. States like Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Union Territory of Puducherry have no representation of women in their Assemblies. It is unfortunate that in India after so many years of the working of the Constitution, women are still fighting for their empowerment; women's representation in Parliament is merely 8 per cent. It is not surprising that the Global Gender Gap Report 2007 of UNDP had placed India at a disappointing rank of 114 out of 128 countries studied, based on indicators, among others, of political empowerment.

When we compare the records we see that there is no trend which is dictating that elected woman in states are increasing. It is following the same manner which was observed in national level.

Parliament and Assembly Elections Contestants

To understand the lower representation we need to understand how much faith political parties shown in female contestants. The table below shows that the parties fielded only approx. 5 percent female contestants.

Table - 6
Women as Contestants

Year	Males	%	Females	%	Total
1952	1831	97.71	43	2.29	1874
1980	4478	96.93	142	3.07	4620
1984	5149	96.91	164	3.09	5313
1991	8374	96.26	325	3.74	8699
1996	13353	95.71	599	4.29	13952
1998	4708	94.56	271	5.44	4979

Source: Women in India - A Statistical Profile, 1997, Department of Women and Child Development, New Delhi.

Above table shows very clearly that if parties are fielding so less woman how come participation will increase. Again and again it is seen that political parties faith in woman contestants are not enough to give them a fair representation. Generally the arguments used by parties are the inability of candidates.

In spite of more winning percentage it is widely assumed that chances of women candidates in front of male contestant is less. Also it is seen that main national parties are not choosing more women contestant. They more or less are static and less than 10 percent of total seats party posted their candidates.

See the below table to understand the fact

Table-7

Seat Allotted to Women Contestants in General Elections by National Parties

	1999		2004		2009	
	Contested	Won	Contested	Won	Contested	Won
All India	284	49	355	45	556	59
Congress	51	41	45	12	43	23
BJP	25	15	30	10	44	13
CPI	4	1	2	-	4	-
CPM	5	3	8	5	6	1

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

Over all woman contestants are increasing but two main political parties' congress and BJP their share is not increasing. The increase in contestant is primarily independent or new smaller parties.

The only silver lining is the turnout of woman voters since the amendment.

Table-8

Turnout of Women Voters in General Elections in India

General Elections	Total Turnout	Men's Turnout	Women's Turnout	Difference in Turnout
Fifth (1971)	55.3	60.9	49.1	11.8
Sixth (1977)	60.5	66.0	54.9	11.1
Seventh (1980)	56.9	62.2	51.2	11.0
Eighth (1984)	64.0	68.4	59.2	9.2
Ninth (1989)	62.0	66.1	57.3	8.8
Tenth (1991)	57.0	61.6	51.4	10.2
Eleventh (1996)	58.0	62.1	53.4	8.7
Twelfth (1998)	62.0	66.0	58.0	8.0
Thirteenth (1999)	60.0	64.0	55.7	8.3
Fourteenth (2004)	58.8	61.7	53.3	8.4
Fifteenth (2009)	58.2	60.2	55.8	4.4

Source: Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

And in 2014 general election this gap has further reduced to 1.4 % only. The upsurge of women's participation as voters in general elections held after 1990s is seen very clearly. The reasons are primarily of electronic media creating awareness and educating women about their political and electoral rights. Second, the Election Commission's initiatives in conducting free, fair and violence-free elections have contributed in larger women turnout as it inculcated a sense of safety and security among them. Also, the reservation of 33% seats for women at the panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) in the 1990s gave women in the country a sense of sharing power with men equally. It may have acted as a catalyst and resulted in the upsurge of women's electoral

participation as voters. To understand the reasons we put below the factors why woman is not actively participating in governance in national level in spite of participation at local governing bodies.

Socio-Economic Factors

Traditional Women Role Model

Women are expected to full fill their domestic responsibility even if they are doing jobs or involve in political .Thus those who are involved in politics find it very hard to take this burden and stays away from full participation and takes it only when they have full family support. In our conservative society woman primary responsibility is still seen as to take care of children and domestic duties and those who try to choose other ways face stiff resistance from the male members of the family. The family responsibilities and cultural values, traditions and practices of confining women to the activities at home have excluded them from actively participating and fulfilling their role as elected representatives.

Social Order

Indian society is divided into many Castes, in a highly hierarchical society; women belonging to the lower castes have lesser access to public fora, which is compounded by their gender. Social divisions on the basis of caste often limit the potential for gender solidarity between women .Political issues are raised on the basis of these subdivisions rather than on the basis of gender thus stopping them of sharing a common space and power

Uneven Wealth Distribution

According to the Labour Ministry statistics, there are 244 million men and only 90 million women in the total workforce. While 18 per cent of the men are in regular salaried jobs, only 8.3 per cent of the women belong to this group. Also the total wealth owned by women is less than 10 % of total wealth. Such unequal wealth distribution resulted women feeling less secure and confident. This lack in control over economic resources resulted in less woman coming out for political work

High Cost Elections expenses

In spite of the fact that election commission is trying to control the election expenses but political fights are generally high cost affairs. As Women tend to have fewer resources at their disposal than men that could be used for election campaigns. Thus these expensive election fights act as a deterrent for women candidates.

Organisational Infrastructure and Barriers

Political Party Support

A national debate on the role political parties should play in supporting women is emerging. In allocating tickets for elections, parties should be compelled to give at least one third of their tickets to women .Currently, main political parties are allotting women less than 10 % of total candidates indicating that all parties lacks female pressure groups.

Money, Muscle and Religion

Money and muscle power along with religious hatred are used to threaten opponents and the voters. Violating women's dignity is an integral part of politics instilling fear in women, thereby restraining their entry into politics. Criminalisation and

corruption are not part of women's value systems and therefore they are kept away from politics in general.

Sexual Allegation

In Indian society any woman bold enough to come out in the open and into politics is viewed with suspicion. She is targeted for slander and sexual allegation These kind of tacit are used to break her confidence and stop her making entry into the election.

Policy Change

Reservation for Woman at Higher Levels

Women must be in higher levels if they want to make any impact on the society and to uphold the principles of 'Equality' Therefore, until the reservations introduced at the lower levels of governance are extended to the higher levels of political governance, that of the state and the federal, there really cannot be much change in women's political participation. The aim of quota systems is to increase considerably the political representation of women. Successful quota systems lead to:

1. the active recruitment of women by political parties in order to have a sufficient number of qualified candidates to fulfil the quota;
2. a larger minority of women, rather than a token few, who will be able to influence political norms and culture; and

Although there is no single remedy for increasing women's presence in Parliament, Yet quotas are a key step towards ensuring inclusive decision-making processes and policy development, thereby involving women in the decisions that have a direct bearing on their lives as well as on the society as a whole.

For their part, political parties play an ever-increasing role in the management of parliamentary politics, and it is therefore at the party level that the principle of equality must be put into practice. Political parties, which are traditionally male bastions, need to be further encouraged to revise their statutes, admit more women into their internal structures and include them as candidates in elections.

The examples of France and Belgium are illustrative. From a paltry 5.6 per cent in 1995, women now represent 17 per cent of the French Senate (an increase of 11.4 percentage points). Over the same time period, women's parliamentary representation in the Belgian House of Representatives increased from 12.2 to 35.3 per cent (23.3 percentage points). In both countries, the electoral laws were amended (France's in 2000; Belgium's in 2002) to oblige political parties to present an equal number of men and women on their electoral lists.

Conclusion

Not just the quota women's movement requires multi-pronged strategies. Various groups not only government must work together to achieve this political inclusion ,Obstacles mentioned before should be removed one by one, Consultations, signature campaigns, large public meetings, media advocacy, lobbying political party functionaries, relay hunger strikes, protest sittings and marches should be used to create awareness among all the participant. Same time elected woman in lower bodies should be train to encourage them for further participation. NGO sector

and government must converge their efforts to fill the existing gap to promote women's political participation. Women's participation in the political process is critical both to the strengthening of democratic traditions and to their struggle against oppression. Political activism for women, as for other underprivileged groups, is integral to social transformation. It is not sufficient just to be given political space at the local and lower levels of governance. The struggle for women's reservations at the higher levels of political office must continue. The enactment of the 85th Constitutional Amendment Bill is still a distant dream. The struggle for equality in economic, social and political spheres will continue until they are achieved. Gender adjust society is still a distant dream but not impossible. Woman must play freely and should seek what is required without endangering her dignity. Why woman needs a family supports specially the male members to authenticate her claim that she is rightly right for the job.

Again and again whenever these questions arise, arise the question of quota? Over and over again it is seen that lip service are not effective until it is backed by something on the ground..Political Literacy is one step. today we achieved the voter turnout tomorrow political presentation will not be a bigger deal. Every day we learn something and today's lesson is to include those who can result in better living.

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