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# REVISITING OF WOMEN'S RIGHT IN POLITICS - AN OVERVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

The political empowerment of women is a social process crucial to development and progress. The status of women is measured internationally by the participation of women in politics and their empowerment. Women remain seriously underrepresented in decision-making positions[1].To empower women legislation was proposed to reserve 1/3rd seats in the Parliament and State Legislatures for women. It was drafted first by the H D Deve Gowda-led United Front government and introduced in lok sabha in 1996.Although it has been introduced in Parliament several times, the Bill could not be passed because of lack of political consensus. the 73rd Amendment Act, in the Panchayati Raj system it provides for 33% reservation for women in all the three-tiers. It is a step towards removing the inequality and incapability of women in all tiers of government.. Art,14,15,16,39(a)(c),42,325,326,243D back the women representation politics. In 2018 Spain's King Felipe VI swore in the country's new government led by Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. It was a moment of some significance: Out of 17 ministers in Sánchez's cabinet, 11 were women. This is, by far, the most in the country's history. It is, in fact, the most female cabinet in Europe. This is not an incidental fact or mere symbolism. B.R. Ambedkar once said that "political power is the key to all social progress". What, then, to make of the fact that India—a country where women suffer substantially greater socio-economic disadvantages and face very less representation of women in politics. Many democratic countries today are faced with the challenge of increasing women's presence in public life and other key decision-making roles.- In the 2019 general election out of the total 29 states, women MP`s were elected only from 22 states. And seven states had no female representation in the parliament. The seven states were Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim. Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal elected the highest number of women MP`s, with 11 candidates each. Out of National political parties, the BJP had maximum number of winning women MPs at 41. (News 18,

[1] M.AMEEN NISHA & Dr.D.VEZHAVENTHAN, Political Empowerment and Participation of WomeninIndia, International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics, Volume 120 No. 5 2018, 4721-4736

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2019). While the 2019 general election witnessed the highest number of representation of women in Lok Sabha,still the equal representation of women in Parliament still has a long way to go.

This paper aims to examine the current laws and legislations related to political participation of women along with other laws that are in favor of the same. It also takes into consideration various aspects such as history and the global scenario to deal with the political participation of women in India; that is the contribution of great leaders. It also talks about the problems faced by women in getting equal political participation as men. It also addresses the various contributing factors such as lack of education and awareness, poverty, the institution of marriage and the mindset of the people.

## Introduction

'It is very difficult for a woman to make up her mind to enter politics. Once she makes up her own mind, then she has to prepare her husband, her children, and her family. Once she has overcome all these obstacles and applies for the ticket, then the male aspirants against whom she is applying makeup all sorts of stories about her. And after all this, when her name goes to the party bosses, they do not select her name because they fear losing that seat.'The above quote of Sushma Swaraj (Union External Affairs Minister) gives a glimpse of reality that how women have to face so many problems and criticisms while entering the politics[2].

Politics involves representation, policy, power and position with Government as its area. Political participation refers to the participation of individuals in the political process. It ensures that individuals are able to take part in deciding the common goals of the society and the best ways of achieving it. Political participation means not merely exercising the right to vote, but also power sharing, decision making, policy making at all levels of governance of the State. Political participation refers to actual participation in these voluntary activities by which the members of the society share in selection of rules and formulation of public policy directly or indirectly[3].

[2] Shah Alam, PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INDIAN POLITICS AND THE ROLE OF, MEDIA, International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences, Vol. 4 | No. 1 | January2015,p.g 77,78

[3] Sumonto Chakravarty,POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA – PROBLEMS FACED AND HOW IT CAN BE SOLVED, e JOURNAL ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF LAW [JCIL] VOLUME 4 ISSUE 9,p.g161 https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://jcil.lsyndicate.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/16.-POLITICAL-PARTICIPATION-OF-WOMEN-IN-INDIA.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjvt8DGoq72AhVhwjgGHV4EC4IQFnoECCsQAQ&usg=AOvVaw1CfO5_FD0H

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Political participation of women in any country gives an overview of how women are treated in society. The development of any country also depends on the equal participation of men and women. Since women's presence seems to be low in Indian politics, it is the duty of every human being to make them aware of their rights and motivate them to participate in mainstream politics. The constitution of India not only guarantees equality in society but also suggests states to make special provisions for women. Women still are fighting for equal status in society. Because of their low representation in Indian politics, their issues and problems are generally unseen and unnoticed. Their genuine demands are not raised before the decisions makers. Women need be dependent to make their own decisions[4].

It is the need of the hour in a country like India to have equal participation of women in mainstream political activity. Society needs to deconstruct the stereotype of women as limited to household activities only. The nature of society has a crucial impact on the extent and effectiveness of women's political participation. Their low representation in decision making institutions signifies deep flaws in the political structure of country. Historical, social and cultural factors have restricted women from enjoying their rights of participation in political processe[5].

## History of rise of women

The roots of the present always lie in the past. So, the justification of the law relating to the political participation of women can be appropriately scrutinized only by looking into the past history of any system. The way to shed some light on the women's right of political participation is to look at its past at national as well as global level.If we see the international history of women's political participation, the history of equal participation of women in the political fields in a few countries, it can be observed that in ancient Greece and Republican Rome as well as in few more democracies having emerged in Europe, women were completely not given voting rights by the end of the 18th century. In the United States of America, the women in this country were the first ones to fight for their right to vote in the whole world.If we see the Indian history, women have a record of suffering and exploitation. The women have remained victims of violence and also, they have suffered various types of discrimination,

WaDwe5nKpiXj, searched on 27/02/2022

[4] Bijoy Prasad Das, Empowerment of Women in India: The Changing Scenario and its Implications, NSOU-OPEN JOURNAL ISSN: 2581-5415,Vol.4 No.2 (July 2021),A multidisciplinary Online Journal of Netaji Subhas Open University, INDIA, p.g 8-14

[5] Supra note 2,p.g 79

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exploitation and torture- both physical and mental not only in the men's society but also within their own house by their family thereby disturbing the balance in the society[6]. Before Independence, Local Self-Governments have existed in India since. Vedas, Puranas, Smritis and books on state crafts and religious texts have vivid descriptions of this. In the past, the Panchayati Raj system was confined to solve social problems with the help of five senior members of a village called 'Panchas'.2 The fact that women are capable of exhibiting extraordinary qualities of leadership is visible by the participation of many women during the national freedom movement. There were many women who fought during the freedom struggle but some of them who were the prominent women were Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Devi Chattopadhaya, Sucheta Kriplani, Aruna Asif Ali, Kasturba Gandhi and Kamala Nehru. They stand out prominently for their leadership skills.The demand for women's voting rights was initiated by Sarojini Naidu who led a delegation of Indian Women before the British Parliament in the year 1917[7]. Consulting the Reforms Act of 1921 women were given the right to vote, but this right came with certain restrictions like wifehood, property and education. The Government of India Act of 1935 granted voting rights to all women without any conditions as it was there in the Reforms Act of 1921. Finally, the Constitution of India in the year of 1950 gave all women equal political and legal rights[8].

**Role of women in national struggle for freedom**- Women in India entered the political process in the early decades of the present century, through their massive participation in the national struggle for freedom under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The first session of Indian National Congress was attended by six women delegates. Women played a crucial role in the Swadeshi and Boycott movement. Gandhi was instrumental in bringing women to the forefront of the Non-Cooperation movement. Women took active part in boycotting foreign goods,picketing in schools, colleges and courts, organising processions, spinning wheels(charka). During the Civil Disobedience Movement women in large numbers took part in the 'Dandi March' led by Gandhiji and directly participated in making salt out of seawater.

[6] Supra note 3,p.g 163
[7] Praveen Rai, WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ELECTORAL POLITICS IN INDIA: SILENT FEMINISATION, SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH, Vol. 37(1): 58–77, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.csds.in/uploads/custom_files/1529066448_Women%25E2%2580%2599s%2520Participation%2520in%2520Electoral%2520Politics%2520in%2520India.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwimit3Qn672AhWazzgGHT7kB4E4ChAWegQIFBAB&usg=AOvVaw1g3LaMIU712swU87wuNiNL, searched on 05/03/2022
[8] Anuradha Chadha, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN: A CASE STUDY IN INDIA, Available at http://www.ssrn.com/link/OIDA-Intl-Journal-Sustainable-Dev.html © Ontario International Development Agency. ISSN 1923-6654 (print) ISSN 1923-6662 (online).

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Thousands of women and girl students took active part in the Quit India movement of 1942[9]. (Ghosh 2010) Immediately after the passing of the Quit India resolution women leaders like Sarojini Naidu, Amrit Kaur, Rameswari Nehru, and others were taken into custody. Women were also part and parcel of the revolutionary activities of the extremist section of the freedom fighters who believed in the forcible overthrow of the British Raj. Sister Nivedita, Sarala Devi Choudharani, Madam Bhikaji Kama were prominent among the women revolutionaries. There were around 1500 women soldiers in the Rani Jhansi Regiment of 'Azad Hind Fouz' prominent among them were Commander Lakshmi Swaminatha, Janaki Davar, Mayawati Arya. (Sinha 2006) Indian women were also fighting for their right to vote and right to get elected in the legislatures. In 1917, even before the women in England got their right to vote, Sarojini Naidu in a petition to the British parliament demanded voting rights for Indian women. By 1929, all the provincial legislatures in India granted women the right to vote at par with men. The Karachi session of the Indian National Congress in 1931 accepted women`s there were many women organizations which played a prominent role like Nari Satyagraha Samiti and Satyagrahi Sevaka Dal organised processions and violated the salt law. Organisations like women`s Swadeshi League and Desh Sevika, Rashtriya Stree Sangha were quite active.The Freedom Movement and Indian women`s widespread participation in it, thus brought out a conducive climate for perceptible changes in many areas. Women's education and participation in work outside home and in the income generation, were some of the changes which came out[10].

## Constitutional Provisions for Women political Empowerment[11]-

The Preamble of the Constitution of India guarantees –Justice, Liberty and Equality to all its citizens. The Constitution provides for equality of women and called on the State to take measures to neutralise the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantage faced by women.

**Article 14** guarantees equality before law and equal protection of law within the territory of India.

**Article 15** prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

[9] Dr. Ramesh Madan, Impact of Women's Representation in Indian Politics, Electronic copy available at: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2502394, searched on 28/02/2022

[10] D.Menaka Thammaiah,POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA – CURRENT TRENDS, International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT) p. g 551 www.ijcrt.org, search on 01/03/2022,

[11] 1S.CHETAN BOHRA and DR.A.SREELATHA, ROLE OF INDIAN JUDICIARY IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT, International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics, Volume 120 No. 5 2018, 1781-1798

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Article 15(3) States can make special provisions for the benefit of women and children.
for securing the health and strength of men and women and not to abuse the tender age of children.

**Article 325 and 326** guarantees political equality, equal right to participate in the political activity and right to vote, respectively.

**Article 243 (D)** provides for the political reservation to women in every panchayat election, it has extended this reservation to elected office as well. (Chadha 2014)But it is really unfortunate that what is assured in the constitution is not actually realised in the day to day affairs of our country. It is, therefore, felt necessary to make special legal provisions for women in accordance with the spirit of the provisions laid down in the clause (3) of Article 15 of the constitution. The demand for greater representation of women in political institutions in India was taken up seriously after the report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India. It suggested that female representation in political institutions, especially at the grass-roots level needed to be increased through a policy of reservation of seats for women. In1988, the National Perspective Plan for women in its first draft suggested that 30 percent reservation be provided for women from panchayat to parliament, but later in its final draft restricted the reservation to the panchayat level. The national consensus around this demand resulted in the adoption of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment in 1993 that provided 33 percent reservation in institutions of local governance.( Rai, 2011) This has been implemented in all states of India without any opposition. Panchayath Raj Institutions have brought about significant changes in the lives of women, The Panchayath villages have become a political training ground for women, who have become self-confident and politically aware and are transforming local governance by sensitising the state to issues of poverty, inequality and gender injustice. But the constitution (Eighty-first Amendment bill),popularly known as Women`s Reservation Bill which was tabled in the Lok Sabha on 12th September, 1996, raised opposition from several political parties regarding issues of elitism and overlapping quotas for women generally and for lower caste women, and the bill introduced twenty three years ago is yet to be passed.(Mandal 2003)[12].

[12] Raghabendra Chattopadhyay,WOMEN AS POLICY MAKERS:EVIDENCE FROM A INDIA-WIDE RANDOMIZED POLICY EXPERIMENT, NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, NBER WORKING PAPER SERIES,

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## Women in Decision-making position in India[13]

Women's participation in the decision making process is vital to sustain democracy. This fact was realised at the UN convention on the political rights of women in 1952. All congresses worldwide emphasised the need for political participation of women. They discussed and planned strategies to achieve this objective. Significant deliberation on women`s empowerment was made in (a) World Plan of Action in (1975) in Mexico; (b) The Copenhagen Programme of Action (1980) (c) World Conference on the UN Decade of Women in Nairobi (1985) and (d) the World Congress of Women in Beijing (1995). (Fadia, 2014)In 2015, September, the member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted a new global agenda to end poverty by 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) includes a specific goal to achieve gender equality, which aims to end discrimination and violence against women and girls and ensure equal participation and opportunity in all sphere of life. The target to achieve this goal is through women`s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.( UN-Women) Sarojini Naidu was the first lady Governor in the Republic of India. She held the office from 1947 to 1949. Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was the Governor of Maharashtra from1962 to 1964. She was also the India`s Ambassador to USSR during 1947 -1949 and President of UN General Assembly in 1954[14].

**Indira Gandhi**[15]was a bold key decision-maker and her decisions had great impact on the Indian political system. She personalised and centralised politics. During her regime, the constitutional system of India became the Prime Ministerial system. By her decisions she eroded the federal system in India.The late 1980s and 1990s have witnessed the emergence of women political leaders who have influenced political decision-making at the national and state level.

**Jayalalitha** emerged as a powerful Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu after the death of M. G. Ramachandra. Jayalalitha`s AIADMK party became the principal ally of the BJP led government in 1998. On Cauvery issue, the AIADMK warned Prime Minister Vajpayee of "disastrous consequences" if his government did not immediately notify the scheme on Cauvery water in the official gazette and table it in parliament. Jayalalitha withdrew her 18

[13] Ibid 554
[14] Ibid p.g 554
[15]10 most powerful female politicians in India, Indian Today news, 4 sep 2015, politicianshttps://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/gk-current-affairs/story/women-politicians-261252-2015-09-04&ved=2ahUKEwi6iZHIo672AhWxzzgGHULODjg4ChAWegQIChAB&usg=AOvVaw2laKGxKlIzMUeTbeaMyRdd

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MPs support from the government after the Union cabinet rejected outright her demands to reinstate former naval chief Vishnu Bhagwat.

**Mayawati** is one of the most dynamic dalit leaders. She became the first women dalit chief minister in the year 1995. She focused on social welfare measures for the upliftment of 'Bhahujans' – other backward classes, Schedule caste, and Schedule tribes. Mayawati`s rise from humble beginnings was referred to as 'miracles of democracy' by former Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narasimha Rao. She was the instrumental in toppling

Vajpayee's government in 1999, by the lowest margin of just one vote.

**Mamta Banerji**- Mamta Banerji is a firebrand leader. Mamta split vertically the Congress (I) in West Bengal on August 9, 1997.She claimed her Trinamool Congress was the real Congress.In 1984 general election Banerji became one of India's youngest parliamentarians defeating veteran Communist politician Somnath Chatterjee. In 2011, Banerji won a sweeping majority which ended the 34 years rule of the Left Front and she became the Chi

In 2000`s the women who came to prominence were Sonia Gandhi, SushmaSwaraj, Nirmala Sitharam and SmritiIrani.

**SushmaSwaraj**- In March 1998, Under Prime minister Vajpayee, she was sworn in as Union Cabinet minister for Information and Broadcasting with an additional charge of the ministry of Telecommunication. She was the leader of opposition in15th loksabha. She served as Minister of External Affairs under Prime Minister Narendra Modi from May 2014 to May 2019.

**SmritiIrani** – She is currently the youngest minister in the council of Ministers at the age of 43. She defeated Rahul Gandhi- President of Indian National Congress in 2019 general election. She is serving as Minister of Textiles and

given additional charge as Minister of Women and Child Development.

**Nirmala Sitharaman**- She is a member of the Rajya Sabha. In 2014 she served as the Defence Minister of India and in 2019 she became Finance Minister, the second female finance minister after Indira Gandhi.

**Pratibha Patil-** She was the 12th President of India and the first women to hold that office.

Sheila Dikshit was the longest serving Chief minister of Delhi for a period of 15 years.

Kiran Bedi is the first woman to join the Indian Police Service (IPS). After retirement she joined Bharatiya Janata party in January 2015. She played a key role in Indian anti-corruption movement. On 22, May 2016, she was appointed as the lieutenant Governor of Puducherry.

**Meira Kumar** was the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment from 2004 to 2009.She was the 15th Speaker of Lok Sabha from 2009 to 2014.Prior to being appointed as Speaker, she had been elected to the 8th,11th,12 th, and 14th, Lok Sabha.Sumitra Mahajan was eldest,

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senior most and longest serving woman Member of Parliament in the 16th, Lok Sabha. She was the second woman after Meira Kumar to be elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.Sonia Gandhi took over as leader of Indian National Congress party in 1998, and played a prominent role in rejuvenating the dying Congress party. She was instrumental in formulating the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), which got elected for two terms in 2004 and 2009.She played an important role in passing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and the Right to Information Act.Although, India has seen women participating in politics as the longest serving Prime ministers, as Chief ministers of various states, members in national parliament, and state legislative assemblies in large numbers, yet the occurrence has not been corresponding to their population.

**Current trends**- In the 2019 general election out of the total 29 states, women MP's were elected only from 22 states. And seven states had no female representation in the parliament. The seven states were Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim. Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal elected the highest number of women MP`s, with 11 candidates each. Out of National political parties, the BJP had the maximum number of winning women MPs at 41.While 2019 general election witnessed the highest number of representation of women in Lok Sabha, still the equal representation of women in Parliament still has a long way to go.Worldwide figures on the representation of women in leadership and political participation in Parliament are Only 24.3 percent of all national parliamentarians were women as of 1st February 2019. As of June 2019, 11 women are serving as Head of the state and 12 are serving as Head of the Government[16]. Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide- 61.3 percent of seats in the lower house of legislature, followed by Cuba with 53.2 percent and Bolivia with 53 percent. (World Economic Forum)Table 2 indicates that India has less number of women in parliament when compared to its neighbouring countries like Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh[17]. Such a dismal picture is all the more surprising because India boast of a number of efficient and courageous women Politicians or administrators who have proved their mettle in the field of politics and administration since the early medieval period of Indian history[18].

[16] Women turnout in greater numbers than in previous elections, May 20, 2019. The Economic Time. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/women-turn-out-in-greater-numbers-than-in-previous-elections/articleshow/69405687.cms?from=mdr search on 2/03/2022
[17] Women `s Political Participation In India. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_political_participation_in_India search on 02/03/2022
[18] supra note 10,p.g 553

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# OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS IN INDIA[19]

The Constitution of India gives universal adult franchise to both men and women with equal rights to participate in electoral competition, but the existing societal value system, the private-public divide in terms of domain identification in political institutions restrict women from exercising their electoral rights and a fair participation in electoral competition as it is dominated by men.These factors also act as key barriers and obstacles in women's active participation in the Indian electoral system and in the larger issue of women's advancement as a whole[20].

**Illiteracy**

One of the main barriers to participation of women in politics in this country is illiteracy. India has one of the largest illiterate populations. Illiteracy limits the ability of the women to understand the political system and issues. Due to illiteracy, many women are sometimes left of the voters list and, as a result, they are not able to exercise their political right. Women who are into active politics and are not educated are not able to handle the office efficiently as the women who are educated have access to all sources of communication like memos and newspaper which helps
them to be updated with all the latest news which helps them to make wise political decision[21].

**Finance and Economic problems**

Poverty is another barrier which has led to low political participation of women in India. Often poor people have no direct voting stance. It is often influenced by rich and well-off people. Just before elections the poor people are given resources such as blankets, television, food, alcohol by various political party workers so that these people vote in favour of them. There are various political parties who work for the poor people and there are some political groups and parties who only work for these groups. These political parties don't win easily as they are low in their funds when compared to other political parties who get their funding from rich business tycoons. Rich business tycoons invest in the parties from which they will get adequate returns. But from these poor people, they shall get no returns as they do not pay that much tax which

[19] Supra note 3,p.g no 169
[20] Supra note 7
[21] Shauna Shames,Barriers and Solutions to Increasing Women's Political Power, search on internet on 4/03/2022

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the other citizens of the country pay who are better off than these poor people[22].The institution of

**Family barriers**

Marriage is another barrier which leads to less political participation of women in India. After a woman gets married, all her political decisions are controlled by the family she is married into if she comes from an uneducated family. Even if she comes from an educated family, to an extent she is influenced by the family she is married to and often there is a clash in ideology[23]. After getting married, the woman has hardly any time to contest elections or go for campaigns as she has new responsibility added to her shoulders. She needs to look after her family, she needs to look after the kids, needs to do all the household work, even go to work[24].

**Conclusion and suggestion[25]**

The Women's Reservation Bill seeks to amend the constitution to set aside for women one-third of all seats in the Lok Sabha, India's lower house, as well as in all state legislatures. Yet the bill has languished despite passing the Rajya Sabha, India's upper house, in 2010, a delay described by one study as showing a "lack of seriousness among political parties in taking better account of women's increasing electoral participation".The failing goes beyond politics to community attitudes. A patriarchal mindset is still evident.

It is the need of the hour in a country like India to have equal participation of women in mainstream political activity. Society needs to deconstruct the stereotype of women as limited to household activities only. Overall political parties' environment too is not women friendly, they have to struggle hard and face multi-dimensional issues to create space for them in the

[22] Firdaus Ara, Barriers to the Political Participation of Women: A Global Perspective, Society & Change Vol. XIII, No.4, October-December 2019,p.g 9 search on internet on 04/03/2022

[23] A. Thanikodi and M. Sugirtha,STATUS OF WOMEN IN POLITICSThe Indian Journal of Political Science Vol. 68, No. 3 (JULY - SEPT., 2007), pp. 589-606 (18 pages),Published By: Indian Political ScienceAssociation,https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/41856357&ved=2ahUKEwizzfeCpa72AhXLILcAHUZQA2s4FBAWegQIBxAB&usg=AOvVaw3MA9UOLAB7Q0Tuia-6YwgR, searched on 04/03/2022

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party. it is important for all institutions (state, family and community) to respond to women's specific needs such as bridging gaps in education, renegotiating gender roles, the gender division of labor and addressing biased attitudes[26].

Women Political power can't be understand in isolation, from their overall socio-economic status. Women usually do not have equal access with men to the means for participation such as the enabling skills acquired through education and training. Even more, there is no equality in terms of possessing property such as land. The land is legally the property of their husbands, fathers or sons. In order be undertaken to bring equality between men and women in legal measure must be undertaken to bring equality between men and women in terms of accessing the means of participation. In order to raise the social status of women, a sustained campaign against social evils like sexual harassment, violence against women etc. need to be carried on. The efforts should be made to educate the girl child and taught leadership skills and qualities in the schools and colleges. The women representatives should act as role models.

The women representatives should act as role models and mentor the new entrants to politics. If more women undertake visible and leading roles in politics, this will encourage other women aspirants. The women incumbent should encourage and educate other women to participate in political decision making from the very grass-roots levels.

Women are considered as a liability in the electoral competitions; therefore, political parties prefer to give tickets to the male candidates. The parties are found to be against taking a risk of putting women candidates for electoral battle, part of the reason appears to be contained in social attitude there is a reserved seat party usually seek women to be in a political campaign not as the party ensuring 33 percent reservations for women in the party leadership position at all levels and one- third party tickets should be given to women at the time of the election. The executive positions of political parties should be gender-sensitive to provide fair quota positions to women. In the present study, it has been observed that most of the women representatives were newcomers or they are new to policy decision making bodies. It is suggested that the orientation programme need to be initiated on a big scale to fully equip women in power politics. The programme should focus on information and training in electoral procedures, public speaking, resource management, campaign strategies, decision making, etc.

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The alliance between the various actors in the local government, national government, the private sector and civil society is recommended to improve the political participation of women. The function of the state is to enhance policies such as affirmative action for reaching gender balance. The civil society plays an important role in providing measures that will ensure the effective participation of women in politics such as training, lobby.

Political violence and the use of money and muscle power have been an inhibiting factor of women entering politics. The violence that is associated with politics puts a lot of fear in women who are interested in politics. Women tend to prefer the less use of money and muscle power and other forms of influence in the public sphere. The criminalisation of politics and the rampant use of violence have further discouraged women. In this context, it is suggested to make the political environment more conducive for women to contest the elections. The absence of political violence would be a sufficient ground to motivate women who are interested in politics to participate fairly as their men counterparts. It is important to impose restriction on the use of money and muscle power during election times. Wide-spectrum electoral reform both at national and state levels that will curb the role of muscles and money power in politics is needed to create a conducive environment for the effective participation of women in politics. It is important for democratizing decision making by ensuring regular and fair elections at all levels, make easy for weaker sections of the society to fight an election without seeking the patronage of the party chief.

Physical constraint particular women responsibility towards children would be mitigated through different support mechanism such as introducing child care facilities to ease the workload for women or by building crèche adjoining office for nursing mothers as around 50 percent of women in elected bodies are in the reproductive age of 31-40 years (see Table 5.8). Secondly, the politics and family life of women can be reconciled through partnership in sharing the burden. The partnership demands the active and equal involvement of men, in politics as well as in the home. An egalitarian culture needs to be developed as it renders the environment

The position of women in politics would strengthen by building up their self-confidence and morale and equipping them with information. The implementation of various central schemes or policies would be difficult unless the women are aware of them. The most important change needed is in the perception of women about their role in politics. They should realize that they

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are equal at par with men and should build up their confidence in their ability that their views can be an effective means to bring qualitative change inability that their views can be an effective means to bring qualitative change in are already very good campaigners, party organizers and effective mobilizers, therefore, certain cultures of fear should not prevent women contesting elections and moving forward for the highest political goals.

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