Barriers and Strategies for Overcoming Caste Patriarchy in Women's Political Empowerment

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Abstract - The subject of women's political engagement has recently come to the forefront in democracies. The term "political participation" encompasses not only casting a ballot but also taking part in any and all political processes. Without women's equitable involvement, democracy would fail, despite the fact that they make up half of the global population. There have been many initiatives on a global and national scale to encourage more women to run for office. Women in India have the same legal protections as males, according to the country's constitution. In addition, local governments are required to set aside a certain number of seats for women from certain demographics. Political participation by women in India is fully encouraged and supported. Particularly in rural regions, Dalit women are among the most marginalised members of society, and their political engagement is fraught with difficulty.

Keywords: women's political empowerment, Caste, Patriarchy,

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INTRODUCTION

In India, gender inequity has persisted for ages. It is well-known that the arrival of a female child is not celebrated in many regions of India. Pregnancy termination and infanticide are two examples of the ways in which discrimination against girls begins long before they are born. Even in this modern day, the majority of Indian homes still practice discrimination against girls in all spheres of life, including but not limited to: education, health, protection, and participation. Patriarchy, in its terrible form, has doomed the country from its very beginning. Even in the most advanced societies, it is ubiquitous, found in every home. Equality between the sexes is furthered when the number of male and female representatives is balanced, according to critical mass theory and token theory. Theories that advocate for more female participation in leadership positions to effect change have their roots in political science (Dahlerup, 1988) or organisational studies (Kanter, 1977a). In order to change a legislative into one where men and women have equal opportunity, critical mass theory and Dahlerup's (1988) research define it as a certain proportion of women in the legislature. In political science and in the political imagination of many countries, Dahlerup's notion of 30% representation as the point of critical mass has made it. This is what prompted India to implement its quota system for women in politics, which has been in place since the 1990s. The number of women serving in village councils has increased dramatically in recent years, with the majority of states having achieved the constitutional goal of having half of those positions filled by women by 2016.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Titty Varghese (2019) There has been a meteoric rise in the visibility of women in politics and their ability to influence policy in the last few decades. Research on women's empowerment in politics is ongoing, but women still have a long way to go before they can be considered legitimate political actors. An excellent policy tool for raising women's political engagement at the national level was the 1992 Indian government nationwide programme of "Panchayati Raj Institutions" legislation. Because of this law, which allows women to have 50% of the seats in the Local Self Government, they were able to rise to positions of political influence. With this legislation in place, women have a better shot of running for office and securing a larger share of the administrative locality's welfare funds than in the past. This essay seeks to delve into the significance of the Panchayati Raj Institution policy in empowering women in the panchayat, within this setting. This article presents the results of an empirical research that aimed to determine the policy's effect in one district of Kerala by gathering primary data from elected women representatives. The findings might provide light on the relevance of

elevating women's political agency and status in Keralan society.

Sasmita Patnaik et.al (2020) Opportunities and access to energy are defined differently for distinct socioeconomic groups in India due to the complex interplay of gender, class, and caste. By seeing energy access through these perspectives, we might rethink the way energy policies are crafted to take into consideration the disparities in price, subsidies, and policy execution that exist along socioeconomic lines. Examining energy access from a gender, caste, and class perspective is the goal of this article. Using an integrated framework called Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), we examine the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), which is the latest and perhaps biggest effort by the Indian government to provide clean cooking energy. We evaluate how well PMUY succeeds in increasing the usage of LPG by removing gender, class, and caste barriers. Supporting the PMUY study are theoretical considerations from the literature and actual data from ACCESS 2018, India's biggest multidimensional energy access database. The plan acknowledges existing inequalities, but our research shows that in order for it and similar initiatives aimed at expanding access to LPG to be successful, the implementation processes must priorities gender, class, and caste.

Supurna Banerjee et.al (2018) The primary organizing concept of intersectionality is reflexivity in the study of social traits; this is necessary to avoid treating lived experiences as generic and undifferentiated and to avoid substituting one marginality for another. A common concern among many who have voiced their disapproval of intersectionality is that it further divides the fight against systemic injustice. Instead of rejecting intersectionality, we propose a reflective use of it as a research approach, because of the possibilities it offers. One way to learn about the practical application of intersectionality is via personal experience. A lived-experience method illustrates the multi-dimensionality of what is manufactured as hegemonic truth and may generate some resistance against it by mapping the broken structure of the daily. It also helps us to be open to conflicting interpretations. Thus, this paper further argues that a radical intersectional praxis is the way to go when trying to unite marginalised groups.

Martha Farrell et.al (2016) Gender has not been adequately considered in the majority of community development strategies in India. Although there was evidence of discrimination against women and girls in both the home and society at large, the government gave women's development very no attention in the early stages of community development initiatives. Yet, in the 1990s, a strategy was put in place to ensure that women could participate fully in local government by setting aside positions for them and providing them with special mechanisms to do so. This chapter examines the history of community development programmes and ideas through the prism of gender, and it sheds light on the ways in which gender inequality has been institutionalised in these fields. It

contends that community participation and development programmes may be revolutionised by giving serious thought to women's political empowerment. Following this, the chapter delves into how Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) takes a different tack when it comes to community participation. PRIA's main goal is to empower women elected leaders by strengthening their collective capabilities. This technique seeks to dismantle gendered identities within families and communities as a means of combating gender discrimination in development initiatives and governmental institutions.

C. Aruna (2018) Promoting gender equality and bolstering democracy necessitates women's active engagement in political processes. With the introduction of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (1992), women in India were granted more authority and were permitted to participate in politics. Much later, a great number of women became politicians. A tiny percentage of the population really participates successfully in government activities, despite the widespread reporting of proxy (Hust, 2002; Mathew, 2003; Palanithurai, 2001). According to research (Jayshree, 2010; Kalaiselvi, 2012), panchayats led by female Dalits tend to be more participatory. Because patriarchy, cultural norms, and traditions are so set in stone, this study seeks to investigate what empowers women to break free of these constraints. What makes social networks apart? Can the associationalism that Putnam (1993) suggests as a means of social capital relate to the ability to self-governance in the Indian context? One way to think about social capital is in terms of affiliations and personal networks. A total of 38 randomly selected delegates from Panchayati Raj Institutions in southern Tamil Nadu, India, were interviewed extensively. Members who actively participate are disproportionately from the Dalit caste, and the elected active members' social networks are vast, diverse, and inclusive; they also serve as anchors for the group. Since they are mostly members of self-help groups, caste organisations, and political parties, they also have familial connections that provide them access to all women's police stations, cooperative organisations, and political parties. Along with acting at the panchayat level, the elected representative's obligatory participation in district Dalit federations acts as a safety net in the face of prejudice and atrocities. The ability to mobilize social capital is a key component of Dalit women's success in local self-governance.

WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

A worldwide trend indicates that women are underrepresented in politics at all levels of government. Only 24.3% of the seats in national parliaments throughout the globe are held by women, according to 2019 data released by the UN Woman (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women). Simultaneously, women make up less than 10% of lawmakers in 38

states. Similarly, the proportion of women serving in parliament varies greatly among global areas. The following regions are included in this: "Nordic countries, 42.5%; Americas, 30.7%; Europe excluding Nordic countries, 27.4%; sub-Saharan Africa, 23.7%; Asia, 19.6%; Pacific, 18.4%; and the Middle East and North Africa, 18.1" (UN Report on Women in Politics, 2019).

When looking at the representation of women in parliament, it's worth noting that 32 of the 39 parliaments with a female membership of 30% or above utilise some kind of quota system (UN Report on Women in Politics, 2019). "Recruit women into political positions and to ensure that women are not only a few tokens in political life" is the ultimate goal of the quota system (Dahlerup, 2005). "Reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative), Legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative), or Political party quotas (voluntary)" are those quota systems that fall under this category (Quota Project, 2009). Typically, women make up less than 20% of lawmakers.

Patriarchal Structure of Politics

Rather than being seen as active participants in politics, women are portrayed as mere tools for males to manipulate (Collier, 1974; 89). The patriarchal character of politics, in which "men are considered bearers of the culturally legitimated authority" (Rosaldo, 1974; 21), is largely responsible for the disproportionate lack of representation of women in international politics. The data on men's political engagement reflects the male-dominated paradigm of politics. More than 70% of the seats in parliaments throughout the globe are held by males, according to 2019 numbers provided by UN Women. Eighty percent of ministers are male, and men have held the office of head of state in 181 of the 193 countries surveyed. A world political paradigm that is male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centered has emerged as a result of men's hegemony (Chuki and Turner, 2017). "The gender role ideology as an ideological tool to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives" (Bari, 2005; 4), is how patriarchy employs women. One way to see the patriarchal paradigm and gender role ideology at work in politics is to look at the roles that the few women who have made it into the political elites have been assigned. Ministerial women's primary concerns are "social affairs, family, children, youth, elderly, disabled, environment, Natural Resources, Energy, Women's Affairs or Gender Equality," according to 2019 data from the United Nations Women's Report. Within a patriarchal society, these are the problems that women have historically been associated with. Conversely, there is a shocking lack of female representation in traditionally male-dominated political arenas, including those pertaining to foreign policy, defense, economics, and justice.

Socio-Economic Status of Dalit Women in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh is home to a sizable Dalit population. Some Uttar pradeshi communities, like the Jatt and the Saini, are considered general caste, while others, like the Balmikis and the Chamars, are considered scheduled castes. Of all the Indian states, Uttar Pradesh has the largest number of SCs. For the betterment of these groups' female members, the Indian government established certain protections. Thanks to these programmes, a lot of women have been able to further their studies. The status of women varies throughout the province of Uttar Pradesh. The status of Dalit women varies between Uttar Pradesh areas. Dalit women in the Doab region had higher levels of education and employment. Many Dalit women have been active in government politics and have a high social standing in society.

ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN UTTAR PRADESH POLITICS: A STUDY OF BATHINDA RURAL ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY

In democracies, women always play a significant role. Legislation based on people's interests is the goal of democracies. In order to have a government that is really democratic, women must participate on an equal footing. We can't have equality, sustainable development, peace, or democracy without women's active engagement at all decision-making levels. The effectiveness of democratising politics depends on women's involvement in political processes at all levels of political life. An essential step towards empowering women is having them take part in decision-making. However, they have a pitiful amount of say in global policymaking. Within patriarchal societies, women are always relegated to a lower role and granted very little independence. In this society, males are seen as superior to women. Historically, women have been painted in an unfavourable light due to men's conventional paternalistic beliefs. While the shift in perspective did nothing to improve women's day-to-day lives, it did provide the theoretical groundwork they needed to vigorously pursue equal rights in 19th-century India.

Regardless, the nationalist movement was crucial in laying the groundwork for women's political engagement. However, after India's independence, there were no real attempts to increase the size of the political base by empowering women.

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Table No. 1

Women Representation in Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly since 1969

Year	Total No. of Candidates who Contested Elections	No. of Constituency	No. of Successful Women Candidates	Percentage of Women Member in SLA
1969	602	104	01	0.96
1973	471	104	–	–
1976	468	104	07	6.73
1981	682	117	03	2.56
1986	722	117	07	5.93
1991	857	117	04	3.42
1996	557	117	06	5.13
2001	693	117	08	6.84
2006	923	117	08	6.84
2010	1073	117	08	6.84
2015	1078	117	16	14
2019	1145	117	06	5

The number of women elected to the Legislative Assembly of the state of Uttar pradesh has been studied. The first elections for the state legislature were conducted in 1969, after the reorganization of State Uttar Pradesh in 1969, and just one woman was elected. When the Uttar Pradesh state assembly election took place in 1973, not a single woman was elected. Electoral victories for women were infrequent after 1969. Their share is less than 10%. Just 12% of women were elected to the legislature in 2012. Nonetheless, women received only 5% of the legislative seats in Uttar Pradesh in the 2019 election. According to these numbers, women make about half of Uttar Pradesh's population, however they are underrepresented in the province's legislative council.
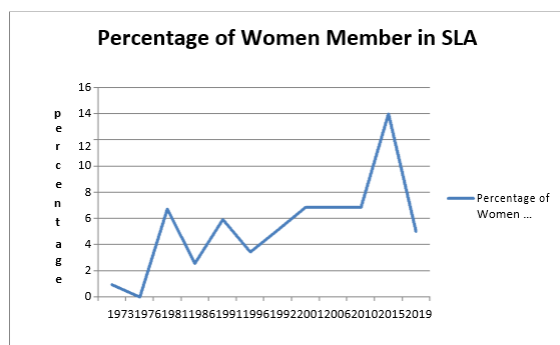

Figure No. 1

Table No. 2

Voting Tendency of men and women during Different Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Election

Year	Poll Percentage	
	Men Percentage	Women Percentage
1969	73.47	68.50
1973	74.54	69.61
1976	70.36	66.64
1981	66.82	63.65
1986	65.64	62.80
1991	68.20	66.72
1996	25.72	21.59
2001	69.51	67.84
2006	65.92	64.27
2010	75.36	75.47
2015	77.58	78.90
2019	75.88	77.90

You may see the gender breakdown of Uttar Pradesh's voters in Table 2. According to the numbers, women in Uttar Pradesh have used their right to vote at about the same rate as males. With each election, they cast their ballots. A larger number of women than males used their voting rights in the 2009 and 2019 state legislative assembly elections. The condition for women's involvement as voters is improving. Based on these numbers, it's clear that women's voting rights are more important than their representation in power at the federal and state levels.
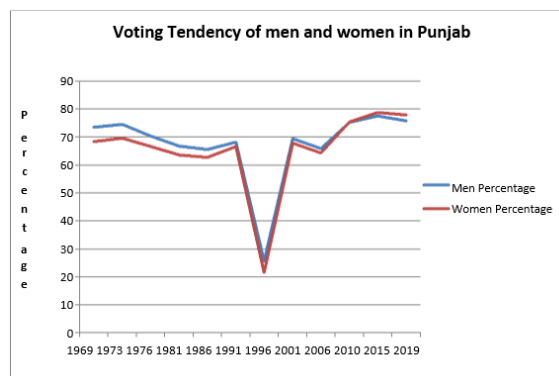

Figure No. 2

In India, the upper house of parliament is called Lok Sabha. People vote for their representatives in the Lok Sabha directly. Based on their population, all states are allocated seats in the Lok Sabha. The three states with the largest populations in the Lok Sabha are Bihar, Uttar

Pradesh, and Maharashtra. These states likewise have a significant percentage of women. Just thirteen Lok Sabha seats are allocated to Uttar Pradesh. Women are underrepresented as well. On the other hand, there are more women than males

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in the 2019 Lok Sabha, in contrast to neighbouring Haryana, which only elected one woman.

CONCLUSION

The advancement of a country cannot be achieved unless women, who make up half of the globe, undergo development. When compared to males, women do not have the same social standing in our culture. Regardless of the field, women are typically thought of as second-class citizens. Societal patriarchy ensures that males will always have the upper hand in all spheres of society, including the economy, politics, and social media. The traditional function of women is limited to domestic duties. In recent years, the advancement of women in all areas of society has made the topic of women's empowerment a top priority. To empower women, we must eliminate gender discrimination in society and provide them equal rights, opportunities, and duties. That way, they may maintain their illustrious social status. There is a worldwide concern about the level of female political engagement. Women When people are politically active, it implies they have a voice in policymaking on an equal basis. It is only fair that all women have a say in how government policies and development goals are made. The whole range of political rights, including the ability to vote, join political parties, participate in party activities, hold public office, run for office, etc., must be extended to women.

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