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Women In Politics

Md. ARSALAN

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ABSTRACT

The changing role of women in politics is examined in this paper, along with their involvement, difficulties, and influence on global political environments. Women have made great progress over the years in dismantling gender stereotypes and participating in local, national, and worldwide activism, leadership, and policymaking. Nevertheless, despite progress, men still control the political arena, and systemic obstacles that prevent women from participating in politics include gender discrimination, unequal access to resources, and cultural norms.

The study explores the variables that affect women's political engagement, such as socioeconomic status, education, and the impact of social movements.
Important case studies of female leaders who have overcome these obstacles to effect change in their particular areas are also highlighted. The research attempts to give a thorough grasp of the advancements made and the challenges that remain in the pursuit of gender equality in politics by examining trends, laws, and international movements.

INTRODUCTION

Although women's political engagement has changed significantly over the past century, there have been both advancements and enduring difficulties in this area. Due to gender discrimination, legal restrictions, and cultural norms, women have historically been barred from political arenas. But as time has gone on, women have been more visible in a variety of political capacities, from voters to parliamentarians, activists, and political leaders. Notwithstanding these developments, women still have several challenges, such as unequal representation, gender bias, and restricted access to political resources.

This study examines how women's roles in politics have changed throughout time, looking at their accomplishments, difficulties, and effects on government

and policymaking. It seeks to examine the elements that impact women's political engagement, the obstacles they face, and the strategies by which they have managed to get beyond these obstacles and bring about significant change. This study aims to give a thorough grasp of the progress made and the work still to be done in guaranteeing gender equality in political arenas through case studies and international viewpoints.

BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Women's political engagement is hampered by a variety of institutional, social, cultural, and economic factors. One major obstacle is gender-based discrimination, which depicts politics as a field dominated by men and frequently restricts women's access to political power due to traditional gender roles. Women's participation in public life may be discouraged by societal expectations regarding their domestic roles, which can result in a lack of support and confidence. There are also fewer women with the networks and abilities needed for political leadership since women frequently struggle to obtain the education and resources needed to launch a political career. Their views are further marginalized by structural obstacles such sexist policies, a lack of political representation, and the underrepresentation of women in political parties and positions of decision-making. The stress of unpaid domestic work and economic inequalities might also make it more difficult for women to participate fully in politics or run for office. These difficulties are frequently made worse by political situations that are antagonistic, violent, or unsupportive of women's participation. When taken as a whole, these obstacles significantly reduce women's political power and representation.

Increasing Women's Representation

Achieving gender equality and guaranteeing that a range of viewpoints are included during the decision-making process depend on increasing the number of women in politics. Gender quotas, which require a specific proportion of women in political parties, election lists, or legislative bodies, are one practical strategy to increase the representation of women. In addition, establishing supportive environments that give women access to education, mentorship, and political networks can help equip them with the skills and confidence needed to pursue political careers. Campaign finance reforms and financial support for female candidates can also level the playing field, as women frequently face financial challenges when running for office. These quotas help to address the underrepresentation of women and ensure that they have a seat at the table. More women entering politics can be facilitated by pushing political parties to embrace inclusive policies and give women's issues top priority, as well as by cultivating a cultural shift that questions conventional gender roles. In the end, greater representation of women results in better policy outcomes, more equal governance, and the empowerment of women in all areas of life.

Achieving Gender Parity in Political Representation

A vital first step in guaranteeing equal opportunity for all people, regardless of gender, is achieving gender parity in political representation. A mix of institutional, cultural, and legal reforms can help achieve this aim. One of the most effective
strategies is the adoption of gender quotas, which ensure that a particular percentage of political candidates or seats are reserved for women. By encouraging more women to participate in politics, these quotas aid in the dismantling of systemic barriers. Apart from quotas, work-life balance-promoting policies, like family-friendly laws, can help women manage their political careers and family obligations. It is equally crucial to create a political culture that opposes gender biases and stereotypes while promoting women's leadership and involvement. Addressing problems like harassment, unequal access to resources, and the underestimation of women's efforts are all part of this. In addition, it's critical to create a mentoring atmosphere, give women the resources and connections they need to be successful, and guarantee equitable access to political campaign finance. In addition to advancing equality, achieving gender parity results in more inclusive, diversified, and representative administration that more accurately represents the interests and viewpoints of the general populace.

Women's Participation in Local vs. National Politics

Due to various social, cultural, and institutional factors, women's involvement in municipal politics frequently differs from that in national politics. Women may find it simpler to participate locally because of stronger relationships to the community, fewer financial obstacles, and the chance to deal with more pressing, regional issues. Because local politics may entail smaller-scale campaigns and more direct interaction with people, it can also provide a less daunting entrance point for women. At the national level, however, women frequently have more difficult obstacles, such as more intense media attention, wider political networks, and more competition for leadership roles. Gender biases and long-standing power structures can also dominate national politics, making it more difficult for women to succeed. Notwithstanding these obstacles, obtaining national political participation frequently results in increased influence and decision-making authority. Although municipal politics can be a first step, systemic changes are necessary to achieve greater gender parity at both levels. These changes include more favorable regulations, easier access to resources, and a change in the way society views women in leadership positions. Given that local political engagement can act as a springboard for increasing women's participation and representation nationally, both domains are essential.

The Future of Women in Political Leadership

Given the growing momentum of worldwide movements for gender equality, women in political leadership have a bright future. As the importance of diverse leadership becomes more widely acknowledged, more women are assuming leadership roles at all levels of the government. Women are gaining access to and success in political positions thanks to initiatives like mentorship programs, gender quotas, and more inclusive political institutions. The increasing prominence of female political activists and leaders is encouraging because it shows that women are capable of being capable and compassionate leaders.

There are still obstacles to overcome, such as ingrained gender biases, unequal resource access, and systemic hurdles that prevent women from fully participating in society. Continued efforts to establish supportive settings, promote equitable opportunities, and advance policies that cater to the unique interests and concerns of women will be crucial to the future of women in political leadership. It is hoped that political decision-making would become more inclusive, representative of a range of experiences, and better able to handle the complex challenges of the twenty-first century as cultural attitudes change and more women take on leadership responsibilities. In the end, society as a whole as well as women would gain from a future in which women hold all positions of political leadership.

Women in Politics and International Relations

Though historically underrepresented in this field, women have made significant strides in recent decades, with female leaders and diplomats playing crucial roles in addressing international conflicts, promoting human rights, and fostering international cooperation.

Women in politics and international relations have increasingly emerged as key players in shaping global policies, peace efforts, and diplomatic relations. Women who have shown leadership in national and international arenas, such as Angela Merkel, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and Jacinda Ardern, have pushed for laws that put social justice, climate change, and global health first. The involvement of women in international affairs also involves a variety of viewpoints to international decision-making, guaranteeing that topics like maternity health, education, and gender equality be given top priority on the global scene.

Despite advancements, gender-based discrimination, restricted access to leadership positions, and the difficulty of navigating male- dominated environments are just a few of the major obstacles that women in international politics frequently still confront. Nonetheless, their expanding impact emphasizes how

crucial it is to have more women in international governance, security, and diplomacy in order to establish a more just and balanced global order. The promotion of a more sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful global community depends on women's participation in politics and international relations.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, women's political engagement is critical to building a society that is more representative, egalitarian, and inclusive.

Women are still breaking new ground in political leadership, challenging established power structures and bringing about significant change in spite of the many obstacles they confront, such as gender prejudices, restricted access to resources, and cultural expectations. In order to guarantee that women's opinions are heard and their demands are met, policies that encourage their engagement at all levels and the pursuit of gender parity in political representation are essential.

More women are entering politics, and their distinct viewpoints and solutions help create more thorough and efficient government.

Women have a bright future in politics, but removing the societal and structural obstacles that prevent them from fully participating will take time. In the end, empowering women in politics is not only a question of justice; it is a critical first step in creating more robust, resilient societies around the world.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

• **Underrepresentation and Barriers:** Due to cultural norms, discrimination based on gender, and restricted access to opportunities and resources, women continue to be underrepresented in political leadership roles.

· **Progress via Initiatives:** Although greater systemic changes are required for actual gender parity, gender quotas and reforms inside political parties have contributed to an increase in women's political engagement.

· **Impact on Policy:** Women's varied viewpoints and advocacy for causes like social justice, gender equality, and sustainability enhance governance and policymaking.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Even though women's political participation has increased significantly, real gender parity will require continued work to remove obstacles, put supportive laws into place, and guarantee equal opportunities, all of which will eventually improve governance by bringing in a variety of inclusive viewpoints.

ENDNOTES/FOOTNOTES

• Gender Quotas: Increasing the presence of women in politics has been demonstrated to be possible through the use of gender quotas in political parties and election systems (Dahlerup, 2006).

• Political Training Programs: According to Paxton and Hughes (2015), women's access to political education and training programs is essential to their readiness for leadership positions.

• Cultural Barriers: According to Inglehart and Norris (2003), women's political engagement is still significantly hampered by traditional gender roles and societal expectations on women's roles in the house and family.

• Economic Challenges: Due to their limited access to campaign money and frequent economic disparities, women bear a disproportionate amount of the financial burden of running for office (Bjarnegård, 2013).

• Role Models: Female political leaders act as role models by encouraging more women to enter politics and by supporting laws that protect the rights and interests of women (Wang, 2017).

• Public Perception: Stereotypes frequently influence how the general public views women in leadership positions, portraying them as less capable or powerful than males (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

• Violence and Harassment: Women in politics frequently experience online and offline gender- based violence and harassment, which might discourage women from participating in politics (UN Women, 2018).

• Intersectionality: According to Crenshaw (1989), women from marginalized groups—such as those based on race, class, and ethnicity—face extra obstacles when trying to obtain political power.

• International Influence: By bringing a variety of viewpoints on peace, security, and human rights, women's increasing involvement in international diplomacy and global governance is changing world politics (Krook, 2010).

• Beneficial Policy Outcomes: Research indicates that nations with greater female political representation typically have more progressive social welfare, health, and educational policies (Chattopadhyay & Duflo, 2004).

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