

# Advancing Women Political Participation: Analysing the Shifts and Changes from Power Conflicts to Individual Merits

Dr. Kavitha K

Government First Grade College Devanahalli (Rural) Bangalore-562110, Karnataka, India

**Abstract:** *This paper leads to an analytical approach towards the exercise of women political rights and their equal participation in political spheres. The inclusion of women in political field is one of the key elements in attaining the true value of democracy. Globally, gender equality is considered as the Rights. The most pressing challenge of our times is women participatory potency in politics. Why should the conflict of power be tossed on gender? The solution claims neutrality by finding its functional merits vested on individual's intellectual power. This, however, means reinforcing the existing power structures that has to move towards reasonable resolution enforcing individualism. The idea of gender-free permits sexuality to identify the individuals at different varying levels of ability, intelligence, appearance, limitations, goals, decision-making, etc., and hence, success becomes the means of positivity by mastery over mediating agreeable prodigy of equality. Sexuality should be respected, recognized and accepted. Expectations based on sexualities must be evacuated from the social norms. Equity and Equality makes an immense difference when it is related to gender. Equality refers to everyone benefiting from the same support and equal treatment and equity implies that everyone gets the support they need. This paper deals with advancing the gender equality and analysing the shifts and changes from power conflicts to individual merits.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Women, Politics, Empowerment, Participation, Representation challenges, Rights, Individualism, Sexuality, Intellectual, Action, Power, Conflicts, Neutrality, Democracy etc.

## 1. Introduction

*“Politics is the complete science of human nature.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“Are you aware that you are, perhaps, the most discussed animal in the universe?”<sup>2</sup>*

*“Feminism shifted the object of literary analysis from the author's sex to the gender of the text itself and the cultural domain in which that text offered compensation for the lack of political authority.”<sup>3</sup>*

Globally, gender equality is considered as the Rights. The most pressing challenge of our times is women participatory potency in politics. Turning promises into actions is perhaps the most difficult task in terms of women issues and further escalate conflicts when it comes to women's participation in politics. Why should the conflict of power be tossed on gender? The solution claims neutrality by finding its functional merits vested on individual's intellectual power. This, however, means reinforcing the existing power structures that has to move towards reasonable resolution enforcing individualism. The idea of gender-free permits sexuality to identify the individuals at different varying levels of ability, intelligence, appearance, limitations, goals, decision-making, etc., and hence, success becomes the means of positivity by mastery over mediating agreeable prodigy of equality.

Intuitions change according to the dynamics of time and opportunity. Women constitute almost 50% of the world's population. Women's participation in the political sphere past

seventy years has witnessed progress. They outnumbered men in the electorate in the United States by 10 million votes in every election since 1964. The present scenario marks to have women progression in the political sphere holding the highest position, including the heads of the state and governmental affairs: Pratibha Patil in India, Angela Merkel in Germany, Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand and Kamala Harris the first Female Vice President in United States. The inclusion of 'women in politics' is one of the key elements in attaining the true value of democracy. Their perspectives and leadership styles had brought unique insights to the political arena fostering diversity and inclusivity. Though, Women have crisscrossed the sprints of gender facing many challenges, it is important to continue supporting and advocating their participation in politics for more balanced and representative governance.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed women flagging up progressively in all most all the fields inclusively the political fields, Yet, there seems to be the gender-gaps which are not filled exactly the way a factual democracy needs its effectiveness. As far as their social, economy and political status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. However, this was questioned by the feminists (Now) to the matters; the explanation was clarified saying that of women's incompatibility of participation in politics. Such conservative ideas affect women's political and social status. Eventually this has not been the recent problem but, from the suffrage movement. To quote; *“The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward women having its direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her... he has never permitted her*

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*to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise. He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice...*<sup>4</sup>

Women having been deprived and oppressed by leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, Hitherto, to all the challenges and disparities over the years, today women outshine with her ability and challenges the hardest path of the universal power structures. Gender equality has to sustain democracy and aim for equal representation overruling the biased nature of gender cult. Nevertheless, still there persist the sexual struggle in many parts of the world. However, in human history there had been a very limited scope or even non-existent for women participation in politics. Women representation in political roles were generally low until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. And the first Prime Minister to hold the national office was Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1960s, later Indra Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu, and many more from India and so on. Yet, there exists the gender-gaps unfilled in political representation and leadership roles of women in the political sphere. The new challenges of sexism have to work on societal norms to create an environment where women can fully participate with full-fledged potency cutting down the barriers where women are allowed to contribute their talents and perspectives effectively. Today research suggests that more gender-balanced governments are associated with better governance, more inclusive policies and improved social outcomes.

Sexualities should be respected, recognized and accepted. Expectations based on sexualities must be evacuated from the social norms. Equity and Equality makes an immense difference when it is related to gender. Equality refers to everyone benefiting from the same support and equal treatment on the contrary equity implies that everyone gets the support they need. To rethink gender and sexuality the concept of equity evolves the shifts and changes to access the binary outlook of the gender presentation. Irrespective of sexuality everyone must be given an opportunity to show what they can do. Lilia Weber, Vice president of the Welcoming Congregation at Thomas Paine Unitarian Universalist Fellowship said, "Rethink everything society has moulded into our brains. Rethink your own upbringing and how you think one should be treated in life due to their gender or sexuality". Gender is the social constructed norms. It is a culture practiced by its own values without recognizing the true potentiality of the sexual universalities. However, there had been these conflicts based on qualities of feminine and masculine perceived to act upon their limitations dictating the choice of behaviours, occupations and lifestyle. Far from all these manners, today the binary mindset urges strongly to admit the universality of sexuality. Abigail Adam was the first person to set forth the notion of taxation as injustice for women. She stated in one of her letters that "*if particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.*"<sup>5</sup> Adam fought for women's political rights equal to that of men abided under the

law, the property rights questioning the qualification for women's status.

### Perceptions of Individualism

It is very clear that the goals of the feminist struggle exposed triumphs of Women's Empowerment. The doctrine of "individuality" which was inoculated by the strength of education, equal opportunity was the first step towards women's emancipation. In this regard, the Fourteenth Amendment in American history was especially important as it shaped women's rights. Susan, B. Antony who was the embodiment of this achievement in America became a role model for women to hold up their position in the political and social fields. The National Women's Party (NWP) formed in 1920s had 60,000 members. The party did not run candidates for the political or public office. But it encouraged professional women's status under "*tight directions of [power] elite.*"<sup>6</sup> The State Law requiring "equal participation origination campaign" made use of women's political participation as in need for men to secure political position and power. In 1946 the establishment of Commission of the State of Women (CSW) perceived women's social, economic, and political status recommending legislative bodies in the political arena. It was not until John. F. Kennedy organized the President Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) allowed women's position to the cabinet and the public office. The formation of the Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) helped women to get equal employment opportunity. Further, the National Organization for Women (NOW) redefined women's status of equality, liberty and education. Thus, women's parties found its network liberating women's progress in the congress and public affairs. In 1970, President Nixon appointed the President Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities. In 1975, President Ford assembled a Bipartisan Commission and the progress was lifted to the level of celebrating the International Women's Year (IWY) in 1978. President Carter established the National Advisory Committee for Women (NACW) in 1980s and women were allowed to influence the policies of the New Deal. However, President Regan's administration showed a little interest, he set to designate a White House Staff to meet Women's Interest Groups. Later, in 1990s Federal Council on Women (FCW) recommended women's economic issues. In 1990s, women became aware that they were denied equal opportunities compared to that of men in political participation. "*...women in the political spheres are denied sharing equal...norms [of] power.*"<sup>7</sup>

### The Shifts and Changes from Power Conflicts to Individual Merits.

The democratic imperatives however rich with its sovereignty by its individual rights, yet, women stand last in its wallet. Women are seen as the deepest problem of democracy by integrating a flaw of its own. A good quotation of Jean Francois Revel quoted by Gregory A. Fossedal focusing on the detailism of "scepticism" in democracy states; "*In its modern sense of a form of society reconciling governmental efficiency with legitimacy, authority with individual freedom, it will have lasted a little over two centuries, to judge by the*

speed of growth of the forces bent on its destruction. And, really, only a tiny minority of the human race will have experienced it.”<sup>8</sup>Revel’s vision was exactly true because the assumptions on women’s equality have been in bargain. Even though women’s intellectual competence is seen undeniable, men are still able to deny it. In spite of all their virtues, they are criticized as; “women with... ‘masculine mind’ is unrepresentative of her sex, and the realm of intellectual is still retained by men.”<sup>9</sup> Women’s equal participation in politics as well as public offices is reasoned by stating: “it is not the unethical [which] have been exposed, and of those exceptions fallen short of the required standards, but, of the “disloyal of civilization.”<sup>10</sup> Hence, women are empowered to free themselves from the loyalties of male institutions and their logical lies. No war or revolt will solve their quest for power; rather making a conquest in men’s way of behaviours by adopting their styles (masculine mode). This archetype cater celebrates human beings as individuals to perform coalition based on talent, considering mutual respect of individualism is to be considered that women and men are equals and shall co-exist in all the ways. “Individualism is the moral stance of political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that stresses the moral worth of the individual.”<sup>11</sup> Women as individuals are of primary importance and resistance towards equality. Women’s interest in political participation resumes the “fulfilment in terms of individualism.”<sup>12</sup> “Education being the positive aid, accessed their struggle of survival.”<sup>13</sup> Women’s capability to acquire their position equal to that of men however has constrained thoughts but, haveto make a great deal of transition with the thought process.

## 2. Conclusion

Enforcing the strategies of consciousness-raising extensively in the 1970s gave voice of many feminists and other social critics, creating critical awareness of individualism. “Women who have been taught the feminine virtues associated with their traditional roles such as adaptability, dependency, unassertiveness, and nurturance, on the contrary they also learned the values of modernity which in particular applied to men but also followed by women.”<sup>14</sup> Women in professions life style however had constrained ideologies and caused cultural rifts within the systems of social values; it seems to be receptive in terms of “power relations”<sup>15</sup> by inducing individualism. Thus, the inexorable boon towards modernity encouraged women by the thumps of survival schemes based on resistance for developing progressive structures. This demands the dynamics of changes engendering the hierarchy by freezing the marginality of gender-identity which upgrades women’s position and professions and also surpasses the consciousness of individuality. “The modern dynamism, pertained; activeness, aggressiveness, individualistic, independent, unemotional, objective, competitive, and achievement oriented”<sup>16</sup> were the factors of women’s success. The concept of women power and freedom significantly demands women to claim mastery over modern dynamism ascertaining power, identity, individuality, and intellectuality. The changing realities of women’s economic freedom of individuality, money and powers has

widened scope. Yet, practically, women on par with equal education and achievements are still not given equal opportunity and position in the major professional sectors and legislator. Hence, if the world wants something new and a balanced egalitarianism outlook, the assumption takes its accordance with women’s equal opportunity and position unbiased. Reassuringly, if this is true, obviously, then women, who are among the ruled, should also be among the legislators equal.

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