



# **PARTICIPATORY GENDER ANALYSIS: A STUDY ON WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETAL DOMAINS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Scholars of women's studies investigate the status, roles and treatment of women, as well as the historical and regional variation in meanings of womanhood and how 'woman' relates to other identity categories. When it was first established, the goal of women's studies was to have women not only as objects of analysis, but also as subjects producing new types of knowledge. Since then, the field's scope has expanded to include research into the full range of gender formations. This paper will look at specific areas where women are contributing towards a better society.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Women, Education, Literature, Politics, Election*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In light of the past two crucial decades, feminism researchers have engraved essential protest to the way social science has outlined men, women, and society. Since the beginning, debates over epistemology, technique, and methodology have been intertwined with discussions on the best ways to correct inaccurate and incomplete accounts in the context of traditional analyses (Adhikari & Saha, 2021b). One needed to observe the implications of the most obvious methods one may aim to modify the androcentrism of the features of traditional in order to grasp the depth and breadth of the metamorphosis of social sciences required to identify women and gender activities. In an effort to 'add women' to these analyses, feminists (Beauvoir, 1949). We discover three different types of women who emerged as unquestionable candidates for this mechanism: women who contributed to public life and were already the subjects of social science studies; women who are social scientists; and lastly, women who had fallen victim to the most egregious and flagrant manifestations of male preeminence.

## **GENDER ANALYSIS**

According to historians, men's attitudes and ideals are inextricably linked to both their reasoning and their behaviour. His standard for judging them rests on the evidence of their behaviour, not some mental construct of his own. It is up to him to detach it and rebuild it using the guidelines of an academic debate or the expansion of Methodism. Any field of knowledge can only be understood by some selection principle and its methodical application. Finding meaning in a situation does not mean imposing it from without; rather, it means giving coherence to what men have deemed significant. Critical theorists have worked to identify the causes and audience of such decisive praxis throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the present. The ability to recognise the pervasive connection between action and cognition has remained critical theory's most important intellectual strength. Marx asserts that theory cannot be resolved through practical endeavours and that practise always triumphs over theory in this instance. Any kind of social life is just pragmatic. The entire enigma that motivates theory is mysticism that has been rationally and objectively explained in human practise and in the understanding of this practise. Social theory as a whole is in trouble. The new theories advanced by phenomenology, Marxism, structuralism, feminism, and others sought to be more adept at defining a contemporary society and providing direction and inspiration for its redesign (Brace, 2000). These theories have stirred up a lot of controversy in the field of social theory and sparked a fiery debate regarding the processes, character, and objectives of critical theory. Hence, critical theory is remarkably self-critical and self-reflexive, compelling theorists to continuously think about the nature, approach, and outcomes of a critical theory. The promise of modernity, which itself was predicated on the assumption that the development of science and technology would enhance human control and dominance over nature and yield greater individuality, freedom, and happiness, was abandoned here, in their opinion, by the disintegration of subjectivity.

## **EDUCATION AS A MAJOR DOMAIN**

Education paves the way for women to assert their power, claim their rights, and achieve liberation. It empowers women to think independently. Education is therefore a means for releasing women from their routine enslavement and desire to follow and be instructed by men. It is true to say that education has a significant role in determining the presence of the second gender in politics. Women with higher levels of education are more inclined than those with lower or no educational backgrounds to engage



further in a variety of political activities. Education encourages women to participate more actively in political conversation, debate, and opinion-sharing than those who lack it. As a result, formal education is important and should be strongly connected with political engagement for both men and women. Political engagement can be predictably controlled and regulated through education. Complementing factors supporting political commitment include contacts and resources that improve political access to various non-political associations, such as religious institutions or charitable organisations, which can be used as a recruitment criterion for political activity. Education is also a key to soaring jobs. Intriguingly, there is a relationship – and at the same time a difference – between women’s educational attainment and their active engagement in various political activities as well as their delegation in official politics.

## WOMEN IN POLITICS

Political engagement is hampered by illiteracy. So, those in the educated strata of society offer a different perspective, whereas others who are less educated or ignorant are viewed as passive citizens, whose political participation is restricted to casting a ballot. In comparison to their male counterparts, women who participate in politics frequently have more refined educational backgrounds. Education emerges as a very important factor in bringing about a favourable and constructive transformation that will reflect on the political standing of women (Adhikari & Saha, 2021c). This culminates in placing its beneficiaries in a world that is independent, more informed, and transforms a person into one who is intellectually and culturally wealthy. Women who have received an education are thought to be more conscious of and appreciative of the rights of women, which extend to obligations leading to the political mainstream. This enables students to develop their understanding of how oppressed women see themselves as well as their capacity to come up with solutions to political problems. It broadens their perspective, increases their awareness, and speeds up how quickly they comprehend the environment around them. The modern education has significantly improved the prospects for women. The principles they upheld while being coerced by lures have undergone a significant transformation.

To be more specific, a new conception of womanhood is emerging in India, which intriguingly stands in stark contrast to the conventional assumption that women should exclusively devote themselves to and confine themselves to the domestic sphere. The scenario for this mechanism in the twenty-first century is entirely different. A woman is in charge of managing the household as well as taking an active role in public life. Education enforces and starts the process of resolving gender disparities. Secondly, education fosters remarkable effects for dynamic shifts in how people view women in politics, especially in emerging nations like India. Our goal is to determine whether education has a functional impact on the ways, to what degree, and in what ways women participate in politics.

Voting has enormous power and vulnerability, and it affects how women are mobilised and treated equally. Nonetheless, it is noted those casting votes exhibit the least internal motivation and effort. Many women view the day of voting as a much-needed reprieve from their tedious and worn-out routine (Kumar, 2017). They actually do not seem to understand the rationale behind supporting a particular politician. Unfortunately, despite the fact that women's involvement in politics has significantly increased, both during elections and in accordance with their willingness to express their innate opinions on matters that affect their lives, their ability to make an impact on the political process has been imperceptible due to the scant attention and recognition given to their political mobilisation and education by both women's organisations and political parties, see women voters (Sahu & Yadav, 2018). However, there has been no corresponding rise in the number of women running for office in legislative elections. Political parties show a complete unwillingness to field and campaign for female candidates. Another barrier preventing female candidates from running for office is the rising expense of electoral canvassing. These end up playing a significant role in the rising trend of women running for office as independent candidates.

## WOMEN IN ACTIVISM

One such example of the success attained by Indian women running a full-fledged campaign as they resisted deforestation is the Chipko movement, which began in the 1970s. The environmental issues championed by activists Medha Patkar and author Arundhati Roy have received a lot of attention as a result of the Narmada Bachao Andolan. Throughout the struggle, Medha Patkar organised numerous fasts and Satyagrahas and was often imprisoned as a result. Indian farmers have been demonstrating against the Farmer’s Bill all around Delhi since November 2020. It’s interesting to note that women with agricultural backgrounds, especially those who are very domestic in nature, are frequently spotted in protest sites, actively supporting the effort to repeal the Farm Laws. It is fair to say that their political engagement and behaviour must advance and become more enlightened. As a result, the movement becomes considerably louder and more determined. It was once thought to be ‘unsafe and ungraceful’ for women to walk the streets; however, ladies of all castes, faiths, and social standing do so. Women are speaking up more and more, which strengthens the protests as they, too, face lathi charges, jail, and resolute resistance to leaving the political sphere. In times of crisis, women from all over the world have actively participated in political movements, but after the crisis has passed, they are once again consigned to the home sphere. A paradigm is being established by women’s active engagement in municipal bodies. Despite the fact that India's constitution is among the most progressive in the world and provides equal rights



for men and women, Indian women continue to eagerly await the realisation of their hopes for equality. Perhaps the most effective weapon for eradicating inequality is political power.

### WOMEN IN EDUCATION AND LITERATURE

Since education alone has the power to create a new world and open possibilities for beneficial consequences, education is currently a priority for every country. The 19th century saw an educational awakening thanks to Raja Rammohan Roy and Henry Derizio, who created a new path for education in Bengal, India (Adhikari & Saha, 2021e). India is currently a leading nation in the area of women's education. The conditions weren't always the same, though. In their efforts to move beyond the domestic sphere and establish a new standard, Tarabai Modak, Durgabai Deshmukh, Anutai Wagh, Pandita Ramabai, Pandita Brahmacharini Chandbai, and Nawab Begum Sultan Kaikhusrau Jahan paved the way (Adhikari & Saha, 2021d). Three famous women educationalists, who emerged at similar times and with similar educational philosophies in three distinct centuries, left their mark on western culture through their contributions to education. With their quick work in education, Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Montessori, and Nel Noddings (Adhikari & Saha, 2021g, 2021h) have brought important concerns pertaining to women and children's education to light (Adhikari & Saha, 2023). These three women educators were connected by their interest in education despite being born in various eras and regions of the world. Strong female characters can also be seen in mythology, such as Shakuntala, British literature, such as Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, and Indian English literature, such as Arundhati Roy's *The God of Little Things* (Adhikari & Saha, 2021a).

### CONCLUSION

Education is widely acknowledged as the foundational component of human resources. The impact of education on life expectancy, population control, nutritional status, infant mortality, and the strengthening of civil institutions are all well-known and play a part in the economy's growth. The new transitory century is now upon us. The main difficulty we face right now is to start the process of changing society so that gender discrimination no longer exists, not only to raise awareness of gender equality. On improving women's conditions, not much has been stated or done. As a result, women must be made independent. Their affiliation and political involvement have given them fresh perspectives. It is vital to focus on working for women's development through their participation in establishing the agenda for their own growth and the development of others. Certainly, this might result in the empowerment of women. Women's empowerment and their participation in politics and decision-making therefore have a dialectical relationship and tight interplay. It is possible to develop a set of tactics and measures to address the shortcomings, empower women in many ways, and support their successful participation in politics. Such involvement in political, educational, and other societal programmes would result in a qualitative shift.

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