

Part – VIII: Women in Power and Decision Making

Gender Parity in governance and political participation is a pre-requisite to the realisation of gender equality.

There is an inverted relationship between the levels of political participation and extent of women's participation. The Higher the level of participation, lower the number of women at the highest levels of participation.

Politics and Political Parties continue to be a male bastion:

As the history of the political participation among women shows, there is a huge gap between men and women in the political activities beyond voting. Some visibility of women as campaigners is present, but few women became contestant. Women are usually denied the ticket or if some get the chance of winning, they are given soft roles are pulled in to campaign among women voters.

Women therefore either are not oriented towards the career in politics or if oriented towards it, find it difficult to pursue.

The 5P's – patriarchy, property, power, propensity and physiology - are major barriers with increasing criminalisation of politics and violence against women, that play a distinct role in keeping women out of the political processes and governance.

Way Forward:

- Ensure atleast 50% reservation of seat for women in local bodies, state legislative assemblies, parliament, ministerial levels and all decision making bodies of the Government.
- Political parties must focus on women's concerns, give tickets to women candidates, take strict action against those accused of gender violence or discrimination and include women at all levels of party hierarchy.
- Involve researchers engaged in studying women's political participation.
- Identifying factors that impede or promote women's active participation in electoral politics.

(For Marginalised and Vulnerable Women visit Part - IX)