

# The Significance of Women's Political Participation towards Gender Equality

Charlie Jacob\*

Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Osun, Nigeria

## ABOUT THE STUDY

Women's participation in politics has transformed significantly over the past century, marking a significant step towards achieving gender equality.

However, despite progress, women's representation in political leadership positions remains unequal and underrepresented globally. This essay explores the importance of women's political participation, the barriers they face, the advancements made towards gender parity, and the significance of women's voices and perspectives in shaping the future of political decision-making.

## The importance of women's political participation

Women's political participation is vital for the development of inclusive and democratic societies. It brings diverse perspectives and experiences to policymaking processes, contributing to more equitable and effective decision-making. Furthermore, women's political participation challenges existing power structures and women's political engagement also challenges current power structures and promotes gender equality. By breaking the traditional gender roles, women inspire others and contribute to changing societal norms and perceptions of women's leadership capabilities. Women in politics serve as role models, encouraging other women and girls to pursue political careers and take an active role in shaping their societies.

## Barriers to women's political participation

Despite the progress made, women continue to encounter several obstacles that prevent them from fully and equally participating in politics. Deeply ingrained patriarchal conventions, gender stereotypes, and cultural prejudices frequently impede women's political participation. Discriminatory practices, such as unequal access to education and limited financial resources, create additional challenges for women seeking political office. Structural barriers within political systems also contribute to the women who have a low representation in politics. Party institutions dominated by men, oriented candidate

selection processes, and inadequate support networks make it more difficult for women to achieve party nominations and political triumphs.

## Advancements towards gender parity

Efforts to promote gender parity in politics have gained momentum globally. Many countries have implemented legal frameworks and policies to promote women's political representation. Quota systems, both legislative and voluntary, have been successful in increasing women's presence in political institutions. Electoral gender quotas, such as reserved seats or minimum candidate quotas, have proven effective in countries like Rwanda, Sweden, and Bolivia.

Political parties and civil society organizations have also played a crucial role in advocating for women's political participation. They provide training programs, mentorship, and support networks for women aspiring to enter politics. Additionally, community involvement groups and campaigns have worked relentlessly to increase awareness about the necessity of women's political representation and to overcome gender prejudices.

## The significance of women's voices and perspectives

Women's participation in politics brings unique perspectives and priorities to policy debates and decision-making processes. Women's lived experiences, expertise, and understanding of gender-specific issues enrich policy discussions and ensure that the needs of diverse populations are addressed. Women politicians have been instrumental in driving policy changes related to gender equality, reproductive rights, healthcare, education, and social welfare. Research shows that when women are well-represented in political institutions, there is a greater focus on issues such as gender equality, social justice, and the welfare of families and children. Women's presence in politics also fosters collaboration, empathy, and consensus-building, leading to more inclusive and effective governance. Moreover, women's political participation has a virtuous cycle that benefits society as a whole. According to study, gender-diverse decision-makers are more creative, make better judgments, and are less

**Correspondence to:** Charlie Jacob, Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Osun, Nigeria, E-mail: jaccharlie52@gmail.com

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susceptible to corruption. Increased women's representation in politics contributes to building stronger democracies, promoting social cohesion, and advancing human rights. Women's political participation is crucial for achieving the gender equality, inclusive governance, and a more representative democracy. Breaking down

barriers and addressing the systemic biases that hinder women's political advancement is essential for progress. By empowering and supporting women in politics, societies can harness their unique perspectives and experiences, leading to more equitable policies, effective governance, and a brighter future for all.