



Exploring the Theories of Women's Political Leadership: Changing Contours of Governance in South Asia

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Abstract

The contemporary political discourses have acknowledged the importance of women's autonomy and gender equality. However, women are conveniently sidelined in the political realm and process, despite the roles they play in society and their claims of equality in all areas of life. Women are not given the same opportunities to enjoy life as men, despite several laws, regulations, and government awareness initiatives. In the political, cultural, educational, and socioeconomic domains of their existence, they experience marginalisation and discrimination. Popular concepts of nature and culture, public and private, reason and emotion, and modern and primitive become analytical features that allow gender to play a role in forming both individual and collective identities.

Within this complexity of social development, an overview of female political leadership in South Asia must be placed, with particular attention paid to the opportunities, gaps, negotiations, and resistances of "women". The current study provides a framework for understanding how gender politics influence the development of the political category "woman" and how the demands, interests, and concerns of this category are characterized throughout various South Asian nations. This article aims to provide an overview of female political leadership in South Asia, drawing on the broader corpus of feminist literature, particularly South Asian feminist scholarship, in the context of changing governance contours.

Keywords: gender; inequality; leadership; marginality, governance