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Glass Ceiling- A Silent Barrier for Women in Highly Advanced and Humanistic Society

Sonia Delrose Noronha^{1,2} and **Dr. P. S. Aithal**²

 ¹Research Scholar, Dept. of Management, Rayalaseema University, Kurnool -518007, Andhra Pradesh, India.
 ²Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangaluru –575 001, India.

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ABSTRACT

Indian society in the present scenario is considered to be highly competitive, advanced and techno-friendly enhancing the talents and career growth of both men and women. This educated society has also created awareness for gender equity. Moreover, this advancement has also provided ample opportunities for women to occupy equal positions as men. Since many decades women have made their presence felt in almost all positions in different organizations. Though we find enough number of women occupying many positions it is doubtful about women occupying the executive positions where decision making plays a major role. Along with work life balance and traditions, there is an invisible barrier that acts as a challenge for women influencing their advancement. One can silently observe a glass ceiling creating a barrier for women to optimize their capacities to the fullest. Here arises the need to investigate the presence of the invisible glass ceiling for women and its impact on their career advancement. For the development of a nation, politics plays a vital role. Politicians being the representatives of the people help people solve their problems by making policies and amend the existing laws. Here the participation of women as public servants is equally important. This study hence tries to analyze if there exist any glass ceiling in Indian political scenario and also tries to find the conditions required for women to obtain such positions. The study will be exploratory in nature based on a comparative analysis of the data gathered from various online sources.

Key-words: Glass ceiling, Career advancement, Optimize, gender equity, ventures.

1. Introduction

Glass ceiling includes various barriers that prevent the chances of qualified skilled people progressing higher in an organization. Even though there are many women in management position the number of women in the top level positions are few [1]. This kind of ceiling is not desirable as it not only hiders the individual in making use of their potential to the fullest but also hampers the national growth. Country like India that is in the verge of shinning as a super power needs to utilize the expertise of its citizens. India is rich in population and to add on to it, the population is skilled and knowledgeable, but the invisible glass ceiling creates the undesirable barrier. Traditions and preconceived notion or prejudice towards women is the reason that prevents the women from accessing the top positions [2]. This is not a clear concept as the reasons for this barrier varies from situation to situation and from organization to organization. The term 'Glass ceiling' gained popularity in the 1980s. It was pioneered in a book, "The Working Woman Report, by Gay Bryant in 1984. It was later used in an article on a wall street journal on barriers to women in high corporate positions [3]. The term glass ceiling refers to an artificial barrier based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevents qualified women and other minorities from advancing upward into senior management level positions or situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organization is stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly racism or sexism. It is believed to be unofficial, invisible barrier that prevents women and minorities from advancing in business or barrier to career advancement into upper level management positions because of discrimination based on person's gender, age, race, ethnicity or sexual preference. It is also defined as an unacknowledged discriminatory barrier that prevents women and minorities from rising to positions of power or responsibility. Over the years the proportion of women in the middle and the lower level management position has increased considerable, but the proportion of women in the top management position is lessor. It is seen that women move ahead in the hierarchy level s until they encounter a glass ceiling that prevents their possibility of reaching top level management positions [4]. Studies have shown that women are inadequately represented in the executive leadership and governance position. It is said that women confront two types of concerns in the form of social scenario and the corporate scenario. Though women are considered to have marched purposefully towards the direction of equality towards achieving higher senior position, the basic fact that women do not share equal participation and representation the these roles remain the same. Complex, unseen barriers limit the growth of women who desire to climb into the positions of authority and power [5].

2. Methodology of the Study

This study is descriptive in nature. The researcher has collected the information from the data bases published by government approved agencies and also other secondary information from newspapers, articles, journals etc.

3. Indian Constitution & Equality for Women

The constitution of India in its preamble, Fundamental rights and duties and directive principles has treasured the principle of Gender equity. Indian constitution not only manifests equality for women but also authorizes the state to embrace measures in favour of women. Plans and programmes, certain developmental policies are developed for women empowerment in different areas. International conventions and human right instruments towards achieving equal rights of women have been officially confirmed and organised. Noted important among it is the convention on elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) IN 1993)[6].

(a) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW):

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the UN General Assembly, is considered as an international bill for empowering the rights of women. It has a preamble and 30 articles that strengthens the idea of the discrimination against women and sets up a scheme to curb such discrimination. This convention defines discrimination against women as any form of exclusion, distinction and restriction done with the purpose of weakening and damaging the recognition enjoyed by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women and fundamental freedom in economic, political, civil, cultural or any other area. The highlighting point of this convention is that it provides the base for perceiving the equality between men and women through ensuring and safeguarding the equal access and opportunities of women in public and political life. This also ensures women the right to vote and even the chance to stand for election, participation in education, employment and health. To ensure that the women will enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedom, state parties will take appropriate legislation and temporary measures. This is the only treaty which guarantees the rights of women and hits the influential forces of culture and tradition that shapes gender roles and family relations [6].

Indian constitution along with providing equality to women has also ensured measures thus reducing the unfavourable situation faced by them. This has made the economic, social, education and political sectors more advantageous for the entry of women. Fundamental rights provide equality and protection by law, but more importantly it prohibits discrimination of any citizen on the basis of sex, race, religion or birthplace. It also guarantees equality of opportunity to all the citizens with regards to employment [6]. This can be considered to be the weapon which the country has given to women to find their place in the society.

ARTICLES	PRIVIL	EGES				
Article 14	Women	have the privilege for equality before law				
Article 15 (i)	There is	no discrimination against any citizen in the state on the basis				
	of race, religion, caste, sex or birth place.					
Article 15 (3)		provision for women and children in the state				
Article 16	Equal of	pportunity in terms of employment or appointment to any				
	office un	der the state for all the citizens.				
Article 39(d)	Direction	n by the state towards achieving equal pay for equal work for				
	both mer	n and women.				
Article 42	Direction	n by the state regarding the conditions of work and maternity				
	relief wh	ich is just and humane.				
Article 46	Promotio	on of economic and educational interest of the weaker section				
		protection from exploitation and social injustice.				
Article 243 D(3)	Not less	than $1/3^{rd}$ of the total numbers of seats which are to be				
	occupied	by direct election are reserved for women.				
Article 243 D (4)	Not less than 1/3 rd of the total number of chairpersons offices in the					
		at are reserved for women.				
Article 243 T (3)		than $1/3^{rd}$ of the total seats in municipality to be filled by				
	direct ele	ection are reserved for women.				
INITIATIVES TAKEN	YEAR	PROVISION				
BY GOVERNMENT						
National Commission for	1992	Government of India incorporated this statutory body to				
Women		study and monitor matters relating to the legal safety				
		provisions and constitutional matters towards women and				
		make amendments whenever necessary.				
Reservation in Local	1992	This reservation ensures $1/3^{rd}$ of the total seats for women				
self-Government		in the elected offices of local bodies of rural and urban				
		areas. This was passed in the 73 rd amendment of				
	constitutional amendment act.					
The National Plan of	1991- This plan is towards the girl child, to ensure the survival,					
Action for the Girl Child	2000 development and protection for the better future.					
National Policy for the	2001					
Empowerment of		resource Development has come up with this policy to				
Women		bring development, empowerment and advancement of				
		women.				

Table 1: Privileges and initiatives for women under Constitution of India

Source: Ministry of statistics and programme implementation

The above table 1 shows the privileges enjoyed by women and also the initiatives taken by government as in the constitution of India. Articles above highlight the equal opportunity, equal pay in terms of employment or appointment for all the citizens. It can be clearly seen that there is special provision in the state for women and children apart from conditions of work and maternity requirements. Articles also stress on promotion of economic and education requirements of weaker section. It also provides for protection from social injustice and exploitation. This is a boon for the women in India to climb up in the career ladder. Though women have realized their potential and have entered into all the domains. The question here is the ratio of women in relation to men in spite of the reservation and privileges given by the constitution.

4. Authoritative Key Positions held by women in politics

Political participation here is not just related to the right the vote but also participation of women in decision making process, political awareness and political activism. Participation of women in Election campaigning and voting turnout has increased but women seem to be under represented in political parties and in legislative bodies both at the national level and also the state level [7]. Constitution of India in 1952 promised "to secure to all its citizens justice, social, economic and political and "equality of status and opportunity" [8]. In spite of the promise proclaimed by the constitution, women in India continue to be under represented in politics [7]. In this paper the researcher has made an attempt to study the authoritative key positions occupied by women at the union executive level, central and the Karnataka state ministries and also the legislative bodies.

(a) Presidents, Vice Presidents and Prime ministers and cabinet secretaries:

Union executive includes President, the Vice President and the Council of Ministers. As per the Article 74(1) the Prime Minister and his Council of Ministers advise and aid the President of India. The Cabinet Secretary is the highest position in the Indian Administrative service (IAS). Cabinet Secretariat is under the direct charge of Prime Minister. This position is responsible for the administration of the Government of India rules, 1961 (Transaction of Business) and the Government of India rules 1961 (Allocation of Business). Cabinet Secretary helps in smooth business transactions in ministries and government departments by maintaining steadiness and perseverance to these rules. Inter departmental coordination, ruling out the differences between ministries if any and also helps in maintaining harmony in the form of instrumentality of the secretaries ad-hoc committees. This also encourages the promotion of the new policies initiatives [9].

Table	e 2: List of Presidents,	Vice Pres	idents, Pı	rime ministe	ers of Inc	dia and g	gender b	alance
since	1950							

SL.	POSITIONS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE
NO	SINCE 1950				REPRESENTATIVES
01	Presidents*	16	15	01	6.25%
02	Vice Presidents*	12	12	Nil	0%
03	Prime Ministers*	19	17	2 (Smt. Indira	10.5%
				Gandhi was	
				elected twice)	
04	Cabinet	31	31	Nil	0%
	Secretaries**				
TOTA	AL	78	75	03	3.85%

Source: *www.gkduniya.com/president-prime-minister-india,** Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India

Table 2 depicts the gender wise classification of Presidents, Vice Presidents, Prime Ministers and Cabinet Secretaries ever since the formation of the government. Out of four categories that make the total of 78 positions, only 03 positions have been occupied by women. This makes the total percentage as just 3.85%. Ever since India became Independent, India has seen the service of the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Prime Ministers and the Cabinet Secretaries towards the growth and development of the nation. Out of total 16 Presidents only 1 president was a woman. This makes the percentage to be just 6.25%.Out of total 12 Vice Presidents all vice presidents were male and no women vice presidents have occupied this position.0% is the figure which indicates that women have been underrepresented here. Among the 19 Prime ministers late Indira Gandhi was the only woman elected twice. It is a sad situation to see that only one woman(elected twice)

has occupied this honorable post. The charge of the highest position of cabinet secretariat in India was first taken in 1950. Since then till date 31 people have occupied this position. As per the data published by cabinet secretariat, Government of India the number of women occupying this position is Nil. This data is something that makes one read the figures again. Out of 31 positions all the positions were held by men. Here it can be observed except for Late. Indira Gandhi and Smt. Prathiba Patil, women are yet to occupy this high position.

(b) Cabinet of India:

The cabinet of India comprises of Prime minister and his council of Ministers. The council of ministers main function is to advise and help the President in exercising his power and this is headed by the Prime minister and advised by the Cabinet Secretary. Other ministers are union Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State (Independent charge), Minister of State and Deputy Ministers. The present council of Ministers was announced on 12.07.2016 [10]. The following table shows the total number of male and female cabinet ministers, ministers of state (Independent charge), ministers of state and the governors of all states and the union territories.

SL.NO	CATEGORY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE
					REPRESENTATIVES
01	Cabinet ministers*	26	21	05	19.2%
02	Ministers of state (Independent charge)*	13	12	01	7.7%
03	Ministers of state*	36	33	03	8.3%
04	Chief ministers (All states)**	29	25	04	13.8%
05	Governors (All states and UT)	36	32	04	11.1%
TOTAL		140	123	17	12.1%

Table 3: Ratio of Cabinet Ministers, minister of state(independent charge), ministers of state, Chief ministers(All states) and Governors (All states and UT)

Source:*Cabinet secretariat, Government of India ** Chief Ministers India.gov.in

Table 3 depicts the gender wise classification of Cabinet Ministers, Minister of State (Independent charge), Ministers of State, Chief Ministers of all states and the Governors of all states and the union territories. Total percentage of women representatives here is just 12.1%. Out of the total 140 positions majority of 123 positions are held by men and only 17 women have got the opportunity of occupying these positions. This means at present we have just 05 women cabinet ministers out of 26. Out of 13 ministers of state (Independent charge) only 01 is a woman. Out of 36 ministers of state only 03 are women and 33 are men. India being a vast nation comprising 29 states having 29 Chief Ministers, only 04 are women. Looking at the figures of Governors of all sates and union territories, out of total 36 only four are women. The question that arises here is the reason why the representation of women is so low.

Table 4: Gender wise classification of cabinet Ministers and minister of state (independ	ent
charge) and ministers of state in every state	

Sl.No	STATE WISE CABINET MINISTERS AND MINISTERS OF STATE	TOTAL	MAL E	FEMAL E	% of Female Representative s
01	Andra Pradesh	19	16	03	15.8%
02	Arunachal Pradesh	11	11	Nil	0%
03	Assam	13	10	03	23.1%
04	Bihar	28	26	02	7.1%
05	Chattisgarh	12	11	01	8.3%
06	Goa	11	10	01	9.1%
07	Gujrath	24	23	01	4.4%
08	Haryana	17	16	01	5.6%
09	Himachal Pradesh	11	10	01	9.1%
10	Jammu and Kashmir	22	20	02	9.1%
11	Jharkand	10	08	02	20%
12	Karnataka	33	32	01	3.0%
13	Kerala	18	16	02	11.1%
14	Madhya Pradesh	20	16	04	20%
15	Maharashtra	37	36	01	2.7%
16	Manipur	11	10	01	9.1%
17	Meghalaya	11	08	03	27.3%
18	Mizoram	11	11	Nil	0%
19	Nagaland	10	10	Nil	0%
20	Odisha	25	22	03	12%
21	Punjab	17	17	Nil	0%
22	Rajasthan	13	12	01	7.7%
23	Sikkim	11	11	Nil	0%
24	Tamil Nadu	28	26	02	7.1%
25	Telangana	17	17	Nil	0%
26	Tripura	11	10	01	9.1%
27	Uttar Pradesh	56	55	01	1.8%
28	Uttarkhand	09	08	01	11.1%
29	West Bengal	41	38	03	7.3%
TOTAL	L	557	516	41	7.4%

Source:www.newincept.com as on 25.10.2016 @ 11.13am

Table 4 shows the Gender wise classification of Cabinet Ministers and Minister of State (Independent charge) and Ministers of State in every state of India. Here one can see that in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Sikkim and Telangana the percentage of women representatives is Nil. Underrepresentation of women here is a matter of concern.Sates like Meghalaya with 27.3% of women ministers and Assam with 23.1% seems to have better representation from women in politics. Overall in the entire nation of 29 states, out of 557 cabinet ministers, ministers of state and ministers of state(independent charge) there are only 41 women, making it 7.4% which is a clear indication that women are yet to set their footprints in this sector.

(c) Parliament of India:

The Parliament of India is the apex legislative body of India. It includes the two houses i.e. LokSabha and Rajya Sabha. The president is the head of this legislative body.

Table 5 : Gender	wise	classification	of	LokSabha	members	in	every state and Union
Territories							

SL.NO	STATE WISE LOK	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE
01	SABHA MEMBERS	25	00	02	REPRESENTATIVES
01	Andra Pradesh	25	23	02	8%
02	Arunachal Pradesh	02 13	02	Nil 02	0%
03	Assam		37		15.4%
04 05	Bihar	40	10	03 01	7.5%
05	Chattisgarh	02	02	Nil	9.1% 0%
08	Goa Gujrath	26	21	05	19.2%
	5	10	10	Nil	
08 09	Haryana Himachal Pradesh	04	04	Nil	0% 0%
		-			
10 11	Jammu and Kashmir Jharkand	04	04	Nil Nil	0% 0%
11 12	Karnataka	28	27	01	3.6%
12		28	19	01	5%
13 14	Kerala Madhya Dradaah	20 28	23	01	5% 17.9%
14 15	Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra	28 48	42	05	12.5%
		48	42 02	Nil	
16 17	Manipur	02	02		0% 0%
	Meghalaya	02	02	Nil Nil	
18	Mizoram	01	01	Nil	0%
19 20	Nagaland Odisha	21	18	03	0% 14.3%
20		13	18	03	7.7%
21 22	Punjab	25			
22	Rajasthan Sikkim	01	24 01	01 Nil	4% 0%
23 24		39	35	04	
	Tamil Nadu	39 17			10.3%
25	Telangana	02	16	01	5.9%
26	Tripura		02	Nil	0%
27	Uttar Pradesh	80 05	67 04	13	16.3%
28 29	Uttarkhand	40	28	01 12	20% 30%
	West Bengal	40	28	12	30%
Sl. No	UNION TERRITORY WISE LOK SABHA				
	MEMBERS				
1	Andaman	01	01	Nil	0%
2	Chandigarh	01	Nil	01	100%
3	Daman	01	01	Nil	0%
4	NCT of Delhi	07	06	01	14.3%
5	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	01	01	Nil	0%
6	Lakshadweep	01	01	Nil	0%
7	Puducherry	01	01	Nil	0%
TOTAL		537	473	64	11.98%

Source: Parliament of India- Loksabha

Table 5 shows gender wise classification of LokSabha members in every state and Union Territories of India. Out of the total 537 members, only 64 members are women making it 11.98%. Remaining 88.02% are male members. To highlight this situation, states like Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Union territories like Andaman, Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry have Nil women LokSabha Members.

S.NO	STATE WISE RAJYA	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE
	SABHA MEMBERS				REPRESENTATIVES
01	Nominated	12	08	04	33.3%
02	Andra Pradesh	11	09	02	18.2%
03	Arunachal Pradesh	01	01	Nil	0%
04	Assam	07	06	01	14.3%
05	Bihar	16	14	02	12.5%
06	Chattisgarh	05	04	01	20%
07	Goa	01	01	Nil	0%
08	Gujrath	11	10	01	9.1%
09	Haryana	05	04	01	20%
10	Himachal Pradesh	03	02	01	33.3%
11	Jammu and Kashmir	04	04	Nil	0%
12	Jharkand	06	06	Nil	0%
13	Karnataka	12	11	01	8.3%
14	Kerala	9	9	Nil	0%
15	Madhya Pradesh	11	11	Nil	0%
16	Maharashtra	19	17	02	10.5%
17	Manipur	01	01	Nil	0%
18	Meghalaya	01	Nil	01	100%
19	Mizoram	01	01	Nil	0%
20	Nagaland	01	01	Nil	0%
21	Odisha	10	09	01	10%
22	Punjab	07	06	01	07%
23	Rajasthan	10	10	Nil	0%
24	Sikkim	1	1	Nil	0%
25	Tamil Nadu	18	15	03	16.7%
26	Telangana	07	07	Nil	0%
27	Tripura	01	Nil	01	100%
28	Uttar Pradesh	31	28	03	9.8%
29	Uttarkhand	03	03	Nil	0%
30	West Bengal	16	15	01	6.3%
SI.	UNION TERRITORY				
No	WISE RAJYA SABHA				
	MEMBERS				
01	NCT of Delhi	03	03	Nil	0%
02	Puducherry	01	01	Nil	0%
TOTA	L	245	218	27	11.02%

 Table 6 : Gender wise classification of Rajya Sabha members in every state and Union

 Territories

Source: Rajya Sabha secretariat

Table 6 depicts the Gender wise classification of Rajya Sabha members in every state and Union Territories of India. Total Rajya Sabha members are 245 out of which only 27 are women members. Merely 11.02% of women occupy the seats in Rajya Sabha. Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Uttarakhand and union territories like NCT of Delhi and Puducherry have no women Rajya Sabha members.

(d) Karnataka State Government and Gender Balance:

When one refers to the political participation of women in the state of Karnataka, the government is headed by the governor as the head of the state. He appoints the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers. Karnataka's Cabinet Ministry led by Chief Minister of the state comprising of Cabinet ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers. Details of the Karnataka government since Independence was collected and evaluated to see the number of women chief ministers [11]. The analysis report is as follows:

	Table 7. List of Governors of Karnataka since 1950								
SL.NO	CATEGORY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE				
					REPRESENTATIV				
					ES				
01	Governors*	18	17	01	5.6%				
02	Chief Minister**	30	30	0	NIL				
Total		48	47	01	2.1%				

Table 7 : List of Governors of Karnataka since 1956

Source: karnataka.com/govt/governor*/ list-of-chief-ministers**

Above Table 7 exhibits the postions held as Governors of Karnataka since 1956. It can be seen that out of 18 Governors only 01 was a woman. Out of the total chief ministers not a single women has served as the chief minister of Karnataka. Women empowerment is spoken in every sphere of life but the data above shows the number of women Chief Ministers the state of Karnataka is Nil.

SL. NO	CATEGORY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMAL E	% OF FEMALE REPRESENTATIVES
01	Cabinet Ministers	29	28	01	3.5%
22	Minister of State	04	04	Nil	0%
Total		33	32	01	3.03%

Table 8 : Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of state of Karnataka

Source: karnataka.com/govt

Table 8 depicts the Cabinet ministers and ministers of state of Karnataka. Out of total 33 council of ministers only 01 (3.03%). There is only 01 cabinet minister and there are no women ministers of state. This means the participation of women in inadequate.

5. Conditions required for women to occupy key positions:

The remedy can be mass awareness programmes with regards to positive discrimination for women and gender equity, promotion and increase in the number of women at the village level into public domain, organizing various training programmes for skill up gradation, providing political education to women especially rural women through voluntary and government agencies to create awareness about the role and responsibility of women in the decision making process. It is seen that women are underrepresented in the government bodies like Legislature, executive and judiciary. Self Help groups have a major role in women empowerment at the domestic as well as

the society level. The collective actions taken bring in the traits like strength, leadership and other threat. This will help the women to realize their potential which will bring the wellbeing and development of women. Micro credit can be a solution to reduce rural poverty and speed up the socio -economic development in women. Nairobi Conference and the non-aligned meet of 1985 have identified the issues related to the women's political participation, their problems and also the strategies that favour the empowerment of women. Participation of women in political decision making seems to be a big challenge due to illiteracy, less political knowledge about the working system of the women in government and also lack of political education [12].

6. Conclusion:

India is a developing economy. Becoming a developed nation can become a reality only when all its citizens' potential is utilized fully. If women are suppressed from participation especially in high public leadership then its impact on the nation can be undesirable. In the above study the researcher has observed the participation of women in authoritative key positions which involves decision making is low. One cannot deny that women are not involved at all; but the number is only a handful. Women have shown their expertise in lower positions. The constraints and the factors that prevent women from occupying these high authoritative positions can be a subject of study by itself. Generally one can point out the prevailing traditional and cultural role of women in our society, family responsibilities; stereotype thinking is the reason for women backwardness. Women in 21st century perform multiple roles of managing family as well as work. Work life balance is a challenge faced by working women. Even after 69 years of independence women seem t o have been struggling to enter the arena of decision making and political authority. 73rd and 74th amendment act though have provided entry at the grass root level, the representation of women in the parliament and state legislatures seems to be poor. Unless women become aware of their rights and duties and are given powers to prove their efficiency, women will remain underrepresented even after reservation. Building awareness among girls at the early age can boost up the confidence helping them to understand and realize their potentialities.

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