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A Critical Study on Public Opinion About Political Ideology on Gender and its Impact with Special Reference to Chennai

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of this topic in India has been marked by significant milestones and shifts in societal attitudes and political discourse. Historically, India has seen movements advocating for women's rights and gender equality, such as the women's suffrage movement, the fight against dowry and sati practices, and the push for legal reforms to protect women from discrimination and violence. In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on gender issues in Indian politics, with the emergence of feminist movements, the implementation of gender-sensitive policies, and the representation of women in political leadership roles. Main objective is To examine the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals towards gender roles and political ideologies in the context of Chennai and Tamil Nadu. The researchers in this study utilized an empirical research method. Totally 200 respondents have been collected from Tamilnadu randomly by a researcher through asking people directly by simple random sampling method. Despite progress, challenges such as limited access to education, patriarchal mindsets, and entrenched social norms continue to hinder women's participation in political decision-making processes. While some states have made significant strides in promoting gender equality, others continue to grapple with deep-rooted social norms and systemic barriers, highlighting the diversity of approaches and challenges across different regions of India. the findings underscore the importance of tailored interventions that consider occupational and gender differences in attitudes towards women's representation. Moving forward, policymakers, civil society organizations, and stakeholders must collaborate to implement inclusive policies and initiatives that promote gender equality and empower women to play active roles in shaping the political landscape of Tamil Nadu and beyond..

Keywords: Political participation, Feminism, Dravidian movement, Women empowerment, Patriarchal society

1. Introduction

The evolution of this topic in India has been marked by significant milestones and shifts in societal attitudes and political discourse. Historically, India has seen movements advocating for women's rights and gender equality, such as the women's suffrage movement, the fight against dowry and sati practices, and the push for legal reforms to protect women from discrimination and violence. In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on gender issues in Indian politics, with the emergence of feminist movements, the implementation of gender-sensitive policies, and the representation of women in political leadership roles. Additionally, there has been growing recognition of the LGBTQ+ community's rights, leading to landmark legal judgments such as the decriminalization of homosexuality. Chennai, as a metropolitan city with its unique socio-cultural landscape, provides an interesting case study for examining the dynamics of political ideology and gender. The city has a rich history of social reform movements and political activism, and its diverse population offers insights into how different communities perceive and engage with gender issues within the political sphere. The Tamil Nadu government has implemented several initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women in the state. These initiatives include the Amma Two-Wheeler Scheme, which provides subsidized two-wheelers to working women to enhance their mobility and access to employment opportunities. Additionally, the Amma Maternity Nutrition Kit Scheme ensures that pregnant and lactating women receive free nutritious food kits to support their health during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Through the Nutritious Meal Programme (PDS), the government provides nutritious meals to pregnant and lactating mothers, as well as children under six years of age, through the Public Distribution System. Various gender empowerment schemes, such as financial assistance for women's self-help groups and skill development programs, aim to enhance women's economic and social empowerment. The government also conducts campaigns to combat female infanticide and feticide, promote the value of the girl child, and provide legal aid and protection to women through specialized courts and support services. These initiatives reflect the Tamil Nadu government's commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable society where women can fully participate and thrive in all aspects of life. Several factors influence public opinion and government initiatives regarding political ideology and gender in Chennai and Tamil Nadu. Cultural and societal norms, deeply entrenched in patriarchal values, shape attitudes towards gender roles and may hinder progress towards equality. Economic factors, including income levels, education, and employment opportunities, play a significant role in perceptions of gender equality and women's empowerment. Political leadership and commitment to gender equality are crucial in driving policy decisions and implementing progressive measures. The presence of supportive legal frameworks and their effective enforcement are essential for protecting women's rights and promoting gender-responsive governance. Unequal access to resources such as education and healthcare perpetuates gender disparities, highlighting the importance of equitable resource distribution. Media representations and public discourse also influence public opinion on gender issues, while civil society organizations and advocacy groups play a vital role in raising awareness and advocating for women's rights. Recognizing the intersectionality of gender with other social identities is crucial for addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalized groups. By considering these factors, policymakers and stakeholders can develop comprehensive strategies to promote gender equality, empower women, and create an inclusive society in Chennai and Tamil Nadu. Current trends related to political ideology and gender in Chennai and Tamil Nadu encompass increasing women's political participation, a focus on gender-sensitive policies, an intersectional approach to address diverse needs, digital initiatives for gender empowerment, efforts to enhance women's safety and security, emphasis on corporate gender diversity, advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, and engagement of youth in gender equality initiatives. These trends reflect a growing recognition of the importance of gender equality in governance and social development, with stakeholders across sectors working towards creating more inclusive and equitable societies in the region. Comparing Chennai and Tamil Nadu with three other states in India provides a nuanced understanding of regional variations in addressing political ideology and gender. Kerala stands out for its strong tradition of women's empowerment, high levels of female literacy, and progressive outlook towards gender issues, with a history of electing women to political office and implementing innovative programs. In contrast, Uttar Pradesh faces significant challenges such as low female literacy rates, entrenched patriarchal norms, and limited political representation for women, hindering efforts to promote gender equality. Maharashtra, with its mix of cosmopolitan cities and rural areas, exhibits both progress and challenges in gender equality, with strides in education and employment alongside persistent disparities. While some states have made significant strides in promoting gender equality, others continue to grapple with deep-rooted social norms and systemic barriers, highlighting the diversity of approaches and challenges across different regions of India.

Objectives

- To examine the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals towards gender roles and political ideologies in the context of Chennai and Tamil Nadu.
- To analyze the impact of government initiatives and policies on gender equality and women's empowerment in the region.
- To identify the key challenges and barriers hindering progress towards gender equality and political representation for women in Chennai and Tamil Nadu.
- To explore potential strategies and recommendations for enhancing gender equality, promoting women's participation in politics, and advancing inclusive governance in Chennai and Tamil Nadu.

Review of Literature

Kumar, R., & Rajan, S. (2023). This article examines public opinion on gender issues and political ideology in Chennai, India. It investigates attitudes towards gender equality, women's rights, and the role of government in addressing gender-based discrimination, with a focus on how political ideology influences these perceptions. Desai, A., & Patel, N. (2022). This study analyzes survey data collected from residents of Chennai to explore the relationship between gender, political ideology, and public opinion. It investigates differences in attitudes towards gender equality and women's empowerment among individuals with varying political beliefs, shedding light on the implications for policy and advocacy efforts in the region. Gupta, M., & Sharma, S. (2021). This article examines the influence of political ideology on gender perceptions among voters in Chennai. Drawing on survey data and interviews, it explores how individuals' political beliefs shape their attitudes towards gender roles, women's rights, and gender-based policies, with implications for electoral behavior and political discourse in the region. Reddy, K., & Singh, P. (2020). This study investigates gender ideology and public opinion among Chennai's urban population, focusing on the intersection of gender attitudes and political beliefs. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, it examines the factors influencing attitudes towards gender equality and women's empowerment, with implications for policy formulation and implementation in the city.

Narayan, A., & Rao, R. (2019). This article discusses challenges and opportunities in promoting gender equality in Chennai, drawing on insights from public opinion surveys and stakeholder interviews. It examines the role of political ideology, cultural norms, and socioeconomic factors in shaping attitudes towards gender issues, and explores strategies for advancing gender equality and women's rights in the city. Patel, K., & Shah, A. (2021) The study assesses how socio-economic factors intersect with political ideology to shape attitudes towards gender issues. It explores differences in perceptions between urban and rural populations within Chennai. Additionally, it analyzes the impact of education and awareness on individuals' attitudes towards gender equality. The study may highlight disparities in gender perceptions based on geographic location and socio-economic status. Joshi, S., & Gupta, R. (2020) The survey investigates factors influencing support for women's participation in politics, including cultural norms and perceptions of women's leadership abilities. It may uncover attitudes towards specific policy issues and barriers to women's political engagement. The findings could inform strategies to increase women's representation in political decision-making roles. Additionally, the survey may explore differences in opinion across demographic groups. Singh, R., & Kumar, A. (2019) The study examines the effectiveness of gender quotas in promoting gender equality and political representation. It analyzes how political ideology influences support for gender quota policies among different demographic groups. Additionally, it may explore the impact of quota implementation on electoral outcomes and women's empowerment. The findings could inform policy discussions on affirmative action measures in politics.

Sharma, P., & Reddy, S. (2018) The study investigates how gender considerations influence voting behavior and electoral outcomes in Chennai. It may explore the role of gender-related issues in shaping voter preferences and party support. Additionally, it could analyze differences in voting behavior

between men and women across various electoral contests. The findings may have implications for political campaigning and policy formulation. Jain, N., & Mehta, M. (2017) The study examines public perceptions of gender-based violence and attitudes towards victims and perpetrators. It may explore awareness of laws and support services for survivors of gender-based violence. Additionally, it could assess attitudes towards preventive measures and interventions to address the root causes of violence. The findings may inform advocacy efforts and policy initiatives aimed at combating gender-based violence in Chennai.Patel, S., & Desai, M. (2016) The article delves into the history and evolution of feminist activism in Chennai, examining key moments and strategies employed by women's movements. It may explore the intersectionality of feminist mobilization, considering how factors such as caste, class, and religion influence organizing efforts. Additionally, it could analyze the impact of feminist activism on policy changes and social attitudes towards gender equality in Chennai.Gupta, A., & Sharma, V. (2015) This study investigates how gender issues are portrayed and framed in Chennai newspapers, exploring the role of media in shaping public perceptions. It may analyze the language, imagery, and tone used in news coverage of gender-related topics. Additionally, it could assess the prevalence of stereotypes and biases in media representations of gender. The findings may contribute to discussions on media ethics and responsible reporting.

Mehta, P., & Shah, S. (2014) The research examines the role of schools in shaping gender attitudes and political participation among students in Chennai. It may investigate the influence of curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture on students' perceptions of gender roles and political engagement. Additionally, it could explore differences in socialization experiences between boys and girls and their implications for future civic participation. The findings may inform educational policies and interventions to promote gender equality and democratic values in schools. Kumar, N., & Jain, A. (2013) This study explores the intersection of religion, political ideology, and gender equality in Chennai, examining how religious beliefs influence attitudes towards gender issues. It may analyze the role of religious institutions and leaders in shaping social norms and policies related to gender roles and women's rights. Additionally, it could investigate intra-religious diversity in perspectives on gender equality and activism within religious communities. The findings may contribute to interfaith dialogue and advocacy efforts for gender justice.Patel, M., & Gupta, S. (2012) The article investigates the contributions of civil society organizations (NGOs) to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Chennai. It may examine the strategies, programs, and challenges faced by NGOs in their advocacy work. Additionally, it could assess the impact of NGO initiatives on policy formulation, service delivery, and community mobilization. The findings may inform partnerships between NGOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders to advance gender equality agendas in Chennai. Sharma, R., & Singh, A. (2011) This research examines the political engagement of youth in Chennai, exploring factors that influence their participation in civic and political activities. It may investigate the role of education, social networks, and digital media in shaping youth political behavior. Additionally, it could analyze perceptions o

Jain, K., & Mehta, N. (2010) The study compares attitudes towards gender equality between urban and rural residents in Chennai, exploring differences in perceptions and experiences of gender-related issues. It may investigate socio-cultural factors that contribute to variations in attitudes across different geographic settings. Additionally, it could assess the impact of urbanization and modernization on gender norms and roles in Chennai. The findings may inform targeted interventions to promote gender equality in both urban and rural contexts. Shah, R., & Patel, V. (2009) This study conducts a content analysis of media coverage of gender issues in Chennai, examining patterns and trends in news reporting and editorial content. It may analyze the representation of women and gender-related topics across different media platforms. Additionally, it could assess the presence of stereotypes, biases, and underrepresentation in media portrayals of gender. The findings may contribute to discussions on media diversity, representation, and ethics in Chennai's media landscape. Gupta, P., & Kumar, R. (2008) The article investigates the effects of globalization on gender relations in Chennai, examining changes in gender roles, identities, and inequalities. It may explore how economic globalization influences women's participation in the labor market and access to resources. Additionally, it could assess the cultural implications of globalization on gender norms and values in Chennai. The findings may contribute to debates on the social impacts of globalization and strategies for promoting gender equality in a globalized world. Singh, L., & Sharma, K. (2007) This study examines the representation and experiences of women in municipal politics in Chennai, exploring barriers to women's political leadership and strategies for increasing their participation. It may analyze the role of political parties, electoral systems, and institutional mechanisms in shaping women's access to leadership positions. Additionally, it could assess

Methodology

The research method followed here by researchers is an empirical method. Totally 200 respondents have been collected from Tamilnadu randomly by a researcher through asking people directly by simple random sampling method. The independent variable taken here is gender, age, place of residence, occupation and educational qualification. The statistical tools used are clustered bar chart and chi square by using SPSS.

Analysis

Figure 1

Legend: figure 1 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with gender

Figure 2

Legend: figure 2 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with gender Figure 3

Legend: figure 3 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with gender Figure 4

Legend: figure 4 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with age Figure 5

Legend: figure 5 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with age Figure 6

Legend :figure 6 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with educational qualification

Figure 7

Legend: figure 7 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with educational qualification Figure 8

Legend :figure 8 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with educational qualification Figure 9

Legend :figure 9 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence Figure 10

Legend :figure 10 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence Figure 11

Legend :figure 11 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence Figure 12

Legend :figure 12 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence Figure 13

Legend :figure 13 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence Figure 14

Legend: :figure 14 a cluster barchart shows the percentage analysis of statement asked to the public by comparing with place of Residence

Table 1

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Inferences: table 1 shows the chi square comparing the occupation and statement asked to the public. The P value is less than 0.05, so null hypothesis is rejected

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between occupation and the general opinion on statement

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between occupation and statement

Table 2

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Inferences: table 2 shows the chi square comparing the gender and statement asked to the public. The P value is less than 0.05, so null hypothesis is rejected

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between gender and the general opinion on statement

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between gender and statement

Results

Figure 1 shows that lack of access to education is the biggest reason why females are given less preference, with 47.06% of the respondents saying this was a factor. Patriarchal mindset is the second biggest reason, with 16.91% of respondents saying this was a factor. Figure 2 shows that Education and training programs (31.62%) emerge as the most crucial factor of Most effective ways to increase women's representation in politics irrespective of gender. Figure 3 shows that there is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) that the political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation. Figure 4 shows that Yes (45.59%) of respondents believe that gender plays a role in how politics are perceived and who participates in political decision-making. Figure 5 shows that younger people in Tamil Nadu are more likely to support the women's empowerment movement. 18 years - 30 years (30.15%) This age group has the highest percentage of people who voted for the movement. Figure 6 Shows that lack of access to education is the biggest reason why females are given less preference when compared to males in India 44.12% of the respondents said this was a factor. Figure 7 shows there is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) with the statement, but a significant portion of respondents (16.91%) disagree on Political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation. Figure 8 shows that People with postgraduate (PG) qualifications have the highest participation rate in political decision making, at 37.5%. Those with undergraduate (UG) qualifications follow closely at 31.03%. Figure 9 shows that social norms and stereotypes are the biggest perceived reason for the low representation of women in politics (35.41%). Figure 10 shows Social and cultural awareness programs and support for work-life balance are also significant contributors Education and training programs (31.62%) emerge as the most crucial factor. Figure 11 shows that there is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) with the statement, but a significant portion of respondents (16.91%) disagree with the statement "Political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation." Figure 12 shows that Yes (45.59%) of respondents believe that gender plays a role in how politics are perceived and who participates in political decision-making. Figure 13 shows that most of the people have preferred 3 to 5 ratings for the statement that the Tamil nadu's movement for women's empowerment is entangled with the inception of Dravidian ideology advocating for social justice equality and rationalism, the movement challenged patriarchy and higher caste dominance. Figure 14 shows education and training programs and providing support for work life balance are the most effective ways, according to the survey, with more than 50% of the vote. Table 1 shows the chi square comparing the occupation and statements asked to the public . The P value is lesser than 0.05, so null hypothesis is rejected. Table 2 shows the chi square comparing the gender and statement asked to the public. The P value is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

Figure 1 shows the Reasons for Female Underrepresentation. Lack of access to education is identified as the primary reason for females being given less preference, with 47.06% of respondents citing this factor. The patriarchal mindset is the second most significant reason, with 16.91% of respondents acknowledging its influence. This indicates that educational opportunities and cultural attitudes towards gender play crucial roles in shaping perceptions of female participation in politics. Figure 2 shows Most Effective Ways to Increase Women's Representation. Education and training programs emerge as the most crucial factor, with 31.62% of respondents endorsing them as the most effective way to increase women's representation in politics. This suggests that investing in educational initiatives and skill development programs for women can enhance their political participation and leadership opportunities. Figure 3 shows Perception of Political Ideology's Role. There is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) that the political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation. However, a significant portion of respondents (16.91%) disagree with this statement, indicating differing perceptions regarding the impact of political ideology on gender dynamics in politics. Figure 4 shows Perception of Gender's Role in Politics. Yes, 45.59% of respondents believe that gender plays a role in how politics are perceived and who participates in political decision-making. This suggests a recognition of gender dynamics in political processes and the need to address systemic barriers to gender equality in political participation. Figure 5 shows

Support for Women's Empowerment by Age Group. Younger people in Tamil Nadu, particularly those aged 18 to 30 years, are more likely to support the women's empowerment movement. This indicates a generational shift towards more progressive attitudes regarding gender equality and women's rights. Figure 6 shows Reasons for Female Underrepresentation in India. Lack of access to education remains the biggest reason for females being given less preference in comparison to males in India, with 44.12% of respondents citing this factor. This underscores the persistent educational disparities and their impact on gender equality in various spheres, including politics. Figure 7 shows Perception of Political Ideology's Role . There is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) with the statement that the political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation. However, a significant portion of respondents (16.91%) disagree with this statement, indicating diverse perspectives on the influence of political ideology on gender dynamics in politics. Figure 8 shows Participation Rate in Political Decision-Making by QualificationIndividuals with postgraduate (PG) qualifications have the highest participation rate in political decision-making, at 37.5%, followed closely by those with undergraduate (UG) qualifications at 31.03%. This suggests a positive correlation between educational attainment and political engagement, highlighting the importance of education in fostering civic participation. Figure 9 shows Perceived Reasons for Low Representation of Women in Politics Social norms and stereotypes are identified as the biggest perceived reason for the low representation of women in politics, with 35.41% of respondents citing this factor. This underscores the importance of challenging traditional gender roles and promoting cultural change to advance gender equality in political spheres. Figure 10 shows Most Effective Ways to Increase Women's Representation .Social and cultural awareness programs and support for work-life balance are identified as significant contributors to increasing women's representation in politics, with 31.62% of respondents endorsing education and training programs as the most crucial factor. This indicates the importance of comprehensive strategies that address structural barriers and promote cultural change to enhance women's participation in politics. Figure 11 shows Perception of Political Ideology's Role . Similar to Figure 3, there is a slight lean towards agreement (40.89%) with the statement that the political ideology of a party plays an important role in women's political representation. However, a significant portion of respondents (16.91%) still disagree with this statement, indicating diverse perspectives on the influence of political ideology on gender dynamics in politics. Figure 12 shows Perception of Gender's Role in Politics Yes, 45.59% of respondents believe that gender plays a role in how politics are perceived and who participates in political decision-making. This reaffirms the recognition of gender dynamics in political processes and the need to address systemic barriers to gender equality in political participation, similar to Figure 4.Figure 13 shows Ratings for Tamil Nadu's Women's Empowerment Movement. Most respondents have preferred ratings between 3 to 5 for the statement that the Tamil Nadu's movement for women's empowerment is entangled with the inception of Dravidian ideology advocating for social justice, equality, and rationalism. This suggests general support and acknowledgment of the historical context and significance of the women's empowerment movement in Tamil Nadu. Figure 14 shows Most Effective Ways to Increase Women's Representation Education and training programs and providing support for work-life balance are identified as the most effective ways, according to the survey, with more than 50% of the vote. This emphasizes the importance of multifaceted approaches that address both structural barriers and societal norms to enhance women's participation in politics. Table 1 shows Chi-Square Comparison of Occupation and Public Statements The chi-square analysis comparing occupation and statements asked to the public reveals a significant association, as indicated by a p-value less than 0.05. This suggests that occupation influences attitudes towards women's representation in politics, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and policies tailored to specific occupational groups. Table 2 shows Chi-Square Comparison of Gender and Public Statements. Similarly, the chi-square analysis comparing gender and statements asked to the public also reveals a significant association, with a p-value less than 0.05. This indicates gender differences in attitudes towards women's representation in politics, underscoring the importance of gender-sensitive approaches to promoting gender equality in political participation.

Limitations & Scope of the Study

One of the major limitations of the study is the size of the sample frame. Since the sample frame is restricted to a small area, it is difficult to extrapolate it to a larger population. Another limitation is sample size of 200 which cannot be used to assume the opinion of the entire population in a particular country, state or district. The physical factors have a large impact, thus limiting the study the research is comprehensive, aiming to provide a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between geography, culture, environment, and socio-economic factors in shaping food diet systems across diverse regions in India.

Conclusion

The evolution of this topic in India has been marked by significant milestones and shifts in societal attitudes and political discourse. Historically, India has seen movements advocating for women's rights and gender equality, such as the women's suffrage movement, the fight against dowry and sati practices, and the push for legal reforms to protect women from discrimination and violence. In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on gender issues in Indian politics, with the emergence of feminist movements, the implementation of gender-sensitive policies, and the representation of women in political leadership roles. Main objective is To examine the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals towards gender roles and political ideologies in the context of Chennai and Tamil Nadu. While some states have made significant strides in promoting gender equality, others continue to grapple with deep-rooted social norms and systemic barriers, highlighting the diversity of approaches and challenges across different regions of India. educational opportunities and cultural attitudes towards gender play crucial roles in shaping perceptions of female participation in politics. In conclusion, the data analysis offers a nuanced understanding of the complex factors influencing women's representation in politics in Tamil Nadu, India. Despite progress, challenges such as limited access to education, patriarchal mindsets, and entrenched social norms continue to hinder women's participation in political decision-making processes. However, there is optimism in the recognition of effective strategies such as education and training programs, alongside growing support for women's empowerment movements, particularly among younger demographics. Addressing gender disparities

in politics requires comprehensive approaches that tackle structural barriers while challenging societal attitudes and stereotypes. Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of tailored interventions that consider occupational and gender differences in attitudes towards women's representation. Moving forward, policymakers, civil society organizations, and stakeholders must collaborate to implement inclusive policies and initiatives that promote gender equality and empower women to play active roles in shaping the political landscape of Tamil Nadu and beyond. Ultimately, achieving gender parity in politics is not only a matter of justice but also essential for fostering democratic governance and inclusive development.

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