



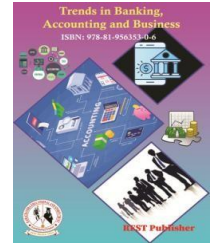
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# **The Effect of Media Coverage on the Public's Perception of Female Politicians in India**

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**Abstract:** *Public opinion and electoral outcomes in politics are greatly influenced by media coverage. Due to the substantial influence it has on the public view and electoral success of female political candidates, the portrayal of these individuals has become a hotly debated topic. This study examines how media coverage affects the public's opinion of female candidates, focusing on the difficulties they encounter and the opportunities that may present themselves. It will examine how the media frame issues, how social media is used, and how implicit prejudices affect how the public views female candidates. The goal of the study is to advance gender equality in political representation and more fair media coverage.*

**Keywords:** *media coverage, influence, female candidates*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The impact of media coverage on the public's image of female political candidates is examined in this study report. It recognizes the important role that the media plays in forming public opinion, disseminating information, and affecting election results. Given that media portrayal of women in politics can either help or hurt their career, it has attracted attention and spurred discussions. The three main topics of the study are how female politicians are portrayed in the media, the impact of social media, and how implicit biases and preconceptions are used to assess female candidates. The research intends to provide light on the difficulties experienced by women in politics by analyzing specific frames used in media coverage, comprehending the impact of social media, and examining the alignment with prevailing biases. In the end, the study hopes to promote democratic processes, foster gender equality, and advance fair media coverage.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

1. To ascertain the impact of media coverage on public perception of female political candidates.
2. To find out how public perceptions of female political candidates are impacted by media framing.
3. To look at any biases and stereotypes that the media's portrayal of female political candidates may be contributing to.

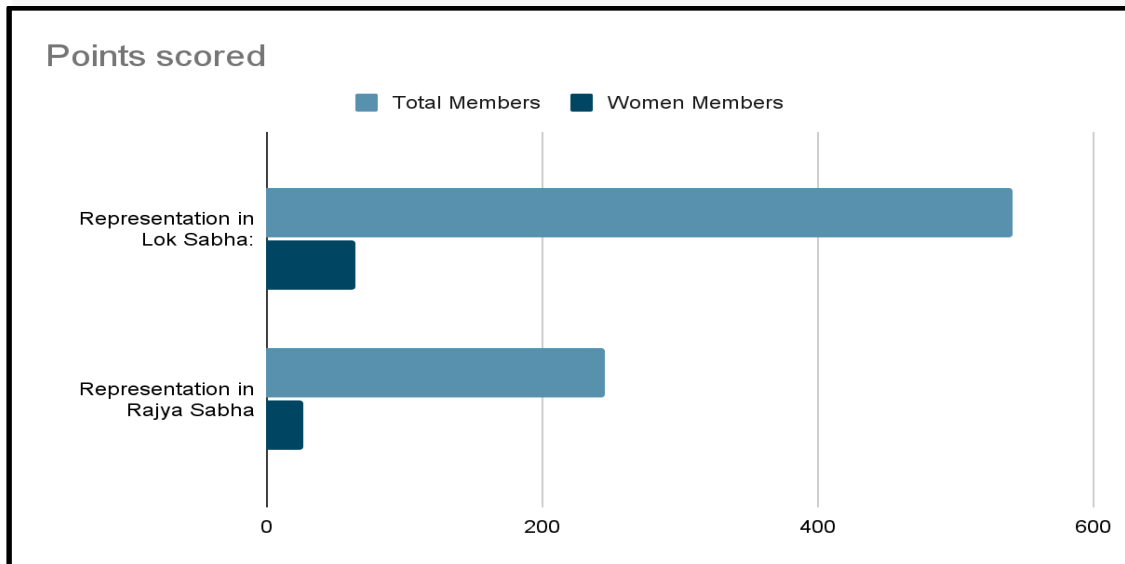
**Important conclusions about media coverage and the public's opinion of female politicians:** Stereotyping and Bias: The way that female politicians are perceived can be severely impacted by media coverage that reinforces gender preconceptions and biases. More than their male colleagues, they can come under scrutiny for their leadership qualities, personal lives, or attractiveness. Underrepresentation: In comparison to their male colleagues, female politicians are frequently underrepresented in media coverage. Due to their lack of visibility, female politicians may not be as well-known or understood by the general public, which may affect how they are perceived. Story framing: How the media presents information about female politicians can affect how the public perceives them. Positive framing that highlights their successes and stances on issues can improve their reputation, whilst negative framing can create a poor impression. Double Standards: Media coverage of female politicians may be biased against them or hold them to a different standard than that of male politicians. The public's impression of their ability and efficacy may be impacted by this uneven treatment. Role Models and Inspiration: Women and girls can look up to and be inspired by the positive and inspiring media portrayal of female politicians. Successful female politicians in the media can dispel myths and inspire more people to get involved in politics.

Representation of Women in Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha)

Data:

- Global Average: 20-25%

- India's Rank: 148 globally
- Representation in Lok Sabha:
- Total Members: 542
  - Women Members: 64
  - Percentage: 11.8%
- Representation in Rajya Sabha:
- Total Members: 245
  - Women Members: 27
  - Percentage: 11%



**FIGURE 1.**

In comparison to the global average, the percentage of women in the Indian parliament is much lower. India ranks 148 internationally in terms of the percentage of women in parliament and the executive branch. Women make up 11% (27 members) of the Rajya Sabha's 245 members and 11.8 percent (64 MPs) of the Lok Sabha's 542 members. Around the world, the average is between 20 and 25 percent. Smriti Irani, Sushma Swaraj, and Nirmala Sitharaman are three well-known female ministers in the Modi administration. The current administration has given some highly significant and noticeable portfolios to women who have regularly demonstrated their competence. Here is a list of some of the most prominent female politicians in the country. Things are improving in India as more members of the civil society are actively bringing attention to the gender imbalance in politics. At least during election seasons, media sources are covering women's representation more frequently. There needs to be more done because this is not consistent across all mediums. Although there is still work to be done, things have changed since Susan B. Anthony's comment from 1893 in terms of achieving impartial reporting and equal representation for women. At various levels, there are more women in journalism and politics. When harassment is not stopped, it escalates into threats, which, in turn, result in violence. And it is clear that when a threat is made against a single female politician, it doesn't stop there. Threats made against elected officials, particularly female lawmakers and government employees, are an attack on democracy and should be reported to law authorities. It should be the media's responsibility to report on how the government is handling the threats. Since the US Capitol was stormed on January 6, civil society should understand that by voting officials who either support or take part in actions that undermine us all, we are endangering our own freedoms. The threats made against women in politics and other issues must be addressed by civil society.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The media coverage of female politicians in India has a significant impact on the public's perception of them. The portrayal of women in politics is often influenced by gender stereotypes and biases, which can lead to negative perceptions and unfair treatment. However, positive media coverage can help to challenge these stereotypes and promote gender equality in politics. It is important for the media to provide fair and balanced coverage of female politicians, highlighting their achievements and capabilities rather than focusing on their appearance or personal lives. By doing so, the media can help to create a more inclusive and representative political system in India.

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