

## DOES GENDER MATTER WHEN IT COMES TO POLITICS OR ADMINISTRATION?

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### Abstract:

Politics has always been considered a male domain, controlled by the macho, muscled, evil looking man. However, India has seen a lot of changes since independence wherein women have also made their way into politics. Unassuming as they may be, they have held power, have been a force to reckon with, and are persons who cannot be set aside as dummies. Whatever the look of the person or the feel of that person, she has been a force that has made a change, and a remarkable one at that.

Key Words: Women, participation, politics, change

Women are in every field, name it and she is there. Text books carry plenty of information about the timidity, unassuming role, backwardness, etc. of women. However, it is very rare to find articles or chapters written on women who show bravery, especially, in the political arena. They have been harbingers of change in the world, country, state, locality and the home. They have been very successful in taking on roles that are multifaceted. Though they are the backbone of humankind, they haven't been given their due or even recognized enough for what they have done. It is only assumed that this is what they should be doing. What if they weren't home-makers or bread-earners, as they are in a number of families? One may not even be able to imagine

the kind of society we would have if women hadn't done what they are doing! There are those women who have taken on the mantle of the representative of their constituency and have done exceptionally well. This author wishes to acknowledge the role that women play in politics which is not much noticed.

Indira Gandhi came from a dynasty of politics. She got her mentoring in statesmanship by her father during his Prime Ministership. Her entry into mainstream politics was slow. Nevertheless, she took complete control over the entire party and commanded respect from the rank and file. She was criticized initially as "gungigudiya" because she was thought to be weak and submissive and was put forth as a candidate of the Syndicate who didn't want Morarji Desai to become Prime Minister of India after the death of Shastri. In her initial years as Prime Minister she appeared nervous and shaky. In 1969 she found it difficult to present the Union Budget and was too nervous to read out the speech. She was cornered by the opposition leaders and opponents in the party, while Ram Manohar Lohia gave her the nick name "gungigudiya".

Indira Gandhi wasn't someone who could be stamped off into oblivion. She bounced back with grit and force. She tested her leadership by going to the public and experimented with her capability and popularity among the masses. Her

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