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Gender Gap in Representation of Women: A comparative Study on the legislative performance of South Indian States

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Abstract

Women's political representation is an essential component of democratic governance and gender equality. Although India has made considerable progress in promoting women's participation in political institutions through constitutional provisions, electoral reforms and affirmative action policies, women continue to remain underrepresented in legislative bodies. The gender gap in political representation reflects not only the unequal presence of women in decision-making institutions but also the structural, socio-economic and political barriers that restrict their electoral participation and success.

This paper examines the gender gap in legislative representation through a comparative analysis of four South Indian states: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It focuses on women's electoral participation, contestation patterns, electoral success rates and their representation in State Legislative Assemblies and the Lok Sabha. The study adopts a comparative and descriptive research methodology based on secondary data obtained from the Election Commission of India, Census reports and other relevant official sources. The analysis considers the proportion of women candidates contesting elections, the number of women elected and the comparative electoral performance of male and female candidates. It also examines variations among the selected states to understand the regional dimensions of gender inequality in legislative representation. The study argues that the numerical presence of women in electoral politics does not necessarily translate into equitable political representation, as women's opportunities to contest and win elections continue to be influenced by institutional and socio-political constraints. The findings are expected to

contribute to the broader discourse on gender justice, political participation and inclusive democratic representation in India.

Keywords: Gender Gap, Women's Political Representation, Legislative Representation, Electoral Performance, Gender Equality, South Indian States, Political Participation.

1. Introduction

Democratic governance is founded on the principles of equality, participation, representation and accountability. The legitimacy and effectiveness of democratic institutions depend not merely on the conduct of periodic elections but also on the extent to which different sections of society are adequately represented in political decision-making processes. In this context, women's political representation constitutes an important dimension of democratic equality and gender justice. Despite women accounting for nearly half of India's population, their representation in legislative institutions has historically remained considerably lower than that of men. This disparity raises important questions about the inclusiveness of Indian democracy and the extent to which women enjoy equal opportunities to participate in electoral politics and occupy positions of political power.

Political representation is not simply a matter of numerical presence; it also concerns the inclusion of diverse social experiences, interests and perspectives in public decision-making. Hanna Pitkin (1967), in her influential work *The Concept of Representation*, distinguishes between formalistic, descriptive, symbolic and substantive dimensions of representation. Her framework provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding women's representation in legislative institutions. Descriptive representation, in particular, emphasises the extent to which elected representatives reflect the social characteristics of the population they represent. From this perspective, the underrepresentation of women in legislative bodies indicates a significant democratic deficit.

Similarly, Anne Phillips (1995), through her concept of the *Politics of Presence*, argues that the inclusion of historically marginalised groups in political institutions is essential for a representative democracy. She emphasises that the presence of women in decision-making institutions matters because political experiences and perspectives are often shaped by gendered social realities. Therefore, ensuring women's representation is not merely a question of individual political rights but also an institutional requirement for achieving inclusive governance.

In India, women's participation in the freedom struggle and the Constituent Assembly established an important foundation for their constitutional and political rights. The Constitution of India guarantees equality before the law under Article 14, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex under Article 15 and provides equality of opportunity under Article 16. Article 325 ensures that no individual is excluded from electoral rolls on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex, while Article 326 provides for universal adult suffrage. These constitutional guarantees establish the legal basis for women's equal participation in democratic processes. Nevertheless, constitutional equality has not automatically resulted in equality of political representation.

Historically, women's representation in the Indian Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies has remained relatively low. Several factors contribute to this persistent gender gap, including patriarchal social structures, unequal access to political resources, financial constraints, limited opportunities within political parties, gender stereotypes and the dominance of male-centred political networks. Political parties play a crucial role in determining electoral opportunities through candidate selection and ticket distribution. Consequently, even when women possess the necessary political aspirations and capabilities, their access to electoral competition may be restricted by institutional and social barriers.

An important development in addressing this inequality was the introduction of reservation for women in local self-government institutions through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992. These amendments provided for the reservation of not less than one-third of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies. Several states subsequently increased this reservation to 50 per cent. These measures created opportunities for women to enter grassroots democratic institutions and participate in political decision-making. However, the experience of local-level reservations has not resulted in an equivalent transformation in women's representation in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies.

The enactment of the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023, popularly known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, represents another significant milestone in India's efforts to enhance women's political representation. The amendment provides for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, including seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, its implementation is linked to the

completion of the first census conducted after the commencement of the amendment and the subsequent delimitation exercise. Thus, the question of women's effective representation in legislative institutions remains an important area of academic and policy debate.

The gender gap in legislative representation is particularly important when examined through a regional comparative perspective. South India offers a valuable context for such an investigation because the states in this region have experienced different patterns of social development, political mobilisation, educational advancement and electoral participation. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu provide an opportunity to examine whether variations in socio-economic development and political culture have contributed to differences in women's legislative representation.

Although these states have made considerable progress in several indicators of human development, the extent of women's representation in legislative institutions does not necessarily correspond with their achievements in education, health and social development. Kerala, for instance, has historically performed well in several social development indicators, while other states have experienced distinctive political and electoral trajectories. Therefore, a comparative examination of these four states can provide valuable insights into the relationship between social development, electoral participation and women's political representation.

The present study examines the gender gap in legislative representation by analysing women's electoral participation and performance in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It focuses on two important dimensions of electoral politics: the participation of women as candidates and their success in securing electoral victories. A comparison between male and female candidates is undertaken to identify differences in electoral opportunities and success rates. The study also examines the proportion of women elected to legislative institutions in relation to the total number of seats available.

Gender Gap in Electoral Performance

The following discussion, compare the performance men and women side by side. For each election, it shows the number of men and women who contested, were elected and were not elected, their respective success rates, and the gender gap, defined as men’s success rate minus women’s success rate. A positive gap means men were more successful; a negative gap means women were more successful.

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Gender Gap in the State Legislative Assembly Elections

Table:1. Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the State Legislative Assembly, Andhra Pradesh

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1999	Men	1947	266	1681	13.66	
	Women	157	28	129	17.83	-4.17
2004	Men	1735	268	1467	15.45	
	Women	161	26	135	16.15	-0.70
2009	Men	3355	260	3095	7.75	
	Women	300	34	266	11.33	-3.58
2014	Men	3591	267	3324	7.44	
	Women	317	27	290	8.52	-1.08
2019	Men	1906	157	1749	8.24	
	Women	211	18	193	8.53	-0.29
2024	Men	2154	153	2001	7.10	
	Women	231	22	209	9.52	-2.42

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

The table shows a consistent and notable result: in every Assembly election in Andhra Pradesh, women's success rate was higher than men's, so the gender gap was negative throughout, ranging from −0.29 percentage points in 2019 to −4.17 points in 1999. The difference is statistically significant when the six elections are pooled. Yet men outnumbered women among candidates by between nine and twelve to one in every election, and as a result men won between 153 and 268 seats while women won between 18 and 34. The problem in Andhra Pradesh is therefore clearly one of access to candidature rather than of success: women who obtained tickets did at least as well as men, but very few obtained them.

Table 2: Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the State Legislative Assembly, Karnataka

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Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1999	Men	1279	218	1061	17.04	
	Women	62	6	56	9.68	+7.37
2004	Men	1614	218	1396	13.51	
	Women	101	6	95	5.94	+7.57
2008	Men	2135	221	1914	10.35	
	Women	107	3	104	2.80	+7.55
2013	Men	2772	218	2554	7.86	
	Women	175	6	169	3.43	+4.44
2018	Men	2417	217	2200	8.98	
	Women	219	7	212	3.20	+5.78
2023	Men	2429	214	2215	8.81	
	Women	185	10	175	5.41	+3.40

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

Karnataka shows the opposite pattern. Men's success rate was higher than women's in every election, and the gap was large: between 7.37 and 7.57 percentage points from 1999 to 2008, narrowing to between 3.40 and 5.78 points in later elections. When the six elections are pooled, men's success rate (10.33 per cent) is more than twice women's (4.48 per cent), and the difference is highly significant ($\chi^2 = 29.73$, $p < 0.001$). In Karnataka, women face a double disadvantage: few of them contest, and those who do are much less likely than men to win, which suggests that they are disproportionately nominated in unwinnable seats.

Table 3: Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the State Legislative Assembly, Kerala

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	1146	127	1019	11.08	
	Women	55	13	42	23.64	-12.55
2001	Men	622	132	490	21.22	

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
	Women	54	8	46	14.81	+6.41
2006	Men	861	133	728	15.45	
	Women	70	7	63	10.00	+5.45
2011	Men	888	133	755	14.98	
	Women	83	7	76	8.43	+6.54
2016	Men	1093	132	961	12.08	
	Women	110	8	102	7.27	+4.80
2021	Men	851	129	722	15.16	
	Women	105	11	94	10.48	+4.68

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

In Kerala, women were more successful than men only in 1996, when the gap was −12.55 percentage points. In every subsequent election men's success rate exceeded women's by between 4.68 and 6.54 points. The narrowing of the gap in 2021 came with a modest recovery in women's success. Pooled across the period, men's success rate (14.39 per cent) exceeded women's (11.32 per cent), although the difference falls just short of statistical significance ($p = 0.075$).

Table 4. Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the State Legislative Assembly, Tamil Nadu

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	1012	225	787	22.23	
	Women	156	9	147	5.77	+16.46
2001	Men	1748	209	1539	11.96	
	Women	112	25	87	22.32	-10.36
2006	Men	2340	212	2128	9.06	
	Women	156	22	134	14.10	-5.04
2011	Men	2605	217	2388	8.33	

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Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
	Women	143	17	126	11.89	-3.56
2016	Men	3406	213	3193	6.25	
	Women	320	21	299	6.56	-0.31
2021	Men	3538	222	3316	6.27	
	Women	413	12	401	2.91	+3.37

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

Tamil Nadu's gender gap changed direction during the period. In 1996, men's success rate exceeded women's by 16.46 points. From 2001 to 2016, women's success rate was higher than men's, with the gap ranging from −10.36 points in 2001 to −0.31 points in 2016. In 2021 the gap turned positive again, at +3.37 points, as women's success rate fell to its lowest level. Pooled across six elections, the success rates of men (8.86 per cent) and women (8.15 per cent) were close and the difference was not significant.

Gender Gap in the Lok Sabha Elections

Table 5 Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the Lok Sabha, Andhra Pradesh

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	1372	39	1333	2.84	
	Women	90	3	87	3.33	-0.49
1998	Men	372	40	332	10.75	
	Women	18	2	16	11.11	-0.36
1999	Men	267	38	229	14.23	
	Women	18	4	14	22.22	-7.99
2004	Men	258	39	219	15.12	
	Women	21	3	18	14.29	+0.83
2009	Men	530	37	493	6.98	
	Women	39	5	34	12.82	-5.84

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
2014	Men	555	39	516	7.03	
	Women	43	3	40	6.98	+0.05
2019	Men	292	21	271	7.19	
	Women	27	4	23	14.81	-7.62
2024	Men	416	22	394	5.29	
	Women	38	3	35	7.89	-2.61

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

In Andhra Pradesh's Lok Sabha elections, women's success rate equalled or exceeded men's in six of the eight elections. The largest negative gaps were recorded in 1999 (−7.99 points), 2009 (−5.84 points) and 2019 (−7.62 points). Men were slightly more successful only in 2004 and 2014. The pooled difference is not statistically significant.

Table 6 Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the Lok Sabha, Karnataka

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	907	28	879	3.09	
	Women	71	0	71	0.00	+3.09
1998	Men	190	28	162	14.74	
	Women	10	0	10	0.00	+14.74
1999	Men	119	26	93	21.85	
	Women	11	2	9	18.18	+3.67
2004	Men	162	26	136	16.05	
	Women	10	2	8	20.00	-3.95
2009	Men	408	27	381	6.62	
	Women	19	1	18	5.26	+1.35
2014	Men	413	27	386	6.54	
	Women	20	1	19	5.00	+1.54
2019	Men	451	26	425	5.76	

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
	Women	27	2	25	7.41	-1.64
2024	Men	432	25	407	5.79	
	Women	42	3	39	7.14	-1.36

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

In Karnataka men's success rate exceeded women's in five of the eight Lok Sabha elections, most sharply in 1998 (+14.74 points), when no woman won. In 2004, 2019 and 2024 women's success rate was slightly higher. The pooled difference is not significant.

Table 7: Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the Lok Sabha, Kerala

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	222	20	202	9.01	
	Women	10	0	10	0.00	+9.01
1998	Men	110	19	91	17.27	
	Women	10	1	9	10.00	+7.27
1999	Men	129	19	110	14.73	
	Women	13	1	12	7.69	+7.04
2004	Men	162	18	144	11.11	
	Women	15	2	13	13.33	-2.22
2009	Men	202	20	182	9.90	
	Women	15	0	15	0.00	+9.90
2014	Men	242	19	223	7.85	
	Women	27	1	26	3.70	+4.15
2019	Men	202	19	183	9.41	
	Women	24	1	23	4.17	+5.24
2024	Men	169	20	149	11.83	

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Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
	Women	25	0	25	0.00	+11.83

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).Kerala's Lok Sabha gap is positive in seven of the eight elections, reaching its largest value of +11.83 points in 2024, when all 25 women candidates lost. Women's success rate exceeded men's only in 2004. Pooled across the period, men were more than twice as likely as women to win (10.71 against 4.32 per cent), and the difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 5.00$, $p = 0.025$).

Table 8: Electoral Performance and Gender Gap of Men and Women Candidates in the Lok Sabha, Tamil Nadu

Election year	Gender	Contested	Elected	Not elected	Success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
1996	Men	734	39	695	5.31	
	Women	15	0	15	0.00	+5.31
1998	Men	283	38	245	13.43	
	Women	13	1	12	7.69	+5.74
1999	Men	345	38	307	11.01	
	Women	17	1	16	5.88	+5.13
2004	Men	548	35	513	6.39	
	Women	23	4	19	17.39	-11.00
2009	Men	775	38	737	4.90	
	Women	48	1	47	2.08	+2.82
2014	Men	789	35	754	4.44	
	Women	55	4	51	7.27	-2.84
2019	Men	782	36	746	4.60	
	Women	67	3	64	4.48	+0.13
2024	Men	873	34	839	3.89	
	Women	77	5	72	6.49	-2.60

Source: As for the preceding table. Men elected = Total seats − Women elected. Gender gap = Men's success rate − Women's success rate (positive values favour men).

In Tamil Nadu, men were more successful than women in the early elections, from 1996 to 1999, and in 2009. In 2004, 2014 and 2024, women's success rate was higher, and in 2019 the two were nearly equal. Pooled across the period, the success rates were almost identical (5.71 per cent for men and 6.03 per cent for women).

Comparative Master Tables

Table 9: Comparison of Representation, Success Rate and Gender Gap by Election in the State Legislative Assembly

State	Election year	Women's representation (%)	Women's success rate (%)	Men's success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
Andhra Pradesh	1999	9.52	17.83	13.66	-4.17
	2004	8.84	16.15	15.45	-0.70
	2009	11.56	11.33	7.75	-3.58
	2014	9.18	8.52	7.44	-1.08
	2019	10.29	8.53	8.24	-0.29
	2024	12.57	9.52	7.10	-2.42
Karnataka	1999	2.68	9.68	17.04	+7.37
	2004	2.68	5.94	13.51	+7.57
	2008	1.34	2.80	10.35	+7.55
	2013	2.68	3.43	7.86	+4.44
	2018	3.12	3.20	8.98	+5.78
	2023	4.46	5.41	8.81	+3.40
Kerala	1996	9.29	23.64	11.08	-12.55
	2001	5.71	14.81	21.22	+6.41
	2006	5.00	10.00	15.45	+5.45
	2011	5.00	8.43	14.98	+6.54
	2016	5.71	7.27	12.08	+4.80
	2021	7.86	10.48	15.16	+4.68

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State	Election year	Women's representation (%)	Women's success rate (%)	Men's success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
Tamil Nadu	1996	3.85	5.77	22.23	+16.46
	2001	10.68	22.32	11.96	-10.36
	2006	9.40	14.10	9.06	-5.04
	2011	7.26	11.89	8.33	-3.56
	2016	8.97	6.56	6.25	-0.31
	2021	5.13	2.91	6.27	+3.37

Source: Computed from the state tables in this chapter.

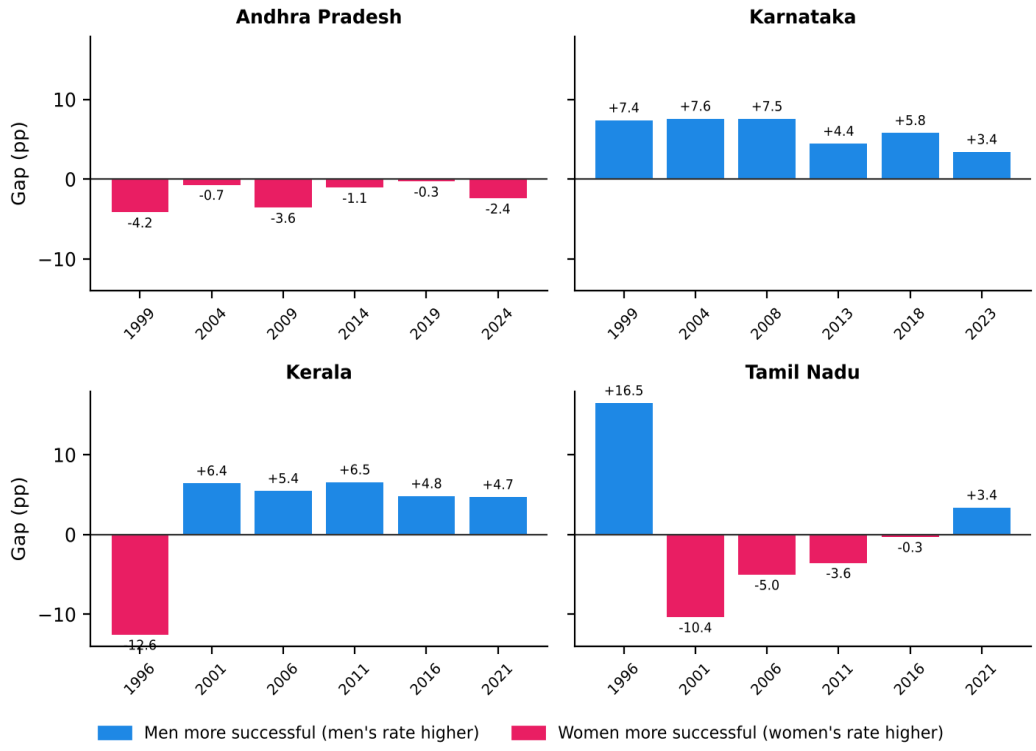


Figure Gender Gap in Success Rate by Election in the State Legislative Assembly
Source: Computed from Tables in this chapter.

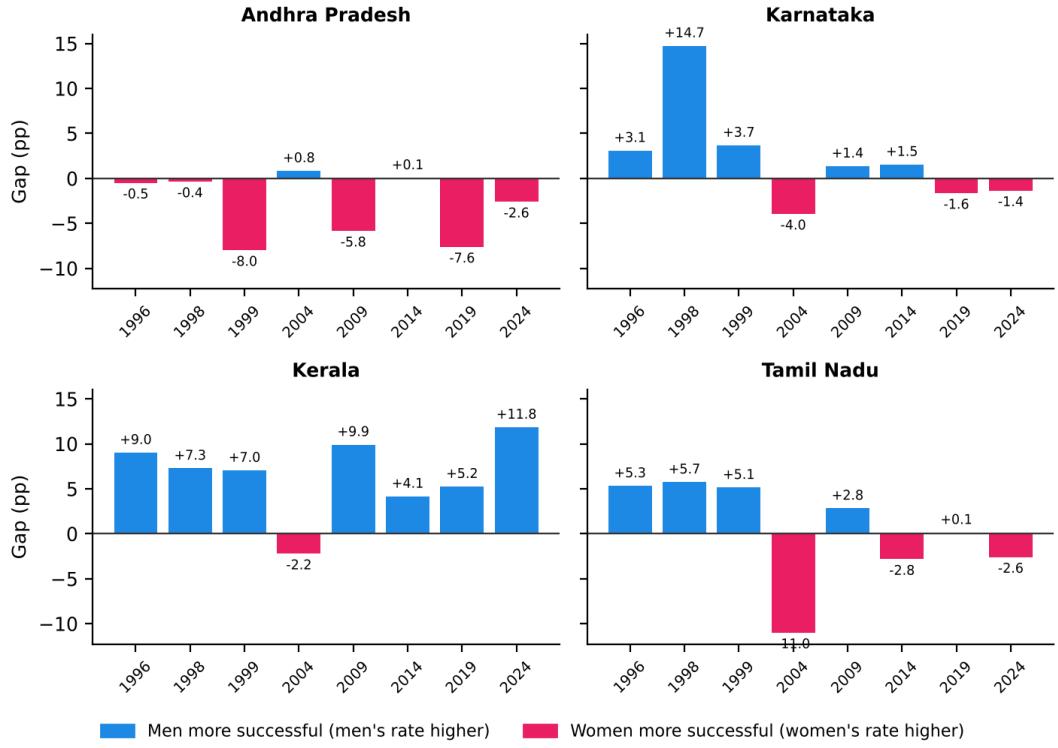
Table 10: Comparison of Representation, Success Rate and Gender Gap by Election in the Lok Sabha

State	Election year	Women's representation (%)	Women's success rate (%)	Men's success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
Andhra Pradesh	1996	7.14	3.33	2.84	-0.49
	1998	4.76	11.11	10.75	-0.36
	1999	9.52	22.22	14.23	-7.99
	2004	7.14	14.29	15.12	+0.83
	2009	11.90	12.82	6.98	-5.84
	2014	7.14	6.98	7.03	+0.05
	2019	16.00	14.81	7.19	-7.62
	2024	12.00	7.89	5.29	-2.61
Karnataka	1996	0.00	0.00	3.09	+3.09
	1998	0.00	0.00	14.74	+14.74
	1999	7.14	18.18	21.85	+3.67
	2004	7.14	20.00	16.05	-3.95
	2009	3.57	5.26	6.62	+1.35
	2014	3.57	5.00	6.54	+1.54
	2019	7.14	7.41	5.76	-1.64
	2024	10.71	7.14	5.79	-1.36
Kerala	1996	0.00	0.00	9.01	+9.01
	1998	5.00	10.00	17.27	+7.27
	1999	5.00	7.69	14.73	+7.04
	2004	10.00	13.33	11.11	-2.22
	2009	0.00	0.00	9.90	+9.90
	2014	5.00	3.70	7.85	+4.15
	2019	5.00	4.17	9.41	+5.24
	2024	0.00	0.00	11.83	+11.83

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State	Election year	Women's representation (%)	Women's success rate (%)	Men's success rate (%)	Gender gap (pp)
Tamil Nadu	1996	0.00	0.00	5.31	+5.31
	1998	2.56	7.69	13.43	+5.74
	1999	2.56	5.88	11.01	+5.13
	2004	10.26	17.39	6.39	-11.00
	2009	2.56	2.08	4.90	+2.82
	2014	10.26	7.27	4.44	-2.84
	2019	7.69	4.48	4.60	+0.13
	2024	12.82	6.49	3.89	-2.60

Source: Computed from the state tables in this chapter.



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Figure Gender Gap in Success Rate by Election in the Lok Sabha
Source: Computed from Tables in this chapter.

Table 11: Pooled Gender Gap and Chi-Square Test by State and Level

State	Level	Women contested	Women elected	Women SR (%)	Men contested	Men elected	Men SR (%)	Gap (pp)	χ^2	P
Andhra Pradesh	Assembly	1377	155	11.26	14688	1371	9.33	-1.92	5.19	0.023
Andhra Pradesh	Lok Sabha	294	27	9.18	4062	275	6.77	-2.41	2.12	0.146
Karnataka	Assembly	849	38	4.48	12646	1306	10.33	+5.85	29.73	<0.001
Karnataka	Lok Sabha	210	11	5.24	3082	213	6.91	+1.67	0.62	0.430
Kerala	Assembly	477	54	11.32	5461	786	14.39	+3.07	3.16	0.075
Kerala	Lok Sabha	139	6	4.32	1438	154	10.71	+6.39	5.00	0.025
Tamil Nadu	Assembly	1300	106	8.15	14649	1298	8.86	+0.71	0.66	0.417
Tamil Nadu	Lok Sabha	315	19	6.03	5129	293	5.71	-0.32	0.01	0.911

Note: SR = success rate; Gap = men's SR − women's SR; χ^2 with 1 degree of freedom. 2 × 2 Pearson chi-square test (gender × elected/not elected) with Yates' continuity correction, pooled across all elections for each state and level. All expected cell frequencies exceed 5. Because candidates in the same election are not fully independent, the test is used only as a supporting indicator; the observed rates and percentage-point gaps are the principal findings. From the above Tables and Figures gender comparison together can be understood. The four

states fall into two groups. In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, women candidates have generally been as successful as men or more so; in Andhra Pradesh's Assembly elections they have been significantly more successful. In Karnataka and Kerala, men have generally been more successful, significantly so in the Karnataka Assembly and the Kerala Lok Sabha. Over time, the gap has narrowed in the Karnataka Assembly, while in the Kerala Lok Sabha it has widened.

The most important finding, however, is common to all four states. Whatever the success rates, the absolute gap between men and women is overwhelmingly a gap in candidature. In the latest Assembly elections, men outnumbered women among candidates by about nine to one in Andhra Pradesh, thirteen to one in Karnataka, eight to one in Kerala and nine to one in Tamil Nadu. Even where women won at higher rates than men, the small number of women contesting meant that men took the great majority of seats. The gender gap in representation is thus produced mainly at the stage of nomination, where political parties decide who will contest and in which constituency.

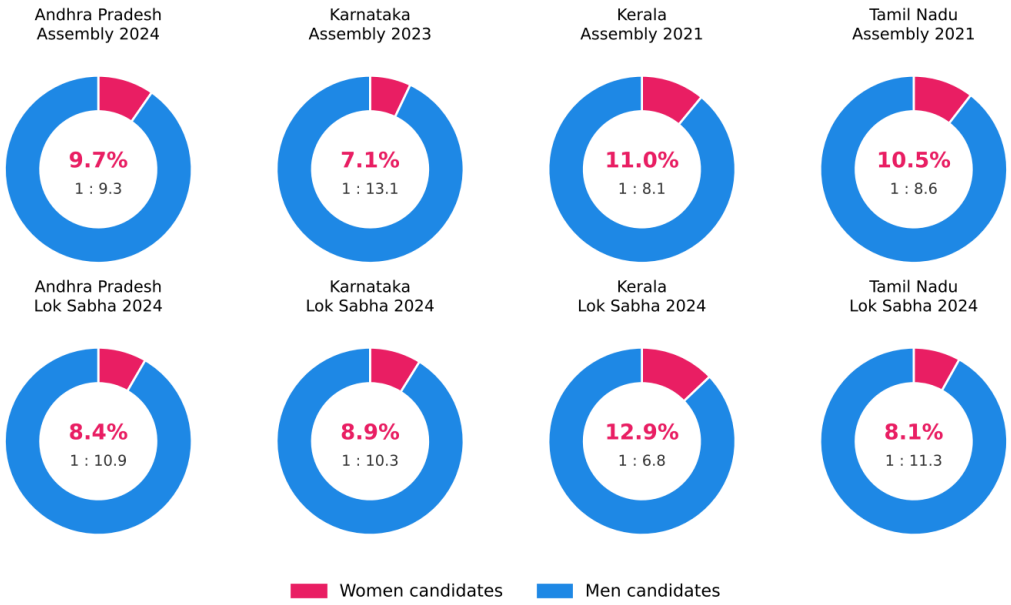


Figure Share of Women among All Candidates in the Latest Election, State Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha

Figure makes this point directly. In each doughnut the pink segment shows women's share of all candidates, and the ratio beneath it shows how many men contested for every woman.

Women formed between 7.1 and 12.9 per cent of candidates, and there were between 6.8 and 13.1 men for every woman. Figures 4.7 and 4.8, the diverging bar charts, show the other side of the comparison: pink bars below the line mark elections in which women were more successful than men, and blue bars above it mark elections in which men were more successful. Pink bars dominate for Andhra Pradesh at both levels and for the Tamil Nadu Assembly between 2001 and 2016, while blue bars dominate for Karnataka and Kerala.

Support from earlier studies. The finding that women in several states win as often as men, or more often, matches the evidence of Duflo and Topalova (2004), who found that women leaders in Indian villages performed at least as well as men, and of Beaman and colleagues (2009), who found that voters' bias against women leaders declines with exposure. Where women are less successful, as in Karnataka and Kerala, the explanation offered by Rai and Spary (2019) and by Praveen Rai (2011), that women are disproportionately given unpromising seats and lack party and financial support, fits the pattern better than voter rejection.

Conclusion:

The above analysis stresses the need of immediate affirmative action on the part of the government to make women visible in the legislatures. This study stresses the need of implementation of Women' Reservations immediately. The legislatures with more gender gap indicate the inadequate representation and political exclusion of women in South Indian Legislative Assemblies and Parliamentary Elections.

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