As the world grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been observed that most countries that have been successful in containing the effects of the pandemic have had strong female leaders in powerful political positions. The effect of this is evident from the fact that Germany, New Zealand, and Australia, among other countries, have been among the leaders in successfully containing the spread of the virus. In fact, a study has shown that countries with strong female leaders have lower death rates compared to their counterparts without strong female leaders. This is because women leaders are more likely to adopt a compassionate and empathetic approach to handling the pandemic, which has been effective in containing its spread.

The success of women leaders in the fight against the pandemic has also been linked to the fact that women tend to be more empathetic and compassionate than men. This has been evident in the way female leaders have addressed the pandemic, with strong women leaders like Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand and Angela Merkel in Germany taking a proactive approach to the pandemic. This has led to the development of effective strategies to combat the virus, which has contributed to the success of women leaders in containing the spread of the pandemic.

While the direct link between women leadership and dealing with the pandemic may be difficult to digest for some, female leadership in politics reflects a society where women hold positions of power in other sectors as well. This is evident in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020, which shows that countries that ranked top in terms of gender equality also had more women in corporate leadership positions. This is because women leaders are more likely to adopt a compassionate and empathetic approach to handling the pandemic, which has been effective in containing its spread.

As the world lauds the ability of women-led countries in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, India is worryingly behind in women’s participation in the political sphere. As indicated earlier, the presence of women in positions of political power has been directly correlated with the performance of countries in terms of gender equality. This is true in the case of India, where advancement of gender equality is measured in terms of achievement of SDG 5, the gender equality target. The data from the Public Affairs Index 2019 shows that women’s participation in politics is dismal, with no state crossing 15% of women MLAs in the Legislative Assembly. The state with the most women MLAs in West Bengal at 14%, while states like Mizoram and Nagaland have no women MLAs.

The statistics pose a telling sign that more women participation in politics is not only crucial in terms of overall governance but can have a strong impact on achieving gender equality in other sectors as well. In Karnataka, continuing the trend of low women leadership in politics, the legislative council will see only two women members, a mere 2.6% of the total 75 members present. This is a fall from the previous 4 women members, all of whom were nominated by the local body. The lack of women in positions of power poses a serious challenge to the ability of women to participate in equitable development. The lack of women in powerful positions of leadership in the legislative council is an additional challenge to achieving gender equality in India.

The lack of women in such positions has a cascading effect of factors such as the participation of women in the labour force, crimes against women and a focus on women-centric schemes and programmes. This is evident in the case of India, where the lack of women leadership in politics is reflected in the lack of women in decisions that affect gender equality. The Madras High Court recently ruled that the lack of women in positions of leadership in the legislative council is a violation of the Constitution’s right to equality and the need for women-centric schemes and programmes.

In conclusion, the absence of women leadership in politics is a serious challenge to the ability of women to participate in equitable development. The lack of women in powerful positions of leadership in the legislative council is an additional challenge to achieving gender equality in India. The lack of women in such positions has a cascading effect of factors such as the participation of women in the labour force, crimes against women and a focus on women-centric schemes and programmes. This is evident in the case of India, where the lack of women leadership in politics is reflected in the lack of women in decisions that affect gender equality. The Madras High Court recently ruled that the lack of women in positions of leadership in the legislative council is a violation of the Constitution’s right to equality and the need for women-centric schemes and programmes.

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