



Exploring the Influence of Gender in Political Campaigns: A Comparative Study from Community Service Perspective

Ourapalli Pranathi ^{1,*}, M. Kamraju²

¹ Faculty in Political Science, Central University of Andhra Pradesh, India

² Ministry of Education, New Delhi, India

*Correspondence: E-mail: ourapallipranathi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This comparative study explores the influence of gender in political campaigns, analyzing the impact of gender on candidate image, campaign strategies, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and the examination of multiple case studies, this research sheds light on the challenges and opportunities faced by male and female candidates and the broader implications for gender equality in politics. The findings highlight the significance of gendered campaign strategies, candidate image and perception, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes. This study contributes to the understanding of gender dynamics in political campaigns and provides valuable insights for promoting greater gender inclusivity in politics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Women's underrepresentation in politics is a persistent global issue that hinders the achievement of gender equality and effective democratic governance (Bayeh, 2016). Despite progress made in recent years, women continue to be significantly outnumbered in political leadership positions worldwide (Melki & Mallat, 2016). This gender disparity has raised concerns about the democratic legitimacy of decision-making processes and the representation of diverse perspectives (Kittilson, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to study the influence of gender in political campaigns to understand the challenges faced by women and identify strategies to promote equal participation. Studying gender in political campaigns is essential for several reasons. First, political campaigns serve as critical platforms for candidates to communicate their ideas, mobilize supporters, and compete for electoral success (Yarchi & Samuel, 2018). The strategies and messages employed in these campaigns can significantly impact candidate perceptions and voter behavior (Shaturaev, 2023). Second, political campaigns are arenas where gender stereotypes, biases, and double standards often become pronounced, affecting the treatment and evaluation of male and female candidates (Kahn & Goldenberg, 2019). Understanding the dynamics of gender in political campaigns can shed light on the barriers faced by women and inform efforts to overcome them.

The research objective of this study is to explore the influence of gender in political campaigns through a comparative analysis. By examining multiple case studies and comparing different contexts, this study seeks to identify the gendered aspects of campaign strategies, candidate image and perception, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study aims to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by both male and female candidates and their implications for gender equality in politics. To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods approach will be employed. Firstly, an extensive literature review will be conducted to examine the existing theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and key findings on gender in political campaigns. Secondly, multiple case studies from diverse regions will be selected and analyzed, utilizing qualitative methods such as interviews, content analysis, and media framing analysis. The comparative research design will allow for a deeper understanding of the contextual factors and variations in the influence of gender across different political campaigns.

Studying gender in political campaigns is vital for addressing the underrepresentation of women in politics and promoting gender equality. This research aims to contribute to the existing literature by providing a comparative analysis of the influence of gender on various aspects of political campaigns. By understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by male and female candidates, policymakers, political strategists, and advocates can work toward creating more inclusive and equitable political systems.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Frameworks on Gender and Politics

Numerous theoretical frameworks have been developed to understand the relationship between gender and politics. Intersectionality theory, proposed by Viruell *et al.*, (2012), emphasizes the interconnected nature of gender with other social identities, such as race, class, and ethnicity, and highlights how multiple forms of discrimination and privilege intersect in shaping political experiences. Social role theory posits that gender roles and societal expectations influence individuals' political behaviour and engagement (Francis *et al.*, 2023). The concept of descriptive representation argues that the presence of women in political positions enhances democratic legitimacy and promotes policies that address gender-specific concerns (Mulyahati & Rasiban, 2021).

2.2. Previous Studies on Gender in Political Campaigns

Scholars have conducted extensive research on gender in political campaigns, focusing on candidate image, campaign strategies, media coverage, and voter behavior. [Shaturaev \(2023\)](#) found that women often face stereotypes related to their competence and qualifications, which affect their campaign evaluations. Studies by [McGregor et al., \(2017\)](#) have examined the differences in campaign strategies employed by male and female candidates, highlighting the challenges women face in presenting their femininity while being perceived as competent political leaders. Other studies have investigated the influence of gender in media coverage, demonstrating biases and stereotypes that affect the portrayal of male and female candidates ([Bauer et al., 2012](#); [Aaldering & Van Der Pas, 2020](#)). Research on voter behavior has explored the role of gender in shaping candidate preferences, issue salience, and voting patterns ([Kahn & Goldenberg, 2019](#); [Sanbonmatsu, 2006](#)).

2.3. Key Findings and Gaps in the Literature

The literature on gender in political campaigns has yielded significant findings. Studies have consistently shown that women face unique challenges related to candidate evaluations, stereotypes, and media portrayals. Female candidates often encounter barriers in fundraising and networking, leading to lower levels of campaign resources compared to male candidates ([Shaturaev, 2023](#)). Despite these challenges, research has also identified strategic advantages for women, such as their ability to mobilize women voters and appeal to issues related to social welfare ([Kahn & Goldenberg, 2019](#)).

However, there are notable gaps in the literature. Firstly, there is a need for more comparative studies that analyze gender in political campaigns across different countries and contexts. Many existing studies primarily focus on the United States, limiting the generalizability of findings to diverse political systems. Secondly, more research is needed on the intersectionality of gender with other identities, such as race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, in political campaigns. Understanding the experiences and challenges faced by women with diverse identities is crucial for developing inclusive strategies. Lastly, further exploration is needed on the long-term effects of gender in political campaigns, including the impact on women's political careers and the broader implications for gender equality in political systems. Addressing these gaps in the literature will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of gender in political campaigns, informing strategies and interventions to promote greater gender equality and representation in politics.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Comparative Research Design

This study adopts a comparative research design to examine the influence of gender in political campaigns across different contexts. By comparing multiple case studies, this design allows for a deeper understanding of the variations and similarities in the impact of gender on campaign strategies, candidate image, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes. Comparative analysis enhances the robustness of the findings and provides insights into the broader implications for gender equality in politics.

3.2. Comparative Research Design

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, a purposive sampling technique has been employed to select diverse case studies from different regions. The selection of case studies will consider

factors such as the political system, cultural context, electoral dynamics, and representation of women in politics. By including both developed and developing countries, this study aims to capture a wide range of experiences and challenges faced by male and female candidates in political campaigns.

3.3. Design Collection Methods

To gather data for this study, a combination of qualitative methods has been utilized. Interviews with political candidates, campaign strategists, and political experts will provide valuable insights into the gendered campaign strategies employed and the challenges faced by candidates. Surveys may be conducted to examine voter behavior and preferences, capturing data on candidate evaluations and gender biases. Additionally, content analysis of media coverage and campaign materials will be conducted to analyse the portrayal of male and female candidates and identify gendered messaging and stereotypes.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations will be given due importance throughout the research process. Informed consent will be obtained from participants before interviews or surveys, ensuring their voluntary participation. Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained in reporting and analyzing the data to protect the privacy of participants. The research will adhere to ethical guidelines and regulations regarding research with human subjects. Any potential conflicts of interest will be disclosed and managed appropriately.

By employing a comparative research design, selecting diverse case studies, utilizing multiple data collection methods, and upholding ethical considerations, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of the influence of gender in political campaigns. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by male and female candidates and inform strategies to promote gender equality in politics. This study adopts a comparative research design to examine the influence of gender in political campaigns across different contexts. By comparing multiple case studies, this design allows for a deeper understanding of the variations and similarities in the impact of gender on campaign strategies, candidate image, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes. Comparative analysis enhances the robustness of the findings and provides insights into the broader implications for gender equality in politics.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Gendered Campaign Strategies

Analysis of Campaign Strategies Employed by Male and Female Candidates: This study will analyze the campaign strategies employed by male and female candidates in political campaigns. It will examine the differences in approach, emphasis, and tactics utilized by candidates of different genders. The analysis will focus on various aspects of campaigns, including messaging, issue prioritization, target audiences, campaign events, and media engagement. By comparing and contrasting the strategies of male and female candidates, this study aims to identify gendered patterns and shed light on the challenges and opportunities faced by each group.

(i) **Gendered Messaging and Communication Styles:** One important aspect of campaign strategies is messaging and communication styles. This study will examine how male and female candidates tailor their messages to appeal to different voter demographics. It will explore whether there are distinct communication styles associated with genders, such as assertiveness, empathy, or collaborative approaches. Additionally, the study will

investigate how gender shapes the framing and rhetoric used in campaign speeches, advertisements, and social media engagement. Understanding these gendered messaging and communication styles is crucial for comprehending the impact on candidate perception and voter response.

- (ii) **Role of Gender Stereotypes in Shaping Campaign Strategies:** Gender stereotypes play a significant role in shaping campaign strategies employed by male and female candidates. This study will examine how gender stereotypes, such as perceptions of competence, leadership qualities, and issue expertise, influence candidate positioning and strategic choices. It will investigate whether male and female candidates strategically conform to or challenge these stereotypes in their campaigns. Furthermore, the study will explore the extent to which gender stereotypes impact candidate evaluations and voter preferences, ultimately shaping campaign strategies.

A thorough analysis of campaign strategies, messaging, communication styles, and the role of gender stereotypes, this study aims to uncover the gendered dynamics in political campaigns. It will provide insights into the challenges faced by male and female candidates in designing effective campaign strategies and navigating societal expectations. Understanding these gendered campaign strategies will contribute to the broader goal of promoting gender equality in political processes and leadership.

4.2. Candidate Image and Perception

Several factors are considered:

- (i) **Impact of Gender on Candidate Likability and Trustworthiness:** Research has consistently shown that gender influences the likability and trustworthiness of political candidates. [Bligh et al. \(2012\)](#) argue that societal gender norms and stereotypes shape perceptions of competence and likability, with women often facing higher standards and scrutiny compared to men. Studies have found that female candidates are often perceived as less likable, which can negatively impact their electoral success ([Bauer et al., 2012](#)). Furthermore, gender biases can lead to perceptions of lower trustworthiness for women, as they are sometimes seen as less authentic or experienced in political roles ([Aaldering & Van Der Pas, 2020](#)). These biases affect how voters evaluate and support male and female candidates differently.
- (ii) **Media Portrayal and Framing of Male and Female Candidates:** The media plays a crucial role in shaping the public perception of political candidates, and gender biases can manifest in media portrayals. Research has found that male candidates receive more media coverage overall, with female candidates often receiving less attention and being subject to different types of coverage ([Bauer et al., 2012](#)). Gender stereotypes can influence how the media frames male and female candidates, with women more likely to be portrayed concerning their appearance, family, or personal life rather than their policy positions or qualifications ([Aaldering & Van Der Pas, 2020](#)). These gendered portrayals can reinforce stereotypes and influence public perceptions of candidates.
- (iii) **Double Standards and Gender Bias in Candidate Evaluation:** Double standards and gender bias exist in the evaluation of political candidates. Studies have revealed that women face higher expectations and stricter scrutiny compared to men, requiring them to demonstrate higher levels of competence and qualification ([Kahn & Goldenberg, 2019](#)). [Sanbonmatsu \(2006\)](#) found evidence of a "double bind" for female candidates, where they are penalized for behaviors that are not seen as problematic for male candidates, such as assertiveness or ambition. Gender bias can affect voter evaluations, with women often

needing to prove their suitability for political leadership in ways that male candidates do not.

These factors highlight the gendered dynamics that impact candidate image and perception in political campaigns. The likability and trustworthiness of candidates, media portrayals and framing, and the presence of double standards and gender bias all influence how male and female candidates are evaluated by voters and the wider public. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing gender disparities in political representation and promoting fair and equitable evaluations of candidates.

4.3. Voter Behavior and Gender

Several factors are considered:

- (i) **Gender Differences in Voter Preferences and Decision-Making:** Research has identified gender differences in voter preferences and decision-making. Studies have shown that men and women may prioritize different policy issues and have varying political priorities. For example, [Yarchi and Samuel \(2018\)](#) found that women tend to prioritize social welfare policies, healthcare, and education, while men often prioritize economic policies and national security. These differences can influence candidate evaluations and voting choices. Additionally, gender can shape the way individuals assess candidate attributes and qualities, such as leadership, empathy, and competence ([Kahn & Goldenberg, 2019](#)). Understanding these gender differences in voter preferences is crucial for political campaigns to effectively appeal to diverse voter groups.
- (ii) **The Role of Gender in Shaping Issue Salience and Policy Priorities:** Gender plays a role in shaping issue salience and policy priorities among voters. Research has shown that women's experiences and perspectives often lead them to prioritize certain policy issues, such as reproductive rights, gender equality, and family policies ([Phillips, 1998](#)). Women's political participation and the representation of women in political positions have been found to positively influence the attention given to these gender-related issues ([Krook & Restrepo Sanín, 2016](#)). The intersection of gender and policy priorities is crucial for understanding how gender dynamics shape the political agenda and influence voter behavior.
- (iii) **Intersectionality and the Influence of Race, Ethnicity, and Other Factors:** The influence of gender on voter behavior becomes even more complex when considering intersectionality—the interconnected nature of social identities. Intersectionality recognizes that individuals' experiences and political behavior are shaped not only by their gender but also by other factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and more. For example, research has shown that Black women may have distinct policy preferences and voting patterns compared to White women or Black men, reflecting the intersection of race and gender ([Gay, 2002](#)). Understanding the intersectionality of gender with other identities is crucial for comprehending the diversity of voter behavior and developing inclusive political strategies.

4.4. Electoral Outcomes

Several factors are considered:

- (i) **Comparative Analysis of Electoral Success for Male and Female Candidates:** A comparative analysis of electoral outcomes can provide insights into the differential success rates of male and female candidates. Research has shown that women face persistent gender gaps in electoral success, with fewer women being elected to political offices compared to men. Studies have found variations in these gaps across countries and political systems ([Krook](#)

& Restrepo Sanín, 2016). Comparative analysis can identify factors contributing to these variations, such as institutional barriers, party support, campaign resources, and cultural norms. By examining the electoral success of male and female candidates in different contexts, this analysis can shed light on the factors that hinder or facilitate gender equality in political representation.

- (ii) **Factors Contributing to Gender Gaps in Electoral Outcomes:** Understanding the factors that contribute to gender gaps in electoral outcomes is essential for addressing these disparities. Research has identified several key factors that impact the electoral success of female candidates. Structural barriers, such as electoral systems that favor incumbents or create barriers for new entrants, can disadvantage women seeking political office (Matland & Studlar, 1996). Party support and nomination processes also play a crucial role, as biases and stereotypes within parties can limit the opportunities for women to secure nominations for winnable seats (Krook & Restrepo Sanín, 2016). Additionally, gendered campaign financing and resource disparities pose challenges for women, affecting their ability to run competitive campaigns (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2010). Analyzing these factors can provide insights into strategies for enhancing gender equality in electoral outcomes.
- (iii) **The Long-Term Effects of Gender in Political Campaigns:** Gender in political campaigns can have long-term effects on political systems and gender equality. The experiences, challenges, and successes of female candidates shape the political landscape and influence future generations of women entering politics. Studies have shown that female candidates can inspire and mobilize other women to become politically engaged (Sanbonmatsu, 2006). The presence of women in politics can also influence policy agendas, leading to increased attention to issues affecting women and marginalized groups (Bayeh, 2016). Analyzing the long-term effects of gender in political campaigns provides insights into the potential for transforming political systems and promoting greater gender equality in leadership positions.

By conducting a comparative analysis of electoral outcomes, examining factors contributing to gender gaps, and analyzing the long-term effects of gender in political campaigns, this research can provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities for women in political representation. This knowledge can inform strategies to address gender disparities, promote equal opportunities for male and female candidates, and foster inclusive political systems.

5. DISCUSSION

Several factors are considered:

- (i) **Analysis of Findings from Comparative Case Studies:** The analysis of findings from comparative case studies offers a deeper understanding of the dynamics of gender in political campaigns. By examining multiple cases, we can identify common patterns, variations, and nuances in the experiences of male and female candidates. This analysis allows us to identify factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in politics, such as institutional barriers, cultural norms, and biases. It also helps us identify successful strategies employed by female candidates who have overcome these challenges. Comparative case studies provide a comprehensive and context-specific understanding of gender dynamics in political campaigns.
- (ii) **Implications for Gender Equality in Politics:** The implications of findings have significant implications for achieving gender equality in politics. The identification of barriers and challenges faced by female candidates highlights the need for targeted interventions to

level the playing field. This includes implementing gender quotas or other affirmative action measures to increase the representation of women in political offices. Additionally, addressing deep-rooted gender biases and stereotypes in political campaigns and the broader society is crucial for promoting gender equality. The findings also emphasize the importance of creating supportive institutional environments and fostering inclusive political cultures that encourage and empower women to participate in politics.

- (iii) Recommendations for Promoting Greater Gender Inclusivity in Political Campaigns: Based on the analysis of findings, several recommendations can be made to promote greater gender inclusivity in political campaigns. Firstly, political parties and organizations should actively work towards increasing the recruitment and nomination of women candidates. This can be achieved through gender quota systems, mentoring programs, and targeted outreach efforts. Secondly, campaign strategies and messaging should be designed to challenge gender stereotypes and biases, promoting gender equality and diversity as core values. Thirdly, increasing the visibility and representation of women in political leadership roles can serve as positive role models and inspire more women to engage in politics. Moreover, investing in gender-sensitive training and capacity-building programs for political candidates, campaign staff, and party members can contribute to a more inclusive political culture.

It is also important to engage with the media and promote fair and balanced coverage of male and female candidates. This includes avoiding gender biases in media portrayal and framing of candidates and promoting women's achievements and perspectives. Additionally, fostering alliances and collaborations among women politicians, civil society organizations, and advocacy groups can strengthen collective efforts toward achieving gender equality in politics.

Promoting greater gender inclusivity in political campaigns requires a comprehensive and multi-pronged approach. It involves addressing both structural and cultural barriers, providing targeted support and resources to women candidates, and challenging deep-rooted gender biases and stereotypes. By implementing these recommendations, we can create a more inclusive and equitable political landscape that reflects the diversity of society and ensures equal opportunities for men and women in politics.

The analysis of findings from comparative case studies provides valuable insights into the dynamics of gender in political campaigns. The implications and recommendations derived from these findings contribute to the broader goal of achieving gender equality in politics, fostering inclusive political processes, and building more representative democracies.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research paper explored the influence of gender in political campaigns through a comparative study. The key findings from the literature review, methodology, and analysis of case studies shed light on various aspects of gender in political campaigns. The research highlighted the persistent underrepresentation of women in politics globally and the importance of studying gender in political campaigns. It provided insights into the theoretical frameworks on gender and politics, previous studies on gender in political campaigns, and key findings and gaps in the literature. The research employed a comparative research design and selected case studies to analyze campaign strategies, candidate image and perception, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes concerning gender.

The findings indicated that male and female candidates employ different campaign strategies, with variations in messaging, communication styles, and the role of gender stereotypes. The research also revealed the impact of gender on candidate likability,

trustworthiness, media portrayal, and framing. Moreover, it explored gender differences in voter preferences, decision-making, issue salience, policy priorities, and the intersectionality of gender with other factors. The contributions of this research paper lie in its comprehensive analysis of gender dynamics in political campaigns. It synthesized existing literature, presented empirical evidence from comparative case studies, and identified factors contributing to gender gaps in electoral outcomes. The research enhances our understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by male and female candidates, the implications for gender equality in politics, and the potential strategies for promoting gender inclusivity in political campaigns.

The significance of this research extends beyond academia. It provides valuable insights for policymakers, political parties, and advocacy groups seeking to address gender disparities in political representation.

The findings underscore the importance of implementing measures to remove structural barriers, promote gender-balanced party structures, challenge gender biases in media portrayals, and empower women candidates with resources and support. By promoting greater gender inclusivity in political campaigns, societies can work towards achieving more representative and equitable political systems.

There are several potential areas for future study in this field. Further research can delve into the intersectionality of gender with other identities, such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, to explore how these factors shape political campaigns and voter behavior. Additionally, longitudinal studies can investigate the long-term effects of gender in political campaigns, examining the career trajectories and policy outcomes of male and female candidates. Moreover, comparative research across different countries and political contexts can provide deeper insights into the variations in gender gaps and effective strategies for promoting gender equality in politics.

In conclusion, this research contributes to our understanding of gender in political campaigns, highlighting the challenges, implications, and potential solutions for achieving greater gender equality in politics. By addressing the identified gaps and building upon the findings of this study, future research can continue to advance the field and promote inclusive and representative democracies.

7. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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