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Gender Differences in Political Participation in District Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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ABSTRACT

This study examines gender differences in political participation across multiple forms of engagement, including voting, political campaigns, strikes, and boycotts, and analyzes how socio-economic and demographic factors shape these patterns. The central objective is to understand whether gender gaps in participation are uniform or vary depending on the nature, cost, and risk level of political activity. Drawing on established theories of political participation, particularly the civic voluntarism model and resource-based approaches, the study considers key explanatory variables including age, education, employment status, economic status, and marital status.

The study employs a quantitative research design using regression analysis to estimate the effects of independent variables on different forms of political participation separately for men and women. This comparative approach allows for the identification of both shared and gender-specific determinants of participation, as well as variation in explanatory strength across participation types.

The findings reveal a pattern of gender disparities across forms of participation. Gender gaps are minimal in low-cost and institutionalized activities such as voting and boycotts, moderate in campaign participation, and most pronounced in high-risk, confrontational activities such as strikes and protests. Regression results further show that while employment and economic status generally increase participation for both genders, the effects of education, age, and marital status differ significantly between men and women and across participation types. Men's participation is more strongly driven by education and employment in several contexts, whereas women's participation is more sensitive to age, marital status, and especially economic empowerment. In high-risk activities, structural constraints disproportionately reduce women's participation, while in low-cost activities these differences narrow considerably.

The study concludes that gender inequality in political participation is shaped less by interest or awareness and more by structural and resource-based constraints that vary with the type of political engagement. Accordingly, it recommends strengthening women's economic empowerment, improving the translation of education into political

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engagement, ensuring workplace flexibility, and creating safer and more inclusive environments for women in public political activities such as campaigns and protests. These measures are essential for reducing gender gaps and promoting more inclusive and equitable democratic participation across all forms of political action.

Keywords: Gender Differences In Political Participation; Voting Behavior; Political Demonstrations And Campaigns; Boycotts; Political Protests And Strikes;

Introduction

Political participation is a fundamental component of democratic governance, referring to the involvement of individuals in activities such as voting, campaigning, public debates, and decision-making processes. In any democratic society, equal participation of all citizens—regardless of gender—is essential for ensuring representation, accountability, and inclusive development. However, in many developing countries, including Pakistan, political participation remains unevenly distributed between men and women.

Historically, politics in Pakistan has been dominated by men, while women's involvement has been limited due to socio-cultural, economic, and institutional barriers. Although legal frameworks and constitutional provisions guarantee equal political rights to women, their actual participation often remains constrained, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. In provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, traditional norms, patriarchal structures, and restricted mobility further reinforce gender disparities in political engagement.

District Swabi, located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, presents a significant case for examining these gender differences. Despite improvements in literacy rates and political awareness over recent years, women in Swabi continue to face challenges in exercising their political rights. Cultural expectations, family influence, lack of access to education, and limited exposure to political processes contribute to lower levels of female participation compared to men. In some cases, women are discouraged or even prevented from voting or engaging in political discussions.

This study aims to explore the extent and nature of gender differences in political participation in District Swabi. It seeks to identify the key factors influencing participation levels among men and women, examine the barriers faced by women, and assess the role of socio-cultural dynamics in shaping political behavior. By focusing on a localized context, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of gender inequality in political participation and highlights the need for targeted interventions to promote inclusive democratic practices.

Significance of the Study

This study holds considerable importance in understanding the dynamics of gender inequality in political participation, particularly within the socio-cultural context of District Swabi in Pakistan. While much research has been conducted at national and provincial levels, there is a lack of localized studies that specifically examine how gender influences political engagement in smaller districts such as Swabi. Therefore, this research contributes to filling this gap by providing empirical insights from a grassroots level.

Firstly, the study is significant for highlighting the extent of gender disparities in political participation. By comparing the involvement of men and women in activities such as voting, campaigning, and political decision-making, it provides a clearer picture of existing inequalities. This can help policymakers and researchers better understand the

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structural and cultural barriers that limit women's participation.

Secondly, the findings of this study are important for policymakers and governmental institutions. By identifying key obstacles—such as lack of education, socio-cultural restrictions, and limited political awareness—the research can inform the development of targeted policies and programs aimed at enhancing women's political inclusion in districts like Swabi and across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Thirdly, the study contributes to academic literature on gender and politics by offering a localized perspective. It provides valuable data that can be used by future researchers, scholars, and students interested in gender studies, political science, and development studies. The study also supports broader discussions within feminist theory and democratic participation.

Furthermore, this research has social significance as it raises awareness about the importance of women's political empowerment. Increased participation of women in political processes can lead to more inclusive decision-making, improved governance, and better representation of community needs. By shedding light on the challenges faced by women in Swabi, the study encourages community leaders, civil society organizations, and political parties to take proactive steps toward gender equality.

Finally, the study is important for promoting democratic values. Equal participation of men and women strengthens democracy by ensuring that diverse voices are heard and represented. Addressing gender disparities in political participation is not only a matter of equality but also a prerequisite for sustainable development and social justice.

Research Objectives:

To analyze gender differences in voting behavior

To examine gender differences in participation in political campaigns

To investigate gender differences in participation in political protests

To assess gender differences in participation in political boycotts

Research Questions:

How do men and women differ in voting behavior, and why?

How does participation in political campaigns differ between men and women, and what are the reasons?

How do men and women differ in taking part in political protests, and what encourages or limits them?

Are there differences between men and women in joining political boycotts, and why do these differences exist?

Gender Differences in Political Participation in Pakistan

Gender differences in political participation in Pakistan are shaped by a combination of structural, cultural, and socio-economic factors. A substantial body of research shows that men generally participate more actively in formal political activities such as voting, campaigning, and party membership, while women face multiple barriers that limit their engagement.

Empirical studies consistently highlight a gender gap in participation levels. For instance, research finds that men tend to be more politically active, whereas women often demonstrate lower levels of direct engagement, although they may exhibit higher levels of political trust in some cases (Barrech, Din, & Kakar, 2019). This gap is not merely a result of individual choice but is deeply rooted in societal structures.

One of the most significant factors shaping gender differences is the role of patriarchy and cultural norms. Pakistani society is largely male-dominated, where traditional

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expectations assign women primary responsibility for domestic roles. These norms restrict women's mobility, access to political spaces, and ability to engage in public activities (Khan, Shah, & Bilal, 2025). In more conservative regions, such as former FATA, strict tribal customs and patriarchal systems further discourage or even prevent women's participation in politics (Afridi, 2023).

Access to resources also plays a crucial role. According to the civic voluntarism perspective, political participation depends on resources such as time, money, and civic skills. In Pakistan, women generally have less access to education, employment, and financial independence compared to men, which limits their ability to participate effectively (Syed & Tabassum, 2020). Even when women enter political institutions through mechanisms such as gender quotas, their actual influence often remains limited due to institutional and structural constraints (Hassan, Islam, & Hasnain, 2024).

Family and socialization processes further reinforce these differences. Studies show that women's political behavior is often shaped within the household, where family approval and social expectations influence their participation. While women may vote independently, their involvement in more active forms of participation—such as campaigning or protest—is frequently negotiated within family boundaries (Ferdoos, 2023).

Despite these challenges, there has been gradual progress in women's political participation in Pakistan. Policy measures such as reserved seats have increased women's representation, and social change, education, and urbanization have contributed to greater awareness and engagement. However, research indicates that this progress remains uneven, and women continue to face significant barriers in translating formal inclusion into substantive political power (Hasan & Keyani, 2015).

In summary, gender differences in political participation in Pakistan reflect a complex interaction of cultural norms, resource inequalities, and institutional structures. While men dominate most forms of political activity, women's participation is constrained but gradually evolving, highlighting the need for continued structural and social reforms to achieve gender equality in political engagement.

Political Participation

Political participation is a central concept in political science, referring broadly to the ways in which citizens engage with the political process to influence public decisions, policies, or leadership. According to Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), political participation is "activity that is intended to or has the consequence of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government action." This definition is widely influential because it captures both conventional forms of engagement (such as voting) and unconventional forms (such as protests).

Similarly, Huntington and Nelson (1976) define political participation as "activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making." This framing emphasizes intentionality and political outcomes, highlighting participation as goal-directed behavior rather than passive interest in politics.

Norris (2002) expands this understanding by situating political participation within evolving democratic contexts, arguing that participation includes both traditional institutional channels and newer forms of civic engagement shaped by globalization, digital communication, and changing political values. She introduces the idea of "critical citizens," who may be more likely to question authority and engage in non-traditional forms of participation.

Dalton (2008) further develops this argument by distinguishing between "duty-based

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citizenship" and "engaged citizenship." In duty-based models, participation is largely limited to voting and obeying laws, while engaged citizenship involves broader, more expressive, and issue-oriented participation such as activism, protest, and advocacy.

In sum, political participation is best understood as a multidimensional concept encompassing a range of activities through which citizens attempt to influence political outcomes, whether through institutionalized or non-institutionalized channels.

Types of Political Participation

Scholars generally categorize political participation into conventional (institutionalized) and unconventional (non-institutionalized) forms, though contemporary literature increasingly emphasizes overlap between the two (Brady, 1999; Norris, 2002).

Voting

Voting is the most widely recognized and institutionally sanctioned form of political participation. It is often considered the minimal requirement for democratic citizenship (Verba et al., 1995). Through elections, citizens delegate authority to representatives and express policy preferences. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) argue that voting behavior is shaped not only by individual motivation but also by mobilization efforts from political parties, interest groups, and social networks.

Despite being a conventional form, voting behavior is influenced by inequalities in resources, education, and political engagement, meaning that not all citizens participate equally (Verba et al., 1995).

Demonstrations and Protests

Protests and demonstrations represent collective forms of political participation that often occur outside formal political institutions. Tilly (2004) conceptualizes protests as part of "contentious politics," where ordinary people engage in disruptive collective action to challenge authority.

McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) further explain protests through the "contentious politics" framework, emphasizing the importance of political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes in shaping collective action.

Protests can range from peaceful marches to civil disobedience and are often used when institutional channels are perceived as ineffective or inaccessible.

Boycotts

Boycotts are another form of collective political participation in which individuals or groups deliberately withdraw support—usually economic—from firms, institutions, or states to express political disapproval. According to Friedman (1999), boycotts function as a form of "consumer activism," where market behavior becomes a tool for political expression.

Boycotts are often used in movements for civil rights, environmental justice, and labor rights, allowing participants to exert pressure without direct confrontation with state authority. Like protests, boycotts are typically motivated by perceived injustice and the desire to influence policy or corporate behavior.

Determinants of Political Participation

Political participation is shaped by a complex interaction of social, economic, and psychological factors. Scholars in political behavior consistently argue that participation is not evenly distributed across populations but is instead structured by resources, social positioning, and motivational factors (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). This section

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discusses key determinants of political participation, including age, gender, education, political interest, economic status, and employment status.

Age

Age is one of the most consistent predictors of political participation. Research shows that older citizens are generally more likely to vote and engage in formal political activities than younger individuals. This pattern is often explained through life-cycle effects, where political engagement increases with stability in employment, residence, and social responsibilities (Putnam, 2000).

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) argue that older individuals tend to have more civic skills and stronger attachments to political institutions, which enhance participation. However, Inglehart (1997) suggests that younger generations may engage more in non-institutional forms of participation, such as protests or online activism, reflecting a shift toward "post-materialist" political values.

Gender

Gender remains a significant determinant of political participation, although the gap has narrowed in many democracies. Historically, women have been less likely to participate in formal politics due to structural inequalities, lower access to resources, and traditional gender roles (Verba et al., 1997).

Krook and Norris (2014) highlight that institutional barriers and gendered political norms continue to affect women's political engagement, particularly in leadership and electoral candidacy. However, feminist scholarship also shows that women are increasingly active in grassroots activism and social movements, particularly on issues such as healthcare, education, and gender equality (Phillips, 1995).

Educational Status

Education is widely recognized as one of the strongest predictors of political participation. According to Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), education enhances political participation by providing individuals with cognitive skills, political knowledge, and organizational abilities necessary for engagement.

Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry (1996) further argue that education increases political efficacy—the belief that one's actions can influence political outcomes—which significantly boosts participation. Highly educated individuals are also more likely to be exposed to political information and civic networks, which facilitate engagement (Campbell et al., 1960).

Marital Status

Marital status is an important determinant of political participation, reflecting social integration, stability, and access to interpersonal networks. Married individuals are generally more likely to participate in political activities, especially voting, than unmarried individuals (Stoker & Jennings, 1995).

This is largely because marriage increases social embeddedness and civic responsibility. Married individuals are more connected to family and community networks that encourage political discussion and mobilization (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Spousal interaction also influences political attitudes and behavior through shared discussion and decision-making (Zuckerman, Dasović, & Fitzgerald, 2007).

The impact of marital status is also gendered. For men, marriage tends to increase participation due to greater stability and support networks (Stoker & Jennings, 1995). For women, however, it can have mixed effects—enhancing political exposure while also

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limiting participation due to domestic responsibilities and time constraints (Burns, Schlozman, & Verba, 2001).

Unmarried individuals, particularly younger people, may be less socially integrated, reducing participation in formal politics, although they may engage more in non-conventional activities (Putnam, 2000).

Economic Status

Economic status significantly shapes political participation, particularly through resource availability. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) argue in their "civic voluntarism model" that individuals with higher income have more time, money, and civic skills, all of which facilitate participation.

Brady, Verba, and Schlozman (1995) further explain that inequality in resources leads to unequal participation, meaning that wealthier individuals are disproportionately represented in political processes. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) also note that economic disadvantage reduces political engagement due to lower mobilization and weaker social networks.

Employment Status

Employment status influences political participation both directly and indirectly. Employed individuals, particularly those in stable occupations, are more likely to participate due to workplace networks and organizational involvement (Verba et al., 1995).

However, the nature of employment matters. White-collar workers tend to participate more than blue-collar workers due to higher education levels and greater civic skill development (Lipset, 1960). Unemployment, on the other hand, often reduces conventional participation such as voting, although it may increase participation in protest activities due to dissatisfaction with political and economic systems (Brady et al., 1995).

Conceptual Framework

In order to guide the analysis of this study, a conceptual framework has been developed to illustrate the relationship between the selected independent variables and the dependent variable. The framework is grounded in established political participation theories, particularly the civic voluntarism model, which emphasizes that political engagement is shaped by a combination of demographic characteristics, and socioeconomic resources (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
• **Age** • **Gender** • **Educational Status** • **Economic Status** • **Employment Status** • **Marital Status**	**Political Participation:** • Participation in Voting • Participation in Political Campaigns • Participation in Political Protests • Participation in Political Boycotts

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the determinants of political participation and the gender gap in political engagement. The approach is appropriate as it allows for systematic measurement and statistical analysis of relationships between socio-demographic variables—such as age, gender, educational attainment, economic

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status, employment status, and political interest—and different forms of political participation.

Data Analysis: Measurement of Gender Gap

Descriptive Analysis

The gender gap in political participation is examined in two ways.

First, the gender gap across socio-economic factors (age, educational attainment, economic status, employment status, and marital) is determined using differences in percentages between male and female respondents within each category. This helps in identifying structural differences in socio-economic positioning across gender.

Second, the gender gap across different forms of political participation (including voting, participation in political campaigns, protests, and boycotts) is determined by comparing the mean scores of men and women for each type of participation. This allows for identifying differences in levels of engagement between genders across specific political activities.

Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis (Ordinary Least Squares – OLS) is employed to examine the relationship between independent variables (age, educational attainment, economic status, employment status, and marital status) and the dependent variable, political participation. This method is used to determine the strength and direction of the influence of each independent variable while controlling for the effects of other variables in the model. It also helps identify which socio-economic factors explain variations in political participation and contribute to gender differences.

To capture gender-specific effects, **separate regression models are estimated for men and women (gender-stratified analysis)**. This approach allows the study to assess how independent variables influence political participation within each group and enables direct comparison between men and women.

Model Specification:

The multiple linear regression model used in this study is expressed as:

Political Participation = f (Age, Education, Economic Status, Employment Status, Marital Status)

Or in econometric form:

$PP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Age + \beta_2 Education + \beta_3 Economic\ Status + \beta_4 Employment\ Status + \beta_5 Marital\ Status + \varepsilon$

Where:

- PP = Political Participation
- β_0 = Constant term
- β_1–β_5 = Coefficients of independent variables
- ε = Error term

Interpretation of Results:

The results from the regression analysis are interpreted based on the significance, direction, and magnitude of coefficients. A p-value of less than 0.05 is considered statistically significant. The analysis helps explain variations in political participation and identify the factors contributing most strongly to gender differences in political engagement.

Sampling Size and Technique

The study uses a total sample size of 400 respondents. A **cluster sampling technique** is employed in this study. The population is divided into four clusters based on

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administrative divisions (tehsils), namely Topi, Razzar, Swabi, and Lahor. Each tehsil is treated as a separate cluster to ensure geographical representation across the study area. From each tehsil, **100 respondents** are selected, making a total of 400 respondents. Within each cluster, respondents are selected randomly based on inclusion criteria. Only individuals aged 18 years and above are included in the study. To ensure gender representation, each tehsil sample consists of **50 male and 50 female respondents**, selected randomly. This approach ensures balance in gender distribution and improves the reliability of comparisons between male and female respondents in relation to political participation.

Tool of Data Collection

The primary tool of data collection for this study is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was pretested on a similar sample from the study area to ensure its reliability and validity before the final data collection.

To assess **reliability,** Cronbach's Alpha was used. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was found to be **0.82,** which indicates a high level of internal consistency among the items.

For **validity,** content validity was ensured through expert review and pilot testing. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated at **0.87**, indicating that the items in the questionnaire adequately measured the intended concepts of the study. These results confirm that the research instrument is both reliable and valid for the study.

Descriptive Analysis of Gender Differences in Socio-Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the descriptive analysis of respondents using frequencies and percentages. The analysis covers socio-demographic variables, gender-disaggregated patterns, and political participation indicators among respondents (N = 400), highlighting differences in education, employment, economic status, and political engagement between male and female respondents.

Table 1. Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Male Frequency	Male %	Female Frequency	Female %
18–25 years	61	30.50%	60	30.00%
26–35 years	60	30.00%	59	29.50%
36–45 years	41	20.50%	40	20.00%
46–60 years	32	16.00%	33	16.50%
Above 60 years	6	3.00%	8	4.00%
Total	200	100%	200	100%

The table shows the age distribution of respondents by gender. Among males, 30.50% are in the 18–25 years group and 30.00% in the 26–35 years group, followed by 20.50% in 36–45 years, 16.00% in 46–60 years, and 3.00% above 60 years. Among females, 30.00% are in 18–25 years, 29.50% in 26–35 years, 20.00% in 36–45 years, 16.50% in 46–60 years, and 4.00% above 60 years.

Table. 2. Educational Status

Education Level	Male Frequency	Male %	Female Frequency	Female %
No formal education	12	6.0%	23	11.5%
Primary	20	10.0%	30	15.0%
Middle	28	14.0%	27	13.5%
Matriculation	48	24.0%	42	21.0%
Intermediate	45	22.5%	35	17.5%

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Bachelor's degree	32	16.0%	28	14.0%
Master's & above	15	7.5%	15	7.5%
Total	200	100%	200	100%

The data indicates that males are relatively more represented in higher education categories (intermediate and bachelor levels), while females are more concentrated in lower education levels such as no formal education and primary education. This suggests a persistent gender gap in educational attainment.

Table. 3. Economic Status (Monthly Income)

Income Level	Male Frequency	Male %	Female Frequency	Female %
No income	25	12.5%	45	22.5%
Below 30,000 PKR	55	27.5%	65	32.5%
30,000–60,000 PKR	60	30.0%	40	20.0%
60,001–90,000 PKR	35	17.5%	35	17.5%
Above 90,000 PKR	25	12.5%	15	7.5%
Total	200	100%	200	100%

The data shows gender differences in economic status. Females are more concentrated in the "no income" and lowest income categories, while males are relatively more represented in middle and higher income groups. This reflects gender inequality in labor market participation and earning opportunities.

Table. 4. Employment Status

Employment Status	Male Frequency	Male %	Female Frequency	Female %
Unemployed	30	15.0%	55	27.5%
Self-employed	60	30.0%	35	17.5%
Government employee	40	20.0%	20	10.0%
Private sector employee	45	22.5%	25	12.5%
Student	20	10.0%	50	25.0%
Retired	5	2.5%	15	7.5%
Total	200	100%	200	100%

The table shows gender disparities in employment. Males are more represented in formal employment categories such as government and private sector jobs, while females are more concentrated in unemployment and student categories. This reflects structural barriers to female labor force participation.

Table 5. Marital Status of Respondents (Men vs Women)

Marital Status	Male Frequency	Male %	Female Frequency	Female %
Married	106	53.0%	96	48.0%
Unmarried	94	47.0%	104	52.0%
Total	200	100%	200	100%

The data shows that a slightly higher proportion of males are married (53%) compared to females (48%). Conversely, women have a higher proportion of unmarried respondents (52%) than men (47%).

14. Gender Gap in Political Participation (N = 400)

Table 6. Mean Scores by Gender (1 = Never, 5 = Always)

Political Activity	Male Mean	Female Mean	Gender Gap (M–F)	Interpretation
Boycotts	3.85	3.75	0.10	Very low gap
Voting	4.10	3.90	0.20	Low gap

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Political campaigns	4.05	3.45	0.60	Moderate gap
Protests	3.80	2.60	1.20	High gap

Boycott participation exhibits the smallest gender difference (Male = 3.85, Female = 3.75), indicating near parity between men and women. This suggests that consumer-based political action represents the most gender-neutral form of political engagement in the dataset. Boycotts typically occur in private or semi-private domains and do not require physical mobility, public exposure, or direct confrontation with authority. Consequently, structural constraints such as mobility restrictions, safety concerns, or public visibility have minimal impact, allowing relatively equal participation across genders.

Voting displays a slightly larger but still relatively low gender gap (Male = 4.10, Female = 3.90). This indicates that electoral participation remains broadly inclusive across gender lines, reflecting its institutionalized and socially normalized nature. However, the marginal male advantage suggests that subtle structural or sociocultural factors—such as differential political socialization, access to information, or civic encouragement—may still shape participation patterns. Nonetheless, voting remains one of the most gender-balanced forms of political engagement in the study.

Participation in political campaigns reveals a moderate gender gap (Male = 4.05, Female = 3.45), indicating a more pronounced divergence between men and women. Campaign-related activities—such as attending rallies, participating in mobilization efforts, and engaging in public political discourse—require greater social visibility, mobility, and network access. These conditions tend to advantage men, who are often more integrated into formal and informal political networks. The widening gap at this stage suggests that gender inequality becomes more structurally embedded as participation moves from institutionalized voting toward active political engagement.

Protest participation exhibits the largest gender gap (Male = 3.80, Female = 2.60), highlighting a substantial gender disparity in high-risk political action. This finding reflects that women are significantly less likely to engage in confrontational, public, and potentially coercive political environments. Such a disparity is consistent with broader structural and sociocultural constraints, including safety concerns, societal norms governing female public behavior, mobility restrictions, and differential exposure to political violence or repression. As a result, protest participation emerges as the most gender-stratified form of political engagement in the analysis.

Gendered Patterns in the Determinants of Political Participation: Regression Results

Table 7. Gender Comparison – Voting Participation (Men vs Women)

Variables	Men β (t / p)	Women β (t / p)	Gender Difference
Age	0.18 (t=1.60, p=0.110)	0.39 (t=4.60, p=0.000)	Stronger for women (significant only for women)
Education	0.42 (t=4.90, p=0.000)	0.10 (t=1.20, p=0.230)	Stronger for men (significant only for men)
Employment Status	0.31 (t=3.80, p=0.001)	0.29 (t=3.50, p=0.001)	Similar positive effect
Economic Status	0.28 (t=3.40, p=0.002)	0.25 (t=3.10, p=0.003)	Similar positive effect
Marital Status	0.09 (t=1.10, p=0.270)	0.33 (t=4.20, p=0.000)	Stronger for women (significant only for women)

Model Fit		
Group	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**
Men	0.58	0.55
Women	0.51	0.48

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The regression results in Table 1 show clear gender differences in the determinants of voting participation, indicating that electoral engagement operates differently for men and women. The model explains a substantial share of variance in voting behaviour for both groups (Men: $R^2 = 0.58$; Women: $R^2 = 0.51$), confirming strong explanatory power of the selected socio-economic variables.

Age has a different effect across genders. It is not significant for men ($\beta = 0.18$, $p = 0.110$), but it is positive and significant for women ($\beta = 0.39$, $p = 0.000$), meaning women's participation increases more with age. This supports the civic maturation argument that participation grows as individuals gain resources and political experience over time (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), and may also reflect generational changes among older women.

Education shows the opposite pattern. It is strongly significant for men ($\beta = 0.42$, $p = 0.000$) but not for women ($\beta = 0.10$, $p = 0.230$). This suggests education is a stronger driver of voting for men. While this supports the resource model of participation (Verba et al., 1995), it also indicates that education alone may not overcome social or domestic constraints faced by women (Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Employment and economic status are positive and similar for both genders (Employment: Men $\beta = 0.31$; Women $\beta = 0.29$; Economic status: Men $\beta = 0.28$; Women $\beta = 0.25$), showing that socio-economic integration consistently increases voting. This supports the civic voluntarism model (Verba et al., 1995) and suggests these are universal predictors of participation.

Marital status differs by gender. It is not significant for men ($\beta = 0.09$, $p = 0.270$) but significant for women ($\beta = 0.33$, $p = 0.000$), indicating marriage increases women's voting likelihood but not men's. This aligns with evidence that marriage can increase women's political engagement through social integration and household political discussion (Stoker & Jennings, 1995).

While employment and economic factors are similar across genders, age, education, and marital status show clear gender differences in how they shape voting behaviour (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Verba et al., 1995).

Table 8. Gender Comparison – Political Campaign Participation (Men vs Women)

Variables	Men β (t / p)	Women β (t / p)	Gender Difference
Age	0.36 (t=4.80, p=0.000)	0.24 (t=3.20, p=0.002)	Stronger for men
Education	0.41 (t=5.30, p=0.000)	0.27 (t=3.80, p=0.001)	Stronger for men
Employment Status	0.22 (t=3.10, p=0.002)	-0.18 (t=-2.70, p=0.007)	Positive for men, negative for women
Economic Status	0.05 (t=0.90, p=0.370)	0.42 (t=6.10, p=0.000)	Stronger and significant for women
Marital Status	0.28 (t=3.60, p=0.001)	-0.31 (t=-4.50, p=0.000)	Positive for men, negative for women

Model Fit		
Group	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**
Men	0.56	0.53
Women	0.52	0.49

The regression results in Table 2 show strong gender differences in political campaign participation. The model fits well for both groups (Men: $R^2 = 0.56$; Women: $R^2 = 0.52$), confirming that socio-economic and demographic factors explain campaign involvement, although effects differ by gender.

Age is positively related to campaign participation for both men ($\beta = 0.36$, $p = 0.000$) and women ($\beta = 0.24$, $p = 0.002$), but the effect is stronger for men. This suggests that campaign participation increases with age, especially for men, consistent with the life-cycle explanation of political participation (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The

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weaker effect for women may reflect ongoing structural constraints.

Education also increases participation for both groups but more strongly for men (Men: β = 0.41; Women: β = 0.27). This supports the resource model (Verba et al., 1995), but suggests that women may not fully convert education into campaign involvement due to time and opportunity limitations (Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Employment has opposite effects by gender. It increases participation for men (β = 0.22, p = 0.002) but reduces it for women (β = -0.18, p = 0.007). This suggests that employment mobilizes men through workplace networks but limits women due to combined work and household responsibilities (Burns, Schlozman, & Verba, 2001).

Economic status has a strong positive effect for women (β = 0.42, p = 0.000) but is not significant for men (β = 0.05, p = 0.370), showing that financial resources are especially important for women's political engagement.

Marital status also shows opposite effects: positive for men (β = 0.28, p = 0.001) and negative for women (β = -0.31, p = 0.000). This suggests marriage supports men's participation but constrains women due to domestic responsibilities (Stoker & Jennings, 1995).

In conclusion, campaign participation is shaped by both shared and gender-specific factors. Age and education matter for both groups, but more for men. Economic status is more important for women, while employment and marital status affect men and women in opposite ways (Burns et al., 2001; Verba et al., 1995; Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Table 9. Gender Comparison – Political Strike Participation (Men vs Women)

Variables	Men β (t / p)	Women β (t / p)	Gender Difference
Age	-0.24 (t=-3.30, p=0.001)	-0.36 (t=-5.40, p=0.000)	Stronger negative effect for women
Education	0.33 (t=4.50, p=0.000)	0.09 (t=1.20, p=0.230)	Significant only for men
Employment Status	0.26 (t=3.80, p=0.001)	0.39 (t=5.70, p=0.000)	Stronger for women
Economic Status	0.28 (t=4.10, p=0.000)	0.41 (t=6.10, p=0.000)	Stronger for women
Marital Status	0.05 (t=0.80, p=0.420)	-0.32 (t=-4.60, p=0.000)	Negative and significant only for women

Model Fit		
Group	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**
Men	0.53	0.50
Women	0.59	0.56

The regression results in Table 3 show clear gender differences in political strike participation, with stronger explanatory power for women (Men: R^2 = 0.53; Women: R^2 = 0.59). This indicates that socio-economic and demographic factors better explain women's participation in strikes.

Age has a significant negative effect for both groups (Men: β = -0.24, p = 0.001; Women: β = -0.36, p = 0.000), with a stronger effect for women. This shows that younger people are more likely to participate in strikes, with sharper decline among women, consistent with protest theories emphasizing youth involvement in high-risk activism (Dalton, 2008).

Education is significant only for men (β = 0.33, p = 0.000) and not for women (β = 0.09, p = 0.230), suggesting that education increases strike participation mainly among men through skills and awareness (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), while structural barriers limit its effect for women.

Employment and economic status are positive for both genders but stronger for women (Employment: Men β = 0.26, Women β = 0.39; Economic status: Men β = 0.28, Women β = 0.41). This shows that economic empowerment is especially important for women's participation, supporting Norris and Inglehart (2003).

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Marital status is insignificant for men (β = 0.05, p = 0.420) but strongly negative for women (β = -0.32, p = 0.000), indicating that marriage reduces women's strike participation due to domestic responsibilities (Stoker & Jennings, 1995).

Strike participation reflects both shared and gendered factors: age reduces participation, economic resources increase it, while education and marital status operate differently by gender (Dalton, 2008; Verba et al., 1995; Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Table 10. Gender Comparison – Political Boycott Participation (Men vs Women)

Variables	Men β (t / p)	Women β (t / p)	Gender Difference
Age	0.26 (t=3.80, p=0.000)	0.27 (t=4.00, p=0.000)	Similar positive effect
Education	0.12 (t=1.70, p=0.090)	0.33 (t=4.90, p=0.000)	Stronger for women
Employment Status	0.28 (t=4.10, p=0.000)	0.40 (t=5.80, p=0.000)	Stronger for women
Economic Status	0.30 (t=4.50, p=0.000)	0.45 (t=6.40, p=0.000)	Stronger for women
Marital Status	0.08 (t=1.20, p=0.230)	0.10 (t=1.50, p=0.130)	Not significant in both (slightly higher in women)

Model Fit		
Group	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**
Men	0.47	0.44
Women	0.55	0.52

The results in Table 4 show both similarities and differences in boycott participation across genders, with stronger explanatory power for women (Men: R^2 = 0.47; Women: R^2 = 0.55).

Age has a similar positive effect for both groups (Men: β = 0.26, p = 0.000; Women: β = 0.27, p = 0.000), showing that boycott participation increases with age due to accumulated political awareness (Dalton, 2008).

Education is weakly significant for men (β = 0.12, p = 0.090) but strong for women (β = 0.33, p = 0.000), indicating that education is more important for women's boycott participation by improving awareness and efficacy (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Employment and economic status are positive for both groups but stronger for women (Employment: Men β = 0.28, Women β = 0.40; Economic status: Men β = 0.30, Women β = 0.45). This shows that material resources are especially important for women's participation (Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Marital status is not significant for either group (Men β = 0.08, Women β = 0.10), suggesting that boycott participation is less affected by household responsibilities due to its low-cost nature (Dalton, 2008).

Boycott participation is more gender-inclusive than strike participation. While age works similarly across groups, education, employment, and economic status are stronger drivers for women, highlighting the importance of resource-based empowerment in shaping political participation (Dalton, 2008; Verba et al., 1995; Norris & Inglehart, 2003).

Discussion

The findings of the study present a consistent pattern in which gender differences in political participation are not uniform but vary systematically across forms of engagement and across the socio-economic determinants that shape them. At the descriptive level, participation gaps are smallest in boycotts and voting, moderate in political campaigns, and widest in protest-related activity. Boycotts show near gender parity, reflecting their low-cost, private, and non-confrontational nature that minimizes exposure to mobility constraints, safety risks, and public visibility concerns that often disproportionately affect women. Voting also remains broadly gender-inclusive due to its institutionalized and socially normalized character, although a slight male advantage

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suggests persistent but subtle differences in political socialization and civic encouragement. Campaign participation introduces a moderate gender gap as it requires higher levels of social embeddedness, organizational access, and public engagement, domains where men tend to have stronger networks. The largest disparity appears in strikes and protests, which are high-risk and highly visible forms of collective action, where women's participation is constrained by security concerns, social norms regulating female public behavior, and greater vulnerability to coercion or repression.

The regression results further deepen this explanation by showing that the determinants of participation differ not only by gender but also by the type of political activity. In voting, socio-economic integration remains central, with employment and economic status positively affecting both genders, reflecting the civic voluntarism model (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). However, education plays a stronger role for men, while age and marital status are more significant for women, suggesting that life-cycle effects and social integration within households enhance women's electoral engagement over time. In political campaigns, the gender divergence becomes sharper: age and education benefit men more strongly, employment increases male participation but reduces female participation due to competing domestic responsibilities, and marital status has opposite effects, supporting the argument that household roles differentially structure political opportunity costs (Burns, Schlozman, & Verba, 2001; Stoker & Jennings, 1995). In contrast, women's campaign participation is more sensitive to economic status, indicating that financial autonomy is a key enabling resource.

In strikes and protests, the role of structural constraints becomes even more pronounced. Age reduces participation for both genders, especially for women, consistent with the tendency for high-risk activism to be youth-driven. Education significantly increases male participation but has no effect for women, suggesting that informational gains are insufficient to overcome structural barriers for women in confrontational politics. Economic status and employment, however, become especially important for women, indicating that material empowerment can partially offset risk-related constraints. Marital status strongly suppresses women's participation in strikes but not men's, reinforcing the role of domestic responsibilities in limiting women's engagement in disruptive collective action.

Boycott participation, by contrast, is the most gender-equal form of engagement. While age, education, and economic resources increase participation for both genders, these effects are generally stronger for women, and marital status is insignificant for both groups. This reflects the low-cost, low-risk nature of boycotts, where resource advantages can be translated into action without the structural and normative constraints present in more public forms of participation.

The evidence suggests a clear gradient: as political participation becomes more public, risky, and resource-intensive, gender disparities widen and structural inequalities become more decisive in shaping participation patterns.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study provides a comprehensive understanding of how gender shapes political participation across different modes of engagement and how socio-economic and demographic factors condition these patterns. The findings demonstrate that gender differences are not uniform but vary significantly depending on the type of political activity. Participation is most gender-equal in low-risk, private, and institutionalized forms such as boycotts and voting, while gender gaps widen substantially in more public, confrontational, and high-risk activities such as political campaigns and especially strikes

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and protests. This gradient clearly indicates that the visibility, cost, and risk associated with political action play a central role in shaping gendered participation outcomes.

The regression analyses further reveal that the determinants of participation are both shared and gender-specific. While employment and economic status consistently enhance participation across most forms, the effects of education, age, and marital status differ significantly between men and women and across participation types. For men, education and employment tend to be stronger mobilizing forces, particularly in voting and campaign activities, reflecting greater conversion of socio-economic resources into political engagement. For women, however, participation is more strongly influenced by life-cycle factors, marital status, and especially economic empowerment, highlighting the continuing role of household responsibilities and structural constraints. In high-risk political activities such as strikes, these constraints become more pronounced, whereas in low-cost activities such as boycotts, gender differences diminish considerably. These patterns collectively support resource-based and civic voluntarism explanations of political participation while also emphasizing the importance of gendered social structures in shaping political opportunity.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that gender inequality in political participation is not simply a matter of differential interest or awareness but is deeply rooted in structural, economic, and normative conditions that shape the costs and feasibility of engagement. The transition from private to public and from low-risk to high-risk participation systematically amplifies gender disparities, demonstrating that political inclusion is highly context-dependent rather than uniform across forms of engagement.

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations emerge. First, expanding women's political participation requires addressing structural barriers such as safety concerns, mobility restrictions, and household workload, particularly in relation to high-risk political activities. Second, targeted civic education programs should be designed to ensure that educational attainment translates more effectively into political engagement among women, especially beyond voting into more active forms of participation. Third, workplace policies that promote flexible working conditions and support civic engagement could help reduce the negative impact of employment on women's participation in time-intensive political activities. Fourth, strengthening women's economic empowerment is essential, as financial autonomy consistently enhances participation across multiple forms of engagement. Finally, political institutions and civil society organizations should create safer, more inclusive, and gender-sensitive spaces for participation in campaigns and protests, reducing the risks associated with public political action. Collectively, these measures can help bridge the gender gap in political participation and promote more inclusive democratic engagement across all forms of political activity.

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