

# WOMEN IN THE DUMA: WHY POST-SOVIET RUSSIA HAS LOW FEMALE REPRESENTATION?

## A VIEW FROM INDIA

Nivedita Kapoor

### INTRODUCTION

The demand for fairer representation of various sections of the society in politics, economics, education and employment has been gaining ground consistently over the years. It is now an accepted principle for a state to advance the interests of the marginalised to bring them more opportunities through various policy measures.

As a result, Anne Phillips points out, there has been an increased focus on ‘demands for political presence’ in order to bring into political power those groups that have hitherto been under-represented for various reasons.<sup>1</sup> This has further led to a demand for a more “adequate representation” of different social groups in the government, resulting in actions like quotas for women in political parties to break down old power structures and build a more equitable society.

Despite constituting almost half the world population, women have consistently failed to turn their numerical strength into political power across the world. It is only in recent years that some Scandinavian and African states have been able to break this pattern, with Rwanda becoming the first ever country to have more female members of parliament than men. Other countries like Bolivia, Cuba, Mexico, South Africa, Ecuador as well as Scandinavian states have seen a steady rise in number of women representation in national parliaments – clocking figures of above 40 per cent.

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, Anne. *The Politics of Presence – The Political Representation of Gender, Ethnicity and Race*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

However, these encouraging statistics mask a deep rooted problem where based on the most recent data, women constitute just 22.7 per cent of world parliaments.<sup>2</sup> Not only does this lack of presence of women undermine democratic principles, it also impacts economic development and promotion of gender equality. Some have even argued low female representation as violating the “fundamental democratic rights”.<sup>3</sup>

Various factors have been found to influence the representation of women in national parliaments. These include a complex mix of political, socio-economic and cultural factors – all of which come together to determine the gender gap in political representation in national legislatures across various countries of the world.

Highlighting the need for more equal gender presence in the parliaments, Lovenduski and Norris argue that while on several traditional issues (say free market economy and moral values), men and women display similar viewpoints, they show remarkable differences on issues (like affirmative action) concerning women’s “ability to lead an independent life.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> World Average - Women in National Parliaments / Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Shvedova, Nadezhda. *Obstacles to Women’s Participation in Parliament* / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Lovenduski, Joni; Norris, Pippa. *Westminster Women: the Politics of Presence* // *Political Studies*, 2003, No. 51(1), pp. 84-102.

On the basis of data compiled in the British parliament, the authors conclude that while on major policy issues political parties remain as divided as ever – gender representation notwithstanding – “men and women politicians differ most significantly over issues that directly affect woman’s autonomy” cutting across party lines. Hence, they conclude that an increased presence of women in politics has the potential to raise critical issues of gender justice.

Similar research by others also indicates that while both sexes are interested in the same policy issues, women bring additional perspectives to the table. It also forces parties to reveal their stand on various gender-based issues and in fact extends the agenda of the parliament to make it more inclusive, presenting before it issues that without the presence of women would be neglected by legislators.

For instance, women legislators have been found to press issues as diverse and important as domestic violence, rape, forced marriage, female genital mutilation among others.

Also, a slow increase in the presence of women eventually makes it a normal phenomenon,<sup>5</sup> paving the way for a more equitable parliament. In fact, a sustained presence of women in parliament over the years has also been linked to a reduction in the “gender differences” between male and female parliamentarians on issues on women’s interests in Sweden.<sup>6</sup>

This understanding is vital in case of Russia since there exists a belief about how pursuing particular interests of women or a “policy with a woman face” is considered “weak, defective, inferior and secondary.”<sup>7</sup>

This fear among women of being not taken seriously if they focus on their gender is countered by above mentioned empirical research

that suggests women and men politicians while working on party lines and following its ideology on the variety of issues that confront a parliament also manage to expand the agenda, benefiting the larger population.

## WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN THE SOVIET ERA

The division of work in the Soviet Union was based on the “needs of the communist state,” wherein despite the progressive nature of laws regarding work, pay, abortion, maternity leave and equal employment benefits among others, there was a widespread “acceptance of supposedly natural sexual differences followed by perceiving of a secondary position (for women) in all spheres as a natural.”<sup>8</sup>

Experts like Sarah Ashwin argue that gender was always a “key organizing principle” in the Soviet system, wherein masculinity was “embodied within the state” as the main provider.<sup>9</sup> In what was seen as emancipation, the law permitted divorce and allowed women to exercise control over earnings and property after marriage.

Despite the progressive tendencies, the role of women in the family was not subject to change and while men were marginalized from the family unit, the women were expected to fulfill both roles as a worker and a mother, further causing consternation among the opposite sex who perceived it as a lack of power. In fact, women participated in the work force in the Soviet Union to the tune of 90 per cent while at the same time handling as much as 75 per cent of household responsibilities.

As Racioppi and O’Sullivan See point out, this was done without any “labour saving technology.”<sup>10</sup> But despite their high presence in the workforce, the authors found that most of

<sup>5</sup> Karam, Azza; Lovenduski, Joni. Women in Parliament: Making a Difference / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers, Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Wängnerud, Lena. Sweden: A Step-wise Development / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers. Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Popkova, Ludmila. Political Empowerment of Women in Russia: Discourses and Strategies // *Sociologija: Mintis ir Veiksmas*, 2005, No. 1, pp. 96-109.

<sup>8</sup> Popkova, Ludmila. Political Empowerment of Women in Russia: Discourses and Strategies // *Sociologija: Mintis ir Veiksmas*, 2005, No. 1, pp. 96-109.

<sup>9</sup> Ashwin, Sarah. Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia. London: Routledge, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Racioppi, Linda; O’Sullivan See, Katherine. Organizing Women before and after the fall: Women’s Politics in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia // *Signs*, 1995, No. 20(4), pp. 818-850.

them were concentrated in the “poorly paid sections” of work. This is important because experts in the field have now concluded that it is not the extent of labour force participation but the extent of participation in professional sectors of the economy that ultimately facilitates political representation.

The economic crisis that preceded the break-up of the Soviet Union led to a reduction in number of women employed which was as high as double the rate of male unemployment by some estimates in the early 90’s. Popkova also points to the absence of any strong debate in the society on gender relations of the kind that took place in Europe and US during second wave feminism from 1960s to 1980s, eventually leading to stronger women’s movements sparking off campaigns for better representation in various sectors.<sup>11</sup>

Also, despite 33 per cent quota for women in the Supreme Soviet, there was a remarkable lack of women leaders at the higher echelons of the system. Semenova points to the fact that only two women were appointed as ministers between 1923 and 1991, with their total presence in Central Committee and Politburo at a mere three per cent “during the entire Soviet period.”<sup>12</sup>

The state centric nature of the Soviet Union also meant women had less experience when it comes to organising and activism, making it difficult to convince them to become politically active. As Moser points out, this meant years of “token promotion of women without corresponding political or economic power.”<sup>13</sup>

Thus, in the Soviet Union, the women had the responsibility to be both workers and mothers, securing their position through paid work while men had more “higher status” roles as

managing the system.<sup>14</sup> The collapse of the Soviet system has since brought back the gender binary fiercely, casting men as the main providers with women expected to nurture and reproduce.

**WOMEN IN THE DUMA<sup>15</sup>  
IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA**

While the quotas for women up to the level of the Supreme Soviet ensured a significant presence of the female population in the legislature, the dismantling of the system led to a sharp decline.

From constituting 33 per cent of the members of the 1984 Supreme Soviet, women’s representation dropped to a mere 7 per cent in the 1989 Congress of People’s Deputies.

The low level of representation continued even after the breakup of the Soviet Union as the quota system was not introduced in the Duma (See *Table 1*).<sup>16</sup>

*Table 1*

**Representation of women in Russian Duma elections<sup>17</sup>**

Duma election year	Women representation (in per cent)	Number of women (450 seats)
1993 (PR + SMD)*	13.5	60
1995 (PR + SMD)	10.5	46
1999 (PR + SMD)	7.7	34
2003 (PR + SMD)	9.8	44
2007 (only PR)	14	63
2011 (only PR)	13.6	61

\* PR – Proportional Representation. SMD – Single Member District

<sup>14</sup> Ashwin, Sarah. *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*. London: Routledge, 2002.

<sup>15</sup> For the purpose of this article, the focus will be on women representation in the lower house of Russian parliament i.e. the State Duma and not the upper house, the Federation Council.

<sup>16</sup> There are 450 seats in the Duma that till 2003 parliamentary elections were filled half through proportional representation based on party list and half through plurality based single mandate electoral districts. Before the 2007 elections, this was amended and the next two elections saw all 450 seats being filled through PR method. For the 2016 elections, the old dual method has been reintroduced.

<sup>17</sup> Source: Vardanian, Razmik A; Kochkina, Elena V. *Elections – The Gender Gap // Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia*, 2007, No. 45(4), pp. 9-29.

<sup>11</sup> Popkova, Ludmila. *Political Empowerment of Women in Russia: Discourses and Strategies // Sociologija: Mintis ir Veiksmas*, 2005, No. 1, pp. 96-109.

<sup>12</sup> Semenova, Elena. *Ministerial and Parliamentary Elites in an Executive-Dominated System: Post-Soviet Russia 1991–2009 // Comparative Sociology*, 2011, No. 10(6), pp. 908-927.

<sup>13</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

The figures compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) put Russia at 94<sup>th</sup> position out of 181 countries in terms of women's representation in the year 2003. By 2007, this had gone up by ten places to end up at 84<sup>th</sup> position while in 2011, Russia stood at 91<sup>st</sup> in a classification of 189 countries.<sup>18</sup> The same year, European average of women representation in both houses of parliament was at 20.9 per cent<sup>19</sup> while for Russia that figure stood at 11.1 per cent. Since then, the figure for Russia has inched up to 14.5 per cent. The latest statistics of 2015 put Russia at 100<sup>th</sup> position in terms of women representation in parliament, between Romania and Niger.<sup>20</sup>

It is clear that the rate of female representation has not undergone any significant change since the first Duma was elected in 1993. Politicians like Irina Khakamada have stressed the need of quotas to improve the situation while also lamenting the lack of financial resources when it comes to women fighting elections. While the parties have across the board increased the number of women “nominated on the party lists,” it has not been enough to substantially lead to changes at the national level due to various reasons discussed further ahead.

As Vardanian and Kochkina point out, the reawakening of a conservative attitude and the patriarchal system has meant a decline in the female presence in the labour market, especially in “the entrepreneurial sphere” where women are losing out to men, and as will be seen in the coming discussion, ultimately impacting their ability to be a strong political force.<sup>21</sup>

This phenomena is also reflected in Russia's Human Development Index (HDI) compiled by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) which in 2015 showed labour force participate rate for Russian men at

71.7 per cent in 2015 while the corresponding figure for women was at 51.7 per cent. The contrast can be seen here with Rwanda and Sweden, both of which have high levels of women representation in parliament – the former through quotas, the latter through voluntary party lists and social change. In Rwanda, the labour force participation rate for men vs women stands at 86.4 and 85.3 per cent respectively while in Sweden the same figure is 60.3 and 67.9 per cent.<sup>22</sup> While labour force participation does not on its own affect women representation but rather the kind of jobs women engage in (professional vs lower level jobs) that has an impact, the access to job market has the indirect benefit of making female participants financially independent, gaining more awareness and coming in contact with male-dominated structures that form the bedrock of any successful political campaign.

Also, female representation at the ministerial level is dismally low, where in the cabinet, “women held only 15 of 485 ministerial posts between 1991–2009, with just eight women accounting for all 15 posts,” despite the fact that ministers need not be elected politicians. Also, women are mostly relegated to “health, culture or social affairs” portfolios, keeping them out of the influential cabinet posts that offer more chance of garnering power and moving ahead in political circles.<sup>23</sup>

As per the data available with IPU, the female representation for the Upper House or the Federation Council also is dismal at 0.6 per cent in 1997, 3.4 per cent in 1999, 4.7 per cent in 2007 and 8 per cent in 2011. The total per centage of women in ministerial positions in 2008 at the federal level was just 9.5 per cent.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Women in National Parliaments / Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2011. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif311211.htm>

<sup>19</sup> Women in Parliament in 2011: The Year in Perspective/Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2011. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnpersp11-e.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> World Classification – Women in national parliaments / Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

<sup>21</sup> Vardanian, Razmik A; Kochkina, Elena V. Elections – The Gender Gap // *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia*, 2007, No. 45(4), pp. 9-29.

<sup>22</sup> Human Development Report / United Nations Development Program, 2015. Mode of access: [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015\\_human\\_development\\_report\\_1.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report_1.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Semenova, Elena. Ministerial and Parliamentary Elites in an Executive-Dominated System: Post-Soviet Russia 1991–2009 // *Comparative Sociology*, 2011, No. 10(6), pp. 908-927.

<sup>24</sup> Progress of the World's Women: Who Answers to Women? Gender & Accountability / UNIFEM, 2009. Mode of access: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2008/1/progress-of-the-world-s-women-2008-2009-who-answers-to-women>

In 1995, Russia did sign the Beijing Declaration that commits it to take “steps towards gender equality, including encouraging women’s participation in public life and the adoption of gender equality as a goal for all policies.”<sup>25</sup> The author also draws attention to the 2002 Russian government document “Gender Strategy of the Russian Federation” formulated to promote equality but argues that it fails to list ways to accomplish the same, besides hardly being discussed in public.

## GLOBAL FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN REPRESENTATION

### Political Factors

Scholars overwhelmingly agree that the type of electoral system has a deep impact on the level of women’s representation in the country. Kenworthy and Malami point out that in a system where women represent just a “part of a larger group of candidates,” parties seem more willing to nominate more women candidates who have less difficulty in securing votes as compared to a system where the election is directly between two candidates.<sup>26</sup>

That is the reason a Proportional Representation (PR) system, where party lists determine the final elected candidates is considered more helpful for women unlike the plurality system based on Single Member Districts (SMD) (where there is a zero-sum election in which only one candidate emerges victorious). Kunovich and Paxton further argue that a PR system forces parties to be seen as progressive and accommodating women, thus leading to women being named on party lists to seem credible.<sup>27</sup>

An increase in the presence of right wing parties has a clear negative impact on women’s

representation<sup>28</sup> while a left leaning government that have an increased commitment “to reduce gender inequality” have the opposite effect, but it has been seen that slowly non-left parties too are working to increase female presence in their ranks.<sup>29</sup>

Quotas have also been found to have an impact but their effect varies based on what kind of quota has been implemented and at what level. These quotas can be at the level of the party, which take voluntary decision to allot a certain per centage of women as nominees or it can be done in the elected legislatures via a new law or constitutional amendment. While these quotas have been found to not have a very deep impact in developed countries, primarily because they do so at a level when female representation is already at a higher level; the affirmative action of reserving seats for women in national legislatures has been found to have a very “significant and positive” impact in developing and less developed countries.<sup>30</sup>

In all the elections held in 2011, the countries that had implemented electoral quotas saw 27.4 per cent of seats being filled by women. In contrast, those countries with no quotas had filled 15.7 per cent of seats through women in their parliaments. Those countries where political parties had implemented voluntary quotas, this figure stood at 17.2 per cent.<sup>31</sup> The abolishment of quotas, as has been seen in Central Asia after the end of the Soviet Union, resulted in a sharp decline in the number of women being elected and since then, the number has not risen

<sup>25</sup> Chandler, Andrea. *Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia – A Wayward Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

<sup>26</sup> Kenworthy, Lane; Malami, Melissa. *Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis* // *Social Forces*, 1999, No. 78(1), pp. 235-268.

<sup>27</sup> Kunovich, Sheri; Paxton, Pamela. *Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women’s National Political Representation*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005, No. 111(2), pp. 505-552.

<sup>28</sup> Matland, Richard E. *Women’s Representation in National Legislatures: Developed and Developing Countries*. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 1998, No. 23(1), pp. 109-25; Leyenaar, Monique. *Challenges to Women’s Political Representation in Europe* // *Signs*, 2008, No. 34(1), pp. 1-7.

<sup>29</sup> Kenworthy, Lane; Malami, Melissa. *Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis* // *Social Forces*, 1999, No. 78(1), pp. 235-268.

<sup>30</sup> Rosen, Jennifer. *The Effects of Political Institutions on Women’s Political Representation: A Comparative Analysis of 168 Countries from 1992 to 2010* // *Political Research Quarterly*, 2013, No. 66(2), pp. 306-321.

<sup>31</sup> *Women in Parliament in 2011: The Year in Perspective* / Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2011. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnpersp11-e.pdf>

above 12 per cent in any of the five republics.<sup>32</sup> A similar effect has also been seen in Russia, where unlike the Soviet Union, there are no specific quotas for women in the Duma or Federation Council.

Scholars also believe that relying solely on quotas might not be in the best interest of women and that the process should go along with creating better conditions for women's entry into politics at all levels. But till that happens, quotas are seen as a way to counter "hidden barriers" that restrict entry of women into politics. The states like Argentina, Costa Rica, Mozambique, Rwanda and South Africa have introduced quota with impressive results, making them leaders in women representation, sometimes even ahead of the Scandinavian countries that have led such lists for a long time now.<sup>33</sup>

### Socio-Economic Factors

Matland found that labour force participation of women had a significant impact on their political participation even as he failed to find a significant difference in the latter due to university education levels.<sup>34</sup> In other words, the author concluded that a higher level of education did not affect either positively or negatively the female presence in politics, even though it did increase political activism. Kunovich and Paxton found a similar pattern when it came to tertiary education levels, saying it had not very "significant effects on political outcomes for women."<sup>35</sup> Despite the common logic that higher education would lead to increased participation of female voters, thus leading to an increase in more women being

elected, Kenworthy and Malami also concluded that this factor was not significant.<sup>36</sup>

They, unlike Matland, also found out that an increase in labour force participation of women was another ingredient that failed to lead to a commensurate rise in their presence in legislatures. In fact, Kunovich and Paxton point out that increased economic activity had a negative effect on women participation in certain states, concluding that this was due to overwork and not enough presence in professional positions, rather than a reflection on labour force participation and its effect on political representation.<sup>37</sup> All of them, however, agree that the type of work force participation matters. When the type of work women were engaged in was analysed, the researchers found with a great statistical significance that an increase of women in professional sectors (like lawyers, bankers, financial services) directly impacted their numbers in parliament.

While Kenworthy and Malami did not find the level of development or economic wealth of women to be critical factors,<sup>38</sup> Matland argued that while the level of development on its own might not be a significant factor, it makes a difference when combined with cultural factors.<sup>39</sup> He argues that this happens because economic development of a country "breaks down traditional values, reduces fertility rates, increases urbanization, education and labour force participation for women," ultimately leading to more progressive attitudes that help women participation in politics.

<sup>32</sup> Cocoran-Nantes, Yvonne. *Lost Voices: Central Asian Women Confronting Transition*. London: Zed Books, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Dahlerup, Drude. *Increasing Women's Political Representation: New Trends in Gender Quotas / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> Matland, Richard E. *Women's Representation in National Legislatures: Developed and Developing Countries*. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 1998, No. 23(1), pp. 109-25.

<sup>35</sup> Kunovich, Sheri; Paxton, Pamela. *Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005, No. 111(2), pp. 505-552.

<sup>36</sup> Kenworthy, Lane; Malami, Melissa. *Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis // Social Forces*, 1999, No. 78(1), pp. 235-268.

<sup>37</sup> Kunovich, Sheri; Paxton, Pamela. *Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005, No. 111(2), pp. 505-552.

<sup>38</sup> Kenworthy, Lane; Malami, Melissa. *Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis // Social Forces*, 1999, No. 78(1), pp. 235-268.

<sup>39</sup> Matland, Richard E. *Women's Representation in National Legislatures: Developed and Developing Countries*. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 1998, No. 23(1), pp. 109-25.

## Cultural Factors

The researchers in their macro study of countries from around the world also found cultural factors to be of deep significance when it comes to representation of women in parliaments. While Protestantism was found to be the least resistant to presence of women in the sector, Catholics, Orthodox and Islam were all found to be behind lowered representation of female population in political system. However, as Kunovich and Paxton explain, this restriction is only seen in the nomination of candidates and once they have been nominated, religion has no impact on the electability of women candidates.<sup>40</sup>

They also extend the argument for cultural factors, placing a heavy emphasis on ideology affecting female participation, which besides religion considers ideas on gender, place of a woman in a society and entrenchment of patriarchy among other variables used to judge the criteria. Kenworthy and Malami study egalitarian attitudes across regions as another dimension of cultural factor, finding that Scandinavian countries have been most successful in instilling such behaviour which is also reflected in the high presence of women in their national parliaments.<sup>41</sup>

Also, it must be noted that Scandinavian countries have achieved a high rate of women representation without introducing formal quotas. A rise of women's movement and pressure from the society led parties to nominate more women and create better conditions for them to be able to compete at par with men.<sup>42</sup>

Matland, through his analysis, thus concluded that these cultural factors were relevant and combined with level of development led to an "increased integration of women into all

spheres of political life."<sup>43</sup> In fact, Kunovich and Paxton argue that the effect of cultural norms is so strong that they can lead to a low female representation despite the presence of a "favourable political system" and "an adequate supply" of female candidates for political positions.<sup>44</sup>

Thus instead of just one factor impacting women representation in parliament, Rosen argues that it is a combination of these above mentioned factors that explains high or low levels of women in politics.<sup>45</sup> While one particular set of reasons might dominate in one country, another state might display a different combination of these above mentioned factors exerting influence. For instance, both Rwanda and Sweden have high levels of women representation in national parliaments but the reasons for the phenomenon are different from each other.

## UNDERSTANDING LOW FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN RUSSIAN DUMA

According to the World Economic Forum report,<sup>46</sup> the gender gap when it came to political empowerment in Russia was so immense that the country ranked at 128 out of 145 countries, even as it scored fairly well on economic participation, education and health (ranks 42, 27 and 42 respectively). When the report was first compiled in 2006, Russia had still fared badly at the level of political empowerment, standing at a dismal 108 out of 115 countries then surveyed.

This gap is just an indicator of the challenges faced by Russian women while making their presence felt in the political life of the country.

<sup>43</sup> Matland, Richard E. Women's Representation in National Legislatures: Developed and Developing Countries. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 1998, No. 23(1), pp. 109-25.

<sup>44</sup> Kunovich, Sheri; Paxton, Pamela. Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005, No. 111(2), pp. 505-552.

<sup>45</sup> Rosen, Jennifer. The Effects of Political Institutions on Women's Political Representation: A Comparative Analysis of 168 Countries from 1992 to 2010 // *Political Research Quarterly*, 2013, No. 66(2), pp. 306-321.

<sup>46</sup> The Global Gender Gap Report 2015 / World Economic Forum, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Kunovich, Sheri; Paxton, Pamela. Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 2005, No. 111(2), pp. 505-552.

<sup>41</sup> Kenworthy, Lane; Malami, Melissa. Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis // *Social Forces*, 1999, No. 78(1), pp. 235-268.

<sup>42</sup> Dahlerup, Drude. Increasing Women's Political Representation: New Trends in Gender Quotas / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

For the purpose of this article, we will concentrate on data at the federal level and hence look at women representation in the Duma.

The analysis will be done by examining the above mentioned global factors – political, socio-economic and cultural – in the light of statistics available for Russia and see if they can explain the low level of female representation of women at the federal level here.

### Political Factors in Russia

From 1993 to 2003, the 450 Duma seats were elected through a mix of PR and SMD system, with half the seats being allotted for each electoral method. All indicators till now have pointed out that a proportional representation (PR) system based on party lists is the “single most important variable affecting women’s legislative representation.”<sup>47</sup>

The parliaments that implemented PR system elected 22.6 per cent women as against 18.1 per cent women in systems using plurality-majority electoral system. The states using a mixed method had a corresponding rate of 19.1 per cent,<sup>48</sup> with the PR method being responsible for more elected women even in this case.

However, Moser argues that this relationship in Russia is more ambiguous.<sup>49</sup> While the parties nominated more women candidates in their party lists in recent years, it did not lead to significant changes in their numbers in the Duma mainly because women’s names were “relegated to the basement” of the lists, reducing their chances of being in the “zone of passability.”<sup>50</sup>

As a result, if one leaves out Women of Russia party in 1993 elections, the SMD sys-

tem saw more women being elected than the PR one. The number of women candidates getting elected in SMDs only increased in 1995 elections, with most women candidates still at the lower end in party lists. As a result, LDPR, *Yabloko* and *Our Home is Russia* finally selected one, two and three women respectively from their party list at the end. Moser also points out that the only exception was the *Communist Party*, which elected nine women, up from three in 1993 due to its better performance in PR seats. At the same time it also elected eight candidates through the SMDs, just one less than through PR.

The number of women candidates nominated via both PR and SMD systems have been roughly the same, indicating that the former has not been a factor in encouraging women nomination and has in fact led to lesser number of women being elected as compared to the latter majority system.

In 1995, the number of women elected through plurality went up to 13.8 per cent from 11.6 per cent in 1993 while the same figure for PR actually registered a decline to 6.7 per cent as opposed to 15.1 per cent in 1993.<sup>51</sup> In 2003 Duma elections, SMDs again contributed to “approximately half of all women candidates elected.”

However, Vardanian and Kochkina point to a slow rise in number of women being elected via party lists instead of the single mandate districts (SMD).<sup>52</sup> While 20 out of 34 women in 1999 Duma were elected through SMD, the number was at 20 out of 24 in 2003 – raising hopes for women being slowly included more at the upper levels of party lists where they would have more chances of making it to the parliament.

With the switch to a completely proportional representation system by the time of 2007 elections, it led to an increase in the percentage of women in the Duma from 9.8 in 2003 to 14 per cent. While still low, this increase has

<sup>47</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

<sup>48</sup> *Women in Parliament in 2011: The Year in Perspective* / Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2011. Mode of access: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmpers11-e.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

<sup>50</sup> Vardanian, Razmik A; Kochkina, Elena V. Elections – The Gender Gap // *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia*, 2007, No. 45(4), pp. 9-29.

<sup>51</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

<sup>52</sup> Vardanian, Razmik A; Kochkina, Elena V. Elections – The Gender Gap // *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia*, 2007, No. 45(4), pp. 9-29.



been attributed to a “slightly higher proportion of electoral candidates on the party lists in 2007 were women.”

Also, the raising of threshold for entry to Duma from 5 per cent to 7 per cent lowered the number of parties in the parliament, allowing them to allot more candidates in their party list, thus aiding women representation despite their presence at the lower end of the list.<sup>53</sup>

Women in Russia also hold “lower positions in parties” (51 per cent) and are less likely to lead as compared to men (60 per cent). Only 20 per cent of women activists say they would like to run for office, even as parties make little effort to encourage them to take a more active role.<sup>54</sup>

Despite this low level of women representation, instead of concrete steps being taken to promote grassroots mobilisation of women into politics, the regime has co-opted members of the elite in Russia, “nominating big names, such as celebrities, singers and athletes to attract voters.”<sup>55</sup>

It has, however, been deduced that most celebrities do not serve for more than one or two terms, with a few exceptions.<sup>56</sup> Also, the author explains that parties have been unwilling to place women at a higher position in party lists, making their election to the parliament difficult and displaying a unique anomaly wherein women would be more successful in single member districts rather than the via party lists, where once nominated they can use different resources for a more positive result.

Moser also points out that the left parties, traditionally believed to aid women representation, have not led from the front in Russia.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> McIntosh Sundstrom, Lisa. *Russian Women’s Activism: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back* / In Amrita Basu (ed.), *Women’s Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*. Colorado: Westview Press, 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Andreenkova, Anna. *Women’s Representation in the Parliaments of Russia and Ukraine* // *Sociological Research*, 2002, No. 41(2), pp 5-25.

<sup>55</sup> Johnson, Janet E. *Pussy Riot as a feminist project: Russia’s gendered informal politics* // *Nationalities Papers*, 2014, No. 42(4), pp. 583-590.

<sup>56</sup> Semenova, Elena. *Ministerial and Parliamentary Elites in an Executive-Dominated System: Post-Soviet Russia 1991–2009* // *Comparative Sociology*, 2011, No. 10(6), pp. 908-927.

<sup>57</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation*

In fact, it was the ruling United Russia party that in 2011 sent the highest number of women to parliament at 18 per cent followed by social-democrat *Just Russia* at 16 per cent. The *Communist Party of Russian Federation* was far behind at a mere four per cent,<sup>58</sup> even less than the seven per cent elected under the banner of right-wing *Liberal Democratic Party of Russia*.

Golosov believes that this might be the result of the “left wing vote” in Russia being “indicative of the socially conservative orientations of the electorate,”<sup>59</sup> thus making the cultural, ideological impact of gender ideology visible despite left leaning sentiments. Otherwise, party ideology does not seem to have a direct impact on “per centage of women on a party list” in Russia.<sup>60</sup>

The 2001 Law on Political Parties calls upon parties to include women in the party lists but has no enforcement mechanism and has been routinely ignored by the parties. A bill proposing to include 30 per cent women as candidates by parties and “permitting no more than two consecutive candidates of one gender on a party list” failed to pass. An attempt to bring in similar measures in 2005 failed again.<sup>61</sup>

The Duma representation for women, as a result, has hovered at 13-14 per cent in recent years, with most of representatives coming from United Russia. A quota bill for women representation was introduced in the Duma in 2005 but fell victim to “traditional psychology of the majority of male Duma deputies” and several objections were raised scuttling the bill.<sup>62</sup>

in Russia. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Kittilson, Miki C.; Schwindt-Bayer, Leslie. *The Gendered Effects of Electoral Institutions: Political Engagement and Participation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

<sup>59</sup> Golosov, Grigorii. *Interdependence Effects in Mixed-Superposition Electoral Systems: An Empirical Test on Women’s Participation in Sub-national Elections* // *Journal of Elections - Public Opinion and Parties*, 2014, No. 24(4), pp. 434-454.

<sup>60</sup> Andreenkova, Anna. *Women’s Representation in the Parliaments of Russia and Ukraine* // *Sociological Research*, 2002, No. 41(2), pp 5-25.

<sup>61</sup> Chandler, Andrea. *Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia – A Wayward Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

<sup>62</sup> Vardanian, Razmik A.; Kochkina, Elena V. *Elections – The Gender Gap* // *Anthropology*

Similar has been the situation in other post-Soviet states as well, where the Soviet past of thinking about quotas as “forced emancipation” has dented its support even though the idea has no empirical basis. This was reflected in the thinking at the highest levels as President Putin remarked: “Is it necessary to introduce quotas? I don’t know, I am not ready to answer that question. It might be even worse to have some kind of discrimination according to sex... But whether we are going to introduce quotas or not, we should certainly aspire to make the authorities more balanced.”<sup>63</sup>

### Socio-Economic Factors in Russia

As has been explained earlier, it has been found that while most socio-economic factors do not directly affect female representation in parliaments, the presence of women in professional jobs does have a crucial impact.

This factor is especially visible in Russia, where very few female parliament members have been found to have come from professional fields like “law, military or journalism.”<sup>64</sup> Civil servants, who made up 15 per cent of MPs in the 2007 Duma, have also failed to push more women into the domain. That is because as Nechemias found out, women were found to hold just 3.9 per cent of “responsible government posts”<sup>65</sup> even though their share in the state working class was about 44 per cent.

By 1996, at the top of the government, women were represented to the tune of mere 2.6 per cent. As opposed to this, about 80 per cent of women working for the executive branch of the Russian government were clustered at the lowest level.

This is a reflection of a deeply entrenched idea of “gender appropriate professions.” Also, men are hired for jobs that are well paid while

women are relegated to lower paying ones.<sup>66</sup> The UN points to the disparity in the “command over economic resources” measured as Gross National Income (GNI) per capita between men and women. While Russian men had a GNI per capita of 28,287, women were at 17,269.<sup>67</sup>

In the post communist Russia, women not only constitute 70 per cent of the unemployed but have also seen their “relative earnings drop from 70 per cent of men’s wages during Soviet times to 40 per cent in the post communist period.” This is also reflected in the election figures where while 20 per cent of men in SMDs could be classified as “economic elite,” women per centage was only at seven due to their lesser success on the economic front after collapse of Soviet Union,<sup>68</sup> making women’s occupation a critical factor like the rest of the world when it comes to political representation.

The International Labour Organisation in its latest annual report examines this gender wage gap, concluding that both explained and unexplained factors are responsible for the phenomenon worldwide.<sup>69</sup> The explained factors include “observable labour market characteristics, such as experience, level of education and employment sector,” the unexplained factors include “risk taking, working unusual hours, higher mobility, competition, ambition, work effort and difference in responsibilities. In addition, direct discrimination also plays a role in exacerbating the gender wage gap. Employers may discriminate against workers based on their subjective prejudice against women.” It also concluded that as far as Russia is concerned, it is the unexplained factors that have had the

& *Archeology of Eurasia*, 2007, No. 45(4), pp. 9-29.

<sup>63</sup> Chandler, Andrea. *Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia – A Wayward Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

<sup>64</sup> Semenova, Elena. Ministerial and Parliamentary Elites in an Executive-Dominated System: Post-Soviet Russia 1991–2009 // *Comparative Sociology*, 2011, No. 10(6), pp. 908-927.

<sup>65</sup> Nechemias, Carol. Politics in Post-Soviet Russia: Where Are the Women // *Demokratizatsiya*, 2000, No. 8(2), pp. 199-218.

<sup>66</sup> McIntosh Sundstrom, Lisa. *Russian Women’s Activism: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back* / In Amrita Basu (ed.), *Women’s Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*. Colorado: Westview Press, 2010.

<sup>67</sup> Human Development Report / United Nations Development Program, 2015. Mode of access: [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015\\_human\\_development\\_report\\_1.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report_1.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> Moser, Robert G. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Women at Work / International Labour Organisation, 2016. Mode of access: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_457317.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf)

most impact, since Russian women score rather well on other explained criteria like education and experience.<sup>70</sup>

By the end of 2011, the percentage gap between number of women and men working had risen to 17 per cent from six per cent in 2001. Also, while women have shown initiative in small businesses, they still remain out of the “close networks that have formed between government officials and businesses,” negatively impacting their ability to progress further to the bigger league.<sup>71</sup> This also results in less number of “business and political connections” of women and a weakened trust in them by “economic and political elite,” directly affecting their campaign finance chances in case they get nominated.<sup>72</sup> Even the well educated women are not part of the circles that enable men to get ahead in politics (like lobbying and networking)<sup>73</sup> and thus lack training from early days, a gap that intensifies as years pass.

### Cultural Factors in Russia

It has been found that cultural factors like religion, ideology, ideas on gender and women’s position in society have a direct effect on women representation in parliament. An understanding of these factors can be gauged from the World Values Survey (WVS) that covers five year periods across various countries of the world.

In the WVS for the period 2010-2014, 19.9 per cent Russians strongly agreed and 37.4 per cent agreed that men make better political leaders than women. 31.5 per cent people disagreed on the issue.<sup>74</sup> On the issue there has not been a dramatic change in public opinion from

the period 1999, when the same question led to an 18.8 and 34.9 per cent people saying they strongly agree and agree that men make better political leaders, with 32.2 per cent of Russians disagreeing with the notion.<sup>75</sup> Contrast this with Sweden, one of the Scandinavian countries, which has historically had one of the highest female representations consistently, where a mere 3.3 per cent strongly agreed and 7.5 per cent agreed that men make better political leaders. An overwhelming 41.2 per cent and 44.3 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed about the idea.<sup>76</sup>

As has been pointed earlier, scholars have found a direct link between the culture of egalitarian attitude towards women and their representation in parliament. Strong patriarchal attitudes and traditional ideas are seen as hindering their progress. The World Values Survey, which looks at other gender related questions, is considered a fair barometer of attitudes regarding women. When asked about whether “women having the same rights as men” was an essential characteristic of democracy, 50.4 per cent of Russians said “yes” while 81.4 per cent Swedes replied in the affirmative, with the worldwide average being 60.5 per cent.<sup>77</sup>

When asked if men make better business leaders, 32.8 per cent of Russians agreed while the corresponding figure for Swedes was 7.1 per cent. While 15.2 per cent of Russians strongly agreed with the idea, only 1.3 per cent of Swedes did. When it came to disagreeing, while 42.1 per cent and 47.6 per cent Swedes disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 35.9 and 9.3 per cent of Russians did the same.<sup>78</sup> All of the responses are a reflection

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Black, J.L.; Johns, Michael. *Russia after 2012: From Putin to Medvedev to Putin – Continuity, Change, or Revolution*. London: Routledge, 2013.

<sup>72</sup> Andreenkova, Anna. *Women’s Representation in the Parliaments of Russia and Ukraine // Sociological Research*, 2002, No. 41(2), pp 5-25.

<sup>73</sup> Shvedova, Nadezhda. *Obstacles to Women’s Participation in Parliament / In Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds.), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: International Idea, 2005.

<sup>74</sup> V51 – On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do / World Values Survey, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

<sup>75</sup> V101 – On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do / World Values Survey, 1999. Mode of access: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

<sup>76</sup> V51 – On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do / World Values Survey, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

<sup>77</sup> V139 – Democracy: Women have the same rights as men / World Values Survey, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

<sup>78</sup> V53 – On the whole, men make better business executives than women do / World Values Survey, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

tion of negative attitudes towards women and go some way in explaining the difference in gender equality ideas in the two states, which is also reflected in their female composition of parliaments.

Research has also indicated a statistically significant difference in the women representation in countries following Islam and Orthodox Christianity. It must be noted that religion has seen a revival in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, with a “particularly marked increase among the younger age groups and among the better educated.” From 57 per cent of people identifying themselves as Russian Orthodox in 1991, the figure went up to 75 per cent in 1996,<sup>79</sup> while the number was at 74 per cent in 2012.<sup>80</sup> White and McAllister also found that while “believers have emerged as more conservative,” the church in Russia does not overtly interfere in political life.

However, it has shaped the attitudes of people on gender that are now reflected in their political representation.

The views of the church on the subject were reflected in 2013 in the words of Patriarch Kirill who argued that men and women had very specific roles that they must fulfil. Criticising feminism as a “very dangerous phenomenon,” he said “man has his gaze turned outward – he must work, make money – and woman must be focused inwards, where her children are, where her home is.” While he added that there is no restriction on the female population joining business or politics, they should “get their priorities straight” while criticising feminist leaders for remaining unmarried.<sup>81</sup>

Hence, as Johnson points out, in recent years, the “gender ideology” of traditional roles of wives and mothers for women has been combined with “pronatalism... and Orthodox Christian nationalism,” marking a coming together of various cultural factors in an overarching discourse of what women ought to do. A symptom of the current ideology can be understood from the fact that no “major legislation promoting gender equality” has been passed and the country is yet to have a law against domestic violence.<sup>82</sup> Also, the focus has been on reproductive capacities of women, for which they are ‘supported’ and not for their ‘contributions to the economy or the public sphere.’<sup>83</sup>

The women’s movement is especially weak in Russia with a generally prevalent negative attitude about “feminism.”<sup>84</sup> The press coverage of women politicians, unlike their male counterparts focuses heavily on their looks, personal lives and even rumours of alleged romantic interests, all of which serve to “diminish women’s standing” as strong political figures. The trend, also a carry-over from the Soviet days, reflected in the coverage of the women’s party that at various times focused on physical features of members or dismissed them as “boring.”<sup>85</sup>

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the political, socio-economic and cultural factors that are globally considered responsible in varying degrees to contribute to low women representation in national parliaments – and juxtaposing these with the case of Russia – the following conclusions can be drawn.

<sup>79</sup> White, Stephen; McAllister, Ian. Orthodoxy and Political Behavior in Postcommunist Russia // *Review of Religious Research*, 2000, No. 41(3), pp. 359-372.

<sup>80</sup> Number of Orthodox Church members shrinking in Russia, Islam on the rise – poll // *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, 2012. Mode of access: [http://rbth.com/articles/2012/12/17/number\\_of\\_orthodox\\_church\\_members\\_shrinking\\_in\\_russia\\_islam\\_on\\_the\\_r\\_21181.html](http://rbth.com/articles/2012/12/17/number_of_orthodox_church_members_shrinking_in_russia_islam_on_the_r_21181.html)

<sup>81</sup> Elder, Miriam. Feminism could destroy Russia, Russian Orthodox patriarch claims // *The Guardian*, April 9, 2013. Mode of access: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/09/feminism-destroy-russia-patriarch-kirill>

<sup>82</sup> Johnson, Janet E. Pussy Riot as a feminist project: Russia’s gendered informal politics // *Nationalities Papers*, 2014, No. 42(4), pp. 583-590.

<sup>83</sup> Chandler, Andrea. *Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia – A Wayward Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

<sup>84</sup> McIntosh Sundstrom, Lisa. *Russian Women’s Activism: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back / In Amrita Basu (ed.), Women’s Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*. Colorado: Westview Press, 2010.

<sup>85</sup> Nechemias, Carol. Politics in Post-Soviet Russia: Where Are the Women // *Demokratizatsiya*, 2000, No. 8(2), pp. 199-218.

The benefits of PR system as evident for women representation in the rest of the world are more ambiguous in case of Russia, especially since a complete PR system has been in place only for a few years. The placement of women at a lower scale on the party list reflects a lack of commitment on part of political parties to encourage women to enter parliament as well as an ideological barrier which considers men to be better political leaders, as has been pointed out in earlier analysis.

The introduction of quotas has also fallen foul due to an aversion to the idea owing to Soviet legacy and paternalistic attitudes, as reflected in Duma debates on the subject.

The phenomenon of more women in professional positions leading to an increased presence in parliament is reflected in Russia in line with world trend, where they have been clustered in lower paying jobs and very few women from professional fields have made it to the Duma.

While level of development alone does not determine women representation, when combined with cultural factors it has a deep impact on the same. This has been seen in Russia, which despite being the 10<sup>th</sup> largest economy

(by nominal GDP) and 6<sup>th</sup> largest (based on purchasing power parity), falls behind women representation when compared to other states in similar economic categories. This reflects a prominent role played by cultural factors including religion and attitudes towards women, as has been examined above.

It can be deduced that cultural factors have been exceptionally relevant in the case of low women representation in Russia. It does not mean that political and socio-economic factors have not impacted the phenomenon, but have rather been worsened by the presence of strong negative cultural factors that have impeded the rise of women in national politics half a century since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

As Chandler points out, the progress made by the government in promoting gender equality has ranged from being “slow” to “resistant,”<sup>86</sup> with even the women themselves failing to organize themselves to promote gender equality and a more balanced representation in national politics.

<sup>86</sup> Chandler, Andrea. *Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia – A Wayward Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

## Women in the Duma: Why Post-Soviet Russia Has Low Female Representation?

**Nivedita Kapoor**, PhD, Researcher, Center for Russian and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India). E-mail: kapoor.nivedita@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *Quarter of a century after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Russian Duma, lower house of Parliament, still has a low representation of women. The article seeks to examine the causes for this phenomenon. It examines the factors that have been found to be responsible for the gender gap in parliaments across the world. It will then present this evidence in the light of the Russian experience to understand what lies behind the low level of representation of women in Russian national parliament. A mix of political, socio-economic and cultural factors will be analysed in detail to find the causative aspects, analysing the inter-linkages between these various factors in play.*

**Key words:** *Russia, Duma, women, gender, quota, Soviet Union, Putin.*

## **Женщины в Государственной Думе: почему в постсоветской России сохраняется низкое представительство женщин в парламенте?**

**Nivedita Kapoor**, PhD, исследователь Центра России и Центральной Азии Университета Джавахарлала Неру, Нью-Дели, Индия.  
E-mail: kapoor.nivedita@gmail.com

***Аннотация:** Четверть века спустя после распада Советского Союза в Государственной Думе Российской Федерации по-прежнему сохраняется низкий уровень представительства женщин. В данной статье автор предпринимает попытку раскрыть причины этого явления. Автор исследует факторы, которые влияют на гендерное неравенство в парламентах мира, а затем останавливается на российском кейсе с целью обнаружить причины низкого женского представительства в российском парламенте. Для этого автор изучает целый комплекс факторов – политических, социально-экономических, культурных, выделяя те из них, которые влияют на эволюцию политической системы России.*

***Ключевые слова:** Россия, Дума, женщины, пол, квота, СССР, Путин.*