

Political Violence

= when the goal of the violence is to affect political integrity and when the means by which the violence is conducted also violates the personal integrity of individuals involved in politics (Bjarnegard 2018)

trends worldwide show online abuse of public reps is personalised

→ women tend to receive threats on their person which are often of a sexualised nature

→ men tends to be more susceptible to questions about their personal integrity and honesty

Violence Against Women Parliamentarians (2016)

- 85.2 per cent of female MPs who took part in the study said that they had suffered psychological violence in the course of their term of office.
- 46.9 per cent had received death threats or threats of rape or beating.
- 58.2 per cent had been the target of online sexist attacks on social networks.
- 67.9 per cent had been the target of comments relating to their physical appearance or based on gender stereotypes.
- 24.7 per cent had suffered sexual violence.
- 14.8 per cent had suffered physical violence.

Gender Aspects of Political Violence (GAPV)

Three characteristics:

1. targets women because of their gender
2. it takes a gendered form (e.g. sexualisation)
3. it has the purpose of discouraging and denying women the ability to participate equally in politics

Gender Aspects of Political Violence (GAPV) (cont)

→ political violence is gendered through: gendered motives, gendered forms, and gendered impacts (Bardall et al, 2020)

Types of Violence Experienced by Women

- physical
- psychological
- sexual
- economic
- semiotic violence/ symbolic annihilation → is a means of maintaining social inequality

Remarks

The current presence of gendered political violence raises “questions about the progress that has been made globally toward incorporating women as full political actors” (Krook, 2017)

General Trends

- both men and women in politics face significant and increasing levels of threats, harassment, and violence
- Gendered differences in terms of form/type of violence experienced by women in comparison to men
 - Women are more likely to experience violence with sexual connotations
- Young, single women are particular targets of political violence
- Although the volume of online threats and harassment is high for both men and women, researchers find that women are more likely than men to receive harassing and uncivil messages (Rhenault et al., 2019; Collignon and Rudig, 2021) and more likely to be attacked on the basis of their gender and sexuality (Erikson, et al. 202)
- Men more likely to experience physical violence while women are more likely to experience psychological violence

General Trends (cont)

- Visibility is a key factor, with higher levels of threats, abuse and harassment more likely to be directed at women who are in leadership positions, have high name recognition, or have been active in the media (Rhenault et al. 2019; Ward and McLoughlin, 2020; Håkansson, 2021; Herrick and Thomas, 2022).'
- Feminist women, and women who are identified with left-wing parties and causes are also more likely to face threats and harassment (Krook, 2017), violence and abuse (Krupeberg, 2018), and sexualized comments (Herrick and Thomas, 2022)
- Evidence from the US and Sweden also shows that constituents prefer to deal with female legislators which increases the level of contact but also the risk of hostility (Håkansson 2023)
- Evidence that political violence can be impacted by intersectionality of gender with race, ethnicity, youth and sexual orientation (IPU, 2016; Kuperberg, 2018; Collignon and Rudig, 2021). Other research findings, however, find that youth, religion, ethnicity, and age (Kuperberg, 2018; Håkansson, 2020) have limited or no impact.
- The varied findings in this area suggest that the relationship between gender, identity, and violence may vary across different social and cultural contexts.



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