# Women's Suffrage

Women’s suffrage also identified as female right to vote is a movement that campaigned for the equal female right to run the political office and even participate in elections. The movement experienced enormous challenges, and it took activists in America more than 100 years to win. Disagreements threatened the success of the movement, but at the end, they succeeded in their grievances.

In the mid-1800’s women began to lead a more social life, with activities outside the home. They became more involved in the church, which led to discussions of social issues such as the anti-slavery movement. Many of these more modern women also began to talk about equality with men, and after being granted full legal control over any property they brought into their marriage, they set their sights on the right for women to vote. Many women were at the forefront of the fight (Fowler, 2015).

Most nations in the 1820s and 30s had extended the franchise to all white men irrespective of their property or financial income. At that time, many forms of reforms were taking place in the America which was pressured by religious movements, anti-slavery organizations, States-temperance clubs and moral-reform groups. Women played a significant role in the movements. They proved that women had different parts to play in the society apart from taking care of her home and family.

The justification of the Rights of Woman in 1792 by Wollstonecraft spearheaded a campaign for women rights and freedom. The explanation made Wollstonecraft to be recognized as the "mother of feminism." Later in 1848, there was a meeting at Seneca Falls Convention in New York by a group of ladies who started to express a demand for the enfranchisement of U.S women (Frost-Knappman & Cullen-DuPont, 2014). The participants spent two days before agreeing on the content of the Declaration of Sentiments. Hence, the meeting was the first step in evolving campaign for their rights.

Nevertheless, the women suffrage movement was not that influential until in 1859 when a political cartoon was formed elegantly dressed and in the front of auditorium addressing a group of women and men who looked unruly and violent. The movement by that time had at least 5000 members who were widespread in different regions. Their main role was to ensure the governing bodies heard their demand.

Moreover, the movement proved that women had exceptional abilities and potential which could lead to development in any state. The crusade made men to have a different perception on what meant to be a woman and a citizen in America. Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are some of the more well-known names associated with women's suffrage, but Alice Paul and Lucy Stone were fundamental to the cause (Smith, Anderson, & Rackaway, 2015).

The beginning of civil war in the 1850s made the movement to lose momentum. However, at the end of the war, familiar queries of citizenship and suffrage were raised by the 14th and 15th Amendments. All citizens were protected by the 14th Amendment of the constitution (Fowler, 2015). The Amendment defined “citizens” as “male”. The 15th amendment entitled black males right to vote in 1870.

Stanton and Susan B. Anthony declined to support the 15th Amendment and in 1869 women came together and formed a group identified as National Woman Suffrage Association. The movement needed to implement substantial changes in the constitution so that females would exercise their rights in different state bodies. They stated that women were not different from men and hence they deserved equal rights.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1866 was the first female candidate to declare herself in the U.S Congress even though he was not allowed to vote. Victoria Woodhull who was less than 35 years in 1872 also formed her political party and declared herself as a president and this was illegal according to U.S policy at that time. The heroism in these women influenced other females to fight for their freedom (Frost-Knappman & Cullen-DuPont, 2014). Belva Ann Lockwood who was a lawyer by profession enhanced women’s suffrage that received respectful coverage in different major periodicals.

At the 19th century, some nations such as Idaho and Utah had given women right to vote. The World War 1 helped the suffragists advance their argument as women participated actively in the war in different ways (Smith, Anderson, & Rackaway, 2015). They proved that just like men, they were patriotic and hence they deserved all the citizenship rights.

The 19th Amendment to the constitution on 26th August 1920 recognized the women right to vote just like men. They were entitled all rights and responsibilities of citizenship. A great number of United States women exercised their political right for the first time in 1920 elections. They were happy to be given the privilege to vote an act which was not possible for many years. Their effort bored fruit, and this was a vast improvement in the U.S constitution. There was women liberation which shaped the way for the freedom and the rights the females enjoy today.

## Summary

The paper defines women’s suffrage as the results of a movement that campaigned for the equal rights of women to vote and run for political office. Women began to lead a more social life in the mid-1800s when they joined the anti-slavery movement. In the 1820s, women took part in religious movements, anti-slavery organizations, States-temperance clubs and moral-reform groups that advocated for reforms in America. For example, the justification of the Rights of Woman in 1792 by Wollstonecraft was the "mother of feminism" as it advanced women rights and freedom. Besides, the 1859 political cartoon that depicted an elegant woman addressing a group of women and men in an auditorium was the most significant point of the women suffrage movement. The paper asserts that the women suffrage movement was very influential subject to its capacity to change men’s view on women in America. Nevertheless, the movement encountered various challenges including the civil war in the 1850s. The 14th and 15th Amendments that emanated from the civil war heightened the advocacy for citizenship and suffrage. Indeed, 14th Amendment of the constitution protected the rights of all citizens including women. As a result, in 1866, Elizabeth Cady Stanton became the first woman to vie in the U.S Congress though she could not vote. The paper recognizes the National Woman Suffrage Association formed in 1869 to fight for substantial changes in the constitution to allow women exercise their rights in different state organizations. The World War 1 helped the women suffrage movement advance their argument in various platforms. The 19th Amendment to the American constitution enacted on 26th August 1920 allowed women to vote just like men.

## References

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