
"Panchayati Raj Institutions is A Most Power Full Instrument of The Women Empowerments: A Case Study"

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ABSTRACT

"Empowerment" as a multi-dimensional social process through which people gain control over their own lives, communities and society. Empowerment is then the process of obtaining these basic opportunities for marginalized people, either directly by those people, or through the help of non-marginalized others who share their own access to these opportunities. It also includes actively thwarting attempts to deny those opportunities. Empowerment also includes encouraging, and developing the skills for, self-sufficiency, with a focus on eliminating the future need for charity or welfare in the individuals of the group.

Key Words: *Panchayati Raj ,Challenges and Women Empowerment .*

INTRODUCTION

"Empowerment: is the capacity of individuals, groups and/or communities to take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve their own goals, and the process by which, individually and collectively, they are able to help themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives."

Robert Adams

"Empowerment is viewed as a process: the mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives.

Rapp port's (1984)

"Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. "

Joneson

Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities.

Empowerment is probably the totality of the following or similar capabilities:

- * Having decision-making power of their own
- * Having access to information and resources for taking proper decision
- * Having a range of options from which you can make choices (not just yes/no, either/or.)

- * Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making
- * Having positive thinking on the ability to make change
- * Ability to learn skills for improving one's personal or group power.
- * Ability to change others' perceptions by democratic means.
- * Involving in the growth process and changes that is never ending and self-initiated
- * Increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma

Empowerment forms an apogee of many a system of self-realization or of identity formation. Realizing the solipsistic impracticality of everyone anarchistic ally attempting to exercise power over everyone else, empowerment advocates have adopted the word "empowerment" to offer the attractions of such power, but they generally constrain its individual exercise to potentiality and to feel-good uses within the individual psyche. The concept of personal development is seen as important by many employers, with emphasis placed on continuous learning, increased self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Empowerment is ultimately driven by the individual's belief in their capability to influence events.

Women

A woman is a female human the term women (irregular plural: women) usually is used for an adult, with the term girl being the usual for a female child or adolescent. However, the term women are also sometimes used to identify a female human, regardless of age, as in phrases such as women's right.

Women Empowerment

“Empowerment of women would lead to empowerment of the nation----- **President of India.**

Women empowerment refers to the process by which women acquired recognition at par with men, to participate in the development process of the society through the political institutions as a partner with human dignity. Of late, one of the major instruments of delivering recognition and power of decision making to the population in general and women in particular has been the emergence of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Violence against women as the most shameful of human rights violation. Violence against women takes various forms such as domestic violence, rape, trafficking in women, forced prostitution and violence in armed conflict and honor killings, dowry related violence, female infanticide and parental sex selection in favour of male babies, female genital mutilation and other harmful practices and traditions. An empowered woman would be one who is self-confident, who critically analyses her environment and exercises control over decisions that affect her life. Women had a very respectable position and were awarded an honored place during the Vedic period it helped them in improving their social status and to maintain their overall social dignity in India. They enjoyed considerable freedom in choosing their mates participating in indifferent social, cultural, religious public function and related activities. Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities.

Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment emerged from debates generated by the women's movement during the 1980s when feminists, particularly from Third World countries, evinced dissatisfaction with the prevailing development discourse that was largely apolitical and economic in its orientation. While Paulo Freire (1973) did not use the term, his emphasis on 'conscientization' provided an important backdrop for those social activists who were working with the poor and the marginalized groups. The mid 1980s therefore saw the emergence and spread of 'women's empowerment' as a more political and concept that challenged not only patriarchy but also the mediating structures of class, race, and ethnicity and in the case of India, caste and religion. Feminists, particularly those from Latin American and South Asian countries, evolved their own approach, emphasizing the importance of consciousness raising, leading to organizing and building a movement for women's equality.

Indian women have had little representation in institutional politics since independence. There was more concern in the last two decades towards increasing women's participation in political institutions thereby leading to empowerment. Affirmative action has been accepted as a means to political empowerment. Leadership is necessary not just to govern but to change the nature of governance. Women have been struggling for self-respect and autonomy. Since mid 1980's owing to questioning by women themselves about their oppressed status and plight through varied women's movements, the issue of 'women empowerment' came into focus. Women in Panchayati Raj Institution Political system and decision making process in seen clearly in the changes incorporated in the Panchayati Raj Institution. The objective of bringing improvement in the socio-economic condition of women could be successful only by taking suitable initiatives and measures for empowering them. Empowerment of women is a necessary basic condition for socioeconomic development of any society. Although women constitute one half of the population, they continue to be subjugated, unequal in socioeconomic and political status. Women have been struggling for self-respect and autonomy. Since mid 1980's owing to questioning by women themselves about their oppressed status and plight through varied women's' movements, the issue of 'women empowerment' came into focus.

Political Empowerment

Empowerment of women in all spheres and in particular the political sphere is crucial for their advancement and for the foundation of gender equal society. It is central to the goals of equality, development and peace. The Indian democracy which is more than half a century old has entered the next century. But a large mass of women are kept out of political arena still. There can be no true democracy, or no true people's participation in governance and development without equal

Participation of men and women at different levels of decision making. Participation of women in political life is integral to the advancement of women.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the government of the country, directly or through the freely chosen representatives.

A proper representation of women in political affairs will ensure their views and needs reflected in public policies that affect their lives most.

73rd Amendment Act is a major step towards political

Women empowerment has been an ongoing debate in India and elsewhere. Indian women occupying a subordinate position to men need to be empowered to overcome social, political and economic discrimination. There were several attempts to improve the position of women after India got independence. The 73rd Amendment Act is a major step towards political empowerment of women through Panchayati Raj Institutions. This has resulted in the entry of large number of women into decision making bodies in the rural areas, who were otherwise home makers. Political system and decision making process in seen clearly in the changes incorporated in the Panchayati Raj Institution. The objective of bringing improvement in the socio-economic condition of women could be successful only by taking suitable initiatives and measures for empowering them. Empowerment of women will not be possible unless they are provided proper representation in the political system. This objective should be achieved at desired level through making the provision of linking and associating maximum number of women in political affairs even at the lowest level of political activity. In recently introduced Panchayati Raj Institution, the policy for reservation in favour of women has therefore, been thought as an important approach to maximize their participation in the local level. Political system and decision making process in the activities of rural area. Under the 73rd amendment of constitution of Panchayati Raj Institution, one third of the total seats for scheduled caste, backward class, scheduled tribes and general caste women members in Grampradhan of village Panchayat, Block Panchayat, District Panchayat are reserved for women candidate. Conceptually, providing representation to women

in Panchayati Raj Institution could be accepted as an important planning approach regarding minimizing the traditional felling of people about the status of women in our society, particularly in terms of keeping women under the subjugation of men, imposing restrictions by the households and society against them in the availment of certain opportunities and several other social, cultural and traditional binding disfavoring them for improving personal life style and status in existing social and economic setting. Consequently this newly introduced policy would enhance the possibilities of increasing equalities in the process of socio-economic development, participation in different activities in mutual understandings, status and role to pay in the household and the activities performed outside households and different decision making processes of the family among men and women. This would also develop the understanding of women

Reservation Policy

The reservations have strengthened the feeling of women empowerment is believed that planning initiatives for achieving the goal of increasing participation of women through the recently introduced Panchayati Raj Institution could be an important measure for empowering women and bringing desirable improvement in their socio-economic and political status. In this regard the policy of reservation 1/3 (50% in Bihar) seats for women in village and block and district level Panchayat was introduced. The provision were also made to strengthen the Panchayati Raj institutions by providing various administrative rights and duties, financial power and the freedom to make, initiatives for generating finances locally from different sources. Reality of

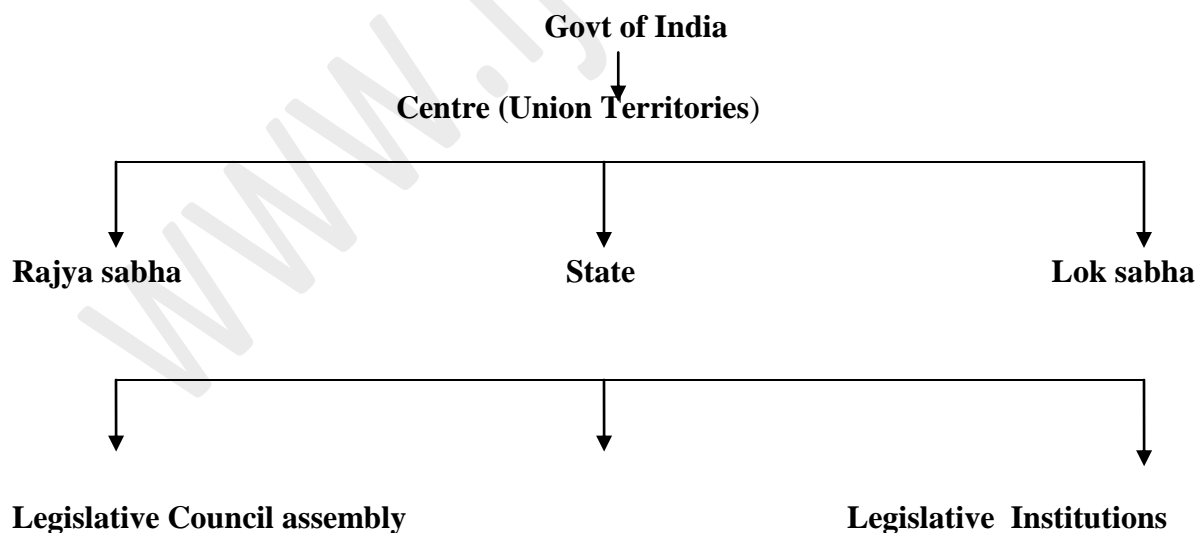
Empowering Women Considering the involvement and domination of women in different activities, historical experiences regarding their participation in various regional movements associated to different level and pattern of awareness about the regional development and maintaining traditional value system and having relatively better educational attainment it is expected that the introduction of Panchayati Raj Institution and reservation policy for women in the Panchayat could be an important instrumental measure of achieving improvement in the socio-economic status and strengthening the empowerment of women in Meerut division. However, the motive of policy

"Swami veکانanda.

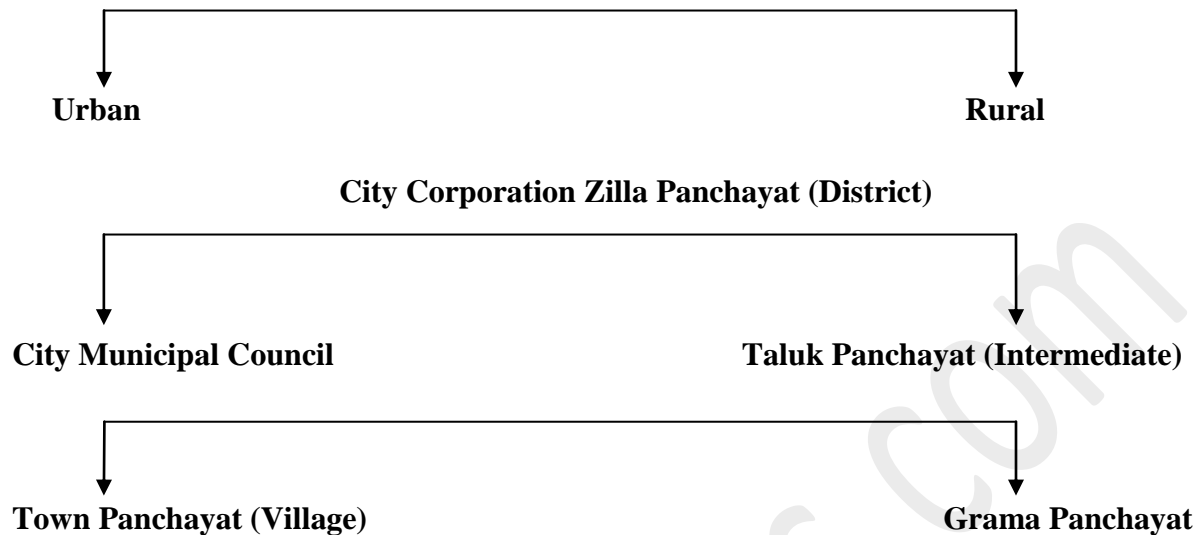
It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing!" But through centuries, societies in the world over have been trying to fly on only one wing, denying women their rightful place. The very concept of women empowerment shows that society as such has given a raw deal to women who comprise nearly fifty percent of the population and women themselves have to come forward to fight for their rightful place in all walks of life and prevent their exploitation in every field

Panchayat Raj: An Evolution perspective

Panchayati Raj is a system of governance in which gram panchayats are the basic units of administration. It has 3 levels: village, block and district. At the village level, it is called a Panchayat. It is a local body working for the good of the village. Historical roots of the local self government in India can be traced from the ancient post, through its present pattern of urban and rural bodies reflects a distinct impact of the British period



Local Self Governance



Historical roots of the local self –government in India can be traced from the ancient, through its present pattern of urban and rural bodies reflects a distinct impact of the British period. The history of panchayati raj in India can be divided into the following periods from the analytical point of view.

Three-tier structure

The new system envisages a three-tier structure namely gram panchayat block and district panchayat. The entire panchayati system is operating in the area of a district. To administer development the entire development administration is being divided into three units. All the three units are independent in certain respects, Gram panchayat will function at the lowest level and block panchayat will function at the block level and district level and district level and direct panchayat will function at the district level. Roles and responsibilities powers duties for each tier will be clearly demarcated activities have to be carried out by lower unit and planning, co-ordination, monitoring and supervision activities has been carried out by the district level body namely district panchayat.

73 RD AMENDMENT

It is a pity to note that none of them are aware of the key characteristics of the 73rd constitutional amendment. No one has a copy of the amendment and nobody bothered about it, nor participated in any of the awareness programmes. They became representatives because the party has selected them to contest for position in the local bodies with the hope that they can get adequate resources to be distributed among the people through schemes. Since everybody talked much about the new system, they believed that they can also get their shares and do service for the people. During interaction, they said that never had a glance of the

CONCLUSIONS

73rd constitutional amendment Act even after they became representatives of the people in the local bodies. They continue to the subjects namely water supply, rural roads, sanitation, street light and IRD as the powers of local bodies. 243 (G) in the act emphasizes the fundamentals of the amendment act. It says that the new system of government is to bring economic development and social justice. In the discussion it was elaborated by referring events from the activities of the federal government.

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