



## Empowerment of Tribal Women in Karnataka: Myths and Realities

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### ABSTRACT

*The empowerment process encompasses several mutually reinforcing components but begins with and supported by economic independence. In determining the empowerment of women, factors such as role in the decision-making power in the family and community, their educational status, their participation in social and political activities, their position in various professions. Here, this paper examines the Empowerment of Tribal Women: myths & realities, with reference Chitradurga district of Karnataka state.*

**KEYWORDS : Empowerment of Women, Panchayat Raj Institutions, Tribal Women.**

### Introduction:

Women's empowerment means entitlement of women to have and enjoy power over their lives both as individuals and members of social system. The empowerment process encompasses several mutually reinforcing components but begins with and supported by economic independence. In determining the empowerment of women, factors such as role in the decision-making power in the family and community, their educational status, their participation in social and political activities, their position in various professions. The approach to women's empowerment should be comprehensive and integrated in nature. The Constitution has passed the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act in order to revise the existing Panchayat Raj Institutions with its structural and functional inadequate. This Act makes it mandatory on the part the states to reserve a minimum of 33, 1/3 % of seats to women in the panchayat so as to involve them actively in the decision making process. The statutory reservation of seats for women in Panchayat Raj bodies has provided an opportunity for their formal involvement in the development and political process at the grass root level there by enabling them to influence the decision making process in local government. The participation of woman in PRIs is considered essential not only for ensuring their political participation in the democratic process but also for realizing the developmental programmes for women. Participation of women in PRIs involves: women as voters, women as members of political parties, women as candidate's women as elected member of the PRIs taking part in decision making, planning, implementation and evaluation. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment is a mile stone in the way of women assuming leadership and decision making positions, as it makes such a role mandatory and universal for the whole of India.

Hence, here this paper focused on Empowerment of Tribal Women: myths & realities, with reference to Chitradurga District of Karnataka.

### Objectives:

To study the empowerment process, and empowerment of Tribal Women through Panchayat Raj Institutions: a Sociological analysis.

### Database and Methods:

Here this paper based on primary data and survey was conducted in Chitradurga District of Karnataka, 300 respondents were selected and interviewed with questionnaire and these respondents were are elected members of panchayat Raj Institutions.

### Data Analysis and discussion:

#### Panchayat Raj System and Empowerment of Tribal Women:

Democracy is considered as one of the best forms of governments because it ensures liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunity, fraternity as well as the right to participate in political decision-making. Participation and control of governance by the people of the country is the essence of democra-

cy. Such participation is possible only when the powers of the state are decentralized to the districts, block and village levels where all the sections of the people can sit together, discuss their problems and suggest solutions and plan, execute as well as monitor the implementation of the programmes. It is called the crux of democratic decentralization (R.P.Joshi&Narwani, 2005:11).

Here, this paper examines the Empowerment of schedule Tribe Women and Panchayat Raj Institutions with reference Chitradurga district of Karnataka state.

#### Tribal Women and their Empowerment process: its myths and realities:

##### i.Opinion regarding their empowerment:

Here the paper examines the respondent's responses regarding whether empowerment has taken place in their political carrier or not. 96% (287) respondents said that they have empowered after entering to the politics, 4% (13) respondents said that they are not empowered. This data clearly reveals that the majority of the respondents were empowered after entering to politics, in the field of social, economic, educational and psychological way.

##### ii.Empowerment process among Tribal Women:

Here the different opinion collected from the respondents regarding the sources of empowerment as analyzed, the respondents opinion regarding sources of empowerment. 9%(27) respondents said source of empowerment was facilities provided by the government, 28%(85) respondents said financial benefit, 23%(68) respondents said education, 01%(4) respondent said NGO, 15%(44) respondents said awareness programme by media, 20%(59) respondents said training, 4%(13) respondents said political opportunity. The whole data in the table reveals that the main sources come from education, government facilities, awareness by the media, training and political opportunity.

##### iii.Empowerment in the family:

Here different opinion collected regarding this. Data shows that the different views on, Is empowerment taken place in their family, 96% (288) respondents said there was empowerment took place in their family and 4% (12) respondents said that no. This data reveals that respondent's participation in the panchayats created empowerment in their family also. We find that problem like illiteracy, economic background and other problems so that empowerment process has not taken place in their family.

##### iv.Suggestion to solve the tribal problems as members of panchayat:

We can say that participation of women in panchayat is good opportunity to solve the problems of the community and public. Here we collected different views by the respondents and analysed in the table No2.

**Table No 2: Suggestion to solve the tribal problems as members of panchayat**

| Sl.No. | Suggestion   | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|--|-----------|------------|
| 1      | President should work properly                             | 57        | 19         |
| 2      | People should be motivated to attend Grama Sabha meeting   | 68        | 23         |
| 3      | Grants should be released in time                          | 50        | 17         |
| 4      | Govt. officials should be sensitive                        | 90        | 30         |
| 5      | Tribes are so backward the facilities reach at their homes | 23        | 08         |
| 6      | Others   | 12        | 03         |
|        | Total  | 300       | 100        |

**Source: Field survey**

Above table No 2 shows that the respondents regarding views on suggestion to solve the tribal problems as members of panchayat. 19%(57) respondents said that president should work properly, 23%(68) respondents said that people should be motivated to attend Grama sabha meeting, 17%(50) respondents said that grant should be released in time, 30%(90) respondents said government officials should be sensitive, 8%(23) respondents said that tribes are so backward, so that the facilities should reach at their homes.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion it may be remarked that Tribal women must get greater social and political exposure so that they can be dynamic in active politics. If they take active participation, they can contribute a lot to the all-round development of their regions. They must be provided with better education facilities and offered necessary training at all the levels. Efforts must be made to bring about a thorough transformation in their attitude and mindset. Only then the process of empowerment of Tribal women through political representation and participation becomes meaningful and realistic.

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