



Empowerment of Scheduled Tribe Women and Panchayat Raj Institutions: A case study

* Dr. Pallavi. S. Kusugal ** Dr.Nagaraja.S

* Assistant Professor, Department of Studies & Research in Economics, Tumkur University, Tumkur-572103, Karnataka

** Assistant Professor, Department of Studies & Research in Sociology, Tumkur University, Tumkur-572103, Karnataka

ABSTRACT

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

Keywords : Empowerment of Women, Panchayat Raj Institutions, schedule tribe 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 73rd Amendment Act in order to revise the existing Pachayatraj 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 Pachayatraj 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 73rd 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.

Panchayat Raj Institutions 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 democracy. Such participation is possible only when the powers of the state are decentralised 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.

Opinion regarding their empowerment:

Here the paper examines the respondents 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.

Sources of empowerment:

The information regarding what are the sources of empowerment of respondents. Different opinion collected from the respondents regarding the sources of empowerment as analyzed in table No 1.

Table No 1: Sources of Empowerment

Sl.No.	Sources	Frequency	Percentage
1	Govt. Facility	27	09
2	Financial benefit	85	28
3	Education	68	23
4	N.G.O	04	01

5	Awareness programme by media	44	15
6	Training	59	20
7	Political opportunity	13	04
	Total	300	100

Source: Field survey

Above table No 1 shows 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.

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.

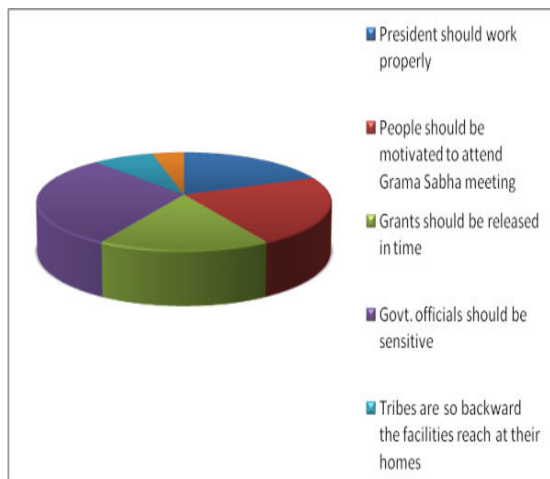
Suggestion to solve the tribal problems as members of panchayat:

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.

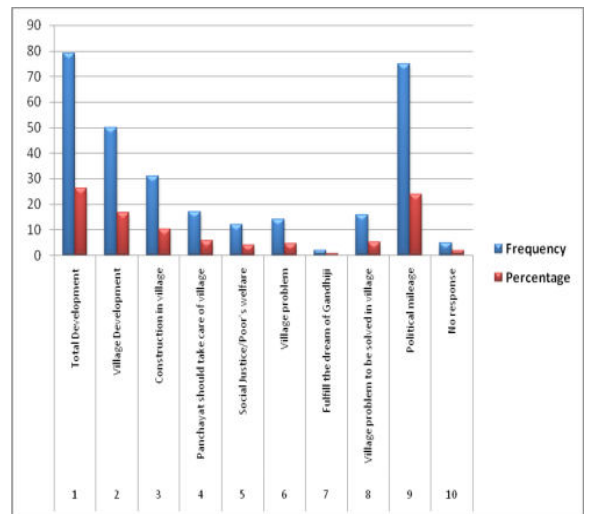
Purpose of entering into the politics:

Here, respondents views on purpose of entering into the politics are given in the below table No 3.

Table No 3: Purpose of entering into the politics

Sl.No	Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
1	Total Development	79	26.33
2	Village Development	50	16.67
3	Construction in village	31	10.33
4	Panchayat should take care of village	17	5.67
5	Social Justice/Poor's welfare	12	4
6	Village problem	14	4.67
7	Fulfill the dream of Gandhiji	2	0.67
8	Village problem to be solved in village	16	5.33
9	Political mileage	75	24
10	No response	5	1.8
	Total	300	100

Source: Field survey



Above table No 3 shows the respondents responses regarding purpose of entering into the politics. 26.33%(79) respondents said total development, 16.67%(50) respondents said that village development, 10.33%(31) respondents said construction works in village, 5.67%(17) respondents said panchayat should take care of village problem, 4%(12) respondents said that social justice and welfare for poor people, 4.67%(14) respondents said that to solve village problem, 0.67%(02) respondents said to fulfill the dream of Gandhiji, 5.33%(16) respondents said that village problem to be solved in village, 24%(75) respondents said that for political mileage, 1.8%(5) of respondents said no response. The majority of the respondents said that their purpose is to do total development in the village.

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 becomes meaningful and realistic.

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