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## Empowering women in panchayat raj institutions in India

**Anju Chaudhary**

### Abstract

The purpose of women empowerment is to make women an important part of society and nation. By making women the right creators and encouraging them, the social condition of the country can be improved. May they get such power in the nation that their importance is easily accepted. They should have equal rights in the society to take their own decisions in the legal, political and socio-economic fields. Empowering Women to recognize their potential and make their contribution to nation building as a hard working citizen. In this era women's self-reliance on every humor of society and nation is inevitable. For the advancement of every nation and society it is essential that women's role in the political, social and economic field and in various decision-making bodies aids them in their empowerment. The purpose of the present study is to recognize women and giving them political power through Panchyati raj institutions by 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment by increasing their reservation from 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to 50 percent so that they could be given constitutional rights to improve their socio-economic status and remove the obstacles coming on their way.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, panchayati raj institutions, decision-making, constitutional amendments

### Introduction

The equal opportunity pertaining to man and women rest at the focal point of constitutional rights and it is from this juncture we can achieve the way for sustainable development. Nearly, fifty per cent of the world's population comprises of girls and women, up till now they are over and over again debarred from the political ground, and their doors are shut for decision-making that straightforwardly have an effect on their lives. Greater than ever women's political involvement and leadership are very important instrument that hold up women to become conscious about their human rights. This necessitate not only societal and political empowerment, which develop the core and altered the relations by means of state, other than economic empowerment. Increasing women's involvement in leadership and decision-making has established the fact that it is superior for economic and social advancement throughout the globe.

The decentralization of power in a way is that affairs of the local people are managed by the means of their positive participation. It mean the broadening of democratic system at the grass-root level in the observation of the reality that the people's involvement indicates the constitution of a democratic administration not simply at the top but on the contrary also at the groundwork level of the political structure. As a result, Panchayati Raj set sights on at making democracy authentic by leading to the million into the carrying out of their spokesperson of the government at the ground level.

### Objectives

- To find out the political powers of women.
- To find out the hindering factors in women empowerment.
- To find out the ways of empowering women through panchayati raj institutions.

### Research Methodology

The secondary data for the present study has been gathered from the books, journals, newspapers and websites.

### Political Powers of Women

In order to understand the involvement of women in Panchayat activities, it is necessary to know the women rights given by the Indian Constitution, along with certain specification which make them identical with their male counterparts. The Preamble of our Constitution acknowledge to promote the principles of political, communal, economic justice and equal opportunity for every citizens of our nation. The Basic Rights as assured by our Constitution (Part III, Articles 12-35) make an effort to do away with inequalities which were suffered by the women in India, here, Article 14 take into account, assure equality and protection by the laws. Article 15(1) and (2) forbid the state from discerning against its citizen only on the basis of any one or more of the aspects such as religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. Article 15(3) creates extraordinary provisions for shielding the interests of both children and women. Article 15(4) provides arrangements by the State for upholding the interests and welfare of socially and educationally backward classes of the society.

Article 16 provides for equality of opportunity for every citizen in issues pertaining to service or selection to any office under the State. In addition to these provisions in the Fundamental Rights, there are several guidelines which are given in the Directive Principles of the State Policy (Part-IV, Articles. 36-51) In the Article 51(e) (Fundamental Duties, Part IVA 42nd Amendment Act, 1976) are given directions to the state to encourage harmony and the strength of common brotherhood amongst all the Indians and to reject practices derogatory to the dignity of women. The Article 39 necessitate the State to direct its policy towards protecting equal rights to a sufficient means of livelihood [Article 39(a)] and equal pay for equal work for both men and women [Article 39(d)]. The Article 39A regulate the State to support justice, on the basis of equal opportunity and to promote free official help by suitable legislation or scheme or in some other means to make certain that chance for acquiring justice are not deprived of to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities Article 42 regulate the State to make stipulation for securing justice and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief.

### Reservation of Seats for Women in Panchayats

The Panchayati Raj System was start out for the sake of decentralizing the economical development, political administration, and social justice to each and every one segment of society in regional governance in order to make people understand their rights and responsibilities. The draftsman of panchayati raj visualize that not only men but also rural women should take part in their progress. On the recommendations of The Balwant Rai Mehta study team several States make an attempt to offer representation to the countryside women. The empowerment of women due to political involvement at the grassroots administration is an attainment of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 foresee under Article 243 D (3) that in every Panchayat one-third of the seats has be filled by direct election shall be reserved for women and such seats may well be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat. It also provides for the offices of the Chairpersons in the Panchayats at the village or any other level shall be reserved for women in such manner as laid down under the State Law. With the Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions and the reservations to women, about one million women entered into

Panchayats. Panchayat, as a state subject, gave the liberty to states to put into practice the 33% seat reservation for women in different Panchayats. In 2009, the Government of India permitted 50% of reservation for women in Panchayat Raj Institutions. Bihar became as the first state to suggest 50% reservation for women in panchayats. Bihar was followed by the state of Uttarakhand than the state of Himachal Pradesh followed by Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Kerala and Maharashtra. Whereas the Article 243 D(4) T(4) provides that not less than one third of the total number of offices of chairperson in the Panchayat at each level to be reserved for women.

### Hindering Factors in Women Empowerment

- Lack of education.
- Inability to take right decision.
- Less involvement of women in decision making.
- Due to constraints of society and family Women are unable to take decision openly in male dominating society.
- Unaware of their role in panchayati raj institutions.
- Safety of women should be at priority at their working grounds.
- Their capabilities are always in doubt.
- Involvement of women in the panchayat activities is very less.
- Domestic violence.
- Very less interest in the politics.
- Lacks backing.
- Narrow mindedness ideology of their male counterparts.

### Suggestion and ways to empower women

- Reduction in the domestic violence against women.
- They should be taught such skills by which they get financial support.
- Reduction in corruption in political, social and economical sphere.
- Reduction in poverty.
- Awareness related to human rights.
- Gender equality should be there for the women.
- They should have the power to make their own choices and decisions.
- Equal chance of education should be provided to them.
- Equal employment prospect has to be provided to them.

### Conclusion

Women empowerment is to pass on the creation of an environment for special benefits as well as for the society as women were deprived of a bundle of opportunities in political, social, and economical and legal sphere. Empowerment of women is an important task that every one of us should undertake. If women is empowered the entire community is Empowered. In order to contribute immensely in the nation building women should have the freedom to work in a healthy environment so that, they are fully aware about their constitutional rights. The valuable policies given by the state has to be assisted by the action to provide them their due rights and equal opportunities. There are scores of ways by which we can empower women as the task of their empowerment does not exclusively lay with the government but with every person in our society.

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