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रासो

अन्तर्विषयी त्रैमासिक शोध पत्रिका

वर्ष-18, अंक-2, मार्च अप्रैल मई 2025





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इतिहास, संस्कृति, साहित्य एवं दर्शन की त्रैमासिक शोध पत्रिका

वर्ष-18

अंक - 2

मार्च-अप्रैल-मई-2025

सम्पादक

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संरक्षक

* प्रो. जे. पी. शर्मा - पूर्व कुलपति, मोहनलाल सुखाड़िया विश्वविद्यालय, उदयपुर (राजस्थान)

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- * डॉ. गौरव बिस्सा - सहआचार्य, विभागाध्यक्ष, प्रबंध अध्ययन विभाग, राजकीय अभियांत्रिकी महाविद्यालय, बीकानेर (राज.)
- * डॉ. बीना शर्मा - पूर्व विभागाध्यक्ष, हिन्दी विभाग, सावित्री कन्या महाविद्यालय, अजमेर
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डॉ. रीता पारीक

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हुकुमचन्द नोबल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस एण्ड टेक्नोलॉजी, अजमेर

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सृजन संस्थान,

आचमन, वेद विहार,

लोहाखान, अजमेर-06

दूरभाष : 0145-2426610

e-mail : rasoajmjournal@gmail.com

☆ प्रकाशक :

पुष्पा शर्मा

सृजन संस्थान,

द्वारा आचमन पब्लिकेशन्स,

अजमेर

☆ मुद्रक :

मैसर्स आर्य प्रिन्टर्स,

केसरगंज, अजमेर

☆ कम्प्यूटराइज्ड सेटिंग :

श्रीनिवास प्रिन्टोग्राफिक्स

132, पंचवटी कॉलोनी,

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Empowerment of Women and the 73rd Amendment Act – A Study

Dr. Mukesh Sharma

*Lecturer in Department of Social Science
Hukumchand Noble Institute of Science & Technology*

While women account for nearly half of the world's population and perform two-thirds of the hours work (though are recorded as working only for one-third of these hours), they receive one tenth of the world's property registered on their name. These gender inequalities are either ignored in development planning and policy formulation, or reinforced through specific development projects and policies. Women are considered as a weaker sex. They are given a subordinate status in Hindu Society. "She is protected by the father in her childhood, by the husband in her adulthood and by the son in her old age.¹ The male-dominated paternal system allows her to survive as a secondary member of the family and society. The condition in which poor women live is characterized by low wages, poor nutrition, are lack of access to health and care, education and training etc.

Discrimination of women from womb to tomb and cradle to grave is well known. The National Perspective Plan for women 1988-2000 A.D. (1988) has added new development dimensions to the betterments of women in India, with special reference to rural women. There is marked disparity, continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all walks of life: economic, social, political, education, health care, nutrition, etc. Thus, women need to be empowered to realise their full identity, power and space in society.

Empowerment of women, means many things to Bhasin² (1992) as given below:

- * Recognizing women's contribution and women's knowledge.
- * Enhancing their self-respect and self-dignity.
- * Helping women fight their own fear and feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.
- * Their becoming economically and self-dependent.
- * Creating and strengthening women's groups and organizations.

Thus 'Empowerment' means to make one powerful or equip one with the power to face the challenges of life to overcome the disabilities, handicaps and

शोध-पत्र में उल्लिखित सन्दर्भ एवं विचारों के लिए लेखक स्वयं उत्तरदायी है, सम्पादक नहीं।

inequalities. Empowerment is an active, multidimensional process, which should enable women to realise their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. greater autonomy in decision-making, greater ability to plan their lives, greater Empowerment also refers to provide greater access to knowledge and resources, I control over the circumstances that influence their lives and freedom from the shackles imposed on them by custom, belief practice. It demands a basic change in the system of marriage and family, husband-wife relationship, enhancement of self-esteem, confidence, and status, participation of women in decision-making process etc.³

The Constitution (73th and 74th Amendments) Act 1992, by way of socio-economic and political empowerment of women, have challenged the unequal power relations in the public domains. Six million women's representatives in PRI's, directly and indirectly, have given an impetus to the process of social mobilization, and women are reinvesting gender role in private and public spaces.⁴ Interestingly, due to their increased visibility, the gender-based distinction between the private and public space is gradually becoming blurred. Women's empowerment enhances human potential at individual and social levels. Thus, empowerment is a continuing process for realizing the ideas and ideas of human liberation and freedom for all. Empowerment has been defined as a change in the context of a woman's life which enables her increased capacity for leading a fulfilling human life. It gets reflected in extended qualities such as health, mobility, education and awareness, status in the family, participation in decision-making, and also at the level of material security. It also includes internal qualities such as self-awareness and self-confidence⁵. Women's empowerment should not be separated from empowerment of nature, empowerment of all marginalized people and their contribution to peace movement, working class movement, human rights movement, movement for democratization and decentralisation of society.

Empowered women can struggle and fight against the forces of oppression. They can create a new society. They can make conscious and deliberate Empowered women can struggle and fight against the forces of oppression. intervention and efforts to enhance the quality of life. Collective strength is necessary for building solidarity and support among women to achieve betterment of humanity, they are the incarnation of ahimsa, that means, infinite empowerment. Mahatma Gandhi says that since women suffer silently for the love and infinite capacity for suffering". Who but women, the mother of man shows this capacity in the largest measure.⁶ Thus empowerment is a dynamic process, as a change is inevitable of one women remains inextricably tied to the welfare of all women.

Some points may be noted regarding women in general:

1. Women's empowerment is a social cause, which makes null and void

women's oppression and exploitation.

2. Women's empowerment inculcates a feeling of cooperation and mutual help.

3. Women's empowerment may rekindle traditional values relating to women.

4. Empowerment is a dynamic process without a uniform definition. It needs to be acquired, and sustained.

5. Education relating to human rights is an important aspect of women's empowerment as it is about bearing of rights, and then voicing, protecting and advancing those rights.

6. Women need more than reservation of seats in local government to realise their empowerment. They need more education, training, mobility, and stronger support system. Both voluntary and governmental organisations also can play an important role in supporting elected women representatives by way of facilitating training and networking.

7. If a woman is active in panchayat's affairs, she can effectively participate in the decision-making process and gets things done for the benefit of the community.

Women And Self-Help Groups (SHGS)

The SHGs of women have existed in India for quite sometime. They strive for a wide range of goals for empowerment of women. SHGs aim to improve the social, economic and political condition of women, and to help the deprived women in their survival, at least at the subsistence level. These groups mobilise women's latent energy and teach them to earn their own living. The SHGs is a viable organized set up to disburse micro-credits to rural women to initiate some self-employment. Micro finance and empowerment are linked to each other. Empowerment is the process of acquiring ability to make strategic life-choices. Empowerment entails that women can acquire a critical awareness of themselves as women with gendered structures of power (gender awareness), self-esteem and self-confidence. It is assumed that micro-finance will have a positive impact on women's livelihood in the following ways:

Increasing women's empowerment in micro-enterprises and improving the productivity of women's income-generating activities.

* Enhancing their self-confidence and status within the family, community and society.

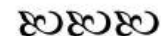
* Control on income and reproductive role are related. A woman's health life-style and education would also improve.

* It is also seen that the probability of empowerment is eight to twelve times high for a woman who is contributing to family's earnings.⁷

Thus, empowerment as a process refers to power being granted, permitted or given for individuals or groups to empower themselves rather than merely being the recipients of power bestowed on them by other. Empowerment is often described as building "Community Capacity", which involves enhancing the aptitude of social groups to procure and manage social and economic resources, implies focus on developing the resources and skills necessary for individuals and communities to exact authority and power.⁸

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001

The policy accepts that there still exists a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes on the one hand and the ground reality of the status of women in India, on the other. It is stated that "the empowerment of women has been recognised as a central issue in determining the status of women."⁹ The policy sets, among others, the objectives of promoting their advancement, development and empowerment and underlines the de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on an equal basis with men in all spheres and their equal access to participation and decision-making in the social, political and economic life of the nation.¹⁰ The need for strengthening the legal system aims at elimination of all forms of discriminations against women. Thus, a broad framework and perspective for empowerment of women exists at the policy level in India.



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