

# Problems and Suggestions for the Political Empowerment of Women in Local Institution



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## Abstract

Women's equal participation in life plays a vital role in the general process of the empowerment of women. Local administration is the most popular democratic institution at the grassroots level. Therefore, the status of women's participation at this level is must and deserves special attention to empower them as participation and empowerment are closely related. Empowerment of women is now a global issue. Although this term is usually used for improving women condition, in real sense it may be applied to any disadvantaged group of society for bringing them to the same level of advanced section. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment acts were adopted to realize the objective of political empowerment of the local grassroots.

The main objective of the paper is the empowerment of elected women representative through local bodies and what kind of problems and obstacles are faced by the women representatives in local governance related to their empowerment.

**Keywords:** Participation, Local Governance, Women Empowerment, Women Representatives.

## Introduction

Women's empowerment fundamentally is the process to uplift the status of women like economic status, social status and political status of women. Without political development women cannot achieve equality so we have to create an environment in society wherein women can take breaths without the fear of domination, anxiety inequality and the general feeling of harassment which goes with being women in a traditionally male dominated structure.

The government of India makes and implemented the policy for women. This policy was called "The national policy for the Empowerment, 2001" The main purpose or objectives of this policy is about the overall development of women in nation.

## Problems

### Lack of Training

When women enters in politics through local bodies, she does not know the rule of politics, she has a platform of politics but without any awareness she cannot be able to perform directly. Government does not provide the basic training for women to enhance their confidence.

### Lack of financial support

If women wants to fight in the election the first thing comes in her mind – financial support. In the local bodies women representatives want to do everything for their people but this is not possible without proper funds.

### Tradition and attitude

Tradition and attitude are barriers for women. In the basic sense our tradition belongs to culture and culture cannot be wrong. If we see the condition of women representatives in local bodies, they have been facing so many problems which is belong to our tradition and negative attitude. "You are a women", this is very common factor in our tradition. There are so many boundation in the political field.

### Lack of Opportunities and Responsibilities

In our society women does not decide the responsibilities, their family members take the decisions. Their responsibilities are belong to house. If they want to perform in the political field, their opportunities are not equal according to men. It is said that, women representatives are not

able to fulfill their responsibilities. This is very common in the politics, our leaders do not give the equal opportunities to a women.

#### Suggestions

1. Training programmes to be established by NGOs, political parties, educational and political institutions to help women in local government develop skills and self confidence and to enable them to learn the functions and processes within this tier of government.
2. Workshops be provided on gender awareness and the importance of women's equality. Women in local government need financial support. To provide a voice for women's views and a base for net working funds to be established to assist women to run for election.
3. The culture and tradition of local government needs to change to ensure that women are treated fairly and equally and to make sure that discrimination against women is not acceptable. local government needs to be more women friendly.
4. Opportunities need to be made available for women as soon as they are elected to learn about local government and their governance role. Responsibilities should be equal and it will enhance the political environment.

#### Review of Literature

Chauhan & Bansal (2002) have mentioned the various dimensions of 'women empowerment'. According to them, empowerment means giving legal and moral power to an individual in all spheres of life.

B. Suguna (2002) throws light on strategies for empowerment of rural women. According to her, empowerment is a phenomenon of the nineties is defined as 'giving power' to creating power within and enabling. The author has categorized the concept into three broad categories – economic empowerment, social empowerment and political empowerment. The author emphasizes on social empowerment of women. This includes equal treatment, equal respect, equal opportunity, equal recognition and equal status. She further says that, empowerment of women is, therefore, the process of controlling power and strengthening of their vitality.

Bose (2004), in his article "Empowerment of women – How and when?" has discussed the problems and limitations of orientation programs which are important for awareness generation and advocacy of grass-roots democracy. He has also discussed.... for they go in actually empowering women.

Srivastava (2002) discussed about the various policies and plans for the development of women in India. The author says, women's status and conditions have changed to a great extent in the post-independence period. The constitution of India has provided equal right for men and women. It has various provisions for empowerment of women.

K.S.R.N. Sarma (2011) in his article 'Women Empowerment and local good governance' has reviewed the over-all situation of women development in India. He raises some questions as the former president of Tanzania Julius Nyerere says, "How can

we expect half the people to be able to develop a nation?" Three major factors show the very slow progress of women's development :

- Deep rooted gender bias
- Funds- crunch
- Institutional inadequacies

Chiranjeevulu and Krishna Murty (2011) have described role women in the global scenario and at the national level in brief. They have observed that, the last decade have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in India society. In 1993, the national government has provided one third political reservation to women in local bodies and implemented it.

Vinay Prasad Singh in his paper "Women Empowerment and Development : Global Scenario and Indian Experience; has focused on the majority of opinions for women empowerment worldwide as one of the eight goals which are included in the millennium declaration signed at the United Nation Millennium Summit in 2000.

In the last few centuries, women have achieved much as far as their socio-economic and political empowerment is concerned, but still a large section of women in the developing countries are far away from the developmental process. Even the developed countries women are not equally empowered in the Political sector. The best example of the USA, Despite its more than 200 years of a democratic governance it has not been able to elect any women as its President. But merely electing a President or Prime Minister does not mean women's empowerment. For example, in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, women have been Prime Minister's and Presidents' but this could not deliver an adequate positive impact on Women's empowerment. The empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality is one of the eight internationally agreed millennium Development Goals (MDGs) designed to alleviate world Poverty. Global experience has shown that the low participation of women in development derails the overall process of development.

#### Conclusion

The success of the local government depends on the elected representatives and women representatives are also the part of local government but they do not perform their role effectively, because they always remain behind their husband, son's or male members. So this is the high time to understand about women empowerment and politics can change the negative approach. Political status can improve the women status.

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