
CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEDULED TRIBE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN PRESENT SOCIAL ORDER

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Abstract:

Women in a tribal society play a vital role in their social, cultural, economic and religious ways of life and considered as an economic asset in their society. But they are still lagging far behind in the different walks of life such as education, employment, good health and empowerment etc.

Objective: To assess and review of the tribal women empowerment in Karnataka perspective.

Methods: We utilize data from published various article in two types of review such as empirical and theoretical on scheduled tribal women empowerment.

Conclusion: Tribal Women are the prime targets of programmes that aim at improving socio-economic, educational status and empowerment of women in society. Through this study I would like to suggest to all women to get ready to fight for right and do duty as responsible citizen to empower themself.

Key words: Critical Assessment , Women Empowerment , economic and religious.

INTRODUCTION

In the traditional caste system, Indian society was divided into four groups based on traditional occupations. They are Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. But, in the modern Indian social system, there are two more marginalized caste groups namely, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, who are living outside the mainstream of the society due to their lower social and economic status. The scheduled tribes are also called the Adivasis, and they are often perceived as backward people, who live in remote and isolated regions and engage in primitive occupations, in tribal communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial. They constitute about half the total population but in tribal society women are more important than in other social groups, because they work harder and the family economy and management depends on them. They have remained as educationally, culturally, economically and socially deprived sections. Scheduled Tribes Women play a very significant role in their social, cultural, economic

and religious ways of life and they are considered as a development factor in their family as well as society. But they are still lagging far behind in the different walks of life like education, employment, political, social position, good health and empowerment etc.

Empowerment define as higher literacy levels, education, better healthcare, equal ownership of productive resources, increased participation in economic and commercial sectors, awareness of rights and responsibilities, improved standards of living, self-reliance, self-esteem and self-confidence. The women empowerment also determined as women economic, social and political identity and their weightage. Majority of tribal women are in the rural areas and in the informal, unorganized sector and they got less education, health and productive resources, among others, is inadequate. Govt. of India have made number of laws to improve the women position such as The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels. The Government of India has adopted the national policy for the empowerment of women on 20th March 2001. The main objective of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the women and to ensure their active participation in all spheres of life and activities. But still schedule Tribal women continue to be socio-economically backward. Through this paper we try to attempt to assessment the women empowerment with different review literature which is supplement on her socio-economic and educational status in present society.

II METHODS/MATERIAL

Legislations and laws for tribal women

(Article 243 D (3) (xii)): one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every panchayat to be reserved for women Including the number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a panchayat.

(Article 243 D (4) (xiii)): one third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level to be reserved for women.

(Article 243 T (3)) one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality reserved for women Including the number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality.

(Article 243 T (4)): Reservation of offices of Chairpersons in Municipalities for the scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Women in such manner as the legislature of a State may by law provide.

STATUS OF TRIBAL WOMEN :

The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. The role of women in tribal communities is substantial and crucial.

They constitute about half the total population but in tribal society women are more important than in other social groups, because they work harder and the family economy and management depends on them. Even after industrialization and the resultant commercialization swamped the tribal economy, women continued to play a significant role. Collection of minor forest produce is done mostly by women and children. Many also work as laborers in industries, households and construction, contributing to their family income. Despite exploitation by contractors and managers, tribal are more sincere and honest than non tribal. However, tribal women face problems and challenges in getting a sustainable livelihood and a decent life due to environmental degradation and the interference of outsiders. Undoubtedly, the programmes, oriented towards the empowerment of tribal women, they have also improved their socio-economic conditions and status. However, there are wide variations across regions and tribes in terms of work participation, sex ratio, economic productivity and social life.

III REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is an important stage of research it helps to identify the research gaps. This exercise is very useful in formulating the objectives and hypotheses of the research study. In this study the literature review is broadly classified into two heads. 1. Theoretical review of Literature and 2. Empirical review of Literature

Theoretical review of Literature: In the theoretical literature review, theories, policies, plans are reviewed relating to women in empowerment with different perspective.

Economic Survey of Karnataka 2010-11: The Stree Shakthi Programme launched in 2000-01, aiming at empowering rural women through the formation of self-help groups (SHGs). Since the inception of the programme 76,952 groups have taken up income generating activities like sheep rearing, poultry rearing, readymade garments, papad preparation etc., with an investment of Rs.821.81 crores. So far 1.40 lakh groups have been formed with 20.73 lakh women members. Out of which, 3.83 lakhs are SC members, 1.52 lakhs are ST members and 1.42 lakhs belong to minority communities. Karnataka State Women's Development Corporation has been implementing various schemes such as Udyogini, Women Skill Training Programme, Devadasis Rehabilitation Programme, Marketing Assistance Scheme for the upliftment of the women. The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme was started in Karnataka on 2nd October 1975. Since then, the programme has been expanded to all the revenue taluks in the state. Karnataka is

the first state in the country to introduce “Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojane” scheme for the empowerment of women. The scheme is to earmark 1/3rd of resources for women in individual beneficiary oriented schemes and labour intensive schemes of the various departments of the Government. Under this programme, 25 departments have identified 238 schemes in Central, State and District Sector.

Welfare Programmes for Scheduled Tribe: The Department of STs Welfare has implemented various programmes for the development and empowerment of the ST community in the state. For the welfare of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), the budgetary allocation for comprehensive development of these groups in the tribal concentrated districts has declined and its utilization needs improvement during 2010-11. In the case of the programmes meant for economic advancement of STs such as Self-employment Scheme, Land Purchase Scheme and Special Development Programmes mainly implemented in the backward taluks, the budgetary allocation has come down during 2010-11 over the previous year, but under the Ganga Kalyana Scheme largely implemented in the backward taluks (as identified by the High Power Committee headed by the late Dr. D. M. Nanjundappa), it has gone up during the same period.

Reecha Upadhyay women's Empowerment in India an Analytical Overview: Women’s empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location, educational status, social status and age. Policies on women’s empowerment exist at the national, state, and local levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence, and political participation. The impact of the patriarchal structure can be seen in rural and urban India, although women’s empowerment in rural India is much less visible than in urban areas. Furthermore, the level of women’s education also has a direct implication on maternal mortality rates, and nutrition and health indicators among children. Women from lower castes such as scheduled castes, other backward castes, and tribal communities are particularly vulnerable to maternal mortality and infant mortality. They are often unable to access health and educational services, lack decision-making power, and face higher levels of violence. Among women of lower caste and class, some level of education has shown to have a positive impact on women’s empowerment indicators.

Heggade (1984) with special reference to India has identified the socio-economic and politico-cultural obstacles for women participation in economic development and also identified different institutional mechanisms and policy measures to promote women empowerment in India. This is one of the early studies on women in economics development in India. It has analyzed the empowerment level, malnutrition, and absence of property rights, lack of access to bank credit absence of skill formation programmes for women, low parental investment in women HRD or capabilities as the factors responsible for women low participation.

Kate’s young (2000) this paper provides information concerning the gender and development approach devised at the feminist scholars at institute of development studies focus on unequal

power relations between men and women prevent women from benefiting from greater accesses. Kate's young (2000:323) observes that using the concept of gender (the socially acquired notions of masculinity and femininity) and gender relations (the socially constructed form of relations between men and women) they analyzed how development strategies reshapes these power relations. They noted now economic and social change, whether planned or unplanned, often gives greater opportunities to one gender and showed how, in many societies.

Gowda and Yogesh (2006) in his paper have given a good account of the evaluation of the vision of women empowerment in India. In this interesting paper, the authors have identified five types of paradigms- welfare, equity, antipoverty, efficiency and employment of women development and welfare that have found a place less than five year plans in India. They also analyzed the problems of women empowerment and suggested educational, economical, employment, health empowerment of women will help them to achieve the gender equality.

Review of Literature on Empirical studies: In the Empirical literature review consists of articles, survey, research, and working paper published with primary and secondary data sources reviewed about issues and difficulties women empowerment with different perspective.

Gurulingaiah (2002) this has attempted to analyze the role of NGO's in the empowerment of tribal women in tumkur District of Karnataka. It also has been conducting social and health awareness campaigns to eliminate superstitious customs, attitude and thinking related to puberty and child birth which are blocking the progress of tribal women. They suggest that women should be encouraged to take active part in spreading social awareness and literacy campus. The Government has vital role in empowerment kadu golla socially and bringing them into the mainstream of the society.

Rao (2002) has analyzed the determinants of social economic status of tribal woman in Arunachal Pradesh. This study analyzed in education and economic empowerment of tribal women of Arunachal Pradesh. Since 1985 some of the findings are A large majority of women in Arunachal Pradesh participate in wage employment activity. They are also involved in household chores. This on an average of women in Arunachal Pradesh work for over 12 hours a day and hence like elsewhere are confronted with double day work problem. A good number of NGOs have been established for the emancipation of women and girl children of Arunachal Pradesh. These NGO's are working towards educational empowerment, social empowerment and improving the women status.

Sathya sundaram (2004) this study has examined the difficulties and issues in empowerment of tribal women. He observes that the wide spread illiteracy, poverty, early marriage and under nutrition are the major obstacles for development of tribal women. Tribal women also suffer from atrocities caused by mainland people and the police. Therefore to reduce the exploitation

and threats to life and decency, self-respect of tribal women. They suggest improving the nutrition status of tribal women and child.

Lal Suresh and Padma (2005) have analyzed the problem of empowerment of tribal women of Andhra Pradesh this study makes use of census data on tribal population, literacy rates in Andhra Pradesh, the tribal women in Andhra Pradesh were found well at dry land agriculture. Tribal women are facing the following problems in health and nutrition such as malnutrition is common among the tribal women, higher infant mortality rate in tribal compared to national average, and the average protein calorie intake was found to be low among tribal women.

Ramakrishna mancial (2008) this paper examined the role of tribal women in socioeconomic development of a developing economy and the society. This study deals with the socio-economic role of tribal women in Arunachal Pradesh. It deals with the Wanchos, Noctes, Tangas, Singphos, the Khamtis, Miju, Mishra and others in the Arunachal Pradesh which state has predominantly. This paper concludes with development and socio-economic status women have forced more than men, in work, employment, earnings, education, health status, political activities, and decision making and exercising of authority women are the underprivileged. The capability or poverty measure of human development considers lack of three basic capabilities. The economic benefits of education derive not just from increase in non-cognitive abilities as reflected by changes in the person's ideas, perceptions and attitudes. But women are deprived of all these benefits.

Mohammad Awais Tosib Alam Mohd (2009) This study focus on status of tribal women in a present society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's empowerment is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. And they also taking considered Tribal Women in Agriculture Over 80% of tribal work in the primary sector against 53% of the general population. About 45% are cultivators against 32.5% of the general population. Tribal Women in Education play an extensive role in the economic development of tribal for the sustained growth of a developing society. And it is largely responsible for the reduce the disgraceful trouble of the tribal women mistreatment. Healthcare is a major problem in far flung isolated tribal areas. Lack of food security, sanitation, and safe drinking water, poor nutrition and high poverty levels aggravate their poor health status. Till recently, an abundance of fruits, tubers, roots and leaves in forests on the one hand and indigenous health-care systems on the other, contributed positively to tribal health. Some health indicators of tribals, SCs and others are given below to establish their poor state of health. Tribal women play a major role in the management of their natural, social, economic resources and agricultural development including crop production, livestock production, horticulture and post harvest operations but they remain backward due to traditional values, illiteracy, superstitions, and dominant roles in decision making, social evils and many other cultural factors.

Puttaraja and O. D. Heggade (2012) Women in a tribal society play a vital role in their social, cultural, economic and religious ways of life and are considered as an economic asset in their society. But they are still lagging far behind in the various walks of life like education, employment, good health and economic empowerment etc. Empowering may be understood as enabling weaker sections like poor women, especially tribal women to acquire and to possess power and resources. The purpose of the present paper is exploring factors facilitating or discouraging economic empowerment of women, such studies are attempted by Banerji, Sen, Krishnaraj, Agarwal, Kelkar and Heggade. These Indian scholars have explored the economic opportunities like employment, education, access to healthcare services, improvements in human resources development, property rights and inclusive growth process for women as important determinants of economic empowerment of women. Some other studies reveals the similar results, according to **Lesmke (2003)** study has analysed, how very high levels of domestic violence and rape have caused women disempowerment and thus has become a source of economic poverty. Budlender (2000: 133) state “poorer women are often rapped in abusive relationship due to their dependence on partner for food, shelter and money”.Awais et al. (2009: 1) point out that tribal women face problems and challenges in getting a sustainable livelihood and a decent life due to the environmental degradation and the interference of the outsiders. However, there are wide variations across regions and tribes in terms of work participation, sex ratio, economic productivity, and social life. Awais et al. (2009: 2) further pointed out that without any healthy and productive tribal women, the tribal societies cannot have productive settled agriculture. That means tribal women contribute immensely to the tribal agriculture. However in modern India, the natural resources and natural habitat of the tribes are used for commercial purposes and thus their ecological sustainability is damaged. This has the potential to damage the life sustenance of goods from the forest and its water bodies. This study suffers from primary data about tribal women participation by different State sponsored employment and welfare programmes in tribal regions.

Kantidas (2012: 1) has made out a strong case for the socio-economic empowerment of the tribal women in India. This study identifies many social, political, economic, technological and physiological constraints in the way of tribal women empowerment. Kantidas has attempted an analysis of constraints in women empowerment in the tribal area of Assam State. This research has found that, the cognitive and infrastructural constraints are major hurdles for tribal development as well as tribal empowerment. In particular, Kantidas has pointed out that the main reason for the poor empowerment of tribal women was noted as lack of knowledge about new technology and information.

D. Pulla Rao 2013 : This paper addresses the socioeconomic status of the scheduled tribes in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh State (India). In the sample, the majority of the households is the tribe of Konda Dora. The majority of the sample households in the study area are Hindus and more than 70 percent of the sample population were illiterate. There is a need to

put more attention on educational aspects of scheduled tribes, where this only can motivate them for future life.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT NFHS-3:

Women are the prime targets of programmes that aim at improving maternal and child health and achieving other desired demographic goals. An understanding of the status and empowerment of women in society and within their households is thus critical to promoting change in reproductive attitudes and behaviour, especially in patriarchal societies (Dyson and Moore, 1983; Jejeebhoy, 1995; Jeffery and Basu, 1996; Kabeer, 2001). Notably, the National Population Policy 2000, specifically identified the low status of women in India as an important barrier to the achievement of population and maternal and child welfare goals (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2000).

NFHS-3 collected data on a large number of indicators of women's empowerment from both women and men. Information was collected on the magnitude of a wife's earnings relative to her husband's earnings, control over the use of one's own earnings and those of the spouse, a wife's participation in household decision making, women's control over resources, knowledge and use of micro-credit programmes, freedom of movement, and gender-role attitudes. The Tenth Five Year Plan(2002-07) called for the three pronged strategy of social empowerment, economic empowerment and providing gender justice to create an enabling environment of positive economic and social policies for women and eliminating all forms of discrimination against them and thus advance gender equality goals.

RESEARCH GAPS

1. The participation rate of Tribal women in the workforce is much higher than that of other women in the general population. The Government has not formulated separate empowerment policies for schedule tribe women.
2. The studies have not undertaken empirical studies on measurement of schedule tribe women poverty, employment, food insufficient, and unpleasant health.
3. There is also found that majority of the scheduled tribe women have less position than tribal men.
4. Scheduled tribe women empowerments have not been adequately and scientifically researched.
5. Due to patriarchal structure women and girls have restricted to access education, access to health facilities, and lower decision-making power, and experience higher rates of violence.
6. The constitution of India is enriched with several provisions for schedule castes and schedule tribes to safeguard and promote their cultural, social, educational, and economic interests in order to bring them in the mainstream of the nation. But these safeguard unsuccessful due to male dominated society and lack interest to utilize in their life.
7. There is a need to put more attention on educational aspects of scheduled tribes women , education in only one determination to motivate them for future life.

8. Some other study have also analyzed the problems of tribal women empowerment and indicated the educational, economical, employment, health are the main component to help them to achieve the gender equality tribal society.
9. Tribal women have adjusted themselves to live a traditional life style in the local environment and follow occupations based on natural resources. That means tribal women contribute immensely to the tribal agriculture.
10. In modern India schedule tribe women are used the natural resources and natural habitat for commercial purposes and thus their potential to damage the life sustenance of goods from the forest and its water bodies.

CONCLUSION:

There are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual empowerment of tribal women. It should need to increase the awareness about right and duties of tribal women to get the equal status at the state and national levels, despite existing reservations for women. As a responsible citizen schedule tribe women have a duty to acquire the education to understand their rights and duties towards country. Because it is related to her own empowerment, this also implies a broad social consensus about the basic rights and opportunities that tribal should enjoy and the responsibilities that should be taken by different individual and social groups.

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