

Position of Indigenous Women Empowerment in Tripura: Challenges and Strategies

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ABSTRACT: *The study admitted to know the position of indigenous women and its empowerment in rural areas of Tripura. The empowerment of women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century. But in practical Indigenous women empowerment is still an illusion of reality. Women Empowerment is the vital instrument to expand women's ability to have resources and to make strategic life choices instead of that Indigenous women becoming victimized by various social and political tribulations. Empowerment of women is fundamentally the process of development in economic, social and political status in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of aggression. The study reveals that Indigenous women of rural areas are relatively disempowered in various aspects. Therefore, the present study will be definitely contributing to explore the present position of indigenous women empowerment. The paper also highlights different issues, challenges, strategies and remedies for empowering the indigenous women in Tripura.*

KEYWORDS: *Empowerment, Indigenous Women, Challenges and Strategies*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical setting, social status, economic status and educational status. Women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over material, human and intellectual resources as well as control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation. The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. In indigenous communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial. They play a vital role in their social cultural economic and religions ways of life and re considered as an economic asset in their society. However the indigenous women faced many problems in our society. They are being economically poor and socially backward live at a low level of scale of the quality life. Thus, the tribal women often face the problems of food insecurity, malnutrition, and lack of access to health care services and education and the victim of domestic violence.

II. WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT

Power is a tool to pass on to those who work on organization's behalf. "To empower," means to give a person or an organization the power or the legal right to do something. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives, their communities, and in their society by acting on issues that they define as important.

III. WHAT IS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender, or economic strength of individuals and communities of women.

Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class), and age.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the Empowerment status of indigenous Women in west Tripura.
2. To know the need of indigenous Women Empowerment.
3. To identify the Hindrances in the Path of Women Empowerment.
4. To understand the strategies and possible remedies for empowering the indigenous women in Tripura.

V. METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the way to systematically solve the research problems. The paper is mainly based on field study. The study is conducted with a view to identifying and analyzing the major empowerment

problems of indigenous women's in West Tripura. In this study interview and observation method is used, that generates data through the opinions expressed by participants. The study was also considered some secondary data regarding their educational status, participation in politics, in decision making etc. Face to face interview is conducted with some indigenous Women to establish the facts described in the paper.

VI. PRESENT STATUS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS OF INDEGINIOUS WOMEN : The constitution has given more than 20 articles on the redressed and upliftment of underprivileged with policies on positive discrimination and affirmative action with reference to S.T.

- **Article 14** confers equal rights and opportunities to all
- **Article 15** prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc;
- **Article 15 (4)** States to make special provisions for advancement of any socially educationally backward classes;
- **Article 16 (4)** empowers the state to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which in the opinion of state, is not adequately represented.
- **Article 46** state to promote with special cares the educational and economic interests of the weaker section, especially the ST and protects the social injustice and all form of exploitation.
- **Article 275** grant-in aid for promoting the welfare of ST and raising the level of administration
- **Article 330** - Seats shall be reserved in the House of the People for -Article 332 Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States 332,335 stipulates the claims that the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.
- **Article 244(1)** tribal welfare communities to be setup for the welfare of the tribes.
- **Article 22(2)** 73rd and 74th amendments - to ensure effective participation of tribal in the process of planning and decision making.
- **Extension to Scheduled Areas Act 1996.** Amendments of Constitution are extended to the Scheduled Areas through Panchayats.

These constitutional provisions of the Government of India helped in the development of the tribes and their education.

VII. NEED OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- By empowerment indigenous women would be able to develop self – esteem and confidence, realize their potential and enhance their collective bargaining power.
- Awareness building about women's situations, discrimination, rights and opportunities will act as a step towards gender equality.
- Capacity building and skill development, especially the ability to plan, make decisions, organize, manage and execute will enable to deal with people and institutions in the course of business.
- It's important for participation and decision making power in the home, community, society and it will develop leadership qualities in indigenous women.

VIII. FACTORS AFFECTING INDIGENOUS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- Educational problems
- Gender prejudice
- Problem related with health
- Poverty
- Societal issues
- Low confidence
- Lack of unity
- Ignorance
- Traditional barriers

IX. STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERMENT

- Skill development initiatives
- Increase well being
- More sustainable use of natural resources
- Poverty Eradication
- Access to education and employment

- To consider indigenous women not only as employee but as potential contributors to the growth of the region, community and economy of Gujarat.
- To engage women in income generating activities in home based or village-based industries.

X. CONCLUSION

Women in every society should be given equal importance and should be respected in every aspect. Empowerment means moving from a weak position to exercise a power. In above discussion, we may say that the tribal women are not empowered economically as well as socially. Economic independence and proper education of indigenous women will go a long way in attaining autonomy for women. So, development/empowerment awareness, education, competitiveness, willingness, confidence, self-motivation, mind set, encouragement from family and society is essential for the empowerment of indigenous women.

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