

**PARTICIPATION OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING
PROCESS : A STUDY AT THE GRASSROOTS DEMOCRATIC
SYSTEM IN KORAPUT DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment of tribal women is one of the focal issues during the time spent improvement everywhere throughout the world. It is a multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered idea. Women's empowerment is a procedure where women increase a more noteworthy portion of authority over the material, human and scholarly assets just as power over dynamic in the home, community, society and country. Notwithstanding, the tribal women confronted numerous issues in our general public. There is fundamentally social and mental capacity concerning men to command the women, which is additionally observed among the tribal men. Concerning the tribal women as well, because of cultural or social reasons, they can't or reluctant to leave their position. Ignorance and the absence of education assume a significant job in hampering the empowerment of tribal women. It is without a doubt a massive undertaking on the part both of government and volunteer organisation to discover various available resources to help the tribal social orders as a rule and the tribal women specifically to ascend the stepping stool of knowledge, awareness, development and progress. The Tribal social orders in India are considered as the most vulnerable areas of the population as far as regular financial and segment factors, for example, poverty, ignorance, absence of development and adequate primary health facilities. For a long time, development with value and social equity' has stayed on the improvement motivation of developing nations, however from the recorded perspective Indian culture experiences considerable uniqueness in education, employment, and income on standing and ethnicity.

In India, women constitute half of the total population and for social, economic and political development we need women must actively participate in all kinds of decision-making processes. For empowerment and active involvement of women in local-level politics, the Government of India introduced the 73rd constitutional amendment act 1992 which was famous for the Panchayatraj System where some seats

are reserved for disadvantaged sections of the society like SC, ST and Women. After that amendment, the tribal women get a chance to participate in the political process at the grass-root level. The central question of this study is that why the tribal women are not actively participating at the grassroots level after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment? Whether some social obstacles create problems on the path of the decision-making process? Whether they can take independent decisions at political affairs? How far the political reservation helps them for their empowerment? Whether due to their socio-economic background they hesitate to participate in political affairs? The present paper is tried to answer some of these key questions.

The present study acquires an important place as it aims at explaining the nature and extent of tribal women's participation in the functioning of the grassroots level in Koraput district. After the 73rd Constitutional Amendment act 1992 provided reservation for women (including tribal women) at the grass-root level now it is time to understand how many tribal women are participating at a lower level in the democratic process. In the present time, the study has huge importance when women issues are general tribal women are particularly dominating the national and international scenario. Empirically it is sure that women are one of the most neglected sections of the society. In the case of rural India, where the majority of the tribal women live in the villages and the society is patriarchal, the women issues have their importance. Local bodies are directly or indirectly affected by women participation. Hence it is very important to study tribal women participation in the political process of local bodies.

The organisation of the thesis based on seven chapters including introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter, being introducing, one gives a brief outline of the study, which presents the details of the role of the women in political participation after 73rd Constitutional Amendment act 1992 in general and tribal women India in particular, it also discusses different forms of political participation of women.

The second chapter Review of Literature explores an account of review of literature related to the political participation of tribal women and their role in the decision-making process.

The third chapter entitled Methodology and Work Plan deals with the research methodology of the problem, need for the study, which discusses objectives, hypothesis, sample, data collection and analysis methods.

The fourth chapter entitled the Socio-economic Status and Working Condition of Tribal Women deals with socio-economic conditions which include family conditions, source of income, level education, type of house, etc.

The fifth chapter entitled Participation of Tribal Women in the Decision Making Process at Grassroot Level explains the involvement of women in the decision-making process in the political, economic and social spheres at the household and community level.

The sixth chapter entitled Challenges Faced by Tribal Women in the Panchayat Election focuses on different challenges faced by tribal women like regarding the independent decision-making process.

The seventh chapter being Concluding Observations and Suggestions summing up of the study and summarizes the observations.

The researcher would like to point out that the maker of Indian Constitution added many articles and provisions in the constitution for giving equal rights, freedom and opportunities to women as per the male members in the society for their empowerment or development by looking all forms of discrimination and exploitation against the women in India since later Vedic period. And also took certain legal measures for elevate women's conditions in the society after the independence. After giving many opportunities to women, participate in every field for the development of the nations as well as empowerment of women but women's participation in political fields in particularly Panchayat Raj Institution is very stumpy. So that for more women's participation at the grassroots level the government of India added new articles under 73rd

Constitutional Amendment Act. According to this act, there are 33 percentages of seats are reserved for women including tribal women at the local level elections. Due to the reservation, the tribal women are getting the chance to participate in the decision-making process and express their views on any kind of local issues and development matters. Political participation of tribal women not only helps them to understand the needs of the society but also help them to build a good society.

Findings

- 79% tribal women are express that, local women representatives are regularly influenced by their male members, 17% tribal women viewed women representatives some time influenced by male members, 4% are viewed that, it is difficult to say who is taking any decision and they are unable to know it.
- 70% are viewed the reason is illiteracy, for which women are unable to take part any decision-making process, 30% are viewed that they are not aware of the decision making process.
- 94% tribal women viewed that male persons took all decisions for the community. Only 6% tribal women view male seeks female's view for any decision of the community.
- 33% are viewed that male dominate create a major challenge to them to take as participate in any decision-making process, 31% are thinking that it is the lack of awareness among them which create a challenge to them to participate any decision-making process. 22 % thinks that due to poverty they are not interested to be part of it. Only a few percentages of tribal women think that education or social problems are made problems in participation of the decision-making process. That is 8% in education and 6% in social problem.

Suggestions:

- Government and civil societies should create awareness among the tribal people about the government programmes, needs and advantages of the education among tribal women.

- To increase the female participation at the community level and to give more decision making power it is needed to understand the existing traditional pattern of tribal community in more details which would help in the formulation of more effective developmental policies and it will also help to bring out the lacunae lying within present policies.
- Women empowerment does not significantly increase the numbers of women in decision making position. There should be measures to improve the quality of participation. The quality of participation signifies taking initiatives in new projects, identifying problems and providing suggestion towards an effective solution.

After participate in the local level election the tribal women are becoming more conscious about the importance of Panchayat and their role in Panchayat Raj institution and think that it as a turning point of their life. It can be understood that the presence of tribal women in grassroots level not only important for the political sphere but also it helps them to empower and getting better their status and position in society. It is found that those tribal women at study area could not say in a single word in front of Panch but now after implementation of Panchayat Raj System became very active and openly express her views in the social issues as well as in process of development. It is clearly visible that at the study area the tribal women while participating in political institution they are able to defend and protect their rights, life and dignity from any forms of exploitation and violence

Signature of the Scholar

Signature of the Supervisor