

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is the structure of political system in which its citizens attain equal status and participate actively in the process of governance. A democratic system of administration is run by the chosen representatives of the society. Hence, public view and opinion is the spirit of democracy. Such type of government confirms virtuous occasion for the total growth and welfare of its citizens. A very famous quote of Abraham Lincoln “Democracy is to the people for the people and by the people”. Democracy is measured best form of government because it guarantees freedom of thought, credence, belief and worship, equality of opportunity and status, expression, fraternity as well as the right to take part in political policy making process. Involvement and control of power by the persons of the nation is the spirit of democracy. PRIs is one of the significant political modernizations of India, which assistances in set up of grass-roots democracy and guarantee the better participations of political structure of the nation. PRIs that work as grass root components of devolved democratic self-rules have been measured as a tool of socio-economic change in countryside India. Participation of people at the local level is the most significant means of carrying about social and economic progress. Decentralization of power is seen as a means of empowering persons and including them in executive process in Panchayati Raj. The democratic structure in a nation can be only confirmed if there is mass contribution and involvement in the governance. Therefore, to attain this goal, in India a scheme of Democratic Decentralization generally known as Panchayati Raj has been introduced.

India is one of the most significant and biggest democratic nation in the world. Indian democracy has continued despite many nations have produced to tyranny and military rule. The victory or unsuccessfulness of democracy matter a lot for the future of democracy not just in India but also in other nations. Indian democracy is considered by pacific existence of dissimilar concepts, notion and principles. There is strong collaboration and competition among prevailing political parties. In 1947 India had preferred for Parliamentary democracy after acquisition independence. In reality, India had no choice than to elect it because of independence movements and social and political consciousness during the all over the world.

Dr. Ambedkar (1979), while speaking on democracy, mentions, for the establishment of popular democracy, two pre-requisites are essential, first, the ‘representation of opinion’ and second, ‘representation of persons’. He further states, the Government in democracy is an important space for the exercise of individual capacities. It is in the interest of the people that no person should be denied the political representation and participation in the process of the Government. The early scholars working on women in politics emphasized participation over representation. The noted American political scientist Sidney Verba points, politics as an engagement of citizens in public institutions has three modes: voting, election campaigning, and influencing through pressure. However, Dr. Ambedkar identifies these modes as representation of opinion, and goes further to argue for representation of persons in the legislative process. The role of individual in politics is a two-level process, first, participation and second, representation. Several contemporary scholars have emphasized on representation as a crucial step towards achieving gender equal society.¹

DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALIZATION

A democratic decentralization includes the devolution of power through which the matters of the indigenous persons are managed by means of their optimistic involvement. It indicates the continuance of democracy at the local level. It indicates noticeable transference of power from the advanced to the lower levels in a mode that the elements of Local Level Government exercise their power with the involvement of the people of that field with infrequent rheostat and supervision of the central and district governments.

Democratic decentralisation is that procedure of devolution which conforms to the elementary canons of democracy. It points toward an assembly of chosen representatives at the decentralized stage of government which would be responsible to its voters. Elections of these councils can be indirect or direct. Democratic Decentralisation seeks out to broaden the regions of people’s involvement, autonomy and authority via diffusion of authorities. This is the actual sordid of the growth of the persons at the local level. In order to participates in the process of decision-making process democratic decentralization proposals chances to the people at grass root level.

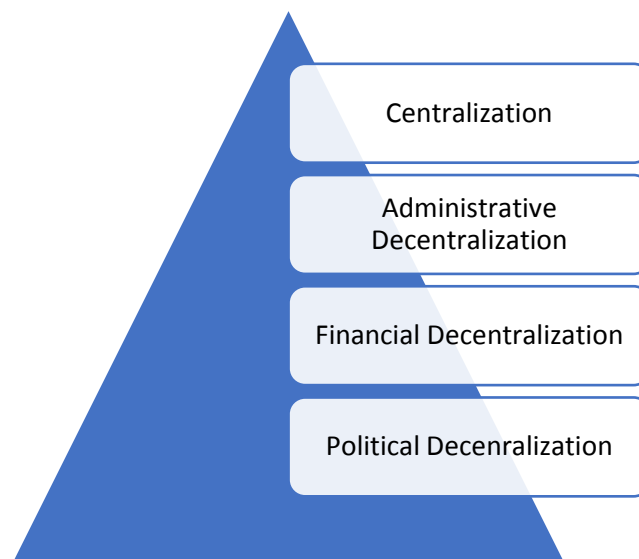
Decentralization

Decentralization is the transfer of authority, responsibility, and accountability from central to local governments. Decentralization can take various forms, commonly described in public administration terms as de concentration, devolution, and delegation. Decentralization also has several dimensions that reflect, in general terms, increasing and often sequential stages of progress in achieving the governance objectives of decentralization. These stages are:

- Administrative decentralization (functional responsibility)
- Financial decentralization (access to resources)
- Political decentralization (accountability).

These are illustrated in the pyramid shown below

Stages of Decentralization



The political dimension is especially critical for democratic decentralization because it reconstitutes the state in a democratic way. It provides a process at the local level through which diverse interests can be heard and negotiated and resource allocation decisions can be made based on public discussions. Democratic local governance does not exist in a vacuum. Authorities beyond the local level must be persuaded or influenced to support the legitimization and empowerment of local governments. Genuine political power sharing is a key element often missing in the political dimension of decentralization.²

The idea of local self-governance is familiarly related with the notion of democratic decentralization. The organization of Local Self- Government comprises both local and urban bodies. Panchayati Raj Institutions and municipals corporations in India, offers the organized agendas for the democratic decentralisation. Constitution of India offers a strong mandate for democratic decentralisation not only by means of the Directive Principles of State Policy which stimulates the State to support Panchayati Raj Institutions but further specifically now through the 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments.

In India, various provisions have been made by the government to attain gender equality. Since ancient times women are on secondary position, that's why Government has made several provisions which are essential for the development of women. But one of the main significant provision for the women is the reservation of seat for them at the local level which has been given to them by the 73rd amendment. It reserved 33 % seats for women at grass root level. Reservation is essential for women because women are struggling to get some fundamentals rights since prehistoric days. Despite of various provisions they are not getting equality. Thus, reservation is necessary to empower them and to give them basic rights which are necessary for their complete development. Women are underrepresented in almost every country.

The under representation of women in top level political policy making system is a general phenomenon. Their presence is considered vital for strengthening democracy and for their fight against marginalization, trivialization and domination of men. Their presence can be ensured in politics just by giving them reservation otherwise they will be kept away from politics by their male counter member. Reservation is working very effectively not in all the states but in some of states of the country. In some states men are working as a proxy. But gradually the problem of proxy will be eradicated by the education system. So, educations as well as reservation both are necessary for the empowerment of women.

In India, the institution of rural local governance is known as Panchayati raj. The word Panchayat means 'assembly' and raj means 'rule'. Traditionally Panchayats consisted of wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the local community, they were responsible for deciding and solving conflicts. Panchayat raj is not a new perception in India. It has its roots in prehistoric India. Panchayat in ancient India, were usually

selected councils with executive and judiciary powers. We find that since prehistoric time to the modern time in India Panchayat have been working for the development of rural areas and trying to solve various problems which are faced by the rural people at local level organization.

Lord Rippon called the father of local self- governance. He brought the important meaning of local self-government forward in the end of nineteenth century.

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation considers villages as the right centre of knowledge. His dream was, "Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers...In this structure composed of innumerable villages; there will be ever widening never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by its bottom...the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it". April 23, 1993 is a landmark day in the history of Panchayati Raj in India as on this day, the institution of Panchayati Raj was accorded constitutional status through the Constitution (Seventy-Third Amendment) Act, 1992, thereby seeking to transform Mahatma Gandhi's dream of Gram Swaraj into reality.³

It (panchayat) deals with the governance of rural villages. India is the country of villages. More than 60 percent of its total population lives in rural areas. Once Jawahar Lal Nehru said. "India is poor because villages of India are poor. India will be rich if the villages of India are rich. Panchayat should be given greater powers, for we want the villagers to have a greater measure of swaraj (self-government) in their own villages."⁴ For this men and women should equally participate in the decision-making process. But in Our country women are neglected and discriminated since birth. Women play no role in decision-making process.

India is recognized as the land of villages and even most of the people of the total population lives in the villages. Women have been underprivileged of several kinds of opportunities and benefits by our old-style society for the past several centuries in India. In providing chances of socio-economic growth, development programmes, involvement in different activities and taking the benefit of opportunities of various amenities, Discrimination against women is commonly noticed which is directly or tortuously connected with bringing enhancements in the life style because of predominant several cultural and social backwardness.

After the October Revolution, the question of involvement of women in policymaking started to accept reputation only in the twentieth century. The universal concern for women's participation in politics, was observed in 1975 when the UN stated the decade as the women development decade. This was tracked in 1985 by the Nairobi Conference which called the involving countries to take steps for the participation of women in politics through arrangement of 35 % seats in all the elections. It is impossible to guarantee actual representation and involvement of women in an unequal society. In an outdated or capitalist society with the inheritances of feudalism there is also the nonattendance of subjective condition. Male members are neither interested in the participation of women in politics nor women members are prepared to participate in the politics.

73rd amendment of Indian constitution provides 33 per cent reservation to women at local level in 1992. In India Panchayati raj system had passed through various phases. For this several committees were formulated. These are Balwant Rai Mehta committee then Ashok Mehta committee, G.V.K Rao committee, L.M. Singhvi, and P.K. Thangun committee.

Balwant rai Mehta committee was one of the first committee which was established by Government of India in January 1957 to explore the working of the national extension service and community development program and to suggest measure for their well working. This committee was headed by Balwant Rai Mehta. It submitted its report in 1957. Some major recommendation of this committee was: There should be a three-tier set up of local self- rule from the village to the district with the village at the lowest and the district at the top with its midway link of organizations all spontaneously related to one another; All programmes of societal and economic progress formulated through the system of planning should be channelled through those institutes, There should be sincere distribution of power and accountability to these organizations of local administration, The entire system of Panchayati Raj should enable further decentralization and spreading of power, responsibilities and resources in the future. National development council and various states of India acknowledged the recommendation in 1958 and started the implementation of the scheme of panchayati raj. Rajasthan in 2nd October ,1959 was the first state to start panchayati raj in Nagaur district. Andhra Pradesh also accepted this system in 1959 itself. By mid 1960s most of the state formed PRIs with tier

differences. Another top-level committee on panchayati raj including fourteen members belonging to different parties under the chairmanship of Ashok Mehta was appointed in December 1977 by Janata party government, and submitted its report in August 1978 about solidification of the waning Panchayati raj system. 132 recommendations made by this committee such as PRIs should have obligatory power of taxation to organize their own resources, there should be a systematic social audit by a district level agency and by a team of legislators to check whether the funds allotted to any group are actually spent on them and seats of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe should be reserved according to their population. And three tier structures of PRIs should be replaced by the two-tier structure. Zilla panchayat at district level and Mandal Panchayat at block level. After the Ashok Mehta committee, another committee was set up. This committee was established under the chairmanship of G.V. K Rao in 1985. It was managerial planning for rural development and poverty alleviation program selected by the planning commission. Committee suggested that planning function should be transferred to district level planning at the state level and Zilla parishad at district level should be crucial in the scheme of democratic decentralisation. And suggest that elections to the PRIs should be held regularly. After this L.M. Singhvi committee was appointed in 1986 by the Rajiv Gandhi government on revival of Panchayati Raj Institution for democracy and development. The committee was supervised by L. M. Singhvi and suggest that PRIs should be legally recognized and well-preserved. For this a new part should be added in the Indian constitution. And constitutional provision to safeguard systematic, free and fair election to PRIs. To make Gram Panchayat more feasible villages should be reorganised. It highlighted the importance of the Gram-Sabha, the village Panchayat should have more monetary resources, and Nyaya Panchayat should be established. Finally, it (panchayati raj) was announced in 1992 by the Indian constitution through the 73rd constitutional amendment act. It has been set up in all the states of India by the acts of the state governments because "Local Government" is stated in the state list in 7th schedules of the constitution of India. 33 percent reservation has been provided to women at local level government by the 73rd constitutional amendment which was passed in 1992, which came into effect from April 24, 1993.

Usually India is male-controlled society where the position of women is very dreadful. Mostly all of the women in our India are suffering from the patriarchal nature of the society. Girls and women face discrimination at every sphere of life. They live under the

subjugation of men. Status of women in India is not equal to men. At the birth of a boy child everybody in the family make celebration. And the birth of a girl child is viewed as a misfortune. The traditional social system of society is responsible for the suppression of women. Mostly women in rural area are uneducated, they do not know about their rights and duties provided by the constitution. This is main reason of their bad condition. Even at the time of election, they have no choice, to give vote to the candidate whom they want to give in the Panchayat election or other elections. They are guided by the choice of their male members of the family because they have no knowledge about the candidate. This is because they always remain in the boundaries of four walls inside the home. They are totally unaware about their rights.

Men knowingly and intentionally keep women away from politics so that their domination over the society remain continue. Only two types of great and somewhat effective changes have occurred in India for women since independence. The first one is 73rd amendment which provides reservation to women at grass root level so that they can freely participate in the politics at grass root level and second is the need felt for elimination of gender biasness. Government of India has taken many steps to improve the condition of women for instance, the National commission for women was formed in 1992 to promote and safeguard the interest of women. But despite of these efforts the condition of women is still not much improved.

Our society is patriarchal society where women's role is limited to household duties only. They even can't come out from their homes. So, nation can't make progress without the equal participation of women because both men and women are the two pillars of the society. And women in our country kept out from decision making process since ancient times. They are not measured as a group. They are either intricate with men or totally unnoticed. But the condition of women is changing but their condition is still not much good at present time they are also suffering from many of the problems. So, there's a need of wider participation of women in politics. Because politics is the area where women can actively and efficiently participate in the decision-making process and where they can make laws, rules and regulation and formulate them for their better present and future.

At present Indian women are demanding for 33 percent reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. In this demand of reservation, they are also raising their voice against the system which has make them marginalised. Women constitute half of the population

and their representation is very small as compared to their population. When women will have equal access to political right many things will automatically change accordingly. We must understand that both men and women have equal potential power. Women and men should equally participate in the politics so that nation can take benefit of women's intelligence and potential.

Women's access into PRIs both as associate as well as heads of panchayats, has pushed them into the executive procedure in a very big manner. Whether any of the member of their family forced them to take up these roles or whether they supposed these role as false officials, one thing is sure that they have crossed the rigid boundaries drawn through their household by the same male relatives. They always lived behind the four boundaries of house. They were not allowed to go outside the home. They were considered as a maid in home, or like a 'aaya' who would take care of children at home. They never enjoyed freedom which was provided by constitution of India even after independence. But now their condition has somewhat changed. This is just because of 73rd constitutional amendment. This amendment provides 33 percent compulsory reservation to women at grass root level. This reservation has been given to women so that they can represent themselves in politics. And their condition can be improved. But despite of this reservation elected women has no real decision -making power.

Women face different types of problem in her way of empowerment through politics. The first one is that women file her candidature for election to PRIs not for their own will; she files it due to the pressure of their family member. And when elected she does not work actually, their husband, father, and other member of family works in behalf of her. Just like president and prime minister of India. As executive power of constitution remains in president and actual work is done by the prime minister of India and his councils of ministers. But there is a difference and this is that prime minister of India does all work after take suggestion of president but in PRIs men uses actual power without consulting to women or without taking her suggestion into account. Her work is limited to sign on papers only.

A nation can make progress if both male and female will equally participate in the process of decision making. In order to achieve greater success, we have to start participation of women from grass root level. Participation is a necessary element of every political system. The term participation suggests redistribution of power in a

powerless society. The central issue of popular participation has to do with power exercised by some people against other people and by some classes against other classes.

The kind of constitutional provision (73rd amendment) has created a scope for accomplishing development with social justice, which is the mandate of the new Panchayati Raj system. There can be no real progress of women of a country are not made partners in the process of development. M.K. Gandhi also believe that full and balanced development of the nation and establishment of a just society is possible only when women participate actively and fully in the political deliberation of the nation and establishment of a just society is possible when women participate actively and fully in the political deliberations of the nation. The Balwant rai Mehta committee on Panchayati raj system emphasised that rural women should not become beneficiaries of development but should be made equal partners in its affairs as contributors.⁵

73rd constitutional amendment created a space for women so that they can actively participate in the process of decision-making process at grass root level. Reservation provided to women at grassroots level can be viewed as an artistic method leading towards empowerment of women. But even after the reservation of seats women do not play their role actually. The women reserved seat is hold by the male member of their family.

It is assumed that politics is the area of men and women are not allowed into this field. Women's role is confined only to domestic work. Due to patriarchal nature of society this assumption has been strong that women should keep away from politics and they should not take part in it. Men think that women's work is to give order and women's work is to obey that order. They should live at home and cook food for them and children. Also, women find it difficult to participate in politics due to dual burden of household duties.

Women and men both are the two pillars of society. The cooperation of both is very necessary for the development of a nation. No society or country can make progress if half of its population is kept out from the decision-making processes. There can be no true democracy without the equal contribution of women in politics. The condition of women is not good. Due to various constraints like illiteracy, poverty, lack of education, lack of financial resources etc. they could not occupy the position of power.

To study the actual insinuation that the strategy of reservation of seats for women in PRIs as enumerated through the 73rd constitutional amendment act, has in empowering women in political decision-making. The Haryana state legislature enacted the "New Haryana

Panchayati Raj Act 1994.” in the pursuance of 73rd constitutional amendment acts 1992, the act has granted whole power and scheme of local self-government.

The execution of the 73rd amendment act has carried some confidence to women and persons belonging to SCs and STs, who have so far persisted relegated. Women have 1/3rd representation in the Panchayati Raj Institutions but there has been no actual change in the outline of women leadership, as the ancient social, political, cultural, and economic structure have remained unaffected.

The prescription of educational qualifications by the government of Haryana in 2016 elections for contesting to the PRIs has been reported to be a game changer. (kundu 2016) Only 33% seats have been reserved for women, as many as 41.46% of them were able to become sarpanches in the 2016 Haryana panchayat elections among them the representation of general caste was 50.79 % of BCs and OBCs 25.80% and that of SCs 23.39 % (sangwan 2016). Hegemony of the sarpanches has been further strengthened by the persistence of Gram Sabha in the state. The 73rd amendment act reserve 33% seats to woman so as to involve them actively in the decision-making process. In India, we call this new system the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The constitutional reservation of seats for women in Panchayati raj bodies has provided an opportunity for their formal involvement in the development and political processes at the grass root level thereby enabling them to influence the decision-making process in the local government. The PRIs should be able to change governance in India. The percentage of women at various level of political activity has shifted dramatically as a result of this constitutional change. Some of the ways in which women, through PRIs can change governance are evident in the issue they would choose to take. e.g. water, alcohol abuse, education, health, domestic violence, women also express different value. But in our society, it is assumed that only men can participate in decision making process only they can hold power. They want that women should not participate in decision-making processes. When it comes to participation in political process or community welfare was more often than not decided in consultation with male members. Husband/father are considered primary decision makers. Women’s position in our society or political field as considered on secondary position.⁶

An emerging democracy like India requires the broader involvement of people regardless of gender, caste, sex and colour. In order to offer this chance, the system of democratic

decentralization through Panchayati Raj was presented. As women establish a considerable percentage of the total population, their involvement in local level politics is very significant to make democratic governance efficacious. The question of their involvement rises because of their long standing ignored social status in male-controlled Indian society. Women constitute little less than 50 per cent of the state's total population. Their social and economic status is, however, relatively small and they are discriminated against in all spheres of the life. For centuries, women have been limited to the home, suppressed and destitute of their right to get fair behaviour from the male-dominated society.

The election of 2015-16 is also very important because the educational criteria have been selected in order to make the Panchayat educated. Uneducated politicians spoil the economic growth of a country. Only elected people should be there to run the Panchayats and government. "It is only education which gives a human being the power to discriminate between right and wrong, good and bad. Therefore, prescription of an educational qualification is not irrelevant for better administration of the panchayats," the bench said. The Haryana law mandates that the minimum education qualification that to contest in the panchayat polls is class 10th pass for men, 8th pass for women and class 5th for Dalits. "If people still do not have a toilet, it is not because of their poverty but because of their lacking the requisite will. One of the primary duties of any civic body is to maintain sanitation within its jurisdiction. Those who aspire to get elected to those civic bodies and administer them must set an example for others," it said.⁷

Many point out that educational qualification has an important role in deciding a person's standing in society and his/her suitability for various responsibilities. This is because a basic knowledge is necessary to work and build more proficiency. They also point out that more education increases exposure to the world and improves the ability to comprehend and envisage things in a much broader way. The 73rd amendment act is a major step towards political empowerment of women through Panchayati Raj Institution (PRIs). This has resulted in the entry of large number of women into decision-making bodies in the rural areas. Who were otherwise housewives.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

Status of women in politics can be explained as the mark of impartiality, freedom and equality enjoyed by women in the influencing and sharing of power and in the worth

given by society to the role of women. At every socio-political stage women around the world find themselves under represented in state and national politics and at local level politics and women are kept away from policymaking process. Women are under-represented in politics despite of international and national summit. Women face different type of problems in articulating and shaping their own destiny. Due to masculine model of politics. Men dominate in the politics; only they formulate the rules of politics. There are limited financial support for women and due to lack of financial resources, lack of awareness and dual burden of domestic/household work on women's shoulder they are unable to participate in the decision-making process. Women are the half of the population but their representation in the Lok Sabha is only 12 % of the total seats. And in the Haryana legislature there are only 12 women who are representing their self out of 90 seats, which is very less. Women are underrepresented due to lack of participation in decision making process.

Review of literature

Baruah (2002)⁸ in his article "*Women: Vital Resource*" states that women should feel their concealed dimensions and should take part actively in policy devising and implementation, which help them to contribute their supreme in the development process. He classifies four factors which are: individual, societal, organizational and cultural. That hinders the development of women.

Shyamla Devi and G. Laxmi (2005)⁹ "*Political empowerment of women in Indian legislature: a study*"-In their study explained that despite of constitutional provision women has not been able to make a room for themselves in the Indian legislature assembly. They identify numbers of women representatives in Lok Sabha from first Lok Sabha to fourteenth Lok Sabha. Also, they suggest various strategies to improve the women's opportunities in the area of decision-making.

Marnie. s, Shaul (1982)¹⁰ in her article "*The status of women in local governments: an internal assessment*" describes that when women achieve equal share of political power many things besides political have automatically changed profoundly. She described status of women, government policies and changing status of women, progress of women in gaining equal participation, barriers to equal participation by women and recommendation for increasing women's participation in politics. She also describes in her study that existence of quotas may lead to the belief that a woman is included only to satisfy the quota not because she has ability.

Ranbir Singh(2013)¹¹“*Empowerment of women in PRIs: issues and challenges*” - present study explains the empowerment of women through panchayati raj institution. In his study, he explains that reservation of seats for women is not actually empowering women but it is empowering the male member of the women representative. Women are only able to get status not power. Also, he explained the various recommendation of Tirupati declaration on women political empowerment (dec,2008). And work done by Panchayats of various states.

A Thanikodi and M Sugirtha (July-Sept 2007)¹²in their article “*Status of women in politics*” that women around the world at every socio-political level finds themselves underrepresented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. She describes the representation of women at cabinet level and sub-ministerial level. The proportion of women in parliament and state legislature is very insignificant. She explained various obstacles faced by women and representation of women in politics in south Asia countries.

Sujit and Ghosh (2002)¹³ in their study “*Empowering rural women*”states that even after introduction of massive poverty eradication programmes like IRDP, the conditions of the female headed households did not improve much. Further, only economic measures alone can't eliminate all the evils; they should be supplemented by social actions also for alleviating deprivation of female headed households.

Sujata. D, Hajarika(2006)¹⁴“*Political participation of women and the dialectics of 73rd amendment*”this paper is based on a study conducted from Feb 2004 to Dec 2004 in three districts of Assam. The study highlights gross unawareness and misconceptions regarding the Panchayati Raj Institution and 73rd amendment. She describes that primary objective to delineate political participation of women through democratic institution can be contained within the following issues such as awareness, decision-making, empowerment, participation and aspirations.

Jeemol unni (1994)¹⁵“*Labour participation decisions of married women in rural India*”- present study describes the job choice decision of married women in rural India as a joint decision between spouses in a household. In this study two model of labour participation

is estimated: first defines work only as market wage labour and second defines work broadly to include wage and self-employment.

Jugal Kishore Mishra (2006)¹⁶ “*Empowerment of women in India*”- present study describes that despite the best efforts of the exponent of social movement theory. The dynamics of empowerment of women in India has not been (re) visited to lend specificity to the Indian gender mainstreaming strategies. He describes the social and economic empowerment of women in India. He also describes the women power in India, theories on women and state.

Raashida gull and Aneesha Shafi (2014)¹⁷ “*Indian Women’s Movement after Independence*” in the present study they express that the Indian women’s movement building on the nineteenth century social reform movement progressed through the period of nationalism and freedom struggle towards the milieu of democracy which was established in India with the achievement of independence. The achievement of the constitutional guarantee of equal rights for women could not fully realize the feminist aims in India providing a new momentum to the Indian women’s movement. The paper makes an attempt to present a picture of how these debates and issues are shaping women’s question in India. She describes various women’s groups and organisations after independence and they also said that there have been many debates going on around important questions and issues characterizing the feminist movement. Debates on the role of law have been central to feminist activism and discourse in India. Although feminist interventions relating to law have resulted in passing of many laws (Domestic Violence Act in 2005, a law on sexual harassment in work place and so on) but feminists have recognized the inefficiency of the laws passed.

HYPOTHESIS

- Higher the socio-economic status of women higher will be their participation.
- Reservation of seats for women in PRIs has a trickle-down effect.
- Patriarchal nature of socio-political order still poses a serious challenge to emancipation of women.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the study are:

- To know how far and to what extent rural women participate in decision-making process.
- To examine the factors which are affecting participation of women in PRIs.
- To study and find out the obstacles which women are facing in political participation.

Research design

The present study is descriptive cum analytical in nature. An enquiry on the participatory role of women in Panchayat in Haryana with reference to Rewari district has been made. The purpose is to identify the problems in the area of women participation especially in its socio-cultural context.

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY:

For the present study Rewari district is selected as an area of study. Rewari is one of the district of Haryana, in India. It is located in south of Haryana around 80 kilometres from the capital of India, New Delhi. Rewari attain the position of a district on 1 November 1989. According to the census of 2011 it was the second lowest populous district of Haryana state, out of 21, after Panchkula district.

In 2011, Rewari had population of 900,332 of which male and female were 474,335 and 425,997 respectively. In 2001 census, Rewari had a population of 765,351 of which males were 403,034 and remaining 362,317 were females.¹⁸Number of females on 1000 males are 899. Female Literacy rate of Rewari is 69.57 and male literacy rate is 91.44. There are

total 358 Panchayats in Rewari. out of 358 there are 139 women are sarpanches and 219 are male sarpanches. It has five blocks, Nahar, Bawal, Rewari, Jatusana and Khol.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on the empirical evidences collected from the field study. Interviews and questionnaire is used for data collection. Besides, questionnaire information is also collected through non-participatory observation method. Questions in the questionnaire related to the impact of 73rd amendment on the status of women and their participation in PRIs. Data is collected from secondary sources like government document, published literature, websites, various articles and books. A questionnaire was prepared for the interview of women sarpanches, and collected data is organised in tabulation form.

Chapter plan:

Chapter 1- Introduction

Chapter2- Representation of women in India and the problem of marginalization

Chapter 3-Panchayati Raj Institutions in India

Chapter 4-Field study

Chapter 5-Findings and suggestions

Endnotes

¹David, Lal. A., Ozha, Abhiruchi, C, Sabharwal, S. Nidhi, (2015) “*Issues of under-representation: mapping women in Indian politics*”, J. S. Asian Stud. 03 (01), pp.93.

² Barnett, Camille. Cates, Minis, Henry P. Vansant, Jerry, (1997), “*Democratic decentralization*”, Research Triangle Institute, pp.3.

³ Kumar Vinay (2016), “*Impact of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Women Empowerment in Bihar*”, International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS) Volume 3 Issue 10, pp. 76.

⁴ Famous quote of Jawaharlal Nehru

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