



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

¹Pratap Kumar Ghorai, ²Ipsita Chakraborty

State Aided College Teacher, Dept. Of Sociology, South Calcutta Girls' College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India¹,
State Aided College Teacher, Dept. Of Sociology, South Calcutta Girls' College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India²
pkgviku@gmail.com¹, chakrabortyipsita448@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT

Women empowerment and social change are very vital subject matter of all the humanities subject, specially for the subject of sociology. Sociology emphasize on the social structure and function, generally the main subject matter of sociology is society, basically society is the web of social relationship, relation among individual mainly institutional and uninstitutional, organised and unorganised relations. So, the unit of society is the individual and family is the miniature forms of society, similarly marriage is the fundamental institution of society. It is very necessary to believe that marriage and family are the core part of Anthropology and Sociology, though anthropologists emphasized on the pre-modern families as well as tribal social relationship. But in other hand sociologist always emphasized on the pattern of modern and post modern family relationship as well as social relationship. Famous American sociologist Kingsley Davis define that social change meant only such alteration as occurs in social organisation, that is structure and function of society, basically a change of social structure, this structural change depends on the change of family- relationship, where a male, a female and also with child. So, in family relationship male and female relation this male and female relationship are decided by the financial empowerment, community participation, social acceptance and various kinds of legal amendment. So women empowerment is one of the vital process to promote social change, women empowerment and social change are interdependent with each other. If we see the post independence social legislation on family and marriage in India, where has promoted various changes in family, group and social life by the process of women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

In order to discuss about the women empowerment and social change, at first we have to know about the concept, meaning, definition and objectives of women empowerment and social change. Deprivation of women and gender discrimination are continued from pre-modern society to till now. But by the emergence of various discipline as women study, feminist theory and collection of social awareness, women empowerment is happening in financially, legally, politically and educationally. A around development is occurring in women status. So women status upgradation is paving the way of balance social change, where will have no deprivation and gender discrimination.

EMPOWERMENT: CONCEPT-

The concept of women empowerment is very earlier notion, In each and every individual, group and society has wanted to develop their life style by the process of empowerment. Though professionally this term is known recently, but the term and practices of empowerment actually a long-term in usually and also in practically. All

the development in cultural material and non materials objects are the effort of empowerment. So in broad sense empowerment is a process of around development.

MEANING

The word empower has derived from French word 'en' meaning into the root, and power meaning strength ability and work ability. It has two meaning as professional and social. In professional meaning where has more stress on the career making, though it is very narrow, but in socially empowerment means all round development of society, basically individual's development and welfare by his own ability and effort. Though literally economic development of an individual is known basically the empowerment. So, economist and social scientist always has given emphasized on economic development of the individual, family and group without discriminating any gender caste and sect. In the regime of 21st century, social scientist and social reformer has given more emphasis on women empowerment. Women empowerment is a process through which poor women become economically affluent .

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Women empowerment and social change, where women empowerment is a very vital factors to change our social system, without women no man can exist in our society, no society can be established without female, so male and female are substitute to each other, without one another is meaningless and blank. To develop a healthy society male and female empowerment is necessary, but unfortunately in Indian society our Indian social system which purely patriarchal society, patriarchal means in which society and family system a senior male member can take decision or has authority to take decision, though it is applicable only for higher caste system but in lower caste mainly for scheduled castes scheduled tribes there male and female enjoy equal rights in family.

Yet Indian society is stratified or divided by caste so this strongly caste ridden society where Brahman or brahminical ideology is the vital factor to maintain our social hierarchy that's why most of the time it's believe that male child are prominent to maintain their lineage or clan and girl child will be go to her husband's home after marriage. So, she has no value like a boy child but several studies and research has proved that to develop a society to make a healthy social system where male and female empowerment is very important and are necessary jointly, male and female empowerment is very helpful for our social development, and that's why women empowerment is become the main topic for social Science as well as to social scientist. Women empowerment basically the empowerment of the village poor mother's those who has no any scope the to develop their own also to their family so they are economically poor and weak that's why they have no scope to take decision in their family and to make strong participation in their community and Society, that's why rural and urban poor women empowerment is necessary.

PLANS AND PROGRAMS:

If we study the Indian scenario, where we can see after independence Community Development Program (CDP) has introduced by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who was the first Prime Minister of India, after that he has started democratic decentralisation by establishing the panchayat raj system, this model has taken from Russia. Russian model Panchayat system become extended all over India except North-East India and after a long time by using this Panchayat system several developmental projects have implemented successfully. A decision has made to empower our poor mothers through self help group and self entrepreneur group by using

microfinance and microcredit. The concept of SHG has developed by the Economics department of Punjab University. Microfinance and microcredit has developed by Muhammad Yunus, Economics department, Dhaka University. Both the concept has compiled and applied in Grass root level for the sustainable development of poor mothers through Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Jojona in 1st April 1999, Where has seen a fruitful and positive result.

In West Bengal near about 10,000 SHG group and all over India where has near about 1 lakhs group. This SHG is most of the vital instrument to empower economically, and helps to develop the value the women of the village area, they are able to earn something by utilising this group fund and able to stand on their own feet. So, this is a positive aspect and what measures has taken by our India government as well as State Government also, for this women empowerment several changes come in our society like economical development, social development, cultural development in health system and also in educational system. After independence some legal measures has taken to develop women status and to empower the women, also Indian Government has taken some legal measures to empower women legally.

ACTS AND POLICY

In 1955 'The Hindu Marriage Act', to introduce inter-caste marriage, to give divorce right to women and to reduce child marriage by deciding the age of marriage as for female 18 years and for male 21 years. In 1956 'The Hindu Succession Act', where women has got equal property right like male, 1961 'The Dowry prohibition Act', where the Act aimed to abolish this evil system from Indian society. In 1971 'The pregnancy termination Act' where this Act legalize abortion for health and educational grounds. 'The equal remuneration Act' 1976, this Act has provided equal remuneration for male and females. In 1976 'The Child Marriage Restraint Act', this act has raised the age of marriage and to eradicate the child marriage form India. 'The POCSO Act' 2012, is a comprehensive law to provide for the protection of children, mainly girl child, from the offence of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.

So from several economical, legal, educational measures have taken to empower Women, yet they to face some obstacle by their family, by group, or by community though, they are stepping forward gradually and slowly with this traditional and social orthodox thinking. With the empowerment of women also where has created certain changes in our family and social system, for instance joint family become break and establishing nuclear family. Womens are enjoying by taking several jobs, they have recruited in military, Air Force, Navy, Indian Administrative Service, Block Development Office etc.

Now girl child participation or female participation in education become high than male because after 18 years a boy need one job but female can study frequently and to concentrate deeply. To promote their study mandatorily our India government has started several educational project for instance "Beti Bachao, beti padhao" and also in our West Bengal's Chief Minister Mamata Bandopadhyay has started great project, it is known as "Kanyasree prakalpa" in 8th of March of 2013, for the age group of 13-18 yrs. The scheme has two components; 1. Annual scholarship of rupees 1000, and 2. One time grand of rupees 25,000. In June of 2017 among 552 projects of 62 countries, Kanyasree awarded as the best project by the judgement of United Nation Organization. For this project Girls participation become arise gradually. Educational development, women empowerment and social change are neck related with each other, by the process of women empowerment, social change is happening gradually.

CONCLUSION

In the concluding part, we can say that social change is a normal natural process and several factors are responsible for social change, like cultural factor, demographic factor and technological factor. In cultural factor there are several materials and non materials components of cultural, those cultural factors are playing important role to change our family, group and society. Women empowerment is a cultural component through which Women can be able to develop ideological as well as non materials component of cultural and at the same time they are developing materially like purchasing using materials and making decisions for the health and education of their own child, consuming as she wants, so women empowerment is a promoting factors to change various aspects of social life, economical, political, religious and educational. So, a collective change in family as well as in social life are happening by the process of women empowerment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bhasin, Kamala. 2003. *Understanding Gender*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.
2. Desai, N and Krishnaraj, M. 1980. *Women and Society in India*. Delhi: Ajanta Publication.
3. Myneni, Dr. S. R. (2010). *Sociology for Law Students*. Faridabad: Allahabad Agency.
4. Nandita, Gandhi and Nandita Shah. 1991. *The Issue of State, theory and Practice in Contemporary Women Movement in India*. New Delhi : Kali for Women.
5. Poonacha, Veena. 1997. *Women Empowerment and Political Participation*. Mumbai :RCWS.
6. Rao, C.N. Shankar. 2004. *Sociology of Indian Society*. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company.
7. Rege, Sharmila. (ed) 2003. *Sociology of Gender: The Challenges of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*. New Delhi : Sage.
8. Zahra, Al Tamini, (Ed.) 2013. *Women and Power: A Short Overview of Social Changes and Women Empowerment*. Published at Smashwords. ISBN: 9781310126376.

E-ISSN NO:2349-0721