Empowerment of Weaker Section: A Review

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Abstract: Existence of weaker sections is a global phenomena and the societies of many developed countries also have this feature. Indian society is a good example of having a large part of population as the weaker section even in the 21st century. Paradoxically, India is the largest democracy of the world that has also a large section of society as weak and marginalized. In the context of Indian society, the marginalized and weaker section is not defined in the terms of caste only but in the terms of gender, education, economy, religion, culture etc. They are women, children, specially abled persons, refugees, migrants, religious minorities, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, educationally and economically backward classes, sexual minorities and many others. Empowerment is related to the word power. In English, the concept leans on its original meaning of investment with legal power permission to act for some specific goal or purpose. The paper is based on secondary source to understand the weaker section groups and reviews on the section and to know the research works on the weaker sections.

Key Words: Weaker Sections, Empowerment, Reviews.

1. INTRODUCTION:

People are managing to gain more control over their lives, either by themselves or with the help of others. The form to be empowered relates to what is both a process and an outcome-to the effort to obtain a relative degree of ability to influence the world by empowerment of the weaker section. Empowerment is an interactive process which occurs between the individual and his environment, in the course of which the sense of the self as worthless changes into an acceptance of the self as an assertive citizen with socio-political ability. The outcome of the process is skills, based on insights and abilities, the essential features of which are a critical political consciousness, an ability to participate with others, a capacity to cope with frustrations and to struggle for influence over the environment.

Literal meaning of "Weak" is lacking something not strong, not having, detract, lagging behind and ultimately the condition of poverty. Weaker section in the Indian context means the people who are economically and socially backward, women and children, minority groups etc. Weaker sections may be defined as those sections who experience a relative weakness in terms of their ability to access their rights and entitlements, and are deprived of their capacity to lead a quality life of their choice. Thus, the weaker sections of the society can be defined as those sections, which are lacking equal social recognition, equal representation in political sphere, equal economic opportunities and losing their cultural identities because they do not have the proper and required resources and facilities to achieve and sustain them in their life. In other words, those who have been lagging behind for a long time in the history to remove their deficiencies of liberty, equality and justice in every sphere of life i.e, social, economic, political, cultural, faith, belief, religion, opportunity status, education, health and so on, are grouped as the weaker or marginalised sections of the society (Speer, Ontkush, Schmitt, Padmasini, Jackson, Rengert, 2003).

1.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER:
The paper is based on following the objectives
1. To understand the weaker section groups and reviews on the section
2. To know the research works on the weaker sections

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

73rd and 74th Constitutional amendment, Panchayath Raj System was put on the path of reforms. Reforms have to do, among other things, two basic issues – 1) including the hitherto excluded that reservation of seats for Sc, ST and socially and economically backward population–OBC and women and hence Panchayath Raj system was used as instrument of affirmative action. In other words, deepening the process of democracy at the village level, 2) people's participation in the decision-making process, policy formulation, implementation, and taking the government benefits and services to the target-population. By these amendments the scope and significance of Panchayath Raj institution got extended beyond the pale of development (Ashok, 2014). Empowerment has been the subject of widespread and often thoughtful and careful theorizing, study, and application in the fields of social work, community psychology,

health promotion, and organizational studies. Unfortunately, it also became an overused buzz-word in consulting, self help, and policy circles. To many, its frequently vague, meaningless usage (sometimes, ironically, for the purpose of co-opting or placating people) has given empowerment a bad name. The aim of this chapter is to dig past the misuse, and overuse, of the term empowerment to reveal, identify, and clarify its utility and importance for political and civic leadership (Perkins, 2010).

Gopalan (2020) The 103rd Amendment Act, 2019 which provides reservations for EWS in Educational and Employment sector has been passed by the Parliament of India provides economic justice without disturbing the existing social justice(reservations based on caste system). Though this has been passed by Parliament it has not been preceded by any Commission like Mandal Commission for providing reservations to OBC. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to have a study on the public awareness and opinion towards the reservations for EWS. The study dealt with the Origin and evolution of the reservation system in India followed by the introduction and implementation of providing reservations for the Economically Weaker Sections of the general category people. The study also analyzed various debates on providing reservations based on the economic status, existing reservation system and social structure along with the perceptions of the people as the study investigated and collected data about the awareness and opinion of the people on providing the reservations for the Economically Weaker Sections of the society.

Kiran Kumar (2018) Owning a house provides social and economic security as well as status in the society. Housing and improvement in the quality of life are the ultimate objectives of social sector planning. Main objectives of the housing schemes are to provide housing facilities to the poorer sections of society by constructing low cost houses for the poorest of the poor. In the present study, an attempt has been made to study the kind of housing facility being provided to the selected beneficiaries from SC, ST, OBC, OC communities. From these communities beneficiaries were selected for this study to see the impact of the programme on them.

According to Article 46 of the Indian Constitution, the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. To encourage their educational participation, the government had committed to giving many policies and programmes at all levels. Even when all groups show a marginal increase of educational participation, there still exists a gap among the weaker sections when compared to the general population at all levels. It is visible that the government was unable to achieve the expected rate of progress among the SC/STs and OBCs when compared to the general communities. "The emancipation of Dalits is based on the capacity for social consolidation and their political mobilization (Prabhash, 2001).

3. GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGES OF WEAKER SECTIONS:

The social development is defined as a transformation of institutions which promotes good growth, good project and good quality of life. Social development is about putting people at the centre of development. This means a commitment that development processes need to benefit people but not only the poor, but also the recognition that people, and the way they interact in groups and society, and the norms that facilities such interaction, shape development processes. Social development thus implies the change in social institutions. Progress toward an inclusive society, for example, implies that individuals treat each other fairly in their daily lives, whether in the family, work place, or public office. Social cohesion is enhanced when peaceful and safe environment within neighborhoods and communities are created. Social accountability exists to the extent that citizens' voices are expressed, and heard by the authorities. Formal institutional reform for example, the provision of legally enshrined rights, better law enforcement or more participatory governance are part of the process by which institutional change is achieved, changing the way people relate to people is an equally important part of this (Singh, 2016).

4. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION:

The discussion of individual and community empowerment has also touched upon the political meaning of empowerment. The perception of the empowerment process on all its levels as a political process is important to the present study, and is influenced by feminist thought, which accords a new meaning to social change. The group and the community organization are the main means of activating environmental processes. These are the settings which actively connect the individual with his environment and make possible a change which includes the individual, the group, and the environment in the one process. The professionalism of empowering professional practice is expressed in the professional's critical approach to himself and his practice. Empowering professionalism means placing the profession at the service of processes that empower people. Empowering professionals choose, from their professional repertoire, those strategies and ways of action that encourage empowerment of the weaker section. After India's achievement of independence several attempts were made to remove socio-economic imbalances existed between the back ward and forward classes and to stamp out the unjust social order through various protective discrimination measures and other promotional measures. Social work in this regard is doing a tremendous job. The whole gamut of practice of social work is centered around and the established on the philosophy of egalitarian society with justice and happiness for all. The weaker and deprived members of the society are the prime target of social work intervention. As a problem solving

profession, Social work shares its values, principles, methods, tools and techniques for the removal major problems of the weaker sections.

5. CONCLUSION:

Social inequality has given birth to weakening of certain sections of society i.e. SC, ST, OBC, differently-abled, minorities etc in Indian context. These are the vulnerable groups who face many difficulties in life owing to a state of oppression in the society. They are underprivileged and lack opportunities to move forward in life. Since independence, there are a lot of efforts to strengthen the position of weaker sections of the society. It is a fact that communal disturbances, religious conflicts, group clashes are taking place frequently in India. In spite of these disturbances the nation has maintained its secular character. Indian Constitutional provisions and legal enactments ensure that there is no discrimination against weaker sections and protect their interests. The state can make efforts to improve the political, social, economic situation of weaker sections of the society through various policies and programmes. The government can make laws and implement policies to make the weaker sections strong in all fields with coordination of Government and Non Government Organization. The people and society to treat these people with equal respect and on par with the rest of the society (Speer, 2000).

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