CHAPTER-II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For more than a decade the terms empowerment has been widely used in relation to women. Today, one hears this term much more than terms like women’s “welfare”, “upliftment”, development or “awareness”, raising. Inspite of the growing popularity and widespread usage of the term, there have been few conceptual explorations of what exactly empowerment means and even more what, the empowerment of women implies in social and Political terms.

The most conspicuous feature of the empowerment is that it contains within the word “Power”. So obviously empowerment is about power, and about changing the balance of power. In every society, there are powerful & powerless groups. Power is exercised in social, economic and political relations between individuals and group. Power itself can be simply defined as “control over resources and control of ideology. Their process of gaining control over the self, over ideology and the resources which determine power may be termed “Empowerment”

CONCEPT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

With the foregoing backdrop at attempt is made here to discuss the concept of women empowerment. The term empowerment is rooted in theories of Paulo Freire, who put forward the notion of conscientization as process by which the poor could challenge the structure of power and take control of their lives. Freire’s analysis, however, totally ignored gender as a determinant of power. Thus, by expanding of Freirean analysis and giving gender an integral place, feminists put forward the concept of women’s empowerment. The notion soon spread throughout the world, and was defined by the feminist scholars and activities in their own regional context.
Empowerment is a process aimed at changing the nature and directions of systemic forces which marginalise women and other disadvantaged sections in giving a context.

Empowerment is a process not a product. The outcome of empowerment would then be a restriction of power, whether between nations, classes, castes, races ethic group or genders. This belies the fond hope of many people that women’s empowerment should not disempower men. There can be no denying the fast that s the women of any class, caste or religion are to gain greater control over resource and her decision making power, then those who traditionally enjoyed such power will have given up at least some of it. Thus the goal of empower is to:

i. challenge, subordination and subjugation and

ii. transform the structures system and institution which have supported inequality such as the family caste & class system, religion top down development models etc.,

The process of empowerment therefore is a embracing because of it must address all structures of power. This brings into question theories which locate any one system or structure as the basis of all power.

The process of empowerment beings in the mind from woman’s consciousness, from her very beliefs about and here rights, capacities & potential, from herself-image and awareness of how gender as well as other socio-civic and Political force are acting on her; from breaking free of the sense of inferiority which has been imprinted since earliest childhood; from recognizing her strengths, her knowledge, intelligence and skills, above all from believing in her innate right to dignity and justice and realising that it is she along with here sister, who must alert that right, for one who holds power will give it away willingly.

Thus external change agents are often necessary to initiate the process of empowerment. However they can take many different forms i.e. women’s organisation and education. Education which aims at empowerment is of course of
weapon of far greater potency, as it actually seeks to liberate women from the small isolated world in which they are trapped. Here, of course the activist educator plays a major role.

Thus the indicators of empowerment are change in women’s self-image from one of subordination and subjugation to one of the self-esteem, confidence and equality.

Women's knowledge and awareness of their own situation, social, economic & Political forces of health, nutrition, reproductive right, the law, literacy & the world around them increase dramatically.

Formation of cohesive, articulate women’s groups collectives at the village the neighborhood level, often in association with the emergence of strong and local women leaders within these groups; these groups and their leaders are capable of taking up their own actions the struggled on shared issues and problems at the local level.

Formation of formal or informal federation/networks of women's groups who can untidily engage in struggled and action on common concerns and issues.

Women's groups collectively access reinforces the scheme services to meet their needs. Eg. : Health, Nutrition, Child Care, Water fuel, Fodder, Legal reforms, Education facilities, Income-Enhancement, Vocational Training etc.,

The concept of the empowerment of women as a goal of development projects and programs has been gaining wider acceptance in the 1990's. According to Kate young the concept of empowerment as used by development agencies, refers mainly to entrepreneurial self reliance taking a critical view of the use of empowerment terminology by development agencies, young states: “The term echoes the general emphasis within the mainstream on unleashing the capacity of individuals to be more entrepreneurial, more self reliant it is closely
allied to the current emphasis on individualistic values people ‘empowering themselves’ by pulling themselves up by their boot steps.

On the other hand, on empowerment approach to development can also mean people is participation in the policy make of 4 planning processes. According to young: it is now recognized in development circles that economic growth and social betterment are best achieved when the mall of the population is informed about and involved in development aims and plans and sees it self as a divert benefiting of the expanded references growth should bring. One of the ways to achieve this is structuring the decision making process in such a way as to ensure wide spread causation at all levels of society about development goals the process by which those goals are to be reached and those reforms needed to achieve them empowerment can be you planning goal given to a range of interest groups and NGOs by using them as confutative bodied or councils. A study entitled empowerment of women in south Asia identifies two approaches commonly used by development agencies; empowerment women’s economic status through employment income generation and to access credit and empowerment through integrated around development programs in which strengthening women’s economic status in only one component along with education, literacy. The provision of basic needs and services and fertility that more generally used by women’s organizations and other NGOs empowerment through awareness build of capacity building and organizing women that leads to transformation of unequal relationships.

The code of the woman’s empowerment framework is its argument that women’s development can be viewed in terms of fire levels of equality for which empowerment is an essential element at each level. The levels one welfare, access, concretization, participation and control

a. Welfare- The first level, address only the basic needs of women, without recognizing or attempting to solve the underlying structural causes, which necessitate provision of welfare services. At this point women are merely passive beneficences of welfare benefits.
b. **Access** - The second level is essential for women to make meaningful progress. This involves equality of access to resources, such as education of opportunities, land and credit. The path to empowerment is initiated when women recognize their lack of access to resources as a barrier to their growth and overall well-being and take action to address this.

c. **Conscientization** - is a crucial point in the empowerment framework. For women to take appropriate action to close gender gaps or gender inequalities there must be recognition that their problems stem from inherent structural and institutional discrimination must also recognize the role they can often play in reinforcing the system that restricts their growth.

d. **Participation** - is the point where women are taking decisions along side men. To reach this level however, mobilization is necessary. By organizing themselves and working collectively, women will be empowered to gain increased representation, which will lead to increased empowerment and ultimately greater control.

e. **Control** - is the ultimate level of equality and empowerment. Here, the balance of power between men and women is equal and neither party has dominance over the other. At this stage in the empowerment framework, women are able to make decisions over their lives and the lives of their children and play an active role in the development process. Further, the contribution of women are fully recognized and rewarded.

Using the empowerment framework, development planners can determine whether a project or program is at the welfare access, conscientization, participation or control level and determine the point of intervention, to move women to higher levels of equality and empowerment.
UNICEF, the women is empowerment framework, women and girls advance, Vol. 1, NO 1 1993, P 5, increased decision-making power in the home and community and greater participation in politics, 28.

Some of these ideas one also taking root in development programmer and agencies are beginning to develop gender training programmer that include the concept of empowerment for instance, the united nations children’s fund (UNICEF) is using the women’s empowerment framework, developed by Sara long we. Of Zambia as tool to be used in its efforts to mainstream gender thought out UNICEF programmer planning process and as a conceptual basis for gender responsive assessment, evaluation and programming 29.

AT THE GROSS ROOTS

The evolution in policy of women and development reflects and is in turn reflected by what is happening at the gross roots many development agencies are gearing their programmer and projects to the empowerment of women through capacity building and through strengthening both women is organizations and women’s participation in rural associations gender awareness activities for both men and women have also become an important part of some projects at the community level women is participation in grass roots organization is increasingly recognized as crucial to their empowerment and as a way for them to help shape development policies. According to the secretary general of the United Nations Mr. Boutros Ghali given the importance of female leadership in community and grass root level organizations non-government organizations have been identified as a key actor in empowering women, and in ensuring that an accurate knowledge of their true situation of their actual and potential roles and of obstacles to their economic participation is reflected in the design of economy wide policies.

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is an example of an organization that has been instrumental in the empowerment of rural women and whose policies and practices are being changed by growing gender awareness
and by women collective strength formed in 1972, BRAC is one of the oldest NGOs in the country which staff of 2500 carrying out general developments education and health programmer and activities for both rural men and women. BRAC has organized over 2500 groups in some 2500 villages. Each village organization has a women is production sub-group. After initial failure in organizing vocational training in tailoring for women, on the mistaken assumption that it was traditional women’s work and required few skills over the years, BRAC developed extensive non-handcraft employment training and programmer for rural women in horticulture, animal husbandry, poultry rearing, fish farming rise processing semi culture, veterinary science and other agricultural activities. Training in production skills is combined with attention to access to markets and credit and to the need to deal with conflicting interests of the rich and poor in a community.

In the villages poor women have been gradually gaining confidence and learning how to handle conflicts of interests with their husbands and other males in the family and community as well as with landlords and rich and powerful people. Acceptance of changes in relational ship and recognitions of women is new roles is easier when the women are well organized and have collective strength. Women in the Bangladesh rural advancement committee receive help from other members of their women’s groups in family and community confirmations. More women are joining the ranks of organizers and field workers and BRAC has taken steps to address gender issues within the organization it conducts gender awareness training of senior field staff so that they can identify and take steps to eliminate discriminatory practices and sexist attitudes, and it has established a women advisory committee to monitor and ensure that gender issues are given the priority they deserve and also that any gender discrimination is rooted out of the organization. The women’s advisory committee is dealing for instance, with the issue of the different social behaviors that one expected of men of women organizers and with on-going discrimination against women in regard to restrictions on women is mobility after working hours housing for women and maternity leave.
Gender awareness training as an instrument to change the attitudes of both men and women in communities, can be built in many different and ultimately appropriate ways. For instance, the Baha International Community, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEW), embarked on a project in the countries of Cameroon, Bolivia and Malaysia to encourage the empowerment of women by using traditional media such as songs, dances and plays to change the attitude of both women and men about the participation of women in community and family decision making began in 1991, the project is already showing dramatic signs of success. Increasing numbers of women are being consulted about community and family issues by men and men are increasingly taking up tasks such as farming, cooking and child care that were once vowed as the exclusive domain of women.

**EMPOWERMENT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN**

Why is women's participation so important in the first place there can be no true democracy, no true people's participation in governance and development without the equal participation of women and men in all spheres of life and level of decision making. Second, the goals of development cannot be attained without women's full participation not only in the development process, but also in shopping its goals. And third, women's participation in changing the world in which we live by bringing new priorities and perspectives to the political process and the organization of society. In focusing attention on the most neglected portion of humanity today, women and girls women's participation will make society more responsive to the needs of all people. In raising the status of women and girl children it will improve the economic and social development of countries. In changing the unequal balance of decision making power and control in the relations of men and women in the house hold in the work place, in communities, in government and in the international area it will lead to women's empowerment.
Participation has two dimensions: quantitative and qualitative. The tendency in the part has been to focus mainly on the quantitative aspects of people's participation and to measure it principally in terms of numbers of people irrespective of the quality of their participation or their involvement in decision making process. For instance, development agencies often considered people is participation mainly in terms of the number involved in development programmer and projects in its sense, women and participation was measured by how many women were affected by a project even if they were simply passive recipients of development aid without any voice in the design, implementation or monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Today the focus in charging from the quantitative to the qualitative aspects and participation is conceptualized in broader terms. According to the human development report 1993, prepared by the united nations development programmer (UNDP): participation means that people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political processes that affect their lives. People may, in some cases, have complete and direct control over these processes in other case, the control may be partial or indirect. The important thing in that people have constant access to decision-making and power participation in this sense is an essential element of human development.

The UNDP Human Development Report identifies from basic forms of participation household participation, economic participation social and cultural participation and political participation. These forms of participation are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation. As the Human Development report 1993 states: since participation can take place in the economic, social and political areas, each person necessarily participates in many ways, at many levels in economic life as a produces or a consumer an entrepreneur or an employee. In social life, as a member of a family, or of a community organization or ethnic group and in political life as a voter, or as member of a political party or perhaps a pressure group. All these roles over lap and interact, farming patterns of participation that interconnect with and often reinforce each other.
a. The household is often the main and sometimes the only place where women participate; women are almost universally responsible for carrying children and other members of the household and for all the domestic work that their carrying roles entail. They often have primary responsibility for their families' health and for the provision of food, water, and fuel, and their work is not only unpaid but largely unrecognized as well. The major responsibilities for the household's well-being do not always mean decision-making power within the family.

Women's status in the household also affects their ability to participate outside the home. While women can often assert influence over public life through the males of their households, women's second status in the family frequently prevents or limits them from taking direct part in the outside world. Democratization and redressing the gender imbalance in the home are therefore crucial to women's wider participation and entail not only increasing women's control in the household, but also a more equal partnership of men and women in sharing household responsibilities. Whilst democracy begins in the home, a frequent result of women's increasing involvement in society is their greater decision-making power in the home as well.

b. Economic participation of women has on the whole been increasing, but great inequalities remain however, between men and women in employment opportunities and rights, remuneration, and recognition of women's economic participation. The nature of economic participation can vary widely from forms of drudgery to creative, productive, and independent economic activity. Society also very greatly in the value they place on forms of work, ranging from the association of manual work with servitude to a respect for manual labor in more egalitarian societies, and closely related to this range of social attitudes is the nature of the work environment itself which can be more or less participation. Participation in economic life also affords people a basis for self-respect and social dignity, attributes that are integrated to participating in all dimensions of life.
c. Social and cultural participation: - Women participation in the life of society through community association, religious groups, and organizations, in which they often comprise the majority of members. A great many factors affect women’s social participation, including their household and economic status and traditional customs and attitudes which may either promote or inhibit their activities. In societies which conservative attitudes towards women’s participation outside the home or where strong discrimination against women exists, women’s social roles may be limited. In many societies women play a significant part in the cultural life of their communities as the member of the community who preserve the traditional culture in song, dance, story telling and ritual.

d. Political participation of women takes many terms; it includes not only voting and holding public office, but also collective action in associations and organizations. In the sphere of electoral politics, women have made great strides forward in obtaining the vote and the right to be elected to political office in nearly every country, yet today they comprise only 10 percent of the member of parliaments world wide and hold only a fraction of other leadership positions nationally and internationally.

The major sphere of women’s political participation is that of comity groups, and of women’s and other NGO’s on the local national and internationals level. As Arronne Fraser, former director of the international women’s rights action watch (IWARW), states: non governmental organizations are the conscience of the body politic, whether services or advocating for changes in public policies civil societies cannot exist long without them because NGOs are a check on the power of governments. Every government need to be hold accountable by its citizens, and citizens acting together in non-governmental associations are farmage powerful than individuals acting separately. NGOs also have the freedom to generate, test out and promote the adoption of new ideas, polities and programmes.

Empowerment is a process and is not, therefore, something that can be given to people. The process of empowerment is both individual and collective, since it is through involvement in groups that people most often begin to develop
their awareness and the ability to organize to take action and bring about change.

Women's empowerment can be viewed as a continuation of several interrelated and naturally reinforcing components:
- Awareness building about women's situation discrimination and rights and opportunities as a step towards gender equality. Collective awareness building provides a sense of group identity and the power of working as a group.
- Capacity building and skills development, especially the ability to plan, make decisions, organize, manage and carry out activators, to deal with people and institutions in the world around them.
- Participation and greater control and decision-making power in the home, community and society.
- Action to bring about greater equality between men and women.

In short, empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, to greater decision-making power and control, and to transformative action.

An assessment of women's media related activities and the development of future strategies was undertaken at an international conference, 'women empowering communication', held in Bangkok in February 1994 organized by the world association for Christian communication (WACC), Isis International, Manila, and the IWTC, it brought together over four hundred women communicators from media organizations, and networks working in both alternative and mass media in eighty countries in all continents of the world. The conference mass media and counter posed its own vision of communication that would empower women: The conference identified the following strategies aimed at strengthening and empowering women's communications:

Strengthening of people is and more specially women's media, including story telling visual and performance arts, what build on their knowledge wisdom and creativity; integration of human values into woman's media creations, such as harmony with nature, co-operation, nurturing caring, love and compassion, and
women's struggles for freedom, to ensure that women's alternative do not become hierarchical, undemocratic and elitist;

development of education and training to enable women's organizations and community groups to access existing media in order to communicate effectively their own messages and concerns;

increased opportunities for technical training for women in the area of communications;

incorporation of gender sensitivity, local history and cultural diversity in the education and training of communications professionals;

expansion of gender specific media research and documentation at the local level;

promotion of lobbies and campaigns directed at opinion makers and media conformers to raise public awareness on how issues of development affect women;

strengthening of monitoring networks with legal backing to guarantee the democratic functioning of medias;

strengthening of women's links with potential allies throughout hierarchies (government politicians, corporations, donors, media mergers) to turn strategies into concrete actions;

building of links and solidarity between women and gender sensitive men working in media at all levels;

pinpointing of special networking considerations and the strengthening of information exchanges: between urban and rural groups and organization across
language barriers, at varied levels of consciousness and access to technology, in oppressive conditions;

efforts to ensure the widest and most appropriate dissemination of information related to United Nations meetings that concern people's lives and future, including training in methods of using this information;

efforts to assure women's participation and inclusion of women's perspectives in all stages of preparations for these meetings.

According to the 1991 census, the sex ratio for women in 929 per 1000 men; this has fallen from the 1981 figure where it stood at 933 per 1000 men. The literacy rate in 39.42 percent for women and 63.86 percent for men. The literacy rate for both men and women has gone up when compared with the 1981 census. Women's work participation rate according to 1991 census showed that it was 13.99 percent and men's work participation rate was 51.62 percent.

Women's participation in labour force has been declining and the status of women has not improved much over the years, and they continue to remain a disadvantaged group.

Women have been playing very important and significant economic roles in both the urban and rural areas. Both in the organized and unorganized sectors of the economy, be it agriculture, industry or services, women have been contributing substantially and yet very often her contribution goes unnoticed by both the family and society. Her work remains mostly "invisible".

Women play dual roles, one is as the paid worker and the other as an unpaid working, involved as a part of the family labour in the fields, family trade craft, etc through her labour, she also contributes in running the family by doing different domestic chores. The work of her in the family by virtue of her being the
mother, wife daughter, daughter in law, and home maker4 takes up a lot of her time and very often she is the sole contributor in running and keeping the family going. Yet, this contribution of her is not recognized in the economy. Even her contribution as a worker on the family lands, in traditional household crafts etc. is not recognized. This, although women does double the amount of work and contribute doubly to the economy, she is still considered a burden and instances of female infanticide and feticide (which are not uncommon even today) bear testimony to this.

The another’s of the Human Development report (UNDP 1990) argue that to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to references needed for a decent standard of living are the most critical of human capabilities and choices. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect. Development enables people to have these choices, by creating a conducive environment for people, individually and collectively, to develop their full political and to have a reasonable chance of leading productive and creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. Development is ultimately ¼ of the capacity of a society to tap the root of popular creativity to free up and empower people ¼ (levitt 1990).

Both the imperatives of distributive justice and concerns about societal development call for women’s access to productive resources (empowerment, training, credit, land, extension, legal reform), access to basic goods and services (household, needs, education, health), and external resources flows (such as debt reduction). In turn, these contribute to the long-term goals of gender equity and the empowerment of women.

The world conference of the UN decade for women held at Copenhagen in July, 1980 defined development as the total development, including development in the political, economic, social, cultural growth of the human person. “Women’s development should not be viewed as an issue in social development but should be seen as an essential component in every dimension of development”. According to
this definition the national perspective plan for women 1988-2000 AD (1998) which has made a free frank and objective analysis of the impact of developmental plans and programmer of Indian women, with special reference to rural women, gives as the following profile of women in India; there is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors economic, social political, education, health care, nutrition and legal as women are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walks of life.

According Kamala Bhasin (1992) Empowerment of Women, means recognizing women’s contribution, women’s knowledge, helping women fight their own fears, and feelings of inadequacy and inferiority women enhancing their self-respect and self-dignity, women controlling their own bodies women becoming economically independent and self-reliant, and finally women controlling resources like land and property.

Empowerment of women is not a one-way process it is not the adult educators and activists can go and empower others it is a two way process in which we empower and get empowered. This is an ongoing journey for all of us. No one can become empowered for good and then become an expert in empowering others. Women need to be empowered for gaining collective strength. Empowerment entails struggle, it entails learning to deal with the forces of oppression; society it also entails conscious and deliberate interventions and efforts to enhance the quality of life. Collective strength in necessary for building solidarity and support among workers to achieve empowerment. On the one hand, a struggle against existing forces of oppression has to be under taken and in the other, support for women workers has to be generated though collective strength. Empowerment through organizing helps to sustain both the struggle and the support base. In order to fight against the socially constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the stream that regimes more strength. Such a strength comes from the process of empowerment.
EMPOWERED WOMEN'S CHARACTERISTICS

According to Hall (1993) the empowered women share the following characteristics:

-- Empowered women define their attitudes, values, and behavior in relation to their own real interests. They have autonomy because they claim their freedom from existing hierarchies, whether they live in traditional societies or modern, industrial societies.

-- Empowered women maintain equal mindedness rather than act out roles that merely confront and challenge male dominance. Empowered women do not aim at being superior to men. They respond as equals and cooperate in order to work toward the common good.

-- Empowered women use their talents to live fulfilling lives. They have not only survived the harshness of their own subjugation, but they have also transcended their subjugation, thus moving themselves through survival of fulfillment. Empowered women maintain their strength, in the presence of pressures of family, religion, and work, and they contribute forward the empowerment of all women.

-- Empowered women may continue to meet their family responsibilities and participate in religion. They choose to do so in ways that strengthen rather than debilitate them, however, which is also advantageous for others. Empowered women do not retreat from these traditional, responsibilities, but they forge their own ways of doing thing.

-- Empowered women define their values and formulate their beliefs themselves. They do not derive their sense of being from male authorities, and they do not live vicariously through men. Empowered women strengthen themselves through other women’s support and sustain their own moral visions. Their actions flow from their own distinctive ideals.

-- Empowered women can be found in all social groups and all societies, however, the optional conditions for empowered women are both individual and social, and there are more empowered women in modern societies because. The collective actions of women are more visible and more palpable in those in settings.
Women's empowerment helps women to make necessary transitions over their life courses (Foner and Kertzen, 1978 marks, 1977). As the patterns of women's interactions have an impact on broader social structure, to the extent that they make changes in these exchanges, they will be in more advantageous positions to make changes at broader levels of social organization (Sunday, 1981). Empowering changes in women's attitudes result in new values that motivate them to participate more actively in broader social controls (Mason, Czajka and Arber, 1976; Roper and Labeff, 1977).

Women's empowerment allows women to be appreciated and acknowledged for who they are and what they do (Kessler-Harris, 1981; Levy, 1989). Women's support of other women (Oliker, 1989) heralds a new stage of women's development, where women can unite and act collectively to reduce and remove oppressive social structures (Fitzputrick 1990).

On both individual and social levels women's empowerment neutralizes and sometimes negates their pervasive devaluation (Reskin, 1988). Women's empowerment also modifies women's existing social ideologies (Mason and Bumpals, 1975) by introducing women's own goals and values into their decision-making. Women become more autonomous through their empowerment and, consequently institutionalized patterns of gender arrangement will continue to be scrutinized and questioned.

Empowerment allows women to move beyond conventional gender stereotypes and rigid gender role definitions. When women deliberately turn toward the most significant sites of their oppression — family, religion, and work — they begin to see the complexities and nuances of their own exploitation (Mills, 1967). Women must know themselves sufficiently to be come free and these occur only when they understand how much society controls them and perpetuates their subordination (Random, 1987).
Empowerment is based on ‘power to and power form within’ involves getting access to the full range of human abilities and potential. Empowerment therefore involves undoing that social constitution so that the group or individuals get to see themselves as having the capacity to act and have influence.

This wider picture of empowerment can be seen on three levels; the personal level, where empowerment is about developing the sense of self and individual confidence and capacity; the level of close relationship, where empowerment is about developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of the relationship and decisions made within that relationship; and the collective level, where individuals work together to have impact that in wider than each could have alone. This last includes involvement in political structures but can also be collective level in practice needs to be broken down further as a category, since it encompasses a wide range of scale, from, for example, a village level through to the level of, say the united nations a local collective level and an institutional level can thus be distinguished.

In many ways, the definitions of empowerment used in education, counseling and social work although developed through work in industrialized countries one similar to frieze’s concept of conscientisation, which centers on individuals becoming subjects in their own lives and developing what he calls ‘critical conscienceless ‘an undertaking of their circumstances and the social environment that leads to action.

Keller and Mbewe describe empowerment as: “a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self reliance to alert their independent right to make choices and to control resources which will at list in challenging and eliminating their own subordination”

Srilatha Butliwala, writing about women’s empowerment has made a detailed analysis of empowerment programmer with women looking at integrated rural development economic interventions awareness building and organizing of
women and at research training and reasonab'... support she notices that in some (especially IRD) programmer, empowering is used synonymously with 'development'. In such cases there may be no change in what is achieved as a result of the change. There is of course an assumption that power comes automatically though economic strength it may, but often does not, depending on local gender relations and class or caste relations and very often work is still alone 'for' women. Economic activities do not always improve women's economic situation, and often add a layer of extra burden. A specific focus on economic activities also does not automatically create a space for women to look at their role as women and at other problematic aspects of their lives.

The idea of 'Empowerment' has much in common with other concepts used by development practitioners and planners such as 'participations', 'sustainability' or 'capacity-building'. They certainly have much have much in common. There is a strong temptation to look for terminology such as 'capacity building', which takes the troublesome notion of power and the distribution of power out of the picture. It seems to be one more way of hide or at least ignore the realities of power, inequality and oppression; yet it is precisely those realities which shape the lives of poor and marginalized people and the communities they live in Srilata Batliwala says the term 'empowerment' valuable for focusing thought planning and action. It is when it uses in un thoughtfúl, careless deliberately vague or sloganising that it loses its usefulness.

Women's ability to independently analyse, critique & reach out information and knowledge increase as also their strategic and managerial capabilities –thus their making power in the home and community increase visibly.

Women-often along with their men begin to collectively address various forms of exploitation such as right to minimum wages, equal wages, for equal work, right to ownership of land and other family assets on their own names, right to maintenance in the event of divorce to desertion etc.
Women’s ability to speak out act on oppressive practices and violence against women both within and inside the family ground, from wife-beating, dowry, child marriage, rape and or sexual harassment to discrimination in opportunities given to sons and daughters etc.,

In some cases, women’s rising consciousness, expresses itself in direct Political forms, such as standing for local body elections demanding accountability for elected representatives and government officials etc.,
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although the present study is concerned with the urban women empowerment, a lower ties of municipality in Karnataka, an attempt is made here to review the studies on woman empowerment in general and in politics in particular. This is considered essential to understand the different levels of empowerment of women. Particularly after the introduction of the 81st Amendment bill or 33% Women’s Reservation Bill. This review also serves as the frame of reference for the analysis of data for the present study.

The review of the studies is presented in two sections. The first section covers the studies on empowerment of women in different fields i.e, social, civic, etc., while the second section deals with studies on woman empowerment covering their participation in political and development processes in general and urban local bodies in particular.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Maxine Molyneux (1998) in Development and change: Analysing women’s movement Vol 29, No.20, April 1998. Analysed the interest in women’s movements has a long history. Its more recent origin go back over 20 years to the work of feminist historian such as Sheila Rowbotham, Louise Tilly and Olwen Hufton. The literature has been particularly concerned with two types of women’s movement on the one had there was an interest coincident with the appearance since the 1970’s of a reinvigorated and international feminists movement in tracing the history of feminists and the work of the feminists groups and organisations in various parts of the world on the other hand there was a parallel concern with the struggles of poor or “subaltern” women and consumption needs. Researchers writes the comparative analysis of women’s movement shows considerable variations between regions in their timing character influence and effectiveness.
While women’s movement in this sense first emerged in the Political and social conditions of 18th Century Europe, it was in the 19th and early 20th centuries that women in many other regions of the world began to organise against in equalities based on sex to demand legal reforms aimed at removing patriarchies rights within the family and in the society at large. The issue of women’s strategic interest is therefore necessarily bounded up with what broader Political projects women’s organisation or movements are associated with. In the relatively new conditions presented by the return to democracy in many Third World States, feminist have been able to contemplate forms of association of alliance in the other Political forces and organisation with which they sympathize.

One of the most significant contribution of feminism has been the development of new perspective on social and political life. The critical insights of feminism have lead to a gendered analysis of polices and of their social consequences, evident in discussion of poverty and the impact of macro civic policies on developing countries. Feminist theory has shown why the sphere of reproduction needs to be placed firmly within the planning process, not just to acknowledge women’s invisible labours, but to identify social needs more generally within conditions of racialized and gendered social inequalities. As was evident from the Beijing resolutions, for many feminists in the developing countries, the important issue is how to develop a feminist politics, which can also promote a general project of social justice. This implies some commitment to the principle of equality and to universal principles of citizenship, but in a way, which does not presume an undifferentiated public with identical needs and interests.

Padma Ramachandran et. al writes that democratic and secular of India endeavours to provide the necessary conditions for greater participation of women in all spheres of life. Equality of opportunity is guaranteed and discrimination on grounds of sex, language, religion, class or creed is prohibited. Yet in reality, women’s participation in decision making at all level national to local is low.
Participation of women is an integral part of democratic process and strengthening the quality of civic life. As they are half the population, women must be in decision making in all socio economic and Political organisation. Recently movement seeking a Political identity based on caste, ethnicity, culture and religion have surfaced. Such movements view the empowerment of women as somewhat of a threat to their vision of a social order.

According to the National Commission for women (NCW) lack of understanding by the implementing agencies of the Government about the existing provisions relating to women's right and their insensitivity in dealing with women's issues are the two important reasons behind it. The NCW has conceded that there is no dearth of scheme designed to uplift the status of women. Yet women do not really stand tall and confident like men at the beginning of the 21st century.

The Commission in its latest, document titled "Gender Equity making it happen was explained these reasons in detail. Based on the study conduct by the NCW members, Poornima Advani, the document has provided information on all the gender related programmes undertaken by all the departments of the Central Government. The 193 page book has documented all consolidated efforts made by the Government ever since independence to dismantle the structure of inequality injustice and deprivation and discrimination against women while pointing out the constitutional provisions the documents relating to women. The main focus of the document is on how, these development schemes and programmes are being executed by the Government as well as its various wings in order to bring about a change in the status of Indian Women. These schemes are for both working and non-working women.

The document is perhaps the first of its kind to give a comprehensive picture of the women related policies and their execution. However it can be helpful to researchers and those who conduct studies on women issues. The document said that the 2001 National Policy for empowerment of women is aimed
at creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full
development of women so that they can realize their utmost potential. It further
explains that the policy seeks to secure the demure and de facto enjoyment of all
human rights and fundamental freedoms by women on equal basis with men in
political, economic, social, cultural and civic spheres. It emphasizes the
empowerment of women through poverty eradication and micro credit. For social
empowerment, it seeks to modify education, health and nutrition policies to meet
the needs of women. It also lays emphasis on the rights of the first child and seeks
to protect women against violence. It enjoys central and state governments to draw
up time bound action plans for translating the policies into concrete action through
a participatory process in consolation with central and state departments of women
and child development and National / State Commission for women.

Experts on women issues have said that the publication of the document is
linked to the declaration of 2001 as the year of empowerment of women. This is a
positive step indeed in the first year of the 21st Century. Incidentally the Ninth
Five Year Plan which is nearing an ended has also focused on women issues. It is
objective to involve women as important agents of social change and development

For the first time empowerment of women has been made an objective. Further women’s development issue has been elevated to the levels of macro
objective, under the plan.

The Government of India has constituted a National Commission for
Women to provide for matters connected with the development of women. It has

The commission shall consists of the following members, namely a
chairperson, nominated by the Government, six members to be nominated by the
Government amongst persons of ability, integrity and standing who have had
experience in law or legislation and other fields.
Provided that at least one member each shall be from amongst persons belonging to SC and STs respectively.

Provided further that majority of the members nominated under the clause shall be women the secretary to the Government Incharge of Women and Child Development – Ex-offico members;
Directors of Women and Child Development – Ex-offico Members;
Director General of Police or his nominee not below the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police, preferably a woman – Ex-offico members;
Secretary of the commission, who shall be the member – secretary.
The term of office of these persons not exceeding of three years as may be specified by the Government.

The Commission shall perform all or any of the following functions, namely.
a. Investigate and examine all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women under the constitution and other laws.
b. Present to the Government, reports upon the working of those safeguards
c. Make in such reports recommendations for the effective implementation.
d. Review from time to time
e. Take up the cases of violation relating to women with the appropriate authorities.
f. Participate and advice on the planning process of socio-economic development of women.
g. Evaluate the progress of the development of women under the state.
h. Make periodical report to the government on any matter pertaining to women and in particular various difficulties under which women toil.
i. Involve with voluntary organisation in the state, more particularly women’s organisation.
j. Assist the women to ensure equal and fair justice in matrimonial disputes before the family courts.
S.V. Saraswati (1997) Presented a paper Women and Indian Constitution at the seminar held on 25th and 26th July 1997 on Women and Nation Building sponsor by the Department of Women and Child. Studied the general status of Women in India is very complex, it differs from income group to income group, religion to religion group, caste to caste, education to uneducated, rural to urban and traditional to modern. A small minority of women who are educated, economically affluent, urbanized and modernized are very much awakened and enjoy a status of equality, rights and freedom with men. But for the majority of women the situation is otherwise. The tradition of subordination, opposition and exploitation continues over them. They are victims of malnutrition, over work, ignorance, illiteracy, sickness, physical violence and much worse, female infanticide, bride-banning, and also occasional ‘Sati’ even on the eve of the 20th century.

The study also reveals that the change in the women’s status and rights is found in the improvements in the women’s education, her increasing employment in the modern areas of the economy under the influence of the British rule and the following westernization and industrialization. The constituent assembly of India had some prominent women of India, such as Sarojini Naidu, Durga Bai, Renuka Ray and Hansa Mehta among others as members. The constitution of India a position of absolute equality with men as citizens.

Even after five decades after Independence and the coming into operation of the new constitution, women for the most part are kept out of politics. This is neither good for the women in particular nor the country in general. Neither full democracy nor full development of the country in possible without a more positive and active involvement of women in politics.

The researcher concluded that women’s political empowerment is not at all possible unless there is reservation for women and unless women themselves understand the simple principle that “Organization is strength”.

Marilee Karl (1993) studies Women and Empowerment (Participation & Decision making) Women and World Development Series, reveals that the term echoes the general emphasis within the mainstream on unleashing the capacity of individuals to be more entrepreneurial, more self-reliant. It is closely allied to the current emphasis on individualistic values; people “empowering themselves” by pulling themselves up by their bootstraps. On the other hand, an empowerment approach to development can also mean people’s participation in the policy making and planning processes. It is now recognized in development circles that economic growth and social betterment are best achieved when the mass of the population is informed about and involved in development. Aims and plans and sees itself as a direct beneficiary of the extended resources growth should bring one of the ways, to achieve this structuring the decision making process in such a way as to ensure widespread. Empowerment can be a planning goal in the sense that government support is given to a range of interest groups and Ngo’s, by using them as consultative bodies or councils.

The researcher concluded that gender awareness training, as an instrument to change the attitude of both men and women in communities, can be built in many different and culturally appropriate ways. For instance, the Baha International Community, in Collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNICEF), embarked on a project in the countries of Cameroon, Bolivia and Malaysia to encourage the empowerment of women by using traditional media- such as songs, dances and plays- to change the attitude of both women and men about the participation of women in community and family decision making begun in 1991, the project is already showing dramatic signs of success.

Aparna Mahanta (1994) in her article “The Indian State and patriarchy” states that, the state in the highest form of organization and it is inevitable. In the modern conceptions of the warfare, state and of social democratic regions- this state is perceived as the agent of social change, with the aim to provide a more just and equitable society to all. The modern Indian state is based on both Liberal
democratic and Marxist socialist traditions in setting a political agenda to incorporate a wide sweep of democratic, secular and socialist principles. Asserting its sovereignty and independence vis-à-vis the international community, the Indian state is constantly being pressurized by the force of imperialism under the guide of international interest through the institutions such as World Bank and The International Monetary Fund.

“Despite its commitments to human rights and social justice, the Indian state is colluding in the name of national interest, with patriarchal forces to deny human rights and social justice to traditionally disadvantaged groups such as women, backward and scheduled castes and tribes and religions and ethnic minorities” Mahanta, 1994, P88).

Researcher reveals that what is now needed is the political will. The strategy for the advancement of women seeks first and foremost to alter the current unequal conditions and structures that continue to define women as secondary persons and give women’s issue a low priority. Development should now more to another phase in which women is pivotal role in the society is recognized and given its true value.

“Women Plea to Introduce Gender Audit in Government” (1997). New Delhi March 17: The National consultation working group on the Ninth Five Year Plan on gender and development, today urged the government to undertake gender analysis and gender audit within all ministries to expedite the process of women’s empowerment organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women(UNIFEM), the working group said gender analysis of all Government plans, programmes and policies, both ex ante and ex-post, would greatly help in mainstreaming gender considerations in the country. The National Consultation group has also recommended the need for providing more information, right work, gender satisfaction and increased resource allocation to link the micro voices of women with macro processes and policies and define the direction of development. Inaugurating the meet, the planning commission deputy chairman, Pro. Madhu
Dandavate, said no economic planning with a social and human base can ignore women's vital contribution in building social and human infrastructure. Prof. Dandavate called upon women organizations, voluntary welfare and study groups to make women aware of their vital role in social and human development and instill confidence in them. Once women are confident they can achieve all their aspirations and fulfill their demands satisfactorily, he said.

M. S. Vidyut Bhagwat (1996), Social activist said in her "Anti - Women effect of Liberalisation warned against". Economic liberalization should be opposed if it would bring more problems for women. If development meant losing of jobs for women in Government offices, it would not be in favour of women's development. Writes also reveals that advanced technology should be provided to the skilled women workers, to facilitate their development. There was a continuous threat to the women that if they step out of the house their family life would be disturbed, women should come out of this frame. She lamented about the lack of women's participation in politics and stressed the need of women's union to solve the problems.

Mukta Mittal (1995) in "Women in India: Today and Tomorrow" writes with the coming of 'Manu Code' in Post-Vedic Age, the Vedic custom of husband and wife jointly taking part in religious functions slowly came to be rejected. But women have, over centuries, been used, abused and exploited and the scenario has not changed much, as we move into the 21st century. The inferior status of women in established right at the birth. The birth of a girl-child is unwelcome as she is considered to be an economic burden. In the matter of education, the picture is similarly bleak. A large number 675 percent of women are illiterate. Female literacy is 18% in the rural are as and 47.8% in the urban areas. Economic development is the progress towards an increasingly intricate patterns of labour specialization. Writes, women empowerment is fast emerging as an important slogan for the 1990's. this slogan is gradually being integrated with that of participation, advanced so vociferously by many in the late 1970's and 1980's. participation as a key to development was found to be highly misleading because
Once concepts regarding women's work were redefined, the invisible women of earlier times were suddenly perceived as 'working women' and thus already participating in their own way in development. The work participation of women in some important occupations is very low. Women have been and still are excluded from the production of and representation in many social and cultural activities, but even when they are included they do not receive their due recognition.

Poornima Chikarmane (1996) in “Education for the Empowerment of Women: A case study of the Kagad, Kach, Patra kashtakari Panchayat. Writes waste pickers comprise the most marginalized among the urban population. Unrecognized as workers and unprotected by labour legislation, they shift through the cities garbage in order to salvage recyclable scrap such as paper, plastic, glass, metal and wood. Waste picking is a survival strategy, rather than an occupational choice. There are estimated to be about 8000 waste pickers in Pune city. The trade is mediated by caste, class and gender. Waste picking constitutes the lowest rung in the urban occupational hierarchy. Pune city generates between 300 and 500 gms of garbage per capita per day. The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) transports about 800 tonnes per day to four garbage dumping grounds located on the city outskirts. Waste pickers are part of the informal sector and are considered to be self-employed. They do not share any employer employee relationship, either with the Municipalities or with the traders. Societal images of waste pickers are stereotypical and include a range from dirty to being labeled as 'thieves'. It is in this context that the Department of adult education, Pune sub-centre, started the process of Education for Empowerment through organizing waste pickers in the Pune city. From 1991, the writer also writes that the process in and through which women collectively enter into a process of critical reflection upon their life situation and act in order to change it, thereby becoming progressively empowered. The participants are the key actors and the activities ensue from dialogue: debate and discussions around critical issues. The important elements of the process as illustrated through the case study are: creation of a space for
dialogue; identification of critical; issues/needs; building solidarity; mobilization around issues; the search for alternatives, access to and control over new resources, decision making, access and control and building alliances.

Vidyadhar Date (9.9.94) The Times of India News service, Bombay Nov.8. In “Women to bear brunt of Economic Policy” writes the new economic policy and the consequent socio-economic adjustments would impose a severe burden on women in India, according to a report prepared by the department of women and child development of the central Government.

The report noted that there may be expansion of employment opportunities for women in export oriented industries, cash crop cultivation, agri-business, finance, banks and insurance sectors. Yet, these gains may be offset in various ways. There will be a decline in public sector employment and women may be the first to be retrenched in other sectors of employment. There will also such as coir, handloom and tobacco as they diminish in importance. The report noted that no generalized picture could be presented about the status of women in a huge country with many contrasts and steeped in the plurality of traditions, customs and institutions and proud of its heritage of eclecticisms. Inadequate representation given to women in the political process and decision making has also been highlighted in the report. In the 1989 parliamentary elections only 43% women voted as against 70% men. The turn-out of women voters in 1991 was only 47% as against 52% of men. Reporter concluded that the number of women contestants in parliamentary elections has not increased significantly over the years. Political parties seem uniformly reluctant to field women candidates. The high cost of electioneering is another deterrent to most aspiring women. At the national level there is one-woman senior minister and six ministers of state in a large ministry.

Shubhra Sanyal Ghosh (1996) ‘Empowering the Women Force’ writes within a very common and even vague framework of empowerment and uplift, the actual problems of women movements are, therefore, world apart – one world having little or no knowledge of what liberation or uplift may possible mean or
how it validates itself for the other. It must be recognized that the uplift of women in this country must take cognizance of certain basic economic realities. Primary among them is a fundamental land reforms programme that would give land rights to women as they constituted the very first measure towards empowerment. Over 90% women in India work in the unrecognized sector while 76% work in the agricultural sector. In absolute number, the 1991 census shows 28.3 million women work in farming at marginal wages and getting barely three month employment in a whole year. Marginalized as they are women have been playing a vital role in agriculture but the whole of it is either unnoticed or overlooked as a result of increasing monetization. In a predominantly agricultural economy that is ours, the gender equality must arise from an agrarian land reform that would bestow land ownership rights on women in the same measure with men and dismantling of land monopolies.

There has been a systematic discrimination against women institutionalized by legislations reducing them into a second rate citizens in the matter of legal rights and status and effectively blunting the legal weapon for them to seek rehearsal of grievances.

He also write that the issue of empowerment of women is not just a question of human rights or social justice for a section of the society. Though by themselves the relevance of them is great indeed. The issue relates itself to the very dynamic of social growth. The challenge is how to secure a social order in which each individual contributes to and take the due share from, a meaningfully participatory process of social development. For one thing, the objective of development is an enhancement and enlargement of individual capabilities in as wide a non – sectarian and non – discriminatory sense as the word is capable of suggesting.

Nirmala Buch “State welfare policy and women, 1950-1975” published Economic and political weekly April 25, 1998. writes and they try to look at the state welfare policy form. The women is perspective in the first 25 years of the
Indian Republic. The Five Year Plan holiday years covered by what are referred to as annual plans. The first 25 years will include the first four Five Year Plans, and the plan holiday years of 1967-69. In these early decades, planning and Five Year Plans determined the public policy and its programmes and their implementation in a much more comprehensive manner than they did in the 1990’s. It is under social welfare that women welfare has been specially discussed but it has been left to voluntary organizations:

The main burden of organized activities for the welfare of women is to a large extent borne by voluntary agencies - the principal social welfare programmes relate to women and children. It is envisaged that within the limitations of their resources the central and the state Governments and the local authorities will strive to undertake more direct responsibility in respect of social welfare than hitherto. Voluntary agencies will have to share the major burden in this field. A sum of 4 crore has been provided in the plan for strengthening, improving and expanding the nature and scope of their welfare activities.

Writer writes that in the social sector, there are sectoral allocations and programmes in which women and either presumed to be beneficiaries or there is a reference to their problems but no attempt to deal with women’s issues and concerns. Instead, there is only inclusion of some services and programmes creating to certain identified problems. The perception of women’s problems as reflected in these public policies thus shows an essentially middle class bias that women were essentially home – makers and sometimes the unfortunate victims who had specific problems which needed help. The main problem with the welfare policy was that it did not try to look at women and at their problems and conditions.

Women’s subordination is not only due to male domination but also due to the basic economic and political structures of society which again are reinforced by the same male domination. It is concluded that many of the goals of women’s movement, it was felt, could be best achieved by improving the status of women
through public policy. While Governmental programmes do not provide the solutions to all problems, they do carry with them authority. Resources to change behaviour, if not attitudes. New programmes were introduced but these always had inadequate resource allocation. This gap between acceptance of women's needs and concerns and the policy, programme and resource support continues even in the later decades and the women's movement will continue to have the challenge of ensuring that its goals and objectives are not ignored in the public policy thrusts.

Yasoda Shanmuga Sundaram (1992) in "Women's Resource and National Development" – A perspective. Edited by Rahkumari Chandrasekar. Writes that awareness of social problems of women in social activities. This necessarily implies the participation of men also, and therefore it is essential to generate awareness in the case of women and the problems of women. At the very outset, it should be mentioned that the socio-economic needs of women vary according to the different strata of society. Millions of women in India are poor. There are quite number of discriminations against these illiterate women. Which need to be removed. It is true that several plans and programmes have been devised but implementation of these programmes in tardy and half hearted. Women's way in modern sector is barred not only by women's prejudices, but by the lack of proper qualification. It is true that literacy, formerly an exception, is now becoming the rule among urban girls in all developing countries. But owing to the enduring prejudice against female employment, urban girls are rarely given the type of education which would qualify them for employment in the modern sectors. It is also stated that the methodology of higher education is inadequate for it does not help women for higher education due to various reasons. Education of women and the employment of women, particularly the rural women, must be free from social stigma which, in turn, should help the process and progress of women's education and employment. The status of women, despite several measures like a separate ministry for women, and the constitutional equality, is still at the lowest ebb in this country because education is not given due weightage. Education does not mean
merely getting a degree, but it is the ability to judge and imbibe a process of decision-making in problem situations. This process of decision-making, when exercised by women should help the elevation of the social status of women. This depends mainly on the kind of education imparted to them. Therefore it is suggested that the type of education imparted to women should enable them to participate successfully in the process of decision-making. In the field of social science research and empirical studies must be given importance in framing decisions regarding social problems.

Avabai B. Wadai, president, Family planning Association of India (1994) writes in “Activities of the Family planning Association of India” that the empowerment of women is an important objective in its own right, and the FPAI has evolved a number of programmes which have helped to increase literacy and education among girls and women, skills – training where by income generating activities have been undertaken by them. Education for dealing with social questions such as raising the age of marriage, equal treatment for sons and daughters and promoting the schooling of all children have been included too. The FAPE which is working in over 3000 villages (apart from 38 Urban Branches) has established various types of local volunteer groups of villagers with more than 90,000 volunteers, of whom at least 1/3 are women.

In 1994, the FAPI carried out the following activities specially for women’s development:

- Special projects for women is development and family planning in 10 locations covering a population of 5,37,807 in 607 villages. These include Literacy Centers, Skills Development Centers, Short Term Courses, Schools, Balwadis, Financial support to 219 needy women, project management support and activities in various social fora.

- Young women’s information centers for girls between 12 – 20 years, 55 such centers have been established in 10 branches. One of the campaigns, conducted successfully, identified 2,810 girls of whom 1,324 got enrolled in schools.
Acosta (1990) in his from structural subordination to empowerment: women and development in Third World contexts. It is argued that an analysis of Third World Women’s Status cannot be separate from the colonial experience, particularly the historical exploration of women and the colonies. It is suggested that contemporary relationships between men and women also reflect this historical influence and contemporary institutions continue to reinforce established inequalities. It is asserted that western initiated development projects for Third World Modernization have already served to perpetuate in international economic crisis. Also, women’s unpaid and underpaid labour new forms the basis of new development programme and policies. The metaphor of women as a “Last Colony” is suggested and gender decolonization advocated.

Barch teari (1988) in his building on Traditional patterns for women empowerment at Grass roots level pointed out women’s role in development in Pakistan. Originally begun as a sanitation experiment in Baldia Town. One of the largest squatter settlement in Karachi- it evolved into participatory action programs that were planned, implemented, managed and financed by the poor, young and literate women of the community to improve the education of girls and women. The location of a home school program which also offered preventive health care, is described and its result are evaluated.

Nichols (1985) in his patron system in academia: alternative strategies for empowering academic women, identified four types of academic patronage are described professional authority, organizational authority, professional influence, organisational influence and associated strategies for empowering women are discussed for each type with power described in terms of both “Professional efficacy”, i.e sense of personal power and control. The effective use of professional and organisational influence offers the best hope for inclusion of women in academia and changing the academic bureaucracy from a system of “Participating autocracy” to one of true collegiality.
Qutierrez (1990) in his working with women of colours: An empowerment perspective observed empowerment among women of colours in the US-blacks, Hispanics, Asian American & Native American specially how individual empowerment contribution to group empowerment, which in turn increases the abilities of all group members to function better in society. For associated psychological changes are crucial in moving individual from despair to action:

i. Increasing self-efficacy.
ii. Developing group consciousness.
iii. Reducing self-blame.
iv. Assuming personal responsibility for change.

The double burden of racism and sexism exacts a severe toll on the mental health of women of colour, with considerable impact on their ability to take advantage of civic opportunities. Social workers must become more aware of the psychological effects of powerlessness in addition to the problems brought by poverty before they can effectively help these women empower themselves.

Sujatha presented a paper in Gender and Development Seminar BRA, Hyderabad putting women in positions of power pointed, the experience of women in local administration should serve as a ladder to climb the positions in legislative assembly and parliament and even official positions, as ministers, only the women have to equip themselves for this daunting task, to add vibrancy to the Political culture of India, free from corruption and more responsive to the felt needs of the people. A democracy will fail in its objective if a vast number of citizen (women) lack equal opportunity in the decision making process from grass roots level to highest levels. They are an equal partners in the nation building and Political development. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of United Nations, stated special reservation for women... “can turn India around and shake up the social processes”.

S.Bnangia (1996) Women's development problem and prospects edited by Shamin Aleem stated that the status of women is directly related to the decision making process and unless women are associated more closely with this process equality and justice to women cannot be achieved. The Political participation of women in India is increasing but at a slow pace. There is continuous increase in the percentage of women voters (from 58.3 to 78.8 percent). This reflects the increasing Political consciousness among women. An effort is being made to involve women in politics at the grass root level as there is a difference in the Political complexion and culture of urban and local government organisations. Women for different reasons are not actively involved in urban local bodies. But the involvement of women in panchayat Raj institutions specially at the low level has been increasing. The recent legislation of parliament on Panchayat Raj ensures a 30% reservation of seats for women. There is no doubt that rural women have become more politically consciousness than women in urban area.

It has to be accepted that the increasing involvement of women in politics in a necessary step for a sound democratic society. The first requirement for women and participation in any field is the need to lessen their household responsibilities. Men should be made to realise the necessity of sharing family responsibilities on an equal footing. Even though gender equality is enshrined in the constitution in its fundamental rights, fundamental duties and directive principles and India has ratified various international conventions to secure equal rights to women and the government had formulated the “National Perspective Plan for Women 1998-2002” and National Policy for Empowerment of Women-1996, there still exists a wide gap between the enunciated objectives in the constitution, legislation, policy formulation and plans on the one side and the reality of the status of women in over country on the other.

Researchers observed that for the first time women in large number were given the opportunity to participate in rural local government institutions. It appears that though women have now come to stay as a Political force, they have
to go a long way before they can really become a significant Political force. Traditional attitudes and values regarding women's Political role. Also observed greater involvement of voluntary organisation in training the rural women for providing education, income generating facilities and in creating awareness among them.

Rai (1995) in his women and public power: women in the Indian Parliament. He observed cross cutting loyalties, institutional incentives and tenums links with women's movements limit the potential of women MP's in representing women's interest across a range of areas.

Kottakayam (1982) in his women power and innovation: A study of women organisation and social change. He studied six Mahila Samjas (MSS) in the Trivandrum district of Kerala. MSS function throughout the state as independent units. It was formed that new norms are better accepted and incorporated into behaviour patterns when they are learned in the context of a felt need or in a reality situation rather than when, they are received as advice out of context. Such norms of easily institutionalized. There was close association between acceptance of new norms and frequency of visit to the MS.

Jagirdhar (1986) in his emergence of women as a force in Rural Development. He observed female literacy has been viewed as the path for development through a awareness fertility control and health improvement, emphasis now being shifted to functional skills and management-oriented education. The formation of a program (DWCRA) for women and children is another step by Government towards recognition of women measures for future action are suggested.

Rosebeh N. Billimoria found that a mere equitable representation of women in not only the legislature but also in the decision making position is vital, if policy decision and development programmes are to reflect greater sensitivity to the needs of the country's most discriminated minority. Women power in India, as
in most of the countries in the world has been surely under estimated and under utilised. She also found that when the Government Political parties and voluntary organisation especially women's organisation make a united effort to ensure greater participation of women in politics that women in status will be improved and consequently the develop process will gather momentum.

G.G.Parikh published a paper why women are needed in politics in Janata October 26,1973 (Vol.30-32) (Page-12) pointed out that women are needed in politics not just because they can do as good a job as men which they can but because they bring a new and necessary focus on social needs. They are needed because at present, our society is largely neglecting the skills and resources of a large proposition of the population. It is absurd to deny the difference between men and women, whether inborn or conditioned, but whatever the differences women are as intelligent and as capable as men. In order to change them they will have to become part of them with all the risks that entails.

Giriyappa.S.published a paper decision roles by women in different rural and semi urban activities in journl of rural development , Vol 7(4) Page 4330443(1988) NIRD, Hyderabad, India. His study undertaken in Dakshina Kannad which is one of the most developed district of karantaka found the role and status of women has been undergoing a continuous change in recent times. Though women may not enjoy equal power in the household, they do participate in many activities and take decision at varying crucial values. Even in the female headed houses, bulk male major decisions are being taken by men but the tendency of greater female participation in matrilineal headed house also becoming quite clear. The decision role by women are quite competitive and hence improvement of the same might help in augmenting of efficiency in many rural and semi urban sectors.

K.Raghuram Reddy presented papers at the conference on “Women’s status and development” held at Warangal during August 7th & 8th 1982 constraints on women’s Political participation pointed even as electorate their
participation levels in lower than men. Thus sex differences is striking with fair sex lagging far behind male in Political participation. Their Political participation, awakening, development and participation is at a low degree. Efforts must be made by the Government, Political parties and voluntary organisation to emancipate the women from their present plight and ignorance fact modernization and industrialization will quicken the development of women.

V.Sivalinga Prasad presented papers at the conference on “Women’s in politics” held at Warangal during August 7th & 8th 1982. A few observations pointed in the Indian context the socio-civic status of women in mainly responsible for their low representation in politics. To over come this problem of different social strata, some suggested total reservation of all Political positions in the country on class basis and further equal reservations to men and women within the classes.

B.S.Bhargava and K.Subha (1994): Emerging trends in Panchayat Raj (Rural Local Self Government) in India. Political Empowerment of women: The case of Karnataka’s experience with Panchayat Raj pointed out that empowerment gives women the capacity to influences decision making process. Planning, implementation and evaluation by integrating them into the Political system. This implies Political participation which includes right to vote, contest campaign, party membership and representation in Political offices at all levels and effectively influence decisions thereby leading to Political empowerment. Reservation is one of the instruments of Political empowerment as its guarantees representation. The falling of the 73rd and 74th Amendments can be considered as the greatest events for women’s empowerment as one third of the seats are reserved for women in the local bodies.

Mahipal(1998) women in Panchayat experienced of a training camp. Published in Economic & Political Weekly January 24, 1998 observed the training camp in Gangohkshetra Panchayat, U.P. was an eye opener to both males and females of the region regarding the discrimination faced by women inside and
outside of the household observed although women are elected representatives of panchayats, they feel neglected. They said that they did not received communication either from the Gram Panchayat or the Kshetra Panchayat to attend the meetings. For the first time they received an invitation from the empowerment and sustainable development initiative for attending the training camps, pradhans and husbands of some women to attend the training camps as they did not want them to learn about their rights and powers. That is why in some villages invitation letters for attending the camps were not distributed among the elected women representatives of PRI’s. It is observed that the organising of the programme created an awareness that would have its spread effect in coming days to faster better working of panchayats. That was the general consensus.

Srinivas, Burra, Pullani, Eshvanaiah etc., in women’s empowerment and representation in Indian Parliament: An antidote to patriarchy observed the major problem in the women coming forward to contest and functioning successfully in the leadership position is that of the patriarchal value, frame work, these patriarchal values are strongly rooted in the rural areas in the context of which the local functionaries and institutions work. The urban social and Political environment where also basic social-cultural frame work for women’s conduct is same, however provides, some space to women’s free choice and activity, because the urban cosmopolitan setting neutralizes the traditional value frame work, although it does not nullify it.

Nutan Sinha(1991). The Indian Journal of Public Administration. Quarterly Journal of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (July-Sep 1991) Vol XXXVII No.3, studied the political scenario in Bihar. It indicates that what is time in the all India context with regard to overall participation of women in the Political life is also true of the state Bihar attempt has been made to examine the degree of association between women’s level of Political awareness, their Political participation and their voting acts in relation to their party identification.
Researchers found, of the total sample about 2% women had high degree of party identification. It means that there were only two percent women who had correct knowledge and identification of more than ¼ of Political parties in Bihar which were contesting the 1991 elections.

In Political involvement, the participation of women in campaigning and their degree of interest in campaigning were also examined over 1/3 of the respondents were very much interested; 1/3 were somewhat interested; and a little more than ¼ were not interested in Political campaign. Even among the women who were exposed to voting, more were very much interested in campaign; ¼ had no interest at all. Even among those women who did not participate in voting more than 1/3 had much interest in Political campaign on the whole observed, the women had greater degree of interest in Political campaign in this election than party-identification and Political awareness. A positive relationship was existing between their Political participation and Political involvement in terms of their interest in Political campaign. The active participation in Political campaign. The active participation in Political campaign was more among the rural women than urban women. Apparently it may be said that the rural women, as against the urban women, had greater degree of voting participation as well as Political involvement.

In the same way, women belonging to higher castes had greater extent of active participation in Political campaign in this parliamentary election than the women who belonged to lower castes which included backwards, SCs, STs and others. The reasons for their active participation would be either affiliation or group feelings.

Usha Mehta (1998) Journal of the Council for social development (Vol.8, No.3, September 1978) "Indian Women and their participation in Politics:; writes in a survey conducted amongst the women candidates contesting for 1971 parliamentary and 1972 assembly elections an attempt was made to find out whether the low participation was due to women being afraid of violating the
traditional Indian norms or because of their lacking motivation to enter the fray. A majority of them blamed the discriminatory policy of the Political parties. Political parties, they complained not only failed in encouraging them to participate in politics, but sometimes, adopted positively discriminatory and discouraging attitudes.

On the whole, as far as equality in the Political field is concerned, from the nonentities they once were, women have now grown into full fledged citizens conscious of their rights and responsibilities. Though their status is not changing completely, it is in the process of being changed. The main factory that defer them from summoning enough courage to enter the Political field according to the study, are:

i. traditional social norms
ii. lack of education
iii. Civic dependence on men
iv. Domestic duties and responsibilities.
v. Political parties dominated by men desirous of perpetuating male rivals some of whom do not even hesitate in indulging in character assassination.

Also said that only the united effort of the Political parties, the government and women and women's organisation that can help in developing readership and improving the status of women.

Rashmi Shrivastava(1982) : The role of women in Indian Politics, published in quarterly journal of the Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur(India) (Vol.21, No.1, Jan-March 1982). Critically examined the participation of the Indian Women in the politics of the country. Indian Women in the politics of the country. Also examined for the purpose, the part affiliation, marital status and the number of women in the parliament in different elections. A discussion has been done regarding the women personnel of Union Government, State Government and those who are working as diplomatic representative abroad.
Researchers found that married women were more in number than the unmarried women who took part in politics and become member of parliament. Observed that the representation of women has been from all parts of the country in the party and Government. The number of women from northern side of the country has always been more, representation of women from different religion and castes of the country. The role of Indian women in states politics is also significant. There are many women MLA's in different states there are women on the post of Governor, Chief Minister, Cabinet Minister, Minister of State, Chairman of Legislative Council, Deputy Speaker of Legislative Assembly. However, the number of women personnel in the state Government is small in campaign to men. Researcher said that though nearly half of this country consists of women, the participation is very low in centre and state politics.

Snehalata Panda (1998) in "Decision making in Panchayats Role of Women" selected sixteen Panchayats located in a contiguous zone near Berhanapur and Chatrapur towns of Orissa. These Panchayats are populated by people belonging to the same caste with same class differences and have a predominantly agricultural economy. Out of the 46 respondents only two belonged to families where their husbands were active in politics as members of CPI and Congress. All the rest had no political experiences either were they exposed to a political environment prior to their induction into the PRI's. But they had improved their skill and shaped their political orientations after participating in the PRI's affairs. By virtue of their official position they come into contact with the influential in the village, party workers, Ngo activities and participated in the meetings of the Gram Sabhas. Such activities and contacts provided stimulus to discharge their responsibilities with a sense of commitment and dedication. But personal factors like interest and receptivity to political stimulus were major factors in influencing their political attitude and behaviours. Their skill and efficiency were influenced by regular attendance in the meetings in support of their colleagues, family and the community. Economic rewards strengthened their
desire to participate and involve in the PRI's. Regular participation provided resources to develop competence and develop a participatory orientation.

Researcher concluded that so far the village power structure located in the PRI's was dominated by men and higher castes. Due to the mandatory provision of including one third women in the PRI's, women have occupied positions in the PRI's. But the dominance of males so far as their position in the power structure is concerned is visible as almost all Sarpanchas were men. The Chairman of Panchayat Samithis also were men. Therefore, viewing form the positional approach women have not occupied the highest office in the PRI's. But from the reputational score eleven of them are considered as influential not only by women but also by male members. This was due to their age, educational status, past experience in the associations to which they were affiliated, party affiliation and better communication skills. Their power and influence also emanated from their contact and rapport with local elites some of whom represented the State Assembly or were the office bearers of their respective parties. Their influence as decision makers emanated from their active participation from the beginning till it is processed in some important channels and also from their membership in core committees formed in the Panchayats to steer it through till the decision was given a final shape. Their capabilities in influencing decision making is evident from the interest they had shown in the process, its implementation and rechannelisation whenever it become necessary.

B.K.Patanaik (1996) in “Political Empowerment of Women and Village Development”, writes, study was conducted in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The aim was to assess the relationship between women political participation and their attitude towards village development with the reservation of seats for women in Panchayats and Block Development Committees (BDS) a sizable portion of women from different caste, class and religions have been elected to these bodies. A total of 4007 female members have been elected to the Panchayats and BDC of Saharanpur district, out of them, 269 are Pradhans, 3460 are Panchayat members, 4278 are BDC members.
Researcher concluded that the women political participation at the village level has broadened their attitude towards various developmental activities and programmes. Therefore, the Eighth Five Year Plan rightly emphasized on greater involvement of women in PRI system. The reservation of seats for women in Gram Panchayats and other municipal bodies and their religious implementation is one of the significant achievements in women empowerment at the grass root level. This is considered to be a stepping-stone in the promotion of status of women in rural society. If this pioneering stride can be bolstered with opposite knowledge, attitude and skills in women for handling their job responsibilities, they would prove to be effective resource persons and promoter of village development in years to come.

Vijay Lele (1997-98) in “Media Response to Political Empowerment of Women”, with special reference to the 81st Amendment Bill. An Analysis of coverage in English News Papers. She starts with the words “Women’s issues are usually not the stuff of which headlines are made nor the gender-related concerns considered good copy. When such questions do draw the attention of the media, they are often either sensationalized, trivialized or otherwise distorted. In a nutshell, their coverage can be summed up as a series of hits and misses”.

(Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sharma in “whose news? The media and women’s Issues”). Writes that the policy of reservations for women, understood as “Positive Discrimination”, is already part of India’s accepted political framework. The dramatic change was made possible by a piece of twin legislation, referred to as the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the constitution, which were formally passed in April 1993. The extensive debate generated by the 81st Amendment, both in Parliament and among concerned individuals and groups outside, was prominently reflected in the media, especially the print media. It found place in newspapers and in magazine, dailies and periodicals. The media recorded what happened, commented on related issues and thus contributed to further debate. Print media has far reaching impact. Moreover, repetitions creates its own fallout. Finally, the possibilities open to the print media are extensive. It has been noticed sometimes
that the same issue is presented in different formats – namely, news reports, interviews, feature article, editorial, letter to the editor and even a cartoon. It was also stated that the representation of women in political process and in power structures remained significantly low. Since the first parliament when women had contested elections, the percentage of their seats had never risen above 8%. The reason for the low representation of women were identifiable. Political parties profess equality but have themselves not given women a chance to contest elections. Their representation in apex bodies was always less than 10%. This held true of the leftist, rightist and centrist parties. In the general society, money power and control over resources were in the hands of men. Underlying all this was, of course, the basic patriarchal attitude that saw house-keeping and bringing up children as the primary responsibility of the women.

Community participation – through initiatives of partnership, 3,816 Local Voluntary groups consisting of 1,865 Mahila Mandals, 1,256 Yuvak Mandals and 692 others were successfully mobilized.

Rahul Singh (1998) published in newspaper ‘Midday’ writes ‘The Reserved Sort’, the bill in question at the moment is the one which seeks to reserve one – third of the seats in parliament and in the state legislatures for women. It is a truly revolutionary bill, one that will entirely transform the lacking system of the country. No democratic country in the world has reservations’ for women in their legislatures. India will be the first. The BJP, the Congress, and the Left parties are for the bill, which means that it is bound to be passed, if not in this particular session, then in the near future. Madhu Kishwar, the founding editor of Manushi, who has been fighting for women’s rights for years and is probably the best feminist thinker, says quite rightly, that we need to have more of a dialogue with those who are opposed to the bill and that, in any case, the bill should be part of a bigger package of electoral reforms aimed at greater participation of women in politics. In the existing scenario, she says, the women’s one-third quota will be cornered by the “Biwi – Beti” (Wife – Daughter) brigade. What we need is to raise
the overall status of women in the country, as has been done in many other counties, not only in the west but in Asia as well.

Seema Mustafa (1998) in midday ‘forget footing, men can’t even stomach the Bill’ in the headline of newspaper writes it was all so predictable. Parliament was divided between men and women, the former all opposed to the women’s reservation bill. The difference was only in strategy. In that the BJP was able to prevail upon its male members of parliament to keep a back seat and allow the Government to list the bill. The congress did not know, and even till now has no idea, of what its position should be on this particular Bill. The Left remain supportive. So it was Left to the two Yadavas, always rushing in where other fear to tread, to hold up the proceedings and ensure that the proposed legislation for according women thirty percent reservation in the legislatures could not be introduced. So they did what should have been expected. Janata Dal Leader Sharad Yadav would have joined them except for the fact that he had lost the Lok sabha elections. They, with the help of other worthies like the Bahujan Samaj party and of course the Mualim MP’s never to be left behind, made a mockery of the supposed sanctity of parliament. They shouted, screamed, rushed into the well if the house, tore up papers, snatched the Bill out of the hands of the speaker and the concerned minister, broke glass panel and did all they possibly could to ensure that the Bill was not tabled. They succeeded. It was not and it still has not been. Also writes and why was all this done? Not for the OBC women. Not for the Muslim women. But for men. To understand this, a profile of the male politician of today’s parliament is necessary. The average politician today is a creature of circumstances, and his selection from a particular constituency is made dependent on extraneous factors of religion, caste, money, influence and not merit. Insecure leaders at the top and this is time of every single political party, look one for men who one faithful and loyal; two, for men who have the money to finance their own elections and surplus to put into the leaders coffer; three men who satisfy the religious or caste compulsions of the constituency. His commitment to the people, his work in the constituency, honesty, integrity are all disqualifications that have
no meaning in the present world of politics. The election is a battle between all these factors and the one who can swing the votes wins.

The demand to reserve a quota within a quota is simply a clever rush to abort the Bill. The BJP, if it was serious, could have tabled it despite the commotion. They have become the fall guys in a diabolical game which has left the BJP with a halo around its head: we wanted to but what could we do a lot under the rules of parliament but obviously there was no intention of doing it.

Lina Mathias (20.07.98) writes in ‘midday’ “the Bill is a Caste Trap” writes Jaya Jaitley, national general secretary if the Samata Party, founder president of the artisans cooperative Dastakari Haath and an active proponent of the women’s Reservation Bill was in the city of Poona last week. She explained her stand on the bill and how the issue is being manipulated. Though they were for an amendemtn to include Other Backward Class (OBC) women, she felt that Gandhiji fasted against because it was so divisive was also harmful. The issue has assumed such dangerous overtones because of lack of proper preparation. Besides Ratriya Janata Dal and Samajwadi Pary are trying to reap political benefit out of it. So it is turning out to be a caste trap rather than a bill for empowering women. The Bill should have been allowed to be introduced. After that debate it threadbare, no problem she says with parties trying to reap political benefit from the women’s Reservation Bill, the proposed legislation is being misused.

Forum on women’s bill (29.07.98) writes one of the correspondent ar Nagpur – A meeting of social activists, academicians and lawyers has set up a forum on women’s reservation bill to bring greater awareness among people, particularly women on the issue. The meeting second to be held at the Indian institute of youth welfare day, strongly criticized the stand taken by certain politicians in blocking the bill in the name of minority and backward class women by seeking reservations within reservation for them. Many speakers doubted the sincerity of those who raised the issue at this stage. It was decided to undertake a survey of awareness on the issue among women, hold meetings of various
women’s organizations and approach members of parliament and the media to create a strong lobby in favour of the bill (PTI).

‘Women’s bill buried by Delhi men’ – One of correspondent (18.7.98) writes, the center is unlikely to table the controversial women’s Reservation Bill in parliament during the current session. This was indicated by parliamentary affairs minister Madan Lal Khurana who said the Government did not want a “re-enactment” of the unruly scenes in the Lok Sabha and would introduce the bill only after there was a consensus on the issue. Also said that efforts were on to reach a consensus on the bill and its introduction has been defended till that time. He informed the Speaker that P.M, A.B Vajapayee was initiating talks with leaders of various political parties. The Government’s decision comes a day after it announced to table. The bill next week. It changed its mind at the last minute following widespread opposition to the bill in its present form.

Express News Service (19980) writes that the Swamajwadi Mahila Subha and Stree Vimochan Trust strongly condemned the tactics of the political parties is not allowing the introduction of women’s Reservation Bill in parliament and averred that they were competent to bring about not only 33% but 50% reservation for women on their own. A resolution was passed after the day long seminar on women’s development in the last 50 years and the future scenario held at SNDT college at Home Science on Saturday. The Trust also gave away the Mahila Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar awards to over 30 women who have made a great contribution in their respective fields. The resolution expressed utter disbelied ober BJP’s assurance in introducing the women’s reservation bill next week. By placing demands in the name of the backward class and minorities group, the name of the backward class and minorities group, the parties have not even allowed a regular discussion in parliament on the reservation bill. While there was no divided opinion among the seminar participants on the need to enhance women’s representation in politics, it was lamented that attempts were being made to create discord among the women themselves by various political groups. Prominent social activist Vidya Bal called upon women to enter politics and try to
provide good governance. Writer Urmila Pawar who expressed her views on the pathetic lot of Dalit women lamented that in the entire struggle for the upliftment of the Dalits, scant attention was paid to the women, especially in the rural areas where the Adivasi women do not even clothes to cover themselves.

(30.07.98) correspondent writes “Chatterjee questions Advani on women’s bill stated that why the Government did not table the women’s Reservation Bill when the Left parties and the Congress were ready to support it. Advani was replying to a special debate on the matter, during which he announced the measures the center was considering to check crime against women, including death penalty for rapists. After a while, he deviated from the subject to the women’s Reservation Bill and blamed some of the opposition parties for not allowing its introduction. He said the bill had the support of three – fourth members in the Lok Sabha but the Government did not want a repeat of the unruly scenes enacted when the bill was sought to be introduced. Mr. Chatterjee interrupted and inquired the reasons for the delay in the bill if the Government had such support. He said the bill should not be made to wait for 100% support and that it should be introduced and passed. “Let them oppose it. You bring it and get it passed” the CPM leader said.

B.S.Bhargava and K.C.Vidya(1992) Journal of Rural Development Vol.II July 1992 No.5, Position of women in political institution ( with special reference to Panchayat Raj System in Karnataka) studied and focussed on “Political Empowerment” for women empowerment give women the capacity to influence the decision making process by seats for women in Political institution will provide them an opportunity to raise their grievances and other relates social and economic problems in a formal forum, a Political process necessary to ensure the improvement for all women in all spheres of life. Researchers writes the major obstacle to women’s in full participation in politics is nearly universal societal attitude that has valued women principally as mother and wives. Reservation of seats is one of the instruments of Political empowerment for women as it is guarantees representation to women as a group. Panchayat Raj one of the most
important Political innovations of independent India is a channel for popular participation in the process of development. The seats reserved for women in Panchayat Raj institutions have been so low that women could hardly influence the Political process only one or two women members would be opted/nominated in a group of 15-19 members. It is disheartening that PRI’s introduced in 1959 have not been able to accommodate or influence women to become members even today. At present PRI’s have been established in nearly all the state but women’s representation in different states, does not exceed 2 to 3.

In Karnataka things took a different turn, when the Janatha Government came to power in 1983 Karnataka become the first state in the country to introduce the policy of reservation for women in the PRI’s by the Act of 1985 which specified that 25% of the total seats should be reserved for women at the district level i.e., Zilla Parishad and at the Mandal Panchayat Level. The purpose behind this move was to provide more opportunities for women to participate in the electoral process and in decision making thereby increasing the possibilities of greater access to women of development benefits.

Reservation of 1/3 of seats for women after the 73rd and 74th Amendments is not only a constitutional law but also political fact today. In Karnataka Panchayat Raj institutions in general the women’s representation has gone beyond the statutory requirements. This has already given rise to a renewed demand by the state government of Karnataka in 1995 for reservation of 30 percent of seats for women in the state legislatures and parliament by amending the constitution.
II CHAPTER REFERENCES


3) Jagiradhar 1986. Emergence of Women as a force in Rural Development.


5) Barch Teari 1988. Building on Traditional Patterns for Women empowerment at Gross not Level.


11) Dr. Sujatha Gender and Development Seminar, BRA ovi, Hyderabad.


20) Dr. S.V. Saraswati 1997. Women and Nation Building Seminar held on 25th and 26th july 1997, Department of women and child.


22) UNIFEM 1997 “Women Plea to Introduce Gender Audit in Government. New Delhi, March 17.


25) Vidyadhar Date. 9.9.94. The Times of India News Service, Bombay, November 8.


31) Press Trust of India 29.7.98. Nagpur.


33) The Times of India News Service, 9.9.94.


37) Varde, sudha. ‘women and political participation’. In women in decision-making: need for network, Mumbai, Research center for women’s studies. 1991. PP 35-43.


45) Modunity and Attitudes towards changing status of women. Modernization of working women in developing societies.


53) ICSSR: Status of women in India 1975.

54) K.N. Venkatappa: “Femine Roles”.


Women and Agricultural Struggles: Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi, 1986.

