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## **Women Empowerment of Mew of District of Haryana: An Evaluation**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The paper examines the pathetic condition of women of Mewat of Haryana. Women are often not aware of her rights in the society. They lived in the most deprived conditions of ignorance and poverty completely unaware of their potential and individuality, leading unhealthy lives, burdened with many and too frequent pregnancies. Meo (Muslim) women do most of the agricultural work related to animal husbandry. They sow weed, transplant, winnow and carry the produce and agricultural waste from the fields to their homes on their head, often with their child on their back or in the womb.

Under the Mewat Area Development project (MADP) these women have started to mobilize organize themselves in self-help groups. In Indian tradition, women have always been given privilege in society. Indian women are known for their significant contribution in everywalk of life. History has failed to record my read tales of mother, wives, sisters and daughters who have struggled for India's independence.

**Key word** women Empowerment, pathetic conditions.

## **THE STUDY AREA**

Mewat region of Haryana in one of the most backward districts of Haryana. During 2004-05, this region has been given a full-fledged status of district, and its headquarter is at Neh. The district Mewat is having five blocks namely Neh, Nagina, Punhena and Ferozpur Thirka.

Every year only 11 percent of the population live in the urban area. According to 2011, area and next to 39 percent of the population live in over 400 villages in Mewat district of Haryana. In Mewat, 85 percent of the population has adopted Islam and the rest of 15 percent of the population are Hindus. Among Hindus, most of the populations belong to Banias, Pradhans, Punjabis, scheduled castes and other backward classes. The literacy rate among the women is very low.

Mewat is characterized with rolling plain with some of undulating topography along with Aravalli hills, extended north to south, stretching over 80 Km. The whole Mewat is characterized by sandy soil, with good permeability of the soil. In the Mewat district, the sub-surface water is saline, except a narrow strip, and along with Aravalli Hills where the hilly water usually percolates the salinity of sub-surface water to a considerable extent. As a result, only 10% of the population is fed by this sub-surface water.

### **Agriculture**

There are only two dominant crops, which are practiced in Mewat. These two crops are wheat in the rabi season and Mustard in the Kharif season. Other vegetable crops like onion and other seasonal vegetables are grown along with Aravalli Hills neighbouring located villages. In the whole of Mewat, 90 percent of the crops are practiced under dryland conditions.

### **Infrastructure**

There are numerous schools in Mewat district. It has been observed that every village has a primary/sr. secondary school. Similarly, four degree colleges have been located in the district. The college is also established by the Govt. of Haryana. There is only one well-facilitated hospital situated at Mandi Khara village in Nagina Sub-Tehsil of Mewat. The health services, facilitated by the state government, have been provided through PHC/CHC in the whole of Mewat district of Haryana. In this context, some of the prominent NGOs like SM Sehgal Foundation are also rendering their services for establishing the drinking water infrastructure in the villages of Karheda, Ghaglas, Notki and Agoan in Nagina and Ferozpur blocks of Mewat.

Hence, it is obvious that the whole region is suffering from various problematic areas. There is a high-fertility rate of population. Every family is having 8 to 10 children. It is because of a religious prejudice against family planning, as a result the size of the family is relatively larger than that of the rest of Haryana. In this context, there is one thing which is heartening to note—that there is no problem of female foeticide in the whole of Mewat district. However, the sex-ratio between 0-6 years is relatively higher over 900, with a rate of prejudice against the women's education. As a result, the social and occupational mobility among the Mewati women is far less as compared to other regions of Haryana. The census of 2011 indicates that the levels of women's participation in the work force are badly affected by the 'pitfalls' in the prevailing social system, as reported by S.P.Y.M, a Nagina-based Non-Government Organization.

In order to overcome the prejudices against family planning, women's education and women's participation in different socio-economic and political life, the local NGOs are playing a significant role in the Mewat area. The other problem like deprivation of children's rights and

then not fulfilling the notion of 'growth with justice' for the people, especially for children, the NGOs like SPYM, playing a notable role in Mewat area.

### **Women Empowerment International Perspective**

The women have not been regarded as equal but are showered only a secondary status, be it only part of the world. For centuries has been denied their rights because of prevailing social and cultural backwardness. They were also denied the rights in the decision-making process of their family affairs on account of several social and cultural constraints imposed by their family and continuation of traditional system of the society. They were merely considered to be suitable to perform the household chores while remaining behind the four walls of the house. But in all societies the gender division of labour hands the responsibility for caring labour to women, much of it without remuneration in the family or as voluntary activity in the community. The human Development Report 1995 estimated that women spending two thirds of their working hours on unpaid work and most of those hours are for caring work.

To understand the status of women in the society, an examination of their political status is necessary. Though the political status is interlinked with the socio-economic status, it has the capacity of influence the transformation of socio-economic system. It has now been accepted that women's rights to vote and occupy positions is fundamental to a women's status. Earlier, women were not allowed to participate in the political process of the country. Later, demand for political equality of women started in 18<sup>th</sup> century. When the United Nations was founded in 1945 only about half of the 51, member had extended franchise to women and it (UN) at first concentrated on political rights which were regard as the most fundamental. The United Nation declared 1975 as the international women's year and 1980 as the year for development of women. But despite all these efforts even today the position of women even in the development, let alone the developing countries, is not satisfactory.

### **Women Empowerment in Haryana**

The transition of Haryana in recent years has brought the issues of women and children strategy. In the recent period Haryana is attracting attention for its high growth in many fields eg. Sports, industries, literacy, agriculture etc. But the ground reality is that Haryana has as backlog in terms of unfulfilled democratic social tasks, which is still lag behind, especially with references to women in Haryana lives gives ample evidence that all is not well in called flower on the lofty hills.

Everyday growing causes of violence against women are in the news daily. Empowerment of women in very much the need of the hour in violence in present scenario in Haryana. Empowerment is a multidimensional and self generating process which involves the advancement and empowerment of women mainly in three fields i.e. social, political and Economic. The role of governments has increased and it has been recognised as a crucial prerequisite for ensuring a position investment climate. Empowerment can be considered as a change in the life of women that enables her participation in decision making, increased. 'Hum Sunenge Narri Ki Baat' (we shall listen to the women) would be the new motto of a women empowerment project to implemented as a pilot project under the national mission for empowerment of women. Block convergence and facilitation centre (BCFC) will be establishment in concerned block. The BCFC would work to increase women participation in Panchayati Raj institutions and village level institutions like, 'Anganwadis' and would also coordinate with government functionaries at block level to process various application for government scheme and services.

The present study confined to Mewat which has been chosen for the implementation of the project, it is because of its distinctive cultural identity with Meos (Muslim) as predominant population group and widely recognized as the key components of the social and economic development of country.

### Socio-Educational Background

Socio-educational background of the representatives is an important element that has a direct bearing on the discharging of their obligations as people's representatives.

### Education

Education is an important ingredient not only in shaping the attitude of individual but also in promoting a person's creative. Women are no exception to it. In fact, it is a pre-condition to their empowerment. Education provides women the means to move from passive to assertiveness and with it women will able to participation proactively in social, economic and political processes which affect their lives take control of themselves. It helps them in decision-making both in their personal as well as professional lives because in the event of being educated, there decision making will be more informed and hence more valuable.

For present study, a fourfold classification-illiterate, literates but not Matriculate, but not Graduates, Graduates and above-of women representatives on the basis of their education has been adopted.

Respondents	Illiterates	Literates but not Matriculate	Matriculate but not Graduate	Graduate and above	Total
Zila Parisad	6 (75.00%)	1 (12.50)	1 (12.50%)	0 (0.00%)	8
Panchayat samiti	63 (94.3%)	(4.48%)	1 (1.49%)	0 (0.00%)	67
Gram Panchayat	141 (97.24%)	3 (2.07%)	1 (0.69%)	0 (0.00%)	145
Total		7 (3.18%)	3 (1.37%)	0 (0.00%)	220

The number of women representatives of zila Parisad belonging to these two categories is 12.5 percent per each. Of the women representatives of sample Gram Panchayats of Mewat region, 97.24% are illiterates while 2.07 percent and 0.69 percent of them are Literates but not matriculate and Matriculate but not Graduates, respectively.

### Political Background

Prior of the passage of the 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional Amendment Act, the participation of political parties in the elections to the rural local bodies were decried, though it is a separate matter that they (Political parties) participated in the election informally.

**Affiliation with Political Party**

Respondents	Yes	No	Total
Zila Parisad	8 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	8
Panchayat samite	61% (91.04%)	6 (8.96%)	67
Gram Panchayats	141 (93.24%)	4 (2.76%)	145
Total	210 (95.45%)	10 (4.55%)	220

In the case of the Panchayat Sumitis of the Mewat region, vast majority of them (91.4%) have been affiliated with political parties, Even greater majority (97.24%) of the women representatives of sample Gram Pancgayats of the Mewat region reported, that they have affiliations with some of the political parties.

**Level of Awareness**

Awareness about the Act or the provision there by which the beneficiaries are governed is an important determinant for its success implementation. The 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional Amendment amend under which reservation of one third seats for the women has been provided, is no exception to it. Non-Government organizations have playing on important role in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of the women in the society over the past few decades. The most salient features of NGO are to actively participation in the development process. However they are considerable an integral part of workforce in Mewat region.

**IRRAD and Mewat**

The institute of Rural Research and Development has been working in Mewat for more then ten years with a vision of motivating and empowering women to make their lives secure and prosperous through education, and better health. S.M. Sehgal foundation has also significantly contributed for improve the women's health in Mewat region.

**Women's Development: A Comparison between Haryana and Mewat**

It has been observed form different points of views, including a wider disparity in women's development in different parts of India and Mewat region of Haryana. Comparing the statistics of health, literacy rates, women participation in the Panchayati Raj institution, womens representation in the service sector and participating probability in the other social economic activities are found negligible by the 'Mewat women'. This cause effect relationship has given rise to widening the disparity between men and women in different strata of society in Mewat District.

**Conclusion**

The women of Mewat district is deprived from different out viewpoints such as literacy, active participation in decision making, political life and social life. She has been exploiting by the prejudicious society for a long time. Today growing violence against her, exploitation and constantly neglecting her has given rise to widen and developed a considerable variability in

almost every walk of life. Though there is ample of state constituted provision for protecting for women rights in the society. But the difference between the theory and practice has given rise to steady deteriorating the women's conditions in the society of Mewat. Keeping in view the present situation, it become imperative to narrowing the gap between theory and practice of the law, pertaining the women's rights in the society. It also need some of advocacy programme for overcoming on prejudices against women especially in the rural society of Mewat. It requires a campaigning programme so that a right thing may be in calculated in to the 'wrong minds'. These awareness programmes are expected to pave the way to develop a quality sense in to the masses, so that a sense of growth with justice may be developed among the masses of Mewat district of Haryana.

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