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Empowerment of Women in Context of Rajasthan Politics

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ABSTRACT: Women have always formed an indispensable part of society and culture. The variety of evidences, empirical investigations and ideological frameworks suggests that we look at social systems and social structures as moving equilibriums.

. To pull the marginalized female population into the mainstream is one of the basic aims with which the Rajasthan State Women's Commission has been established.

→ Redress the grievances of the suffering women across the State of Rajasthan

→ the interests of women across the State

→ Review prevailing laws concerning women and to request the government to make amendments for women to get justice.

→ Recommend remedial legislative measures

→ Advise the Government of Rajasthan on all Policy matters affecting women

Functions of the Commission

Section 11 of the Rajasthan State Women Commission Act, 1999, elaborates the functions of the Commission, but in short, these are as follows:

→ To investigate and analyze all unjustified acts committed against women and to request the government to take action.

→ To take steps to make the existing laws more effective and ensure their implementation.

→ To review existing laws and recommend amendments.

→ To prevent any discrimination against women in state public services and state public enterprises.

→ To take steps to alleviate the condition of women by suggesting practical welfare schemes, appealing to the government to provide equal opportunities

→ Appealing to the government to take strict action against any public servant found by the commission to be working against the interests of women.

→ To submit Annual/ Special Reports to Govt with its recommendation

Powers of Commission

The Commission under the Act has 10(1) the powers of a Civil Court, while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Central Act 5 of 1908). Under Sections 10, 11, 12 and 13 of Rajasthan State Women's Commission Act, 1999, the Commission has the following powers:

10(1) a. Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any witness and examining him/her.

10(1) b Requiring the discovery and production of any document

10(1) c Receiving evidence on affidavits

10(1) d Requisitioning any public records or copy thereof from any public office

10(1) e Issuing commissions or summons for the examination of witnesses

10(2) :- The Commission will be deemed as a Civil Court and when any offence as is described in section 175, section 178, section 179, section 180, or section 228 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (Central Act 45 of 1860) is committed in the view or presence of the Commission, the Commission may after recording the facts constituting the offence and the statement of the accused as provided for in The Indian Penal Code, 1860 (Central Act 45 of 1860) or The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Central Act 2 of 1974) forward the case to a Magistrate having jurisdiction to try the same and the Magistrate to whom any such case is forwarded shall proceed to hear the complaint against the accused as if the case has been forwarded to him under section 346 of The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Central Act 2 of 1974).

10(3). Every proceeding before the Commission shall be deemed as judicial proceeding within the meaning of sections 193 and 228, and for the purposes of section 196 of The Indian Penal Code, 1860 (Central Act 45 of 1860) and the



Commission shall be deemed to be a Civil Court for all the purposes of of section 195 and Chapter XXVI of The Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Central Act 2 of 1974).

I. INTRODUCTION

Educate Girls, a non-profit working in the most rural and remote villages of India to bridge the gender and literacy gaps through girls' education, today announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Rajasthan's Directorate of Women Empowerment at Jaipur. Sharing the details of the MoU, Safeena Husain, Founder of Educate Girls, said, "With this collaboration, the government and Educate Girls can usher in behavioural, social and economic transformation in the society. It is a convergence of evidence-based policy making and our proven technology backed model." Adding more on the MoU's implementation, she said, "We will be augmenting state-level resources for enhancing and hand-holding support to carry out research and review studies. Educate Girls will also empower and educate various stakeholders on girls' education and converge with various institutions - government and non-government - for sustainable development of adolescent girls and women, transforming their lives and those of their families and communities." [1]

Women's participation in planning is dominated by two interrelated themes: representation of women in PRIs, and effectiveness and outcome of their participation. The effectiveness of women's participation in political processes strengthens democracy and creates attention towards marginalisation, trivialisation and oppression of women. Considering the importance of women's participation there is a need for policy interventions to provide a safe space for women for their active participation in village-level planning. Panchayat Raj department issued an office order for organising Mahila Sabhas (women-led Gram Sabha) – thus creating spaces for women's participation in Panchayat level planning. This policy brief makes recommendations that can push forward the implementation and regularization of Mahila Sabhas in all villages of Rajasthan through necessary amendments in the Rajasthan Panchayat Raj Act to achieve higher participation of women in preparation and monitoring of GPDP.

A Mahila Sabha is a women-only village level meeting designed to enable them to share their views and opinions related to women's issues, to be included in the local Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) after approval in a Gram Sabha. The Mahila Sabha is attended by women from across the socio-economic spectrum. It provides a space for all women to contribute their experiences and knowledge related to women-centric issues and discuss solutions that will benefit the entire community.

Women turnout during India's parliamentary general elections was 65.63%, compared to 67.09% turnout for men. India ranks 20th from the bottom in terms of representation of women in Parliament. Women have held the posts of president and prime minister in India, as well as chief ministers of various states. Indian voters have elected women to numerous state legislative assemblies and national parliament for many decades. The Constitution of India establishes a parliamentary system of government, and guarantees its citizens the right to be elected, freedom of speech, freedom to assemble and form associations, and vote.

II. DISCUSSION

While reservation policies clearly have a strong impact on women's representation, the fact that women and men may have different policy preferences need not imply that increased female representation will affect policy decisions. In a world where candidates care about electoral success and can commit to policies before elections, voter preferences, rather than the legislator's gender identity, will determine policy outcomes. Further, if men and women are equally likely to vote and monitor elected officials, the implemented policies should not exhibit any gender bias. Even if mandated political representation raises the bargaining power of women, increased female representation in politics should only affect transfers to women, not policy, as long as the preferences of different voters are known and individuals are not credit constrained. That is, the efficient policy choices will still be made, and women will be compensated with direct transfers. In these two worlds, we will see no impact of the gender of the policymaker on policy decisions, including policy decisions regarding women and children. The village council president, called a Pradhan, is the only councilor with a fulltime appointment and accordingly wields effective power. In 1993, India amended its federal constitution, devolving power over rural public works and welfare services from the states to Gram Panchayats (GPs). [2]



The GP now decides how to allocate government funds to development schemes it defines and implements, including welfare programs (such as antenatal care and childcare for pre-school children) and public works (drinking water, roads, housing, electricity, irrigation, education). The amendment also included mandates to ensure that GP budget decisions were representative of the preferences of the community. First, GPs must hold a general assembly every six months to report on activities and submit the proposed budget to voters for ratification, and Pradhans must have regular office hours to allow villagers to formally request services and lodge complaints. Second, states are required to reserve one third of all council seats and Pradhan positions for women. Since electoral rules ensure that GPs to be reserved for women are selected at random and that reserved seats cycle among GPs evenly, any difference in outcomes in reserved and unreserved GPs can be confidently attributed to the reservation policy. An important way in which women leaders may affect child health is by ensuring that children are immunized, either by village health workers or at government-organized immunization camps. While the vaccination of children against six serious but preventable diseases (tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, and measles) has been a cornerstone of the child health care system in India, the extent of child immunization remains low. Recent government efforts to encourage immunization have involved Panchayats. They have been given responsibility to organize immunization camps and to monitor local health workers. The government child day care program, Anganwadi, is also subject to monitoring by Panchayats. Finally, while Panchayats do not play a direct role in monitoring school activity, there is anecdotal evidence of the more entrepreneurial and motivated Pradhans affecting school attendance.[3]

III. RESULTS

Sambhali Trust is an NGO focused on the development and empowerment of marginalized women and girls in Rajasthan. We work throughout Jodhpur and the surrounding Thar desert with women and children experiencing discrimination and violence on a daily basis due to economic, gender, and caste status. These women face extreme poverty and social exclusion - deprived of education, health care, and legal resources. Many lack any autonomy in their domestic lives, and face severe verbal, physical, and sexual abuse within their communities. At Sambhali, we equip underprivileged women with the tools to become financially independent, provide for their children, and establish self-sustaining communities of support. In Hindi, Sambhali means "strengthening of the deprived." We believe in a grassroots model for lasting, community-driven empowerment fostering dignity and self-confidence, encouraging deprived Rajasthani women to reclaim their worth. We aim to break this cycle of poverty and dependence by providing vocational training in our sewing centers. We teach women valuable marketable skills to earn a living on their own. In our Empowerment Centres, we provide underprivileged women Rajasthani women and girls an education in English, Hindi, and Maths. Through our Scholarship Project and boarding homes, we sponsor children from poverty-stricken families to continue going to school. We provide counseling, health, and legal support when women are abused, abandoned, and blackmailed. Most importantly, we provide a space that is safe and free of discrimination, to uplift the hearts and voices of deprived Rajasthani women and nurture lasting networks of support. "When women come here, they are often very weak. They have been suffering financially and socially for a very long time, and feel very alone. When they arrive, they meet other women with similar struggles, and realise they are not alone in this. This is the first step to building confidence: having a community that is supportive and understanding. They start learning to sew, and when they improve they come to the graduate sewing center. There they are able to start making money, slowly becoming financially independent so that when they leave they feel empowered to continue earning their own livelihoods. These women learn English, Hindi, Math, and workshops including human rights, women's health, economy, and more. They feel they have access to knowledge they were deprived from for so long, and this nurtures dignity. They are better able to provide for and teach their children, to nurture the next generation to be confident and powerful. And all of this happens in a safe and uplifting community of other women, that endures long after they leave Sambhali's walls." At Sambhali, we follow three primary goals centered around self-confidence:

1. Building networks of lasting community support.[4]
2. Promoting social and financial independence through training in valuable marketable skills.
3. Nurturing self-worth and strengthened future generations through education.

IV. CONCLUSION

In exercise of the powers conferred by the proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution of India, the Governor of Rajasthan hereby makes the following rules, regulating the recruitment to posts in, and the conditions of service of persons appointed to the Rajasthan Women Empowerment (State and Subordinate) Services, namely:-

1. Short title, commencement and application. - (1) These rules may be called the Rajasthan Women Empowerment (State and Subordinate) Service Rules, 2017.

(2) They shall come into force with immediate effect.

(3) These rules shall not apply to the posts governed by the Rajasthan Scheduled Areas Subordinate, Ministerial and Cass-IV Service (Recruitment and other Service Conditions) Rules, 2014, except as provided in those rules.[5]

2. Definition. - In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) "*Appointing Authority*" in respect of the posts included in State Service means the Government and in respect of posts of Subordinate Service means the Director or Commissioner, Women Empowerment and includes such other officer or authority who may with the approval of the Government be specially empowered by the Director or Commissioner to exercise the powers and perform the functions of the Appointing Authority;

(b) "*Board*" means the Rajasthan Subordinate and Ministerial Service Selection Board;

(c) "*Commission*" means the Rajasthan Public Service Commission;

(d) "*Committee*" means a Committee referred to in Rule 31;

(e) "*Department*" means the Department of Women and Child Development;

(f) "*Direct recruitment*" means recruitment made according to the procedure prescribed in Part IV of these rules;

(g) "*Director or Commissioner*" means the Director or Commissioner, Women Empowerment, Government of Rajasthan;

(h) "*Government*" means the Government of Rajasthan;

(i) "*Member of the Service*" means a person appointed to a post in the service on the basis of regular selection under the provisions of these rules or rules or order superseded by these rules;

(j) "*Schedule*" means the Schedules appended to these rules;

(k) "*Service*" means the Rajasthan Women Empowerment State Service or the Rajasthan Women Empowerment Subordinate Services, as the case may be;

(l) "*Service*" or "*Experience*" wherever prescribed in these rules as a condition for promotion to senior posts in case of a person holding a lower post eligible for promotion within the service from one category to another or to senior posts shall include the period for which the person has continuously worked on such lower post after regular selection in accordance with rules promulgated under proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution of India;

Note.-Absence during service e.g. training, leave and deputation etc. which are treated as "*Duty*" under the Rajasthan Service Rules, 1951 shall also be counted as service for computing experience or service required for promotion;

(m) "*State*" means the State of Rajasthan:[6]

(n) "*Substantive Appointment*" means an appointment made under the provisions of these rules to a substantive vacancy after due selection by any of the methods of recruitment prescribed under these rules and includes an appointment on probation or as probationer trainee followed by confirmation on the completion of the probationary period;

Note.-Due selection by any of the methods of recruitment prescribed under these rules shall include recruitment either on initial constitution of service as per Rule 5 or in accordance with the provisions of any rules promulgated under proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution of India, except an urgent temporary appointment; and

(o) "*Year*" means the financial year

3. Interpretation. - Unless the context otherwise requires, the Rajasthan General Clauses Act, 1955 (Act No. VIII of 1955) shall apply for the Interpretation of these rules as it applies for the interpretation of Rajasthan Act.

4. Composition and strength of the Service. - (1) The nature of posts included in service shall be as specified in column 2 of Schedule-I or Schedule-II, as the case may be.

(2) The strength of the posts in the service shall be such as may be determined by the Government, from time to time:

Provided that the Government may,-

(a) create any post(s), permanent or temporary from time to time, as may be considered necessary and may abolish any such posts in the like manner without thereby entitling any person to any compensation: and

(b) leave unfilled or hold in abeyance or abolish or allow to lapse any post, permanent or temporary, without thereby entitling any person to any claim or compensation,

5. Constitution of the Service. - The service shall consist of,-

(a) all persons holding substantively the post(s) specified in Schedule-I or Schedule-II, as the case may be. on the date of commencement of these rules; and

(b) all persons recruited by any of the methods laid down in Rules 6 of these rules.

6. Methods of recruitment. - (1) Recruitment to the post (s) in the service after the commencement of these rules shall be made by the following methods in the proportion as indicated in column 3 and 4 of Schedule-I or Schedule-II, as the case may be, namely:-

(a) by direct recruitment,

(i) to the post of Assistant Director shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the Rajasthan State and Subordinate Services (Direct Recruitment by Combined Competitive Examination) Rules, 1999;

(ii) to other posts except post of Assistant Director shall be made by direct recruitment in accordance with the procedure prescribed in Part-IV of these rules; and

(b) by promotion in accordance with the procedure prescribed in Part-V of these rules.

(2) Recruitment to the service by the aforesaid methods shall be made in such a manner that the persons appointed to the service by each method do not at any time exceed the percentage laid down in the rules/schedule of the total cadre strength as sanctioned for each category, from time to time:[7]

Provided that,

(i) if the Appointing Authority is satisfied, in consultation with the Commission that suitable persons are not available for appointment by either method of recruitment in a particular year, appointment by the other method in relaxation of the prescribed proportion may be made in the same manner as specified in these rules.

(ii) recruitment, promotion, seniority and confirmation etc. of a person who joins the Army/Air Force/Navy during an emergency shall be regulated by such orders and instructions, as may be issued by the Government, from time to time provided that these are regulated *mutatis mutandis* according to the instructions issued on the subject by the Government of India.

7. Compassionate appointment of Dependents of the Deceased/Permanently Incapacitated Armed Forces Service Personnel/Paramilitary personnel. - (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in these rules, the Appointing Authority may fill the vacancies of the:-

(i) post upto Pay Band PB-I Grade Pay No. 10 (Rs.2800/-) to be filled in by direct recruitment by appointing on compassionate ground, one of the dependents of a member of Armed Forces/Para Military Forces belonging to the State who becomes permanently incapacitated on or after 1.4.1999 in any defense operations including Counter insurgency operations and operations against terrorists,

(ii) post upto Pay Band PB-2 Grade Pay No. 11 (Rs.3600/-) to be filled in by direct recruitment by appointing on compassionate ground, one of the dependents of a member of Armed Forces/Para Military Forces belonging to the State, who dies on or after 1.4.99 in any defence operations including counter-insurgency operations and operations against, terrorists,

(iii) post upto Pay Band PB-I Grade Pay No. 10 (Rs.2800/-) to be filled in by direct recruitment by appointing on compassionate ground, one of the dependents of a member of Armed Forces belonging to the State, who died or was permanently incapacitated in war or any defence operations including counter-insurgency operations and operations against terrorists during the period from 1.7.71 to 31.3.99,

subject to fulfillment of the educational qualifications and other service conditions prescribed under the relevant service rules and with the concurrence of Department of Personnel and the Rajasthan Public Service Commission if the post falls within the purview of the Commission:

Provided that,-

(a) if the Armed Forces/Para Military personnel who are permanently incapacitated are capable of and desirous of obtaining employment for themselves under the State Government, employment shall be given to them.

(b) if the widow or the children of the Armed Forces/Para Military Personnel who are killed or permanently incapacitated are not in a position to take up employment immediately, employment will be given to them on acquiring of eligibility for appointment,

(i) Name and designation of the deceased/permanently incapacitated Armed Forces/Para Military Force Personnel:

(ii) Unit in which he/she was working prior to death/becoming permanently incapacitated;

(iii) Date and place of death with death certificate issued by the Authority competent to declare him a battle casualty or becoming permanently incapacitated: and

(iv) Name, date of birth, education qualification of the applicant and his/her relation with the deceased (with certificates),-

Explanation. - For purpose of this rule,

(a) "Armed Force" means the Army, Navy and Air Force of the Union;



(b) "*Dependent*" means the spouse of the deceased/permanently incapacitated person, son/adopted son, unmarried daughter/unmarried adopted daughter who were wholly dependent on deceased/permanently incapacitated Armed Forces Service Personnel/Para Military Personnel;

Note. - Adopted son/daughter means legally adopted son/daughter by the deceased/ permanently incapacitated person during his/her life.

(c) "*Para Military Forces*" means Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Indo Tibetan Border Police and other Para Military Force as may be notified by Central and State Government, from time to time.

(d) "*Permanently incapacitated*" means a person who is covered under the definition of the term "person with disabilities" as provided in the persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (Act No. 1 of 1996).

Reservation of vacancies for women. - In direct recruitment, reservation of vacancies for women candidates shall be seventy-five percent for the post of Supervisor (Women Empowerment) and thirty percent for the remaining posts category wise, out of which one third shall be for widows and divorced women candidates in the ratio of 80:20. In the event of non availability of eligible and suitable candidates, either in widow or in divorcee, in a particular year, the vacancies may first be filled by interchange, i.e. vacancies reserved for widows to the divorcees or vice versa. In the event of non-availability of sufficient widow and divorcee candidates, the unfilled vacancies, shall be filled by other women of the same category and in the event of non availability of eligible and suitable women candidates, the vacancies so reserved for them shall be filled up by male candidates of the category for which vacancy is reserved. The vacancy so reserved for women candidates shall not be carried forward to the subsequent year. The reservation for women including widows and divorcee women shall be treated as horizontal reservation, within the category, i.e. even the women selected in general merit of the category shall first be adjusted against the women quota.

Explanation. - In the case of widow, she will have to furnish a certificate of death of her husband from the Competent Authority and in case of divorcee she will have to furnish the proof of divorce.

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