



Community Organization as a Tool and Method to Address the Issue of Social Exclusion of Women Belong to Scheduled Caste.

Mr. Pradeep B S¹, Dr. Yashaswini B²

¹Assistant professor, Department of studies in social Work, Shivagangothri, Davangere University, Davangere. Karnataka, India.

Email: pradeepwagonr@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor, Post-Graduate Department of studies and Research in Social Work, Mangalore University, Mangalagangothri, Karnataka, India

ABSTRACT

This paper is an effort to evaluate the community organization as a tool and method to address the issue of social exclusion of women belonging to scheduled caste. Social exclusion is a process where individuals or groups are systematically excluded from the social, economic, and political opportunities available to the larger society. Women belonging to the scheduled caste are among the most socially excluded groups in India. They face multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization on the basis of their gender, caste, and economic status. Community organization is a tool and method that can be used to address the issue of social exclusion of women belonging to scheduled castes.

Key Words: Community Organization, Scheduled caste, exclusion, discrimination, inclusion.

INTRODUCTION

In India, social exclusion of marginalized groups, especially women belonging to scheduled castes, has been a persistent issue. Scheduled castes, also known as Dalits, are considered to be at the bottom of the Hindu caste hierarchy and face various forms of discrimination and exclusion. Despite the constitutional guarantees of equal rights and opportunities, the reality for Dalit women is far from ideal. They face discrimination and exclusion in various spheres of life, including education, employment, healthcare, and politics. This article explores the role of community organization as a tool and method to address the issue of social exclusion of women belonging to scheduled castes.

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

Community organization refers to a process where people come together to identify and address common problems in their communities. It is a participatory process where community members are actively involved in identifying their problems and developing solutions. The process involves building relationships and networks among community members, developing leadership skills, and mobilizing resources to address community problems. Community organization is based on the principles of empowerment, participation, and social justice.

Community organization can be used to address the issue of social exclusion faced by women belonging to Scheduled Castes by empowering them to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. It can help them to identify their issues, develop strategies to address them, and take collective action to achieve their goals. Community organization can also help to build the capacity of these women to advocate for their rights and access resources that are necessary for their well-being.

Community organization can be initiated through various means, including forming self-help groups (SHGs), promoting community-based organizations (CBOs), and mobilizing women through women's collectives. These methods have been used successfully in many parts of India to address the issue of social exclusion faced by women belonging to Scheduled Castes.

Self-Help Groups: Self-help groups are voluntary associations of people who come together to address common issues. In the context of women belonging to Scheduled Castes, SHGs can provide a platform for these women to come together, share their experiences, and work towards their common goals. SHGs can also help to build the capacity of these women to access credit, start small businesses, and engage in income-generating activities.

Community-Based Organizations: Community-based organizations (CBOs) are organizations that are formed by communities to address common issues. CBOs can provide a platform for women belonging to Scheduled Castes to voice their concerns and influence decision-making processes. CBOs can also help to build the capacity of these women to advocate for their rights and access resources that are necessary for their well-being.

Women's Collectives: Women's collectives are groups of women who come together to address common issues. In the context of women belonging to Scheduled Castes, women's collectives can provide a platform for these women to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and work towards their common goals. Women's collectives can also help to build the capacity of these women to advocate for their rights and access resources that are necessary for their well-being.

The social exclusion of women belonging to the scheduled caste

The social exclusion of women belonging to the scheduled caste is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach. It involves addressing multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization that are rooted in social, cultural, and economic factors. Community organization can play a crucial role in addressing these issues by empowering women and building their capacities to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Women belonging to scheduled castes face multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion due to their gender, caste, and economic status. They are often denied education, subjected to early marriage, and have limited opportunities for employment. The lack of access to healthcare and other basic services further exacerbates their situation. The patriarchal norms and values prevalent in the society further reinforce their marginalization and limit their agency. In such a scenario, community organization can play a significant role in addressing their issues and empowering them.

One of the key principles of community organization is empowerment. Empowerment refers to the process of increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to take control of their lives and make decisions that affect them. Empowerment is based on the principle of participation, which involves creating opportunities for community members to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Empowerment can help women belonging to the scheduled caste to overcome the multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization that they face in their daily lives.

Community organization can also play a crucial role in building the capacities of women belonging to the scheduled caste. Building capacities refers to the process of developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are necessary for individuals and groups to act on their own behalf. Building capacities can involve training programs, workshops, and other educational activities that provide women with the skills and knowledge they need to address the issues they face.

Community organization can also help to mobilize resources to address the issues faced by women belonging to the scheduled caste. Mobilizing resources refers to the process of identifying and accessing resources that are needed to address community problems. Mobilizing resources can involve accessing government programs, seeking funding from non-governmental organizations, and developing partnerships with other community organizations.

One of the key challenges faced by women belonging to the scheduled caste is the lack of access to education and economic opportunities. Community organization can play a crucial role in addressing these issues by developing programs that provide women with access to education and training programs. These programs can help women to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to participate in the workforce and take control of their economic lives.

Community organization can be undertaken at various levels, including the village, block, and district level. At the village level, women belonging to scheduled castes can come together and form self-help groups (SHGs) to address their issues collectively. SHGs provide a platform for women to share their experiences, identify their problems, and find solutions together. They also enable women to access credit and start income-generating activities, which enhances their economic status and reduces their dependence on men. SHGs can also undertake collective action to demand their entitlements and rights from the government and other service providers.

At the block level, community organization can take the form of federations of SHGs. These federations provide a platform for SHGs from different villages to come together and work towards common goals. They enable the community members to access larger resources and undertake bigger projects. Federations can also undertake advocacy and lobbying with the government and other service providers for the provision of basic services and entitlements.

At the district level, community organization can involve the formation of district-level networks of federations. These networks can undertake advocacy and lobbying with the district administration and other stakeholders to address the issues faced by women belonging to scheduled castes. They can also provide a platform for sharing best practices and learning from each other.

Community organization can also involve the formation of women's collectives at the village, block, and district level. These collectives provide a platform for women belonging to scheduled castes to come together and demand their rights and entitlements. They enable women to access information, build solidarity, and develop leadership skills. Women's collectives can also undertake advocacy and lobbying with the government and other stakeholders to address the issues faced by women belonging to scheduled castes.

Community organization can also involve the formation of youth groups at the village, block, and district level. Youth groups provide a platform for young people from marginalized communities to come together and work towards common goals. They enable young people to develop leadership skills, access information, and build solidarity. Youth groups can also undertake advocacy and lobbying with the government and other stakeholders to address the issues faced by women belonging to scheduled caste.

Community organization can also help to address the issue of gender-based violence faced by women belonging to the scheduled caste. Gender-based violence is a pervasive problem in India, and women belonging to the scheduled caste are particularly vulnerable to this form of violence. Community organization can help to address this issue by raising awareness about the issue, providing support services to survivors of violence, and working with law enforcement agencies to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

CONCLUSION

In order for community organization to be effective in addressing the issues faced by women belonging to the scheduled caste, it is important to build strong and sustainable community organizations. This involves building the capacity of community leaders, developing networks among community organizations, and ensuring that community organizations have access to the resources they need to carry out their work. Strong and sustainable community organizations can play a crucial role in addressing the issues faced by women belonging to the scheduled caste by providing them with a platform to voice their concerns and act.

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