

**Course title: Gender and education**

**Course code: MAJ-EDU-5.2**

**Prepared by: Dr. Jaishree Devi, Assistant Professor**

**Department of Education, RTV**

### **Women's Reservation Bill – Overview**

India has a long history of discussions and demands for women's reservation in politics and public life:

#### **Panchayati Raj Reservation (1993):**

Through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, 33% seats were reserved for women in: Panchayats (Village Councils) and Municipalities (Urban Local Bodies). This was a major milestone in women's political empowerment at the grassroots level. In some states like Bihar, Rajasthan, and Odisha, the quota was increased to 50%.

#### **Attempts at National-Level Reservation (1996–2010):**

The Women's Reservation Bill was first introduced in 1996. It aimed to reserve 33% of seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women. Despite multiple re-introductions (1998, 1999, 2002, 2008), it faced strong opposition and never passed until 2023. Main objections included: Demand for OBC sub-quotas, concerns about limiting merit-based candidates and political unwillingness across parties.

However, the present Women's Reservation Bill is a landmark constitutional amendment that seeks to reserve 33% (one-third) of all seats in the Lok Sabha (lower house of Parliament) and State Legislative Assemblies for women. It was passed in September 2023 after years of debate and is officially called the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 which is officially known as Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (2023). It was passed by both Houses of Parliament in September 2023. It includes SC and ST women within the 33% quota. However, it has not been implemented yet but after the next census and delimitation exercise, this act will be implemented in India.

\*\*\*\*\*