Empowerment is a buzz word. It is used in media, in policy documents and in academic discourses. But it’s meaning and aims differ from one situation to another. In India providing ‘quota’ to deprived castes, communities and gender in decision making bodies, in admission and in employment is generally understood as the best way of securing empowerment for them. But empowerment is more than ‘quota policy’. It is an idea, rooted in the concepts of citizenship and democracy, which may be invoked in virtually any context: in speaking about human rights, about basic needs, about economic security, about capacity building, about skill formation or about the condition of dignified social existence. It is a multifaceted process of transforming the economic, social, psychological, political, and legal circumstances of the currently powerless individuals and groups. State and ‘Civil Society Organizations’ (CSOs) perform indispensable functions in the process of empowerment.

India has been a democratic republic since its independence. Its constitution assigns preeminent position to individual as a citizen and enjoins the state to secure for its citizens’ justice, liberty and equality, and promote among them all fraternity. Equality is conceived only among equals and not among unequals. Hence, state is obliged to take special measures or affirmative action for the well-being and empowerment of weak, disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups. Since independence India has taken various developmental and transformative measures for the welfare and empowerment of its people. It has achieved phenomenal growth and development in all sectors, succeeded in reducing poverty and improving crucial indicators of human development such as literacy, education and health. Decentralization and distribution of power through its elaborate structure of ‘Panchayati Raj Institutions’ and comprehensive policy of affirmative action seem to enable many powerless to influence decision making process. But the benefit of these and other developmental and transformative policies could not evenly reach to everyone. Poorest of the poor and weakest of the weak are left behind in the journey of development and empowerment. Inequalities, exclusion and many other negative and coercive circumstances of human life not only continue after independence but also increased manifolds in the last four decades due to sudden and rapid spread of free market economy, continuous withdrawal of state from welfare services and weakening of state institutions.

The underachievement of the state to respond to the basic needs and aspirations of the people and to create a just and egalitarian order in society warrant the intervention of CSOs in making people empowered. CSOs include various formal and informal organizations such as community organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social clubs, religious organizations, unions, social movement organizations (SMO’s) etc. These organizations are not alternative but complementary to the state, and perform various functions like assisting state in the implementation of welfare programmes, articulating issues of powerless, mobilizing people and protest against injustice, exploitation and coercive tendency of the state etc.
This seminar intends to discuss and debate following themes:

1. **Role of State and CSOs in the policies and programmes of affirmative action, education and health**
2. **State, CSOs and the empowerment of SCs, STs, Minorities, Women, Disabled and other vulnerable categories**
3. **Role of faith based organizations such as Mosque, Temple, Gurudwara, Church, Madarsa, Shrines etc. in the Empowerment of People**
4. **Role of Aligarh movement in the empowerment of Muslims of Indian subcontinent.**
5. **Civil Society Movements**
6. **Any other related themes**

Well researched papers are invited from academicians, practitioners, researchers, scholars and students on the above mentioned themes. Abstract of a paper of at least 500 words should be communicated by **15th February 2020**. Selected abstracts will be printed in ‘Book of Abstract’. Full paper should be submitted prior to the dates of the seminar. Only selected papers will be published as an edited volume with ISBN number. All papers and abstracts shall be sent via e-mail in word format to drssociology@gmail.com as an attachment.

**REGISTRATION DETAILS**
- Registration Fees for Faculty/Practitioner: Rs 1000/- per participant
- Registration Fees for Research Scholar: Rs 500/- per participant
- Registration Fees for PG Students of the Department: Rs 100/- per participant

Registration fee for local participants may be submitted in the office of DRS-II, 3rd Floor, Department of Sociology, AMU from 20th to 22nd February, 2020 during office hours. On the spot registration facility will be provided for the outstation participants only.

**BOARDING AND LODGING**
Outstation participants will be provided modest lodging and boarding for the two days starting from 1st March (evening) till 3rd March (Morning) 2020 on first come first serve basis. The type of accommodation will be double bed room on sharing basis.

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