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### A Beacon of Hope for Destitute Women : A Study of Shanti Kutir Mahila Punarvas Kendra, Patna

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**Abstract :** 'Destitution' is a matter of great concern for the society. With increasing disparity in incomes and receding employment opportunities; it is constantly on the rise. It is a condition of extreme poverty and females are its greatest sufferer. Situation worsens if they belong to a deprived section of the society and become victims of maltreatment, sexual harassment and prostitution. With limited educational and occupational support, most of them have no option other than beggary. However, the Indian Government has taken up this issue seriously. Its schemes like Food Security Bill, National

Rural Employment Guarantee Act and National Old Age Pension Scheme have provided great hope to destitutes. Correspondingly, in Patna too, Shanti Kutir Mahila Punarvas Kendra, has been tackling this issue zealously ever since 2014. It has provided security, vocational skills, legal aid and rehabilitation to the destitute women brought there. Most importantly, it has made them aware of their rights and empowered them in many ways. Truly, it is a beacon of hope to destitute women.

**Keywords:** Destitution, Poverty, Rehabilitation, Empowerment.

#### Introduction :

Although the word 'destitution' is often used with the colloquial meaning of severe poverty and dependence on the goodwill of others. There is no accepted technical definition, nor does a standardized set of tools exist for analysing and quantifying destitution. The concept of 'destitution' presents challenges to several preoccupations of contemporary poverty discourse. By contrast this paper argues that destitution is intrinsically a multi-dimensional concept and it emphasizes on the severity of poverty – in contrast to 'chronic poverty' which emphasizes on the duration of poverty. In India 28.5% of the population, which is over 340 million, is destitute. In every five Indians, one is a severe destitute. There are various reasons for destitution, both economic and social.

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