
Participation of women in Panchayat Samiti

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Abstract:

Elected women in the Panchayati Raj system are facing many difficulties in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. The displeasure of the people who are considered to be prosperous and prestigious in the village is also seen because the effective role and emancipation of women in important works is still negligible. In the panchayat system, the government has provided a role to women, but it is functional so that the dimensions are still invisible. As ours is a male dominated society, even after elected as a panchayat member her role is played by the males of their homes. The entire change in the values and mindset of the entire society can make the role of women effective and active. Women representatives in Panchayats are facing some social and administrative problems. Generally, many questions are raised regarding the literacy and unawareness of women, but in this context, it is clear that generally elected women representatives are not weak. There are also some women who manage work and development plans better. In fact, the low level of education among women is one of the biggest obstacles. Lack of awareness is also a big reason for this reason. Although, women have proved that they are the family village society.

Keywords:

Panchayati Raj, responsibilities, prestigious, representatives, dominated, administrative, awareness, obstacles.

As we all know usually population of women constitutes half of the population of a country, so no development activities can be performed without active participation of them. It is a popular saying that, 'women are the mother of a society and progress of a society depends upon the development of women'. If a mother is empowered, then a family, and ultimately, the entire society is also empowered. As a matter of fact, participation of women is felt essential in social, economic and political field. History reveals that though, women have always actively participated in political arena in India, but the figure is in minimum. In the present scenario Panchayati Raj System is rolling at the grass root level democracy in India, under which each and every people of the rural areas has the right to participate actively in democracy on the one hand and free to contribute the development of the rural areas on the other hand.

For the national growth and for effective people participation, it is widely accepted that self- governing institutions as the local level are essential as they are an integral and indispensable

part of the democratic process without which smooth functioning if the democracy is unimaginable. Today we have seen women chief ministers, women president, different political parties leader, well establish businessmen etc. the most notable amongst these are Mrs. Pratibha Devi singh Patil , Shila Dexit. Mayawati, Sushama sawraj, Samriti Irani, Basundhara Raje, Sonia Gandhi, Brinda karat, Nazma Heptulla, Indera Nuuye, Mamata Benarji, Jai Lalita, Medha patakar, Indian Irron women, Ex- prime minister smt. Indira Ghandi etc.

Well, Panchayati Raj is the first school of democracy. Democracy is basically based on decentralization. The Bengal Chowkidari Act in 1870 empowered for setting up panchayat by nominating village members. In India, local self-government is an institution, it has been going on since the past, yet the latent systematic beginning of local institutions goes back to the 19th century. The Balwant Raj Mehta Committee also decided that Panchayat Raj would act as the representative body of the village and ensure the development of the village as well as participation of villages in development activities. The 73rd amendment Act (1992) is a stricken landmark in the transition of political power to the grass-root democracy in our country. Panchayati raj is considered to be the most popular unit of rural local administration. There are very old institutions which used to be capable units of local government in the past. Due to this system in ancient times, every rural society used to consider

itself as a small state and thus the people of India were very well bound in the thread of unity, this desire of the human mind from the past. Elected women in the Panchayati Raj system are facing many difficulties in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. Since the past, there is an inherent philosophy of the development of local institutions, the units of local self-government exercise the rights given in a limited area, Panchayat is the basis of self-government, In the absence of this, it is also impossible to imagine local self-government. Local self-government means those institutions at the local level and which are elected by the people and which are kept under the control of the national and provincial government. Citizens get rights and responsibilities to meet local needs, while being under the control of the national provincial government. Every village has a panchayat of the village member of the same village. That Panchayat settles all kinds of disputes. The principle of equality is followed while doing justice. It has become a popular system because of its ideal form and fair procedure.

The main objective of this research is to explore whether the participation of women has really been strengthened or not, whether the participation of the rural people in the development works has been confirmed or not, whether there is mutual coordination among the public representatives is confirmed or not. Has there been availability of economic resources, has the state government controlled the prices, has there been a ban on malpractices like

ghunghat pratha, sati pratha, child marriage etc, if not, then many steps are yet to be taken in this context. Women representatives in Panchayats are facing some social and administrative problems. The displeasure of the people who are considered to be prosperous and prestigious in the village is also seen because the effective role and emancipation of women in important works is still negligible. Women are hardworking and have more willpower to understand things properly than men so undoubtedly can lead the country. In the context of Panchayati Raj, the role of women is still seen in terms of suspicion by the male group. In the eyes of men, women have always been considered as an object of exploitation, due to which the percentage of sentimentality is more in them in comparison to men, that's why women are also involving in human development issues of child rearing, education, health and gender parity.

Generally, many questions are raised regarding the literacy and unawareness of women, but in this context, it is clear that generally elected women representatives are not weak. There are also some women who manage work and development plans better. In fact, the low level of education among women is one of the biggest obstacles. Lack of awareness is also a big reason for this reason. Although, women have proved that they are capable enough to handle the family as well as their role at village society.

Though, there are several problems faced by the Panchayati Raj like functions of panchayats and their distribution at all three levels,

administrative problems, financial problems, lack of proper training system, control of state government and bureaucracy on panchayats etc. Moreover, lack of co-operation among government officials and elected representatives Panchayat members, not having full knowledge of their duties and rights, lack of proper direction, lack of national character Indifference towards different committees are another major issue faced by Panchayat raj system. If we look at the empty figures, then the participation of women can be claimed to some extent, but in reality, this situation is completely opposite.

Though, in the panchayat system, the government has provided a significant role to women, but it is functional the real dimensions are still invisible. As ours is a male dominated society, even after elected as a panchayat member her role is played by the males of their homes. The entire change in the values and mindset of the entire society can make the role of women effective and active. No democracy can be successful at the upper levels of governance until democratic beliefs and values are strong at the lower level. Panchayati Raj is the medium in a democratic political system. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation, had an entire same line of thought, he believed that India's ideal political and economic society can be named after the village panchayat which can lead the country. Parallel efforts should be made to change the socio-economic and cultural work, which are traditionally obstructing the independent and empowered role of women. Although providing reservation to women in

Panchayati Raj institutions has undoubtedly increased their political participation also, but it is necessary to increase their effective and meaningful role in politics for the betterment of the nation. To play this crucial role, these huge human forces which are women have to be made more aware and of course educated.

To conclude, we can say that in the present era women's partial participation cannot be ignored, though complete active participation is yet to be achieved in grass root level democracy. They are becoming now more active in their duties at home as well as outside their home. Performing their domestic duties, they are also contributing to the development of their village as well the nation through participating in the panchayats.

Camps, programmes in television and radio by the government should be organised. Moreover, NGOs can come forward to make these rural women enlighten about their rights, about the framework of panchayats and other institutions so that we can be assured of cent percent active participation of rural women in democracy. In fact, when the rural women will be able enough to understand their need in participation in democracy and confident enough to take their own decision, only then we can hope that no reservation will be required to bring the women participation in democracy.

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