



Role of reservation for women in rural political institutions and constitutional implications

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Abstract

India is a country of villages. The development and progress of India depends on the development and progress of villages. Gandhiji had rightly said that if villages are destroyed, India will be destroyed. The makers of the Indian Constitution were also well aware of this fact. Therefore, to realize our independence and make it permanent, sufficient attention was paid to the rural governance system. It has been directed in our Constitution that the state will take steps to create village panchayats and provide them with such power and authority that they can Gram Panchayats can work as a unit of self-governance. This study of implementation of Panchayat Raj and rural women leadership makes it clear that the socio-economic status of the leadership is more or less on an average low like that of the Scheduled Tribes. This is the first opportunity for women of this class, who traditionally have a low status in the rural social structure, to lead. In the multifarious activities of Panchayat Raj, the status of the leadership of rural women has been like that of a trainee. Due to reasons like illiteracy, weak socio-economic background and lack of formal work experience, ignorance of many important provisions was seen in this leadership. Despite this, this leadership has expressed clear views on topics like rural development, problems of Panchayat, upliftment of Scheduled Tribes.

Keyword : Panchayati Raj , Rural Development , Women Leadership , Legal Provisions, Rural Development.

Introduction

The history of village panchayats in India is very old. In ancient times, mutual disputes were resolved through Panchayats used to do all this. But during the British rule, Panchayats gradually ended and all the work started being done by the provincial governments. After independence, the state governments paid special attention to the establishment of Panchayats. According to Prof. Rajni Kothari, the establishment of Panchayati Raj was a farsighted act of the national leadership. In this, the Indian political system is being decentralized and its unity is also increasing due to the creation of a common local institution in the country. 1 The credit for its beginning goes to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Pandit Nehru used to say that the people of the villages should be given power. Let them work even if they make thousands of mistakes. There is no need to be afraid of this. Give power to the Panchayats. In fact, our democracy is based on this basic belief that at every level of governance, the people should participate in as many governance tasks as possible and bear the responsibility of ruling themselves. The future of democracy in India depends on the extent to which the rural people establish direct and lively contact with the government. In other words, Panchayati Raj is the only suitable scheme for rural India.

Panchayats are the backbone of our national life. No matter how many big people sit in the Parliament of Delhi, but in reality, it is the Panchayats that will decide the course of India. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rightly said that if our independence is to be achieved through the voice of the people If Panchayats have to become an echo, then the more power they get, the better it is for the people. Rural women leadership has played a very effective role in Panchayat Raj implementation at some places and a normal role at other places. The process of training this traditionally unrepresented class through work has been going on continuously for the last few years. To make the implementation more effective, the basic principle of decentralization is necessary for this leadership. Serious efforts need to be made to understand the concept.

Gram Panchayat is the lowest level unit of the three-tier Panchayat Raj system. Gram Panchayats have the direct responsibility to work in rural areas. All important tasks related to self-governance are performed in the Gram Panchayat. In such a situation, the Sarpanch has a central and important role as the head of the Gram Panchayat. The Madhya Pradesh government has provided various functions, rights, duties and powers to the Panchayats with the aim of making them independent units of local self-governance. Information was obtained from Scheduled Tribe women Sarpanches regarding the diverse role of Gram Panchayats.

In India, the condition of women belonging to SC/ST is very pathetic. The impact of poverty is more direct and severe on women. Indian women are held responsible for the maintenance of the family. SC/ST women have creativity and at the same time they are eager to help themselves. People of similar background are capable of solving the biggest problems. Understanding this feeling, the government created the Panchayati Raj system. Under this, various productive activities are being carried out at present. In this, the economic upliftment of rural women, especially women belonging to backward castes, SC/ST and ST has taken place. Today, they have been able to fulfill the responsibility of their

family very well and have become self-reliant. Social, economic and political weaknesses have the greatest impact on women. If seen in the Indian context, the condition of SC/ST women in the rural and labour-dominated scenario of backward areas is very pathetic. It has become difficult to even think in the context of the possibility of this happening as a result of illiteracy, malnutrition, workload and economic disparities.

Chhattisgarh There is a three-tier Panchayat Raj system in Madhya Pradesh which has 48 district panchayats, 313 Janpad Panchayats and 23051 Gram Panchayats. According to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, one third of the seats in Madhya Pradesh have been reserved for women. Women have been elected on a total of 33.86 % seats. If the seats reserved for women are divided into different categories, then the representation of general category is 37.89 % and that of scheduled tribes is 29.86 % , that of other backward classes is 17.61 % and that of scheduled and scheduled castes is 14.84 % . The present study focuses on rural women.

Objective of the research

- To study the socio-economic background of rural women leadership.
- To find out the perspectives of women leadership in the context of implementation of Panchayat Raj system.
- To assess the political awareness and interest of rural women.
- To find out the level of participation and reservation of women in rural areas .

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the rate of enrolment of rural women in the research area in the form of education, employment, economic and vocational change in the Nagar Panchayat and the District Panchayat on the benefits of primary schemes.
2. A very high percentage of SC women leadership is aware of the regular participation in Gram Panchayat meetings.
3. Rural women leadership has played a very effective role in the implementation of Panchayati Raj and a normal role in other places. To make the implementation more effective, serious efforts need to be made for this leadership by understanding the basic concept of decentralization.
4. The first formal participation of rural women leadership in Panchayats will be capable of providing more alert and aware leadership in the times to come.

Area of research

Raipur It is a city in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. It is the capital of the state and the headquarters of Raipur district . Raipur is the largest city of Chhattisgarh state as well as an important industrial and commercial center of the state. Before the division of Chhattisgarh, Raipur was a part of Madhya Pradesh state. Raipur is considered one of the best cities in the country for business. Raipur is rich in mineral wealth. It is one of the biggest markets for steel and iron in the country. There are about 200 steel rolling mills , 195 sponge iron plants , at least 6 steel plants , 60 plywood factories , 35 ferro-alloy plants , and 500 agricultural industries. There are more than 800 rice mill plants in Raipur
2011 census:

- Population – 10,10,087
- Sex ratio - 946
- Literacy rate – 86.90%
- Male literacy rate 92.39%
- Female literacy rate 81.10%
- The current estimated population of Raipur City in 2024 is 1,433,000 , while the population of Raipur Metro is estimated at 1,594,000 .

The presented research paper is on the role of rural women in Panchayati Raj with special reference to Raipur district. It is based on Raipur district has a special place in Chhattisgarh due to its geographical location. The length of the district from east to west is 155 km. Km and its width to the south is 95 It is Km .

research methodology

Research work is inevitable in the field of knowledge. Through research work, an attempt is made to know the answer to those questions whose answer is not available. An attempt is made to solve those problems whose solution is not available. In the present era, research is of great importance because the authentication, renewal and verification of facts related to any field can be done only through research.

In this research work, both primary and secondary data have been collected and completed to obtain real and reliable data related to the role of rural women in Panchayati Raj. Primary data has been collected by visiting the work place itself and through original sources and interview schedule. Whereas in the secondary source, facts have been collected from previous research studies, research articles, essays, occasional letters, journals, government publications, orders, circulars, ordinances, acts etc. related to the subject.

as a study area 50 respondents residing in Raipur district were selected and during the interview by the researcher in Panchayati Raj, the information obtained from the respondents regarding rural women leadership is as follows:

Table No. 1 Participation of SC/ST women in Gram Panchayat meetings

S.No.	Participates regularly in Gram Panchayat meetings	Frequency	Percentage
1-	Yes	40	80 %
2-	No	10	20 %
	Sum	50	100 %

Table 1 shows the participation in the meetings of the Gram Panchayat. According to this, 80 percent of the respondents have stated their participation in the Panchayat meetings as regular. Only 20 percent do not participate in the meetings regularly.

On this basis it can be said that a large percentage of rural women leadership is conscious in terms of regular participation in the Gram Panchayat meetings.

Table No. 2 - Reasons for not attending Gram Panchayat meetings regularly

S.No.	Reason for not participating regularly in Gram Panchayat meetings	Frequency	Percentage
1-	husband participates	12	24 %
2-	Other men in the family participate	8	16 %
3-	Due to busyness in labor and agricultural work	19	38%
4-	Due to illiteracy and lack of information	11	22%
	Summation	50	100%

The reasons for not attending the meetings of the Gram Panchayats regularly have been given. Out of such 50 female respondents, a maximum of 22 % are unable to attend due to being busy in labour or agricultural work. The number of female respondents who do not attend due to illiteracy and lack of information is 22 %. Only 24 % of such female respondents are not attending because their husbands attend the meetings instead of them. The reason for 16 % female respondents not attending is because other men of the family attend in their place. Thus, among the reasons for not attending, the most important reason is being busy in labour and agricultural work.

Table No. -3 Major problems faced by tribal women in carrying out the work of Gram Panchayat

-S.No..	What are the major obstacles in the work of Panchayat	Frequency	Percentage
1..	lack of money	15	30 %
2.	Non-cooperation of government employees and officials	10	20 %
3.	Lack of relative support from male representatives	3	6 %
4.	Illiteracy and lack of understanding of legal matters	12	24 %
5.	factionalism existing in rural life	3	6 %
6.	no obstacles	7	14 %
	Summation	50	100 %

The table mentions the major obstacles in carrying out the work of the Panchayat. According to this, 30 percent of the female respondents described lack of funds as the major obstacle. 14 percent of the female respondents are such who do not face any obstacle in carrying out the work of the Panchayat. 24 percent of the female respondents described illiteracy and lack of understanding of legal complexities as the major obstacle. 20 percent of the female respondents mentioned the non-cooperation of government officials and employees. 6 percent of the female respondents said that the lack of expected cooperation from male representatives is the major obstacle. Therefore, it is clear from this that a large percentage of Scheduled Tribe leadership faces obstacles in the way of work. Lack of funds is the biggest obstacle in it.

Table Number – 4 Works done by Panchayat

Serial Number	What works have been done in the Panchayat?	frequency	Percentage
1	Functions of Well Planned Employment Scheme / Jawahar Employment Scheme	6	12 %
2	Benefits of Indira Awas Yojana	7	14 %
3	Hand pump installation/drinking water	12	24 %
4	Ditch construction/drainage construction	10	20 %
5	Murmification/access roads	7	14 %
6	Construction of School Building/Construction of Additional Room Panchayat Bhawan	5	10 %
7	Hospital opened	1	2 %
8	opened the school	1	2 %
9	Electrification	1	2 %
	sum	50	100 %

The table mentions the works done by the Panchayats. Here the works mentioned by the female respondents have been shown in the same form. Generally, the Panchayats have got works done under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and Assured Employment Scheme. Most of the female respondents have told about the actual works done instead of the schemes. According to this, the maximum 20 percent of the female respondents told about the work of drain construction/drainage. 48 percent of the female respondents provided the facility of hand pump/drinking water. 14 percent of the female respondents got the work of murumisation/access road done in their Panchayat. Among the construction works, the major ones are school building/extra room/panchayat building, which were constructed by 10 percent of the female respondents. 14 percent of the female respondents got the benefit of Indira Awas Yojana. Most of the works mentioned come under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana Assured Employment Scheme, in which 2 percent of the female respondents told about working directly under these schemes. 2 percent of the female respondents got hospitals opened. 2 respondents opened a school. 2 percent of the respondents got electrification done in the village. This analysis of the work makes it clear that mostly those works are being done through Panchayats for which grants are being received. Also, fulfillment of basic needs like roads and drinking water appears to be a priority. From this point of view, there is a special need for the leadership to keep in mind the broad concept of infrastructural development of villages.

Table No. – 5 Ambition in Political Field

Serial Number	What is ambition in political field ?	frequency	Percentage
1	be limited to gram panchayat only	13	26%
2	Extending its working area upto District Panchayat	12	24%
3	Getting active in district level politics	2	4%
4	Entering state politics through assembly	2	4%
5	No ambition	21	42%
	sum	50	100%

It lacks ambition. Or it wants to limit itself to the Gram Panchayat. It wants to expand its area of work to only one-fourth of the Janpad Panchayat.

conclusion :-

in rural areas has come from less competition in Panchayats. Their talk of rural development and social reform can be considered encouraging. Their awareness towards the media is related to illiteracy and poor socio-economic status. Lack of ambition also seems to be interrelated in this context. If the answers of these leaders/sarpanchs of Scheduled Tribes are seen in a holistic manner, such a leadership of women is emerging at the rural level. This gives rise to the hope that the first formal participation of Scheduled Tribe women leadership in Panchayats will be able to provide more alert and aware leadership in the times to come. This is a hopeful sign for the Panchayats of Raipur Chhattisgarh.

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