



Panchayati Raj Insututions :The Participation of Women in Social Study in India

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KEYWORDS :

Introduction

It was presumed that these rights would automatically get translated into political development of the women in the country. The issue of women's participation in politics cannot be viewed in isolation from the general position of women in a society but despite their vast strength, women occupy a marginalized position in the political system. Women constitute more or less than half of the population of any country. But their involvement in politics is insignificant compared to men. Many psychological, Social and physical factors hold women back from active political involvement. This is true as far as the state and national level politics is concerned. A democratic country cannot progress if energies of its half population are concerned in the kitchen only. After attaining independence Indian constitution ensured gender equality through various provisions and regulations.

Political status of women implies a degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by women in sharing of power and importance given by the society to the role of women in the political system. The equality and active political participation are inseparable. Participation of women in political area is integral to the advancement of women. Their political participation means not only using the right to vote, but also power-sharing, co-decision-making, and co-policy-making at all levels of governance of the State. Women's equal status in every sphere is inextricably linked to country's progress and development.

The credit goes to Narsimha Rao government when 73 and 74 Constitutional Amendment Act in 1992 Panchayati Raj Act, which not only, provided autonomy to the grassroots but it also provided reservation of one-third seats shall be reserved for women belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This may be allotted by rotation form the constituency to constituency. Till the enactment of the 73 and 74 Amendments no one was sure about the role to be played by the women in the process of development of the society and women themselves.

The PRIs provide village women, the opportunities for leadership and to take part directly in the decision making in the process of development. Since the PRIs have potential to start the process of women empowerment from the village level, It can change the social scenario of the village. It will also help in managing the violence against women. So the following factors had attracted to take the problem of women empowerment through PRIs for this work. These are: i. To create a healthy environment to exercise women's right equal with men in rural area. ii. For equal participation in Parliament and Assemblies also with 33 per cent reservation. iv. To adopt an integrated approach for empowering women through effective convergence of the services, resources, structures and man power in related sectors. V. To organize women into groups as self help groups for economic empowerment of rural areas. Vi. To generate political awareness and political participation in village politics by women through PRIs.

Constitutional provisions

Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14,15,15 (3), 16,39 (a), 39(b), 39(c) and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard. The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them.

Constitutional Privileges :i. Equality before law for women (Article 14)
ii. The State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them (Article 15 (i),
iii. The State to make any special provision in favour of women and children (Article 15 (3)),

iv. Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State (Article 16),
v. The State to direct its policy towards securing for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood (Article 39(d)),
vi. To promote justice, on a basic of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid by suitable legislation or scheme or in any other way to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities (Article 39 A), vii. The State to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (Article 42), vill. The State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46),ix. The state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people (Article47), x. To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e))

Objectives of the study

In the present study, the emphasis is given to study women's participation in panchayats. To understand this phenomena, the investigator has formulated the following objectives :i. To study the socio-economic background of the respondents, ii. To know the awareness and constitutional knowledge of women in PRI's.

Methodology

For the present study, both primary and secondary data was used. Primary data which the base of our study was collected by interview schedule. In order to select the respondents from the different ward of the villages Stratified Random Sampling method was used. The data was collected by the investigator from field. Simple statistical tools were used in the while tabulation and analyse of the data. Secondary data was collected from various government records and other sources.

An interview schedule was framed to collect the primary data. Village Dabodha kalan was divided in 14 wards. As our study was on micro level, so out 14 wards, 50 respondents were analyzed, 25 respondents from each ward. Here, random sampling method has been adopted for the selection of sample respondents. To understand the socio-economic background we would analysis the age, education, caste, family type, family size, family income, of the respondents.

Table-1
Age wise classification of Respondents

Age Group	Number	Percentage (%)
Young Age (18-31)	33	66 %
Middle Age (32-50)	14	28 %
Aged (Above 50)	03	06 %
Total	50	100 %

(Sources : Computed from primary data)

table 1 Presents the age wise classification of the respondents. A perusal of the table reveals that out of total sample of 50 female respondents (66 per cent) belonged to 18-31 years of age group, 28

percent belonged to 32-50 years of age group. Only 06 percent respondents were from the age group of above 50 years.

Table-2
Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their caste

Caste	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Upper caste	29	58 %
Scheduled caste	13	26 %
Other Backward caste	08	16 %
Total	50	100 %

(Sources : Computed from primary data)

Table 2, shows that out of the total sample of 50 respondent's majority of women 29 per cent were from upper caste, followed by Scheduled caste 26 per cent and other backward caste 16 percent. So caste system does not affect the participation.

Table-3
Sources of Income of the Respondent's Family

Occupation	Number	Percentage (%)
Agriculture	24	48 %
Govt. Job	07	14 %
Private Job	06	12 %
Other	13	26 %
Total	50	100 %

(Sources : Computed from primary data)

Table 3 show that majority 48 per cent of women respondent's family were engaged in agriculture for livelihood, followed by 14 percent respondent's family in Govt. Job and after that 12 percent and 26 percent respondent's family were engaged in private job and other works respectively.

Findings :

They know that every village have a Panchayati which works for the development for the village but they do not know the various power When we analyze all the data collected from the respondents, we found that majority of respondents participate in the electoral process as voter.

From this study we found that respondents have very less awareness about the Panchayati Raj Act 73rd Amendment, works ect. Of the Panchayats.

They have a very little knowledge about the reservation of seats for women in Gram Panchayats.

During this survey we found that most of our respondents cast their vote to the candidate whom their husband chooses. Even they do not have that right to cast their vote for their own choice.

Conclusion

The study Shows that participation of women in the affairs of Panchayat Elections Is not up to mark. The present study entitled " Participation of Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions" is a study conducted to know the awareness and constitutional knowledge of women in PRI's. The study has been conducted on 50 women respondents in village Dabodha Kalan Distt Jhajjar Haryana.. They have less awareness about the Panchayati Raj Act 73rd Amendment and the working of gram Panchayats.. So, in the light of the above analysis, it is quite obvious that a number of reasons like illiteracy, poverty, traditional family values and pattern of society, male dominance society etc. are responsible for their less participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

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