



Knowledge and Participation of Women Members About Different Activities of Panchayati Raj Institutions

KEYWORDS

Women, Participation, Socio-economic status

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ABSTRACT Majority of the respondents were young aged, educated upto college level, married, large family size moderately high annual income, low political experience, high level of knowledge about working and functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions. It was found that majority of the respondents (98.00%) possessed low level of extent of participation in different activities of Panchayati Raj institutions. Majority of the respondents (63.00%) were found in young age category i.e upto 35 years and 45 percent of the respondents belong to large family size. Regarding their family income majority of (41.00%) the respondents had their annual income between Rs. 1,50,001/- to 2,00,000/-. Great majority of the respondents (62.00%) did not have any political experience.

Introduction-

In 21st century women play equal and important role in each field. Panchayati Raj Institutions also not exception for it. Women participation and empowering in rural development has been concern of serious and hard to believeable in India. Today it is not only possible but also nothing any else possible without womens participation in any area. Hence study will be helpful to know the extent of participation of women members in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Akola district. The present study was conducted with the objective study personal, socio-economic psychological characteristics of the respondents, their extent of participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions and relation between them.

Material and Methods:

The present study was conducted in Akola Zilha Parishad, Akola and Murtizapur Panchayat Samity of Akola district of Maharashtra State. The Gram Panchayat from each Panchayat Samity purposively selected on the basis of maximum women members in the Gram Panchayat. Thus in all, 100 women members were selected from Akola Zilha Parishad, Akola Panchayat Samity, Murtizapur Panchayat Samity and eight Gram Panchayat from each Akola and Murtizapur Panchayati Samity by using random sampling method. 20 women members from Akola Zilha Parishad, 10 women members from Akola Panchayat Samity and 5 women members from murtizapur panchayat samity and 32 women members from eight gram panchayat of akola panchayat samity and 33 women members from eight gram panchayat of Murtizapur Panchayat Samity were selected. The percentage was worked out to describe the profile of the respondents and analysed by using suitable statistical techniques like Arithmetic Mean, Statistical Deviation, Coefficient of Correlation.

Results and Discussion:**Socio-Economic Status**

Age: It was observed from Table 1. that most of the respondent (63.00%) were belong young age group, followed by 37.00 per cent respondents were belonged to middle age group, whereas none of the respondents belonged to old age group. Thus, it is concluded that majority of the respondents belongs to young age group categories.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their age

Sr.No	Categories	Age(Yrs)	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage
1	Young	Upto35	63	63.00
2	Middle	36-50	37	37.00
3	Old	Above 50	00	00.00
	Total		100	100.00

Family Size- The most of the (45.00%) respondents belonged to large family size having the family members more than seven. Whereas, 32.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to small family size, while 23.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to medium family size category.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their family size

Sr.No	Categories	Score	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage
1	Small	Upto 4	32	32.00
2	Medium	5 - 7	23	23.00
3	Large	Above 7	45	45.00
	Total		100	100.00

Family Income- The most of the respondents (41.00%) had annual income in the range of Rs.1,50,001/- to Rs.2,00,000/-, followed by 34.00 per cent respondents had income between Rs.1,00,001/- to 1,50,000, whereas 14.00 per cent respondents earn up to Rs.50,001/- to 1,00,000/-. 09.00 per cent of the respondents had annual income up to Rs.25,001/- to Rs.50,000/- while only 02.00 per cent respondents were below poverty line. It is concluded that majority of the respondents had annual income in the range of Rs. 1,50,001/- to Rs.2,00,000/-.

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents according to their Family Income

Sr. No	Categories	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage
1	Below poverty line (Upto Rs.25,000/-)	02	02.00
2	Low (Rs.25,001/- to Rs.50,000/-)	09	09.00
3	Low medium Rs.50,001/- to Rs.1,00,000/-)	14	14.00
4	Medium (Rs.1,00,001/- to Rs.1,50,000/-)	34	34.00
5	Moderately high (Rs.1,50,001/- to Rs.2,00,000/-)	41	41.00
6	High (Above Rs.2,00,001)	00	00.00
	Total	100	100.00

Political Experience- The majority of the respondents (62.00 %) not having any political experience, while 38.00 per cent respondents had the political experience. Thus, it is inferred that majority of the respondents not have any political experience.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to their number of years completed as a members of PRI.

Sr.No	Categories	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage
1	Presence	38	38.00
2	Absence	62	62.00
	Total	100	100.00

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to their overall level of extent of participation

Sr.No	Categories	Index range	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage
1	Low	Upto 33.33	98	98.00
2	Medium	33.34-66.65	02	02.00
3	High	Above 66.66	00	00.00
	Total		100	100.00

Extent of Participation: Scale develop by Adhikary, et al, 2009 with slight modification was used for measurement of extent of participation of women members in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Six components namely political activities, social activities, economic activities, developmental activities, decision making activities and policy making activities was used. It was concluded by using following formula

$$\text{Participation Index} = \frac{\text{Participation score actually obtained on all six components}}{\text{Maximum obtainable participation score on all six components}} \times 100$$

Different statements were used in activities presented in five point scale (Linkert, 1932) score was allotted according to the frequency of participation –Always- (4), most of the time- (3), sometime- (2), rarely- (1) and never- (0). Finally they were classified into three participation levels namely low, medium and high with the help of equal interval method. The data in Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents (98.00%) had low level of extent of participation followed by 02.00 per cent had medium level of extent of participation. Thus it could be inferred that majority of the women members had low level of extent of participation in PRIs.

Relationship: Attribute like political experience having positive and significant correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The result further revealed that age, family size and family income did not show any significant association with extent of participation of the respondents. These findings were revealed that extent of participation of women PRIs members they were in very low category thereby implying wide scope for improvement in their level of extent of participation. New Panchayati Raj act (50% reservation for women) has offered an opportunity for active participation of higher to suppressed rural women in socio-political life and this has certainly resulted in increased numerical participation of women.

Table 6. Correlation between personal and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and their extent of participation

Variables	'r' value
Age	0.0652
Family Size	0.0252
Family Income	0.0383
Political Experience	0.2024*

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