

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter is indeed an embodiment of the observed and in-depth study of different dimensions of the role of women in PRIs with special reference to the two districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Sirmour and Hamirpur. It includes the observations and findings that have crystallized from the study. It also contains certain recommendations and suggestions to ensure effective role of women in PRIs.

As the study passed several conclusions concerning the subject developed and the deeper the research developed into the field, the vaster its scope and sweep seemed to evolve and various conclusions were arrived at, although all the minutes' details are not explain here as they have been deal with at length in the previous chapters. This chapter epitomizes only the central themes of the study.

In the Indian context the institution of local self-government dates back to pre-historic days and the concept of village panchayats are indigenous of the Indian soil. There is sufficient evidence that show that the village panchayats under different names forms existed in India ever since Vedic time. The available literature clearly points to the fact that republic functioned and elected representatives participated in the village assemblies in ancient India. People in republics were functioning through decisions by majority which was regarded as inviolable and not be overridden.

With the arrival of Muslim rule in India the village panchayats suffered a setback as they no longer enjoyed the same autonomy and prestige bestowed on them by erstwhile ruling dynasties. Under the British rule local self-government did not make much progress. These panchayats institutions were unable to function effectively due to organizational and financial problems. However, with the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi in the political arena, grass root level democracy slowly started regaining importance. Gandhi's advocacy of village democracy brought the issue to centre stage and laid the foundations for grass root level democracy in modern India.

In the post independence period a new era ushered in the history of local self-government in India. The Gandhian ideology 'Gram Swaraj' had been integral part in

formulating national policy for the revival of village panchayats. This ideal was enshrined in the Constitution of India, under Article 40 of the Directive Principles of State Policy. After independence, the Community Development Programme was launched nationwide to accelerate the process of rural development. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was appointed to study the Community Development Programme; the Committee stated that the community needs to be involved in planning, decision-making and in implementation process. However, Panchayati Raj institutions across the country faced resistance from bureaucracy, lack of capacity and were often captured by certain selective section of the community.

In 1978 another committee was constituted under Ashok Mehta to review existing situation regarding democratic decentralization in the states. The Committee recommended that district should be the basic unit for planning, coordination and resource allocation and should be supported by technical expertise. The G.V.K. Rao Committee (1985) was appointed to review the existing arrangements for rural development and poverty alleviation programmes and to recommend appropriate structured mechanism to ensure that they are planned in integrated manner and implemented effectively. The Committee opinion that PRIs need to play an important role in rural development programmes thus building up a gradual momentum in favor of the local self-government institutions.

In 1986 the committee for the concept Paper on Panchayati Raj institutions recommended that these institutions need constitutional backing. The Gram Sabha was identified as the base of decentralized democracy and PRIs as unit of self-governance promoting people's participation. Although this was opposed by the Sarkaria Commission; the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi introduced 64th Constitutional Amendment Bill in 1989. As the Bill was defeated in the Rajya Sabha; it was introduced again in 1992 and passed as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. This Act is a landmark legislation which has brought empowerment of the PRIs and has ensured the transfer of power from the state to the PRIs to be exercised by the people.

Women all over the world have remained out of the political realm for quite a long time. For centuries they were not welcomed at the helm of political affairs. Women's quest for full citizenship and participation in politics began during the

eighteenth century Enlightenment. Changes began to appear gradually in recent decades particularly when women became assertive of their rights. They realized the need for redefining their traditional role which prevented them from entering the arenas where men ruled the roost.

Although women, to a great extent, have succeeded in gaining acceptance and recognition, the scenario has not yet changed dramatically. Though women constitute nearly half of the global population, their participation in political affairs has not been significant. The percentage of women in world parliaments has dropped over the years. Their representation is quite disproportionate to their population. Strangely enough, ten parliaments in the world do not have even a single women parliamentarian.

India's record in this regard is no exception. Although, women constitute about half of the total electorate, their representation in the Lok Sabha has not been adequate. Women contesting elections still constitute only a meager percentage of the total number of contestants. For instance, in the first Lok Sabha there were only 22 women contesting and 4.41 per cent elected in the House. Now, in the fifteenth Lok Sabha (2009) the percentage of women member has increased from 4.41 per cent to 10.86 per cent in 2009. A similar situation is visible in the Rajya Sabha. In spite of the fact that representation in the Upper House is slightly better than that of the Lower house, there also it is not too high. In the Rajya Sabha, the proportion of female members started with 7.31 per cent in 1952 and rose to 10.74 per cent in 2011.

The system of Panchayati Raj, which was initiated mainly for people's participation in the political and economic process somehow, has not been successful in protecting women's participation. The champions of the PR system desired that rural women should not only become the beneficiaries of the development; but more importantly the contributors to it. The Balwantrai Mehta was particular that women should find representation in the rural political institutions. Therefore, he recommended that besides the 20 member of the Panchayat Samiti, there should be two women 'who are interested in work among women and children' as co-opted member. A similar provision was suggested with regard to village panchayat. As the result of this recommendation, a few states did make provisions for women representation.

The Committee on Status of Women (1974) viewed that the active involvement of women in the decision-making process will best be achieved by providing them with special opportunities for participation in the representative structure of local government. The Committee suggested the establishment of statutory all-women panchayats at the village level with autonomy and resources of their own for the management and administration of welfare as well as development programmes for women and children. The Ashok Mehta Committee viewed that by reservation of women in the decision-making development projects would be brought to forefront.

The National Perspective Plan for Women (1988) recognized women have not gained much through political and development processes at grassroot levels. Hence, it recommended 30 per cent executive heads of all bodies from village panchayats to district level.

The Congress government introduced the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Bill in the Parliament. The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on 22nd December 1992 and the Rajya Sabha, the following day. Following the ratification by more than half of the State Assemblies, the President gave his assent on 20th April 1993. The Act provides for one-third reservation of seats for women and offices of Chairpersons to women in the grass root institutions throughout the country. With a view to bring law relating to Panchayat in conformity with the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1968 is replaced and Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act 1994 is enacted in the State w.e.f. 23rd April 1994.

The first chapter of the present study is 'Introduction'. All over the world women are denied from equal access with men to opportunity and for their personal development. Although the Constitution of India, is based on the principle of political equality, but women have not yet been able to get adequate representation in political field. In the initial phase of PR system there was no provision of reservation for women, some states had made provision of either cooption or nomination of one or two women if no woman member was elected. The 73rd Constitution Amendment ensures 33 per cent reservation for women in PRIs. In the state H.P. 73rd Amendment is implemented in 1994 and major recommendation of the 73rd Amendment are implemented in the state. The Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill,

2008 raises the reservation limit for women in PRIs from existing 33 per cent to 50 per cent.

The finding of the study regarding the past experiences role of women in PRIs in different states of India concludes that, majority of women elected representatives came from families with a considerable degree of political influence and most of them has contested election because the pressure from either their family or any political party. In the initial phase of women's reservation more number of illiterate women are come forward in these institutions; but in the latter stages younger and educated women are coming forward to take responsibility as elected member of PRIs. Women led Panchayats has a far more gender sensitive agenda than men led Panchayats. The hypothesis of the present study has been significantly proved that male dominating society and patriarchal structure of society somehow responsible for the less participation and less effective role of women in PRIs.

The findings of the study regarding the past experiences role of women in PRIs in the different districts of the state Himachal Pradesh concludes that, women get opportunity to enter in PR politics after implementation of 73rd Amendment in H.P. The political parties are taking keen interest in PRIs election in order to keep their vote bank in contact and party base election has resulted in factionalism in rural masses. Majority of women representatives are elected from sound economically families. The large numbers of women representative are motivated by their family member to enter in PR politics; there are very few numbers of women representatives who are motivated by their self to enter in PR politics.

The first chapter also deals with research methodology of the present study. In the chapter relevance of the study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, sources of data collection, sampling techniques, universe of the study, selection of sample, technique of data analysis, limitation of the study, scheme of chapterization and suggest areas of further studies are mentioned.

The second chapter deals with the historical background of rural democratic institutions in India. The study concludes that, India is a land of villages and most of its population lived in small villages since ancient time. At that time village was the basic unit of governance and these villages were governed by 'Sabha' in which mature people of village were included. The Sabha formed rules and regulations for

their people and also formed judicial function. This type of governance system in India was survived till the entrance of Muslim inventers. The village Panchayat system suffered during Muslim rule in India. The Britishers also not give much importance to rural government and autonomy of panchayats gradually disappeared. Some efforts were made by British government to rebuild panchayat system in India, but these steps were not seriously taken. Mahatma Gandhi was a great champion of village life and he always supported decentralization of powers and he believed that government of Swaraj (self rule) can be achieved through sound system of Panchayats.

In the first draft of the Indian Constitution no place was given for PR system. After the criticism of this omission a new article is included in Constitution which confirm establishment of PR in India. After the implementation of Constitution no serious efforts is made by states government to establish PRIs in their concerned states. Many committees are established by state and centre government to give suggestions regarding the establishment of PRIs in India, but suggestion of these committees are not seriously taken neither by centre government nor by state governments. The Singhvi Committee recommended for constitutional provision for PRIs. The government of India moved 64th Amendment in parliament to ensure constitutional provision for PRIs but could not succeed. After three year latter 73rd Amendment is passed and PRIs get constitutional status.

In the state Himachal Quami (caste) Panchayat was established in the princely state Bilaspur. In 1949 Punjab Village Panchayat Act is implemented in four districts of Himachal Pradesh. In 1994 Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act is passed to implement 73rd Amendment Act recommendations in the state.

The third chapter of the present deals with the profile of Panchayati Raj institutions in Himachal Pradesh. The first part of chapter deals with the geographical profile of state, economy of the state, population and literacy in the state. The study concludes that Himachal Pradesh is a hilly state and it came into existence on 15th April 1948 with the emergence of 30 princely states. In 1971 state get full statehood status. In the state there is great diversity in climate due to variation in altitudes. Agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and government jobs are the major source of the state's people income. The people of the state speak different dialects.

The finding of the study regarding the 2005 PRIs election profile in Himachal Pradesh concludes that, in the state district Kangra had the highest proportion of the state PRIs posts; whereas, district Lahaul and Spiti had the lowest proportion of state PRIs posts in 2005 PRIs election. In the state highest percentage of the state unopposed GP ward member was elected in the district Lahaul and Spiti; whereas, in the district Bilaspur lowest percentage of the state GP ward member was elected unopposed. In the GP Pradhan post state highest percentage of unopposed GP Pradhan was elected in the district Kinnaur; whereas, in the district Kangra lowest percentage of state GP Pradhan was elected unopposed. In the PS ward member post highest percentage of state unopposed PS ward member was elected in the district Lahaul and Spiti; whereas, in the district Bilaspur no PS ward member was elected unopposed. In the state highest percentage of unopposed ZP ward member was elected in the district Lahaul and Spiti; whereas in the eight districts no ZP ward member was elected unopposed.

In the state district Kangra had the highest proportion of the state voter; whereas, the district Lahaul and Spiti had the lowest proportion of the state voter at the time of 2005 PRIs election. In the district Hamirpur female voter were more than male voter; whereas, in all other districts male voter number was more than female voter. In the state 16.16 per cent of the total polling station was sensitive polling station and 7.68 per cent of the total polling station was hyper sensitive polling stations. In the state total three by-elections were held to fill the vacant posts of PRIs; in those by-elections total 449 member was elected on various vacant posts of PRIs in the state Himachal Pradesh.

The findings of the study regarding the geographical profile and people's profile of the district Hamirpur concludes that; district Hamirpur was ruled by Kotech ruler in the ancient time. The name of the district was derived from its ruler Hamir Chand. District Hamirpur was merged with the state Himachal Pradesh in 1966.

The finding of the study regarding the 2005 PRIs election profile in the district Hamirpur concludes that, in the district Hamirpur unopposed elected GP ward member, GP Pradhan, PS ward member percentage was low than the state unopposed elected GP ward member, GP Pradhan, PS ward member percentage; whereas, district

unopposed elected ZP ward member percentage was high than the sate unopposed elected ZP ward member percentage.

In the district Hamirpur 2005 PRIs election polling percentage was low than the sate polling percentage. In the district Hamirpur 14.91 per cent of the district polling station was sensitive polling station and 9.78 per cent of the district polling station was hyper sensitive. In the district Hamirpur 32.80 per cent of female was elected on various PRIs post of the district; whereas, in the state 37.57 per cent of female was elected on the various PRIs post of the state. In the district total 49 members was elected on various posts of PRIs in by-election held in the state.

The findings of the study regarding the geographical profile and people's profile of the district Sirmour concludes that, district was ruled by Raja of Jaislmer. The present district headquarter Nahan was founded by Raja Karam Prakash in 1621. The rulers of the district had maintained good relation with the British Government. Agriculture and horticulture is the main occupation of the district people.

The finding of the study regarding the 2005 PRIs election profile in district Sirmour concludes that, in the district Sirmour GP ward member, GP Pradhan and PS ward member unopposed elected percentage was high than the district Hamirpur GP ward member, GP Pradhan and PS ward member unopposed elected percentage; whereas, district Sirmour ZP ward member unopposed elected percentage was low than the district Hamirpur ZP ward member unopposed elected percentage.

The polling percentage of the district Sirmour was low than the district Hamirpur polling percentage. In the district Sirmour sensitive polling station and hyper sensitive polling station percentage was high than the district Hamirpur sensitive and hyper sensitive polling station percentage. In the district Sirmour 32.59 per cent of female was elected on various post of PRIs in the district; whereas, in the Hamirpur district 32.80 per cent of female was elected on the various post of PRIs in the district. In the district Sirmour three by-elections was held in which total 36 members was elected on various posts of PRIs.

The fourth, fifth and sixth chapter of the present deals with women in Gram Panchayats, Panchayati Samitis and Zila Parishads of the district Sirmour and Hamirpur. The finding of the study regarding the personal profile of GP, PS and ZP

female respondents of the district Hamirpur and Sirmour concludes that, in both districts majority of female respondents are between the age group of 20-30 years; there are very few number of respondents who are above 50 years. The study finding regarding the education status of the respondents concludes that, education status of the GP Pradhans, PS and ZP Chairpersons respondents is better than the female ward members' respondents of GP, PS and ZP. Education status of the district Hamirpur respondents is much better than the female respondents of the district Sirmour. The study finding regarding the respondents religion and caste status conclude that, all respondents of the PS and ZP belong to Hindu religion; whereas, in the district Sirmour only two GP respondents belong to Sikh religion. The study further concludes that; majority of respondents of the both districts either belong to general category or SC category and few number of respondents belong to OBC category. The study analysis regarding the marital status of the female respondents conclude that all respondents of both districts are married. The finding of the study regarding the respondents' husband occupation concludes that, in the district Sirmour majority of female respondents' husband occupation is agriculture; whereas, in the district Hamirpur majority of respondents' husband occupation is either business or government job.

The study finding regarding the habits of respondents newspaper reading and watching news on TV concludes that, in the district Hamirpur more number of respondents read newspaper daily and watches news on TV as comparison to female respondent of the district Sirmour. The study finding regarding the respondents' involvement in the previous grassroot institutions concludes that, in the both districts majority of GP respondents accepted that they had not attended previous Gram Sabha meetings and most of the respondents who have accepted that they had attended previous Gram Sabha meetings are those respondents who are their self elected in previous GPs. The study finding regarding the respondents' previous elected status in the PRIs concludes that, in the district Hamirpur more number of respondents had been elected in previous PRIs as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour.

The study finding regarding the respondents' family member's involvement in the previous PRIs concludes that, in the district Sirmour more number of respondents accepted that their family member was elected in previous PRIs as comparison to

female respondents of the district Hamirpur. The study finding regarding the respondents' motivation to enter in PR politics concludes that, in the district Hamirpur majority of respondents are either inspired by their self interest or by their village people to take part in PR politics; whereas, in the district Sirmour majority of female respondents are either inspired by any political party or by their family members to enter in PR politics. In the district Hamirpur more number of respondents accepts that they are inspired by their self interest to take part in PR politics as comparison to female respondents of the district Hamirpur. The hypothesis of the present study has been partially proved that well educated women of the rural area are still not coming forward to take part in PRIs.

The study findings regarding the political party role in GP, PS and ZP politics concludes that, in the both districts majority of female respondents have accepted that political party involve in PRIs election either directly or indirectly and majority of respondents are agree that, PRIs members are elected on their political party identity base not on their capability base. In the both districts majority of respondent are agree that political party interfere in the candidate selection process for PRIs election. In the district Sirmour large number of respondents have accepted that their election victory fully depend on any political party support as comparison to female respondents of the district Hamirpur. In the both districts almost half of the respondents are not in favor of political party base election in PRIs. The finding of the study regarding the respondents' affiliation with political party concludes that, the both districts majority of GP respondents are not primary member of any political party; whereas, majority of PS respondents and ZP respondents accepts that they are primary member of political party. The study further concludes that, the respondents who have accepted that they are primary member of any political party most of them have become primary member after they succeed in their election contest in 2005 PRIs election.

In the district Hamirpur more number of respondents has accepted that they are primary member of any political party as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. In the district Hamirpur more respondents are primary member of BJP party; whereas, in the district Sirmour more respondents are primary member of Congress party. In the district Hamirpur large number of respondents has accepted that political party did not interfere in the decision-making process of the GP or GSs as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The hypothesis of the

present study has been noticeably proved that political party based election are somehow responsible for electing candidate on party base not on their capability and potentiality. The voter first preference is always to elect a candidate from their own party. This theory dismantles the potentiality, credibility and caliber of a candidate who has not any political party affiliation.

The finding of the study regarding the election campaign of the female respondents concludes that; in the Sirmour district majority of GP and PS respondents accepts that they are either supported by their family members or by their village people to contest election; whereas, in the Hamirpur district majority of GP and PS respondents accepts that they are either supported by political party or by their village people to contest election. In the both district majority of ZP respondents accepts that they are supported by political party to contest ZP election. The finding of the study regarding the issues raised by respondents at the time of their election campaign concludes that, in the both districts majority of respondents accepts that they had raised local area development base issues during their election campaign. In the district Hamirpur large number of respondents accepts that they had raised women development base issues during their election campaign as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour.

The study finding regarding the village women's involvement in the election campaign of the respondents concludes that, in the district Hamirpur most of the respondents accept village women's involvement in their election campaign as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The finding of the study regarding the respondents' most important factor in their election win in PR election concludes that, in the both districts majority of GP and PS female respondents has determines either political party support or their village people support as the most important factor for their election win in PR election. In the both districts majority of ZP respondents determines political party support as the most important factor for their election win in ZP election. In the both districts large number of GP respondents has accepted that they did not take part in the election campaign of assembly and parliament election; whereas, majority of PS and ZP respondents of the both districts accepts that they fully take part in the election campaign of assembly and parliament election. The other hypothesis of the present study has been has been partially proved that most of the women are not participating in PRIs because of their own interest.

Most of the time, it has been found that women are not interested to participate/contest election in PRIs. There is a lack of willingness in women.

The study finding regarding the awareness level of female respondent concludes that, in both districts majority of GP respondents are not aware about reservation provision of PRIs, GP plan formation, power and function of GP and women related laws; whereas, majority of PS and ZP respondents are aware about reservation provision of PRIs, PS and ZP plan formation, power and function of PS and ZP and about the women related laws. The awareness level of the district Hamirpur respondents is much better than the female respondent of the district Sirmour. In the both districts almost half of the respondents are agree that women's non awareness is responsible for their less effectiveness in PRIs. The next hypothesis of the present study has been considerably proved that women representatives' non-awareness is somehow responsible for their insignificant role in PRIs. Most of the women respondents are not aware about their rights, duties, powers, functions, schemes, proposals related to PRIs.

The finding of the study regarding the female respondents' family member cooperation with them and participation in meetings concludes that, in the both districts majority of respondents accepts that they are fully helped by their family members in their daily household wok and they get sufficient time to discharge their responsibilities as elected representative of PRIs. In the district Hamirpur large number of respondents has accepted that they have not faced any problem from their male family members in discharging their responsibilities in PRIs as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The finding of the study regarding the respondents' participation in PRIs meetings concludes that, in the both districts majority of respondents accepts that they have regularly participated in the PRIs meetings. In the both districts majority of ZP respondents accepts that they regularly participate in PS meetings.

The finding of the study regarding the respondents participation in the training programmes concludes that, in the both districts most of the GP respondents accepts that they has not attending in training programmes; whereas, majority of PS and ZP respondents accepts that they have attended training programmes. In the district Hamirpur large number of respondents accepts that they have attended training

programmes which are organized by district official and by state government to train elected representatives as comparison to female respondent of the district Sirmour.

The finding of the study regarding the harassment and complaint cases against the respondents concludes that, in the both districts all respondents has accepts that they have not faced any type of harassment during their tenure. In the both districts no complaint is registered against the PS and ZP female respondents; whereas, in the GP few number of complaint is registered against respondents; all of these complaint is registered on corruption base. In the district Hamirpur more complaint is registered against GP respondents as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. In all those compliant cases inquiry is conducted by district official and none of the respondent is found guilty. Majority of respondents of both districts has accepted that when they have any problem in the functioning of these institutions they directly approached to concerned authority.

The finding of the study regarding the respondents' satisfaction with their allied institutions officials cooperation and coordination in the functioning of PRIs and in the implementation of various development schemes concludes that, in the both districts majority of respondents are satisfied with their allied officials cooperation and coordination in the functioning of PRIs and in the implementations of various development schemes. The finding of the study regarding the PRIs officials' interference in the PRIs concludes that, majority of GP respondents of the both districts accepts low level interference of GP officials in the functioning of GP. In the both districts majority of PS and ZP respondents accepts medium level interference of officials in PS and ZP. Majority of respondents of both districts accepts that PRIs officials not interfere in the decision-making process of PRIs.

The finding of the study regarding the male representatives' cooperation with female representatives of PRIs concludes that, in the GP majority of respondents of both districts has accepts that GP male representatives regularly participate in GP meetings. The study finding regarding the respondents' satisfaction with PRIs male representatives' cooperation and coordination in the functioning of these institutions concludes that, in the both districts majority of the respondents are satisfied with male representatives' cooperation and coordination towards female representatives. The study further concludes that, majority of respondents of the both districts admits that they are equally treated by male representatives of PRIs. The majority of respondents

of those two PSs which are headed by male Chairperson accept that they are equally treated by male representatives.

The finding of the study regarding functioning of those PRIs institutions which are headed by female concludes that, majority of respondents of both districts accepts that those GP, PS and ZP are working effectively which are headed by female. The study further concludes that, in the district Hamirpur more number of respondents accepts that those PRIs are working effectively which are headed by female as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The finding of the study regarding the female representatives participation in those PRIs which are headed by male member concludes that, majority of respondents of both districts hoped that women representatives get equal opportunity of participation in those PRIs which are headed by male member. The finding of the study regarding the female representatives decisions taking ability on their level concludes that, majority of respondents of PS and ZP accepts that women representatives take decisions on their own level; whereas, in GP almost half of the respondents accepts that female representatives not take decisions of their own level regarding the decisions of GPs.

The finding of the study regarding the female representatives capability in getting things done as comparison to male representatives concludes that, most of the respondents of the both districts admits that female representatives are not handicapped in getting things done as comparison to male representatives. In the district Sirmour large number of respondents has accepts that female representatives are handicapped in getting things done as comparison to male representatives as comparison to female respondents of the district Hamirpur. The next hypothesis of the present study has been significantly disapproved that there is a lack of coordination between male and female representatives of PRIs. They help each other, guide each other and most of respondent are satisfied with male representatives' cooperation in the functioning of PRIs.

The finding of the study regarding the village people participation in GP development activities and higher caste influence in Gram Sabha decision concludes that, in the district Hamirpur large number respondents has admits that village people actively participate in GP development activities as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. In the both districts majority of female respondents accepts

that village people take interest in those GPs which are headed by female Pradhan. In the both districts majority of respondents has accepts that higher caste people did not interfere in the decision-making process of GPs.

The finding of the study regarding the ZP representatives' role in PSs concludes that, in the both districts most of the PS respondents has accepts that ZP representatives regularly participate in PS meetings. The finding of the study regarding the ZP representatives' influence in the PS decisions concludes that, majority of respondents has accepts that ZP representatives did not interfere in the decision of the PS.

The finding of the study regarding the MLA and MP role in ZP concludes that, in the both districts all female respondents has accepts that MLA and MP did not participate in the ZP meetings. All female respondents of both districts admit that there is no interference of MLA and MP in the decision-making process of ZP.

The finding of the study regarding the women's economic dependency on their male family members concludes that, most of the respondents of the both districts admits that women of rural area are economically still depend on their male family members and majority of them are also agree that women's economic dependency on their male family members is somehow responsible for their low participation in PR politics. The next hypothesis of the present study has been noticeably proved that women's economic dependency is somehow responsible for their less effective role in PRIs. There is a dire need of economic liberty for women so that they can participate influentially in PRIs.

The finding of the study regarding the role of education in women's effective participation in PR politics concludes that, majority of respondents of the both districts admits that women's low education qualification is responsible for their less effectiveness in PRIs. The study further concludes that large number of district Sirmour respondents admits that women's low education qualification is responsible for their less effectiveness in PRIs as comparison to female respondents of the district Hamirpur. In the both districts majority of respondents admits that women's effective political participation can be ensure by providing good education for them.

The finding of the study regarding the most important factor to increase women's political participation concludes that, majority of respondents of the both districts determined good educational qualification and family support as the most important factor to increase women's political participation. The hypothesis of the present study has been proved to some extent that illiteracy and low education status is also responsible for the less effective role of women representatives in PRIs. In the district Sirmour most of the representatives are illiterate as comparison to the district Hamirpur representatives. It has been observed that even educated representatives are not much aware about their responsibilities and functions in the PRIs.

The study finding regarding the female respondent participation in 2010 PRIs election concludes that, majority of respondents of the both districts are happy with state government decision to increase women's reservation from 33 per cent to 50 per cent in the State. The finding of the study regarding the re-election contest of respondents in 2010 PRIs election concludes that, in the both districts majority GP and PS respondents has not contested 2010 PRIs election; whereas, majority of ZP respondents of the both districts has contested 2010 PRIs election. The study further concludes that large number of district Hamirpur respondents has contested 2010 PRIs election as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The respondents who have contested 2010 PRIs election most of them have contested either for GP Pradhans post or for PS or ZP ward member post, very few numbers of respondents has contested for GP ward member post.

The finding of the study regarding the election result of those respondents who has contested 2010 PRIs concludes that, majority of GP and PS respondents of the both districts has defeated in their election contest; whereas, most of ZP respondents of the both districts has win their election contest in 2010 PRIs election. The finding of the study regarding the main reason for respondents to not contest 2010 PRIs election concludes that, majority of respondents has not contested 2010 PRIs election because either their family members are not interested in their election contest or they are their self not interested to contest election.

The finding of the study regarding the female respondents' satisfaction with their performance concludes that, in the both districts most of the GP respondents are satisfied with their role to encourage village women to take part in Gram Sabha

meetings. The study further concludes that, in the district Hamirpur more number of respondent are satisfied with their role to encourage village women to take part in GSs meetings as comparison to female respondents of the district Sirmour. The finding of the study regarding the PS and ZP respondents' satisfaction on women development issues concludes that, most of the respondents are not satisfied with their performance on women development issues. In the both districts majority of respondents are satisfied with their performance on their area development.

The finding of the study regarding the respondents' issues completion which they had raised during their election campaign concludes that, most of the respondents of both districts admit that they have completed the issues which they had raised at the time of their election campaign. The finding of the study regarding the respondents' adoption of politics as their career concludes that, majority of respondents of GP and PS of the both districts accepts that they has not adopt politics as their career; whereas, majority of respondents of ZP in the both districts accepts that they has adopt politics as their career. The finding of the study regarding politics as a profession for women concludes that, majority of respondents of the both districts admits that politics is good field for women.

SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of in-depth study and analysis of different aspects which influence role of women in the districts Sirmour and Hamirpur, the practical implementation of the provision regarding the reservation of one-third (50 % in the state) seats and office of chairpersons for women in PRIs as well as the observation and experiences obtained from the field study, it seems proper to present some suggestions that would help to ensure effective role of women in PRIs and their real empowerment. The following points constitute the suggestions resulted from the present study:

1. It is evident that men's attitude towards women's entry into PR politics has begun to change from total rejection to limited encouragement and in some cases to active encouragement. This trends needs to be strengthened through orientation courses and training programmes for official and elected representatives of PRIs for both men and women. Through the PRIs machinery, programme or project should be developed that would allow for

meetings for the exchange of information and experience on the ways in which women members can pursue issues of women's effective role as PRIs member.

2. There is a need to train women leaders at regular intervals enable them to manage the responsibilities assigned to them in PRIs. Confidence building exercises would help them to fulfill their responsibilities as their own. Training materials and courses of members of PRIs should be revised to include components on women's equality and development. This should include components of changing attitudes to women's role in PRIs decision-making as well as components on assessing programmes and projects to ensure proper implementation of all kinds of development activities and for proper advancement of grassroots level poor community.
3. The women should also be encouraged to organize themselves. The Mahila Mandals (female organization) in the village can be effectively used as instruments to mobilize them for this purpose. Some successful women's organization and NGOs can also act as catalytic agents for encouraging the women's role in social and political activities. The government should provide finances and infrastructure to some of deserving and successful women's organization and NGOs to take up the responsibilities of encouraging women elected representatives. The leaders of women's movement should also take up this task. They too can provide support to sensitize the rural women.
4. Incentives play a vital role in ensuring the effective role of women elected representatives in decision-making. It has been noticed that there can certain very active and enlightened women leaders at all levels of PRIs, who have been successfully implementing the development schemes and have ensured overall development of their constituencies, such leaders need to be encouraged by publicizing their leadership qualities and honoring them in public meetings. It will certainly encourage other women representatives and their success stories and good practices will get replicated.
5. The study, though confined the PR politics, has put forward the well-considered suggestions that the government should lay down minimum educational qualifications for those who aspire to hold elected post to all levels

of governments. Experiences has made it fully clear that owing to the incompetency and low qualification of administrators, the country has been denied good governance, the dream of entire community. It is plain truth that, to a great extent, elected representatives from PRIs to the parliament are ill-equipped and unqualified to discharge their constitutional responsibilities they need proper educational qualification and orientation. It is also suggested political parties which are the pillars of democracy shall increase the hopes and expectations of the people by fielding morally and educational competent candidates in the election fray starting with PRIs level. The voter should also prefer a candidate of caliber, honesty and intelligence rather than party affiliation of the candidate.

6. The foremost responsibility should that of the political parties recognize the capability and success of women and select those women candidates who are their self interested to stand for the said post; to raise the political consciousness of the people and sensitize them about women's issues. Political parties should organize workshops, dialogues, discussions and mass meetings. Political parties should sensitize party leaders and party workers about women's issues by organizing discussion session. Political parties should provide financial allocations for the election campaign expenditure of women candidates. The government should instigate political parties to make necessary change in their constitutions with a view to ensuring reasonable percentage of offices for women with immediate effect. Such a step will have useful impacts on their involvement in fundamental and basic areas of political process like voting and election campaign.
7. The male dominated rural social structure is still not fully prepared to accept women's participation in politics. The positive attitudinal change is urgently called for whereby the male folk in rural society should rather encourage and offer their conscience. The government should take active interest in giving full support to NGOs and women's organization which can play a key role in the creation of a civil society capable of ensuring women empowerment by exerting moral pressure on the political parties and men folk to provide women their rightful place in the political, social and administrative dispensation of the country. It is important considering that the responsibility

of the government should not end with reservation of seats for women in the PRIs but should also treat very idea of reservation as the means to real empowerment of women.

8. The Gram Sabha has a silent feature of the age old system of direct democracy. Therefore, it is the supreme responsibility of the government to strengthen this institution by ensuring maximum and active participation of women particularly. In the light of the study certain suggestions are put forward for making this institution more representatives and productive for women. It is suggested that institution of family shall be treated as the basic unit of GS as far as its meeting are concerned and that the attendance of at least one male and female member from each family in GS meetings shall be made mandatory and that of the failure of which result in the for feature of governmental grants and concessions.
9. Economic independence is another pre-major pre-condition for women's effective role in PR politics. They are to depend on the husband or the male member of the family even for bus fare to attend the PRIs meetings. In such a situation, it is not possible for them to play effective role in both politics and society. They should be at least engaged in some society gainful economic activities and the government and banking institutions should come forward to provide them grants and loans. Women Self Help Group (SHG) should be given additional incentives so that women can engage more and more in numerous enterprise activities, such as making toys, fruit processing, sewing, making pickles, bamboo and cane related cottage industries, animal husbandry, horticulture, floriculture. More additional care should be providing for SHGs so that can expand scope and agenda from economic empowerment to add in social and political empowerment too.
- 10 The unfinished agenda of women's effective role in politics and their empowerment be completed by enacting in Amendment for providing reservation at local level governments are not enough for women unless the issue is addressed both state and centre level. To realize good governance at state and centre government must create a congenial ambience for active leadership generating participation which would ensure women's role in

governance and politics. Leadership needs to be transformational effecting changes in institutions of governance. Women are required to be actively involved in the defining the political, economic and social agenda. Women's qualitative and quantitative participation at all levels of governance is importantly essential for their empowerment. Decentralization and women's empowerment would be turn into meaningless if women constituting almost half portion of India's population are not facilitated to participation to both in the governance and development process. This is only possible if gender equality is ensured at all the levels of political bodies.