



**WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN PANCHAYAT RAJ AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN KARNATAKA: A CASE  
STUDY OF MANDYA ZILLA PANCHAYAT (1995-2015)**

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**Research Guide**  
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## **Conclusion**

The Panchayat Raj Institutions have emerged as effective sources and resources of decentralized administration and development in India. The PRIs have become a new alternative for inclusive development of women and weaker sections of society. The centralization of administration and development has cost the marginalized sections of rural society very dearly. The PRIs have the capacity to fill the vacuum created by the mainstream administrative system in the post-independence era. The need for bridging the urban-rural divide has arisen in India to facilitate better governance and development on the basis of transparency, accountability and responsibility. The investigation emphasizes that PRIs have become effective institutions of decentralized governance and developmental endeavors. The study also reveals that women elected representatives have played a limited role in the management of PRIs and implementation of various rural development programmes in Mandya district of Karnataka. The findings of the study, testing of hypotheses, limitations of the study, implications of the study and suggestions for future research are amplified in this chapter.

## **Findings of the Study**

### **Findings of Qualitative Research**

#### **Women Participation in Panchayat Raj in Mandya District**

- The Gram Panchayats in Mandya district have women representatives (51.36%), OBC representatives (27.17%), SC representatives (14.83%) and ST representatives (5.97%) respectively.
- The Taluk Panchayats in Mandya district have women representatives (50.32%), OBC representatives (31.71%), SC representatives (14.63%) and ST representatives (2.44%) respectively.
- The Mandya Zilla Panchayat has about (73.17%) of seats represented by SC, ST, OBC and Women representatives.
- In particular, Mandya Zilla Panchayat has women elected representatives. (51.23%)

## **Women Participation in Rural Development in Mandya District**

- Women elected representatives have gained widespread support from the government and non-government agencies to participate in rural development programmes.
- Women elected representatives have entered the centre of local development in PRIs of Mandya district.

## **Findings of Quantitative Research**

### **Demographic Features of the Respondents**

- A majority of the study sample represents male respondents (58.29%), young and middle age groups (79.15%), primary, pre-university and diploma educational category (71.56%), officials, facilitators and beneficiaries categories (81.99%), Other Backward Communities (77.25%) and middle and low income groups (80.09%) respectively.

### **Significance of Constitutional Rights to Women in PRIs**

- The Constitution of India has recognized Panchayats as institutions of self-government. (100%)
- The Directive Principles of State Policy have called upon the state to establish PRIs to facilitate grassroots administration and development (80.33%).
- The National Development Council has envisaged a three tier system of panchayats known as Zilla Parishad, Taluk Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat. (74.88%)
- The State Governments have the primary responsibility of promoting Panchayat Raj System at the grassroots level. (85.31%)
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions have the responsibility of planning, executing and monitoring grassroots development programmes. (81.52%)
- The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of India has provided the much needed constitutional sanction to the PRIs. (87.20%)

- The PRIs are constituted to provide adequate political space to women and weaker sections of society. (81.99%)
- The women have considerable representations in the PRIs mainly due to constitutional amendments and reservation benefits. (75.83%)
- The elections are regularly held to the PRIs with representation to women, Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes. (100%)
- The elections are held to the PRIs on the basis of individual capacity rather than party basis. (63.98%)
- The Government of India has provided 50 percent reservation for women in Panchayat Raj Institutions. (82.94%)
- The effective functioning of PRIs has required certain procedural, legislative and most importantly attitudinal changes among women and other representatives. (77.25%)
- The women elected representatives are not aware of the administrative procedures and developmental activities in the PRIs (68.48%).
- The women elected representatives have not enjoyed the benefits of solidarity and networking development in the PRIs. (75.36%)
- The women elected representatives are not encouraged by the media, NGOs and civil society to play an active role in the PRIs. (71.09%)

### **Role of Women Representatives in the Governance of PRIs**

- The patriarchy, inadequate capacities and self-confidence, rotation of terms and other factors have impeded the political leadership development of women in PRIs. (64.93%)
- The level of political representation to women has increased quantitatively and qualitatively in the PRIs. (65.88%)

- The absence of strong network of elected women representatives has impeded their participation and performance in PRIs. (63.03%)
- The women elected representatives are given adequate freedom, security and opportunity to do justice to their role in the PRI. (62.09%)
- The affirmative action is not ensured by the political parties and civil society to increase the leadership qualities of women in PRIs. (64.22%)
- The views and suggestions of women elected representatives are not considered seriously by the male representatives and officials in the PRIs. (66.35%)
- The women elected representatives are not adequately equipped to take active part in the decision-making process in the PRIs. (60.66%)
- The women elected representatives have not played a responsible role in the implementation of decentralization in the PRIs. (77.25%)
- The women elected representatives do not represent sound educational and financial status in the PRIs. (79.38%)
- The women elected representatives have experienced political bossism and corruption in the PRIs due to system related constraints and limitations.(73.46%)
- The inadequate women's pressure groups in PRIs have impeded the progress of women. (71.09%)
- The women elected representatives have not gained opportunities in PRIs to ventilate their grievances and participate in the formal political arena. (72.04%)
- The women elected representatives are not properly encouraged by the state and civil society due to the traditional mindset. (75.12%)
- The women elected representatives are not endowed with adequate capacity development opportunities in the PRIs. (74.41%)

- The women elected representatives have not emerged as the harbingers of administrative reforms and progress in the PRIs. (76.54%)
- The benefit of reservation has given the statutory status to women elected representatives in the PRIs. (73.22%)
- The women are not enabled to reflect the voices of women and the concerns and issues that confront them in the PRIs. (73.93%)
- The women elected representatives have not enjoyed the benefit of inclusive development at the grassroots level in the PRIs. (69.67%)
- The women elected representatives in PRIs are not enabled to participate actively in the grassroots development administration. (70.14%)
- The women elected representatives in PRIs have enjoyed the benefit of political empowerment. (66.82%)

#### **Participation of Women Representatives in Rural Development Process**

- The PRIs have provided an institutional mechanism for participation of women elected representatives in the rural developmental endeavors. (64.93%)
- The women elected representatives have not gained greater role clarity and change of mindset to contribute effectively for rural developmental endeavors. (63.03%)
- The women elected representatives are not given adequate political education, motivation and opportunities to function as effective change agents at the grassroots level. (62.09%)
- The women elected representatives in the PRIs have gained adequate opportunities to participate in various rural development programmes (64.22%).
- The women elected representatives have not gained widespread support from the government and non-government agencies to participate in rural development programmes. (66.35%)

- The women elected representatives have implemented various rural development programmes for the uplift of women and weaker sections. (77.25%)
- The women elected representatives in the PRIs are not given the benefit of appropriate training intervention at the grassroots level. (79.38%)
- The central and state governments have not organized capacity development programmes for women elected representatives in PRIs and enhanced their leadership potentials. (71.09%)
- The women elected representatives in PRIs are not enabled to enhance their capacity, capability and skill in governance and administration of development activities (75.12%).
- The women elected representatives in PRIs are not practically trained and motivated to implement various development schemes and programmes. (76.54%)
- The women elected representatives have gained the benefit of increased participation in political power structures and developmental initiatives in PRIs. (73.93%)
- The women elected representatives have entered the centre of local development in PRIs. (70.14%)
- The women elected representatives are not enabled to enrich their participatory practices in rural development interventions. (74.17%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of land development and irrigation facilities in the PRIs. (60.19%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the dairying, horticulture, fisheries, sericulture and other agro based developmental activities in the PRIs. (58.29%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of central and state rural development programmes. (75.59%)

- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of various employment generation and infrastructure development programmes in the PRIs. (73.70%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of Khadi and village industrial programmes in the PRIs. (76.30%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of food processing and other micro level industrial programs in the PRIs. (70.62%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of social welfare and social security programmes in the PRIs. (72.27%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of educational, health and other developmental activities of the government in the PRIs. (76.07%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of public distribution activities in the PRIs. (71.56%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of technical and vocational training programmes for the youth in the PRIs. (68.72%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of sports and cultural activities in the PRIs.(70.85%)
- The women elected representatives have not participated in the implementation of disaster management activities of the government in the PRIs. (64.45%)

### **Implications of the Study**

The Panchayat Raj Institutions have played a significant role as centers of decentralized administration and participatory development at the grassroots level in India. The stakeholders of grassroots governance and development are required to ensure optimum utilization of PRIs and rural development projects on the basis of active people's participation. The state, civil society, judiciary, non-government



organizations, media institutions and progressive movements have to facilitate the integrated development of women through active intervention of PRIs at the grassroots level. The implications of the study in specific terms are presented as follows.

### **PRIs Related Implications**

- The policy makers should re-structure the Panchayat Raj Institutions and Rural Development Departments to improve transparency and accountability in these two major systems at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should strengthen the PRIs by providing adequate financial resources, manpower, facilities and opportunities for integrated grassroots development.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should be equipped with necessary infrastructural facilities and human resources in order to plan and execute various administrative and developmental activities at the grassroots level.
- The PRIs need proper devolution of power for effective participation of elected members in the various administrative and developmental activities at the grassroots level.
- The specific areas of devolution of power in respect of functions, functionaries and finance in respect of different developmental programmes implemented by various departments should be scientifically assessed for effective management of PRIs at the grassroots level.
- The elected representatives should be equipped with necessary vision and missionary zeal for effective delivery of service as change agents and facilitators of development at the grassroots level.
- The confidence and capacity of women elected representatives in the PRIs should be boosted through proper brainstorming exercises and periodic training programmes in order to enable them to play a vital role in the development administration process at the grassroots level.

- The policy makers should implement the goal of ‘Digital India’ to create digital infrastructure, promote digital literacy, deliver digital services and prevent corruption in the management of PRIs and various rural developmental activities at the grassroots level.
- Stringent measures need to be initiated to prevent interference of dummies and proxies in discharging the roles expected of elected women members in PRIs.
- The standing committees should have adequate women elected representatives and actively involve them in various developmental endeavors.
- Leadership development activities should be organized at the grassroots level to enhance the competence of the elected representatives including women.

### **Grassroots Development Related Implications**

- The policy makers should reverse the process of development in India by ensuring full-fledged political powers and allocating adequate funds to the PRIs to undertake appropriate developmental activities at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should adopt locally relevant development models such as Gandhian ‘Sarvodaya’ model, Ambedkar’s ‘Antyodaya’ model and Bhutan King Jigme Singye Wang Chuck’s ‘Gross National Happiness’ model of development to facilitate inclusive development of women and weaker sections of society at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should ensure ‘Land to the Tiller’ by implementing land reforms act and redistributing land by applying ceiling on land holdings to facilitate the agrarian reforms and agricultural development at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should develop the cottage industry, small industry and medium enterprises in the rural areas to improve the economy at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should promote public – private partnership to achieve the goal of integrated rural development at the grassroots level.

- The policy makers should bring about pension sector reforms and extend insurance cover to farmers, artisans, workers and women at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should develop the social sector by providing need based education, health care, infrastructure development, social security and life security based services at the grassroots level.
- The policy makers should implement the goal of ‘Make in India’ to boost the manufacturing sector of Indian economy and increase economic self sufficiency of the people.
- The government and non-government organizations should explore new avenues and opportunities for achieving the goals of distributive justice and decentralized development at the grassroots level.
- The rural development and Panchayat raj institutions should harness the potentials of corporate houses, non-government organizations and progressive organizations for various developmental endeavors.
- The research and development institutions should promote adequate scientific investigations on the role of PRIs and rural development agencies in the empowerment of women and weaker sections of society in India.

### **The PRIs and Social Networking Related Implications**

- The PRIs should become a new platform for the mobilization of ideas, resources and empowerment of women and weaker sections.
- The PRIs should create social networking for transformational social learning and action among the women and weaker sections.
- The PRIs should facilitate the development of social networking for the expansion of human collaboration among the women and weaker sections.
- The PRIs should enable the creation of social networking for political organizing and action for the women and weaker sections.

- The PRIs should contribute for social networking for better coordination among various agencies at different levels for the women and weaker sections.
- The PRIs should facilitate social networking development for strategic intervention and lobby action for the women and weaker sections.
- The PRIs should strengthen the social networking for better transnational advocacy networks for the women and weaker sections.

### **The PRIs and Social Capital Development Related Implications**

- Social networking development should be undertaken in the PRIs to facilitate greater institutional trust and collaboration for the social capital development.
- Social networking development should be ensured in the PRIs to facilitate greater inter and trans-disciplinary collaboration for the social capital development.
- Social networking development should be achieved in the PRIs to promote community preparedness, participation and action for social capital development.
- Social networking development should be accomplished in the PRIs to ensure consistent collaboration between the government institutions, corporate houses and non-government agencies for social capital development.
- Social networking development should be ensured in the PRIs to promote creativity, entrepreneurship and leadership opportunities for social capital development.
- Social networking development should be achieved in the PRIs to promote social entrepreneurship and system dynamics for the social capital development.
- Social networking development should be accomplished in the PRIs to facilitate a new paradigm shift for the social capital development.

### **The PRIs and Empowerment of Marginalized Sections Related Implications**

- The intervention of PRIs is required to create better awareness among the marginalized sections about protective, affirmative and promotional measures.
- The PRIs intervention is essential to obtain adequate means of organized activism at various levels for the empowerment of the marginalized sections.
- The PRIs intervention is crucial for the development of life skills and managerial competence of the marginalized sections.
- The PRIs intervention is vital for the betterment of production and productivity of the marginalized sections in various walks of life.
- The PRIs intervention is solicited to achieve social justice, economic equality, political participation and cultural transformation of the marginalized sections.
- The PRIs intervention is necessary to facilitate emulation of success stories and adoption of best practices for the empowerment of the marginalized sections.

### **Women Representatives Related Implications**

- The patriarchy, inadequate capacities and self-confidence, rotation of terms and other constraints should be overcome to enhance the political leadership development of women in PRIs.
- A strong network of elected women representatives should be encouraged by the state and civil society to enhance the performance in PRIs.
- The affirmative action is necessary to increase the leadership qualities of women elected representatives in PRIs.
- A positive mindset and cooperative approaches are required in the PRIs to respect the views and suggestions of women elected representatives.

- The women elected representatives should be adequately equipped to take active part in the decision-making process in the PRIs through innovative training programmes.
- The women elected representatives should be enabled to function as effective pressure groups and harbingers of administrative reforms in PRIs for delivery of services.
- The women elected representatives should be endowed with adequate capacity development opportunities in the PRIs.
- The women elected representatives should be enabled to gain greater role clarity and competence for effective implementation of various rural development programmes.
- The women elected representatives should be encouraged to participate in various rural development programmes through capacity building endeavors.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

The present investigation was carried out in Mandya district of Karnataka state to assess the participation of women in the decentralized governance and rural development endeavors. The study revealed that women elected representatives were aware of the constitutional rights and obligations in the Panchayat Raj Institutions. The study indicated that women elected representatives have not played an active role in the governance of Panchayat Raj Institutions. The study confirmed that women elected representatives have not played a crucial role in the implementation of the rural development programmes in the study areas. But, during the course of the study, it is understood that there are many areas which could be considered for research by the future generation of researchers. The role of PRIs in gender justice, women empowerment, inclusive development, sustainable development, social capital development, distributive justice and other processes could also be explored systematically by the future generation of public administration, rural development and women development researchers.

The Panchayat Raj Institutions were established in India to achieve the goals of democratic decentralization, distributive justice, participatory development and

empowerment of women and other marginalized sections of the society. The rural masses should be empowered by adopting several constitutional, legal and progressive administrative policies and affirmative actions. The intervention of state for the empowerment of the women and weaker sections fall short due to lack of political will, economic resources, social networking, social activism and inclusive approaches to development. The constitutional provisions and protective measures should be promptly implemented in the rural areas through revitalizing PRIs which are the prominent platforms for good governance and judicious development of the women and weaker sections of society. Several commissions have suggested certain policy framework and initiatives to enhance the status of PRIs and facilitate the establishment of a true welfare state on the basis of certain human values and constitutional provisions.

The national leaders have strongly advocated that the purpose of modern democracy is not so much to put a curb on an autocratic King but to bring about the welfare of the people. They have also pleaded for a method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed. There is a need for a paradigm shift from post-facto to pro-active planning for the empowerment of people through active intervention of PRIs and effective implementation of rural development programmes at the grassroots level. The importance of active participation of women elected representatives in the functioning of PRIs needs to be recognized in accordance with the constitutional provisions and humanitarian approaches to grassroots development. The present investigation clearly emphasizes that women elected representatives have to contribute decisively for the systematic management of PRIs and inclusive development of the marginalized sections in the countryside. The future agenda for the stakeholders of Panchayat Raj and rural development must deal with the reformation of PRIs in general and enhancement of active participation of women elected representatives in various grassroots developmental endeavours.