

## A CRITICAL STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PANCHAYATI RAJ: A CASE STUDY OF KHAMMAM DISTRICT IN T. S.

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### Abstract

*Using letters with numbers or symbols has always been an essential factor in determining society's living standards, not only for women today. To cement their demands, they now demand a complete overhaul of the old social system that discriminates against women and binds them to the reality of "domestic slavery" and "legal prostitution." Because of these and other characteristics, the women's movement of the 1960s was called the "Women's Liberation Movement." It is perhaps one of the most successful women's movements founded by women in human history. The women's liberation or feminist movement of the late 1950s and early 1970s looked at women's issues from sexuality as reflected in men's power over women. Women argued that women are an oppressed class, women's problems are political, social, religious, economic, and legal, and women's participation in all these fields can solve these problems.*

### Introduction

Ironically, our country is the largest democracy in the world, with almost half of the total population being women. The Indian Constitution also guarantees equal rights to women and men. Nevertheless, his participation in politics is significantly less due to various reasons. While it is complicated for women to compete with their peers in a male-dominated society like India, some women have overcome obstacles and achieved their goals.

Political participation and leadership are the basis of all political systems. However, it is more important than democracy because democracy always emphasizes people's participation in the decision-making process and encourages people's participation in political life. If democracy is defined as the rule of the people, then who participates in political decision-making becomes a general democratic question.

Democracy succeeds if it ensures the active participation and continuity of different groups of society at different levels of the decision-making process. Because of their participation, they elect their representatives and lose the right to make decisions. This article ensures the protection of personal interests through their political participation. People express their preferences to decision-makers. Political participation involves people in the political system and encourages them to participate in the country's political process.

### Forms of Participation:

The UNDP Human Development Report identifies four main types of participation

- Budget allocation
- Financial sharing
- Social and cultural participation

- Political participation
- These forms of participation are interconnected and cannot be considered separately.

### **Household and Economic Participation:**

Women lead to varying degrees in all economies. Although they are the backbone of India's rural economy, in traditional village society, men are the head of the family and make the majority of family decisions. A woman's role can be divided into productive and non-productive. Productive activities are related to so-called dependent work, while non-productive activities are related to housework, childbirth, and child-rearing.

As for economic participation, although women work more than men, whether their work is counted or not, our statistics and those of other countries show an increase in the number of women in full-time employment. Has grown, and women are now working in various previously considered exclusively male jobs.

### **Social and cultural participation:**

There are "public organizations" and "community holding companies." While human participation in social institutions is their inalienable right or right, there are situations in which it is not allowed for various reasons that arise from people's weakness or lack of managers or general attitudes, which are accepted by some and rejected by others. However, there is no doubt that public participation in public institutions is beneficial, especially for women living in rural areas.

Women participate in society through civil society organizations, religious groups, and many other groups and organizations. Women's participation in society is influenced by many factors, such as their family and economic status, as well as traditional customs and attitudes that help or hinder their activities. Women's social role may be limited in societies with conservative views on women's participation outside the home or intense discrimination against women. In many societies, women play an essential role in the cultural life of their communities and preserve the traditional culture of songs, games, stories, and traditions.

### **Political Participation:**

We are at a critical juncture in human development. Societies in many countries are in conflict and conflict not only because of poverty and inequality but also because of ethnic conflicts, gender discrimination, and exploitation of others. As Hobbes once put it, one might wonder how, after 20 million years of living on this planet, most of humankind has remained "solitary, poor, that is, rude and small." Today we have come a long way, primarily as the thin layer of civilization still covers the highest and best human feelings. Humans are human innovators. The strong take advantage of the weak, and the process goes on. Try to manage the aspirations of the people involved in the development process in the most humane, inclusive way to ensure peace, development, and prosperity for all, as the problems faced by women worldwide affect the entire humanity. Men and women live decently.

Nearly 50 years on, despite much progress in democracy and development, women's participation and role in public life have not changed much. The number and rate of women's participation in politics and active participation in politics are far from zero, indicating that

women's role in the decision-making process is influential. Your engagement creates the conditions for your development, and direct attention to the development of others requires the empowerment of women. So there is a strong connection between women's empowerment and their role in politics on one hand and decision making. Such participation in state decision-making brings about qualitative changes not only in women's lives but also in the functioning of public institutions and politics. In a democratic system that guarantees equal citizenship and equal rights to women worldwide, institutions and political processes cannot guarantee or enforce these guarantees. So you need to access these processes and institutions, participate in government programs, and share control over government institutions. The Charter of the United Nations aims to protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people without discrimination based on race, sex, language, or religion. In 1952, the United Nations issued a resolution to guarantee and protect the rights of women worldwide. The United Nations declared 1975 as the International Women's Year and 1980 as the Year of the Advancement of Women. United Nations member states also declared 1975-1985. Decade for Women's Advancement In 1995, the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women concluded in Beijing in September. A plan of action was drawn up and fully implemented in every district. India played a crucial role in this conference.

### **Women and Panchayat:**

The Panchayati Raj system, designed primarily for people's participation in political and economic processes, has failed to ensure women's participation. Advocates of the Panchayati Raj system urged rural women to contribute to development rather than benefit from it. The Balwant Ray Mehta Committee was particularly active in promoting women's representation in village political bodies. He, therefore, suggested that in addition to the 20 members of the Panchayat Samiti, two women "interested in women's and children's work" should be included as additional members (Government of India, 1957: 45-52). A similar scheme has been proposed for Panchayats as well. Based on this recommendation, some states have adopted regulations on women's representation. Maharashtra District Councils and Panchayat Samiti Act 1961 appoint one or two women to each of the three bodies if women are not elected. According to the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Council Act, each Samiti must have two women members in the electoral process. In Haryana, by law, a gram panchayat can elect one member, one or two members of a panchayat Samiti and two members of a district council. States like Punjab and Rajasthan did not immediately agree to cooperate but took action when women did not stand for election. Despite promises or cooperation agreements, women have not played an influential role in PRI Recruitment or co-option systems, have direct control over political or community groups, and recruited women with little knowledge of panchayats or experience working with women and children. The representation of women in this body is now characterized by association with "symbolism" and nonsense.

### **73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment and Women:**

Women's empowerment is one of the main objectives of third-generation panchayats in India. For example, one-third of PRI seats are reserved for women as per Amendment 73.

Women's participation and political leadership in WIC are considered essential not only to ensure their political participation in the democratic process but also to achieve women's development goals. Women's participation in the PRI refers to (1) women as voters, (2) members of political parties;

As a female candidate; (4) participation of women among elected PRI members in decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation; and (5) women members of Mahila Mandal Associations and their charities

The 73rd amendment gives a sense of psychological independence and political efficacy to those who cannot influence public decisions affecting women. This is welcome, as a democratic traditional society like India is meaningless without the full participation of women and other weaker sections of the society. However, the constitutional provision is a necessary and reasonable step to improve the status of women in the country.

### **Review of Literature**

This section reviews the literature on women's political participation and leadership in Panchayat Raj institutions. There is a rich literature on Panchayati Raj in books, committee reports, and articles published in various journals. These studies have theoretical and psychological components. This review is presented in three parts, but that is all.

- **Part 'A'** discussion on Panchayati Raj Institutions
- **Part 'B'** covers Participation and Leadership Studies and whereas
- **Part 'C'** deals with Women in Politics

### **Part-A**

#### **A Study on Panchayati Raj Institutions**

Khanna (1966) attempted to study the structure, function, economy, and performance of the Panchayat Raj in Punjab and Haryana. He suggested improving the functioning of Panchayat Raj democratically.

Desai (1969) provides a new basis for the political struggle between the Panchayati raj rival landlords who are jealous of each other's prestige and determined to maintain their power at the expense of the opposition. He said there is a positive attitude towards the Panchayat Raj system and the awareness of the elections as the villagers are represented by their constituencies.

Inamdar (1970) focused on the difference between the 'ideal' and the 'real' and contributed to a better understanding of village panchayats, which now play a significant role in creating economic and social security.

Narayan, Kumar, and Mathur (1970) discuss Panchayati Raj institutions in Madras, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Various economic, social, political, and administrative aspects and ways to strengthen rural India were also discussed.

Prasad (1971) studied the process of democratization and development in Ava village of Bihar; They argued that although panchayats lead the process of political democracy, they have not accelerated the economic development of the people.

Samiuddin (1978) takes a broader view of the origins and growth of social development programs and emphasizes their relationship with the rural economy and the democratic institution of the Panchayat Raja.

In their article, Rao and Hazarika (1978) concluded that local government is not fully democratic. They have no real decentralization of power and functions, so the concept of democratic decentralization is impossible.

Huja (1978) attempted to examine the origins of the two concepts of Panchayati raj and democratic decentralization from their historical perspective and the events leading up to independence.

Dakar (1979) analyzed the interaction of caste and politics, the role of money, education, and social status in the functioning of Panchayati raj institutions in the Marathwada district of Maharashtra. He said that the success of Panchayat Raj depends on the leaders who adhere to the aspirations of Panchayat Raj.

Bharat (1979) discusses the Panchayati Raj movement in the country, particularly in Karnataka. An attempt has been made to discuss the main recommendations of the Ashok Mehta Committee to highlight the essential issues and problems of Panchayat Raj reforms.

Sharma (1984) studied the administrative skills, political motives, and socio-economic status of selected Panchayat officials in Vankrot Panchayat village of Jaipur district, Rajasthan.

Sahib and Swinder (1) attempted to provide a comprehensive and objective analysis of rural and urban areas of local government. From time to time, discussions were held in the cities of Punjab and Haryana on the recommendations of various committees set up by the Central and State Governments.

Singh (1986) discusses the threefold structure of the Panchayat Raj and its functioning in his essay 'Revival.'

Hirvi (1) defines the term Panchayat Raj in his Panchayat Raj at the Crossroads. It examines the importance and potential of this Panchayati Raj in our political system by analyzing the experiences of different countries and learning from them. Noting the legal purpose of the 73rd Amendment, Sudhir Krishna (1997) notes that the 73rd amendment was designed to remove at least one-third of the positions, including the presidency, from women's and women's roles at various levels of the Panchayat Raj development program

## **Part-B**

### **A Study on Political participation and Leadership of Women**

Inamdar (1970) attempted to study four Gram Panchayats of Maharashtra to monitor the proper functioning of this critical management and administrative unit; In all its aspects, elections, personnel, activities, finances, village meetings, and especially its leadership

Dubey and Mardia (1966) examine the influence of considerations such as caste, relationship, client-client relationship, and political affiliation on the acceptance of Panchayati Raj leaders in Mana and Sripur districts of Maharashtra.

Bhargava (1979) tried to analyze the management of the Panchayat Raj system in Rajasthan. The style of leadership in the Panchayat Raj system is very different from the traditional style of village leadership, which can now be called traditional. These organizations have a few weak areas.

Mishra (1989) states that different countries use different methods to achieve rural development in the context of India. He also reviewed the tripartite system and emphasized the need for community participation in policy formulation and implementation.

Referring to the 73rd objective of institutional change, Sudhir Krishna (1997) explained that the 73rd amendment was implemented to eliminate at least one-third of the posts, including the presidency, for women at all levels of the PRF. □□ in development programs for women

## **Part-C**

### **A Study on Women in Politics**

Devaki Jena (1994), analyzing the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, states in this article that the main objective of politicians is twofold: democratic justice on the one hand and utilization of (human) resources on the other. They also claim that half of them are women. A nation cannot develop without the participation of women.

Kumari, R. Pale (2006) Discusses women's political integration, gender differences in political attitudes, women's political potential, and patterns of women's political participation in Women's Politics: Participation and Governance. Representation of women in politics also provides comparative information on how women can promote democracy and good governance.

### **Need for political Participation and Leadership of Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions**

First, true democracy, governance, and human development cannot exist without the equal participation of men and women in all spheres of life and at various levels of decision-making. Second, women are involved not only in the development process but also in setting goals rather than achieving development goals. Third, women's participation changes the world we live in and brings new priorities and perspectives to political processes and social organization. Empowerment of women and girls contributes to the economic and social development of the country. Shifting the unequal balance of agency and control at home, at work, in society, in government, and ultimately at the international level will lead to women's empowerment.

The political status of women in developing countries and the level and quality of their political participation in the process of national development is insufficient if we consider their participation in social construction, participation in social and economic reproduction and its accounting, reality, and perhaps a role Ø The poor economic and social situation of women in developing countries is directly reflected in their participation in decision making at all levels. Free India's founders encouraged women to participate in the politics of India's freedom struggle actively. After independence, these efforts never materialized into a social structure, although the Constitution enshrined the lofty ideals of equality and social justice. The founders' dream of creating a conducive socio-economic and political system was hampered by the lack of positive political initiatives, barriers preventing the more vigorous sex from sharing with women, and issues of gender silence.

### **Need for the Study:**

Women's issues came to the fore in the first six decades. National and international policy documents now recognize gender discrimination as a common form of institutional failure, leading to the development of many new policies.

Despite all government mandates, women's political participation and leadership are essential issues. 64 years after independence, India has yet to achieve a satisfactory level of women's political participation, far below the level of Panchayat Raj institutions. There is a pressing need for policy research on women's participation and PRI leadership.

### **Objectives:**

These are the objectives of this study

1. Describe the growth and development of the Panchayat Raj system of local government in India before and after independence.
2. Explain the institutional and structural changes brought about by the Panchayat Raj Act to the Telangana situation.
3. Discuss the meaning of the 73rd amendment with particular reference to the constitutional provision for reserved seats for women.
4. Analyze the 2020 local elections in the Khammam region, focusing on regional panchayat politics.
5. Describe the socio-economic status of elected women panchayats in Hamam district
6. To study and analyze the views of elected women and Panchayat Raj institutions.
7. To understand the nature and extent of participation of women leaders in decision-making.
8. Find out how people appreciate the work of women politicians in Panchayati Raj.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study:**

This is an empirical study based on women's political participation in the Panchayat Raj organization in the Khammam district. The researcher selected three districts to conduct this research with all the above objectives from Hamam and Kalu in the Khammam region. This country consists of a city, a village, and a tribe; thus, the researcher can study the maximum political participation of women in the Panchayat Raj organization in two different areas.

The researcher could not conduct small-scale research at the district level (21 mandals) as the research was limited to 6 mandals due to financial and time constraints. They are Chintakani, Konijerla, Bhaira, Talada, Penubali and Bhimsur.

### **Methodology**

Keeping the above concepts and objectives in mind, the researcher decided to study PRI politicians' attitudes in the Khammam region of Telangana. Relevant data for this study has been collected from primary and secondary sources.

The primary source of data was field research which was collected using questionnaires. In the study, the researcher selected women leaders who were elected in the



Panchayat Raj elections in the Khammam district. Books, magazines, newspapers, studies, reports, and official documents on panchayat raj institutions were secondary data sources.

### Findings:

1. On some political issues, our data shows that the majority of surveyed rural and urban women leaders support a two-party system in the country for a healthy and vibrant democracy.
2. Many women leaders believed a multi-party political system was the way out of Indian politics.
3. Many women leaders agree with the statement that individual freedom can be preserved when people actively participate in political activities.
4. Interestingly, more than half of the women leaders interviewed in both rural and urban areas agreed that only elections were necessary to change the current political structure.
5. Although many women leaders are still determining if the country's governance will go well in the form of a President's rule. Under parliamentary government
6. Many leaders agree that a coalition government that brings together regional parties defeats the nationalist cause.
7. Half of the women leaders agreed that the country's government could function appropriately without elections.
8. Most of the women leaders in rural and urban areas prefer only the rich
9. More than half of women leaders agree that the legal system only protects the rights of the wealthy.
10. However, many women leaders believe that corruption can be eradicated by changing the electoral system.
11. Interestingly, most women leaders, both rural and urban, agree that legal activism helps sustain a democratic system.
12. However, many female local government chairpersons agree that federalism is effective in solid regional governments.
13. Additionally, most women leaders interviewed agreed that secularism is a cornerstone of democracy.
14. Women Leaders Generally Support Greater Representation of Women in Politics  
Greater representation in political institutions improves the condition of Native Indian women. He \ he said.
15. Most Leaders Interviewed Attending Regular Meetings. On the other hand, it was found that many leading organizations of rural and urban self-government regularly participate in council meetings.
16. Most managers interviewed believed that women's conditions improved after the warning. More than half of women leaders in rural and urban areas did not intervene in their process.
17. Many panchayat raj institutions have less freedom to make decisions than their urban counterparts.



18. Many women heads of rural and urban self-governments personally approached the administration and complained to the public.
19. Most of the women leaders interviewed believe that public life affects private life to some extent. Also, most of the women base leaders are not Mahila Mandal members. It should be noted that their participation in Gram Mahila Mandapam is significantly less.

#### **Suggestions:**

1. A comparative study of role performance can be done by analyzing the differences between men and women.
2. Various factors can be studied that contribute to developing women's leadership positions.
3. A similar study will be conducted with a larger sample of women politicians to test different findings and explore different theoretical explanations.
4. Future research can be done on the performance of Mandal representatives at the district level in panchayat raj institutions.
5. Future research on women's outcomes in middle-income countries could use qualitative methods such as in-depth studies, research reports, and participant observation.

#### **Summary:**

A comparative analysis of political value orientations of women in leadership positions in rural and urban areas shows that there is no significant difference between different political conditions. However, many rural and urban women leaders prioritized local issues over national ones. Looking at the orientation of political values and the participation of women leaders, it can be concluded that local unit leaders are well aware of the political situation in the country and region. Your approach to political issues is generally positive and logical. They believe in democratic institutions and constitutional mechanisms for change. They are firm in their beliefs and transparent in their opinions.

For example, research on the value orientation of managers in various social, economic and political contexts leads to the conclusion that their understanding of these areas is entirely satisfactory. Furthermore, they are well-versed people in social and various aspects and show a deep understanding of the country's economy. They proved that they knew the political situation of the country very well. The old management is removed and replaced by new people. Women's position at the local government's center has allowed them to formally participate in the development and political processes at the local level, thereby influencing local government decisions. Reservation gave women a chance to represent as a group and express their views or feelings in a formal forum on social and economic issues, Demonstrating the potential of women's thinking and human development activities. Women's participation in local government institutions enables them to become influential leaders and helps to build rural and urban women's confidence and promote social change. The awareness and understanding of women leaders are similar in all states of India and are still in progress.

The country's leaders occupy a strategic position in formulating and enacting laws and implementing them to achieve specific national goals. As a result, leadership studies have become increasingly important in recent years, but research on women's leadership needs to be improved, particularly at the local level. In this context, it was decided to conduct a deep study on local self-governing institutions of women leaders. Hence this study focuses on the women local government employees of the Mulugu district of Telangana. With the introduction of special seats, women were allowed to join local government bodies for the first time.

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