



STUDY OF KAITHAL DISTRICT, HARYANA ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN PANCHYATI RAJ

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ABSTRACT

The study covers the empowerment of women in Haryana and their panchayat members of Kaithal district in Haryana in India. Women make up 50% of the world's population, but India has exhibited unequal sex ratios, so the female population has been treated as inferior in Indian society. The panchayati raj system introduced through empowerment of women in India especially in Haryana. Women will have the same prospects in the panchayati raj system. Women who are still illiterate rely on husbands and male officials to make specific decisions related to village advancement programs, but still lack power. To empower women in India, they must receive the necessary education, training, economic status and encouragement in society. If all this drive towards the improvement of women's society continues, then the effective empowerment of women in Indian society will be a model in the world context.

Key words: Panchayati Raj, Women empowerment, Participation, Election.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women make up more than half of the country's population. However, their political participation is marginal compared to men. Many psychological, social and physical factors hold women back from active political involvement. This is true as far as the state and national level politics is concerned. A democratic country cannot progress if energies of its half population are concerned in the kitchen only. After attaining independence Indian constitution ensured gender equality through various provisions and regulations. It was presumed that these rights would automatically get translated into political development of the women in the country.

The issue of women's participation in politics cannot be viewed in isolation from the general position of women in a society but despite their vast strength, women occupy a marginalized position in the political system. This step was based on the premises that there can be no true democracy or no true people's participation in governance and development without equal participation of women in all spheres of life and at different levels of decision-making and then the goals of development cannot be fully realized without

women's full and active participation not only in the development process but also in the shaping of its goals.

It is well known that parliamentary democracy is the rule of majority and by ignoring nearly fifty per cent of women's population; no country can march towards attaining the goals of justice, liberty and equality under the socialist, egalitarian and democratic frame work of India's Constitution. Political status of women implies a degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by women in sharing of power and importance given by the society to the role of women in the political system. The equality and active political participation are inseparable. Participation of women in political arena is integral to the advancement of women. Their political participation means not only using the right to vote, but also power-sharing, co-decision-making, and co-policy-making at all levels of governance of the State. The equal status of women in all fields is closely linked to progress and development at the national level.

Women's participation in politics has been neglected since India's independence. Although our country has a democratic government system and women constitute 48.9% of the country's population, then also the political participation of women is very low. Due to various constraints they could not occupy the positions of power and assume leadership roles. Women's participation has been increasing rapidly but it is not satisfactory. They are also denying opportunities to participate in the administration, even in the making of decisions that affect their life and welfare. After independence, when the constitution was adopted women like Smt. Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Renuka Roy, Durgabai Desmukh etc. took part in the constitution-making. In our Constitution there is guarantee of equality and dignity of the individual and it claimed the fundamental rights of women to political and legal equality and guaranteed non-discrimination in employment and office under the states. Our constitution provides many avenues for the development and advancement of women. The constitutional provisions are meant to empower 48.9 per cent women population in India.

Many government and non-government agencies are working for the development of women but in practice we find a wide gap between the stated social objectives and achievements, between the legal framework and imperial realities, between the symbolism and actuality. And that is why participation is still very low after these constitutional safeguards and legal frameworks.

There are three indicators for evaluating women's political participation.

- a. To participate in the political process as voters and candidates in elections.
- b. Political characteristics such as commitment to knowledge and political participation and autonomy in political action and behavior.
- c. Their influence on the political process.

The credit goes to the government of Narsimha Rao when the constitutional amendment acts 73 and 74 of 1992 Panchayati Raj Act, which not only gave autonomy to the base but also provided for the reservation of one third of the seats for women in every Panchayat and municipality, not less than one-third seats shall

be reserved for women belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This can be awarded by rotation from constituency to constituency. Until the enactment of the 73rd and 74th amendments, no one was sure of the role women should play in the development process of society and women themselves.

Panchayati Raj Institutions and Women

Having contributed as equal members of society during India's freedom struggle, women's involvement in politics was by no means a new phenomenon. The degree of freedom and equality that women enjoy affects their political standing. The recognition of women's rights to political and social equality within the framework of the Indian constitution represented a retreat from both preexisting views of women's rights that were largely prevalent in developed and advanced countries as well as from conventional notions about the position of women as citizens.

The National Movement and Mahatma Gandhi's leadership were the two main factors that served as the catalysts for obtaining political equality for women. Despite some glaring exceptions, women citizens of India have been denied their rightful representation in institutions that make decisions. Women have been isolated within their homes for years and rarely leave to participate in public activities. The structure and rules laid down in the Constitution of India for all women gives women equal representation in Indian politics. The constitutional framework acknowledges and discusses the political rights of women without providing any distinctions or requirements for them to participate in important decision-making processes at all levels.

The electorate's active participation in politics, regardless of gender, caste, class, or religious prejudice, is one of the key components of India's democratic political system. When one carefully examines women's enthusiastic and dedicated engagement in the political process over the past 40 years, it supports the founding fathers' intentions in the Indian Constitution. In comparison to many other nations throughout the world, India has a situation where women are more likely to participate in the electoral process.

Objectives

1. The evolution analyses of the institution of Panchayati Raj in India.
2. To understand the Panchayati Raj structure of the Panchayati Raj system and its many intellectual interrogatories.
3. To analyze the performance and out-turn of the SHG increase with a rise in the level of institutional support to it.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research method is a method for systematically solving a research problem. It can be understood as the science of how research is done scientifically. Here we go through the various steps along with the logic behind them.

This study is quantitative in nature. We adopted descriptive survey research design for this Study. Data will be collected by using questionnaire distribution using the main data set. The study also examines factors that SHG should focus more on in the future to empower rural women.

Moreover, when designing a questionnaire that measures one's attitude towards a particular topic, we generally prefer asking the subject's degree of agreement or disagreement on the topic, instead of giving a dichotomous choice; this helps in avoiding socially preferred responses. Structured samples and questionnaires are conducted to collect data for this process. Advanced decisions were made when formulating objective, designing method, selecting sample, collecting data. Finally, data analysis and reporting were planned with expertise's approval.

Data collection method

Gathering information directly from rural women to get accurate information can be difficult. The only solution was to meet and build relationships with all respondents in person so that there was no ambiguity between respondents when answering questions. The tools will be used for the collection of data are Questionnaire and Likert Scale. Tools will be designed in such a manner, that even the illiterate respondents will able to understand the meaning and answer it.

- a. Primary data
- b. Secondary data
- c. Questionnaire
- d. Likert scale

Sample and Measures

This study begins with an in-depth discussion of the status of women and why participation in self-help groups is a viable option for empowering rural women to work towards poverty alleviation. It continues with the discussion of a quantitative analysis of the impact of SHGs on individual members, their family and social life, changes in knowledge and attitudes. For this, a comparative survey was conducted in 400 rural women in 13 Panchayat Samitis of Kaithal.

With a population of 6.86 crores, the state has the country's eighth highest population growth. However, the state's decadal growth rate has dropped from 28.33 percent (1991-2001) to 21.44 percent now. The state also has one of the highest overall fertility rates in the country, at 3.1 percent, compared to the national average of 2.5 percent. Even the sex ratio is lower than the national average of 940, at 928. The literacy rate is 66.11 percent, which is lower than the national average of 74.04 percent.

3. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Economic empowerment of rural women is essential for the development of their families and the economic status of the country by encouraging them to participate in economic activities. Any progress in the country

is possible if women are given equal opportunities as men in all aspects of life. Consequently, Self Help Groups (SHGs) are a viable option to achieve the goal of economic empowerment for rural women.

Age Group of Rural Women SHG Members

Table 3.1:- Age Group of Rural Women SHG Members

Sl. No.	Age Group	Number of Women Members	Percentage
1.	Below 20 years	20	5.00%
2.	Between 20-30	100	25.00%
3.	Between 30–40	100	25.00%
4.	Between 40-50	80	20.00%
5.	Above 50	100	25.00%
	Total	400	100.00%

According to the results, the age group of Below 20 years accounts for 05% of rural women self-help group members, followed by between 20-30 years (25.00%), between 30–40 years (25.0%), between 40-50 years (20.0%), and Above 50 years (25.0%).

Religion of Rural Women SHG Members

Table 3.2: Religion of rural women SHG members

Sl. No.	Religion	Number of Women Members	Percentage
1.	Hindu	150	37.5%
2.	Christian	150	37.5%
3.	Muslim	100	25.00%
	Total	400	100.00%

According to the results, Hindus account for 37.50% of rural women self-help group members, followed by Christians (37.50%) and Muslims (25.00%).

Size of Family of Rural Women SHG Members

Table 3.3: Size of family of rural women SHG members

Sl. No.	Size of Family	Number of Women Members	Percentage
1.	Below 4 members	180	45.00%

2.	5–7 members	150	37.50%
3.	Above 7 members	70	17.50%
	Total	400	100.00%

According to the results, rural women self-help group members had a family size of 5–7 members (37.50 %), followed by less than four members (45.00%) and more than seven members (17.50%).

Position of Rural Women in SHG

Table 3.4: Position of women in SHG

Sl. No.	Position	Number of Women Members	Percentage
1.	Animator	30	7.50%
2.	Representative	120	30.00%
3.	Member	250	62.50%
	Total	400	100.00%

According to the results, 62.50 percent of rural women are members of self-help organizations, followed by representatives (30.00 percent) and animators (7.50 percent).

4. CONCLUSION

After the passage of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992 and Assembly passed the Haryana Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2015 the States were expected to decentralize their authority to the institutions of self government at the local level. Significance of this research paper is to improve the quality of leadership and governance in gram panchayats and also to enable elected representatives of PRIs to be more accountable and responsible towards their people. The purpose was to take democracy to the grass-root level so that the people should manage their own affairs at that level. Only the people themselves know what is best for them and what needs to be done. The idea was not only to entrust the people with the power of decision-making but also to give them the authority and capacity of governing themselves. Along with their socioeconomic backgrounds, there are other elements that have an impact on rural women's empowerment.

Through SHGs, leadership also plays a key part in empowering rural women, and the opportunities and resources accessible to them also play a vital part in their total empowerment.

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