

## PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTIONS AND RURAL WOMEN IN MYSORE DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

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### ABSTRACT

The paper presents the structure and functions of Panchayati raj Institutions. It also highlights the social composition of elected members and their participation in the decision making process in PRIs. Liberal Democracy is one of the basic features of the Indian Constitution. Mahatma Gandhi advocated Panchayat Raj even before Independence. The further of the Nation felt that as issues at the village levels must be addressed by the people only under self-governance and the State or the Central Governments only facilitate such self-rule through grants and by conferring autonomy on them. Panchayat system had earlier an informal setup to redress the local issues and problems of communities which were mainly social and economic in nature. They were popular institutions at micro levels and the main objective was to keep the local community in harmony and to encourage participation in the process of development.

In our visits to villages for conducting studies on participatory development, we have often come across rural women either indifferent to governmental programmes or plainly stating that the government is not much interest in them and they are being left alone to fend for themselves. Many occasions, the village women have shown lack of interest in discussing their issues with outsiders perceiving this to be not a useful exercise. Sheer neglect of their wretched conditions over long years perhaps explains such attitude. Often their responsibilities in household chores also prevent them from having much spare time and at other times the cultural barrier restricts them from interacting and participating with men folks and the outsiders. In our visits to villages for conducting studies on participatory development, we have often come across rural women either indifferent to governmental programmes or plainly stating that the government is not much interest in them and they are being left alone to fend for themselves.

One major problem in women's participation in panchayats is time. It has been generally observed from field survey that rural women in different and ages have, in general, little time in their daily schedules. Discuss with them their daily schedule of activities and make appropriate arrangements for releasing time for better participation in panchayats for their own decision making. Ask groups of rural women as to how their participation in panchayats can be made more effective, empower the women with different kinds of skill formation for income generation so that they are able to earn from such activities and become financially empowered. The importance of those women actively participates in the PRIs which are at present monopolized by men. This is not only for the sake of the democratic principle but also for their position to benefit from issues which directly affect them and for which there are no appropriate forums to seek redressed. This paper consist the objectives of to examine the relevance and significance of the panchayat Raj Act, to study the effective implementation of the programmes, to study the building up of an appropriate environment for effective implementation of the Act and to study the rural women participation of decision making process in Panchayat Raj Institutions in Mysore District.

**KEYWORDS:** Panchayat, Participation, Women, Reservation, Decision Making