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## **ROLE OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND OTHER FAMILY PROGRAMS**

# Role of Women in Decision Making Process and Other Family Programs

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**Abstract** – reveals that 137 respondents opined that PRI decision are taken as per rule, i.e. voting system, followed by 34 (15.18%) respondents who have no clear idea about the decision making process. While 53 (23.66%) responded that all the decision are taken unanimously. Similarly at the Gram Panchayat level 20 (14.09%) Panches, 4 (26.67%) Sarpanches and 10 (16.95%) Panchayat Samiti members did not response to it. It means they act as a person of just thumb impression or signing on paper about the consensus of final decision taken by other member of the Panchayat. Majority of 99 (69.72%) Panches and 8 (53.33%) Sarpanches opined that all the decisions are taken as per the rules like casting of vote. 6 (75.00%) Zila Parishad member responded that maximum of decision taken through the process of casting vote. So on the basis of above data that decisions are taken either by voting or by Unanimity.

**Key Words:** Gram Panchayat, Respondents, Thumb Impression.

## INTRODUCTION

“Participation means direct involvement of masses individually or through representatives. Participation cannot be imposed on the people from above; it should be voluntary and based on the will to participate. People’s participation or involvement can better be understood in terms of participation in decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes and projects and the most important is the sharing of the benefits of development.” (Mishra, 1995)<sup>1</sup>.

Even after Independence, for a long time the rural women virtually remained unknown to rights due to religion, caste, traditions and the male-domination in panchayat that played a dominant role in the villages, ignoring the interest of women. The prevailing stratification of society, the authoritarian pattern of decision-making, limited channel of communication and the low literacy prevented them from being exposed to rights.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A reference to these institutions has been made in the Vedas and other scriptures. The writings of Kautilya also contain evidence showing their existence in the ancient period. In due course of time, the village communities began to be governed by a council of five members, Panchayat. These bodies performed the functions of tension management and conflict resolution. The legitimacy of the authority of Panchayat was based on religion and custom. In

addition to these Panchayats of village communities, there existed simultaneously, caste and sub-caste Panchayats to regulate the code of conduct of their members. Although Panchayats of village communities as well as of castes have been glorified as democratic institutions by those who have taken a romantic view of the rural society of the ancient era, these were dominated by the male landlords of the higher castes owing to its caste-base, patriarchal and feudal character.

Be that as it may, these institutions had complete hold over the rural people during the ancient period. The establishment of a centralized system of administration by the Mauryan dynasty, however, is reported to have reduced their significance to some degree. But their authority was fully restored as a result of decentralization of administration during the Gupta period. On the whole, the Panchayats remained autonomous institutions of local government in the ancient India.

## POST-COLONIAL PERIOD

The evolution of the Panchayati Raj system in the post-colonial period may be divided into the pre-Balwant Rai Mehta Study Team Report, post-Balwant Rai Mehta Study Team Report and the pre-73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment and the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment phases.

## THE BALWANT RAI MEHTA STUDY TEAM REPORT PHASE

The issue of the status of village Panchayats in the Indian political system became a matter of great controversy in the Constituent Assembly after independence in 1948 when the Indian Constitution was being prepared. While the Gandhians wanted India to be a polity with maximum powers at the Panchayat level and minimum powers at the central level, the chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, did not want to give any place to this institution in the Constitution. He perceived the village as "a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow mindedness and communalism."

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

### Decision Making Process

Here in this study, we have gathered data from the respondents about the methods of decision making in PRI meeting/discussion. The table given below presents the data on this issue.

Table 1

#### Opinion of Respondents about Decision Making

Methods of Decision Making	Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti Member	Zila Parishad Member	Total
	Panch	Sarpanch			
As per rules voting	99 (69.72)	08 (53.33)	24 (40.68)	6 (75.00)	137 (61.16)
Unanimously	23 (16.19)	03 (20.00)	34 (42.37)	2 (25.00)	53 (23.68)
No Response	20 (14.09)	04 (26.67)	10 (16.95)	---	34 (15.18)
<b>Total</b>	<b>142(100)</b>	<b>15 (100)</b>	<b>59(100)</b>	<b>08(100)</b>	<b>224(100)</b>

Figures in parentheses show percentage.

The table reveals that 137 respondents opined that PRI decision are taken as per rule, i.e. voting system, followed by 34 (15.18%) respondents who have no clear idea about the decision making process. While 53 (23.66%) responded that all the decision are taken unanimously. Similarly at the Gram Panchayat level 20 (14.09%) Panches, 4 (26.67%) Sarpanches and 10 (16.95%) Panchayat Samiti members did not response to it. It means they act as a person of just thumb impression or signing on paper about the consensus of final decision taken by other member of the Panchayat. Majority of 99 (69.72%) Panches and 8 (53.33%) Sarpanches opined that all the decisions are taken as per the rules like casting of vote. 6 (75.00%) Zila Parishad member responded that maximum of decision taken through the process of casting vote. So on the basis of above data that decisions are taken either by voting or by Unanimity.

### INVOLVEMENT IN FAMILY AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

A women leader has to devote time and feel concern towards functioning/activities of PRI as well as in the family. Some women leaders feel PRI's work as an

extra work as for them because it affects their involvement in family/other activities. For the purpose of present study, respondents were asked about their involvement in functions.

Table 2

#### Classification of Respondents on their Involvement in Family and Other Activities

Reason	Gram Panchayat		Panchayat Samiti Member	Zila Parishad Member	Total
	Panch	Sarpanch			
Yes	112 (78.87)	12 (80.00)	49 (83.05)	6 (75.00)	179 (79.92)
No	30 (21.13)	3 (20.00)	10 (16.95)	2 (25.00)	45 (20.08)
<b>Total</b>	<b>142(100)</b>	<b>15(100)</b>	<b>59(100)</b>	<b>08(100)</b>	<b>224(100)</b>

Figures in parentheses show percentage.

This table shows that majority of 179 (79.92%) respondents agreed that they participate in their family/other activities, while 45 (20.00%) respondents did not participate in social/activities. Similarly 112 (78.87%) Panches, 12 (80.00%) Sarpanches, 49 (83.05%) Panchayat Samiti members and 6 (75.00%) Zila Parishad members constitute the group of women leaders who participate in their family and other activities but extent of their participation is directly lies on their family socio-economic and political position like male dominance, economic situation, education standard and PRI position.

### CONCLUSION

So on the basis of above analysis we may conclude that there is a large extent of participation in family and other activities by women PRI leaders. The social system of rural society contains the extent of freedom, participation and rights of women in all sphere of socio-economic and political life.

The success of developmental programme depends upon the spirit of mutual understanding, harmony and co-operation between public and officials. To perform the PRI functions and activities PRI leaders have to interact with other officials like Deputy Commissioner, BDO & PO. Mahila Mandal Representatives, Anganwari workers or other women representatives.

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