

## Role of Women in Panchayati Raj System: Experience and Prospects

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### Abstract

Panchayati Raj is considered for good governance. The 73rd constitutional amendment was made with a view for better governance and to provide political space to Scheduled caste, Scheduled tribe and women. But the effective presence of women in the Panchayat was negligible, whereas they are even not respected. The suggestions given by elected women in Panchayats are not considered and are pressurized by their husbands against taking decisions. The participation of women elected in Panchayats should be encouraged and the lacuna can be bridged by regular training. Women in India are primarily considered as a biological body limited to sexuality, marriage, reproduction and domestic duties. In the history as well as socially, women are considered subordinate to men. In politics also, women have to remain dependent on father, brother, son or husband. Moreover, illiteracy among women, lacking of quality leadership and forced purdah system are the main drawbacks of role of women in Panchayati Raj. Also women lack self-esteem, skill, confidence and social presence and that effects work in Panchayats. There are few examples of women in Panchayats who are really doing great work and are respected for their work. Overall representation of women and their role in politics at state and national level is minimal.

**Keywords** – *Panchayat, Skill, Women*

### INTRODUCTION

Panchayati Raj institution is 100 years old which means that villages in India were like little Republic and governed by Panchayat. Panchayati Raj was formed in India on 24th April 1993 under the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment act. The structure and process of Panchayati Raj was to involve women in governing and development of villages. After 43 years, women were considered as the changing group of local councils in India. After the formation of Panchayati Raj institution, 25-40% women participated in this institution. Women participation is trying to improve poverty, inequality and health issues (Kaul and Sahni, 2009).

The International Agricultural development funding agency funds for development projects for women. They

have listed four factors for women empowerment which are-

1. Mobility of women and her social interaction.
2. Type of employment.
3. Resources accessed and control by women.

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4. Women’s role in decision making at family and community levels.

Moreover other factors like status of women in family, her age, her educational background help in empowerment of women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment also helped in revitalization of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Women. The article 243(D) of the legislation provides reservation to Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe in their area. The Panchayati Raj institution focused on protection of women and providing a better, secure position in society. Moreover 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment of Indian constitution also provides 33% reservation for women in Panchayats. This led to more women participating and also taking leadership positions in Panchayati Raj institutions. Their participation has helped in self-development and empowerment. The successful women educate girls and as parent dream for a better future for their daughters(Dak et.al, 2008).

**Materials And Methods:**

This study was a type of interactive method from January 2022 to May 2022. Three selected villages which had women as Sarpanch was selected for the interactive session.

List of villages visited

Sr No.	Name of village	Taluka	District
1	Ambli	Dholera	Ahmedabad
2	Lupkaman	Daskroi	Ahmedabad
3	Mahijada	Daskroi	Ahmedabad

**Data Collection:**

The data was collected with interactions with the Sarpanch, Members, ASHA Workers and members of the respective village.

**Table – 1: Ambli Village, Taluka- Dholera, District – Ahmedabad**

Parameters	Answer	Parameters	Answer
Name of Sarpanch	Smt. Indrajayuba Chudasma	Age	58 years
Elected Year	2019	Term	5 years
Total Members	5 Women And 4 Men	Social Stigma	Purdah system exist
Establishment Before 500 Years		Number of Houses	500 of Village

Voters	1200	Population	3000
Dispensary	Sub Center	Water Supply	24 × 7
Water Tax	Sarpanch Collects Yerlys Service	Emergency	108 available
Corona Vaccination	Vaccination Given	Mamta Day	Celebrated every year
Field Area	15000 Bigha	Farmers	70%
Crops Grown	Jowar, Wheat, Chana	Total Population Rajput	OBC- 70%, (General)-10% and SC- 20%.
Men and Women	55% and 45%	Domestic Cattles	Cows and buffaloes
Dairy	Milk Sold to Uttam Dairy	Drainage System	Underground
Defecation	No Open Defecation	Road	RCC type with interior residential blocks
School	Upto 8 <sup>th</sup> Standard	Number of Students	187
Aaganwadis and Asha Workers	Available	Toilets	In their own homes
Ration Cardand Food Items Supplied	All villagers Get Rice, Wheat, Sugar, Oil, Chana and Iodized Salt	Power Supply	24 *7
Ujjwala Scheme	All Have Cylinders At Home	Funds Received	Gujarat Government, Central Govt. and District Panchayats.
Audit	Every Year	Gram Sabha	Established under Government resolution

**Table – 2: Lupkaman village, Taluka- Daskroi, District – Ahmedabad**

Parameters	Answer	Parameters	Answer
Name of Sarpanch	Smt Soniben Gobarji Thakore	Age	65 years

Elected Year	2021	Term	5 years
Total Members	6 Women And 4 Men	Social Stigma	Purdah system does not exist
Voters	1700	Name Of Deputy Sarpanch	Smt. Ramilaben Bharatji Thakore
Dispensary	Not Available	Water Supply	24*7
Water Tax	Paid by Government	Emergency Service	108 available
Corona Vaccination	Vaccination Given	Men and Women	60% and 40%
Crops Grown	Jowar, Wheat, Rice, Bajra, Grass	Total Population	OBC- 50%, General - 40% SC- 10%and ST-10%
Dairy	Milk Sold to Private Dairy	Domestic Cattles	Cows and buffaloes
Defecation	No Open Defecation	Road	RCC type with interior residential blocks
School	Up to 8 <sup>th</sup> Standard	Number of Students	305
Aaganwadis and ASHA Workers	Available	Toilets	In their own homes
Bank Account	All Villagers Have.		Power Supply 24 *7
Ujjwala Scheme	All Have Cylinders at Home.	Funds Received	Taluka member, District member and MLA
Audit	Every Year	Drainage System	Underground

**Table – 3: Mahijada Village, Taluka- Daskroi, District – Ahmedabad**

Parameters	Answer	Parameters	Answer
Name of Sarpanch	Smt Amratiben Amrutbhai Thakore	Age	54 years
Elected Year	2021	Term	5 years
Total Members	5 Women and 1 Men	Social Stigma	Purdah system exist

Establishment of Village	Before 5000 Years	Corona Vaccination	Vaccination given
Voters	1700	Population	5000
Dispensary	Not Available	Water Supply	24*7
Water Tax	Sarpanch Collects Yearly	Emergency Service	108 available
Field Area	700 Bigha	Farmers	70%
Crops Grown	Wheat and Rice	Total Population	OBC- 40%, ST- 40%, General and SC- 20%.
Men and Women	60% and 40%	Domestic Cattles	Cows and buffaloes
Dairy	Milk Sold to Uttamand Private Dairy	Drainage System	Underground
Defecation	No Open Defecation	Road	60%RCC type with interior residential blocks
School	Up to 8 <sup>th</sup> Standard	Number Of Students	280
Aaganwadis and Asha Workers	Available	Toilets	In their own homes
Ration Card and Food Items Supplied	All Villagers Get Rice, Wheat, Chana Dal And Tugar Dal.	Power Supply	24 *7
Ujjwala Scheme	All Have Cylinders At Home.	Funds Received	Zillapanchayat and Taluka Panchayat
Audit	Every Year	Industry Located	Yes

**Discussion:**

The Sarpanch and members at Ambli village require a high school building and a new Panchayat building for their future. The deputy Sarpanch and members at Lupkaman village need a dispensary and ‘Gruh Udyog’ set up for their village and for their next generations. The Sarpanch and members at Mahijada village also

want a good dispensary and regular city bus service like AMTS (Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service) for proper development of their village.

### CONCLUSION

The villagers of Amla village, Lupkaman village and Mahijada village are happy under their respective leadership. The school building is old and needs renovation. Women in Lupkaman village want to do business and require proper training and guidance. These villages under Ahmedabad district are doing good work for the welfare of the people.

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There are no conflicts of interest.

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