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***Women Empowerment
through Panchayati Raj
Institutions:
A Study of Role and
Responsibilities of Women
Heads of Village Panchayats in
Gujarat***

From:

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(1) Introduction:

The rise of Indian women as Panchayat leaders is a spectacular achievement given that India has one of the least records with respect to the way it treats the female sex. Malnourished, suppressed, uneducated, violated and discriminated against Indian women have the odds stacked against them. Even though women constitute half the human resources of a nation and playing pivotal role in the overall progress of the country, women continue to be seen through traditional patriarchal roles of being wives and mothers, not as effective decision-makers in the public sphere. As the time passed by, there is considerable anecdotal evidence to suggest that reservations have made a difference. At present day we are passing through the greatest social experiment of our time. There is historic confluence of two forces, the awakening of women and the emerging commitment to local democracy. This is taking decision making power to the people at the village level including one million elected women local government representatives.

The presence of 1.05 million elected women representatives in the institutions of local governance in rural India is an extra ordinary phenomenon. India's ranking on the political empowerment of women: 21 out of 128 countries, higher than even Australia, Canada and The United States (Thematic report on the state of Panchayats 2007-08). These women not only beneficiaries of change they are the key agents of change. Their role in the society is not confined to fetch, to carry, to cook and to wash year after as a submissive slave, sold to life for nothing. This struggle for creating a new future for women encounters harsh opposition from patriarchal and feudal elements. Women who dare to contest elections are victims of manipulation, physical attack, violence and humiliation. However, when some groups and organizations had tried to encouraged women's entry in panchayats and their family members and others did not show much enthusiasm in permitting women of their family to contest. In this back drop, the constitution amendment of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) making it mandatory for one-third positions to be contested only by women, gave a legitimacy and respect to leading families motivating women to contest, taking the new position as a point of entry for the family and not only for the individual women. Introduction of panchayat raj was most important political innovations in India. It was also considered as a revolutionary step (Oommen, 2001).

The greatest feature of the New Panchayat Raj Act 1992 is the reservation of seats for women. Article 243-D says that "Not less than one-third (including women belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a panchayat". Indian state has also been providing lot of opportunities for redefining the identity of some deprived sections by way of reservation process and constitutional safeguards (Deshpande:2004, Roy: 1996, Mohanthi:1996). The one-third reservation for women in the panchayat raj institutions is based on the view of empowerment of women in all spheres like social, economical, political etc. by means of providing them the

opportunity to participate in the administration of local government. Rama Devi(2000), former governor of Karnataka state who was involved in the drafting of the 73rd constitutional amendment act is a strong supporter of reservation for women in panchayat. She says that the great social engineering of the century, providing 33% reservation for women in panchayat is positive aspect. 73rd Amendment to the constitution of India brought new life to the institution by making it compulsory for women to get adequate representation in these bodies and even 29 government departments are brought under village panchayat under 11th schedule of article 243G of 73rd Amendment to make panchayats more effective. By making regular elections to gram panchayats mandatory, these institutions have been given permanency as entities of self government with a specific role in planning for economic development and social justice for the local area. The present pattern of panchayat raj in the state is functioning under the Andhra Pradesh Panchayath Raj Act, 1994, which was enacted in the light of the 73rd constitutional amendment act 1993 and it is comprehensive legislation covering all the three tiers of panchayat raj. There are 21,807 Gram panchayats working in Andhra Pradesh out of which 7,172 women representatives (Source; Ministry of Panchayath Raj). Gram panchayat is the most important tier of the panchayat raj because it is a pillar of the panchayat raj system due to which people at grass root or villagers can develop themselves and develop leadership of the country. The utmost success of the nationwide programme depends upon effective implementation at the village level by the gram panchayats. It is democratic institution in the villages where people's representatives can express their problems of their constituency in a better way. So, it is a system of self-governance (Mohanthi: 1996: Sundaram:1997)

Almost two decades into the enactment of the amendment, for the obvious reasons there is reportedly growing interest in the local governance on women as representatives. This essentially brings the concept of measurement of performance through which one can ascertain whether public resources have been utilised to derive maximum benefit. Hence, local bodies should be held accountable for discharging their regulatory and developmental responsibilities in a fair manner and strictly in accordance with the spirit of rule of law. Several factors that variant the nature of performance associated with are inequality, local power relations, gender differentials and caste-based divisions. A global assessment of women in politics arrived at three conclusions. "Firstly women choose issues of importance to themselves using a variety of meanings in different cultural contexts. Secondly, no issues are tied solely to one political context and a condition and thirdly the political problems, facing women cluster into four topics: personal safety, security and autonomy, reproductive rights and maternal and child health problems, equalizing access to public, communal and market resources for problem solving and empowerment, and remaking the political and legal rules of the game" (Sharma, 1998). Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) also found that an increase in the female participation in politics in Indian villages resulted in a large increase in expenditures such as public investments to provide clean water. The paradigm

of success of local governance performance has been a function of many factors in which rural leadership is of paramount importance. Thus one of the advantages of the panchayat system is that it provides an opportunity to the local leaders to move forward on the leadership scale. It is in fact a training ground for leadership aspirants. The rise of women's leadership in male dominated politics at the grass root level is a significant development through women reservation. In the coming years these new leaders are going to play a major role in shaping the panchayats. It is through this leadership all the developmental works at the local level are to be carried out. These leaders will try to engineer profound social and economical improvements by injecting new ideas, innovations, norms and values. Political development and the growth of these democratic institutions to a large extent depend on the quality of local leadership, its socio-economic background and style of functioning. Therefore it is important to study grass root women sarpanch leaders who have acquired power through democratically elected bodies and are going to be actively involved in eliciting people's cooperation in the implementation of the programmes and plans relating to socio economic development of these rural areas.

(2) Statement of Research Problem:

As we approach 21st century Indian polity has been striving for establishing democratic goals through modernizing its political and administrative institutions. With a change in development paradigms, the focus of development planning has shifted to participatory development with social justice and equity. It called for decentralized administration ensuring people's participation in decision making and giving priorities to their local needs. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992 made the provision for ensuring local self governance through empowering local bodies. Thus, the units of the local self governments were given statutory status and state governments were given the mandatory provisions for establishing three tiers of local governments both in rural and urban areas. Importantly, the local bodies have become the units of the governments to have a share in decision making and active participation in development process for social-economic development of the region. The constitution of 74th Amendment Act, 1992, has marked the beginning of a historical reform to decentralize power at the grass root level in urban areas of the country. This act has provided a constitutional form to the structure and mandate of municipalities to enable them to function as an effective democratic institution of local self government. One of its important objectives is to promote people's participation in planning, provision and delivery of civic services. It introduced some fundamental changes in the system of municipal governance with a new structure, additional devolution of functions, planning responsibilities, new system of fiscal transfers and empowerment of women and the weaker sections of the society.

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(4) Implications of Study:

Women's political participation has been considered a major measure of women's empowerment. Gender equality and gender equity are emerging as major challenges in the recent times. Women are considered extremely pivotal in the process of change in the rural areas. Women's participation in Panchayats has provided them opportunities in the decision making process. It has proved to be the most effective instrument in bringing about change in their way of life in terms of economic well being and adoption of new technology. Their entry into Panchayati Raj Institutions, both as members as well as heads of Panchayats, has pushed them into the policy making and implementation process in a big way. Their problems are manifold which include proxy attendance in meetings, role conflicts as they face grievances of family, society and governments, social barriers, male dominance in decision making, lack of knowledge, information and educational backwardness, etc. Thus, it is imperative to study the problems and challenges of women representatives in PRIs in Gujarat.

(5) Survey of Literature

The concept of role assumed a key in the field of Economics, Sociology, Social Psychology and Anthropology. Many definitions of the term role have

been presented in the social science literature, representing different disciplines, and different points of view within a single discipline and in some cases, different formulations of individual author.

(6) Objectives of the Study:

- To review policies, programmes and schemes for the empowerment of women in India and particularly in Gujarat ;
- To examine the profile and status of women representatives in PRIs in Gujarat ;
- To study the performance of roles and responsibilities of women in PRIs in Gujarat;
- To examine the problems and challenges of women in Panchayati Raj in Gujarat;
- To suggest policy measures for effective and efficient functioning and performance of the PRIs and empowerment of women.

(7) Universe of Study

The universe of the present study is the elected women in the State of Gujarat in west Region of India. The universe has been selected for the reason the researcher is well conversant of the conditions of women in the area. The researcher has relatively easy access and mature understanding with regards to language, socio-economic, and management and non-domestic aspects of the region.

(8) Statistical Design:

A multi stage stratified random sample method will be applied for the selection of the sample of the study. We propose to select backward and forward districts for field survey. ***Tapi, Anand, Junagadh, Ahmadabad, Bhavnagar, Gir Somnath, Panchmahal, Dang, Dwarka, and Rajkot Total 10 District survey out 35 district each district 20 respondent in my survey total 200 respondent survey in Gujarat.***

I select **200** women representatives randomly from village Panchayats. Only Heads of Village Panchayats will be randomly selected for field survey. The field survey will be conducted with the help of structured interview schedules. We propose to develop a set of interview schedules for the interview of women representatives and officials of PRIs. The research tools will be developed keeping in view the relevant research points, questions and scales of view perception pertaining to socio cultural and economic profile of respondents, political participation , decentralized governance, role conflicts, women's role and responsibilities in PRIS etc.

(9) Tabulation Arrangements:

The filled in interview schedules will be thoroughly checked, edited and processed in SPSS.19 software use for the analysis. Inferences, results and conclusions will be drawn out from the analysis of data. The data in tabular form will be analyzed, interpreted and discussed in the respective chapters. The policy recommendations will be based on the analysis of research findings and critical appreciation of pertinent literature.

Gender Equality and Empowerment

At the turn of 19th century, industrial revolution brought about radical changes in societies the world over, particularly in the societies which were rooted in the agriculture. One of the radical changes was the removal of manufacture from the households to the factories and shops. The work done at home offered lifelong educational, socialization, communication and residential benefits to the family members. It kept the unemployment and crime rate low. The industrial revolution took away this responsibility from women, brought about a rural urban dichotomy particular in aggregations society and created demand for some other education agent, outside homes. It resulted in greater segregation and discrimination within all sectors, a majority of women lacking productive and technical skills, science and technology, and extension and training programmes provided primarily to men as women are conceived only as consumers of the industrial revolution (Dhawan, 1995). At the turn of 19th century, communication revolution, which is technology intensive, has brought about another radical transformation again at the home front. Globalization and economic liberalization followed by structural adjustment programmes forced women to involve in economic activities as more salaries are needed just to maintain a house (Dhawan & Singh, 1991).

In India, the plight of women is no better than that of women in other developing countries. Despite the honour and reverence accorded to them as deities in religion and mythology and tribute paid to them as personified in historical monuments, the ground realities have a very different tale to tell. In a patriarchal society like India, there exists the unfounded belief that man is the bread winner of the family. Consequently, the male child gets the best of the limited facilities and resources of the family. The girl child runs the risk of being aborted through the misuse of modern technology of amniocentesis, she is deprived of school education because she has to take care of siblings at home and since she is to be married off soon, investment in her education is considered generally a liability. Despite the fact that women are massively involved in agriculture, food production and the like, their work remains unrecognized. Their activities as producers are not reflected in statistics thus making their contribution invisible. Culturally, in an effort to uphold cultural heritage, the past is

glamourized and with it, the trend to equality of women enhancement of their role in development gets inhibited (Pinto, M. 1995).

Women constitute half of the segment of population in India and cannot be afforded to be kept out of the mainstream. Secondly, women are vital and productive workers in India's national economy, and make 1/3rd of the labour force. Thirdly, the poorer the family, the greater is the dependence on women's economic productivity. Fourthly, there is a significant gap between women's potential and actual productivity. Therefore, women will gain proportionally more if investment allocation and development efforts are shifted in their favour. Fifthly, women's earnings have a positive correlation with children's health, nutritional levels and education (Singh and Singh, 2004).

The current wave of globalization has greatly improved, in some respects, the lives of women worldwide, particularly in the developing country like India. Globalization offers women unprecedented opportunities but equally new and unique challenges. Globalization plays a definite role in increasing opportunities for women in the workforce. The modern development of technology offers the possibilities for women to communicate more directly through networking both within and across countries. However, women remain disadvantaged in many areas of their lives, including education, employment, health and rights. In order to create violence and exploitation free environment and to empower women, policy support both from international and national agencies has provided with enforcement of legal provisions, acts and budgetary allocation for schemes and programmes. Ever since, introduction of globalization in 1990s, a few efforts have been made to assess the impact of globalization on women however, there is paucity of empirical research and data on the subject. Most of the studies are concentrating either on empowerment of women or feminist discourse in the context of globalization.

There are some important approaches of women development given below:

- The welfare approach- until the early 1970s developed policies was directed at women only in the context of their roles as wives and mothers, with a focus on mother and child health and on reducing fertility. It was estimated that the benefits of macroeconomic strategies for growth would automatically trickle down to the poor, and that poor women would benefit as the economic position of their husband improved.
- The WID approach – the rise of women movement in Western Europe and North America, the 1975 UN International year for Women & International Women's Decade [1976-1985] led to the establishment of women ministries in many countries and the institutionalization of Women in Development [WID] policies in

governments, donor agencies and NGOs. The aim of the WID was to integrate women into economic development by focusing on income generation projects for women.

- Gender and Development [GAD] this approach originated in academic criticism starting in the mid 1970's in the UK. Based on the concept of gender relations [the socially constructed pattern of relations between men and women] they analyzed how development reshapes these power relations. Drawing on feminist political activism, gender analysts explicitly see women as an agent of change.
- Women and Development [WAD] at the 1975 UN Women's World Conference in Mexico City the feminist approaches of predominantly white women from the north aimed at gender equality were rejected by many women in the South who argued that the development model itself lacked the perspective of developing countries. They saw overcoming poverty and the effects of colonialism as more important than equality.
- The efficiency approach - the strategy under this approach was to argue that, in the context of structural adjustment programmes [SAPs], gender analysis made good economic sense. It was recognized the understanding men and women, roles and responsibilities as part of the planning of development interventions improved project effectiveness.
- The empowerment approach in the 1980s, empowerment was regarded as a weapon for the weak, best wielded through grassroots and participatory activities. However, empowerment has many meanings and by mid 1990,s some mainstream development agencies has begun to adopt the term (Jane, 2002).
- Gender and the Environment [GED] this approach was based on eco feminist views, especially those of Vandana Shiva, which made an essentialist link between women and the environment and encouraged environmental programmes to focus on women's roles (Shiva, Vandana).
- Mainstreaming gender equality; the term 'gender mainstreaming' came into wide spread use with the adoption of the Platform for Action at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing. The 189 governments represented in Beijing unanimously affirmed that the advancement of women and the achievement of equality with men are matters of fundamental human rights and therefore a prerequisite for social justice. Mainstreaming gender equality tries to ensure that women's as well as men, concern and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all projects so that gender inequality is not perpetuated. It attempts to overcome the common problem of

‘policy evaporation’s the implementation and impact of development projects fails to reflect policy commitments (Helan, 2001).

- (ii) Women’s development has come a long way from the earlier welfare orientation. In the welfare approach, women were taken as vulnerable sections of the population, whose situation could be ameliorated through the provision of support services like health, nutrition and child care. Women’s development has been looked at variously from perspectives that have followed the welfare approach. The present approach of empowerment looks at unequal gender and power relations and use conscientisation, mobilization, solidarity and collective action as the solution (Chart-1).

Chart: 1 Different Perspectives to Women’s Development

<i>Type of Project goal</i>	<i>Concept</i>		<i>Type of developmental interventions</i>
	<i>Concept of the problem</i>	<i>Concept of the solution</i>	
Welfare	Women’s poverty, women’s special needs, women as a vulnerable groups, women’s lower socio-economic status	Provision of support services of health, nutrition, child care	Build maternity clinics, health clinics, immunization, health education, nutrition education
Economic self-reliance	Women as under-employed, unproductive, dependent, lacking in productive skills	Promote self reliance and inter-dependence, provide productive skills, encourage women’s productive enterprises	Income generating projects for women, women’s clubs, soap making, school uniform making etc.
Efficiency	Women as previously overlooked resource in development planning, women as under developed human capital	Identify actual productive roles of women, support women with skills, training and improved technology, invest in previously over looked resource	Integration of women in development planning, mainstreaming of women’s development, extension advice for women farmers, appropriate technology for women, increase women’s access to factors of production
Equality	Structure of inequality, discrimination against women in schooling, credit, access to land	Equality of opportunities for women in schooling, access to factors of production	Affirmative action to promote equal opportunity, revise development planning so that women are equal partners and beneficiaries in development process.
Empowerment	Unequal gender power relations, the patriarchy, patriarchal resistance	Conscientisation, mobilization, solidarity, collective action	Grass roots projects, support for women’s collective action, project concerned with democratization and political action

- (iii) **Source:** UNICEF, based on Moser, in ICECD, Making Development Gender Sensitive, a Guide for Trainers, Ahmadabad, ICECD.

The following target has been enclosed to attain gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls (U N. Women, 2015):

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls at all

places;

- To abolish all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual abuse and other types of exploitation;
- Eliminate all harmful traditional practices, such as child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation;
- Value the unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies/schemes and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family;
- To ensure that women practice full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public realms of life;
- To assure Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

86) Representation of Women in Lower House of Indian Parliament

87)

Lok Sabha	Total Number of Seats (Election Held)	Number of Women Members Who Won	Percentage of the Total
First (1952)	489	22	4.4
Second (1957)	494	27	5.4
Third (1962)	494	34	6.7
Fourth (1967)	523	31	5.9
Fifth (1971)	521	22	4.2
Sixth (1977)	544	19	3.4
Seventh (1980)	544	28	5.1
Eighth (1984)	544	44	8.1
Ninth (1989)	529	28	5.3
Tenth (1991)	509	36	7.0
Eleventh (1996)	541	40*	7.4
Twelfth (1998)	545	44*	8.0
Thirteenth (1999)	543	48*	8.8
Fourteenth (2004)	543	45*	8.1
Fifteenth (2009)	543	59	10.9
Sixteenth (2014)	543	62	11.0
Seventieth (2019)	543	78	14.4

* Including one nominated member.

Source: National Election Study, CSDS Data Unit, Delhi.

Role of Women in local Governance Policy Role

Formulate development policies, prepare town development plans, take decisions regarding the integration of spatial development planning with economic development planning, lay down broad parameters for the future growth of the towns, mobilize resources to undertake both obligatory and discretionary functions, undertake measures for assisting the weaker sections, etc.

Development Role

Formulation, implementation and monitoring of development plans, including those for the weaker sections, women, etc. is their responsibility. Both national and state governments have articulated a number of development programmes. Formulation of city action plans under these schemes and ensuring their proper and effective implementation is a part of their development role. They have also to mobilize their share of the resources, to implement various plans and programmes wherever necessary.

Political Role

As peoples' representatives, the elected representatives are to be in constant touch with their constituents to reflect their aspirations, needs and perspectives in the articulation of town's development policies and plans. They are the links between the electors and the local body. Apart from this, as representatives of political parties they also have to undertake political activities. Sarpanches, Chairpersons and Members are constantly approached by their constituents with complaints or grievances relating to the functioning of panchayats. As people's responsibilities, they have to attend to their day-to-day problems and continuously establish rapport with the community.

Administrative Role

Supervising the functions of municipal officials in the implementation of development plans, monitoring their progress, ensuring the proper implementation of municipal laws and regulations, administrative coordination and convergence within the municipality and with external agencies, liaisoning with non-governmental organizations, resolutions of conflicts in the management of municipal affairs between the groups and communities, effective utilization of resources both internal and external, etc. are some of their administrative roles. The Sarpanches and Chairpersons, who are directly elected and have a term co-terminus with that of the council, will tend to have more of these responsibilities.

In particular, women can play a purposive role as heads and members of councilors Panchayats (Prasad 2014):

- Ensuring access to basic services like water and sanitation and to provide higher allocation to these services. Enhancing the access of women to economic resources by strengthening linkages with banks

and other financial institutions and encouraging innovative savings, thrift and lending practices.

- Ensuring access to education to all with a view to eradicate illiteracy, particularly among women and children.
- Improving access to women to vocational and technical training for skill formation and development.
- Increasing access to quality health care, particularly preventive and primitive health care, provision of information about factors which increase risks to women's health.
- Initiating measures for the prevention of violence against women, raising awareness among women on the issues of violence against women and organizing support to community-based organizations working in this field.
- Promoting women's economic right including access to employment and appropriate working conditions and strengthening women's economic capacity through skill development, training, self-employment and establishment of market and trade networks.
- Ensuring full participation of women at all levels of decision-making concerning the well-being of the society, particularly those concerning women, children and disadvantaged people.
- Preparing women to leadership positions, organizing legal and administrative literacy programmes to educate women on various aspects of their rights.
- Involving women's groups in environmental protection and up-gradation; and
- Protecting the rights of the children, particularly those of the girl child.

MAHILA SARPANCH PERSONAL & FAMILY INFORMATION:

- Age of respondent district wise all district most of respondents were found belonging age group highest number of female sarpanches is found in the age group of 41 to 45 years, 34.5%, then the proportion between 30 to 40 age group is 20 percent. Gujarat has the highest proportion of young women.
- Marital Status of Women Sarpanch 94% women sarpanch is married only 6% women are unmarried.
- Women Sarpanch Cast. More than half of the respondents were from General category (60%). OBCs while about 28 percent respondents in Gujarat were Scheduled Caste in Gujarat only 4.5 % and Scheduled Tribes are 7.5 % in Gujarat.
- How many Children in your family Total 97 family (48.5%) only 2 children.
- Education Status of Women Sarpanch 1st Children Gujarat 1st children highest education 27.0% in primary education.

- Education Status of Women Sarpanch 2nd Children Gujarat 2nd children total out of 200 women sarpanch have baby (under 5 years) 48 (24 %)
- Education Status of Women Sarpanch 3rd Children 151 women sarpanch has 3rd children 75.5 %.
- Education Status of Women Sarpanch 4th Children 4.8 in only 1 0.5% and 199 women sarpanch have no 4th children in 99.5%.
- Women sarpanch children who type institutions study 80 family children study in Government institutions 40.0%.
- Type of family of respondents More than 3/4th respondents were from joint families. This was found more pronouncing in Gujarat 74.5 %
- Annually women sarpanch income from different sources is Less than half (48. 5%) of the respondents reported that their Annual income is 10001 To 20000.
- Annually of total family members income from different sources is More than half 64.5 % of the respondents reported that their Annual income is 500001 To 600000

MAHILA SARPANCH- POLITICAL AFFILIATION AND PROCESSES:

- Women sarpanch respond that 70% women interested in party politics.
- Women sarpanch interested in party politics respondent say to yes to which party affiliation 53% women sarpanch affiliation in BJP.
- Women sarpanch interested in party politics are which type interested in party show in 40 % women sarpanch active involvement in party politics.
- Ask women sarpanch do the political parties participate in the Panchayat Election? 48.5% women sarpanch says yes.
- Political party supports a woman sarpanch in a panchayat election? Somehow has the highest percentage of 55.5 %, with 111 women sarpanch said **that to some extent**.
- The election of women sarpanch, the state/ national issue was seen, in which 67 % of the women said yes.
- Asked the women sarpanch if you give active support in the election of MLA MP, 52 % of women sarpanch refused (NO)
- Whether you are going for campaigning in state and parliamentary elections, 61.5% of women sarpanch said NO.

ROLE OF PANCHAYAT :

- Are you satisfied with the role of women sarpanch in which 57 % women sarpanch said that they are not satisfied with this role while 43 % women said that they are satisfied with this role. In Gujarat, the reason for not being satisfied as a

woman sarpanch is that the work as a sarpanch is done by our husbands. We have nothing to do in the work as a sarpanch so we are not satisfied with this work.

- Do you think grants in aid given by the government to your panchayat are sufficient 59.5% women sarpanch said that Yes.
 - Do the Panchayati Raj institutions play important role in rural development programmes 70.5 % women sarpanch said that Yes.
 - Do you think the training camps at the village/group of villages are required to educate the rural masses in relation to rural development programmes 80.0 % women sarpanch said that Yes.
 - Do the Panchayat leaders give due regard to public opinion, 44.5 % women sarpanch said that Yes.
 - The poor performance of panchayat is due to insufficient funds 71.5 % women sarpanch said that Yes.
 - Do you think grants in-aid should not be given for specific schemes 52.% Yes.
-
- Do you think there is positive control of Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad over Panchayat 67 % women sarpanch says that Yes.
 - Do you think that development bureaucrats should strictly implement policies within prescribed frame work of law, rules and regulation 57% women sarpanch said that Not at All.
 - Does your Gram Panchayat constituted production, social justice and amenities sub-committees at Gram Panchayat level 45.5 percent say to yes 31.5 % say No.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN HEADS

Women sarpanch know about the schemes of rural development many schemes are put up at the village level by the Central and State Governments for the development of rural picture which are implemented by the scheme sarpanch in the rural area.

- ❖ Old Age Pension schemes 81% women sarpanch not about know Old Age Pension schemes.
- ❖ MGNREGA schemes 93% women sarpanch know MGNREGA schemes.
- ❖ District-Plan schemes 96.5% women sarpanch know about District-Plan schemes.
- ❖ 14th Finance Commission (PRI Scheme) 50%women sarpanch to say yes.
- ❖ Gujarat Rural Development Fund schemes 57 % women sarpanch to say No.
- ❖ Kuvar Bai nu Mameru scheme schemes 54.5 % women sarpanch to say No.
- ❖ Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme 72.5 % women sarpanch to say No.
- ❖ Widow pension schemes 82 % women sarpanch to say yes.
- ❖ What method you adopted to identify beneficiaries in various scheme 77.5 % women sarpanch use serves notice
- ❖ Women members attend Gramsabha meeting 87% Women members attend Gramsabha meeting.
- ❖ How to know benefiter, which method implement about all yojna regular 54.5 % know benefiter implement about all yojna regular by notice.
- ❖ Gramsabha members which method impalement about know the meeting women sarpanch said that 55% by notice.
- ❖ What method you adopted to pass any resolution 64% resolution pass in Gramsabha meeting, 33 percent by voting and only 3 percent door to door signature.

Agriculture including agriculture extension

- ✚ Your Village Preventing there land unauthorized alienation and use 97.5 % says that No.
- ✚ You are working in Recover the loan amount _ up keep of accounts and records.92.5 percent says No.
- ✚ Your Village you Development of waste lands. 90% says No.
- ✚ Your Village Distribution of improved seeds, manure and fertilizers. 90 % says No.
- ✚ **Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development**
- ✚ Your Work in Identify the sites for the Construction of minor irrigation 84.5% says No.
- ✚ Assist in development of ground water resources 71.5% say yes.
- ✚ **Social forestry and farm forestry**
- ✚ The respondents were asked that In your Village

Plantation and preservation of trees on the sides of roads and other public lands under its control. 74.5 % yes. The respondents were asked that other like a west land uses etc 84 % yes.

✚ **Rural Electrification**

✚ You work in providing and maintenance of lighting of public streets and other places. 68 % yes.

✚ **Ruler housing scheme** provided by the government at the village level in Gujarat is very rare. No attempt has been made by the village sarpanch in this regard. Respondents could not give a clear answer in this regard.

✚ The You Monitoring the scheme and submit a quarterly report to Zila Prishad/parent department 81.5 % says No.

✚ You Renovation/repairing of housing belonging to SC/ST 100% says No.

✚ The you work in Implementation of Indira Awaas Yojana 95.5 % says No.

✚ The you work in Implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (Awas) PMGY 86% No.

✚ **Drinking water facility in ruler area,**

✚ The you Development in Promotion of drinking water and rural sanitation programme 76 % says No.

✚ You Development in Construction, repairs and maintenance of drinking water wells, tanks and ponds 98% says yes.

✚ You work in Maintenance of rural water supply scheme 84.5% says yes.

✚ You work in Development in Deepening or otherwise improve any watercourse and other property 71.5 % yes.

✚ **PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN HEADS.**

✚ Do you think Panchayats should be given all powers to develop Panchayati Raj 87 % says yes.

✚ What are the reasons for poor involvement of panchayat members of the community in planning, implementation and evaluation of the developmental programmes 56.5% women sarpanch said indifferent attitude.

✚ The women in your Panchayat involved in your Panchayat's decision making process 62% say some way involved.

✚ Attitude/Behavior of male members of panchayat towards elected women Panchayat members 69.0 % says that good.

✚ As women head of panchayat, what you think more to be done to involve more women in the activities of Panchayat 83 percent says that more power be given to women Because if women are given more power than women can be more involved in decision power and other matters.

✚ *Who convene/conduct the meeting of gram panchayat and*

gram sabha in your tenure 80 percent women said that my husband convene/conduct the meeting of gram panchayat. My research project has made it very clear that in most of the women sarpanch reserves, the woman sarpanch is only nominal while all the work is done by her husband which can be seen in this table here. 20 percent women sarpanch self work of convene/conduct the meeting of gram panchayat and gram sabha.

- ✚ Did you need support of any family member while attending the meetings of gram panchayat/gram shaba 100% women sarpanch says yes.
- ✚ Do you take decisions independently with consultation to the panches in meetings of gram panchayat 52.5 percent says no.
- ✚ Whom the villagers approach directly for their problems 91.0 % says husband.
- ✚ Do you visit the village for understanding/solution of the problems/issues 72 percent says yes.
- ✚ Who took the decision to spend the money earned by you 60.5 percent says husband took the decision to spend the money earned by you.
- ✚ Do you have separate account of your earnings 92.5 percent says yes.
- ✚ Who takes the decision to spend the money earned by your husband 67.5 % says the decision to spend the money earned by husband.
- ✚ Does your opinion taken while purchasing the major household items in the home 92.5 percent says yes.
- ✚ Do you have freedom to visit market or any place outside the community 85.5 % says yes.
- ✚ Do you feel any change in the attitude of your family members after being elected as Sarpanch 76.5 percent says yes.
- ✚ Who helped you in household chores including looking after your children 34.5 % says husband.
- ✚ Do you face any violence at home by your husband/family 94% says no.
- ✚ Is there any sort of discrimination towards women-members by other members 99% says no.
- ✚ **After covid-19 all women sarpanch talk about village Situation.(By Telephone talk)**
- ✚ Any covid -19 case in your Village 66.5 % says yes.
- ✚ How many covid-19 case in your village 28 % says that more than 11 covid case, 22 percent says that 4 to 6 covid case, 12.5 percent says that 7 to 9 covid case, , 04.0 % says that 1 to 3 covid case and 33.5 % says that no any case in

this village.

- ✚ How many covid-19 case in your village If yes what action by you 44.5 percent says that Admit at Hospital, 18. % says that Home isolation, only 4. % Give Aruvedik Medicine and 33.5 % says that no any case in this village.
- ✚ Covid-19 time any lockdown in your village 71.5 % says no.
- ✚ Covid-19 time any lockdown in your village if yes how many days lockdown in your village 28.5 % says that 1 to 5 days lockdown in village, 71.5 says that NA.
- ✚ Any Death in Covid-19 40.5 % says that yes.

Suggestions:

- To increase the participation of women in political field it is necessary to wiped out all kinds of bias from the mind of patriarchal society for women and behave with equality, treat them with respect and admiration, give them equal place in society and behave with them with full of respect so that women can developed their self-respect and self-confidence. By doing the self-respect in future, many women can inspired to participate in political field.
- Elected women of Panchayati raj should aware with administrative skills, aware with the laws and by-laws of Panchayat, responsibility of their post, aware with their role and power so in these matters government should arrange training programme so they became enough capable and with self-confidence they do their job. With this efforts they can motivated and raised questions in the meetings of Panchayati raj, participate in the meeting discussion, and capable to present their point of views.
- It is necessary for the elected male members and officers of Panchayati raj should come out from their rigid belief, established equality and try to give respect so they can sustain their self-respect and actively and with efficiency, they do their job. By doing these women are not only remain as purported representatives but in real sense, they participate and perform their role actively and effectively.
- To do efforts to provide the basic rights to women to give basic education, constitutional and property rights.

- It is essential that women representative should receive positive response from the people so that they can work with more efficiency and with encouragement.
- At local governance level reservation policy is implemented for the women in same way it should be implemented or plan to do at state, national level means at Assembly and at Parliament so women became more enthusiastic to participate in politics.
- In the real sense, make the partner in decision making process and political administration, express and appreciate their work in public and arrange the function in manner of respect and honor of them so in response women can do the work with more self-confidence and political participation becomes more effective and active by them.
- To make women active in political participation political knowledge and political awareness should develop among them. It should be doing in two ways firstly, the literate village women should support illiterate women representative with care, love and support and encourage them. Secondly, for these illiterate women they should arrange programme with literate urban representative so they can receive the appropriate guidance from them.
- Women organization at rural level also plays vital role for participation of women at political level in Panchayati raj. For this government should give economic support to this N.G.O. and make women literate and aware.
- Women organization at urban areas and women leader at state level women also became active in different programme and activities.
- Elected women in Panchayati raj is doing excellent work in service for the society and organized the political system with all efficiency. Therefore, so to encourage them give their work details in print media and at television.
- Electronic and print media means in on radio, newspapers, and on televisions broadcast their news regarding literacy, awareness and print the programme related political participation make more encourage and provide the guidance to them.

- In current time, people are using social media more so to keep the videos of some women who are doing good and effective work in this field. In addition, if possible to programme some technical application because, the mobile is now using by the every one even at the remote are mobile is using as an essential object. This kind of medium shares the information easily and with low of cost. By doing these women can encourage and they do the work with full of zeal and efficiency.
- To encourage the women in political field political parties are also contributed like to make aware them by political rights, knowledge regarding administration, process of politics, arrange the training programme so that woman can gain the political knowledge and inspire to do the work in the field.
- Emphasize on the policy of education so women can educate more. Due to some social responsibilities and house hold responsibilities when the choice for making to do further education among boy and girl in the house boy is selected because of the rigid mind set of society. For this reason drop out ratio of women increase, and to stop them government should flourished some awareness among the people. If women get educated, their political participation is also increased.

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