

**RESEARCH PAPER****The Role of Female Representatives in Rural Development: A Study****Krishan Pratap Singh and S.V. Pande**

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Email: kpsinghagra78@gmail.comReceived: 21st February 2017, Revised: 20th March 2017, Accepted: 26th March 2017**ABSTRACT**

This study basically makes an attempt to study the leadership structure in Panchayati Raj System is successful to achieve its aim to provide the power in the villagers hands for socio-economic development. Rural political elites governing the local self government running through three tier Panchayati Raj System. It appears that in panchayat elections these rural political elites manipulate the rural leadership of villages. Now the panchayats have constitutional power, therefore they are not working properly because the rural political elites are much powerful than panchayats, they maneuver the process of planning for development, they work on their own theory, do not work according to the legal ethics of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Social and political elites in many areas seeking to undermine and nullify Panchayati Raj and women's participation, since they perceive it as a threat to their monopoly on power. In this study we would try to find the nexus among Rural Political Elites as they become rural political leader in three tier panchayat election.

Key words: Rural Political Elites, Socio-Economic Development, Panchayati Raj System

FEMALES IN RURAL LEADERSHIP IN INDIA

"Is there any thing better in a state than that both women and men be rendered the very best? There is not"
.....Plato

In a society with uneven distribution of resources both the access and control of any opportunity are in hands of the "Haves" but not in the hands of "have-nots". Same picture of deprivation and inequality is true between men and women. In a country like India where social orientation is based on class, caste and gender, the picture of deprivation and inequality is appalling. So long the women were not considered as a social group in their own right, rather they were either included with men or totally ignored. In British India, social reformers like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Raja Rammohon Roy, and Swami Dayananda Saraswati etc. first raised their voices for oppressed and suppressed women. Iswarchandra Vidyasagar espoused the cause of women-education and widow remarriage, Raja Rammohan Roy campaigned for the abolition of Sati and Dayananda Saraswati, resolutely opposed the child marriage. Behram Malabari and Ranade had given a new dimension to the struggle of women in India.

After the First World War 1914 Indian women joined the freedom struggle. Women's organizations at all India level began to emerge in the early twentieth century with the agendas of advocacy of women's sufferings, protest against child-marriage and reforming the personal laws. The Madras Legislature first provided women the voting rights in 1920. In 1928 Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed. In 1946, demands for equal rights and political representation by women were drafted in the Fundamental Rights of the Constitution of India by the Constituent Assembly (1946). In post-independent India, Sharda Act provided an impetus to the battle for rights of Women. The passing of the Hindu Code Bill, 1955 and the provision of equal rights for women in the Constitution of India improved the status of women. In June 1954, the first post-war all-India organization of women, the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) was formed in view of at the impending socio-political issues). In 1992, the National Women's Commission followed by the state women's commission was formed.

SAMPLING METHOD

For the present study to discuss about the sample of the study i.e, the studied areas where these hypotheses would be empirically tested at Gram Panchayat level and Block level. The study was designed and carried out according to the plan, to study the objectives. Target was to cover at least 1/3rd of the total Gram Pradhan, BDC members and Zilla Panchayat Members. Though the task was very difficult, but multi-stage cluster sampling has been followed. The sampling was done in the following stages:

1. Purposive selection of the Blocks from the District.
2. Random selection of Gram Pradhan, BDC Members, Zilla Panchayat Members
3. Participant observation and Interview also made with these three tier members.

Out of 15 Blocks of Agra districts 5 Blocks namely, Shamsabad Block, Barouli Aheer Block, Akola Block, Sainya Block, Edmadpur Block have been selected on the basis of following reasons:

1. Different types of ecological conditions have been covered,
2. Welfare measures taken up by the government differ to some extent,
3. Level of socio-economic empowerment of rural political elites and rural leaders also varies,
4. Different culture and political practice are there.
5. Different caste dominated population blocks have been covered.
6. A comparison is also possible

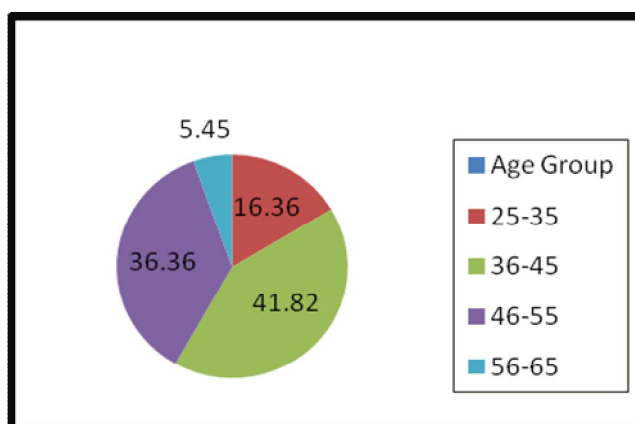
Total number of 55 female elite respondents have been selected out of 222 These. female elite respondents have been selected from Shamsabad Block, Barouli Aheer Block, Akola Block, Sainya Block, Edmadpur Block. These selected female elite respondents are Gram Pradhan, BDC Members, and Zilla Panchayat Members.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF FEMALE ELITE RESPONDENTS.

Table 1: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to Age

No.	Age Group	Response	Percentage
1	25-35	9	16.36
2	36-45	23	41.82
3	46-55	20	36.36
4	56-65	3	5.45
5	Total	55	100.00

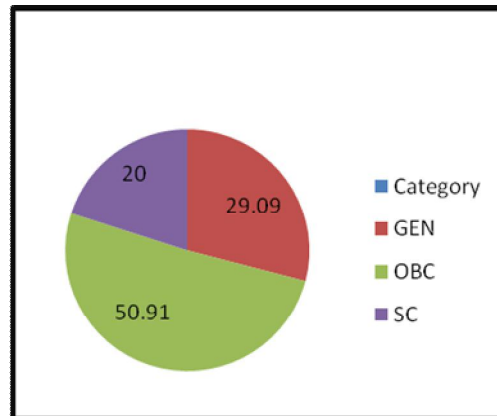
Chart 1: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to Age



From the table it is seen that in all five blocks, the female elite respondents of age group 25-35 are 16.36%, age group 36-45 are 41.82%, age group 46-55 are 36.36 %, age group 56-65 are 5.45%.

Table 2: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to caste category

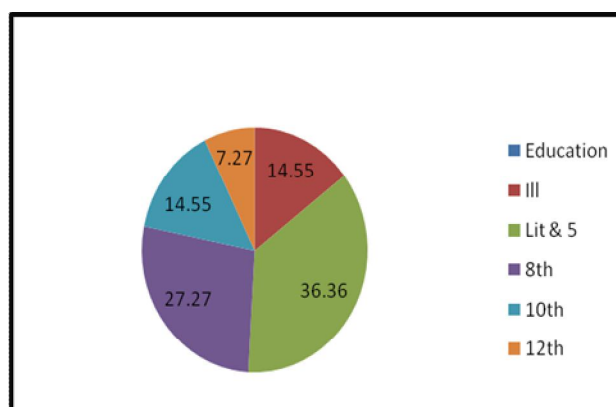
No.	Category	Response	Percentage
1	GEN	16	29.09
2	OBC	28	50.91
3	SC	11	20.00
6	Total	55	100.00

Chart 2: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to caste category

From the table it is seen that in all five blocks, the female elite respondents of Gen category are 29.09%, OBC category are 50.91%, and SC category are 20% .

Table 3: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to education

S.No	Education	Response	Percentage
1	Ill	8	14.55
2	Lit & 5	20	36.36
3	8th	15	27.27
4	10th	8	14.55
5	12th	4	7.27
6	Graduate	0	0.00
7	Post. Graduate	0	0.00
8	Total	55	100.00

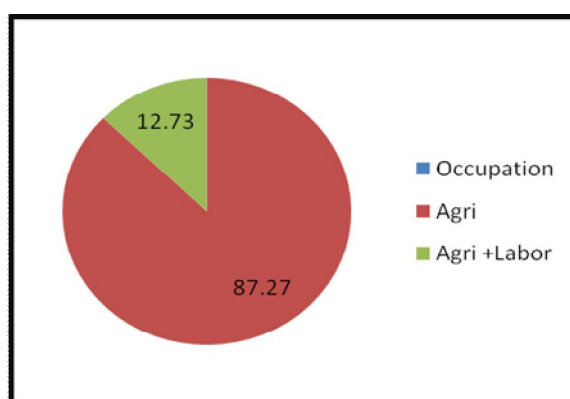
TChart 3: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to education

From the table it is seen that in all five blocks, the female elite respondents illiterate are 14.55%, Lit & 5th are 36.36%, 8th passed are 27.27%, 10th passed are 14.55%, 12th passed are 7.27%.

Table 4: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to occupation

S.No	Occupation	Response	Percentage
1	Agri	48	87.27
2	Agri +Labor	7	12.73
3	Total	55	100.00

Chart 4: Distribution of female Elite Respondents according to occupation



From the table it is seen that in all five blocks, the female elite respondents involved in agriculture occupation are 87.27% and 12.73% female elite respondents are labourer.

PARTICIPATION OF FEMALES IN PANCHAYAT ELECTION

In his study the female representatives accepted that they have participated in panchayat elections through their family member's choice. Major percentage of female representatives are belongs in-lows family mostly are the wife or daughter in lows of their family. Unfortunately no unmarried girl or daughter founded as a female representatives in panchayat.

Reservation is a reason for their participation in panchayat election. Only few percentage of female representatives participated in panchayat election without reservation for female candidates but their family belongs very sound social and financial background. The rise of female elites is on account of the reservation given to them in panchayati raj system. Female rural political elites are less conscious about their role in panchayats. female representatives was mostly the under 36 to 55 age and their literacy scale were under 5th to 8th class as a major part of respondents.

AWARENESS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS OF PANCHAYTI RAJ

Female representatives accepted that their husbands and other family members takes the decision regarding the development programs. Very few female representatives accepted that their role also in decision making in the development programs. They depend on the male members of their families. Female elites are more aware of the woman and child development programmes than of other programmes being run under panchayati raj system.

Respect by family members after election, 78.18% female elite respondents accepted that their family members respect more after elected in panchayat and 21.82% female elite respondents accepted that their family members do not respect more after elected in panchayat. According to age about their awareness of Panchayati Raj, the 25-35 age group female elite respondents are 77.78% who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 22.22% are not aware. In 36-45 age group 73.91% female elite respondents are aware of panchayati raj institution and 26.09% female elite respondents are not aware. In 46-55 age group 75.00% female elite respondents are aware of panchayati raj institution and 25.00% female elite respondents are not aware of panchayati raj

institution. In 56-65 age group 100% female elite respondents are aware of panchayati raj institution. According to category about their awareness of Panchayati Raj, the GEN female elite respondents are 75% who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 25% elite respondents are not aware of panchayati raj institution. OBC female elite respondents are 75% who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 25.00% elite respondents are not aware. 81.82% SC female elite respondents are aware of panchayati raj institution and 18.18 not aware of panchayati raj institution. According to education about their awareness of Panchayati Raj Institution, the illiterate female elite respondents are 25% who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 75% elite respondents are not aware of panchayati raj institution. Lit & 5th educated female elite respondents are 75% who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 25.00% elite respondents are not aware. 8th passed 86.67% elite respondents who are aware of panchayati raj institution and 13.33 are not aware. 10th, 12th, Graduate & Post Graduates are 100% who are aware of panchayati raj institution.

HOW FEMALE REPRESENTATIVES COMMUNICATE WITH THE VILLAGERS

In all five blocks, 05.45% female elite respondents accepted that they meet with the villagers direct, 81.82% female elite respondents meet with the villagers with their husbands, 3.64% female elite respondents accepted that they meet with the villagers with others family members and 9.09% female elite respondents accepted that they do not meet with the villagers.

SOCIAL RESPECT OF FEMALE REPRESENTATIVES BY FAMILY MEMBERS AFTER ELECTION

In all five blocks, 78.18% female elite respondents accepted that their family members respect more after elected in panchayat and 21.82 % female elite respondents accepted that their is no any change in behaviour of family members ,they are same as earlier and after elected in panchayat.

CONCLUSION

India is a predominantly rural society. The role of rural elite for rural reconstruction and development is highly significant in India. The 73rd constitutional amendment and establishment of modern panchayati raj system has strengthened the roots of democracy at the grass-root level. It has also influenced the composition and nature of rural elite in modern India. In the study it was observed that rural leadership from poor, scheduled castes and backward castes of society too, is emerging through panchayati raj system. The rise of female elites is on account of the reservation given to them in panchayati raj system. Female rural political elites are less conscious about their role in panchayats. They depend on the male members of their families. Female elites are more aware of the woman and child development programmes than of other programmes being run under panchayati raj system.

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