

Administrative Problems of Women Representatives of PRIs In SPSR Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

Panchayati Raj Institutions have been a vital platform for women's political empowerment since the 73rd (Constitution) Amendment Act, 1992. Before that, women had limited access to politics in general and rural politics in particular, as politics was the exclusive domain of men. Therefore, the Seventy-third (Constitution) Amendment Act, 1992, started a historic step to increase women's involvement in local self-governing organizations. In light of this, an effort has been made to comprehend the difficulties and barriers elected female representatives in Panchayati Raj institutions are confronting in Nellore district, AP.

Keywords: Elected Women Representatives, PRIs, Administrative Problems

1. Introduction

The introduction of women's reservation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 is a landmark step toward gender equality in India's political landscape. It mandated that one-third of all seats in panchayats be reserved for women, enabling them to participate in grassroots governance. Over the years, several states have extended it to 50%, resulting in the presence of over 1.45 million elected women representatives (EWRs) in PRIs. Panchayati Raj Institutions have been a vital platform for women's political empowerment since the 73rd (Constitution) Amendment Act, 1992. Before that, women had limited access to politics in general and rural politics in particular, as politics was the exclusive domain of men. Therefore, the Seventy-third (Constitution) Amendment Act, 1992, started a historic step to increase women's involvement in local self-governing organizations. The Act provided for a 33 percent reservation of seats for women at the PRIs, which has since been raised to 50.00 percent with the goal of empowering women. A transformation in the long-standing power structure of local institutions was finally brought about by this provision for women's representation, which resulted in an unprecedented surge of women's participation in local governance. A sizable portion of women have gained access to rural politics. Although making up nearly half of the

population, women still do not have an equal voice in our socio-political system. Even though there has been a lot of progress in the field of women's empowerment, problems still exist. In addition to limiting women's social rights and privileges, patriarchy's domination discourages women from pursuing positions of authority. They often fail to play an independent role in rural leadership. They continue to be treated by male relatives as little more than puppets. In order to achieve this, the opinions of 360 elected women members of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Nellore district have been examined. The concerns that have been examined include administrative problems.

Administrative Problems

Elected women representatives like sarpanches in the panchayats have many administrative problems like delay in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level, lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches, lack of communication media at village level, lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches, lack of any type of protection to women sarpanches, women sarpanches could not work freely, she has to work what her husband says, lack of discipline in male members at panchayat office, groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village and lack of staff in village panchayat office. All these administrative problems are presented below.

1. Delay in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level

The information on whether there are delays in sanctions and permissions for development work from upper level has been collected and furnished in the Table 1.

Table 1

Delay in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level

Sl. No.	Delay in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	278	77
2	No	88	23
Total		360	100

The table indicates that 278 respondents (77%) felt that there are delays in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level. On the contrary 88 respondents (23%) felt that there are no delays in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level. By and large, it is concluded that majority of the 278 respondents (77%) felt that there are delays in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level.

2 Lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches

The information whether the respondents have lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats has been collected and the details are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2

Lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches

Sl. No.	Lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	234	65
2	No	126	35
Total		360	100

The table portrays that 234 respondents (65%) have lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats whereas 126 respondents (35%) have administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats. By and large, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (65%) have lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats.

3 Lack of communication media at village level.

The information on whether the respondents have lack of communication media at village level has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 3.

Table 3

Lack of communication media at village level

Sl. No.	Lack of communication media in village	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	314	87
2	No	46	13
Total		360	100

The table explicitly shows that 314 respondents (87%) have no administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats and mere 46 respondents (13%) have administrative and financial power in village panchayats. It is concluded that majority of the respondents (87%) have no administrative and financial power in village panchayats.

4. Lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches

The information on whether the respondents have lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 4.

Table 4

Lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches

Sl. No.	Lack of co-operation from VLW and talati to women sarpanches	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	231	64
2	No	129	36
Total		360	100

The table presents that 234 respondents (64%) have lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches whereas 129 respondents (36%) co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches. Above all, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (64%) have lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches.

5. Lack of any type of protection to women sarpanches

The information on whether the respondents have any type of protection to women sarpanches has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 5.

Table 5

Lack of any type of protection to women sarpanches

Sl. No.	Lack of any type of protection to women sarpanches	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	197	55
2	No	163	45
Total		360	100

The table describes that 197 respondents (64%) felt that they have no protection while 163 respondents (36%) felt that they have protection. Above all, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (64%) felt that they have no protection.

6. Interference of Husband

The information on whether the respondents have to work on the lines of their husbands has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 6.

Table

Women sarpanches could not work freely

Sl. No.	Women sarpanches can't not work freely	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	159	44
2	No	191	56
Total		360	100

The table depicts that 159 respondents (44%) felt that women sarpanches could not work freely and have to work what their husbands say. On the contrary, 191 respondents (56%) felt that women sarpanches work freely and have to work what their husbands say. By and large, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (44%) felt that women sarpanches could not work freely and have to work on the lines of their husbands.

7 Lack of discipline in Male members at panchayat office

In gram Panchayat office discipline and cooperation is immensely important among the members of the staff in the office for the development of village. The information on the opinion of the respondent on whether there is lack of discipline in males members at panchayat office has been collected and the details are presented in the Table 7

Table 7

Lack of discipline in Males members at panchayat office

Sl. No.	Lack of discipline in male members at panchayat office	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	121	34
2	No	239	66
Total		360	100

The table depicts that 121 respondents (34%) felt that there is lack of discipline in males members at panchayat office. On the contrary, 239 respondents (66%) felt that there is discipline in males members at panchayat office. By and large, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (66%) felt that there is discipline in males members at panchayat office/

8 Groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village

In political system groupism, selfism and egos are natural. Thus most of the village panchayats are not developing. The information on whether groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 8

Table 8

Groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village

Sl. No.	Groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	144	40
2	No	216	60
Total		360	100

The table limpidly presents that 216 respondents (60 %) opined that the groupism in gram sabha did not stop the development of village. On the contrary, 144 respondents (40 %) opined that the groupism in gram sabha stopped the development of village. By and large, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (60 %) opined that the groupism in gram sabha did not stop the development of village.

9 Lack of staff in village panchayat office

Panchayats function basing on their staff in the office. The information on the opinion of the respondents have sufficient staff or lack of staff in village panchayat office has been elicited and the details are furnished in the Table 9.

Table 9
Lack of staff in village panchayat office

Sl. No.	Lack of staff in village panchayat office	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1	Yes	287	80
2	No	73	20
Total		360	100

The table presents that 287 respondents (80 %) opined that there is lack of staff in village panchayat office while 73 respondents (20%) opined that there is no dearth of staff in village panchayat office. Above all, it is concluded that majority of the respondents (80 %) opined that there is lack of staff in village panchayat office

Conclusion

When panchayat members have made significant strides in political representation but systemic barriers continue to hold them back. Majority of the 278 respondents (77%) felt that there are delays in sanctions and permission for development work from upper level, (65%) have lack of administrative and financial power to women sarpanches in village panchayats, (87%) have no administrative and financial power in village panchayats, (64%) have lack of co-operation from VLW and talari to women sarpanches and no protection. Moreover, (44%) felt that women sarpanches could not work freely and have to work on the lines of their husbands, (66%) felt that there is discipline in males members at panchayat officem, (60 %) opined that the groupism in gram sabha did not stop the development of village and 80 % opined that there is lack of staff in village panchayat office. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that includes capacity building, legal reforms, gender sensitization, and community support. By empowering women representatives and ensuring their full participation in local governance, India can move closer to achieving gender equality and inclusive development.

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