

The Emergence of Women Power in Local Self Government in Karnataka with Special Reference to Hassan District

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ABSTRACT: The women in India remain weak and vulnerable in all spheres of human life due to absence of social activism and political will. The raising social status of women, increasing educational opportunities, obtaining employment opportunities, sharing economic resources, raising of standard of living and active participation of women in governance basically constitute the process of 'empowerment of women'. The implementation of political reservation for women has brought about a new era of the emergence of women power in local self government across the country. This aspect has been evaluated in the present study with special reference to Hassan district of Karnataka state.

KEYWORDS: Women political Empowerment, Reservation of seats in local self governments (PRIs), Various women empowerment programmes.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Local self governance is an effective method of governing through which the national policy is administered at grass root level. The local self government known as Panchayat Raj institutions (PRIs) under the control of state governments in the rural areas a three tier structure has been adopted. They are, Grama panchayat consisting of village or group of villages, taluk panchayat for every taluk and Zilla Panchayat for every district. In the Urban areas there are municipal bodies called city corporations i.e. Town Panchayats. There are also municipal councils for smaller urban areas and municipal corporations for larger urban areas based on the size of the population.

These agencies at rural and urban levels discharge the function of administration. Participation of women in these agencies in adequate their participation in politics still a distant dream. The study of women participation in rural and urban local self governments is very important. It is also necessary to study the lack of space for participation in political bodies. Political participation is a distant dream causes for the less participation in decision making bodies, the neglect of their issues and experiences in policy making process.

The directive principles of state policies enshrined in the democratic constitution of India inform all the sublime ideals of democracy, including the principles of democratic decentralization. Politics is usually considered as a male preserve. The fact remains that notwithstanding the progress made in other fields of Human endeavor the involvement of women in politics has been consistently minimal. Women's participation in politics is closely related to their level of empowerment. The political awareness and involvement of women can be considered has a yard stick of their empowerment. Women empowerment is conditioned by the socio-economic and religio-cultural ambience. It could be achieved with or without governmental assistance and support. However in the Indian context Women Empowerment remained a distant dream for a good five decades till the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment acts, began to be implemented. The passage of the above acts is a landmark in the march of women towards the ultimate goal of self-fulfillment.

This study seeks to make an investigation into how much women in Karnataka could make use of the opportunities which the act provided and how much it helped them empower themselves. The hallmark of the Karnataka society is its diversity and socio-economic imbalances. The indicator of the feudal past still persist in the society. Women who constitute more than fifty percent of the state's population are a marginalized despite half a century of independence. In literacy as well as health care, Karnataka women are far ahead. However their presence in the political area, even at the grass roots level was not at all clear until empowerment was as it were, thrust upon them by the 73rd Constitutional amendment Act. The Act made the involvement and participation of women in politics mandatory. 33% of the total seats and posts in the three-tier Panchayat Raj system are now been filled by women. This is the background which prompted the identification of this topic for

study and to pay maximum effort to go through into the different dimensions of women democracy and women's political participation and involvement in PRI's.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The past studies examined the dimensions, factors and institutions concerning the empowerment of women in India and abroad. The review of literature clearly emphasizes that Panchayat Raj Institutions are rendering fruitful services to women in modern times. Prominent recent studies which are conducted by various scholars on women in Panchayat Raj Institutions include – Sharma (1992), Mathew (1994), Mohanty (1995), Gowda et. al. (1996), Arun (1996), Krishna (1997), Aiyer (1997), Panda (1997), Gowda (1998), Buch (1999), Singh (2000), Nirmala (2001), Satapathy (2002), Sharma (2003), Dhaka and Sunita (2004), Ambedkar and Nagendra (2005), Cornelio (2005), Gill (2006), Mahanta and Sinha (2007), Samad (2007), Dak and Purohit (2008), Mangubhai et. al (2009), Pattanaik (2010), Choudhury and Debnath (2011), Kumar (2012), Mandal (2013), Singh (2014), Samria (2015), Billava and Nayak (2016), Garg (2016) and Ara (2017). Various scholars have also noted that Panchayat Raj Institutions have contributed significantly to women's social, economic and political inclusion and development across the country. There is not even a single study conducted by any researcher in Karnataka State on the role of local self government bodies in the emergence of women power.

Significance of the Study

There is need to define areas in respect of which these institutions would bring about the empowerment of women by upgrading their administrative and developmental competence and social commitment. The emergence of women power in local self government in Karnataka state has brought about several issues and challenges. Thus, women are required to play a pivotal role in the process of management of Panchayat Raj institutions in order to make them more women friendly, justice friendly, accountable, competitive and competent in this age of competitiveness. The emergence of women power in the Panchayat Raj institutions with special reference to Karnataka State has not been adequately evaluated by the researchers. There are good numbers of anthropological, sociological, political and cultural investigations which are conducted with reference to the empowerment of women in India. The major deficiency observed in their works is lack of emphasis on the intervention of Panchayat Raj institutions for the empowerment of women in Karnataka state. Hence, the problem "The Emergence of Women Power in Local Self Government in Karnataka with Special Reference to Hassan District" has been chosen for the present study.

Statement of the Problem

The emergence of women power in local self government organizations in Karnataka state with special reference to Hassan district was primarily considered in the study because:

- Panchayat Raj Institutions have come into existence to facilitate the inclusive development of women and weaker sections.
- The central and state governments have provided political power and financial resources to the PRIs to undertake grassroots level development activities.
- The PRIs have also evolved specific developmental strategies for the empowerment of women in Karnataka State.
- The PRIs have become prominent means of social, economic, political and cultural empowerment of women and weaker sections in Karnataka state.
- In the new millennium, command over political power and developmental resources is an unmistakable index of empowerment of women.
- Access to political power and financial resources among the women in PRIs becomes highly relevant since the state moves towards gender justice, equity and empowerment of women.
- Modern PRIs have a social responsibility of promoting the empowerment of women as a matter of constitutional obligation.

Objectives of the Study

With the emergence of women power in local self government in Karnataka with special reference to Hassan district, the research proposes to:

1. Study the role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the empowerment of women,
2. Document the development of Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka state.
3. Analyze the women power in Panchayat Raj Institutions of Hassan District
4. Assess the political representation of women in PRIs of Hassan district.
5. Examine the leadership development of women in PRIs of Hassan district.
6. Evaluate women the emergence of women power in the local –self government institutions of Hassan district.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Scholars have examined the role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the empowerment of women in India. Subha and Bhargava (2004:273) examined the political empowerment of women in the context of Panchayat Raj in Karnataka state. The scholars found that Panchayat Raj had provided a common forum for social, economic, political and legal advancement of rural women. The study revealed that more had entered the local bodies and gained necessary power to achieve multi-faceted progress. The present study was conducted on the basis of the conceptual framework of Subha and Bhargava (2004:273) who have made notable contributions for the understanding of the emergence of women power in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study approaches the problem through a systematic survey method which is very popular in the field of Social Science research including Economics and Co-operation. The major aim of the present study was to understand the role of local self government bodies in the empowerment of women with special reference to Hassan district. The present study was planned and conducted in three stages. In the first study, a pilot study was conducted with a view to ensure preliminary evaluation of the tools and procedures to be finally employed. In the second stage, primary data were collected from the central and state government agencies concerning rural development and urban development. In the third stage, the validity and reliability of the tools, procedures, primary data and statistical tests were examined systematically in consultation with experts in the subjects of Political Science and Public Administration. Primary data were collected from about 480 respondents through structured, standardized and pre-tested interview schedules. The interview and questionnaire methods were adopted to collect primary data from the women elected respondents who were associated with both urban and rural local self government bodies. Before administering the questionnaire to the final respondents of the study, a pre-test was conducted in Mysore city. The contents of the questionnaire were subjected to suitable changes, modification and simplification to avoid ambiguity.

Besides survey methods, secondary source of literature (census reports, departmental annual reports, special publications, books, theses, journal articles and other publications related to the research topic) were also used as other methods to collect the precise information about the demographic features and study related aspects. The entire study was exploratory in nature. Therefore, research methods were designed on the basis of flexibility, adaptability and ground realities.

Distribution of Study Areas and Sample

Sl.No.	Name of the Taluk	Number of Respondents
1	Alur	56
2	Arakalagud	58
3	Belur	60
4	Hassan	68
5	Holenarasipura	62
6	Channarayapatna	60
7	Sakleshapura	58
8	Arasikere	58
	Total	480

IV. DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis

The frequencies processors, cross tabs procedure, p-value and Chi-Square tests were utilized for the purpose of statistical analysis. The simple percentages and graphical representation were also used for this purpose.

Perception about Emergence of Women Power

- A majority of the respondents (64.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had ensured political empowerment of women in India.
- All the respondents (100%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had facilitated 33% of reservation to women in India.
- A majority of the respondents (78.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had ensured demonstration of political ability of women in India.
- A majority of the respondents (82.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled women to participate actively in the decision making process.

- A majority of the respondents (53.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled women to participate actively in the implementation of development programmes at grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (81.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled women to develop capacity at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (78.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had integrated women into the political system at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (54.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women to develop infrastructural facilities at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (78.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women to gain equal opportunities in socio-economic development processes at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (57.5%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not transformed the lives of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (53.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had changed the dynamics of empowerment of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (55.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had promoted gender responsive governance at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (51.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women to play an active role in sustainable development.
- A majority of the respondents (75.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enhanced the capacities of women representatives at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (57.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women to emerge as a potential force at the grassroots level.

Emergence of Women Power and Empowerment

- A majority of the respondents (80.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent gender based discrimination at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (69.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent sexual atrocities at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (54.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent social evils like dowry system at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (87.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent social evils like superstitions at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (56.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to prevent social evils like child marriage at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (53.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent social evils like child labour at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (58.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent social evils like human trafficking at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (70.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to prevent exploitation of women by the dominant powers at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (67.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to judicious wage for the women workers at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (65.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to achieve the goals of social modernization and mobilization of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (65.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement constitutional provisions at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (62.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement women development programmes at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (60.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to provide basic civic amenities to women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (61.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to work for the effective implementation of rural employment programmes at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (52.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to implement land ownership programme for the landless people at the grassroots level.

- A majority of the respondents (55.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement the health and family welfare programmes at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (57.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of farmer's welfare and development at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (53.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement 'Sthree Shakti' programme for the empowerment of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (59.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement 'Manaswini' programme for the welfare of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (71.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement 'Yasawini' programme for the welfare and progress of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (79.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement 'Annabhagya' programme for the food and nutrition of the people at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (70.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement 'Nemmadi' programme for the health and progress of the people at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (73.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement scholarship programme to the students of weaker sections at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (72.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to implement skill development programme for women and weaker sections at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (71.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to implement entrepreneurship development programme for women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (60.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to implement self-employment programmes for women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (53.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to implement leadership development programme for women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (73.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to protect human rights at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (68.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of inclusive development of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (73.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of sustainable development of women at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (70.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to earn respect from the family and society.
- A majority of the respondents (69.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to gain better self confidence.
- A majority of the respondents (71.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to improve their living condition.
- A majority of the respondents (56.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to improve their decision making power.
- A majority of the respondents (70.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to improve their social mobility and networking.
- A majority of the respondents (75.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to gain economic independence. There
- A majority of the respondents (66.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- A majority of the respondents (60.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to involve in community service.

- A majority of the respondents (63.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had not enabled the women elected representatives to compete in the elections confidently.
- A majority of the respondents (61.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enabled the women elected representatives to increase their problem solving power.

Testing of Hypotheses

H1: The elected women representatives have cultivated a positive attitude towards local – self government bodies.

The data analysis furnished in the thesis indicates that the elected women representatives have cultivated a positive attitude towards local – self government bodies. Hence, the above hypothesis stands proved according to the data analysis.

H2: The elected women representatives have experienced the trend of emergence of women power in the local – self government bodies.

The data analysis furnished in the thesis reveals that the elected women representatives have experienced the trend of emergence of women power in the local – self government bodies. Hence, the above hypothesis stands proved according to the data analysis.

H3: The local – self government bodies have brought about the emergence of women power and empowerment.

The data analysis furnished in the thesis states that the elected women representatives have endorsed that the local – self government bodies have brought about the emergence of women power and empowerment. Hence, the above hypothesis stands proved according to the data analysis.

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Emergence of Women Power in PRIs

- A majority of women elected representatives are found in Gram Panchayat Samitis (51.92%), Taluk Panchayat Samitis (54.67%) and Zilla Panchayat Samitis (55.0%) respectively in Hassan District. The data reveal clear emergence of women power in Panchayat Raj Institutions of Hassan district.

Demographic Features

- The present investigation was carried out in Hassan district of Karnataka state to evaluate the emergence of women power in local self government bodies. There were 100% female respondents, 18-39 years age groups (58.75%), primary and secondary educational categories (72.50%), agriculturists and business persons categories (60.0%) and low and middle income groups (85.0%) respectively among the study sample.

Attitude towards Local-Self Governance

- All the respondents (100%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had facilitated political decentralization.
- A majority of the respondents (62.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had facilitated qualitative changes in the governance at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (60.83) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had changed the mindset of the society in regard to grassroots governance and development.
- A majority of the respondents (60.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had changed the dynamics of grassroots administration across the country.
- A majority of the respondents (75.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had benefited the backward sections of society.
- A majority of the respondents (77.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had strengthened grassroots development.
- A majority of the respondents (80.83%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had brought about institutional and operational changes.
- A majority of the respondents (74.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had developed the leadership qualities of people.
- A majority of the respondents (78.33%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had prevented the dominance of upper castes in the grassroots democracy.
- A majority of the respondents (74.17%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had brought about political modernization at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (82.50%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had provided greater opportunities for women and weaker sections at the grassroots level.
- A majority of the respondents (60.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had created better decision-makers and caretakers at the grassroots level.

- A majority of the respondents (71.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had enhanced the social and economic status of people in India.
- A majority of the respondents (70.0%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had facilitated affirmative action for grassroots development in India.
- A majority of the respondents (66.67%) have stated that Panchayat Raj Institutions had created more change agents and catalysts of development in India.

Implications of the Study

The state has the obligation to develop the Panchayat Raj Institutions as effective instruments of gender justice, gender equity and empowerment of women in a pluralistic society like India. The central, state and local-self governments have a responsibility to formulate suitable policies and develop Panchayat Raj Institutions as sound grassroots level democratic institutions. The Panchayat Raj Institutions should be made more transparent, accountable and responsive in order to cater to the needs of women and weaker sections in India. The women should not be treated as mere receivers of benefits but they must be actively involved in policy making, planning, implementation and evaluation of development programmes of Panchayat Raj Institutions. The services of Panchayat Raj Institutions should be designed after proper analysis of the situations and consultation with the veterans and experts in Political Science and Public Administration. The following suggestions are made with a view to improve the process of management of Panchayat Raj Institutions and role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the empowerment of women in modern times.

Management Related Suggestions

- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should have the state of the art infrastructural facilities in order to rise to the occasion in the age of democratic decentralization.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should have adequate skilled and competent manpower in the rural areas.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should conduct systematic research in order to find out the needs of elected representatives and people at the grassroots level.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should deliver people-friendly services in order to gain the confidence and goodwill of the people.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should facilitate quick delivery of services in order to win over the confidence of the people who matter most in the present times.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should provide financial assistance to the deserving beneficiaries in order to do justice to their role.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should monitor the progress of beneficiaries after delivery of services in order to prevent misuse of financial assistance and facilitate optimum utilization of the financial resources.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should develop the leadership qualities of elected representatives through workshops, conferences and other training programmes.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enhance the problem-solving capacity, decision making capacity and managerial capacity of the elected representatives and officials.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should provide suitable opportunities for the development of human resources at the grassroots level.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should adopt latest and advanced technologies like Internet in order to provide the benefit of all time connectivity to the stakeholders of grassroots administration and development.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should provide socially responsible services in order to build organizational reputation in modern society.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should organize meaningful publicity campaigns in order to increase awareness among the people about the activities of Panchayat Raj Institutions.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should actively make use of various communications media for the purposes of image building and reputation management.
 - The Panchayat Raj Institutions should open up new avenues for agriculture and rural development in order to enrich the bargaining power of the people in the rural areas.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should promote better organizational culture and working environment in order to live up to the expectations of the people and command respect in the rural area.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study is an attempt to understand the emergence of women power in local self government with special reference to Hassan district of Karnataka state. The empirical study was confined to Hassan district in order to facilitate in depth analysis of the existing state of affairs with respect to women and Panchayat Raj

Institutions. The emergence of women power in the PRIs is a very vast area of research. But during the course of the study, it is understood that there are many areas which warrant serious research interests in this vital area of research as far as Karnataka State and India are concerned.

The future generation of researchers can concentrate on Panchayat Raj Institutions and educational empowerment of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and social empowerment of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and economic empowerment of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and political empowerment of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and leadership development of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and inclusive development of women, Panchayat Raj Institutions and economic development, Panchayat Raj Institutions and human rights protection, Panchayat Raj Institutions and environment protection and Panchayat Raj Institutions and social responsibility which are broadly associated with the processes of inclusive development and integrated development of women and other sections of society. The role of educational institutions, cooperatives, self help groups and NGOs can also be studied exclusively with reference to empowerment of women in modern times.

The researcher is very conscious of the significance of the role Panchayat Raj Institutions in the process of empowerment of women in a developing country like India. It is clearly emphasized that management of Panchayat Raj Institutions in general and empowerment of women in particular are enduring areas of research in India and other developing nations. Hence, a combination of quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, content analysis, case study and experimental research is strongly advocated for understanding the role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the processes of inclusive development, sustainable development and empowerment of women in future.

Empowerment of Women Related Suggestions

- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should conduct field survey and identify deserving women beneficiaries for the purpose of providing financial assistance.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should identify the poorest of the poor among women and cater to their developmental needs.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should recognize the need for cultivating good relationship with the people.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should design the grassroots development projects in consultation with the beneficiaries.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should give proper orientation to the office-bearers, elected representatives and officials about the integrated rural development.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to develop civic responsibility.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of gender equity and justice.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of human rights protection.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of social harmony and unity.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of environment protection.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of cultural promotion.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of community development.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against the oppressive forces in the society.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to adopt the scientific innovations and technological advancements.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to develop leadership qualities.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to develop crisis management capacity.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to develop personality.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to participate in the development projects of government and non-government agencies.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to sensitize the policy makers and officials about their developmental obligations.

- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to become aware of opportunities of empowerment of women.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to work for social equality.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of social freedom.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of social justice.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against superstitions.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against human trafficking.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against human rights violation.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of small family.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to prevent atrocities against women.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to prevent female infanticide and foeticide.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against the drug and liquor addiction.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against the child marriage, child labor and bonded labor.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to fight against the dowry system and other social evils.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to gain the benefit of social mobility.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to promote the remarriage of divorced / widowed persons.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to actively participate in social service.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of agricultural development and cottage industrial development.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to gain control over their economic assets and achieve financial independence.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve grassroots level infrastructural development.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to promote gain self – employment opportunities to women and weaker sections.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to understand the constitutional safeguards and provisions.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to understand the activities of women’s commission.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to gain the benefit of women’s political reservation.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to understand the significance of adult franchise.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to understand the significance of electoral reform.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to actively participate in the political activities.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to improve their political bargaining power.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to enhance their political status.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to manage political crisis.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to achieve the goal of political equality.

- The Panchayat Raj Institutions should enable the women elected representatives to participate actively in political movements.

VI. CONCLUSION

The importance of empowerment of women forming the core of national development strategies is duly recognized in India and abroad. The Panchayat Raj Institutions are indeed effective instruments of development at the grassroots level. The challenge facing the policy makers today is how to strengthen the foundations of the Panchayat Raj Institutions, widen the reach of Panchayat Raj Institutions, how to make Panchayat Raj Institutions accessible to women and weaker sections and how to empower the women in every respect. The status of women and weaker sections is regarded as an important variable in determining the quality of their empowerment in a democratic system. The empirical study clearly indicates that women power has emerged actively in the local self government bodies. The women elected representatives should be sensitized through the orientation programmes about the various Panchayat Raj regulations and functions in order to function effectively as angel guardians of public interest at the grassroots level.

The future agenda for the policy makers, administrators and other professionals at the grassroots level must deal with strengthening the Panchayat Raj Institutions, manpower development, resources mobilization, improving the delivery system, implementation of development programmes, involvement of women and weaker sections in the implementation of programmes and evaluation of the role of Panchayat Raj Institutions. The civil society, progressive organizations, educational institutions, financial institutions, political parties, cooperatives and other agencies have to work in close collaboration toward designing systematic management of Panchayat Raj Institutions and delivering women empowerment oriented programmes at the grassroots level.

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