

Active Participation and Provision of Reservation for SC/ ST/ Women in Panchayath Raj Institutions

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ABSTRACT

The panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. They were empowering the rural population to participate in rural development programs for improving their quality of life. The study was conducted in the Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh, where a total of 100 rural respondents were selected through simple random sampling technique. The objective of the study is to know the socio-economic status of the respondents, involvement of respondents in party politics and reservation status of SC&STs in panchayat raj institutions. Results indicated that half (50%) of the respondents have belonged to the age group of 18-25 years, illiterates (68%), males (56%) and nuclear family type (67%). The majority (72%) of the respondents possessed 1-3 acres of land, 49 per cent of the respondent's occupations were agriculture and (71%) monthly income was from 1rs to 25,000 rs. Most (88%) of the respondents were not involved in party politics. While 60 per cent of the respondents accepted, to some extent, the provision of reservations for SC/ST/Women. The result of the study concluded that the majority of the women were not interested in participating in party politics and also any rural development activity because of the patriarchal society.

Keywords: Panchayat raj institutions, Democratic decentralization.

INTRODUCTION

Panchayats have been the backbone of Indian villages since recorded history began. Panchayat Raj is a governance system in which Gram Panchayats are the basic administrative unit. Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been involved in programme

implementation, and they are at the core of decentralised planning and implementation.

Panchayati Raj, a synonym for democratic decentralisation, was introduced in India in the late 1950s and early 1960s to restore the erstwhile institution of Panchayat to its former glory.

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It represents a political ideal and is reflected in the rural local-self government in its institutional form.

Mahatma Gandhi envisaged a five-tier system of Village Panchayats, Taluka panchayats, District panchayats, Provincial panchayats, and All-India panchayats. He envisioned an administrative system resembling a pyramid, with a broad base made up of numerous village communities throughout the country.

The Village Panchayat has played a major role at the village level in terms of improving people's living standards. Their primary functions include the provision of clean drinking water, the construction and repair of roads, the provision of drainage and street lighting, education, the provision of funds for the poor, and so on. Village Panchayats receive income from a variety of sources, including house taxes, fairs, health, water, and market fees, as well as grants from the state and federal governments. The purpose of the research is to determine the active participation and provision of reservation for SC/ST/Women by the people living in the rural areas of Visakhapatnam district with the objectives given below.

- To study the general profile of the respondents.
- To know about the socio-economic status of the respondents.
- To study the involvement of respondents in party politics.
- To study the reservation status of SC and ST's in panchayat raj institutions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Four villages from one Mandal were selected by using simple randomly sampling technique making total sample one hundred for the study. In order to study the general profile, socio-economic status, involvement of party politics and reservations status, the questionnaire was developed and the respondents were interviewed individually by using the questionnaire. The frequency and percentages were used for the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **Age** It was measured as the number of years completed at the time of investigation.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their age

S.No	Age Group	Number	Percentage
1.	18-25 years	50	50%
2.	26-35 years	35	35%
3.	36-50 years	12	12%
4.	Above 50 years	3	3%
	Total	100	100%

The data in the above table revealed the age-wise distribution of the respondents. 50 percent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 18-25 years, 35 percent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 26-35 years, 12 percent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 36-50 years and 3

percent of the respondents belonged to age group of above 50 years.

2. Gender

Gender is a biological identity of the rural respondents who respondent at the time of investigation.

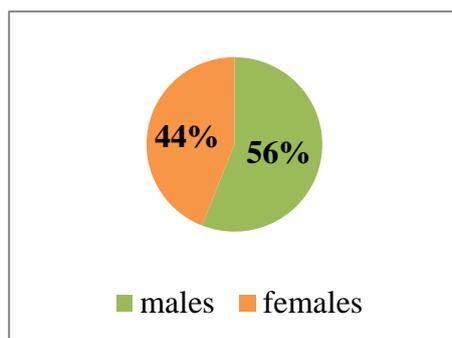


Fig 1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their gender

The data in the above graph represented the gender-wise distribution of the respondents. 56 percent of the respondents belonged to male category and 44 percent of the respondents belonged to female category.

3. Caste

It refers to the caste of the respondents, who were classified into four categories namely OC, BC, SC and ST.

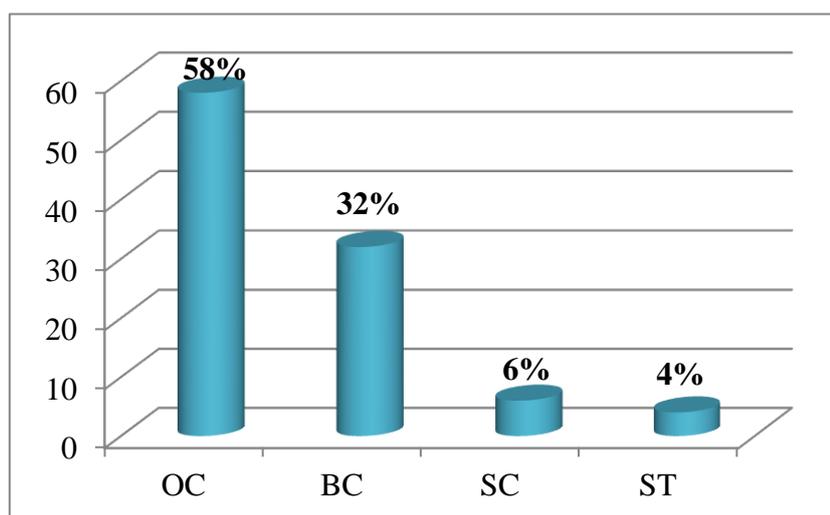


Fig 2: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their caste

The data in the above Fig 2 clearly indicated the caste of the respondents. 58 percent of respondents belonged to OC community, 32 percent of respondents belonged to BC community, 6 percent of respondents belonged to scheduled caste (SC) community and the

remaining 4 percent of the respondents belonged to Scheduled tribes (ST) community.

4. Education:

Education is operationally defined as a person's ability to write, read and the amount of formal education received by the respondents.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of the respondents by educational status

S. No	Educational Status	Number	Percentage
1.	Illiterates	53	53%
2.	Primary education	17	17%
3.	Secondary education	8	8%
4.	High school education	11	11%
5.	College going	11	11%
	Total	100	100%

The data in the above Table.2 showed the educational status. More than half of the respondents were illiterates followed by 12 percent of the respondents attained primary education, 8 percent of the respondents attained secondary education, 8 percent of the

respondents had college-going children and 4 percent of the respondents had high school children.

5. Type of family

It refers to the number of pair of couples and their children living together in a house.

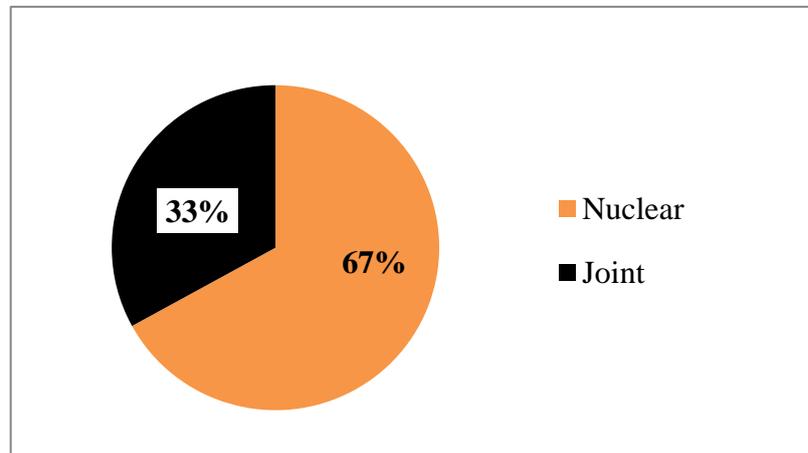


Fig 3 Percentage distribution of the respondents by their type of family

The data in the above fig 3 revealed the type of family of the respondents. 67 percent of the respondents belonged to nuclear families and 33 percent of the respondents belonged to joint families.

1. Occupation

Occupation as the main activities chosen by the respondents as their major source of income and the survival.

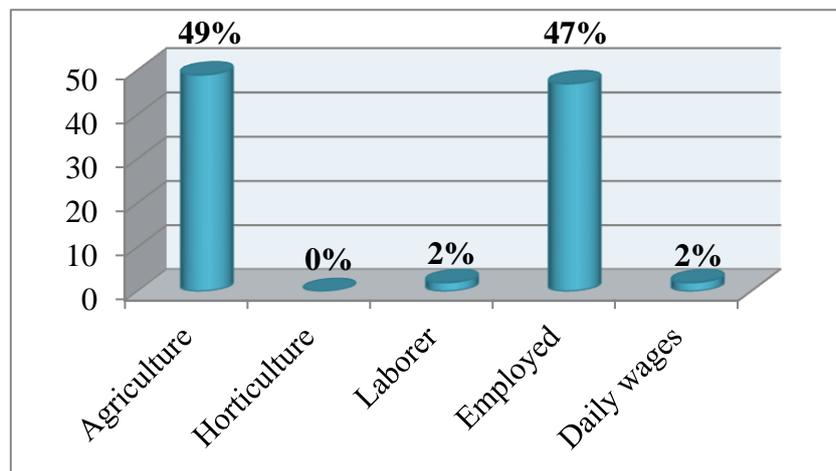


Fig 4: Percentage distribution of the respondents by occupation of family members.

The data in the above graph shows clearly indicated the occupational status of the respondent's family members. 49 percent of the respondents were involved in agriculture,

47 percent of the respondents were employed, 2 percent of the respondents were laborers and 2 percent of the respondents were daily wage workers.

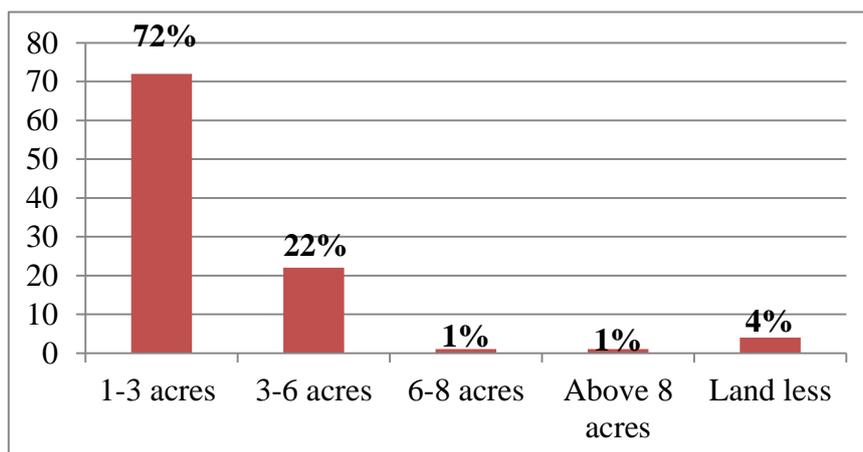


Fig 5. Percentage distribution of the respondents by number of acres of possession of land

7. No. of acres

The data in the above graph showed the number of acres of possession of land by the respondents. The majority (72%) of the respondents possessed 1-3 acres of land, 22 percent of the respondents possessed 3-6 acres, 1 percent of the respondents possessed 6-8

acres, 1 percent of the respondents possessed above 8 acres of land and 4 percent of the respondents were landless.

8. Income

On the basis of the monthly income of the respondents they were classified into four categories as shown below.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their monthly income

S. No	Monthly Income	Number	Percentage
1.	Rs.1-25000/-	71	71%
2.	Rs.26,000-50000/-	22	22%
3.	Rs.51000-75000/-	4	4%
4.	Above Rs.75,000/-	3	3%
Total		100	100%

The data in the above table clearly indicated the monthly income of the family. Majority (71%) of the respondents earned Rs.1 to 25,000/- income, 22 percent of the respondents

earned Rs.26,000-50,000/- income, 4 percent of the respondents earned Rs.50,000- 75,000/- and 3 percent of the respondent's monthly income was above 75,000/-.

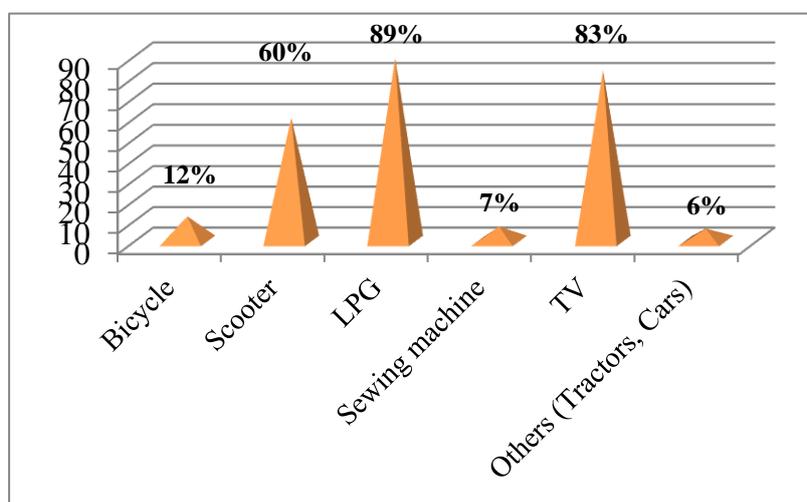


Fig6. Distribution of the respondents by amenities available at home

9. Amenities available at home

The data in the Fig.6 clearly showed the amenities available to the respondents at home. 12 percent of the respondents possessed bicycles, 60 percent of them possessed

scooters, 89 percent had LPG stoves, 7 percent possessed sewing machines, 83 percent had T.V's and 6 percent of the respondents possessed other amenities such as cars, tractors, autos etc.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of the respondents by the active participation of women

S.No	Active participation of women	Number	Percentage
1.	Political affairs	4	4%
2.	Community affairs	5	5%
3.	Education	22	22%
4.	Health services	29	29%
5.	Any other(self employment)	40	40%
	Total	100	100%

10. Active participation of women

The data in the above table showed the active participation of women members in various activities. 29 percent of the respondents actively participated in health services, 22 percent of the respondents actively

participated in educational services, 5 percent of the respondents actively participated in community affairs, 4 percent of the respondents participated in political affairs and 40 percent of the respondents participated in other activities like agriculture.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of the respondents by the provision of reservation for SC/ ST/ women

S.No	Reservation for SC/ST/ Woman	Number	Percentage
1	Not at all	9	9%
2	To some extent	60	60%
3	To large extent	22	22%
4	Any other reason	9	9%
	Total	100	100%

11. Provision of reservation for SC/ ST/ women

The data in the above table clearly indicated the provision of reservation for SC/ST/ women or power is still with the higher castes. 60 percent of the respondents accepted to some extent, 22 percent of the respondents accepted to a large extent, 9 percent of the respondents accepted as not at all and 9 percent of the respondents quoted other reasons for provision of reservation for SC/ST women.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that a great majority of the respondents expressed they are not interest to participate in party politics and also any rural development activity because of patriarchy society and half of respondents

were expressed their views regarding provision of reservations for SC/ ST/ women rural areas.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to establishing the topic of the research and design experiment.

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