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## Gender Issues and Sociological Concerns of Women in Panchayati Raj: Impact of 73<sup>rd</sup> constitution Amendment Act, 1992

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**Abstract**

Gender Equality and Empowerment of women are appears to be much publicised cliched concepts of the 21st Century. Though media talks about it, the politicians talk about it, leaders talk about it, policy makers talk about it, the international community talk about it, yet women are no where near to being full and equal participants in public policy choices that affect their lives. The lack of adequate Political participation in decision-making has far-reaching consequences. It deprives women of important rights and responsibilities as citizens, their viewpoints and perspectives tend to remain unheard or under-represented and in some instances ignored while taking key decisions on national issues and while setting up priorities for the Government. There was a widespread perception that with the improvements in social indicators, education and growing number of women in the various employment sectors, women would automatically gain space in the decision-making bodies. However, this does not appear to be happening and there is a growing opinion that an affirmative action to increase the number of women in representative bodies is required. Women's struggle is not over when they enter political institutions just because they enter a male domain. The local bodies are the products of male dominated or exclusively male political processes like most of the institutions of governance and hence their institutional masculinity continues to be their invisible characteristic (Buch, 2010). The challenge of mainstreaming gender in rural local governance is to address the continuing patriarchal resistance in various forums reducing the potential of the contribution of women in panchayats to engender governance eradicating discriminations, neglect and apathy affecting even equitable utilization of resources e.g. in centrally sponsored schemes in social sectors. A number of measures has been suggested from time to time to empower women in panchayats, to perform their role in rural governance and in delivery of public services which is an important part of their responsibilities. This requires their effective participation in articulation of their needs and demands overcoming the social and institutional constraints.

**Keywords:** Empowerment; Gender; Sociological Concerns; Amendment.

Gender Equality and Empowerment of women are appears to be much publicised cliched concepts of the 21st Century. Though media talks about it, the politicians talk about it, leaders talk about it, policy makers talk about it, the international community talk about it, yet women are no where near to being full and equal participants in public policy choices that affect their lives. The lack of adequate Political participation in decision-making has far-reaching consequences. It deprives

women of important rights and responsibilities as citizens, their viewpoints and perspectives tend to remain unheard or under-represented and in some instances ignored while taking key decisions on national issues and while setting up priorities for the Government. There was a widespread perception that with the improvements in social indicators, education and growing number of women in the various employment sectors, women would automatically gain space in the decision-

making bodies. However, this does not appear to be happening and there is a growing opinion that an affirmative action to increase the number of women in representative bodies is required.

Women's participation in political processes is important for strengthening democracy and for their struggle against marginalisation, trivialisation and oppression. Emergence of women as a strong group would change the prevailing political practice, the nature and content of debates in the legislature and women's issues can be taken care of from feminist perspective both in policy formulation and implementation. The under representation of women in high level political decision-making structures is an universal phenomenon and therefore, their inclusion is considered essential. But the electoral politics world over has a patriarchal bias which exclude women from high level political activities like contesting in elections and representation in significant political structures and the issue has been consistently deliberated in several national and international forums. The Beijing Women's Conference Platform of Action pointed out "equality in decision making provides the leverage without which an integration of the equality dimension in government policy is not feasible." Special provisions to facilitate participation of women has been suggested universally for reforming the prevalent political practices endorsing the right of every one in a democracy to take part in the government of his/her country as per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This resolution has not been formulated out of thin air but grounded on the practical experiences of subordination and oppression of women despite their educational attainments and economic independence. Political representation of women is deemed essential from the policy formulation and implementation perspective which is not possible in the normal election processes and therefore, reservation is suggested to enable women to contest in less competitive seats.

Reservation per se is undemocratic and results in reverse discrimination infracting the underlying philosophy of equal rights which cannot be seen as a "panacea for all evils that are perpetrated against women". The existing norms guiding social hierarchy will continue to dominate decision-making unless there will be a radical change in orientation and perceptions of the power elite and will not be remedied through reservation for women or for that matter OBC women. However, higher caste based reservations will not percolate political power down to the larger sections of Dalit

women as has been the experience with reservation for SC and ST categories. It is undemocratic if a major category is left out from a share in the political power. Today the opening of the democratic horizon is precisely through the proliferation of identities all claiming the legitimacy of recognition .... and precisely for that reason it becomes necessary to rethink old languages and old politics based on the language of equal rights."

Though at the moment it would be premature to assess women's insusceptibility from party and factional politics yet it cannot be gainsaid that this will be the beginning of democratisation of politics which in the long-run will shed most of the imperfections that our democracy is suffering from at the moment. The invisibility of women in legislature is a reality and their entry into it has not ensured equal participation which justifies enhancement of numerical strength without dissension. Both the ideological perspective of human rights and the necessity to widen the democratic space for practical reasons demand inclusion of women. The need of the hour is a change in the social and individual mindset including women's. Reservation for women will provide equitable share and "women just want share; equality makes the world better, for men as well as women" (Snehlata Panda, 2007).

Against this backdrop, an attempt has been made in this paper to evaluate the extent of women's participation in the political process and the empowerment- social, political and economical, they have attained through the passing of the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1992 and its subsequent state level legislations. This paper has been classified under two parts. Part-I examines the international perception of women's political participation and Part-II unfolds on the impact of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment Act.

## **Part-I**

### **International Perception of Women's Political Participation**

Women's political participation has been beset with problems even internationally. Except for countries like Seychelles, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, the percentage of women parliamentarians to the total membership of the Parliament is quite low. Internationally, only 24 women have been elected as heads of state or government in the last century. Of the 185 highest-ranking diplomats to the United Nations, only seven are women. In terms of education, of the world's nearly one billion illiterate adults, two-thirds are

women. Two-thirds of the 130 million children worldwide who are not in school are girls. In terms of income, the majority of women earn on an average about three-fourths of pay of males for the same work, outside of the agricultural sector, in both developed and developing countries. No wonder therefore that poverty largely has a feminine face. In most countries, women work approximately twice the unpaid time men do. Women make up 31 per cent of the official labour force in developing countries and 46.7 per cent worldwide. The value of women's unpaid housework and community work is estimated at between 10-35 per cent of GDP worldwide, amounting to \$11 trillion in 1993. Thus, for empowerment of women the world has a long way to go. And this task of empowerment of women is necessarily a movement to end the hegemony of man on the one hand and on the other also enlisting their support, wherever necessary, to bring about desired changes in the society and attitude of the people so that discrimination suffered by women is remedied.

In fact if we survey history, the attitudes and atmosphere of prejudice and neglect towards women have been there throughout the ages. Tragic abandonment of women's issues in all major revolutions and movements has become the bane of our civilisation. On the voting front it had taken almost an effort of a century for women to get the right to vote and to be elected. New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893 and Finland was the first country to give the right to stand for elections to women in 1906. The equal rights of women and men to vote was specifically proclaimed only in 1952 in the Convention on the Political Rights of Women. Article 1 of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women states that "Women shall be entitled to vote in all elections on equal terms with men, without any discrimination". And by the end of the 20th Century, more than 95 per cent of the countries in the world have granted the two most fundamental democratic rights. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979, under Article 7, provides that States "shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) to vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; and (c) to participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country".

Notwithstanding such international declarations

one finds that in many societies women hardly enjoy any space in the decision-making process. Highlighting this fact in the Inter-Parliamentary Symposium on the Participation of Women in the Political and Parliamentary Decision-making Process held in Geneva in 1989, it was stated: The political space belongs to all citizens; politics is everyone's business and affects the lives of each of us... There is no doubt that the more women are associated, in numbers corresponding to their percentage of the population, in the political decision-making process, in parties, in elected bodies in Governments and in international bodies, the more they can be associated with this process as protagonists and the more they can change the modalities and outcomes of politics. Only then will the concept of democracy find concrete and tangible expression. Indeed it has been underscored that democracy and the participation of women go hand in hand and promote each other mutually.

This has been the underlying refrain of all the subsequent international conferences on gender issues and is categorically stated in all Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. In the actions to be taken by governments to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, it is stated that targets be set and measures implemented to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action; to protect and promote the equal rights to women and men to engage in political activities and to freedom of association, including membership in political parties and trade unions, etc. In the actions to be taken by political parties it is stated that political parties consider examining party structures and procedures to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women; consider developing initiatives that allow women to participate fully in all internal policy-making structures and appointive and electoral nominating processes, etc. In terms of representation of women in decision-making bodies, the Scandinavian countries are generally considered as a model for women's equality. The strength of the social democratic parties, development of an extended welfare state, the educational system and massive induction of women into the workforce are stated as reasons. Percentage of women in Scandinavian Parliaments today are: Sweden - 42% (1998), Denmark - 38% (2001), Norway - 36% (2001), Finland - 37% (1999).

However, it took many decades for women in these countries to reach this far and today the women of the world are not willing to wait

that long. It is being increasingly accepted that electoral quotas which may be constitutionally or legislatively mandated or take the form of political party quotas could be one of the solutions. Introduction of electoral quotas by political parties is a reflection of this sense of urgency. Accordingly to a study of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in 1993, out of a total of 35,884 parliamentarians, about which information was available there were only 3,626 women legislators constituting 10.10 per cent. And as per a recent study by IPU, as on October 30, 2003, out of a total of 42,012 parliamentarians the world over, only 6,133 are women. In terms of percentage women thus constitute 15.1 per cent of the members of national parliaments today. There is therefore, only a marginal change in the percentage of women parliamentarians in the last decade in spite of women's movement and growing international awareness on the matter.

However, beyond these figures and percentages what is apparent and heartening is that there is political will emerging to have more women in public life. Traditionally, Nordic countries have the highest number of women in Parliament. In Sweden alone women now account for 45.3 per cent of parliamentarians in the Swedish Riksdagen. Even some of the Arab countries are also steadily moving towards gender equality in politics. For instance in Morocco, women now account for 10.8 per cent of the lower house: a 10 percentage leap. This progress has come about after the introduction of a quota in Parliament reserving 30 seats for women. In Bahrain for the first time women were able to vote and contest elections. In Djibouti a new law stipulates that every party has to present at least 10 per cent of candidates of both sexes. The result was that in the 2003 elections seven women were elected to Parliament accounting for more than 10 per cent of the newly elected parliamentarians. In Jordan electoral law was amended to reserve six seats for women in the Lower House of the Majlis. Recently, Indonesia has passed a Bill stipulating that at least 30 per cent of parliamentary candidates must be women. Although the changes may appear to be modest, the increasing presence of women in parliaments of the world is a heartening trend for their empowerment.

Even though women have played important and path-breaking roles in shaping the destiny of mankind, their roles in enriching public life has not been sufficiently acknowledged. Since, by and large, women are denied access to public offices it was felt that it is imperative to involve them now directly in the decision-making process.

The movement for right to information which has played a significant role in deepening democracy has witnessed large scale participation of ordinary women in its fold. It is in fact appropriately said that right of women to participate in public life is part of the larger catalogue of human rights. In a much more pronounced manner a former Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission has said that the denial of empowerment is a denial of human right. According to one definition of democracy, "All citizens have an inalienable right to two things: to concur individually through their representatives in law-making and to seek public office". (Yogendra Narayan et.al, 2007). It is worth mentioning that Agenda 21 which deals the Environment and Development Agenda of the United Nations, contains a full chapter on the Global Action for women towards sustainable and equitable development. Herein one of the objectives given is to increase the proportion of women decision-makers, planners, etc. in environment and development fields and to consider developing and issuing by the year 2000 a strategy necessary to eliminate constitutional, legal, administrative, cultural, behavioural, social and economic obstacles to women's full participation in sustainable development and in public life. And further, for actualising the desired changes it was suggested that Governments should take measures to review policies and establish plans to increase the proportion of women involved as decision-makers, planners, managers, scientists and technical advisers in the design, development and implementation of policies and programmes for sustainable development. Thus, globally, it is being recognised that women need to be actively associated for sustainable development and the only means to achieve it is to have more women in decision-making bodies. It is now said that for sustainable growth our policies, apart from becoming pro-nature and pro-poor have to be pro-women.

#### *Constitutional Provisions of Women's Empowerment*

After we attained Independence the enactment and adoption of our Constitution and its numerous provisions heralded a new era of equality for women of India. The Constitution of India guarantees equal political rights including the right to vote to women. Also, almost all the provisions contained in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are there in the Indian Constitution. Not only does the Constitution guarantees equal political status to women, there

is even a scope for 'positive discrimination' in their favour as is evident in Article 15(3) of the Constitution. There are many other provisions in the Constitution which lay stress on equality between men and women. Article 14 provides for equality before law. Article 39(a), states that the state shall direct its policy towards securing equally to men and women the right to an adequate means of livelihood, and 39(d) enjoins the state to direct its policy towards securing equal pay for equal work for both men and women. Article 42 provides for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief and Article 51 (A)(e) refers to the fundamental duty of citizens to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

#### *Status of Women in India*

In Independent India, women have held important political and administrative positions. For instance, Indira Gandhi guided the destiny of the country as Prime Minister for more than 15 years. Women have also served as governors, chief ministers, ministers in Union and state governments, presiding officers of legislative bodies, judges of the high courts and secretaries to the Government of India. Election of Prathibha Patil to the office of Indian Presidency is the most remarkable achievement in the annals of women's political empowerment. While Vijayalakshmi Pundit was India's Ambassador to the Soviet Union and first woman President of the U.N. General Assembly, Hansa Mehta and Sareefa Hamid AM were on several U.N. Commissions, and more recently Najma Heptullah was President of the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Yet despite the fact that Indian women have held important positions both at the national and international levels what we see it that women's participation in the political arena and in the decision making bodies is not in proportion to their population.

#### *Gender Perspective in Five-Year Plans*

In India, values encouraging political participation of women co-exist with the notions of traditional role of women *vis-a-vis* the family and society. The Five-Year Plans of the executive reflected this notion in the first Five Plans. The issue of women and their development was viewed primarily from the welfare point of view. The First Five Year Plan set up Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 to undertake welfare activities through voluntary sector. The Second Five Year Plan hoped for development from grassroots through Mahila

Mandals and the third, fourth and the interim plans planned for education of women, maternal and child care services, etc. In the fifth Plan there was a shift from the welfare to the developmental approach and it was only in the sixth Plan that women's upliftment and their role as agents of development received priority attention. In fact, in the Sixth Plan document a separate Chapter on Women and Development was incorporated. Multi-disciplinary approach with three-pronged thrust on health, education and employment was suggested. In the Seventh Plan, the objective was clearly stated to bring the women into the mainstream of national development. And in the eighth Plan for the first time the shift was made from development to empowerment and the need for flow of benefits to women in the core sectors of education, health and employment. The ninth Plan states empowerment of women as a strategic objective. The Approach Paper called for women's component plan as a part of the plan of each sector to identify the impact of plans and programmes on women. The Plan assures that at least 30 per cent of funds/benefits from all development sector flow to women. The Tenth Plan approach aims at empowering women by translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action.

#### *National Perspective Plan and Empowerment of Women*

In order to view the problems of women in the national perspective and to develop a holistic approach to their development and progress, a National Perspective Plan for Women was published in 1988-2000. The Plan laid down a map towards gender equality. It sought increase in women's participation and presence at decision-making levels and local self-government bodies, State Assemblies and Parliament. Women's participation in elections is to a great extent dependent on the mobilisation of efforts of the political parties, general awareness among the community of the importance of exercising franchise, and the overall political culture. The effectiveness of the Plan to prepare women for meeting the challenges depends on "the presence or absence of a political will." Thus political will is indeed very crucial factor for determining the success or failure of any plan or programme.

#### *Women in Parliament*

During the first general elections, 66 women contested the elections to Parliament and 19 were

ected to the House of the People. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was quite appalled at the low representation of women in Parliament. Expressing his anguish and pondering over the issue he wrote thus on the matter in his letter to the Chief Ministers: I have been meeting our new Members of Parliament. There are over 700 of them as between the two Houses. I have noticed with great regret how few women have been elected. I suppose this is so in the State Assemblies and Councils also. I think we are very much to be blamed. It is not a matter of showing favour to any one or even of injustice, but rather of doing something, which is not conducive to the future growth of our country. I am quite sure that our real and basic growth will only come when women have a full chance to play their part in public life. Wherever they have had this chance, they have, as a whole, done well, better if I may say so, than the average man. Our laws are man made, our society dominated by man, and so most of us naturally take a very lopsided view of the matter. We cannot be objective, because we have grown up in certain grooves of thought and action. But the future of India will probably depend ultimately more upon the women than the men.

Today also the figures do not tell a different story. In fact, in the 14th General Elections, 2004, there were only 355 women candidates out of a total of 5435 and only 45 women have been elected to the 14th Lok Sabha. And in the Rajya Sabha out of 245 members, only 28 are women. It is unfortunate that in India after 57 years of the functioning of the Constitution, we find that women are still fighting for their empowerment; for gaining equality of status and securing a role for themselves in the decision-making bodies. The situation which obtains in India is hardly any different from what it is in several other parts of the world. But this cannot be and should never be a reason for complacency.

#### *Representation of Women in Parliament*

Political representation was initially based on the premise that it deals primarily with individuals, regardless of sex and equal opportunities should be granted for power and influence in society. It was believed that though very few women were actually joining politics, given time the overall change in terms of education and employment opportunities would necessarily percolate into the political sphere too and their representation would increase. However, it is that representation of women in the Lok Sabha has not crossed 10 per cent. In the First Lok Sabha there were only 22 women constituting 4.4 per cent of the House. It increased marginally

over the years except in the Sixth Lok Sabha when the House had only 19 women members. In the 13th Lok Sabha there were 49 women members, however, in the 14th Lok Sabha, again the strength of women members has come down to 45. Similarly in the case of Rajya Sabha the percentage of women members has never crossed 12 per cent. These facts inevitably lead us to conclude that there is need for positive action in favour of women. Given the low representation of women in politics there has been a consistent demand for more meaningful methods to increase their representation in decision-making bodies. In pursuance of this notion of empowerment of women, the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act and the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act reserved seats for women at the grassroots level bodies, namely, the panchayats and municipalities with the hope that these measures will set the trend to provide women their legitimate place in public life. After these amendments, Article 243 D and 243 T of the Constitution provide that not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by the direct election in the local bodies (Panchayats and Municipalities) would be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in the local bodies. This indeed makes a beginning for the effective participation of women in the decision making process at the grassroots level. And it is a fact that in the elections to these local bodies one million women have been elected every five years. It is but natural that a larger number of women would have participated in these elections and this portrays a very encouraging trend for women's empowerment. Though it has taken women time to translate their numerical strength into active participation in the rural and semi-urban areas, the results have been startling. Women have prioritised issues of health, education and access to basic services and in some cases have been able to ensure a significant change in living conditions for the entire community. Activities of several all women panchayats in Maharashtra, Gujarat and West Bengal have been acclaimed and commended.

As far as the participation of women in the electoral politics is concerned, the statistics shows that very few women are actually participating in the elections. For example in the Sixth General Elections out of the total contestants of 2,439 only 70 candidates were women and in the 14th Elections, out of the total numbers of contestants of 5,9435 only 355 were women. Though the number of women participating in the elections may be increasing

gradually they continue to constitute a very small percentage of the total number of contestants. Another startling fact is that out of the total number of women who actually contest the elections, the percentage of women who finally make it to the Lok Sabha is very less. In fact over the years the percentage of women who have found their way to the legislature has reduced. In the Sixth General Election 27 per cent of the women contestants won the elections and by the fourteenth General Election less than 13 per cent have actually made it to the House.

As far as the number of women candidates fielded by National Political Parties are concerned they have won in larger numbers in comparison to independent candidates. Thus, support from political parties will surely give a fillip to the number of women who find their way to the legislatures. Maybe involving more women in the party's work could be a first step to stimulate and enthuse more women to participate. In this context, national level parties can and ought to play a major role. To provide legitimate place to women in public life and their due share in the representative bodies at the state and the national level must be accorded top priority by the political parties. The Constitution Amendment Bill to reserve seats for women in Parliament if passed would be a major milestone in the path of empowerment of women. Actually, there would have been no need for bringing such Bills before Parliament had there been a gradual increase in women's participation in the political process over the years.

In India, 1996 itself almost all pre-election manifestos contained promises to implement 33 per cent reservation for women and in September 1996 the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill seeking 33 per cent reservation for women was introduced in the House. After the controversial debates and dissenting opinions were aired, the Bill was referred to a Joint Select Committee consisting of 31 members from both the Houses of Parliament. The Committee chaired by Geeta Mukherjee presented its report on December 9, 1996. It had in all received 102 memoranda from various associations and organisations. It also heard the views of some of the eminent social workers and representatives of the women's organisations. The Committee in its report noted that sub-clauses (1) and (3) of proposed article 332 A of the Bill provided that seats should be reserved for women in the Legislative Assembly of every State. The Committee felt that those clauses did not cover the National Capital Territory of Delhi though it had a Legislative

Assembly. Similarly, the Union Territory of Pondicherry was also not covered although it had a Legislative Assembly. The Committee felt that the Bill should be amended so as to provide that one of the members nominated from the Anglo-Indian Community should be a woman, by rotation. The Committee noted that the Bill did not contain any provision for reservation of seats for women in the Rajya Sabha or the Legislative Councils of the States. The Committee felt that there should also be reservation of seats for women in Rajya Sabha and the Legislative Councils. As the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill fell through on December 14, 1998, the 84th Constitution Amendment Bill seeking reservation for women was introduced. The Bill could not be passed by the 12th Lok Sabha, so again on December 23, 1999, the 85th Constitution Amendment Bill seeking 33 per cent reservation for women in legislative bodies was introduced in the 13th Lok Sabha which has also lapsed with the dissolution of the House.

## Part-II

### The Impact of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment Act at the National and State Levels

The 73rd Amendment by mandating a minimum one-third reservation for women in membership as well as in the position of chairpersons of panchayats at the village, district and intermediate levels, gives representation to women in a 'critical mass'. The Amendment included one year's transitional period for the states to amend their panchayat legislation to conform to this new Amendment. While amending their panchayat laws for this conformity, all the states without exception gave only one-third reservation to women though the amendment spoke of "not less than one-third" representation for women in membership as well as in chairpersons' positions even though the states could have given a higher percentage of reservation.

The Amendment spoke of mandatory rotation of the reserved positions of chairpersons, but apparently not of the posts of members. (It was evident from the words shall be' in the former [Art. 243D(4)1, and may be' in the latter [Art. 243D(1)1. All the state legislations, however, have rotation of members as well as chairpersons' positions. In fact, the states which included reservation for backward/other backward classes (only four states did. not include this reservation) which is only discretionary in the Constitutional Amendment, have stipulated one-third reservation for women amongst these groups also.

While the states restricted themselves to giving

only the minimum mandated one-third reservation for women in panchayat membership and the chairpersons' positions, some of the states gave them reservation in the position of vice-chairperson too. For instance, Orissa gave the post of vice chairperson to a woman if the chairperson's post is held by a man. Assam too included a similar stipulation. In West Bengal, the vice-chairperson's post also included reservation for SC/ST and women on the same lines as for the posts of chairpersons. On the other hand, Karnataka and Maharashtra made legislative changes for rotating the chairpersons' reservations in twenty months and one year, respectively. Thus, one panchayat tenure of five years will have three or five chairpersons limiting the scope of developing sufficient leadership and the possibility of showing performance. A notable change was made by Tamil Nadu, on the demand articulated by women sarpanches, by providing for rotation of the gram panchayat sarpanch post after two tenures of five years each.

#### *Women in Public Life*

The national consensus and the guarantee in the Constitution for at least one-third reservation for women in the positions of members and chairpersons of panchayats at all the three levels from the village to the district in various states does not mean that no one now has any reservation about this guarantee. In fact, even when these amendments were being discussed there were members who expressed the view that this would be used by dominating elements to continue their hold by bringing in women from their groups. Such biases and prejudices continue to manifest in various comments and statements about women's handicaps, inability and non-participation even after they have entered the panchayats. In fact, it is the continuation of such biases and the inability to share power with women which were reflected when there was resistance to giving similar reservation to women in the national and state legislature in 1997 and 1998. The interest and anxiety about the one-third space made available to women in panchayats have also aroused considerable reservations about its effectiveness.

#### **Number of Members and Women Members in Panchayats at three levels**

Panchayats	Total number	Women	Percentage
GP	2178183	984373	36.8
PS	157973	58112	36.8
ZP	15583	5768	34.8

The new elections led to recognition of the identity of women and their presence in panchayats in such proportion so as to form a critical mass. This is a refreshing contrast from the earlier token presence when even in an all women panchayat in Maharashtra, the gram sevak talked of all persons attending the gram sabha though women were not attending and did not see the anomaly in women not attending the gram sabha in an all women panchayat. Earlier studies of women representatives in panchayats before the 73rd Amendment noted the major presence of women from the dominant sections, e.g., from Marathas and families owning more than 20 acres of land in Maharashtra<sup>3</sup> and Lingayats and Vokkaligas in Karnataka.<sup>6</sup> But the profile of the new women in post-73rd amendment panchayats showed that the majority were illiterate and a large percentage were from families in the lower socio-economic strata. They were comparatively younger than the earlier entrants and were predominantly first generation entrants to public political life.

A study of twelve all women panchayats in Maharashtra documented male family members' support for women coming into panchayats, but such support was tentative and interspersed with typical anxieties expressed in such comments as "who will make the chapatis" and "so long as you mind the kids." But with the country's Constitution making it mandatory, the male members have discovered the importance of women and so encouraged their women folk to stand for elections leading to assumptions/beliefs in these women being only 'proxy' and their husbands being the 'sarpanch pati' and 'pradhan pati' (husband of the chairperson). A number of micro studies documented the profile and experience of these women and perceptions about their new roles. The studies reflect the variety of experience and participation of women in different groups. It appears that women had to use the new political space in the panchayats in the face of unspoken opposition or at least negative attitudes. A study in Haryana noted how most government officials looked to the male kin of elected women to attend meetings.<sup>7</sup>

Reservations created a space for women's needs within the structural framework of politics and "legitimized" women's issues, but women had to be aware of their new political power. A study of women in panchayats in Madhya Pradesh noted positive responses of 82 per cent women about their participation in the panchayat meetings, but it also observed that in most cases they were not given



an opportunity to speak or express themselves. A report from rural Orissa in Ganjam district after reservation of one-third seats for women indicated a positive pattern of emerging women's leadership even in a predominantly traditional settings with male dominance in the family. A study in Pudukottai and Thiruvallur districts in Tamil Nadu noted the very good attendance of women representatives in panchayat meetings.

The family was sometimes seen as controlling and dictating actions and decisions of women representatives. But at other times, the family members were highly supportive of women's new responsibilities. These studies also noted women's increasing awareness, confidence levels, aspirations, performance and priorities for crucial social and economic needs as also the counter forces, obstacles and handicaps faced by them. Others have noted that certain women found it difficult to be assertive due to family pressures and social restrictions. The negative perceptions/comments about the new women in panchayats were reflected in pejorative appellations of 'sarpanchpati' and 'pradhanpati' (husband of village panchayat chairpersons) working on their behalf. There have been cases of women chairpersons being removed by successfully steering 'no confidence' motions against them. But, women have also fought back by coming back with high margins of votes over their rivals in the elections held subsequently to fill up these reserved positions within six months as mandated by the constitutional amendment.

Women's entry in new panchayats was viewed with skepticism with no major impact. A number of myths became apparent about women's entry in a critical mass and their performance in the new panchayats. A study in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh on women's experience in the new panchayats noted that the reservation for women immediately led to four myths about their entry and likely performance: (a) their passivity and disinterest in political institutions (b) only the well-to-do, upper strata women would come through reservation (c) women's political connectivity - only kins of powerful politicians would enter panchayats to retain the seats for them, (d) lastly, most important - women were only proxy- 'namesake' members and they did not participate in the panchayats. The field data collected for the study exploded these myths without discounting existence and behaviour of some women who would fit into this patriarchally oriented framework.

The entry of women by contesting the reserved

posts disproved their disinterest in politics and the socio-economic profile of these new women in terms of their occupation, family income, political background and previous political experience of their families showed that a large number of women had entered from the lower socio-economic groups. Women entered the panchayats not only in the reserved positions but also in some unreserved positions too. Their profile reflected a wider representation of younger women across social groups and also included more than 40 per cent from families living below the poverty line (BPL). They were also predominantly (97 per cent) first generation entrants to politics. Reservation for them across social categories contributed to this wider representation. Admittedly, a large number of younger, not so educated or economically well off women across social groups made their first time entry in the panchayats. The performance of women representatives who belonged to a younger age category (21-35 years) was better than those who were above 35' (MoPR 2007) 23. The pradhans represented a profile of relatively more educated and economically better off group. Women from the weaker section of SC often displayed more assertion and social leadership in taking up issues as panchayat leaders than men from their class. Studies noted the trend of political parties and local leaders not promoting more articulate women in the panchayat elections. With the rotation of reservation and women, contesting reserved seats continue to be predominantly first generation entrants to panchayats even today as shown in Table 2.

A number of studies looked at women's impact and attention to social issues particularly girls' education while also recognizing the challenges and factors affecting their participation. But quite a few studies had ignoring the multiple constraints of these women, having to cope with the patriarchal resistance and limitations of the enabling environment with inadequate devolution and resources. Others questioned the ability of the new women entrants to make a change. Some of the early exploratory studies tended to be really impressionistic, did not even concede any scope for a learning phase for this long politically marginalized and under represented group and the early observations caused substantial damage to any efforts at objective assessment of their new experience in this public sphere. "It became almost fashionable to speak of women's proxyism and nonparticipation in panchayats without having to substantiate such observations by any data (Buch: 2010). However, on the whole, the studies noted their new identity and recognition did bring out the potential of the new power.

*The way forward*

Women's struggle is not over when they enter political institutions just because they enter a male domain. The local bodies are the products of male dominated or exclusively male political processes like most of the institutions of governance and hence their institutional masculinity continues to be their invisible characteristic (Buch, 2010). The challenge of mainstreaming gender in rural local governance is to address the continuing patriarchal resistance in various forums reducing the potential of the contribution of women in panchayats to engender governance eradicating discriminations, neglect and apathy affecting even equitable utilization of resources e.g. in centrally sponsored schemes in social sectors. A number of measures has been suggested from time to time to empower women in panchayats, to perform their role in rural governance and in delivery of public services which is an important part of their responsibilities. This requires their effective participation in articulation of their needs and demands overcoming the social and institutional constraints.

When observing impact and performance of women elected to panchayats in societies with rigid gender norms we have to keep in view the degree of autonomy women have in public and private spaces. Here patriarchal structures and hierarchical gender relations limit women's decision-making within the household. Political institutions constantly reproduce asymmetrical gender relations in public interactions too and these result in discriminatory practices (Vijayalakshmi, V, 2008). Proxyism and what Vijayalakshmi calls *de facto* politics with other individuals carrying out the functions of the elected women representatives in panchayats, which is reported to be practised in some panchayat bodies, is a manifestation of gender rigidity in political participation. The issue of proxyism of elected women in panchayats as a problem and organization of a mahila sabha before a gram sabha meeting, a special quorum for women in gram sabha meetings and review of rotation of seats and positions reserved for women as possible measures, have been seriously debated amongst others by the Parliamentary Committee on Women's Empowerment in its III Report: Empowerment of Women Through Panchayati Raj Institutions in view of their significant implications for elected women's participation, performance and impact on governance.

*Concluding Observations*

In order to encourage the political participation by women in PRIs, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj conceptualized a scheme titled Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) targeted at EWRS and elected youth representatives (EYRs). Scheme has two facets, namely, Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA), and Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PYSA). This has since been revised to make it more effective. Some of the well intentioned policy efforts, for instance, were population stabilisation and promoting rural sanitation which had special significance and impact on women in panchayats. Thus, the law of two-child norm disqualifying persons for contesting panchayat elections and for continuing thereafter introduced by Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Orissa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh had serious implications for young women aspirants to panchayats. The four of these states had, of course, already reconsidered and removed this disqualification. Similarly, the condition to construct a toilet in the house for the panchayat sarpanch/representatives introduced by Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka at different times had limited effect but became an avoidable source of harassment and dropped subsequently. The 21st century has seen initiatives for increasing reservation for women to fifty per cent. After the pioneering role played by Bihar, states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan followed suit. Now there are 15 states following reservation 50 per cent reservation for women. The central government has also decided to introduce a Constitutional Amendment to mandate this fifty per cent reservation for women universally and the bill is in parliament. The mandatory or automatic rotation of the reservation every five years or less, however, becomes a barrier in building and supporting leadership of women and they have to work harder to contest subsequent elections. This needs review on priority so that the reserved position is available at least for two terms. Women are slowly learning how to build alliances with other social collectives and to build on their initial entry into public life. This is where the civil society and the women's movement, in particular, have an important role in supporting women's emerging leadership in the rural local bodies.

**Table 1:** Number of Panchayati Raj Institutions State - Wise (As on 31s' March 2012)

S. No.	State /UT	Districts	District Panchayats	Blocks	Block level RLBs		Village level Rural Local Bodies	
					Block Panchayats	Equivalent RLBs	Gram Panchayats	Equivalent RLBs
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	3	3	9	9	0	67	0
2	Andhra Pradesh	23	22	1121	1098	0	21827	0
3	Arunachal Pradesh	16	16	149	155	0	1756	0
4	Assam	27	21	238	191	0	2206	343
5	Bihar	38	38	534	534	0	8474	0
6	Chandigarh	1	1	1	1	0	17	0
7	Chhattisgarh	27	18	146	146	0	10024	0
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1	1	0	0	11	0
9	Daman & Diu	2	1	2	0	0	14	0
10	Delhi	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Goa	2	2	11	0	0	190	0
12	Gujarat	26	26	225	223	0	14135	1
13	Haryana	21	21	119	119	0	6285	0
14	Himachal Pradesh	12	12	77	77	0	3243	0
15	Jammu & Kashmir	22	22	143	143	0	4099	0
16	Jharkhand	24	24	259	259	0	4423	0
17	Karnataka	30	30	176	176	0	5631	0
18	Kerala	14	14	152	152	0	977	0
19	Lakshadweep	1	1	9	0	0	10	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	50	50	313	313	0	23024	0
21	Maharashtra	35	33	352	352	0	27899	0
22	Manipur	9	4	41	0	0	160	2635
23	Meghalaya	7	0	39	0	0	1463	0
24	Mizoram	8	0	26	0	0	0	776
25	Nagaland	11	0	52	0	0	0	1123
26	Odisha	30	30	314	314	0	6236	0
27	Puducherry	4	0	6	10	0	98	0
28	Punjab	21	20	142	142	0	12800	2
29	Rajasthan	33	33	246	246	0	9199	0
30	Sikkim	4	4	27	0	0	165	0
31	Tamil Nadu	32	31	385	385	0	12528	0
32	Tripura	4	4	40	23	40	511	527
33	Uttar Pradesh	72	72	821	821	0	51974	0
34	Uttarakhand	13	13	95	95	0	7555	0
35	West Bengal	19	18	341	333	0	3354	0
	Totals	651	585	6612	6317	40	240355	5407

**Table 2:** Number of Panchayats and Elected Representatives in All the Three Tiers of Panchayats  
(As on March, 31,2008)

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Panchayats		All Panchayats: Number of Elected Representatives							
		General (Non-SC/ST)		SC	ST	OBC	Total	Women			
	State			No.	%	No.	%	No.		No.	%
1.	Andhra Pradesh	22945	172136	34025	15.19	17842	7.97	NA	224003	74019	33.04
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1789	0	0	0	8260	100	NA	8260	3183	38.54
3.	Assam	2431	23206	1344	5.284	886	3.48	NA	25436	9903	38.93
4.	Bihar	9040	109767	19440	14.94	884	0.68	NA	130091	70400	54.12
5.	Chhattisgarh	9982	76062	17553	10.93	66933	41.69	NA	160548	54159	33.73
6.	Goa	191	844	0	0	181	11.61	NA	1559	534	34.25
7.	Gujarat	14068	83982	7970	6.98	22235	19.47	NA	114187	38068	33.34
8.	Haryana	6325	36578	7724	11.07	0	0.00	NA	69805	25503	36.53
9.	Himachal Pradesh	3330	16706	6575	26.75	1300	5.29	NA	24581	9552	38.86
10.	Jharkhand	3979	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0
11.	Karnataka	5833	67920	17859	18.59	10311	10.73	NA	96090	41210	42.89
12.	Kerala	1165	10629	2005	10.85	226	1.22	NA	18482	5614	30.38
13.	Madhya Pradesh	23412	231246	59106	14.91	106350	26.82	NA	396516	136196	34.35
14.	Maharashtra	28277	176874	25269	11	27597	12.01	NA	229740	76581	33.33
15.	Manipur	169	1556	39	2.247	41	2.36	NA	1736	758	43.66
16.	Odisha	6578	52333	16007	17.31	24114	26.08	NA	92454	33630	36.37
17.	Punjab	12604	62614	28349	31.17	0	0	NA	90963	31809	34.97
18.	Rajasthan	9457	22858	25385	21.16	21415	17.85	50245	119975	42434	35.37
19.	Sikkim	258	483	57	5.781	446	45.23	NA	986	394	39.96
20.	Tamil Nadu	13031	91958	23653	20.31	877	0.75	NA	116488	39364	33.79
21.	Tripura	540	3914	1509	26.32	310	5.41	NA	5733	1986	34.64
22.	Uttar Pradesh	52890	578984	191950	24.87	727	0.09	NA	771661	299025	38.75
23.	Uttarakhand	7335	44450	11077	19.26	1973	3.43	NA	57500	21517	37.42
24.	West Bengal	3713	37434	17112	29.09	4282	7.28	NA	58828	21351	36.29
UTs											
25.	A & N Islands	75	856	0	0	0	0.00	NA	856	296	34.58
26.	Chandigarh	19	153	34	18.18	0	0.00	NA	187	62	33.16
27.	D & N Haveli	12	7	3	2.4	115	92.00	NA	125	49	39.2
28.	Daman & Diu	15	81	2	2.062	14	14.43	NA	97	37	38.14
29.	Lakshadweep	11	4	0	0	106	96.36	NA	110	41	37.27
30.	Puducherry	108	784	237	23.21	0	0.00	NA	1021	370	36.24
	Total	239582	1904419	514284	18.25	317425	11.26	50245	2818018	1038045	36.84

NA: Not Available.

Note: General (Non-SC/ST) categories, Males &amp; Females;

SC: Scheduled Caste Males &amp; Females;

ST: Scheduled Tribe Males &amp; Females;

Women: Combined SC, ST and General Categories.

Source: GOI, Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Annual Report, 2007-08.

**Table 3: Number of Panchayats and Elected Representatives in the Village Panchayats  
(As on March, 31, 2008)**

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Panchayats	Village Panchayats: Number of Elected Representatives								
			General (Non-SC/ST)	SC		ST		OBC	Total	Women	
	State		No.	%	No.	%	No.		No.	%	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	21825	160386	31243	15.00	16662	8.0	NA	208291	68736	33.00
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1639	0	0	0.00	6485	100.0	NA	6485	2561	39.5
3.	Assam	2223	20862	1254	5.48	782	3.4	NA	22898	8977	39.2
4.	Bihar	8471	99672	16941	14.43	784	0.7	NA	117397	64152	54.6
5.	Chhattisgarh	9820	74498	17200	10.94	65552	41.7	NA	157250	53045	33.7
6.	Goa	180	814	0	0.00	181	12.0	NA	1509	514	34.1
7.	Gujarat	13819	80349	7615	6.97	21245	19.5	NA	109209	36400	33.3
8.	Haryana	6187	34879	7303	10.97	0	0.0	NA	66588	24406	36.7
9.	Himachal Pradesh	3243	15383	6095	26.90	1176	5.2	NA	22654	8864	39.1
10.	Jharkhand	3746	0	0		0		NA	0	0	
11.	Karnataka	5628	64525	16997	18.60	9880	10.8	NA	91402	39318	43.0
12.	Kerala	999	9282	1750	10.84	203	1.3	NA	16139	4904	30.4
13.	Madhya Pradesh	23051	226873	57752	14.85	104204	26.8	NA	388829	133508	34.3
14.	Maharashtra	27893	172370	24624	11.00	26863	12.0	NA	223857	74620	33.3
15.	Manipur	165	1599	37	2.21	39	2.3	NA	1675	730	43.6
16.	Odisha	6234	48396	14805	17.34	22166	26.0	NA	85367	31121	36.5
17.	Punjab	12443	60692	27440	31.14	0	0.0	NA	88132	30875	35.0
18.	Rajasthan	9188	21404	24140	21.23	20248	17.8	47846	113710	40043	35.2
19.	Sikkim	163	440	52	5.84	399	44.8	NA	891	356	40.0
20.	Tamil Nadu	12618	86325	22156	20.27	827	0.8	NA	109308	36824	33.7
21.	Tripura	513	3653	1408	26.31	291	5.4	NA	5352	1852	34.6
22.	Uttar Pradesh	52000	527779	174842	24.86	673	0.1	NA	703294	273229	38.8
23.	Uttarakhand	7227	41717	10413	19.29	1858	3.4	NA	53988	20319	37.6
24.	West Bengal	3354	31425	14492	29.25	3628	7.3	NA	49545	18150	36.6
UTs											
25.	A & N Islands	67	759	0	0.00	0	0.0	NA	759	261	34.4
26.	Chandigarh	17	135	27	16.67	0	0.0	NA	162	53	32.7
27.	D & N Haveli	11	6	3	2.63	105	92.1	NA	114	45	39.5
28.	Daman & Diu	14	64	1	1.30	12	15.6	NA	77	30	39.0
29.	Lakshadweep	10	3	-		82	96.5	NA	85	32	37.6
30.	Puducherry	98	695	218	23.88	0	0.0	NA	913	330	36.1
	Total	232855	1784985	478808	18.10	304345	11.5	47846	2645880	974255	36.82

NA: Not Available.

Note: General (Non-SC/ST) categories, Males & Females;

SC: Scheduled Caste Males & Females;

ST: Scheduled Tribe Males & Females;

Women: Combined SC, ST and General Categories.

Source: GOI, Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Annual Report, 2007-08.

**Table 4:** Number of Panchayats and Elected Representatives in the Intermediate Panchayats  
(As on March, 31,2008)

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Panchayats	Intermediate Panchayats: Number of Elected Representatives								
			General (Non-SC/ST)		SC		ST		OBC	Total	Women
	State		No.	%	No.	%	No.			No.	%
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1098	10938	2586	17.69	1093	7.48	NA	14617	4919	33.7
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	136	0	0	0	1639	100	NA	1639	577	35.2
3.	Assam	188	1982	80	3.724	86	4	NA	2148	791	36.8
4.	Bihar	531	9139	2307	20	91	0.79	NA	11537	5671	49.2
5.	Chhattisgarh	146	1404	316	10.61	1257	42.2	NA	2977	1005	33.8
6.	Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0		
7.	Gujarat	224	3049	297	7.13	815	19.6	NA	4161	1394	33.5
8.	Haryana	119	1499	372	13.13	0	0	NA	2833	962	34
9.	Himachal Pradesh	75	1155	416	24.82	105	6.26	NA	1676	596	35.6
10.	Jharkhand	211	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	
11.	Karnataka	176	2658	678	18.41	347	9.42	NA	3683	1519	41.2
12.	Kerala	152	1147	220	10.98	20	1	NA	2004	609	30.4
13.	Madhya Pradesh	313	3833	1105	16.13	1913	27.9	NA	6851	2378	34.7
14.	Maharashtra	351	3022	430	10.96	470	12	NA	3922	1307	33.3
15.	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	
16.	Odisha	314	3449	1056	16.94	1728	27.7	NA	6233	2208	35.4
17.	Punjab	141	1782	840	32.04	0		NA	2622	866	33
18.	Rajasthan	237	1197	1057	20.11	980	18.6	2023	5257	2014	38.3
19.	Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0		NA	0	0	
20.	Tamil Nadu	385	5119	1358	20.82	47	0.72	NA	6524	2313	35.5
21.	Tripura	23	206	78	26.09	15	5.02	NA	299	106	35.5
22.	Uttar Pradesh	820	49164	16453	25.05	52	0.08	NA	65669	24674	37.6
23.	Uttarakhand	95	2451	596	18.91	105	3.33	NA	3152	1079	34.2
24.	West Bengal	341	5540	2422	28.28	601	7.02	NA	8563	2953	34.5
	UTs										
25.	A & N Islands	7	67	0	0	0	0	NA	67	25	37.3
26.	Chandigarh	1	11	4	26.67	0	0	NA	15	6	40
27.	D & N Haveli	0	0	0	0	0		NA			
28.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0		0		NA			
29.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0		0		NA			
30.	Puducherry	10	89	19	17.59	0	0	NA	108	40	37
	Total	6094	108812	32690	20.88	11364	7.26	2023	156557	58012	37.1

NA: Not Available

Note: General (Non-SC/ST) categories, Males &amp; Females;

SC: Scheduled Caste Males &amp; Females

ST: Scheduled Tribe Males &amp; Females;

Women: Combined SC, ST and General Categories

Source: GOI, Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Annual Report, 2007-08.

**Table 5:** Number of Panchayats and Elected Representatives in the District Panchayats

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Panchayats	District / Zilla Panchayats: Number of Elected Representatives									
			General (Non-SC/ST)		SC		ST		OBC	Total	Women	
	State		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.		No.	%
1.	Andhra Pradesh	22	812	196	17.9	87	7.95	NA	1095	364	33.24	
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	14	0	0	0	136	100	NA	136	45	33.09	
3.	Assam	20	362	10	2.56	18	4.62	NA	390	135	34.62	
4.	Bihar	38	956	192	16.6	9	0.78	NA	1157	577	49.87	
5.	Chhattisgarh	16	160	37	11.5	124	38.63	NA	321	109	33.96	
6.	Goa	2	30	0	0	0	0.00	NA	50	20	40	
7.	Gujarat	25	584	58	7.1	175	21.42	NA	817	274	33.54	
8.	Haryana	19	200	49	12.8	0	0.00	NA	384	135	35.16	
9.	Himachal Pradesh	12	168	64	25.5	19	7.57	NA	251	92	36.65	
10.	Jharkhand	22	0	0		0		NA	0	0		
11.	Karnataka	29	737	184	18.3	84	8.36	NA	1005	373	37.11	
12.	Kerala	14	200	35	10.3	3	0.88	NA	339	101	29.79	
13.	Madhya Pradesh	48	450	153	18.3	233	27.87	NA	836	310	37.08	
14.	Maharashtra	33	1482	215	11	264	13.46	NA	1961	654	33.35	
15.	Manipur	4	57	2	3.28	2	3.28	NA	61	28	45.9	
16.	Odisha	30	488	146	17.1	220	25.76	NA	854	301	35.25	
17.	Punjab	20	140	69	33	-		NA	209	68	32.54	
18.	Rajasthan	32	257	188	18.7	187	18.55	376	1008	377	37.4	
19.	Sikkim	95	43	5	5.26	47	49.47	NA	95	38	40	
20.	Tamil Nadu	28	514	139	21.2	3		NA	656	227	34.6	
21.	Tripura	4	55	23	28	4	4.88	NA	82	28	34.15	
22.	Uttar Pradesh	70	2041	655	24.3	2	0.07	NA	2698	1122	41.59	
23.	Uttarakhand	13	282	68	18.9	10		NA	360	119	33.06	
24.	West Bengal	18	469	198	27.5	53	7.36	NA	720	248	34.44	
	UTs											
25.	A & N Islands	1	30	0	0	0	0.00	NA	30	10	33.33	
26.	Chandigarh	1	7	3	30	0	0.00	NA	10	3	30	
27.	D & N Haveli	1	1	0	0	10	90.91	NA	11	4	36.36	
28.	Daman & Diu	1	17	1	5	2	10.00	NA	20	7	35	
29.	Lakshadweep	1	1	-		24	96.00	NA	25	9	36	
30.	Puducherry							NA				
	Total	633	10543	2690	17.3	1716	11.01	NA	15581	5778	37.08	

NA: Not Available.

Note: General (Non-SC/ST) categories, Males & Females;

SC: Scheduled Caste Males & Females

ST: Scheduled Tribe Males & Females;

Women: Combined SC, ST and General Categories;

Source: GOI, Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Annual Report, 2007-08.

**Table 6:** Release of Grants of 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission for Panchayati Raj Institutions  
(Rs. in Lakh)

S. No.	State/ UT	Total Allocation	Amount of one installment (6-monthly)	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
				Amount Released		Amount Released		Amount Released	
				1 <sup>st</sup> Installment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Installment	1 <sup>st</sup> Installment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Installment	1 <sup>st</sup> Installment	Installment
1.	Andhra Pradesh	158700	15870	15870	15870	15870	15870	15870	
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	6800	680	680	0	0	0		
3.	Assam	52600	5260	5260	5260	5260	0		
4.	Bihar	162400	16240	16240	16240	16240	16240	16240	16240
5.	Chhattisgarh	61500	6150	6150	6150	6150	6150	6150	6150
6.	Goa	1800	180	180	#	#	77 #		
7.	Gujarat	93100	9310	9310	9310	9310	9310	9310	
8.	Haryana	38800	3880	3880	3880	3880	3880	3880	3880
9.	Himachal Pradesh	14700	1470	1470	1470	1470	1470	1470	1470
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	28100	2810	1762	1762"	1762	1762	0	
11.	Jharkhand	48200	4820	0	0	0	0		
12.	Karnataka	88800	8880	8880	8880	8880	880	8880	
13.	Kerala	98500	9850	9850	9850	9850	9850	9850	9850
14.	Madhya Pradesh	166300	16630	16630	16630	16630	16630	16630	16630
15.	Maharashtra	198300	19830	19830	19830	19830	19830	19830	19830
16.	Manipur	4600	460	212*	212	212	212		
17.	Meghalaya	5000	500	500	500	500	0		
18.	Mizoram	2000	200	200	200	200	200		
19.	Nagaland	4000	400	400	400	400	400		
20.	Odisha	80300	8030	8030	8030	8030	8030	8030	8030
21.	Punjab	32400	3240	3240	3240	3240	3240		
22.	Rajasthan	12300	12300	12300	12300	12300	12300	12300	
23.	Sikkim	1300	130	130	0	0	0		
24.	Tamil Nadu	87000	8700	8700	8700	8700	8700	8700	8700
25.	Tripura	5700	570	570	0	0	0		
26.	Uttar Pradesh	292800	29280	29280	29280	29280	29280	29280	29280
27.	Uttaranchal	16200	1620	1620	1620	1620	1620		
28.	West Bengal	127100	12710	12710	12710	12710	12710	12710	
	Total	2000000	200000	193884	192324	192324	184879	179130	100230

Source: GOI, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Annual Report 2007-08



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