

**Women's Participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in  
Punjab: A Case Study of Villages - Bahadurgarh  
Jandian and Raike Khurd of District Bathinda**

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## Chapter I

### Introduction and Literature Review

#### Introduction

The word “Panchayat” has comprise two the words, ‘Panch’ and ‘Ayat’. The word “Panch” is derived from Sanskrit stands for number five and “Ayat” means place or house (Batta, 2012). The Panchayat Raj order is ancient as well as modern system of governance in the Indian subcontinent. Since the ancient time, Panchayati Raj system had been established in India. “Panchayati Raj is a system of governance in which gram panchayats are the basic units of administration” (Lakhimi Dutta, 2014).<sup>1</sup> It is a system in which people directly elected their representative for rural local self-government. The Panchayati Raj system in India during the period of 1950s and 60s had been introduced and run through laws passed by the state’s legislative assembly. However, in 1992 was an era of the prosperity in the federal democratic set up in the country. The 73rd constitutional amendment gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institution. It envisages. The establishment of a democratic decentralization development process through people’s participation in decision making.

The system had been established for distributing the political power at the grass-roots level in a democratic set up that have to facilitate rural development. Since independence, the attempts have been made to reform in the local government to bring decentralization in both political and economic domain in the gender context. The Constitution of India makes provisions through various Articles (Art. 14, 15, 23, 29, 30, 42, 45 etc.) that have guarantee equal rights for women. Indian women still oppressed by the male dominated society and are struggling for survival to resources. However, women have registered substantial improvement in some areas such as education and employment, they continue to be exposed to the influence of the prevailing patriarchal

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<sup>1</sup>Lakhimi Dutta. (2014) Panchayati raj - three tier system in India. The Monthly Journal, Ministry of Rural Development Vol. 62 No. 3 Pages 52 January 2014

attitudes in Indian society.<sup>2</sup> The constitution of India made the provision for women's active participation – right of vote and representation in the village Panchayat system. However, women are inadequately represented in the local government also they have limited participation in political activities. According to a report “*Women in Politics 2017*” published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and United Nation Women, suggested that in Indian parliament women are constituted only 11.8 percent (64 MPs) Lower House out of 542-member and 11 percent (27MPs) in Upper House out of the 245-member (Doel Sengupta, 2017).

Punjab is one of the leading states in the country having undergone tremendous economic and social transformation since independence. On the other hand, it has highest per capita income besides the lowest proportion of population below the poverty line while it continues to have considerably low sex ratio besides the lowest female workforce participation in the country

This study is talks about women's role in decision making in Punjab Panchayati Raj system. Throughout the history, we can see that women participation in decision-making process, whether in a particular state or whether all over India, is less than male participation. The Punjab state passed through critical times due to the rise of militancy and terrorism, which affected the normal functioning of democratic political Institutions since the early eighties. The state also remained under the president's rule for a long time. With the improvement of the law and order situation, the state is back to normal democratic functioning. The elections to the state assembly were held in 1992, followed by Panchayati elections in 1993.

While examining the political participation of women in Punjab, it is important to take note of the factors which have been instrumental in pushing women within the household activities. Punjab is primarily an agrarian society where the male dominance is still prevalent, though democratic society does not recognize any gender or social

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<sup>2</sup> Ajit Pal Singh. Women's Participation at Grassroot Level: An Analysis. Mainstream, Vol XLVII No 12, March 7, 2009. [www.mainstreamweekly.net](http://www.mainstreamweekly.net)

ethic or biases. Women actively participate in agricultural activity. They have been mainly entrusted with the function of wearing and rearing of their off-springs. In Punjab, the mindset of people is greatly influenced by “semi-feudal tendency” of political economy which is manifested in various forms of people’s life. Since women in the past remained confined to four walls of the house, even the transition from colonial to democracy has not necessarily enhanced the political status of women.

However, Indian society has witnessed success of democracy during the span of past six or seven decades which obviously has significant impact on women and strengthened participation of women. The dominance of primordial gender biases is there which are determining the political decision making in various ways. Woman in India and more particularly in Punjab have been devoted to patriarchal form of society and the subordinate status is backed by cultural ethos. She used to face various forms of discriminations since the time of her birth.

#### **Literature Review:-**

Since the establishment of Local Self Governments in India, various research studies have been conducted on the topics regarding women issues in India. There is range of literature, official documents have been published on different aspects of women participation in the Panchayati Raj system. However, the study primarily focused on women participation in Punjab especially the district of Bathinda. The relevant portion of literature is studied such as books, Journals, Articles, newspaper and online sources. After review of literature, Scholars have discussed various aspects about women’s participation in Panchayati Raj system. The primary survey has also been conducted through random sampling. Few studies which are very relevant to the present work have been presented below:-

#### **Participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institution:-**

The participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institution in India is hot debate at all levels. Because women’s are struggling for self-respect status in our society and fighting for political rights like equal participation in political process. The government

of India is taking various steps in order to increase women participation in political Institutions like reservation in all political arena and government Institutions. To highlighting the women participation in Panchayati Raj system, some scholars have expressed their ideas as under:-

**Shashi Kaul & Sharda Sahni (2013)** have discussed about the women's participation in Panchayati Raj Institution and talks about some obstacles which are responsible for less women's participation in decision-making process at ground level. Despite the presence of various constitutional provisions available for the betterment of women in political area, women are away from decision-making process and developing programme for society.

**Jalaj Batta (2009)** focuses in his paper entitled, "Role of Women Members in Gram Panchayats" on awareness regarding functions, powers, duties of the members of Gram Panchayats. He says that women participation is low due to good education and financial resources and level of awareness was medium.

**Lima Hazel D. (1983)** observes that about 42% of women took part in decision making and 58% of them were unable to participate into actual Panchayat decision making. The author have discussed that there are some reasons which led to less participation such as lack of education, articulation and self-confidence.

**Dr Pandian. (2008)** discusses about the origin of Panchayati Raj Institution and how we can facilitate to this structure for good efficiency and the establishment of Panchayati Raj and decentralising and devolution of power in the hand of Panchayats. Because of that, the rural people can regulate their own developing programme. Further, he talks about that this concept is again becoming debating issue among politicians and administrators.

**Craig Johnson (2011)** this study emphasized on the decentralization and attaches to decentralization with local autonomy He argues that the devolution of power is not significant to local bodies because all the power manipulated by the local elites. He expressed that the five year plans also impacting the functioning of Panchayats and

also increasing the financial power of Panchayats. Further explained that the old Panchayati Raj model was not significant and demanding Panchayati Raj institution Reforms. The three-tier system is significant to make facilitate people's participation in Panchayati Raj institution.

**Dr Rajinder Singh Sandhu (2008)** argues that Panchayat Raj Institutions being changed. The author argues that the deprived section (SC, ST and Women) participation is less in Panchayati Raj institution. He talks about the negligence of the 73th constitutional amendment. The participation of the young population has been increased due to spread of education at the rural population.

**A.K. Puri (2016)** argues that the political parties are influencing the functioning of Panchayats. The relationship between Panchayats and State is being increased. It can be deliberative, administrative or financial. It introduced the new Panchayati Raj System in Punjab. He gives suggestions about the community development programme and rural development Programmes.

#### **Women Empowerment through Reservation:-**

Women are fighting for gaining women's right like right to education in all Institution, equal participation in political Institution like right to vote, equal participation in govt. jobs etc. Half of the population belongs to women section. But they are doing work under male dominant society that's why, the government of India taking good step toward uplift of women and the betterment of women in all spheres such as political, social, and economic, etc. To encourage these phenomena some scholars have make their contribution like:

**Simmi Aghihotri & Vijay (2014)** says about the relevance of the women for good society and how women are behind from their real status which have given to them by the constitution. Further, the author is of the opinion that the 73rd Constitutional Amendments is a milestone for women. In this article, the author talks about various types of obstacles which creates problem for women from participating in political activities.

**Dr T.K. Pandey (2013)** talks about the education should be necessary for women due to good understanding about political affairs they can maintain easily political activities and affairs. The objectives of the study are to bring improvement in socio-economic condition of women through taking good initiative and measurement for the betterment of women participating in decision making.

**Kaur Gursharan & Dhinda Parmjeet Kaur (2009)** highlights the obstacles about women less political participation in decision-making process. Due to constitutional provision and reservation for the women participation in political process then also women are not interesting come forward for the settlement of women issue. Further author says education is more important for women if they want change their status in male dominate society. They want to learn about social structure then they can resolve their problem.

#### **Knowledge gap:-**

Scholar of these workers have discussed their views for the betterment of the women in decision-making process and discussed about women participation in Panchayati Raj Institution. Some areas are missing from focusing and have not been highlighted so far.

- Which types of obstacles are existed in our society which are stopping women come forward in political and social issues.
- Another one is because of increasing literacy rate in women's section how many women's participation has been increased in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

#### **Objectives:-**

The following objectives are selected for the study:-

- To examine the role of women in decision-making process in PRI.
- To study women empowerment through PRI.

### **Research Methodology:-**

The present study is conducted in district Bathinda (block Sangat) Bahadurgarh Jandain and Raikhe Khurd Village's. The primary data was collected by using the Random Sampling technique, which was adopted for selecting the sample from woman who has participated in PRI in their villages. For obtaining information the tool was used an interview Schedule. Analytical method of study is used. Secondary data is collected from books, journal articles, and newspapers. For collection of data, the structured questionnaire is prepared.



The Institution of Panchayati Raj is as old as the human civilization. It has been in existence since ancient time. In history of human civilization, it is an early concept of democracy. If we look back into the political history of human civilization, then we will find that village Panchayat was the basic unit of democracy. An element of local self-government was working in the Vedic period. The Panchayati Raj system, which dates back to ancient time and which survived in India through Sultanate, Mughal and even the British rule was also given importance to Panchayati Raj system in this country. The village community in India used to utilize Panchayati Raj Institutions for the resolution of social conflicts at ground level. After the independence, national leadership, especially Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru mentioned their importance and put great stress on the revival of Panchayati Raj Institutions and designated these Institutions as milestone over the social, economic and political development of the country.

This chapter emphasises about the evolution of Panchayati Raj system in Modern India. India has the longest history of village self-government in the world and these Institutions of local government were developed earliest and among all the countries of the world. The government of India was appointed a number of committees. These committees were given constitutional status to Panchayati Raj system in India. These were following:-

### **2.1 Balwant Rai Mehta Committee 1957:-**

The community development programme could not stimulate people's participation. That's why it was necessary to know about the less participation of the people in planning programme. The government of India appointed the Balwant Rai Committee to investigate the working of the community development programme (Ananth, 2014).

#### **Recommendation of the Committee:-**

- Establishment of three-tier Panchayati Raj system-gram panchayat at village level, panchayat samiti at the block level, Zila Parishad at the district level.
- All Planning and Development activities should be entrusted to these bodies.

- There should be a genuine transfer of power and responsibility to these democratise bodies.
- Adequate resources should be transferred to these bodies to enable them to discharge their functions and fulfil their responsibilities. (Ananth, 2014)

## **2.2 Ashok Mehta's Committee 1977:-**

When Janata government came into power, they took efforts to make facilitate Panchayati Raj system. The Ashok Mehta committee was set up in December 1977 by the Janata government and it is considered a golden era of the Panchayati Raj system. The committee which submitted its report in 1978 made various recommendations to revive and strengthen the decline of the Panchayati Raj system in India. It recommended two-tier system of the Panchayat at district level and Mandal level representation of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the election of the Panchayati Raj Institution on the basis of their population. The aim of the committee was to make Panchayat as a political Institution instead of less developing agencies.

### **Recommendation of the Committee:-**

- Two-tier systems should be established at District level and Mandal level.
- Panchayat should be political Institution rather than subordinate body of the political system.
- The participation of political parties should be at all the level of panchayat elections.
- Zila Parishad should be the executive body and is responsible for all the development planning at the district level.
- The Panchayati Raj Institutions should have powers of taxation to utilize their own financial resources.

## **2.3 L.M Singhvi Committee 1986:-**

In June 1986 the Rajiv Gandhi government of India was appointed an 8 member committee under the leadership of L.M Singhvi to prepare concept for discussion the present status of the Panchayat and make better functioning of the Institution which effectively do too much work for the development of the local level and nation-building.

The aim of the committee was local government should be recognized and protected by the constitution of India.

- Each state should be reorganized to make village Panchayats.
- Each state should be a Panchayati Raj judicial set up for the resolution any dispute relating with election and dissolution of power with the function of the Panchayati Raj.
- Every Panchayat should be enabling to use their own financial resources for the development of the local people.

#### **2.4 73th Constitutional Amendment Act:-**

The 73th Constitutional Amendment act adds a new Part-IX and also entitled as panchayats under of provisions articles 243 to 243 O to the Indian constitution. (Laxmikanth, 2016) This act gives a practical shape to article 40<sup>th</sup> of the constitution which says that the duty of the state to take step to organise village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as a unit of self-government. It has given constitutional status them. In 1991 general election no one single political party got majority but on the other, only the Congress has a large majority under the leadership of P.V Narasimha Rao with consultation with other parties government took draft which known as a 73rd constitutional amendment act it was a milestone for the Panchayati Raj system. The following step was taken by the amendment act:-

- Uniformity should be necessary in Panchayati Raj.
- Direct election should be in the gram level but on the other hand indirect election
- Election should be in the district and block level.
- Reservation for scheduled castes and tribes will be separate.
- Chairperson of the Gram Panchayat should be removed by the 2/3 majority.
- 1/3 of the seat should be reserved for the women.
- Panchayati Raj Institution should have duration of five year.
- Panchayati Institution should have power to collect taxes, duties and funds for development programme.
- The state government would constitute financial commission to receive the status of Panchayati Raj system.

The study of this committee will introduce understanding and evolution of Panchayati Raj system in India and concern toward the structure and maintenance of rural people problem by the constitutional Institution by the forefather of our Nation. This study is given an understanding of the Panchayati Raj Institution and functioning of the system to resolve an issue relating to rural people as well as women section. This study will introduce the constitutional provision relating to women reservation in Panchayati Raj system.

## **2.5 Women Participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in India:-**

The empowerment of women is today the most commonly used and discussed the concept. Women empowerment is a required condition for the socio-economic development of any society. One half of the population of the country belongs to women section. They have subjugated in socio-economic and political status. Women's are struggling for self-respect and equal status. Women are not always treated very well. A majority of women felt that their views were ignored only because they are women. The section of women has been discriminating in all walks of life whether it is political, economic and social as well. This disadvantaged group require a solution for their discrimination.

Since independence, women have had little representation in political Institution. With the passage of time, the status of women in India has been undergoing a change. The Constitution provides guarantees to ensure 'dignity' and 'equal opportunities', for women in all walks of life including education, politics, sport etc. The Government had declared 2001 as the year of 'Women's Empowerment' by adopting a National Policy to offer 'Swashakti' project, which started in the year 1988 and led by the word bank and international fund for agricultural development. The aim of the project was the development and empowerment of women particularly those engaged in "on farm" activities in rural area through the dynamic self-help groups. Several laws have also been adopted to empower women socially, economically, legally and politically.

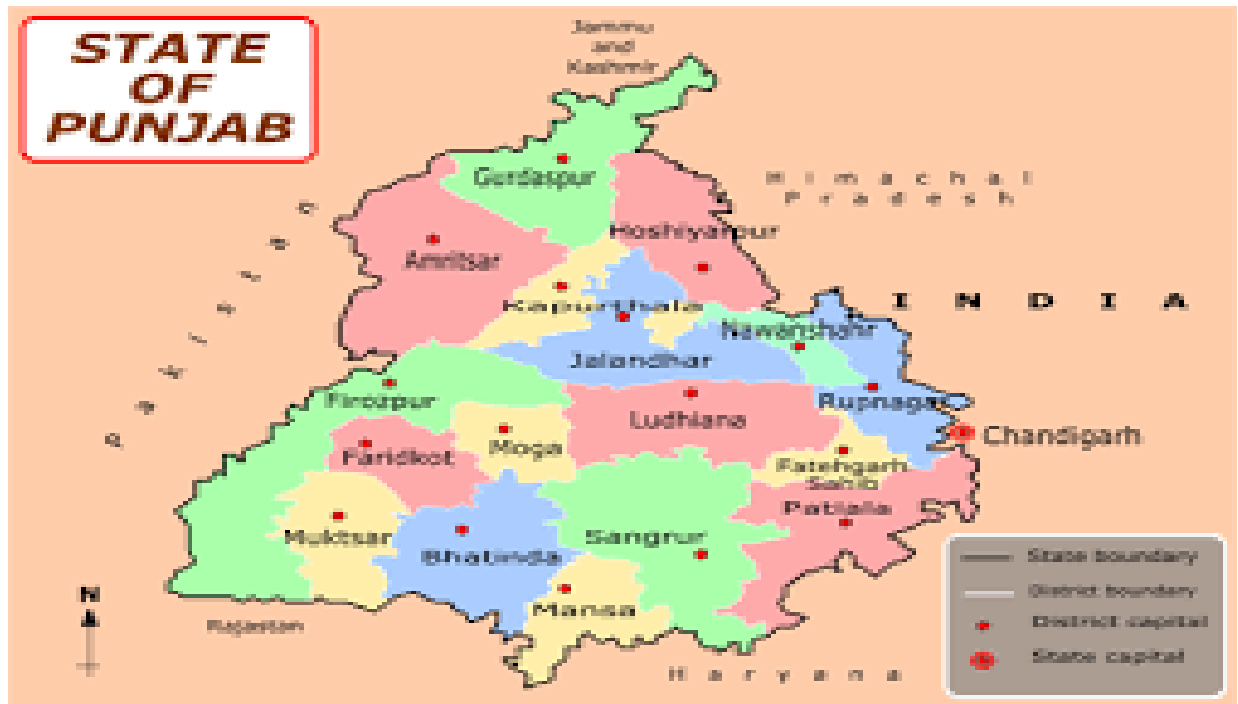
The process of transforming the national political and administrative system has started in January 1994, so it would be too early to assess the impact of women's entry

into government structures. The percentages of women at various levels of political activity have been shifted dramatically as a result of the constitutional change, from 4-5 percent before to 25-40 percent after this; women are bringing a number of experience and innovation in the governance of society. Further, they are making the state responsible to take serious these issues like poverty, inequality and gender injustice. In last two decades, the women's participation in political Institutions has been increased leading to women empowerment by the government of India like the right to vote, equal participation in politics, equal wages for work etc. these affirmative action has been considered as a means to the political and social empowerment of women.

The adoption of the 73rd Amendment by the Parliament in 1992 had a great revolutionary step to create genuine democracy at the grassroots village level. It represented a historic opportunity to change the face of rural India. Panchayati Raj institutions are always considered to be a tool for good governance at ground level and the 73th constitutional amendment is affected in the hope that this will be a better administration and provide a political space to the disadvantaged section of the society like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. Women empowerment and their political participation both are co-related. Nowadays woman both urban and rural is taking interest in their role as voters. As voting is the most important responsibility of the citizen, it is a good sign in a democratic country like India. The awareness among the women also plays important role in strengthening this system.

The empowerment of women is directly related to responsible Democracy. These are a lot of factors which are co-related with women empowerment. The 73rd and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments are historic landmarks for women participation. It introduces 33 percent reservation for women in local bodies. But the country in which women population is nearly 50 percent, should reserve the same percentage in political Institutions and is a simple logic. The union cabinet had declared 50 percent reservations for women in Panchayati Raj. The reservations for women are changing the face of male-dominated mainstream politics in India.

## Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab



Source <http://www.bharatonline.com/punjab/travel-tips/map.html>

The state of Punjab is located in the Northern part of India and is one of the most prosperous state. The total population is 277.04 lakhs and literate & educated population 1,89,88,61 (according to 2011 census literacy rate 76.7 percent). Female population in number is 893 in comparison to 1000 male population (Govt. of Punjab 2016). These villages are grouped into 147 community development blocks and the blocks are grouped into 22 Districts. Punjab has one of the most progressive economies amongst the states in India, with an average growth rate of 10% per annum. It also has one of the highest per capita income levels in the country.

Historical development of Panchayati Raj in the state, for the first time, was established in the composite province of Punjab in 1912. It was assisted by passing the Punjab Village Panchayat Act under British rule. After the independence and partition of Punjab, the rural organizations were created democracy through a new law, called the Punjab Panchayat Act, 1952. The

new law provided the constitutional status to village Panchayats on a mandatory basis through universal adult suffrage. The Punjab State Government formulated its Panchayati Raj system based on the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee's recommendations. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee initiated a three-tier Panchayat system such as Gram Panchayats at the village level, Panchayat Samiti's at the block level and Zila Parishad's at the district level (Paul, 2006).

Punjab has three tiers Panchayati Raj System:--.

- Gram Panchayat
- Panchayat Samiti
- Zila Parishad

#### **Gram Panchayat:-**

The Gram Panchayat is an elected body which constitutes by the Gram Sabha members. It includes Sarpanch and the number of Panches. The number of Panches are depended on the population taking from the particular village or Gram Sabha. The Gram Panchayat secretary is totally responsible for the maintenance of records of Gram Panchayat, those are kept in the custody of Sarpanch or one of the Panches.

All Gram Panchayat should constitute the following committees:-

- Production Committee is responsible for the work in relation to Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Rural Industry and Poverty Alleviation Program.
- Social Judge Committee is responsible for working in this regard Encouraging the promotion of scheduled work education, economic, social, cultural and other Castes and other weaker sections and welfare of women's and children's

**Panchayat Samiti:** - "Panchayat Samiti" means a Panchayat Samiti constituted for a Block. If Gram Panchayat fails to present its budget or plan of development programme in the meeting to be held in December the Panchayat Samiti shall prepare the budget

and the said plan for such Gram Panchayat and present the same before an extraordinary general meeting of the Gram Sabha specially called for this purpose and the Gram Sabha shall consider the budget and the plan so prepared and presented.

Every Panchayat committee should make the following from your own body Committees:-

- General committee:-Performs functions relating to Establishment matters, communication, building, rural housing etc.
- Finance, Audit and Planning Committee: Performs Functions related to finance of the Panchayat Samiti, budgeting, Increase in revenue, check receipts and Statement of expenditure, ideas affecting the finances of all projects General monitoring of Panchayat Samiti and Revenue and Expenditure Panchayat Samiti.
- Social Judge Committee: Performs functions relating to promotion of education, economic, social, cultural and other interests Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes and other weaker sections of society; protecting them from social injustice and all other exploitation; To save Social Justice for Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, and Women etc.

#### **Gram Sabha:-**

The act provides for a Gram Sabha as the foundation of the Panchayat Raj system. It is a body consisting of persons registered as voters in the voter's list. Automatically becomes a member of the Gram Sabha. Which underlies the concept of Gram Sabha is part of the participating democracy. Grams all provide to discuss and analyse local development problems for local platforms. The development and administrative actions of elected representatives ensure Transparency and Accountability. It is important for the law to have at least two general meetings of the Gram Sabha in one Year, after the harvest of Sawney crop in December (Savni meeting) and after the second harvest of green produce in June (green meeting). It may exercise such powers and perform such function at the village level as the legislature of a state determines.

## **Zila Parishad:-**

The Zila Parishad has been formed for a district. Each district council is headed elected by a chairman and a vice chairman who is elected from the elected electors. The entire member, of the Zila Parishad, is elected directly. The following Zila Parishad's permanent committees:

- General committee: responsible for establishment matters and responsibilities Communications, Buildings, Rural Housing, Village Extensions, and relief from natural disasters.
- Finance Audit and Planning Committee: responsible for the financing of financial Zila Parishad, scrutiny of proposals for budget creation, revenue enhancement, Examining receipts and expenditure statements, considering all proposals Affecting Zila Parishad's financial and general supervision of income and expenses In addition, this committee is also responsible for the Plan Preferences, To implement the instructions issued by the state government, Review of program programs;
- Social Justice Committee: education, economic, Social, and cultural and other interests of scheduled castes and backward classes, Protecting them from social injustice;
- Education and Health Committee: Responsible for the promotion of education in the district council, education in the district National policy and within national and state plans, surveys and its frameworks Assess the Zila Parishad's educational activities, make more duties Regarding education, adult Literacy and cultural activities Drainage, health services, hospitals, water supply, family welfare;

Agriculture and Industry Committee: responsible for agricultural production, Animal Husbandry, Cooperation, Planting and Improvement, Village and Encouraging industrial development of cottage industries and districts.

## **2.6 Women Participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab:-**

The Constitution of India is based on the principles of equality and equality before the law and equal protection to all its citizens. It not only guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, but also prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth. Some an important area where women have been inadequately represented is in the political sphere. The Constitution of India under the article of article 325 and 326 guarantees the political equal right to women participation in political activities and right to vote respectively. Lack of space for participation in political bodies has not only resulted in their presence in scanty numbers in this decision making bodies but also in the neglect of their issues and experiences in policymaking. As you know, Punjab has been considered as a socially backward and handicaps like lowest sex ratio since 1921. At present, it is 885 as against the national average of 935. The workforce participation of women in Punjab is ranked as one of the lowest in the country and as one having the lowest proportion of female workers to the total workers. Out of the total female workers, near about 21.6 percent is an agricultural Labour (kaur, 2010). It is obvious that lowest growth of the industrial and tertiary sector in the state has affected the occupational structure and the women. These women are always seen to be engaged in farm activities, home-based industrial occupation and contribution, to a great extent, to the family's economy. Women participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab is less than from male participation in politics.

The political participation of women can be defined as the degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by women in the shaping and sharing of power and in the value given by society to this role of women. To understand the status of women in the society, an examination of the political status is necessary. Though the political status is interlinked with socioeconomic status, it has the capacity to influence the transformation of the socioeconomic system. It has been accepted that women's right to vote and to occupy is fundamental to women's participation in the political process of the country. Women are facing a number of problem or obstacles like dowry system, female foeticide etc. They are away from some political activities like participating in politics, lack of education, lack of awareness about Panchayati Raj Institution etc. Some

dynamic is coming in women condition due to government initiative with the purpose of women empowerment like recently Punjab government have given 50% reservation to women in Panchayati Raj Institution for contesting the election. But women participation is still away from government objects. The proposition of women have increased in the political arena in Punjab but the actual decision-making power is rest in the hand of a male. The decision of the women is not considered during decision-making process.

## **2.7 Constitutional Provisions Relating to Women Reservation in PRI:-**

Punjab Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 (Paul, 2006) provides huge knowledge about Punjab Panchayat Raj system and also providing the knowledge about the structure of Panchayats, the election process, budget of the Panchayat, and how to govern the Panchayat in village level and giving the reservation to women for the office of Sarpanch\ Panch. The following provision is relating with scheduled caste women:-

### **2.7.1 Reservation for the Office of the Panch:-**

The offices of Panch shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes. In such a way the number of offices reserved for Scheduled Castes shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of offices in Gram Panchayat, as the population of the Scheduled Castes to the total population in that Gram Sabha area.

- One-third of the total number of offices should be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes.
- Not less than one-third (including the number of offices reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes) of the total number of offices (to be filled by direct election) in every Gram Panchayat shall be reserved for women.
- One office of Panch shall be reserved for Backward Classes in a Gram Panchayat where the population of Backward Classes in the Gram Sabha area is more than 20 percent of the total population of Gram Sabha.

### **2.7.2 Reservation for the Office of the Sarpanch:-**

Offices of Sarpanch of Gram Panchayats in the district shall be reserved for Scheduled Castes and the number of such offices shall bear, as nearly as may, the same proportion to the total number of offices of Sarpanch's in the district as the population of Scheduled Castes in the district bears to the total population of the district: Provided that not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Sarpanch of Gram Panchayats In the district shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes.

- Not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Sarpanch's in the district shall be reserved for women including such offices, reserved for women belonging to Scheduled Castes under sub-section.
- There shall be no reservation in the offices of Sarpanch's for Backwards Classes.
- The offices reserved under this section shall be allotted by rotation to the different Gram Panchayats in such manner as may be, prescribed.

### **2.8 Increase Reservation in Punjab for Women in PRI:-**

The state government have taken a good step to increase reservation for Punjab women to 50 percent from the existing 33 percent in Panchayat Raj Institutions. The decision was taken by the Punjab Congress government led by Amarinder Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab. The bill Punjab Municipal Act of 1911 and the Punjab Municipal Corporation Act of 1976 and the Panchayat Raj Act of 1994 has been amended to have increase women reservation in Panchayat Raj Institution. The amendment, which was a promise made by the ruling party during the election, will ensure that women have increased chances of being directly elected as members of Gram Panchayats, Zila Parishads, and other similar bodies. This Act will provide reservation quota to empower women in the rural areas for the electing direct elections for members of Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis, and Zila Parishads, besides municipal corporations, municipal councils and Nagar Panchayats. It also means that 50 wards from municipal

corporations, Nagar Panchayats, and municipal councils will also be reserved for women.

## Chapter III

### **Women Participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab: A Case Study of Villages- Bahadurgarh Jandian and Raike Khurd**

Bathinda district is situated in the southern part of Punjab and is surrounded by Muktsar district in the west, Faridkot in the north-west, Moga in the north, Barnala and Mansa in the east and Sirsa district of Haryana in the south. The district has a geographical area of 3335 sq. km. with a population (according 2011 census, 13, 88525,) of living in eight towns and 271 inhabited villages. Administratively the district is divided into Four Tehsils like(Bathinda, Rampura Phul, Talwandi Sabo, Maur) and covering eight blocks, namely Bathinda, Sangat, Maur, Talwandi Sabo, Rampura Phul, Bhagta Bhai and Nathan. The district has one municipal corporation at Bathinda, seven municipal committees in other towns, and 297-Gram Panchayats at the village level. Bathinda has a central university of Punjab Regional centre of Punjabi University, Extension centre of Punjab Agriculture University and extension centres of Punjab Technical University. The district had four engineering colleges, industrial training institutes, nine-degree colleges and one B.Ed. College. It is one of the most important tourist destinations in the state. Bhatinda is also a major religious centre in Punjab.

Sangat, a small town, is located on the Bathinda-Bikaner railway line at a distance of 17 km from Bathinda city. It lies at 30° 05" North latitude and 74°-50" east longitude. Sangat Mandi is linked with several important towns including Bathinda, Rama, Dabwali and Giddarbaha. The area around the town has sandy soils and undulating topography. Sangat Mandi had a population only in 1971 which increased to 5396 in 2001, registering an annual growth rate of 58 of 1.4 percent in 30 years. Sangat Mandi town has been emerging as a trade centre in food grains and other commercial crops are grown in the area (kaur A. , 2017).

#### **Profile of Villages:-**

Bahadurgarh Jandian is a village of Bathinda district and comes under Sangat Block. The total population of the village is near about 1,794 thousand. There are

various castes and people of different religions are residing in the village. The following table shows the profile of these villages:-

**Table No. 3.1 Socio-Economic Profile of the Study Area**

Village Name	Bahadurgarh Jandian
Total Area of the Village	64.100 sq. km
Total No. Household	344
Total population	1,794
Male	948
Female	846

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

The total area of the village is 64.100sq km and the total number of households is 344, the total population of the village 1,794, Male 948 and Female 846

**Table No.3. 2 Profile of literate Population**

Total literate population	924
Male	425
Female	499

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows the total literate population of the Bahadurgarh Jandian village. The total number literate population is 924 populations, Out of that male are 425 and female are 499. The literate population of the women is larger than the male population.

**Table No.3.3 Profile of Labour population**

The total population of Labour	822
Male	575
Female	247

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows the profile of the total Labour population of the village. Out of that male is 575 and female, 247.

**Table No. 3.4 Profile of Agriculture Labour**

Total agriculture Labour	222
Male	37
Female	185

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows the profile of the agricultural Labour population of the village. Out of that male is 37and female, 185.

**Raike Khurd** is a village of Bathinda district and comes under Sangat block. The total population of the village is near about 1239 thousand persons and the following table shows the profile of the village:-

**Table No. 3.5 Socio-Economic Profile of the Study Area**

<b>Village Name</b>	<b>Raike Khurd</b>
Total Area of the Village	34.800 sq. km
Total No. Household	220
Total population	1,239
Male	585
Female	654

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

The total area of the village is 34,800 sq. km and a total number of household are 220. The total population of the village is 1,239 (male 585 and female 654).

**Table No. 3.6 Profile of literate population**

Total literate population	703
Male	281
Female	422

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows the data which is related with a literate population of the village. Out of that, the male is 281 and female, 422. In this village, female are too much literate than the male of the villages.

**Table No. 3.7 Profile of Labour population**

The total population of Labour	675
Male	359
Female	316

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows data which is related to total Labour of the village. Out of that, male Labour is 359 and female, 316.

**Table No. 3.8 Profile of Agriculture Labour**

Total agriculture Labour	134
Male	33
Female	101

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB.html>

This table shows data which is related to the Agriculture Labour. Out of total Agriculture Labour, the male is 33 and female 101. The Agricultural population of the women is larger than the male population.

**Table No. 3.9 Distribution of Age of the Study Area**

<b>Group of age</b>	<b>No. Of age</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20-30	5	25%
30-40	8	40%
40-50	8	40%

This study shows random age group of the respondents from (20-30 are 5 respondents), (30-40 are 8 respondent) and (40-50 are 8 respondents age groups) respectively. 20 percentage people belong to (20-30) age group. 40 percentage people belong to (30-40) age group. 40 percentage people belong to (40-50) age group.

**Table No. 3.10 Women Participation in Panchayati Raj System in Various Ways**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>No. Of member</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Elected member	6	30%
Ex. Member	4	20%
As a voter	10	50%

This table shows the women participation in Panchayat Raj system as an elected and non-elected member whether it is Ex.Sarpanch\ Panch or whether it is a voter. Women participating in Panchayat Raj Institution in this village as an elected member are (30% recent member in Panchayat and 20 percent as an EX. Member in Panchayat system), 50 percent are voter women.

**Table. No. 3.11 Awareness of Women Rights**

<b>Awareness about Women Rights</b>		
Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	7	35
No	13	65

This table shows data which is related to women awareness about women rights which is given by the Indian constitution to them. Out of 20 respondents, 35 percentage women know about women rights and 65 percent are not aware of women's right.

**Table No. 3.12 Awareness of Panchayati Raj Institutions**

<b>Awareness about Panchayati Raj Institutions</b>		
Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	55
No	9	45

This table shows data which is related to women understanding of Panchayat Raj system in Punjab. Out of 20 respondents, 55 percent know about this system and 45 percent have no understanding about Panchayati Raj system. Those women who are working in Panchayati Raj system as elected Sarpanch & Panch in the village are unable to understand the basic structure of this system. They have lack of knowledge about Gram Sabha and its functions. Some of them, who have a higher education or

working in government Institutions like Asha Worker and Anganwadi Worker have interaction with administrative know about the Panchayati Raj Institution of the village.

**Table. No. 3.13 Awareness of Constitutional Mechanism**

<b>Awareness about the Constitutional mechanism</b>		
Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	40
No	12	60

This table shows data which is related with women understanding about the constitutional mechanism. Out of 20 respondents, 40 percent have an understanding about the constitution and its functions. Most of the respondents,

**Table. No. 3.14 Awareness of Women Reservation**

<b>Awareness about Women Reservation</b>		
Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	4	20
No	16	80

This table shows data which is related to women' reservation. Data shows, how much women know about women reservation which is given by the government of India to them for all walk of life like reservation in political Institution.

**Table. No. 3.15 Problems Faced by Women in PRI**

<b>Problems Faced by Women in PRI</b>	
<b>Problems</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Lack of Family Support	6
Household Burden	14
Lack of Education	13
Ignorance by male dominant society	16

This table shows data which is related with women section and shows types of problems is facing by women's during participating in Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab and other types of election, even social and economic activities also.

## **Conclusion**

This research has investigated factors relating to women participation in Panchayati Raj Institution in Punjab, India. The analysis is based on the data collected from interviews with the help of a structured questionnaire with random sampling, an adequate question relating to women participation in PRI. To understand the nature of women participation in PRI, the socio-economic profile of sample respondents was obtained from the data collected. The young women are far from the PRI participation than middle aged. A majority of women are participating in PRI as an elected body and as a voter. Some of them are educated up to middle level and some are uneducated.

Majority of women are working as a housewife but some of them working as a government employs like Asha worker, Anganwadi worker etc. Family size including male, female and children in the family is a nuclear family. From three villages some are young female are taking education in various disciplines like technical and non-technical this study have divided women's age groups such as (20-30), (30-40), (40-50) years. They are not participating properly in the political process and some other social activities due to lack of awareness about the political system.

From the literature reviewed, various reasons have been raised for lack of women participation in Panchayat Raj Institution and what type of obstacles they are facing during participation in PRI. The results indicate the lack of awareness about PRI. That was the major cause for lack of women participation in PRI in the comparison of the male participation in Panchayati Raj Institution. Most of the women in our society particularly belong to a rural area and working in PRI as panaches, Sarpanch also. They have no understanding of our political system and they do not know about Indian constitution and women rights also such as reservation for the women in political Institution providing by our constitution.

Based on the data analysis this study will find out that the Punjab government giving 50% reservation to empower the women in Panchayati Raj Institution. You will be surprised when you will know about women lack awareness about their political rights like (33 percent reservation) which right is providing the government for the upliftment

of women section. The government may want to initiate a survey on a country basis, along with women empowerment NGOs, to find out the problem relating with women and want to have work resolve the problem of the women which they are facing during participating in PRI.

With the establishment of PRIs in our country, a woman gets an opportunity to prove her ability as a good administrator, decision-maker or a good leader. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 is a milestone in this regard. It provides women with a chance to come forward. It is up to them to make use of this opportunity. This experiment is proving to be a big success particularly by providing an opportunity to women to come out of their houses and participate in the administrative and political field. However, in many areas of our country, this system has been captured by some elite people. The government should provide extra financial, administrative or political assistance to women for the success of the provision of the Amendment. Women constitute half of the population of our country. So it becomes necessary to encourage the women in such a largest democracy of the world. To give a proper status to the women, Government, NGOs, and Universities have to play a vital role in this field. The government should encourage the Universities to do better research in this field and find the problems in the way of implementation of different women programmes. There should be a proper check on the grassroots level for the success of any programme.



## DECLARATION

I declare that the project report entitled “**WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION IN PUNJAB A CASE STUDY OF VILLAGES - BAHADURGARH JANDIAN AND RAIKE KHURD OF DISTRICT BATHINDA**” has been prepared by me under the supervision of Dr Sudheer Singh Verma, Assistant Professor, Department of South and Central Asian Studies (Including Historical Studies), School of Global Relations, Central University of Punjab. No part of this project report has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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## CERTIFICATE

I certify that HUSANPREET SINGH, Registration Number 16maplsc08, has prepared his project report entitled **“WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION IN PUNJAB A CASE STUDY OF VILLAGES - BAHADURGARH JANDIAN AND RAIKE KHURD OF DISTRICT BATHINDA”** for the award of M.A. degree in Political Science under my guidance. He has carried out this work at the Department of South and Central Asian Studies (including Historical Studies), School of Global Relations, Central University of Punjab.

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## ABSTRACT

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**Keywords:** Bathinda, (Punjab) women empowerment, Panchayati Raj Institution, Political Participation, 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment.

Panchayati Raj Institutions have always been considered as a means to people's participation in decision-making process regarding their development programmes. It is also materialisation of Philosophy of Gandhi regarding upliftment of rural community and self-development through their political participation. After Feasibility study conducted by several governmental constitute committees; India have given constitutional validity to the Panchayati Raj institution through introduction of the 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment. The constitution has made provision of representation for the disadvantaged section of the society like schedule caste, scheduled tribes and women in the process of local governance as an electoral representative and a voter. To what extent are they facing hurdles to be part of the governance? The study has further made an attempt to find out that whether the conditions of women in rural area of Punjab has been changed through their participation in local governance. For the said study, there has been collected sample data of twenty women representatives. In which, some women are elected representatives of Panchayati Raj and another as voters from the two villages. These data have helped to understand women's participation along with the available theoretical works. At last, the study has found that in male-dominated society, husband of women takes decision in the name of his wife wherever or whenever women becomes a head of

the Panchayati Raj institution at village. The study also found that this has been happening due to lack of education and awareness among women at villages.

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Husanpreet Singh

(Signature)

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