

Role Perception of Women Members of Gram Panchayat

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ABSTRACT

Gram Panchayat is the grass root level organization playing very important role in Panchayat Raj administration. In India the idea of Panchayat Raj is based on community participation and collective decision-making at the local level or in other words self-governance. Gram Panchayats play a vital role in the achievement of the planned targets in rural areas with the participation of the government officials, elected representatives and rural people. The success of any Gram Panchayat largely depends upon how well the elected members perceive their roles within the framework of Panchayat Raj constitution. It is necessary for the member of the Gram Panchayat to have understanding of their roles and its effective implementation for the development of village. The functioning of the Gram Panchayat has direct impact on the everyday life of millions of rural people. Hence, the role of Gram Panchayat is crucial for overall inclusive development as well as for deepening democracy through participatory governance. The study was conducted during 2019-20 in Dharwad and Uttara Kannada districts of Karnataka state. A total of 150 women members of Gram Panchayat were randomly selected from both the districts (75 from each district). The results revealed that more than three fourth (76.00 %) of the Dharwad district members belonged to good role perception category and 24.00 per cent had medium role perception. In case of Uttara Kannada district, all the respondents (100.00 %) were in good role perception category. The mean score of role perception of women members of Uttara Kannada Gram Panchayat was found to be high (96.57) while in women members of Dharwad Gram Panchayat it was 85.68. Here, 't' value showed significant difference in role perception of women members of Dharwad and women members.

Key words: Perception, Role, Members, Gram Panchayat, Women.

INTRODUCTION

India truly lives in its villages and known for its largest democracy in the world. The country's actual progress is based on the

progress of these villages. The people of India were given the right to elect their leaders through voting.

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India is among few countries where voting rights were given to all men and women irrespective of their religion, gender, caste, etc. Some form of suffrage did exist in India before independence. The princely state Travancore-Cochin was the first to give the right to vote to women in 1920, Similarly Madras and Bombay also made provision to vote in 1921. However, women had to wait till independence to get universal voting rights.

In the time of the Rigveda (1700 BC), evidences shows that self-governing village institutions called 'sabhas' existed. With the passage of time, these institutions became panchayats (council of five persons). During the ancient Hindu period, villages enjoyed autonomy and were governed by Panchayats which exercised judicial and administrative powers. These village bodies received a setback under the Muslim rule and almost disappeared in their old form under the British, limited their authority only to the social life of the village community. The annexation of territory and over centralization of administration during the early British period brought about total extinction of traditional institutions of local self-government in India. The events of 1857, however had an eye-opening and softening influence on the British rulers and the subsequent years saw numerous steps being taken for decentralization and to usher in local government in the rural and urban areas.

The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) was set up in India to review the success of Community Development Programme (CDP) and National Extension Service (NES) which were implemented during 1952 and 1953, respectively. The committee suggested the establishment of the scheme of 'democratic decentralization', which later came to be known as Panchayati Raj. In subsequent years many committees have been appointed to look in to the Panchayati Raj system. Various committees have suggested inclusion of women in Panchayati Raj. Hence in 1992, the 73rd Amendment Act (73rd CAA) provided one-third of reservation for women in Panchayati

Raj Institutions (PRIs). In India it created a new era, for participation of women in local governance.

Gram Panchayat is the primary body of the rural local self-government, working as an executive committee of the Gram Sabha. In the three tier system of democratic decentralization of Panchayati Raj, the Gram Panchayat functions at the grass root level i.e. at the village level. Gram Panchayats are democratically elected local governments and have crucial role in shaping local socio-economic development and addressing the diverse social needs of the rural community.

Role perception is the way in which women members of Gram Panchayat perceive and interpret the roles which are to be performed by them. Role perception is the accuracy with which women members of Gram Panchayat are able to perceive the activities associated with her role and formulate opinions regarding the role and locate herself in the reciprocal role. Any of the Gram Panchayat success mainly based on how well the members perceive and perform their roles within the framework of Panchayati Raj constitution. Hence, it is important for the women member of Gram Panchayat to better understand their roles. Therefore the present study was conducted to measure the role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in the year 2019-20 in Dharwad and Uttara Kannada districts of North Karnataka, which are coming under the jurisdiction of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. Based on the highest number of Gram Panchayat members, Dharwad, Kundagol and Hubli talukas were selected in Dharwad district. From Uttara Kannada district Honnavar, Sirsi and Kumta talukas were selected. From each taluk 25 women members of Gram Panchayat were selected. A total of 75 women members of Gram Panchayat were randomly selected from each district. Thus the total number of Gram Panchayat women members was 150. Keeping

in view the objectives and the variables under study, a schedule was prepared by reviewing the previous research studies, consultation and discussion with the experts.

In my Ph. D. research work I have developed and standardized a scale to measure role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat. The scale consisted of 28 statements. The responses were recorded on a five point continuum representing strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with scores of 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0, respectively. The scores of all the items were

summated to get the role perception score of women members of Gram Panchayat. The scores ranged from a minimum of 0 to maximum of 112. Higher the perception score indicates the good role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat and lesser/lower perception score indicates poor role perception.

Total score for each respondent was calculated and classified into three categories using class interval with the help of below mentioned formula.

$$\text{Class interval} = \frac{\text{Maximum scores} - \text{Minimum scores}}{3} = \frac{112-0}{3} = 37$$

Based on the scores obtained by each individual the respondents were classified as low, medium and high level of role perception.

| Category | Range |
|----------|--------|
| Poor | 0-37 |
| Medium | 38-74 |
| Good | 75-112 |

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat

n=150

| Sl. No | Role perception statements | Dhrawad (n1 = 75) | | | | | Uttara Kannada (n2 = 75) | | | | | Total (n=150) | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | SA F(%) | A F(%) | UD F(%) | DA F(%) | SDA F(%) | SA F(%) | A F(%) | UD F(%) | DA F(%) | SDA F(%) | SA F(%) | A F(%) | UD F(%) | DA F(%) | SDA F(%) |
| A. Administrative roles | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Encourage and involve local people in decision making | 52 (69.33) | 17 (22.67) | 06 (08.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 50 (66.67) | 25 (33.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 102 (68.00) | 42 (28.00) | 06 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 2 | Monitoring the performance of the Gram Panchayat activities to achieve the set targets | 60 (80.00) | 10 (13.33) | 05 (06.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 53 (70.67) | 22 (29.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 113 (75.34) | 32 (21.33) | 05 (03.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 3 | Guiding local people in getting the benefits of government schemes | 58 (77.33) | 14 (18.67) | 03 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 54 (72.00) | 21 (28.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 112 (74.67) | 35 (23.33) | 03 (02.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 4 | Participation in decision making of Panchayat for all round development of the village/s | 59 (78.67) | 06 (08.00) | 10 (13.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 49 (65.33) | 26 (34.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 108 (72.00) | 32 (21.33) | 10 (6.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 5 | Active participation while preparing budget for the village development | 56 (74.67) | 08 (10.66) | 11 (14.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 42 (56.00) | 33 (44.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 98 (65.34) | 41 (27.33) | 11 (7.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 6 | Fair, impartial and quick response to enquiries of the people | 43 (57.33) | 09 (12.00) | 23 (30.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 33 (44.00) | 42 (56.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 76 (50.67) | 51 (34.00) | 23 (15.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 7 | Participation in all the meetings of Gram Panchayat | 55 (73.33) | 18 (24.00) | 02 (02.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 50 (66.67) | 25 (33.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 105 (70.00) | 43 (28.67) | 02 (01.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| Role perception index of administrative roles | | 90.39 | | | | | 90.76 | | | | | 90.57 | | | | |
| B. Agriculture and allied roles | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Confirmation of the fair distribution of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, subsidies etc, to all the farmers | 13 (17.33) | 17 (22.67) | 05 (06.67) | 40 (53.33) | 00 (00.00) | 22 (29.33) | 53 (70.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 35 (23.33) | 70 (46.67) | 05 (03.33) | 40 (26.67) | 00 (00.00) |
| 2 | Help the developmental departments in performing their functions at village/s | 14 (18.67) | 15 (20.00) | 07 (09.33) | 39 (52.00) | 00 (00.00) | 22 (29.33) | 53 (70.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 36 (24.00) | 68 (45.33) | 07 (4.67) | 39 (26.00) | 00 (00.00) |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 3 | Help villagers in getting loan for agriculture and allied activities such as dairy, poultry etc. | 13 (17.33) | 16 (21.33) | 07 (09.33) | 39 (52.00) | 00 (00.00) | 25 (33.33) | 50 (66.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 38 (25.33) | 66 (44.00) | 07 (04.67) | 39 (26.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 4 | Motivation of villagers to repay crop loans | 11 (14.67) | 16 (21.33) | 09 (12.00) | 39 (52.00) | 00 (00.00) | 24 (32.00) | 44 (58.67) | 07 (09.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 35 (23.33) | 60 (40.00) | 16 (10.67) | 39 (26.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 5 | Get irrigation sources constructed and their maintenance | 13 (17.33) | 20 (26.67) | 05 (06.67) | 37 (49.33) | 00 (00.00) | 28 (37.33) | 40 (53.33) | 02 (02.67) | 05 (06.67) | 00 (00.00) | 41 (27.33) | 60 (40.00) | 07 (04.67) | 42 (28.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 6 | Provide proper storage facilities to the agricultural producers in the village/s | 10 (13.33) | 19 (25.34) | 09 (12.00) | 37 (49.33) | 00 (00.00) | 32 (42.67) | 41 (54.67) | 02 (02.66) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 42 (28.00) | 60 (40.00) | 11 (7.33) | 37 (24.67) | 00 (00.00) |
| 7 | Guide farmers in getting good price for their produces in markets | 09 (12.00) | 21 (28.00) | 07 (09.33) | 38 (50.67) | 00 (00.00) | 23 (30.67) | 46 (61.33) | 00 (00.00) | 06 (08.00) | 00 (00.00) | 32 (21.33) | 67 (44.67) | 07 (04.67) | 44 (29.33) | 00 (00.00) |
| Role perception index of agriculture and allied roles | | 51.00 | | | | | 81.81 | | | | | 66.40 | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| C. Women and Child Welfare roles | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Preventing violence against women in the village/s | 22 (29.33) | 31 (41.33) | 19 (25.34) | 03 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 24 (32.00) | 49 (65.33) | 02 (02.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 46 (30.67) | 80 (53.33) | 21 (14.00) | 03 (02.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 2 | Awareness creation about the laws for protection of women | 30 (40.00) | 17 (22.67) | 22 (29.33) | 06 (08.00) | 00 (00.00) | 23 (30.67) | 50 (66.66) | 02 (02.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 53 (35.33) | 67 (44.67) | 24 (16.00) | 06 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 3 | Making arrangements for organizing health and vaccination campaigns | 35 (46.67) | 17 (22.67) | 19 (25.33) | 04 (05.33) | 00 (00.00) | 25 (33.33) | 50 (66.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 60 (40.00) | 67 (44.67) | 19 (12.66) | 04 (02.67) | 00 (00.00) |
| 4 | Creating awareness about the consequences of child marriages, child labour and other gender issues | 22 (29.33) | 21 (28.00) | 21 (28.00) | 11 (14.67) | 00 (00.00) | 15 (20.00) | 60 (80.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 37 (24.67) | 81 (54.00) | 21 (14.00) | 11 (7.33) | 00 (00.00) |
| 5 | Preventing child marriages/child labour | 36 (48.00) | 15 (20.00) | 19 (25.33) | 05 (06.67) | 00 (00.00) | 18 (24.00) | 53 (70.67) | 04 (05.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 54 (36.00) | 68 (45.34) | 23 (15.33) | 05 (03.33) | 00 (00.00) |
| 6 | Increasing enrolment of children in schools | 31 (41.33) | 21 (28.00) | 21 (28.00) | 02 (02.67) | 00 (00.00) | 24 (32.00) | 47 (62.67) | 04 (05.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 55 (36.67) | 68 (45.33) | 25 (16.67) | 02 (01.33) | 00 (00.00) |

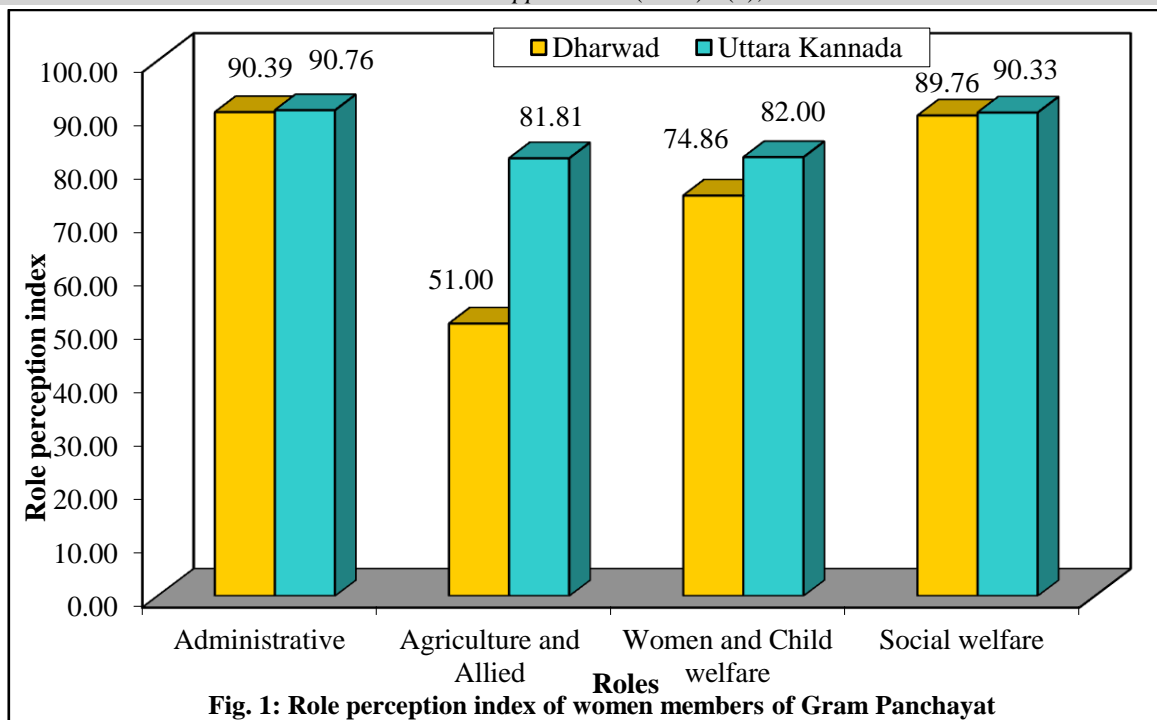
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|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 7 | Participation in implementation of women and child welfare activities | 31 (41.33) | 20 (26.67) | 21 (28.00) | 03 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 30 (40.00) | 45 (60.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 61 (40.67) | 65 (43.33) | 21 (14.00) | 03 (02.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| Role perception index of women and child welfare roles | | 74.86 | | | | | 82.00 | | | | | 78.43 | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| D. Social welfare roles | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Monitoring the quality education and food supplied to the children in the schools | 49 (65.33) | 18 (24.00) | 08 (10.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 52 (69.33) | 23 (30.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 101 (67.34) | 41 (27.33) | 08 (05.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 2 | Implementation of health and nutrition programmes for the welfare of the school children and villager | 50 (66.67) | 16 (21.33) | 09 (12.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 49 (65.33) | 26 (34.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 99 (66.00) | 42 (28.00) | 09 (06.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 3 | Creating awareness about various government welfare schemes and arrange for implementation of the same | 45 (60.00) | 23 (30.67) | 07 (09.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 49 (65.33) | 26 (34.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 94 (62.67) | 49 (32.67) | 07 (04.66) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 4 | Creating facilities for safe drinking water for better public health and hygiene | 50 (66.67) | 19 (25.33) | 06 (08.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 47 (62.67) | 28 (37.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 97 (64.67) | 47 (31.33) | 06 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 5 | Generating employment opportunities through MGNREGA and such other employment programmes for the needy | 53 (70.67) | 16 (21.33) | 06 (08.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 41 (54.67) | 34 (45.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 94 (62.67) | 50 (33.33) | 06 (04.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 6 | Creating infrastructure facilities like roads, bus stand, electricity etc. | 55 (73.33) | 09 (12.00) | 11 (14.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 38 (50.67) | 37 (49.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 93 (62.00) | 46 (30.67) | 11 (07.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| 7 | Ensuring proper sanitation and drainage facilities in the village/s | 62 (82.67) | 06 (08.00) | 07 (09.33) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 46 (61.33) | 29 (38.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 108 (72.00) | 35 (23.33) | 07 (04.67) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| Role perception index of social welfare roles | | 89.76 | | | | | 90.33 | | | | | 90.04 | | | | |
| Overall role perception index | | 76.50 | | | | | 86.23 | | | | | 81.36 | | | | |

F=Frequency, %=Percentage

Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (DA), Strongly Disagree (SDA)



A close look at Table 1 showed that among the statements under the component administrative roles, ‘monitoring the performance of the Gram Panchayat activities to achieve the set targets’ was strongly agreed by 80.00 per cent of the women members of Dharwad Gram Panchayat followed by ‘participation in decision making of Panchayat for all round development of the village/s’ (78.67 %) and ‘guiding local people in getting the benefits of government schemes’ (77.33 %). While 24.00 per cent of the respondents agreed to the statement ‘participation in all the meetings of Gram Panchayat’. Less than one fourth (22.67 %) agreed to the statement ‘encourage and involve local people in decision making’. A little less than one third (30.67 %) of the respondents were undecided for the statement ‘fairly, impartial and quick response to enquiries of the people’. The role perception index of administrative roles was found to be 90.39 in both the districts.

In case of Uttara Kannada district, 72.00 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed to the point ‘guiding local people in getting the benefits of government schemes’ followed by ‘monitoring the performance of the Gram Panchayat activities to achieve the set targets’ (70.67 %). Similarly 56.00 per cent

and 44.00 per cent agreed to the statement ‘fair, impartial and quick response to enquiries of the people’ and ‘active participation while preparing budget for the village development’, respectively. The role perception index of administrative roles was found to be 90.76.

With regard to agriculture and allied roles, only 18.67 per cent of the respondents from Dharwad district strongly agreed the statement ‘help the developmental departments in performing their functions at village/s’ and an equal per cent (17.33 %) of them strongly agreed to the point ‘confirmation of the fair distribution of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, subsidies etc, to all the farmers’, ‘help villagers in getting loan for agriculture and allied activities such as dairy, poultry etc,’ and ‘get irrigation sources constructed and their maintenance’ each. The role perception index of agriculture and allied roles was found to be 51.00.

Whereas, in Uttara Kannada district, about 42.67 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement ‘provide proper storage facilities to the agricultural producers in the village/s’ followed by ‘get irrigation sources constructed and their maintenance’ (37.33 %) and ‘help villagers in getting loan for agriculture and allied activities

such as dairy, poultry etc' by 33.33 per cent of the respondents. An equal per cent (70.67 %) agreed to the point 'confirmation of the fair distribution of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, subsidies etc, to all the farmers' and 'help the developmental departments in performing their functions at village/s'. The role perception index of agriculture and allied roles was found to be 81.81.

In case of women and child welfare roles, 48.00 per cent of the Dharwad district respondents strongly agreed to the statement 'preventing child marriages/child labour' followed by 'making arrangements for organizing health and vaccination campaigns'. 'preventing violence against women in the village/s' statements were agreed by 41.33 per cent of the respondents. The role perception index of women and child welfare roles was found to be 74.86.

In Uttara Kannada district 40.00 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement 'participation in implementation of women and child welfare activities' followed by 'making arrangements for organizing health and vaccination campaigns' (33.33 %). While 88.00 per cent and 70.67 per cent agreed to the statements 'creating awareness about the consequences of child marriages, child labour and other gender issues' and 'preventing child marriages/child labour', respectively. The role perception index of women and child welfare roles was found to be 82.00.

With regard to social welfare roles, 82.67 per cent of the respondents from Dharwad district strongly agreed to the statement 'ensuring proper sanitation and drainage facilities in the village/s'. Most (73.33 %) of them strongly agreed to the

statement 'creating infrastructure facilities like roads, bus stand, electricity etc.' followed by 'generating employment opportunities through MGNREGA and such other employment programmes for the needy' (70.67 %). However, 'creating awareness about various government welfare schemes and arrange for implementation of the same', 'creating facilities for safe drinking water for better public health and hygiene' and 'monitoring the quality education and food supplied to the children in the schools' statements was agreed by 30.67 per cent, 25.33 per cent and 24.00 per cent of the respondents, respectively. The role perception index of social welfare roles was found to be 89.76.

In case of Uttara Kannada district, most (69.33 %) of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement 'monitoring the quality education and food supplied to the children in the schools'. An equal per cent (65.33 %) agreed to the statement 'implementation of health and nutrition programmes for the welfare of the school children and villagers' and 'creating awareness about various government welfare schemes and arrange for implementation of the same' each. Nearly half (49.33 %) of the respondents agreed to the statements 'creating infrastructure facilities like roads, bus stand, electricity etc.' followed by 'generating employment opportunities through MGNREGA and such other employment programmes for the needy' (45.33 %). The role perception index of social welfare roles was found to be 90.33. Overall role perception index was found to be 76.50 and 86.23 in Dharwad and Uttara Kannada districts respectively.

Table 2
Categorization of women members of Gram Panchayat based on their role perception

n=150

| Category | Dharwad (n1 = 75) | Uttara Kannada (n2 = 75) | Total (n=150) |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| Poor (0-37) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) | 00 (00.00) |
| Medium (38-74) | 18 (24.00) | 00 (00.00) | 18 (12.00) |
| Good (75-112) | 57 (76.00) | 75 (100.00) | 132 (88.00) |

The results presented in Table 2 depict the overall role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat. It showed that, majority (88.00 %) of the women members of Gram Panchayat from both the district had good role perception and 12.00 per cent of the respondents had medium role perception. More than three fourth per cent (76.00 %) of the Dharwad district members belonged to good role perception category and 24.00 per cent had medium role perception. In case of Uttara Kannada district, all the respondents (100.00 %) were in good role perception category. The results are not in consistent with the study conducted by Sudakara (2005), Khalge (2006), Sampat (2009), Sutthianlal

(2010), Wahane (2010), Ahmed (2015), Bhagwanrao (2014) and Khare and Kadam (2018).

This might be due to the fact that, most of the respondents are familiar about their roles which they are supposed to perform in Panchayat as elected members. Other reasons could be that, most of them are in middle age group and hence they are active and get more leisure time to learn and work. They are active and enthusiastic to know better about their roles. The medium cosmopolitaness and respondents education is between high school to PUC must have made them to better understand their roles which they have to perform in Panchayat.

Table 3

District wise differences in the role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat

n = 150

| Sl. No. | Districts | Mean | SD | 't' value |
|---------|----------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 1 | Dharwad | 85.68 | 15.06 | 6.211* |
| 2 | Uttara Kannada | 96.57 | 5.45 | |

* Significant at 5 %

The results presented in Table 3 depicts the district wise differences in role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat. The mean score of role perception of women members of Uttara Kannada Gram Panchayat was found to be high (96.57) while in women members of Dharwad Gram Panchayat it was 85.68. Here, 't' value showed significant difference in role perception of women members of Dharwad and women members. The role perception of Uttara Kannada members was better than that of Dharwad. This could be attributed to the fact that, Uttara Kannada members had better education, more participation in organizations, had attended more trainings and were more exposed to mass media.

CONCLUSION

The overall role perception of women members of Gram Panchayat shows that more than three fourth (76.00 %) of the Dharwad district members belonged to good role perception category and in case of Uttara Kannada district, all the respondents (100.00

%) were in good role perception category. It is necessary for the member of the Gram Panchayat to have understanding of their roles and its effective implementation for the development of village. The functioning of the Gram Panchayat has direct impact on the everyday life of millions of rural people. Hence, the role of Gram Panchayat is crucial for overall inclusive development as well as for deepening democracy through participatory governance.

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