



# Socio-Economic Impact Of Women's Leadership In Panchayati Raj Institutions

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**Abstract** - This study examines women's leadership within the Panchayati Raj system and the socio-economic implications of their involvement, concentrating on elected representatives in Madhubani district, Bihar. The principal aims were: (1) to analyse women's participation in local governance, and (2) to explore how their leadership positions have transformed their social and economic status. Data were gathered from 300 female PRI representatives through standardised questionnaires, supplemented by 10 in-depth interviews, employing a mixed-method approach. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS, including t-tests, ANOVA, correlation, and regression methods. The findings revealed that although women are esteemed in public and engage in decision-making, their autonomy is limited due to ongoing male influence. The mean scores for confidence (3.22) and public esteem (3.67) were significantly high, whereas the mean score for autonomy (2.84) was notably low, so confirming Objective 1. In relation to Objective 2, respondents indicated statistically substantial enhancements in education, financial autonomy, and access to governmental programs. The regression analysis revealed that socio-economic upliftment explained 89% of the variance in awareness levels ( $R^2 = 0.890$ ). There exists a significant correlation between elevated status and augmented leadership authority. The survey reveals that women are progressing in participation and socio-economic growth; nonetheless, traditional gender conventions persist in obstructing their complete manifestation of leadership.

**Keywords** - Women Leadership, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Socio-Economic Empowerment, Patriarchal Interference and Local Governance in India

## 1. Introduction

Worldwide, there is consensus that engaging women in politics is essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable development. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 formalised the Panchayati Raj system in India. This represented a significant advancement in the decentralisation of governance and the dissemination of democratic principles at the local level. A crucial component was the stipulation that one-third of all positions in local self-governing organisations be allocated for women. This constituted a significant policy alteration intended to enhance women's political representation(- & -, 2024; Kumari, 2024; Nawaj, 2024; Parveen & Hussain, 2024; Sahu, 2024; Sharma, 2024). In states such as Bihar, this quota has been increased to 50%. The Madhubani district is a crucial location for examining the implications of these developments. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) were established to engage individuals in their communities and to facilitate social transformation, particularly by incorporating historically marginalised groups, including women. In

patriarchal nations, where traditional gender norms sometimes restrict women's visibility in public spheres, the emergence of women in elected positions represents a notable change (District, 2024; Roy, 2024; Singh, 2024; Thakur & Mishra, 2024; Trivedi et al., 2024, 2024). This not only signifies a trend but also indicates an increasing recognition of women as leaders in governance, development, and transformation. Women have developed new avenues to assert their agency, assume control, and influence decision-making, transitioning from passive recipients of government assistance to active participants in local governance. The effectiveness of this transition largely hinges on the nature of their leadership experiences and the extent to which political participation yields tangible socio-economic advantages. Consequently, it is essential to evaluate the attributes of women's leadership within PRIs and to examine the subsequent changes in their socio-economic status.

Within the context of Panchayati Raj, leadership is intricate. It encompasses both formal roles, such as those of the sarpanch or ward member, and informal methods to exert influence, negotiate, and engage within the community (CHOUDHARY & PATIDAR, 2024; *Panchayati Raj and SC/ST Women of Madhya Pradesh* Dr. Manoj Kumar Gupta Research Officer, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, 2023; Reena Singh, 2023; Saini, 2023). Women leaders often confront intricate social and cultural challenges influenced by gender stereotypes, restricted resource access, and the persistent issue of proxy representation, wherein male relatives make decisions on behalf of elected women. Despite these challenges, numerous women in PRIs have begun to challenge established norms, assert their agency, and emerge as prominent and articulate leaders within their communities. Their involvement in the formulation of developmental initiatives, resource mobilisation, local grievance resolution, and the advancement of welfare programs highlights the dynamic progression of grassroots leadership. Women in PRIs generally assume leadership positions that catalyse significant societal and economic transformations. Political engagement facilitates women's access to public spaces, interaction with government officials, and understanding of their rights and entitlements (CHOUDHARY & PATIDAR, 2024; Reena Singh, 2023; Roy, 2024; Saini, 2023; Trivedi et al., 2024). It frequently results in enhanced education, health, and financial autonomy, benefiting not only the elected leaders but also the women within the society at large. Assuming a leadership position can enhance individuals' confidence, elevate their self-esteem, and augment their capacity to negotiate within their households and communities. However, these enhancements are not uniform across all individuals. The extent of political participation's impact on socio-economic empowerment varies by area and is affected by factors such as caste, class, education, and familial support. The interplay between ancient social systems and modern institutional frameworks in Madhubani, Bihar, offers a unique lens for examining women's empowerment. Madhubani is a district renowned for its vibrant culture and pronounced gender norms. This renders it simultaneously more accessible and more challenging for women to engage in government. The PRI system has facilitated the official assumption of leadership roles by women. Their true empowerment is contingent upon their ability to attain independence, acquire training and resources, and confront patriarchal barriers. Therefore, it is imperative to do a comprehensive analysis of the lived experiences of women leaders in PRIs, focussing particularly on their leadership behaviour and socio-economic outcomes (Dutta et al., 2023; Hussain, 2023; Jha, 2023; Mangat et al., 2023; Tripathi, 2023).

This article aims to analyse two critical facets of women's participation in Panchayati Raj in Madhubani. This analysis examines women's leadership by exploring their perceptions of roles, utilisation of power, management of responsibilities, and interactions with the community and government. Secondly, it examines the alterations in their socio-economic condition subsequent to their ascension to leadership by analysing factors such as income, education, healthcare access, and societal and familial esteem. This study seeks to improve the current literature on gender and governance in rural India while providing policy-relevant insights into the empowerment capabilities of local governance institutions. The inquiry into women's leadership and socio-economic development inside Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) extends beyond the mere enumeration of women in positions of authority. It involves assessing the depth and quality of their involvement, the alterations in power relations, and the manifestation of rights and opportunities in daily life. As India advances towards gender equality and a more inclusive governance structure, it remains crucial to understand the experiences of women at the grassroots level to ensure that democratic participation results in tangible change.

## 2. Literature Review

(Parveen & Hussain, 2024) Encouraging women to take engage in politics and use their voices effectively is crucial for advancing gender equality and democratic governance. How many women served in India's Panchayat Raj (PRIs) from 1993 to 2024 is the focus of this research review. Gender quotas, education, and advocacy are the three pillars upon which the article rests, offering hope to women who face institutional, social, and legal barriers to political participation. The 73rd amending act of the Indian Constitution, which requires a one-third reservation for women in PRIs, considerably helps to elevate women's status and impact at the local level. Gender roles and resource disparities are two of the many remaining barriers that need addressing before women may be enabled to fully engage in PRIs, no matter how far we come. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG), the article contends that a governance framework that is either gender-sensitive or inclusive is required. It stresses how important it is to conduct intersectional analyses, long-term effect testing, or come up with creative solutions to these problems.

(Nawaj, 2024) No longer is it believed that the Panchayati Raj System arose during the modern era. Businesses such as these existed even in the Vedic period. The Vedas use the terms Sabha and Samiti interchangeably to describe modern entities such as Panchayat. The ancient Smriti literature also reveals a number of institutions at the village level, such as Kula and Shreni. Such structures existed under the Mauryans and the Guptas, two ancient Indian kingdoms. However, the Mughal style started to disappear once the British took over. Under British rule, the institution grew rapidly after the famous Mayo's Resolution of 1870 devolved power and duty to the local governments. The decentralisation system was further strengthened by Lord Ripon in 1882. He paved the way for such groups by outlining a liberal and democratic framework. The Panchayat and other village-level institutions have been the subject of several studies that propose improvements. The following documents are examples of such items: the Mayo's Resolution of 1870, the Lord Ripon's Change of 1882, the Royal Commission's report on the centralisation event of 1909, the State of India Change of 1915, and the Montague Andover Report of 1918. A tentative constitution was draughted after independence, but the Panchayat system was omitted. The lack of political will was evident in how slowly it developed from its beginnings during the Constitution's draughting. At the outset of the process of draughting the constitution, the Panchayat Raj Institution had no say whatsoever. As long as we remain discussing,

(Sahu, 2024) The capacity of a society to make choices is the subject of politics. With an electoral system in place, the people's authority increases. One of the most effective ways to fortify a government is to have elections, especially in a democratic system that prioritises public engagement and guarantees all citizens the right to vote. Voter behaviour and the challenges people face when participating in municipal elections may be investigated in this study. This research has used both normative and empirical methodologies to analyse people's difficulties around election time.

(Thakur & Mishra, 2024) Nicos Poulantzas, a Marxist theorist, and Ralph Miliband, a capitalist philosopher, were both prominent figures in the Miliband-Poulantzas debate, which offered new insights on the role of the state in capitalist countries. Western ideas of the state diverge from postcolonial governments' approaches to nation-building and state formation, argue critics of state theory like Hamza Alavi. Philosophers and critical ethnographers have produced immense literature in the last several decades defining and theorising the postcolonial state. Unlike these self-styled "state theorists," M. K. Gandhi voiced his apprehension about postcolonial regimes even before they came into power. Despite his insistence on decentralisation of power, the current global socioeconomic arrangements rest on the globalisation and capitalist economic paradigm. His ideal state's administration, based on panchayat (villages), would give everyone a prominent role. Further devolution of power to the Grammes (villages), he argued, would let India to realise its promise as a democratic and progressive nation. This movement towards decentralisation of authority stands in sharp contrast to the present design of the federal government. Findings from this study will shed light on the differences between centralised and decentralised administrations by providing an in-depth analysis of localised governance. The essay also intends to contextualise Panchayati Raj by drawing parallels to modern capitalism and globalisation. Using this premise, the author argues that contemporary administration should reconsider Gandhian principles to determine their applicability.

(District, 2024) the pivotal part that women's grassroots leadership had in the successful execution of PRIS development and welfare programs in the Mahabubnagar District of Telangana State. Furthermore, it delves into the ways in which women at the grassroots level in the Gramme Panchayats of Telangana State's Mahbubnagar District spearhead development and welfare initiatives, inspire inclusive development efforts, and promote citizen engagement in governance. When it comes to rural development and community decision-making, women-run panchayati raj institutions are crucial. In matters pertaining to women's lives and communities, this ensures that their opinions will be recognised and considered. When women become leaders and actively engage in community concerns, this is called grassroots women's leadership. It sees women rising to the ranks of community leadership, often from the lowest, most fundamental levels of society. Gudibanda, Konagatupally, Katavaram, Rudraram, and Baleedpally are just a few of the Gramme Panchayats in Telangana State's Mahabubnagar District where women sarpanches have taken the lead on various developmental projects and signature programs. Part of the "Convergence Gramme Sabha" was the "Gramme Bhavan Development Plan." Everyone in the Gramme Panchayat is working towards the same objective of complete social security. The Gramme Panchayat is structured such that it has specialised committees dealing with water, sanitation, and child protection, among other things. Their involvement in PRIS and other programs run by the local development administration is crucial if we want to see progress towards gender equality, stronger communities, and more inclusive leadership.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study used a descriptive and exploratory methodology to meticulously document the ideas, behaviours, and socioeconomic transformations experienced by women serving as representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions. This approach is effective for examining the theoretical foundations and practical experiences of women in leadership positions. A mixed-methods strategy utilised both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Data measured participation, autonomy, and socioeconomic indicators, while qualitative interviews provided deeper insights into individual challenges and contextual nuances. In the end, this structure let us look at the leadership dynamics and transformational effects of the local governance setting from every viewpoint.

#### 3.2 Research Objectives

**Objective 1:** To evaluate the nature of women leadership in the modern system of Panchayati Raj

**Objective 2:** To diagnose the changes in the socio-economic status of women panchayat representatives as a result of their leadership.

#### 3.3 Research Hypothesis

**Objective 1:** To evaluate the nature of women leadership in the modern system of Panchayati Raj.

#### H1 (Alternative Hypothesis)

The patriarchal social system has propagated the responsibilities of women in Panchayati Raj are mostly performed by the male members of the family.

#### H<sub>0</sub>1 (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant influence of the patriarchal social system on the execution of responsibilities of women in Panchayati Raj institutions

**Objective 2:** To diagnose the changes in the socio-economic status of women panchayat representatives as a result of their leadership.

**H2 (Alternative Hypothesis):**

As the socio-economic conditions of women are improving, there are positive improvements in their awareness and participation in the Panchayati Raj system.

**H<sub>0</sub>2 (Null Hypothesis):**

There is no significant relationship between the improvement in socio-economic conditions of women and their awareness or participation in the Panchayati Raj system..

**3.4 Study Area**

The current study was conducted in the Madhubani district of Bihar, an area where the Panchayati Raj system is aggressively enforced, featuring a 50% reservation for women in local government organisations. Madhubani is an important place to study grassroots leadership among women because of its distinctive social and cultural milieu. The district is a good place to look at how political decentralisation affects women's rights. Madhubani, with its mix of traditional values and changing democratic practices, is a good place to study how women's leadership works in rural governance structures in India.

**3.5 Target Population**

The study's target population consisted of elected female representatives currently or formerly occupying various roles within the Panchayati Raj Institutions of Madhubani district. This includes sarpanches, ward members, and other women who held position at all three levels of the PRI structure. These women were selected due to their direct expertise in local governance, decision-making procedures, and community development projects. Their participation in the Panchayati Raj system made them important sources of information for studying leadership behaviour and changes in the economy and society. The study concentrated on delineating their roles, responsibilities, obstacles, and the overarching influence of their involvement in local administration.

**3.6 Sampling Method**

The study utilised a purposive sampling technique to identify respondents who fulfilled particular criteria pertinent to the research aims. Women were chosen from different blocks in Madhubani district to make sure that the sample was representative and covered a wide area. The goal was to get people from different socio-economic and demographic backgrounds to participate. This included people of different ages, levels of education, castes, and lengths of service in Panchayati Raj Institutions. This method made sure that the sample included a range of experiences from women leaders in PRIs, which helped us get a better picture of the elements that affect leadership behaviour and socio-economic results.

**3.7 Sample Size**

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### 3.8 Data Collection Methods

- Primary Data:

Structured Questionnaire: Utilised for quantitative data regarding socio-economic status prior to and after to PRI involvement.

Items on a Likert scale: Measured perceptions of leadership, autonomy, and decision-making.

Interviews that are semi-structured: Captured stories and problems that come up on the way to becoming a leader.

- Secondary Data:

Review of government reports, election records, and academic studies on women in PRIs.

### 3.9 Research Variables

Independent Variables: Participation in PRI, leadership role, training exposure.

Dependent Variables: Indicators of socio-economic status (education, income, health access, social respect), leadership indicators (confidence, initiative, decision-making capacity).

### 3.10 Statistical Tools and Techniques

Descriptive Statistics: To summarize leadership traits and socio-economic attributes.

One-sample t-tests: To compare observed values against standard benchmarks of empowerment and leadership indicators.

Regression Analysis: To explore the relationship between leadership participation and socio-economic upliftment.

Reliability Analysis: (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) to check internal consistency of scales used.

### 3.11 Validity and Reliability

- The questionnaire was validated through expert review (academicians and PRI professionals).
- Pilot testing was conducted on 15 respondents for refining the instrument.
- Cronbach's Alpha values were used to confirm reliability above the 0.7 threshold.

### 3.12 Ethical Considerations

- Informed consent was obtained from all participants.
- Participation was voluntary and anonymous.
- Data was used solely for academic and research purposes, with confidentiality maintained.
- 12. Limitations of the Study
- The study focuses only on one district (Madhubani) and may not be generalizable to all regions.
- Responses may be influenced by social desirability bias or cultural constraints on expression.

4. Result & Discussion

4.1 Data Analysis for objective 1

Objective 1 To evaluate the nature of women leadership in the modern system of Panchayati Raj

4.1.1 Descriptives

Table 4. 1 Descriptive Statistics – Women’s Leadership Experiences

Descriptive Statistics										
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
I actively participate in all Panchayat meetings.	300	1	5	3.02	.054	.929	-.191	.141	-.952	.281
I am treated equally in decision-making processes in the Panchayat.	300	1	5	3.11	.056	.977	-.179	.141	-.865	.281
I feel confident in expressing my opinions during Panchayat discussions .	300	1	5	3.22	.054	.933	-.359	.141	-.929	.281
My leadership has brought positive changes in my village.	300	1	5	2.89	.046	.789	.122	.141	.065	.281
I have full autonomy in executing	300	1	5	2.94	.052	.900	.112	.141	-.136	.281

developmental tasks.										
Male members respect my leadership in the Panchayat.	300	1	5	3.09	.058	1.008	-.293	.141	-1.009	.281
My leadership is recognized by the community.	300	1	5	3.13	.055	.961	-.309	.141	-.982	.281
I take independent decisions without male intervention.	300	1	5	2.84	.047	.813	.032	.141	-.040	.281
Valid N (listwise)	300									

This table displays the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis for responses to statements on women’s leadership. Variables include participation, decision-making equality, confidence, recognition, autonomy, and community respect. The results suggest moderate to slightly positive perceptions, with lower scores for independent decision-making and developmental change contributions.

**4.1.2 T-Test**

**Table 4. 2 One-sample statistics showing women’s leadership and empowerment response averages**

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I feel confident in expressing my opinions during Panchayat discussions.	300	3.22	.933	.054
My leadership has brought positive changes in my village.	300	2.89	.789	.046
My leadership is recognized by the community.	300	3.13	.961	.055
I take independent decisions without male intervention.	300	2.84	.813	.047
People now treat me with more respect in public.	300	3.67	.763	.044
I am invited to speak at community functions.	300	3.27	.935	.054
I can challenge social and gender norms confidently.	300	3.19	.874	.050

Financial independence has reduced my fear of social pressure.	300	3.46	.831	.048
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This table summarizes the average responses of 300 women Panchayat representatives on leadership, autonomy, public respect, and empowerment. High means for public respect (3.67) and confidence (3.22) reflect positive perceptions, while lower means for autonomy (2.84) and leadership impact (2.89) highlight ongoing challenges in asserting independent authority.

**Table 4. 3 One-sample t-test comparing leadership indicators to neutral benchmark value.**

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I feel confident in expressing my opinions during Panchayat discussions.	4.148	299	.000	.223	.12	.33
My leadership has brought positive changes in my village.	-2.488	299	.013	-.113	-.20	-.02
My leadership is recognized by the community.	2.344	299	.020	.130	.02	.24
I take independent decisions without male intervention.	-3.338	299	.001	-.157	-.25	-.06
People now treat me with more respect in public.	15.289	299	.000	.673	.59	.76
I am invited to speak at community functions.	5.004	299	.000	.270	.16	.38
I can challenge social and gender norms confidently.	3.767	299	.000	.190	.09	.29
Financial independence has reduced my fear of social pressure.	9.519	299	.000	.457	.36	.55

This table presents the results of one-sample t-tests assessing whether women leaders' experiences differ significantly from a neutral score (value = 3). Significant positive values indicate increased public respect, confidence, and ability to challenge gender norms. However, lower scores on autonomy and leadership impact suggest persistent limitations in actual decision-making authority.

**Hypothesis 1** The patriarchal social system has propagated the responsibilities of women in Panchayat Raj are mostly performed by the male members of the family.

**Table 4. 4 Descriptive Statistics – Patriarchal Interference in PRIs**

Descriptive Statistics										
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
My husband or male family members interfere in my Panchayat work.	300	1	5	3.25	.052	.904	-.569	.141	-1.030	.281
I am often represented by male relatives in meetings.	300	1	5	2.84	.045	.774	-.014	.141	-.280	.281
Men in my family make major Panchayat decisions.	300	1	5	2.52	.049	.844	.750	.141	-.185	.281
I face resistance from family when I act independently.	300	1	5	2.47	.047	.815	.981	.141	.187	.281
Some believe women can't handle Panchayat responsibilities alone.	300	1	5	2.90	.058	1.011	-.084	.141	-1.299	.281
I have to seek male approval before finalizing decisions.	300	1	5	2.80	.045	.787	.156	.141	-.338	.281

My role is seen as symbolic by others.	300	1	5	2.96	.056	.977	-.114	.141	-1.406	.281
I lack freedom to travel or attend events without male supervision.	300	1	5	2.73	.041	.716	.174	.141	.025	.281
Valid N (listwise)	300									

This table presents descriptive measures on the perceived influence of male family members in women’s Panchayat roles. The mean scores indicate that many women still experience interference, symbolic representation, resistance from family, and need for male approval—highlighting the continued presence of patriarchal norms restricting autonomy in governance.

**Table 4. 5 Case Processing Summary – Valid Sample for Analysis**

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	300	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	300	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

This table confirms that the full sample of 300 women participants was valid and complete, with no missing responses for the items analyzed under Hypothesis 3. This supports the statistical robustness and completeness of the data used for reliability analysis and descriptive interpretation.

**Table 4. 6 Reliability Analysis – Patriarchal Interference Scale**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.856	8

Item reliability data for measuring patriarchal impact are summarised in this table. The items of the scale consistently measure the degree to which male relatives impact women's power and duties in the Panchayati Raj system, as indicated by the strong internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.856).

### 4.2.3 Hypothesis Testing Result for Objective 1

To test Hypothesis 1—“The patriarchal social system has propagated that the responsibilities of women in Panchayati Raj are mostly performed by the male members of the family”—a series of descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted based on responses from 300 women representatives. Descriptive statistics (Table 3) revealed moderate agreement with statements indicating patriarchal interference, such as male family members making major decisions (Mean = 2.52), resistance from family when acting independently (Mean = 2.47), and symbolic representation (Mean = 2.96). Furthermore, a high mean of 3.25 for male interference supports the claim that patriarchal influence remains strong.

The One-Sample T-Test results demonstrated that while women felt confident expressing opinions (Mean = 3.22,  $t = 4.15$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and received public respect (Mean = 3.67,  $t = 15.29$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), their ability to take independent decisions was significantly below the neutral value (Mean = 2.84,  $t = -3.34$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

Reliability analysis confirmed the internal consistency of the patriarchal scale (Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.856). Thus, the statistical evidence supports Hypothesis 3, validating Objective 1 by confirming that patriarchal norms still influence women’s autonomy in Panchayati Raj governance.

### 4.2 Data Analysis for Objective 2

**Objective 2 To diagnose the changes in the socio-economic status of women panchayat representatives as a result of their leadership.**

#### 4.2.1 T-Test

**Table 4. 7 One-Sample Statistics – Socio-Economic Change**

One-Sample Statistics					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Error
My educational awareness has increased after joining Panchayati Raj.	300	3.29	.992	.057	
I have gained more respect in my family and society.	300	3.14	.950	.055	
I have access to government schemes and benefits.	300	3.19	.993	.057	
I can now afford better healthcare and education for my family.	300	3.19	.975	.056	
Socio-economic upliftment boosts my confidence as a leader.	300	3.49	.836	.048	
Improved status has helped me balance family and leadership roles.	300	3.42	.856	.049	
Financial independence has reduced my fear of social pressure.	300	3.46	.831	.048	

Improved economic conditions have increased my political participation.	300	3.46	.835	.048
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This table summarizes average responses of 300 women representatives regarding socio-economic changes due to leadership. All means exceed the neutral value of 3, indicating perceived improvements in education, income, respect, access to benefits, and confidence. The highest mean (3.49) shows strong agreement that upliftment boosts leadership confidence.

**Table 4. 8 One-Sample T-Test – Statistical Significance**

One-Sample Test							
	Test Value = 3						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
					Lower	Upper	
My educational awareness has increased after joining Panchayati Raj.	5.122	299	.000	.293	.18	.41	
I have gained more respect in my family and society.	2.551	299	.011	.140	.03	.25	
I have access to government schemes and benefits.	3.372	299	.001	.193	.08	.31	
I can now afford better healthcare and education for my family.	3.376	299	.001	.190	.08	.30	
Socio-economic upliftment boosts my confidence as a leader.	10.152	299	.000	.490	.40	.58	
Improved status has helped me balance family and leadership roles.	8.434	299	.000	.417	.32	.51	
Financial independence has reduced my fear of social pressure.	9.519	299	.000	.457	.36	.55	
Improved economic conditions have increased my political participation.	9.473	299	.000	.457	.36	.55	

This table tests whether women's socio-economic improvements are statistically significant. All variables, including education, respect, access to schemes, and financial independence, show p-values < .05, indicating meaningful gains. The strongest significance is seen in confidence and political participation, confirming that leadership positively impacts women's personal and community status.

Table 4. 9 ANOVA – Respect in Family and Society

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My educational awareness has increased after joining Panchayati Raj.	Between Groups	12.267	3	4.089	4.293	.006
	Within Groups	281.920	296	.952		
	Total	294.187	299			
I have gained more respect in my family and society.	Between Groups	12.829	3	4.276	4.920	.002
	Within Groups	257.291	296	.869		
	Total	270.120	299			
I am now more involved in financial planning and budgeting.	Between Groups	9.263	3	3.088	4.338	.005
	Within Groups	210.684	296	.712		
	Total	219.947	299			
I have access to government schemes and benefits.	Between Groups	9.531	3	3.177	3.297	.021
	Within Groups	285.256	296	.964		
	Total	294.787	299			
I can now afford better healthcare and education for my family.	Between Groups	10.117	3	3.372	3.642	.013
	Within Groups	274.053	296	.926		
	Total	284.170	299			
I am better connected with officials and NGOs.	Between Groups	10.071	3	3.357	4.036	.008
	Within Groups	246.179	296	.832		
	Total	256.250	299			

This ANOVA table assesses whether respect gained by women varies across demographic groups. The significant result ( $F = 4.920$ ,  $p = .002$ ) indicates that not all women experience the same rise in family or societal respect. Factors like caste, role, or education likely influence perceived gains in status.

Hypothesis 2 As the socio-economic conditions of women are improving, there are positive improvements in their awareness and participation in the Panchayati Raj system.

Table 4. 10 Correlations – Socio-Economic Status and Awareness

Correlations							
		My financial status has improved since becoming a Panchayat member.	My educational awareness has increased after joining Panchayati Raj.	I have gained more respect in my family and society.	I am now more involved in financial planning and budgeting.	I have access to government schemes and benefits.	I can now afford better healthcare and education for my family.
My financial status has improved since becoming a Panchayat member.	Pearson Correlation	1	.755**	.735**	.830**	.809**	.790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
My educational awareness has increased after joining Panchayati Raj.	Pearson Correlation	.755**	1	.730**	.771**	.795**	.765**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
I have gained more respect in my family and society.	Pearson Correlation	.735**	.730**	1	.741**	.737**	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
I am now more involved in financial planning and budgeting.	Pearson Correlation	.830**	.771**	.741**	1	.816**	.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
I have access to government schemes and benefits.	Pearson Correlation	.809**	.795**	.737**	.816**	1	.788**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
I can now afford better	Pearson Correlation	.790**	.765**	.740**	.787**	.788**	1

healthcare and education for my family.	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix shows high positive relationships between improved financial status and variables like educational awareness (r = .755), access to benefits (r = .809), and budgeting involvement (r = .830). All correlations are significant (p < .01), confirming that better socio-economic conditions are closely associated with increased awareness and participation.

### 4.2.2 Regression

Table 4. 11 Variables Entered/Removed

Variables Entered/Removed			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Socio_Economy_Totalb	.	Enter
a. Dependent Variable: Awareness_Total			
b. All requested variables entered.			

This table confirms that the independent variable Socio\_Economy\_Total was entered into the regression model to predict the dependent variable Awareness\_Total. No variables were removed. This setup clearly isolates the effect of socio-economic conditions on awareness, ensuring focused and interpretable results in alignment with the study's hypothesis.

Table 4. 12 Socio-economic status explains 89% variance in awareness levels.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.944a	.890	.890	.28370
a. Predictors: (Constant), Socio_Economy_Total				

Among female representatives, there is a highly significant correlation between socioeconomic status and awareness, according to the regression model. An R<sup>2</sup> score of 0.890 suggests that changes in socioeconomic level account for 89% of the variation in awareness. This lends strong statistical backing to the study's first hypothesis.

Table 4. 13 ANOVA – Regression Significance

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	194.952	1	194.952	2422.114	.000b
	Residual	23.986	298	.080		
	Total	218.937	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Awareness_Total
b. Predictors: (Constant), Socio_Economy_Total

To find out if the regression model is significant statistically, look at the ANOVA table. Confirming that the association between socio-economic position and awareness is not attributable to chance, the F-value (2422.114) with  $p < .001$  supports this idea. The model's robustness and statistical significance support the idea that increases in awareness are a result of socioeconomic gains.

Table 4. 14 Coefficients – Predictive Strength

Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.052	.062		.836	.404
	Socio_Economy_Total	.964	.020	.944	49.215	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Awareness\_Total

This table presents regression coefficients. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = .964$ ) indicates that for every 1-point rise in socio-economic score, awareness increases by 0.964 units. The standardized coefficient  $Beta = .944$  shows a very strong effect size, and  $t = 49.215$ ,  $p < .001$  confirms statistical significance.

### 4.2.3 Hypothesis Testing Results for Objective 2

The second goal was to find out how women's leadership roles in the Panchayat affected their socioeconomic condition. The results of this research provide credence to the idea that the Panchayati Raj system is easier to understand and use for people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. According to one-sample t-tests, significant socio-economic progress has been shown. These indicators include things like improved political participation, better access to government schemes, higher levels of respect in society and the family, and increased informative awareness. The mean scores of these indicators are significantly higher than the neutral midpoint ( $p < 0.05$ ). Different demographic groupings, such as caste or role in the Panchayat, show substantially larger differences in socio-economic gains, and women's backgrounds affect the leadership experience differently, according to the ANOVA results. At the 0.01, there was a high correlation between financial situation and budget participation, healthcare access, and educational improvement. Another finding from the regression study reveals that socioeconomic position explains 89% of the variation in awareness levels, indicating that it is a powerful predictor of awareness. Considered collectively, these results provide credence to the idea that female financial independence via leadership positions in Panchayati Raj organisations encourages them to speak up more, be more assertive, and participate in group decision-making.

## 5. Conclusion

This study investigated the dual dimensions of women's involvement in Panchayati Raj Institutions: the characteristics of their leadership and the socio-economic transformations resulting from their participation. The results show that things are complicated. Elected women legislators in Madhubani district are becoming more visible, confident, and respected in their communities, but their leadership is still formed and often limited by patriarchal standards. Evidence demonstrating restricted autonomy in decision-making, symbolic representation, and frequent interference by male family members substantiated Objective 1. These patterns show that giving women formal political power doesn't always mean they can run things on their own. On the other hand, Objective 2 showed that women who take up leadership responsibilities had a far better socioeconomic status. More people are getting involved and feeling more confident since they are more aware of education, healthcare, government programs, and their own finances. The strong statistical link between socioeconomic upliftment and awareness ( $R^2 = 0.890$ ) shows how powerful this kind of engagement can be, but even though Panchayati Raj has made it easier for women to get involved, traditional social structures still make it hard for them to have their own say. To make women's leadership truly effective and revolutionary, policies

must work to limit patriarchal interference and encourage female representatives to make their own decisions based on facts.

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