

## **Functioning in Panchayati raj Local Government in Andhra Pradesh: A Study of Pendurthi Mandal in Visakhapatnam District**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the rural local government in Pendurthi Mandal, Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh. The mandal's administrative structure, demographics, economic profile, and challenges are analyzed. The role of Panchayats in delivering basic services and promoting development is highlighted. The study identifies best practices, including effective implementation of the MGNREGA scheme, promotion of organic farming, and establishment of a robust healthcare system. Challenges faced by Panchayats, including inadequate funding, limited capacity, and lack of infrastructure, are discussed. Recommendations for strengthening Panchayats and promoting development in Pendurthi Mandal are provided. This study contributes to the understanding of rural local government in India and offers insights for policymakers and practitioners.

**Keywords:** Rural Local Government, Panchayats, Pendurthi Mandal, Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh.

### **Introduction**

Rural local governments in India play a vital role in delivering basic services and promoting development at the grassroots level. The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution empowered rural local governments, also known as Panchayats, to function as institutions of self-government. This article focuses on the rural local government in Pendurthi Mandal, Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh.

### **Administrative Structure**

Pendurthi Mandal is one of the 11 Mandals in Visakhapatnam district. The mandal is headed by a Tahsildar, who is vested with magisterial powers. The Mandal Revenue Officer (MRO) is responsible for the administration and revenue collection of the mandal. The MRO is assisted by a team of officials, including the Deputy Tahsildar, Mandal Revenue Inspector, and Assistant Statistical Officer.

### **Demographics**

As per the 2011 Census, the total population of Pendurthi Mandal is 146,650, with a male population of 73,434 and a female population of 73,216. The mandal has a total of 37,440 households, with an average household size of 3.9 persons. The literacy rate in the mandal is 79.12%, with a male literacy rate of 77.53% and a female literacy rate of 65.74%.

### **Rural-Urban Divide**

Pendurthi Mandal has a significant urban population, with 77.9% of the population living in urban areas and 22.1% living in rural areas. The urban areas have a higher literacy rate of 82.3%, compared to the rural areas, which have a literacy rate of 67.9%. The sex ratio in the urban areas is 992, while in the rural areas, it is 1,015.

### **Economic Profile**

The economy of Pendurthi Mandal is primarily driven by agriculture, with a significant proportion of the population engaged in farming and allied activities. The mandal is also home to several industries, including textiles, pharmaceuticals, and food processing. The major crops grown in the mandal include paddy, sugarcane, and groundnuts.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Despite the progress made in recent years, Pendurthi Mandal still faces several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to healthcare and education, and poverty. However, the mandal also presents several opportunities for growth and development, including its strategic location, abundant natural resources, and skilled workforce.

### **Role of Panchayats**

The Panchayats in Pendurthi Mandal play a crucial role in delivering basic services and promoting development at the grassroots level. The Panchayats are responsible for providing services such as drinking water, sanitation, and roads. They also play a key role in promoting agriculture, education, and healthcare in the mandal.

#### **Functioning of Panchayats**

The Panchayats in Pendurthi Mandal are elected by the people and are responsible for governing the mandal. The Panchayats are headed by a Sarpanch, who is assisted by a team of ward members. The Panchayats meet regularly to discuss and decide on various issues related to the development of the mandal.

### **Challenges Faced by Panchayats**

The Panchayats in Pendurthi Mandal face several challenges, including inadequate funding, limited capacity, and lack of infrastructure. The Panchayats also face challenges in implementing various government schemes and programs, due to lack of awareness and limited resources.

### **Initiatives and Programs**

The government has launched several initiatives and programs to strengthen the Panchayats and promote development at the grassroots level. Some of the notable initiatives include the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

### **Convergence of Schemes**

The government has also launched several schemes to promote convergence of services at the grassroots level. Some of the notable schemes include the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), and the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

**Table 1: Distribution of MPTC members by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	12	40%
Female	18	60%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 40.00% (12) of the MPTC members are male category, whereas 60.00% (18) of the MPTC members are female category. It was concluded that, majority 60.00% (18) of the MPTC members are female category.

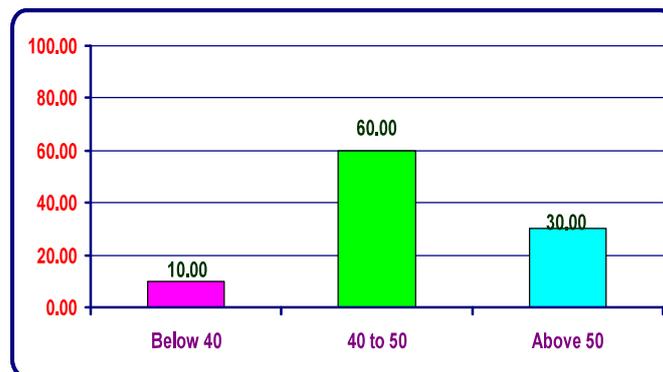


**Figure-1: Distribution of MPTC members by gender**

**Table 2: Distribution of MPTC members by Age**

Age	No. of respondents	Percent
Below 40	3	10%
40 to 50	18	60%
Above 50	9	30%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 10.00% (3) of the MPTC members are below 40 years age group, whereas 60.00% (18) of the MPTC members are 40 to 50 years age group and 30.00% (9) of the MPTC members are above 50 years age group. It was concluded that, majority 60.00% (18) of the MPTC members are 40 to 50 years age group.

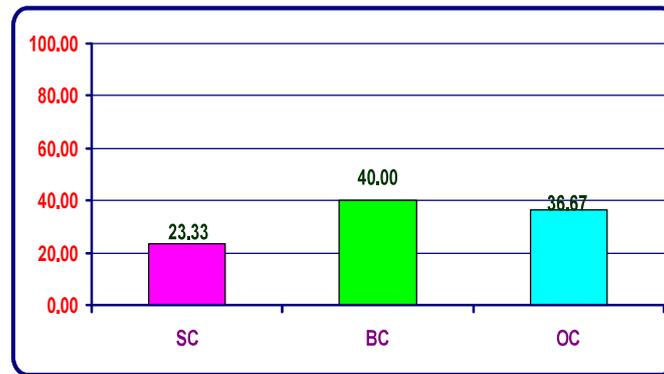


**Figure-2: Distribution of MPTC members by Age**

**Table 3: Distribution of MPTC members by their Social Status**

Social Status	No. of respondents	Percent
SC	7	23.33%
BC	12	40%
OC	11	36.67%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 23.33% (7) of the MPTC members are SC caste category; whereas 40.00% (12) of the MPTC members are BC caste category and 36.67% (11) of the respondents are OC caste categories. It was concluded that, majority 40.00% (12) of the MPTC members are BC caste category.

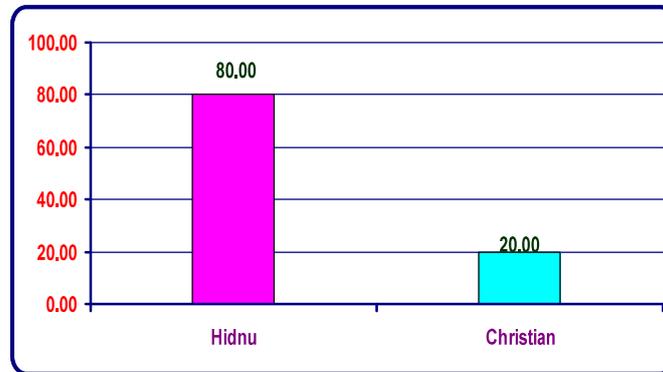


**Figure-3 : Distribution of MPTC members by their Social Status**

**Table 4: Distribution of MPTC members by their Religion**

Religion	No. of respondents	Percent
Hindu	24	80%
Christian	6	20%
Total N=30	30	100%

Table above observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 80.00% (24) of the MPTC members are belongs to associated with Hindus, whereas 20.00% (6) of the MPTC members are Christians. It was concluded that, majority 80.00% (24) of the MPTC members are Hindus.

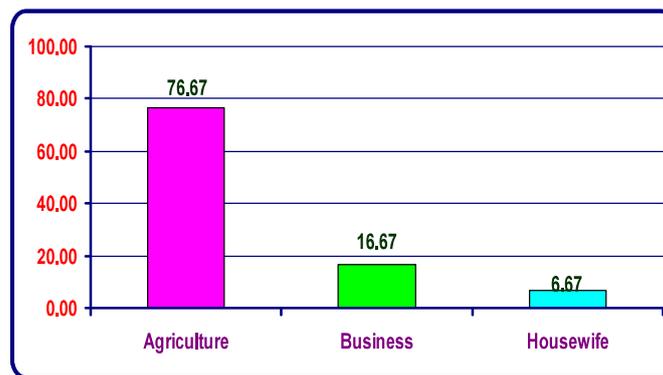


**Figure-4: Distribution of MPTC members by their Religion**

**Table 5: Distribution of MPTC members by their Occupation**

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percent
Agriculture	23	76.67%
Business	5	16.67%
Housewife	2	6.67%
Total N=30	30	100%

Table 5.2.6 observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 76.67% (23) of the MPTC members are doing cultivation, whereas 16.67% (5) of the MPTC members are doing business and 6.67% (2) of the MPTC members are Housewives. It was concluded that, majority 76.67% (23) of the MPTC members are doing cultivation.

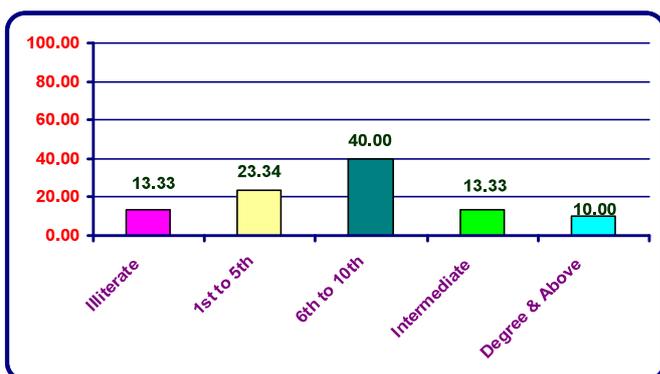


**Figure-5: Distribution of MPTC members by their Occupation**

**Table 6: Distribution of MPTC members by their Educational Qualifications**

Educational Qualifications	No. of respondents	Percent
Illiterate	4	13.33%
1 <sup>st</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup>	7	23.34%
6 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup>	12	40%
Intermediate	4	13.33%
Degree & Above	3	10%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 13.33% (4) of the MPTC members are Illiterates, whereas 23.34% (7) of the MPTC members are having primary education, 40.00% (12) of the participants are qualified Secondary Education, 13.33% (4) of the MPTC members are qualified Intermediate education and 10.00% (3) of the MPTC members are completed Degree and above Qualification. It was concluded that, majority 40.00% (12) of them are qualified Secondary only Education



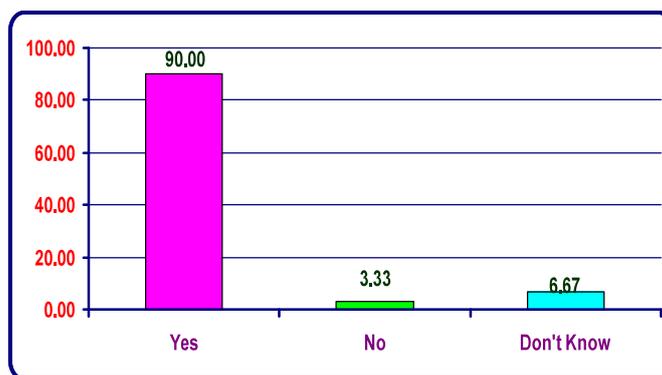
**Figure-6: Distribution of MPTC members by their Educational Qualifications**

**Table 7: Opinion about considerable changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act**

Response	No. of respondents	Percent
Yes	27	90%
No	1	3.33%
Don't Know	2	6.67%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 90.00% (27) of the MPTC members expressed that, there is a significant changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, whereas 3.33% (1) of the respondents expressed that, there is no significant changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act and 6.67% (2) of the respondents expressed that, they don't known about the significant changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Ac. It was concluded that, majority 90.00% (27) of the MPTC members expressed that, there is a

significant changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act.

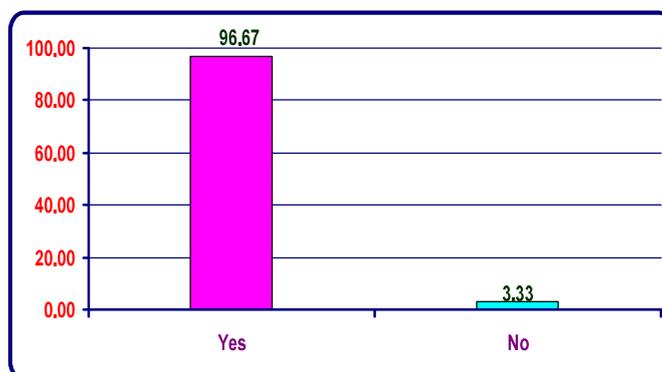


**Figure-7: Opinion on any considerable changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act**

**Table 8: Opinion about level of satisfaction feel that the present three - tire structure of Panchayati Raj is Helpful to rural areas**

Response	No. of respondents	Percent
Yes	29	96.67%
No	1	3.33%
Total N=30	30	100%

Table 5.2.9 observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 96.67% (29) of the MPTC members felt that the present three -tire structure of Panchayati Raj is helpful to rural areas, whereas 3.33% (1) of the MPTC members are felt that the present three -tire structure of Panchayati Raj is not helpful to rural areas. It was concluded that, majority 96.67% (29) of the MPTC members felt that the present three -tire structure of Panchayati Raj is helpful to rural areas.

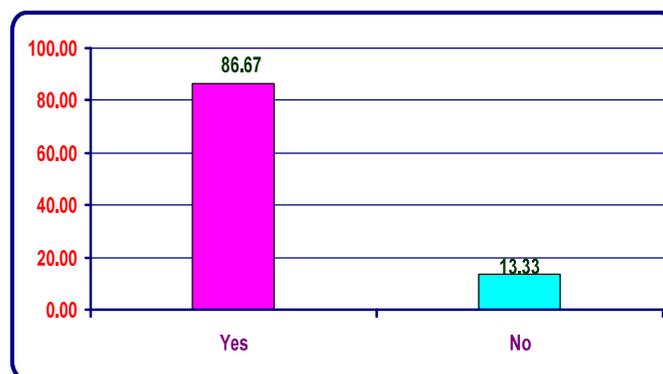


**Figure-8: Opinion on the present three - tire structure of Panchayati Raj is Helpful to rural areas.**

**Table 9: Opinion about frequency of meetings held in respective Mandal Parishads**

Response	No. of respondents	Percent
Yes	26	86.67%
No	4	13.33%
Total N=30	30	100%

The above table observed that, out of 30 MPTC members, 86.67% (26) of the MPTC members expressed that, the meetings of the Mandal Parishad are held frequently in their Mandal, whereas 13.33% (4) of the MPTC members expressed that, the meetings of the Mandal Parishad are not held frequently in their Mandal. It was concluded that, majority 86.67% (26) of the MPTC members expressed that, the meetings of the Mandal Parishad are held frequently in their Mandal.



**Figure-9: Opinion about frequently of meetings held in respective Mandal Parishad.**

#### Best Practices

In Pendurthi Mandal there are some best practices have been identified in the study, it includes the effective implementation of the MGNREGA scheme, the promotion of organic farming, and the establishment of a robust healthcare system.

#### Findings:

1. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, there is a significant changes in the Panchayati Raj System of Andhra Pradesh after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act.
2. Majority of the MPTC members felt that the present three -tire structure of Panchayati Raj is helpful to rural areas.
3. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, the meetings of the Mandal Parishad are held frequently in their Mandal.
4. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, 76-100% of the MPTC members are attended in the Mandal Parishad Meetings

5. Majority of the respondents expressed that, they usually discussed about the people's Problems and review of developmental problems in Mandal Parishad Meetings.
6. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they select all the beneficiaries of rural development programme at the Mandal Parishad Level.
7. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they are getting representation in the implementation of Rural Development Programmes.
8. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they are having Shortage of staff in Staff Strength of PRIs after the 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional Amendment Act.
9. Majority of the MPTC members agreed that, they are having the Provisions Covered under the section 25 (c), 165 (i)(a) and 193 (i)( a ) of Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act.
10. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they felt that rural bureaucracy interferes with the functioning of elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
11. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been given adequate powers after 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act.
12. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they want all the Functions, Funds and Functionaries of subjects mentioned in 11<sup>th</sup> schedules be transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
13. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, 10-15 subjects are transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
14. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, the financial resources and assets of PR Institutions are from State Funds and Village Revenue.
15. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they believe that the funds as recommended by the National Finance Commission and State Finance Commissions have been given to Panchayati Raj Institutions.
16. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they are satisfied with the performance of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Andhra Pradesh.
17. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, they are faced hurdles by the elected representatives in functioning of the PRIs.
18. Majority of the MPTC members thought the demands of Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Sarpanches Association, M.P.T.Cs Association are justified.
19. Majority of the respondents expressed that, they are some times come with their male family members, while attending the meetings of Panchayati Raj institutions.
20. Majority of the MPTC members expressed that, their Husbands are attended with them while attending the Panchayati Raj Institutions meetings or while travelling outside in connection with their role in Panchayati Raj.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Pendurthi Mandal in Visakhapatnam district is a critical component of the rural local government in India. Pendurthi Mandal has made significant progress in recent years, but still faces several challenges. By addressing these challenges and leveraging its opportunities, Pendurthi Mandal can emerge as a model of rural development and governance in India.

## Recommendations

### Based on the study, the following recommendations are made

1. Strengthening of Panchayats: Capacity building and training programs for Panchayat members and officials.
2. Improving Infrastructure: Investment in roads, drinking water, and sanitation facilities.
3. Promoting Agriculture: Initiatives to promote organic farming, soil testing, and farm mechanization.
4. Enhancing Education and Healthcare: Upgrading schools and healthcare facilities, and recruiting qualified teachers and healthcare professionals.
5. Encouraging Citizen Participation: Regular Gram Sabhas and ward meetings to ensure citizen participation in decision-making processes.

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