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Profile of Sarpanches and their emotional intelligence

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Abstract

The study delves into the profile analysis of Sarpanches and their emotional intelligence in South Gujarat, aiming to enhance local governance effectiveness. Employing an ex-post-facto research design across seven districts, 210 Sarpanches were surveyed. Findings reveal a predominance of middle-aged individuals with secondary education, primarily from Scheduled Tribes. Moderate income and landholding patterns underscore diverse economic circumstances. Active community involvement and leadership roles highlight their significance in local governance. Varied management efficiency and group cohesiveness levels necessitate tailored support for optimal effectiveness. The study underscores the importance of enhancing emotional intelligence among Sarpanches for improved leadership and governance.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence (EI), sarpanch, panchayati raj system

Introduction

India's post-independence era marked a pivotal juncture in its developmental landscape, with a population of 359.0 million, wherein 55.00 percent were reliant on agriculture for sustenance. Recognizing the imperative of inclusive rural development, the nation embarked on a transformative journey of Democratic Decentralization. This paradigm shift culminated in the inception of the Panchayati Raj system on October 2nd, 1959, constituting a three-tier structure of governance aimed at empowering local self-governance in districts, taluka/block, and villages.

The Panchayati Raj system serves as a beacon of participatory democracy, facilitating the engagement of diverse sections of society in common programs under the leadership of democratically elected representatives. A true sense of rural development necessitates the devolution of responsibilities and power to rural communities in a democratic manner. The Constitution Act (73rd Amendment) of 1992 was a landmark legislation that reinforced the third tier of democracy by mandating regular elections, reserving seats for marginalized groups, and devolving powers and revenues to local bodies.

Empowered by legislative provisions, panchayats have been entrusted with a plethora of activities aimed at rural development and the welfare of the populace. Central to this endeavor are Sarpanches and gram panchayats, who bear the pivotal responsibility for holistic village advancement. Their roles span diverse sectors, including agriculture, healthcare, education, water access, sanitation, and social justice.

However, amidst their multifaceted duties, Sarpanches encounter myriad challenges that necessitate not only

intellectual acumen but also emotional intelligence (EI). EI, a psychological construct encompassing the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions, plays a vital role in leadership effectiveness. It fosters transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making processes, thereby bolstering good governance.

In South Gujarat, Sarpanches occupy a significant position in local governance and decision-making processes. Understanding their emotional intelligence is crucial, as it can profoundly impact their leadership effectiveness and the overall well-being of their communities. As such, this research aims to delve into and analyze the conceptualization of emotional intelligence among Sarpanches in South Gujarat. By identifying areas for improvement and providing insights for potential interventions or training programs, the study seeks to enhance their leadership capacities and contribute to the broader discourse on emotional intelligence in local leadership.

Materials and Methods

This research was carried out across seven districts within the South Gujarat region, employing an ex-post-facto research design. To ensure a representative sample, a simple random sampling technique was utilized to select Sarpanches as respondents. A total of 210 Sarpanches, including 105 males and 105 females, were randomly chosen for participation.

Statistical analysis involved the use of the arbitrary method, along with standard deviation (SD) and mean calculations, for data categorization and interpretation.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the sarpanches

The profile is a short description. Data regarding the profile of Sarpanches were analyzed and presented in the following sequence.

Age: The physical and psychological growth of an

individual is intertwined with their age. Sarpanches were requested to disclose their age in full years. Subsequently, the gathered data were categorized into three groups: (i) young age (up to 35 years), (ii) middle age (36 to 50 years), and (iii) old age (above 50 years). The age data obtained are displayed in table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Sarpanches according to their age

Sr.	Categories	Age			Total
		Young	Middle	Old	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	10 (9.52)	70 (66.67)	25 (23.81)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	42 (40.00)	52 (49.52)	11 (10.48)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	52 (24.76)	122 (58.10)	36 (17.14)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Table 1 illustrates that the majority (66.67%) of male Sarpanches were in the middle age group, followed by 23.81 percent in the old age group and 9.52 percent in the young age group. Conversely, for female Sarpanches, 49.52 percent were in middle age, 40.00 percent in the young age, and 10.48 percent in the old age group. It's a great sign for the panchayati raj system that more young age female Sarpanches are participating in local governance. The aggregated data from the table 1 indicates that 58.10 percent of all Sarpanches were in the middle age group, while 24.76 percent were in the young age group, and 17.14

percent were in the old age group. These findings shed light on the age distribution among Sarpanches, highlighting the prevalence of middle-aged individuals in this role.

Education: Education facilitates desired alterations in one's behaviour. To assess this, information was gathered and segmented into four categories: (i) illiterate (not able to read and write), (ii) primary education (up to 7th standard), (iii) secondary education (8th to 12th standard), and (iv) college education and beyond (graduation or post-graduation). The compiled data are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their education

Sr.	Categories	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	College & above	Total
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	2 (1.90)	24 (22.86)	65 (61.90)	14 (13.33)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	2 (1.90)	21 (20.00)	62 (59.05)	20 (19.05)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	4 (1.90)	45 (21.43)	127 (60.48)	34 (16.19)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The distribution of respondents according to their education, as presented in Table 2, indicates variations among male and female Sarpanches as well as the pooled data. Among male Sarpanches, the majority possessed secondary education (61.90%), followed by primary education (22.86%), with a smaller percentage having a college education and above (13.33%). Similarly, among female Sarpanches, the highest proportion had secondary education (59.05%), followed by primary education (20.00%) and college and above education constituting a smaller portion (19.05%). Upon examining the pooled data, it's evident that the highest percentage of respondents had secondary education (60.48%), followed by primary education (21.43%), and

college education and above (16.19%). The distribution of education levels among Sarpanches provides valuable insights into the educational backgrounds within this group. More than 75 percent of Sarpanches had secondary or more than secondary education is good for good governance.

Caste

Caste is an inherent aspect determined at birth. To delve into this phenomenon, information was gathered and classified into four primary caste categories: (i) Scheduled Tribes (ST), (ii) Scheduled Castes (SC), (iii) Other Backward Classes (OBC), and (iv) General category and the data presented in table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their caste

Sr.	Categories	ST	SC	OBC	General	Total
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	71(67.62)	2(1.90)	14(13.33)	18(17.14)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	68 (64.76)	4(3.81)	12.00 (11.43)	21(20.00)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	139 (66.19)	6 (2.86)	26 (12.38)	39 (18.57)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The analysis of Table 3 reveals distinct patterns among male and female Sarpanches in terms of caste representation. Among the male Sarpanches, the majority, (67.62%) of total respondents belonged to the ST category, followed by 17.14 percent in the General category, 13.33 percent in the OBC category, and a minimal 1.90 percent in the SC category. Similarly, among female Sarpanches, the highest proportion identified with the ST category at 64.76 percent, with 20.00 percent in the General category, 11.43 percent in the OBC category, and the lowest representation at 3.81 percent in the SC category.

When pooling data from both male and female Sarpanches, the dominant presence was from the ST category at 66.19

percent. The General category followed at 18.57 percent, while the OBC category constituted 12.38 percent, and the SC category had the smallest representation at 2.86 percent.

Annual income

In the present study, annual income refers to the total earnings of the Sarpanches within a year. Respondents were asked about their income and their responses were categorized into three groups: (i) low annual income (up to Rs. 50,000/-), (ii) medium annual income (Rs. 50,001 to 1,00,000/-), and (iii) high annual income (above Rs. 1,00,000/-). The data pertaining to the annual income of Sarpanches are delineated in table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their annual income

Sr.	Categories	Annual income			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	33 (31.43)	54 (51.43)	18 (17.14)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	31 (29.52)	55 (52.38)	19 (18.10)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	64 (30.48)	109 (51.90)	37 (17.62)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The data in table 4 indicate that among male Sarpanches, the largest proportion reported a moderate annual income, accounting for 51.43 percent of the total respondents. This was followed by 31.43 percent reporting a low annual income and 17.14 percent reporting a high annual income. Similarly, among female Sarpanches, the majority, representing 52.38 percent, reported a moderate annual income, with 29.52 percent reporting a low annual income and 18.10 percent reporting a high annual income.

Pooling data from both male and female Sarpanches, the majority reported moderate annual income, accounting for 51.90 percent of the total respondents. Low annual income was reported by 30.48 percent of respondents, while high

annual income was reported by 17.62 percent. These findings offer insights into the distribution of annual income among Sarpanches, reflecting varying economic circumstances within this leadership role.

Land holding

Land holding refers to the total area owned by the Sarpanches at the time of the interview and is often regarded as a discriminator of economic status in Indian society. The collected data were categorized into three distinct groups: (i) small land holding (up to 2.00 ha.), (ii) medium land holding (2.01 to 5.00 ha.), and (iii) large land holding (above 5.00 ha.). The data are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to their land holding

Sr.	Categories	Land holding				Total
		No	Low	Medium	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	2 (1.90)	59 (56.19)	26 (24.76)	18 (17.14)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	17 (16.19)	51 (48.57)	26 (24.76)	11 (10.48)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	19 (9.05)	110 (52.38)	52 (24.76)	29 (13.81)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The data presented in table 5 distinctly reveal that among male Sarpanches, the majority, constituting 56.19 percent of the total respondents, reported low landholding, followed by 24.76 percent reporting medium landholding and 17.14 percent reported high landholding. A small percentage, 1.90 percent, reported having no landholding. Similarly, among female Sarpanches, the highest proportion, at 48.57 percent, reported low landholding, followed by 24.76 percent reporting medium land holding, 16.19 percent reported having no landholding and 10.48 percent reported high landholding.

Pooling data from both male and female Sarpanches, 52.38 percent reported low landholding, 24.76 percent reported medium landholding, and 13.81 percent reported high

landholding. A smaller percentage, 9.05 percent, reported having no landholding. These findings shed light on the diverse landholding patterns among Sarpanches, offering insights into their economic status and land ownership dynamics within local governance contexts.

Social participation

Social participation encompasses the active involvement of individuals in their communities, societies, or social groups. The gathered data were classified into four distinct categories: (i) no membership, (ii) membership in one organization, (iii) membership in more than one organization, and (iv) holding position in organization. These categorized data are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to their social participation

Sr.	Categories	Membership				Total
		No	One	More than one	Holding position	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	0 (0.00)	79 (75.24)	26 (24.76)	85 (80.95)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	0 (0.00)	59 (56.19)	47 (44.76)	79 (75.24)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	0 (0.00)	138 (65.71)	72 (34.29)	164 (78.10)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The distribution of respondents' social participation, as delineated in Table 6, unfolds a comprehensive picture of engagement levels among Sarpanches:

Notable, none of the male or female Sarpanches reported a lack of membership in any organization, indicating a high level of social engagement within the community.

Among male Sarpanches, the majority, comprising 75.24 percent, were affiliated with a single organization, while 56.19 percent of female Sarpanches shared this affiliation, showcasing a significant level of involvement in community activities.

A considerable portion of respondents, accounting for 24.76 percent of males and 44.76 percent of females, were members in more than one organization, reflecting a diversified engagement in various social groups or initiatives.

Further reveal that a substantial proportion of Sarpanches,

representing 80.95 percent of males and 75.24 percent of females, held leadership positions within their respective organizations, underscoring their active roles in driving community initiatives and governance.

Pooling data from both male and female Sarpanches, 65.71 percent were affiliated with a single organization, 34.29 percent were members of multiple organizations, and 78.10 percent held leadership positions. These findings highlight the diverse and active involvement of Sarpanches in community affairs, indicating their significant contributions to local governance and social cohesion.

Training

Training availed by the Sarpanches at different levels like village, block, district and state level. The collected data are presented in table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to their training availed

Sr.	Categories	Village level	Taluka level	District level	State level	Total
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	40 (38.10)	59 (56.19)	6 (5.71)	0 (0.00)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	59 (56.19)	42 (40.00)	4 (3.81)	0 (0.00)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	99 (47.14)	101 (48.10)	10 (4.76)	0 (0.00)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

From table 7, it's clear that the majority of male Sarpanches, comprising 56.19 percent, received their training at the block level, followed by 38.10 percent at the village level, and only 5.71 percent at the district level. None of them received training at the state level. Similarly, among female Sarpanches, the largest proportion, constituting 56.19 percent, underwent training at the village level. Meanwhile, 40 percent received training at the block level, and a mere 3.81 percent received training at the district level. Like their male counterparts, none of the female Sarpanches received training at the state level.

When examining the pooled data, it's apparent that the majority, accounting for 48.10 percent, of all Sarpanches underwent training at the block level. This was closely followed by 47.14 percent who received training at the village level. Only 4.76 percent of the respondents received training at the district level, while none received training at the state level.

Management efficiency

It involves streamlined resource allocation and effective utilization to ensure cost-effective operations and meet

customer needs. The views of the Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories, (i) lower level of management efficiency (up to 28 score), (ii) moderate level of management efficiency (29 to 45 score) and (iii) higher level of management efficiency (above 45 score). The classified data are presented in table 8.

In table 14, it's evident that among male Sarpanches, a majority of 59.05 percent demonstrated lower management efficiency, followed by 33.33 percent with moderate management efficiency, and a smaller proportion of 7.62 percent with higher management efficiency. This could suggest a need for targeted interventions or training programs to enhance management skills among male Sarpanches. Conversely, among female Sarpanches, a lower proportion of 21.90 percent exhibited lower management efficiency, while a significant majority of 70.48 percent demonstrated moderate management efficiency, and a similar proportion of 7.62 percent showed higher management efficiency. This indicates a relatively stronger performance in management efficiency among female Sarpanches compared to their male counterparts.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents according to their management efficiency

Sr.	Categories	Management efficiency			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	62 (59.05)	35 (33.33)	8 (7.62)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	23 (21.90)	74 (70.48)	8 (7.62)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	85 (40.48)	109 (51.90)	16 (7.62)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Looking at the pooled data, it's notable that 40.48 percent of respondents showed lower management efficiency, 51.90 percent demonstrated moderate management efficiency, and 7.62 percent exhibited higher management efficiency. This suggests a varied distribution of management efficiency levels among all Sarpanches surveyed, emphasizing the importance of tailored support and development initiatives to optimize management effectiveness.

Group cohesiveness

It reflects the unity, solidarity, and emotional connection among group members. The views of the Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories as, (i) low level

of group cohesiveness (up to 12 score), (ii) moderate level of group cohesiveness (13 to 17 score) and (iii) high level of group cohesiveness (above 17 score). The classified data are presented in table 15.

Table 9 shows that in the case of male Sarpanches, the majority, accounting for 59.05 percent, demonstrated low group cohesiveness, followed by 35.24 percent showing moderate group cohesiveness. A smaller proportion, 5.71 percent, demonstrated high group cohesiveness. For female Sarpanches, a relatively higher proportion of 53.33 percent demonstrated moderate group cohesiveness, followed by 23.81 percent exhibiting high group cohesiveness. Conversely, 22.86 percent showed low group cohesiveness.

Table 9: Distribution of respondents according to their group cohesiveness

Sr.	Categories	Group cohesiveness			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	62 (59.05)	37 (35.24)	6 (5.71)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	24 (22.86)	56 (53.33)	25 (23.81)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	86 (40.95)	93 (44.29)	31 (14.76)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Analyzing the pooled data, it's notable that 44.29 percent of respondents demonstrated moderate group cohesiveness, slightly higher than the 40.95 percent showing low group cohesiveness. However, a smaller proportion of 14.76 percent exhibited high group cohesiveness, indicating a varied distribution across the levels of group cohesiveness among all Sarpanches surveyed.

Experience

It is widely believed that an individual's length of experience significantly influences decision-making in life. To investigate this, data was collected and grouped into three categories: (i) lower (up to 3 years), (ii) medium (4 to 6 years), and (iii) higher (above 6 years) service experience. The data are presented in table 10.

Table 10: Distribution of respondents according to their experience

Sr.	Categories	Lower experience	Moderate experience	Higher experience	Total
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	50 (47.62)	18 (17.14)	37 (35.24)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	65 (61.90)	24 (22.86)	16 (15.24)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	115 (54.76)	42 (20.00)	53 (25.24)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Table 10 depicted that male Sarpanches, 47.62 percent had lower experience, 17.14 percent had moderate experience, and 35.24 percent had higher experience. Among Female Sarpanches, a majority (61.90%) had lower experience, while 22.86 percent had moderate experience, and a smaller proportion (15.24%) had higher experience. This indicates

that female interest in local level politics is increasing. In the pooled data, the majority (54.76%) of respondents had lower experience, followed by 25.24 percent with higher experience, and 20.00 percent with moderate experience. This distribution suggests a predominance of lower experience levels across all respondents surveyed.

Innovativeness: It refers to the degree to which an individual is relatively earlier in the adoption of new ideas than the other members of his social system. The data in this regard were collected from the respondents and grouped

into three categories, (i) low level of innovativeness (up to 2 score), (ii) moderate level of innovativeness (3 to 4 score) and (iii) high level of innovativeness (above 4 score). The data in regard are presented in table 11.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents according to their innovativeness

Sr.	Categories	Innovativeness			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	20 (19.05)	52 (49.52)	33 (31.43)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	6 (5.71)	36 (34.29)	63 (60.00)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	26 (12.38)	88 (41.90)	96 (45.71)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The result presented in table 11 indicates that male Sarpanches, 49.52 percent showed moderate innovativeness, followed by 31.43 percent demonstrating high innovativeness, and 19.05 percent exhibiting low innovativeness. Among female Sarpanches, 60.00 percent exhibited high innovativeness, followed by 34.29 percent demonstrating moderate innovativeness, and a smaller proportion of 5.71 percent showed low innovativeness. In the pooled data, the highest proportion, 45.71 percent, exhibited high innovativeness, followed by 41.90 percent demonstrating moderate innovativeness, and the lowest

proportion, 12.38 percent, showed low innovativeness.

Communication ability

It encompasses skills such as clarity, articulation, active listening, empathy, and adaptability to different audiences and contexts. The data in this regard were collected from the respondents and grouped into three categories as, (i) lower communication ability (up to 12 score), (ii) moderate communication ability (13 to 17 score) and (iii) higher communication ability (above 17 score). The data in regards are presented in table 12.

Table 12: Distribution of respondents according to their communication ability

Sr.	Categories	Communication ability			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	57 (54.29)	36 (34.29)	12 (11.43)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	18 (17.14)	44 (41.90)	43 (40.95)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	75 (35.71)	80 (38.10)	55 (26.19)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The data of table 12 shows that male Sarpanches, the majority, at 54.29 percent, exhibited lower communication ability, followed by 34.29 percent showing moderate communication ability, and the smallest proportion, at 11.43 percent, demonstrated higher communication ability. Among Female Sarpanches, the highest proportion, at 40.95 percent, exhibited higher communication ability, followed by 41.90 percent demonstrating moderate communication ability, and the lowest percentage, at 17.14 percent, showed lower communication ability. In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 38.10 percent, demonstrated moderate communication ability, followed by

35.71 percent exhibiting lower communication ability, and the smallest percentage, at 26.19 percent, showed higher communication ability.

Decision making ability

It is an ability to select best alternatives for expected outcome. The views of the Sarpanches in this regard were collected and classified into three groups such as, (i) poor level of decision making ability (up to 10 score), (ii) good level of decision making ability (11 to 14 score) and (iii) best level of decision making ability (above 14 score). The classified data are presented in table 13.

Table 13: Distribution of respondents according to their decision making ability

Sr.	Categories	Decision-making ability			Total
		Poor	Good	Best	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	42 (40.00)	43 (40.95)	20 (19.05)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	12 (11.43)	53 (50.48)	40 (38.10)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	54 (25.71)	96 (45.71)	60 (28.57)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Table 13 depicted that male Sarpanches, 40.95 percent showed good decision-making ability, followed by 40.00 percent exhibiting poor decision-making ability, and the smallest proportion, at 19.05 percent, demonstrated the best decision-making ability. For Female Sarpanches, the majority, at 50.48 percent, demonstrated good decision-making ability, followed by 38.10 percent exhibiting best decision-making ability, and the smallest proportion, at 11.43 percent, showed poor decision-making ability. In the pooled data the highest proportion at 45.71 percent, demonstrated good decision-making ability, followed by 28.57 percent showing best decision-making ability, and the

smallest percentage, at 25.71 percent, exhibiting poor decision-making ability.

Aspiration

Aspiration refers to a strong desire, ambition, or goal that someone wishes to achieve or accomplish. The desires of the Sarpanches in this regard were collected and classified into three groups such as (i) lower aspiration (up to 4 score), (ii) moderate aspiration (4.1 to 7 score) and (iii) higher aspiration (above 7 score). The classified data are presented in table 14.

Table 14: Distribution of respondents according to their aspiration

Sr.	Categories	Aspiration			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	61 (58.10)	38 (36.19)	6 (5.71)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	41 (39.05)	58 (55.24)	6 (5.71)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	102 (48.57)	96 (45.71)	12 (5.71)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The result obtained in table 14 displays that male Sarpanches, the majority, at 58.10 cent, exhibited lower aspiration, followed by 36.19 percent showing moderate aspiration, and the smallest proportion, at 5.71 percent, demonstrated higher aspiration. Among female Sarpanches, 55.24 percent showed moderate aspiration, followed by 39.05 percent exhibiting lower aspiration, and the smallest proportion, at 5.71 percent, demonstrated higher aspiration. In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 48.57 percent, exhibited lower aspiration, followed by 45.71 percent showing moderate aspiration, and the smallest percentage, at

5.71 percent, demonstrated higher aspiration.

Leadership ability

It is an art of motivating a group of people toward achieving common goal. The views in this regard were collected and classified into three categories as, (i) low level of leadership ability (up to 8 score), (ii) moderate level of leadership ability (9 to 11 score) and (iii) high level of leadership ability (above 11 score). The classified data are presented in table 15.

Table 15: Distribution of respondents according to their leadership ability

Sr.	Categories	Leadership ability			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	12 (11.43)	37 (35.24)	56 (53.33)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	6 (5.71)	28 (26.67)	71 (67.62)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	18 (8.57)	65 (30.95)	127 (60.48)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Data presented in table 15 indicates that among male Sarpanches, 53.33 percent demonstrated high leadership ability, followed by 35.24 percent showing moderate leadership ability, and the smallest proportion, at 11.43 percent, exhibited low leadership ability. For female Sarpanches, the majority, at 67.62 percent, exhibited high leadership ability, followed by 26.67 percent demonstrating moderate leadership ability, and the smallest proportion, at 5.71 percent, showed low leadership ability. In the pooled data, the majority, at 60.48 percent, demonstrated high leadership ability, followed by 30.95

percent showing moderate leadership ability, and the smallest proportion, at 8.57 percent, exhibited low leadership ability.

Mass media exposure

It can be referred as the extent to which Sarpanches encounter specific messages and to confirm, the data in this regards were collected and grouped into three categories as, (i) lower mass media exposure (ii) moderate mass media exposure and (iii) higher mass media exposure. The classified data are presented in table 16.

Table 16: Distribution of respondents according to their mass media exposure

Sr.	Categories	Mass media exposure			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	20 (19.05)	67 (63.81)	18 (17.14)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	25 (23.81)	57 (54.29)	23 (21.90)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	21 (10.00)	158 (75.24)	31 (14.76)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

In the table 16 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their mass media exposure levels, categorized as lower, moderate, and higher exposure. It includes data for male Sarpanches, female Sarpanches, and a pooled total.

Male Sarpanches exhibit 19.05 percent lower exposure, 63.81 percent moderate exposure, and 17.14 percent higher exposure. Female Sarpanches show 23.81 percent lower exposure, 54.29 percent moderate exposure, and 21.90 percent higher exposure. When considering the pooled data for both genders, 10.00 percent have lower exposure, 75.24 percent have moderate exposure, and 14.76 percent have higher exposure.

These statistics offer insight into the distribution of mass

media exposure among male and female Sarpanches, as well as an overall perspective when combining both groups.

Group motivation

Group motivation refers to the collective drive, enthusiasm, and willingness to pursue shared goals or objectives within a group setting. The views of Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories as, (i) low level of group motivation (up to 12 score), (ii) moderate level of group motivation (13 to 17 score) and (iii) high level of group motivation (above 17 score). The classified data are presented in table 17.

Table 17: Distribution of respondents according to their group motivation

Sr.	Categories	Group motivation			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	71 (67.62)	24 (22.86)	10 (9.52)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	32 (30.48)	55 (52.38)	18 (17.14)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	103 (49.05)	79 (37.62)	28 (13.33)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The data presented in table 17 shows that male Sarpanches, the majority, at 67.62 percent, exhibited low group motivation, followed by 22.86 percent with moderate group motivation, and the smallest proportion, at 9.52 percent, demonstrated high group motivation. Among Female Sarpanches, 52.38 percent showed moderate group motivation, followed by 30.48 percent with low group motivation and 17.14 percent exhibiting high group motivation.

In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 49.05 percent, exhibited low group motivation, followed by 37.62 percent with moderate group motivation, and the smallest

percentage, at 13.33 percent, demonstrated high group motivation.

Political affiliation

Political affiliation refers to an individual's formal or informal association with a particular political party, ideology, or movement. The views of Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories as, (i) no political affiliation (0 score), (ii) political affiliation with regional party/panel (1 score) and (iii) political affiliation with national party/panel (2 score). The classified data are presented in table 18.

Table 18: Distribution of respondents according to their political affiliation

Sr.	Categories	Political affiliation			Total
		No	regional party/panel	national party/panel	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	29 (27.62)	4 (3.81)	72 (68.57)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	28 (26.67)	7 (6.67)	70 (66.67)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	57 (27.14)	11 (5.24)	142 (67.62)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Table 18 depicts the distribution of respondents based on their political affiliation, categorized into three groups: no affiliation, affiliation with a regional party/panel, and

affiliation with a national party/panel. Among Male Sarpanches, a similar trend is observed, with 68.57 percent affiliating with national parties/panels. Conversely, 27.62

percent of male respondents report no political affiliation, while a minimal 3.81 percent were affiliated with regional parties/panels. This pattern underscores the prevalence of national-level political ties among Male Sarpanches. Similarly, among Female Sarpanches, a majority, comprising 66.67 percent, are affiliated with national parties/panels. A smaller portion, 26.67 percent, reported no political affiliation, while 6.67 percent were affiliated with regional parties/panels. These figures mirror the broader trend observed in the pooled and Male Sarpanches data, indicating a prevalent association with national-level political entities among Female Sarpanches.

The pooled data comprising 240 respondents demonstrates a significant preference for affiliation with national

parties/panels, with 67.62 percent indicating such allegiance. This dominance is followed by 27.14 percent of respondents reporting no political affiliation, while only 5.24 percent are affiliated with regional parties/panels. This suggests a strong inclination towards national-level political entities among the surveyed population.

Empathy: Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others. The views of the Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories, (i) lower level of empathy (up to 12 score), (ii) moderate level of empathy (13 to 17 score) and (iii) higher level of empathy (above 17 score). The classified data are presented in table 19.

Table 19: Distribution of respondents according to their empathy

Sr.	Categories	Empathy			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	42 (40.00)	49 (46.67)	14 (13.33)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	16 (15.24)	60 (57.14)	29 (27.62)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	58 (27.62)	109 (51.90)	43 (20.48)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Data from table 19 shows that male Sarpanches, 46.67 percent exhibited moderate empathy, followed by 40.00 percent with lower empathy, and the smallest proportion, at 13.33 percent, demonstrated higher empathy. Among Female Sarpanches, the majority, at 57.14 percent, showed moderate empathy, followed by 27.62 percent with higher empathy, and the smallest proportion, at 15.24 percent, exhibited lower empathy.

In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 51.90 percent, exhibited moderate empathy, followed by 27.62 percent with lower empathy, and the smallest percentage, at 20.48

percent, demonstrated higher empathy.

Personality trait

Personality traits reflect people’s characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Personality traits imply consistency and stability. The views of the Sarpanches were collected and classified into three categories as, (i) lower personality trait (up to 12 score), (ii) moderate personality trait (13 to 17 score) and (iii) higher personality trait (above 17 score). The data are presented in table 20.

Table 20: Distribution of respondents according to their personality trait

Sr.	Categories	Personality trait			Total
		Lower	Moderate	Higher	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	40 (38.10)	49 (46.67)	16 (15.24)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	24 (22.86)	59 (56.19)	22 (20.95)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	64 (30.48)	108 (51.43)	38 (18.10)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

Data from table 20 opined that for male Sarpanches, 46.67 percent exhibited moderate personality traits, followed by 38.10 percent with lower personality traits, and the smallest proportion, at 15.24 percent, demonstrated higher personality traits. Among Female Sarpanches, the majority, at 56.19 percent, showed moderate personality traits, followed by 20.95 percent exhibiting higher personality traits, and the smallest proportion, at 22.86 percent, exhibited lower personality traits.

In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 51.43 percent, exhibited moderate personality traits, followed by 30.48 percent with a lower personality trait, and the smallest percentage, at 18.10 percent, demonstrated higher personality traits.

Emotional intelligence of sarpanches

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively use one's own emotions, as well as those of others. It encompasses a range of skills and competencies that enable individuals to navigate social interactions, manage relationships, and cope with challenges in a healthy and productive manner. In the present study, a scale was developed by using the ‘scale product method’ which combines the equal appearing interval scale and summated rating technique for ascertaining the response on the scale as proposed by Eysenck and Crown (1949). In scale, all 18 statements were obtained and the views of Sarpanches in this regard were collected and classified into three categories, (i) low

emotional intelligence (up to 42 score), (ii) moderate emotional intelligence (43 to 66 score) and (iii) higher

emotional intelligence (above 66). The data are presented in table 21.

Table 21: Distribution of respondents according to their emotional intelligence

Sr.	Categories	Emotional intelligence			Total
		Low	Moderate	High	
1	Male Sarpanches (n=105)	16 (15.24)	73 (69.52)	16 (15.24)	105 (100.00)
2	Female Sarpanches (n=105)	0 (0.00)	53 (50.48)	52 (49.52)	105 (100.00)
	Pooled (n=210)	16 (7.62)	126 (60.00)	68 (32.38)	210 (100.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total)

The table 21 depicts that for male Sarpanches, 69.52 percent demonstrated moderate emotional intelligence, followed by 15.24 percent with high emotional intelligence, and another 15.24 percent with low emotional intelligence.

Among female Sarpanches, the majority, at 50.48 percent, exhibited moderate emotional intelligence, followed by 49.52 percent with high emotional intelligence. There were no respondents with low emotional intelligence among female Sarpanches.

In the pooled data, the highest proportion, at 60.00 percent, demonstrated moderate emotional intelligence, followed by 32.38 percent with high emotional intelligence, and the smallest percentage, at 7.62 percent, demonstrated low emotional intelligence.

Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of Sarpanches' profiles and emotional intelligence reveals intriguing insights. The majority of Sarpanches are middle-aged, with secondary education, and primarily from the Scheduled Tribe category. They predominantly hold moderate annual incomes and landholdings, indicating diverse economic backgrounds. Active involvement in community affairs and leadership roles underscores their significance in local governance. Training at block and village levels is prevalent, with varied levels of management efficiency and group cohesiveness observed. The study highlights the need for tailored support and development initiatives to enhance leadership effectiveness and emotional intelligence among Sarpanches, ensuring more efficient local governance structures.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that they do not have any conflicts of interest. It is noteworthy to mention that the authors are employed by the funding agency, a governmental organization.

Authors Contribution

All authors have made significant contributions to the inception, design, execution, analysis, and/or writing of the manuscript. Additionally, they have thoroughly reviewed and approved the manuscript before its submission.

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