

Strengthening Democratic Processes through Enhancing People's Participation in *Gram Sabha*

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KEYWORDS Attendance. Democracy. Elected Representatives. Meeting. Panchayati Raj Institution

ABSTRACT *Gram Sabha* is the institutionalized foundation for a decentralized participatory democracy. However, *Gram Sabhas* are not yet functional enough to accomplish their role in the making of a vibrant Indian democracy. The main reasons seem to be the lack of people's participation, lack of awareness amongst the elected representatives of *Panchayati Raj* Institutions, ritualistic conduct of the *Gram Sabha* meetings, poor information communication, sparse attendance in the *Gram Sabha* meetings, and a lack of clear understanding amongst the people about the importance and the functions of the *Gram Sabha*. Thus, there is a need to strengthen the *Gram Sabha* by increasing the participation of members in the meetings so that they can directly participate in governance. This paper highlights the present scenario of *Gram Sabha* and ways for increasing people's participation in this Constitutional body.