

Constraints perceived by functionaries of Panchayati Raj institution

¹ Dr. Achla Gakkhar, ² Dr. Dolly Rani, ³ Anupam Dixit

¹ Professor, Department of Extension, Communication and Management, Institute of Home Science, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Research Associate, UGC/PDF, Department of Extension, Communication and Management, Institute of Home Science, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India

³ Research Scholar, Institute of Home Science, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

Panchayat Raj is local governance of the people, by the people and for the people. Panchayati Raj has the objective of placing more powers in the hand of rural people, enhancing their capabilities to involve themselves in the process of decision making, preparation and implementation of programme for economic development and social justice.

The Panchayati Raj System has been launched in India since 1959. Since then various studies were carried out regarding the various aspects of Panchayati Raj Institutions. But there was no any detailed research study available on constraint analysis of functionaries of panchayati raj institutions of Agra district. Therefore, the study entitled "Constraints perceived by functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institution" was undertaken in 'Bichpuri Block' of Agra district.

It is concluded from the study that the main constraints faced by the Panchayati Raj functionaries were social constrains (M.W.S. 25.39) with rank 1. However a good number of Panchayati Raj functionaries also faced personal constraints (M.W.S. 25.01), technical constraints (M.W.S. 22.56) and family constraints (M.W.S. 17.7).

Keywords: panchayati raj institutions, constraints, functionaries

Introduction

Panchayati Raj, a synonym of democratic decentralization, was introduced in India in the late 1950s and early 1960s to restore to the erstwhile institution of Panchayat the pristine glory that it enjoyed in ancient India. It represents a political ideal and is reflected in the rural local-self government in its institutional form. The word "Panchayat" literally means "assembly" (ayat) of five (Panch) wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the local community.

Panchayati Raj system was started in India on the recommendation of Balwantrai Mehta committee in 1959. It is a system of decentralization and participation of people in developmental efforts. In Rajasthan it was first followed by other states. The introduction of Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan led to the creation of three tire system i.e. village level, block level and district level.

The concept behind the Panchayat is local governance of the people, by the people and for the people. Panchayati Raj has the objective of placing more powers in the hand of rural people, enhancing their capabilities to involve themselves in the process of decision making, preparation and implementation of programme for economic development and social justice.

Panchayati Raj has made excellent progress in India. It covers almost 98-99 per cent of rural population as a whole in India. The Panchayati Raj System has been launched in India since 1959 and Uttar Pradesh implemented it in 1947. Uttar Pradesh has the fortune to firstly buildup and passed the "U.P.

Panchayati Raj Act 1947" on 7th Dec. 1947 and the whole.

Since then various studies were carried out regarding the various aspects of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Singh (2004) concluded that the elected representatives of PRIs were predominantly faced the technological constraints followed by economic, psychological, educational, operational, social and epistemic constraint. The educational constraint was predominantly claimed by government officials of PRIs involved with people and Panchayat representatives followed by technological, economic, social, operational, epistemic and psychological constraints.

Mishra and Dhaka (2003) ^[2] observed that, lack of participation of people in Panchayat work, unhelpful and overriding role of local bureaucracy, non-observance of the election code of conduct, Pradhan raj, mal-development and corruption were the major constraints faced by Panchayat bodies and their functionaries.

Subha and Bhargava (2002) ^[4] observed that, though the new system has provided the weaker section access to the membership and authority positions in the ZPs, it has not gained much social significance and have not yet developed as an effective institution. The members are yet to be mobilised, they lack awareness and hence not able to make PRIs strong and meaningful and get people participation. They are also not able to articulate their rights and demands in an effective manner. Corruption, money and muscle power continue even in the local election and functioning.

Kumar and Rai (1991) ^[1] conducted "A study of the dominant

problems of village panchayats of Delhi" in which they observed that the dominant problem were lack of co-operation from villagers, lack of adequate fund, lack of genuine interest of panchayat members in village development work, selfishness in decision making by panchayat member, Improper perception of the village problem of panchayat members authoritarianism by pradhans, lock of the adequate facilities provided to panchayat members in adequate supervision and co-operation from block officials.

It is true that a plethora of studies exist, regarding the various aspects of Panchayati Raj Institutions. But there was no any detailed research study available on constraint analysis of functionaries of panchayati raj institutions of Agra district. Therefore, the study entitled "Constraints perceived by functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institution" in community development block Bichpuri of Agra district was undertaken with the hope and firm belief that the result of this study will be useful for policy makers and planners, who are attached to gram panchayats as well as those who can involved directly or indirectly in the extension programmes through – out the country – further the achievement of this investigation would be helpful to make the programmes more effective.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the present study was descriptive type of research design. Multistage sampling procedure was used in the present study for selection of sample. Sampling procedure adopted for the present study has been presented as under:

- The study is confined to Agra division of U.P. which comprises seven districts, out of which Agra district was selected purposively for the study.
- Agra district comprises fifteen community development blocks, out of these community development block 'Bichpuri block' was selected randomly by chit fold method.
- Bichpuri block consists of 7 Nayaya Panchayats. Out of these seven, Nayaya Panchayts two Nayaya Panchayats were selected randomly which are the 'Bichpuri' and 'Dehtora'.
- From the selected two Nayaya Panchayats five villages were selected randomly.
- Twenty elected members of gram panchayat from each selected village were selected as sample respondents for the study. Thus total hundred elected members of P.R.Is. were taken as a sample for the present study.

The technique for data collection adopted for the present study was personal interview method with the help of self-structured questionnaire.

The data put further to statistical analysis in order to get meaningful conclusion. For this purpose percentage, mean weighted score, rank order and scoring procedure were used.

Result and Discussion

In this section and attempt has been made to examine the constraints faced by functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institutions and presented under the following tables.

Table 1: Area wise constraints perceived by Panchayati Raj functionaries under different categories (N = 100)

S. No.	Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Social constraints	25.29	I
2.	Personal constraints	25.01	II
3.	Technique constraints	22.56	III
4.	Family constraints	17.7	IV
5.	Economy constraints	14.99	V

A perusal of Table 1 indicates that the main constraints faced by the Panchayati Raj functionaries were social constraints (M.W.S. 25.39) with rank 1. However a good number of Panchayati Raj functionaries also faced personal constraints (M.W.S. 25.01), technical constraints (M.W.S. 22.56) and family constraints (M.W.S. 17.7). A few Panchayati Raj

functionaries also faced economic constraints with (M.W.S. 14.99) comes under the ranking V.

However, different constraints are also discussed simultaneously under different categories and are presented from Table no. 2 to Table no. 6.

Table 2: Family Constraints (N = 100)

S. No.	Family Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Family interference in your panchayat activities	2.57	1
2.	Problem faced by women in panchayat due to household chores.	2.56	2
3.	Low social standing of the family.	2.54	3
4.	Lack of support by the family members.	2.53	4
5.	Your entire work related to panchayat done by the male members of in your family.	2.52	5
6.	Decision making process of Panchayati Raj functionaries elected by the family members.	2.52	6
7.	All member of your family are illiterate that why they do not understand your responsibilities.	2.47	7

Family constraints refer to the problem faced by respondent's from their family members, which effect respondent's participation, decision making process, Panchayati Raj activities and responsibilities, in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

An examination of data depicted in Table 2 depicts the impediments faced by Panchayati Raj functionaries Important constraints realized by Panchayati Raj functionaries were "Family interference" with M.W.S. 2.57 and was ranked 1.

A critical look of Table 2 presented the major constraints related to family as perceived by Panchayati Raj functionaries were "house hold chores" (M.W.S. 2.56), "low social standing of the family" (M.S.W. 2.54), "lack of support by the family members" (M.W.S. 2.53) and "entire work related to

panchayat done by the male members of in your family" (M.W.S. 2.52) comes under the ranking 2 to 5 respectively. While decision making effected by the family members (M.W.S. 2.51) and low family educational level (M.W.S. 2.47) comes under the ranking 6 and 7 respectively.

Table 3: Economy Constraints (N = 100)

S. No.	Economy Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Lack of fund for self-transportation	2.57	1
2.	Lack/irregularity of honorarium.	2.55	2
3.	Lack of finance for developmental work.	2.49	3
4.	Lack of financial help.	2.47	4.2
5.	Irregular panchayat allowance.	2.47	4.2
6.	Facing difficulties to run the government scheme.	2.44	6

Economic constraints refer to the problem faced by respondents related to the lack of economic resources.

Close observation of the Table 3 depicts that, high proportion of Panchayati Raj functionaries reported that "lack of fund for self – transportation" (M.W.S. 2.57) with ranked 1, was a major problem for them in participation.

Due to government system they were facing problem about getting honorarium amount with the (M.W.S. 2.55) and ranked 2. Under the economic constraints Panchayati Raj

functionaries expressed that finance provided for developmental work to them was very less (M.W.S. 2.49) and ranked 3.

Under the economic constraints all the Panchayati Raj Functionaries reported that "lack of financial help" and "irregular panchayat allowance" rank were 4.2 with the M.W.S. 2.47 respectively. They were "facing difficulties to run the government scheme" (M.W.S. 2.44) comes under the ranking 6.

Table 4: Technical Constraints (N = 100)

S. No.	Technical Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Lack of information about R.R. Act.	2.54	1.5
2.	Lack of information about timing and place of meeting.	2.54	1.5
3.	Lack of attention to women's problem in gram sabha.	2.53	3.5
4.	In accessible meeting place.	2.53	3.5
5.	Forceful signature on incomplete proposals.	2.51	6
6.	Lack of information about developmental programme.	2.51	6
7.	Unaware about agenda.	2.51	6
8.	Lack of resources for implementing village development schemes.	2.48	8
9.	Lack of information regarding rural people adopting the new technology.	2.41	9

Technical constraints refer to the problem faced by respondents relation of technical knowledge of Panchayati Raj Institution.

A critical look of the Table 4 presented major constraints related to technical knowledge perceived by Panchayati Raj functionaries were "lack of information about timing and place of meeting" (M.W.S. 2.54) comes under the ranking 1.5. "Lack of attention to women's problem in gram sabha" and "in accessible meeting places" (M.S.W. 2.53) with rank 3.5

respectively.

"Forceful singular on incomplete proposals", lack of information about developmental programme" and unaware about agenda was found with the M.W.S. 2.51 and ranked 6 respectively.

While "lack of resources for implementing village development scheme" (M.W.S. 2.48) and "lack of information regarding rural people adopting the new technology" (M.W.S. 2.41) comes under the ranking 8 and 9 respectively.

Table 5: Personal Constraints (N = 100)

S. No.	Personal Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Lack of confidence	2.57	1
2.	Abusive language	2.51	3.5
3.	The women members who speak more in troubled more.	2.51	3.5
4.	Views are not considered.	2.51	3.5
5.	Lack of cooperation from government employees.	2.51	3.5
6.	Self-motive of punch members.	2.5	7
7.	Lack of support from panchayat members.	2.5	7
8.	Lack of cooperation from villagers.	2.5	7
9.	Making fun of you in women members who speak in meetings/interference.	2.47	9
10.	You feel nervousness to present your thought in front of other peoples.	2.43	10

Table 5 reveals that the personal constraints as perceived by Panchayati Raj functionaries in participating in Panchayati Raj Institution activities were "lack of confidence" was exist in rank 1 with M.W.S. of 2.57, while average member of facing constraints related to "abusive language", "the women members who speak more in troubled more", views are not considered" and "lack of cooperation from government employees" were exist in rank 3.5 with M.W.S. 2.51 respectively.

The data reveals that "self-motive of Punch members", "lack of support from panchayat member" and "lack of cooperation from villagers" M.W.S. 2.5 comes under the ranking respectively.

Few Panchayati Raj functionaries also faced the constraints of making fun of women members who speak in meetings/ interference M.W.S. 2.47 with the rank 9. "Feel nervousness present thoughts front of other peoples" M.W.S. 2.43 comes under the ranking 10.

Table 6: Social Constraints (N = 100)

S. No.	Social Constraints	M.W.S.	Rank Order
1.	Racist discrimination is kept in pahchayat.	2.58	1.5
2.	Male participate in meetings along with women members.	2.58	1.5
3.	No separate seating arrangement for the women	2.57	3.5
4.	Pardha system	2.57	3.5
5.	Male compel women to act as per advice.	2.56	5
6.	Lack of social cooperation.	2.52	6.5
7.	Male discourage women while making proposal/ suggestions.	2.52	6.5
8.	The atmosphere of the panchayat seems unusual.	2.51	8
9.	Lack of hygienic place.	2.49	9.5
10.	Women faces problem in panchayat regarding decision making.	2.49	9.5

Social constraints refer to the problem faced by Panchayati Raj functionaries related to social issues.

Close discussion of the Table 6 depicts that, high proportion of Panchayati Raj functionaries reported that "Racist discrimination is kept in panchayati" and "male participate in meetings along with women members" (M.W.S. 2.58) and ranked 1 respectively.

While "lack of separate sitting arrangement for women" and "pardha system" (M.W.S. 2.57) comes under the ranking 3.5 respectively.

The data reveals that "male compel women to act as per advice" with M.W.S. 2.56 comes under the ranking 5. The data reported that "lack of social cooperation" and "male discourage women while making proposal/ suggestions" (M.W.S. 2.52) with rank 6.5 respectively.

A critical look of the table 4.2.6 presented that "the atmosphere of the panchayat seems unusual" M.W.S. 2.51 with the rank 8. "Lack of hygienic place" and "women faced problem regarding decision making" M.W.S. 2.49 comes under the ranking 9.5 respectively.

Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that the main constraints faced by the Panchayati Raj functionaries were social constrains (M.W.S. 25.39) with rank 1. However a good number of Panchayati Raj functionaries also faced personal constraints (M.W.S. 25.01), technical constraints (M.W.S. 22.56) and family constraints (M.W.S. 17.7). A few Panchayati Raj functionaries also faced economic constraints with (M.W.S. 14.99) comes under the ranking V.

References

1. Kumar R, Rai GC. A study of the dominant problems of village panchayat of Delhi. Indian Journal of Extension Education. 1991; 4:34-49.
2. Mishra S, Dhaka RS. Institutionalising Panchayati Raj, Kurukshetra. 2003; 51(11):27-31.
3. Singh VK. Role of Panchyati Raj in development – a study of Deoria district UP. Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Ext. Edu., I. Ag. Sci., Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, U.P. (INDIA), 2004.
4. Subha K, Bhargava BS. Panchayati Raj System in Karnataka: Issues and Strategies, Local Government Quarterly J. 2002; 72(4):43-55.