

HURDLES IN PROPER FUNCTIONING OF VILALGE PANCHAYATS IN EASTERN U.P.

G. P. Singh¹ Avanish K. Singh² & Gyasuddin Ansari

The 73rd constitutional amendment has rightly claimed that it is an Institution that takes power to the people. We have to see that the spirit of the said amendment is not lost. Therefore it is imperative to educate the people at large and village leader in particular about the implication and expectations of the panchayat raj act. So that necessary foundation for participatory democracy at the grass root is well laid. The credit for reviving this grass root democratic institution goes to Late Shri Rajeev Gandhi who introduced the 73rd amendment in the constitution, which made panchayat elections mandatory and in particular recognising Gram Sabha as a basic Institution of the new panchayat raj system. When panchayat raj was introduced in the country in 1959 then Prime Minister Pt. Nehru said that it was the greatest revolution in the country and the system worked well till 1964. But after the demise of Pt. Nehru the system become more of a political institution.

Rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organisation like Gram Sabha in the village which can bring all the people including the weaker section in to common programme to be carried out with the assistance of the administration. Panchayat raj was a unit of government as the village, panchayat raj on the country means a system of governmented. horizontally. It is a network of gram sabhas and village panchayat vertically. It is an organic growth of the

panchayat rising up to the national level. Infact, country is so large and panchayat raj (democratic decentralization) is so complex subject will for reaching consequence that there is the fuller scope of trying out various pattern and alternatives. The idea of decentralization, therefore, seeks to transfer of power of administration to help village representative to access the needs of the area, work out scheme and meet the same.

The three tier system of the panchayat raj had come through the recommendation of Shri Balwant Rai Mehta committee in year of 1958. This team recommended three-tier system of district administration as pattern of democratic decentralization. The panchayat at the village level will be the basic institution for planning and execution of development programme. In rural area, people in general are unaware of the kinds of developmental activities under taken at panchayat levels. Mobilization and proper utilization of financial resources is the major problem of gram panchayat at where resources are limited in quantum because of poor taxation. The primary reasons for the slow growth of panchayat raj system were viz. lack of coordination between government agencies and voluntary agencies engaged in social development at the grass root level, lack of proper communication between panchayat raj bodies and the rural people, problem of illiteracy, traditionalism, conservatism, lack of

1. Reader, 3. PG student, Deptt. of Agril. Extn. J. V. College, Baraut Baghpat U.P.
2. Research Associate, Div. of Agril. Extn. IARI, N. D.-12

complex pressure groups and political and national consciousness, absence of responsible, democratic and development oriented leadership etc.

Panchayat Raj system seeks to ensure self-government through direct representatives. It has transformed representation into participatory democracy, which means transition of political power to the grass root level in the country. It encourages people to participate in the development activities and brings a meaningful socio-economic change. Several studies like have Mankar *et al.* (1997), Pramanick *et al.* (1995), Bava Moorjahan (1996) and Madhushree *et al.* (1998) reiterated clearly this point. Keeping the above views in mind this study was conducted with following objective special objective :

To study the hurdles in proper functioning of village panchayat in Eastern U.P.

METHODOLOGY :

C. D. block Dudahi (Tambuhi) in district Kushinagar was selected purposively, out of

14 C.D. blocks of the district. Ten village panchayats were selected from the development block of random sampling method. A list of adults of the villages was prepared of both the ten village panchayats and thus, 100 respondents were selected randomly for obtaining information for the present study. The data were collected with the help of interview schedule. The data was collected using pretested interview schedule.² The data was analysed using frequencies, χ^2 test and percentage. The of research was conducted from September 2001 to Dec. 2002.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

In this study various hurdles hampering the normal working of village panchayat like structural, administrative and functional were studied and the results have been discussed as under:

Structural hurdles—Various structural hurdles hampering the normal working of village panchayat were included in the study are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Structural hurdles in the proper functioning of village panchayats

(N = 100)

S. No.	Structural hurdles	Level of Response		
		Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed
1.	The larger size of village panchayat creates obstacles in preparation of village development plan and execution of village development projects schedule	39	5	56
2.	The way of election of members of village panchayat is erroneous and hence the village panchayat does not represent the homogeneity	40	10	50
3.	Panchayat raj act needed amendments time to time	37	8	55
4.	The existing set up of village panchayats is efficient to bear responsibilities of agro-economic and social development	35	12	53
5.	Lack of co-ordination between government educational institutions and financing organisation hampered the proper functioning of the village panchayats	55	10	35
	Total	206	45	249

$\chi^2 = 13.086$, $DF = n-1$, 5% level = 9.488, Agreed % = 39, 40, 37, 35 & 55

was observed from the analysis of the data the statements form 1 to 5 were not homogeneous ($\chi^2 = 13.086$)

It is clear from above table that majority (55%) of respondents were agreed to the

statement "Lack of co-ordination between government education institutions and

financing organization hampered the proper functioning of the village panchayat". A majority (56%) of respondents were disagree to statement 1 and followed by statements 3, 4, and 2 perceived by 55%, 53%, & 50% respectively. A few (nearly 9%) respondents should have undecided position about above statements. Thus it is clear that lack of co-

ordination between government, educational institution and financing organisation hampered the proper functioning of the village panchayat.

Administrative hurdles—Efforts were also made to study administrative hurdles in the working of village panchayat, the results have been discussed in Table 2.

Table 2. Administrative hurdles impeding the functioning of village panchayats (N=100)

S. No.	Administrative hurdles	Level of Response		
		Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed
1.	The election of village panchayats have given rise to village factionalisms resulting in poor performance of duties	35	5	60
2.	Three tier system of administration of ten imposes difficulties in executing and planning the programme	59	14	27
3.	Lack of true representative of active honest and loyal men in to administration and executive body	30	11	59
4.	The elected representatives seldom take interest in planning and executive the plan	35	7	58
5.	Uneducated, un-experienced but politically strong representative misuse privilege and thus create hindrances in normal functioning	41	10	49
	Total	200	47	253

$\chi^2 = 28.15$, $DF = n-1$ 5% level = 9.488, Agreed % = 35, 59, 30, 35 & 41

It was observed the statements form 1 to 5 were not homogeneous ($\chi^2 = 28.18$).

Table showed that majority (59%) of respondents were agreed to the statement "Three tier system of administration of ten imposes difficulties in executing and planning the programmes". While a majority (60%) of respondents were disagreed to the statement "The election of village panchayats have given rise to village factionalism's resulting in poor performance of duties" & followed by statements no. 3, 4 and 5 perceived by 59%, 58%, & 49% respectively. A few (nearly 9%) respondents should have undecided position about above statements. Thus it is clear that three tier administration often imposed difficulties in executing and planning the programmes.

Functional hurdles—Efforts were also made to study functional hurdles of village

panchayat, the results have been discussed in Table 3.

It is clear from the above table that majority (58%) of respondents were agreed to the statement "Inadequate and lack of timely availability of production inputs followed by statement no. 6, 1, & 2 as 56%, 55%, and 52% respectively. While a majority of farmers were disagreed to statement no. 5, 3 and 7 as perceived by 53%, 48% and 48% respectively. Thus it is clear that inadequate and lack of timely availability of production inputs and other hurdles like statements 6, 1 and 2 should have major role in proper functioning of village panchayats. Nearly 11-12 per cent respondents were responses to unawareness about above statements

3. Functional hurdles impeding the normal working of village Panchayat (N=100)

Functional hurdles	Level of response		
	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed
Lack of enthusiasm villagers and officials of village panchayat in participating actively in the planning and executing of various schemes	55	7	38
Mutual conflicts and conformation among officials of village panchayat causes delay in carrying out of various functions	52	9	39
Village panchayats are finance stricken bodies and are unable to plan and to execute the development programme according to need of village community	44	8	48
Inadequate and lack of timely availability of production inputs	58	11	31
Illiteracy among the members of executive body	25	22	53
Times bound developmental activities an over looked causes delay planning as well as executive the programme	56	6	38
The corrupt practices of officials/non officials also crated hindrances in normal functioning of village panchayat	37	15	48
Total	327	78	295

= 26.43 DF = n-1, 5% level = 12.592 Agreed % = 55, 52, 44, 58, 25, 56 & 37.

was observed from the analysis of the data that the statements form 1 & 6 were not homogeneous (=26.43).

ONCLUSION :

Hence, to conclude the study points out at the village panchayat are very important village institution for overhauling the socio-economic conditions of the villages. Owing to some constraints these panchayat could not achieve the desired goals due to unawareness about the external world for which emphasis is to be given on the village education. The most important shortcoming was observed that the villages do not participate in the development work voluntarily. They seem to be satisfied on there own decisions.

Moreover, due to poverty, illiteracy and unawareness of the participants of village

panchayat desired. So, targets are not being achieved. This institution may be proved more effective and beneficial for the village upliftment. It emphasis should be given to organised night class to educate the adult of the village to enable them to under stand the benefits of village panchayat. They should be aware to co-ordinate between the local co-operative societies and village panchayat so that timely disbursement of short term and mid term loans could be made available to the needy villagers. Emphasis should be made to increase sources of income of village panchayats.

REFERENCES :

1. Manker, M. S., Ingle, P. O. (1997). Evaluation of selected agricultural development schemes executed through panchayat raj isntitutions. *P. K. V. Research Journal* 21:2, 154-157.
2. Madhushree Sekher, Nelson-C, Sekher- M (1998). Panchayat reforms in Tamil Nadu. *Journal of Rural Development*, Hyderabad. 17:1, 77-97.
3. Bava Noorjahan (1996). Enhanhancing financial autonomy of panchayat raj institution takes "Kurushshetra". 54 (7) : 17.
4. Pramanick Swapan and Datta Prabhat (1995). Panchayatas and people, the west bengal experience, Sarat Book House, Culcutta.