

## **CONSTRAINTS FACED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was undertaken to find out the various constraints hampering the normal working of Panchayati Raj Institutions perceived by the Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Nagaur District of Rajasthan. PRIs are managed by people's Representatives but Government officials are also closely associated with these institutions. The present study was conducted in Nagaur district of Rajasthan which was selected purposely. Total 307 respondents were selected for the present study comprising 247 elected representatives and 60 Government officials from three tiers of PRIs. The elected representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions predominantly faced the technological constraints followed by economic, psychological, educational, operational, social and epistemic constraints. The educational constraints were predominantly claimed by Government officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions involved with people and Panchayat Representatives followed by technological, economic, social, operational, epistemic and psychological constraints.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In a predominantly agrarian country like India where an overwhelming majority (65%) of the people live in 6,00,000 (Approximately) villages, where economy still depend on agricultural and allied activities (about 26% national income comes from this sector), where three fourth of its population still depends on agriculture and allied activities, where the condition of rural people in general is of poverty, malnutrition, poor standard of public health and illiteracy and where the village people have been steeped in inertia and superstition for more than thousands years, the rural development is a sine qua non of national development.

Since the days of struggle for independence, the Indian people specially the people of our villages as well as the poor strata of the society harboured innumerable hopes and countless aspirations and had a deep faith that freedom could certainly salvage them from the morass of poverty, illiteracy, health hazards and backwardness. After independence the principle of democracy was enshrined in the constitution of India at the root to enable the people to plan and progress according to their needs and priorities. Within the broad infrastructure of our

democratic set up, it was assumed that Panchayati Raj is the only institution for the upliftment of rural India which is aimed to make a first head way towards the fulfillment of quota a large variety of hopes through peoples own efforts keeping in view their versatile local needs. Keeping this view in mind, the present investigation entitled constraints faced by elected representatives and government officials of panchayati raj institutions was undertaken in Nagaur District of Rajasthan.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study was conducted in Nagaur district of Rajasthan which was selected purposely. From Nagaur district, four Panchayat Samitis were selected randomly. From these Panchayat Samitis ten per cent of the total number of the Gram Panchayats was selected randomly. From Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishad, 60 per cent Elected Representatives were selected randomly for the study and all the Government Officials of Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishad were selected for the study purpose. Finally, total 307 respondents were selected for the present study comprising 247 Elected Representatives and 60 Government Officials from three tiers of PRIs. The con-

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straints faced by Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions were measured by a schedule prepared by the investigator in light of the suggestions of the experts.

The data were collected by the researcher with the help of a well structured interview schedule by face-to-face method of interview technique. The data so collected were classified, tabulated and analysed statistically.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results and their interpretations have been presented under following heads:

### Constraints faced by Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

In this study various constraints hampering

the normal working of Panchayati Raj Institutions like epistemic, operational, social, economic, technological, psychological and educational were studied and the results have been discussed as under:

Constraints in Panchayati Raj System as perceived by the respondents- Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Table 1 showed that most of the Elected Representatives under the study faced technological constraints followed by economic constraints, psychological constraints, educational constraints, operational constraints and social constraints. The Elected Representatives least faced epistemic constraints.

**Table 1: Constraints in Panchayati Raj system as perceived by the respondents**

**n=307**

Constraints	Elected Representatives( ERs=247)		Government Officials (GOs=60)	
	Mean score	Rank	Mean score	Rank
1.Epistemic	3.072	VII	1.066	VI
2.Operational	3.323	V	1.166	V
3.Social	3.263	VI	1.533	IV
4.Economic	3.821	II	2.316	III
5.Technological	4.603	I	2.816	II
6.Psychological	3.562	III	0.983	VII
7.Educational	3.530	IV	3.250	I
$r_s=0.43NS$ $t=1.1$				

NS= Non-significant

The findings are in agreement with the results of Fernandes (2001), Khurana & Khare (2001) and Mishra & Dhaka (2003).

Fernandes (2001) reported that poor finance, poor support to Panchayat in terms of public participation at the Gram Sabha, and administrative shortcomings coupled with epistemic and operational constraints are the three most important challenges faced by Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Khurana and Khare (2001) observed that, first major problem was financial as 15 per cent Representatives faced this and second major problem was lack of cooperation with Government Officials.

Mishra and Dhaka (2003) observed that lack of

participation of people in Panchayat work, unhelpful and over-riding role of local bureaucracy, non-observance of the election code of conduct, Pradhan Raj, Mal-adjustment and corruption were the major constraints faced by Panchayat bodies and its functionaries.

Table further depicts that most of the Government Officials under the study faced educational constraints followed by technological constraints, economic constraints, social constraints, operational constraints and epistemic constraints. The Government Officials least faced psychological constraints.

An effort was also made to find out the relationship in perception of constraints between Elected

Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj bodies. The value of rank order correlation ( $r_s$ ) was 0.43. The calculated value of 't' (1.1) was less than its tabulated value at 5 per cent level of significance. This leads to conclusion that there is no association between the ranks assigned by Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj bodies in constraints of Panchayati Raj System in spite of difference in magnitude of mean score.

**Significance of difference in the constraints of two categories of respondents i.e. Elected Representatives and Government Officials:**

Data presented in Table 2 indicate that calculated 'Z' value was greater than its tabulated value at 5 per cent level of significance for epistemic, operational, social, economic, technological, psychological and constraints (overall). This calls for rejection of null hypothesis and it reveals that there was significant difference between the Elected Representatives and Government Officials with regard to constraints faced by them. Further analysis of Table shows that the calculated value of 'Z' was less than its tabulated value at 5 per cent level of significance for educational constraints. This call for acceptance of null hypothesis and it indicate that there was non-significant difference between the Elected Represen-

**Table 2: Significance of difference in the constraints faced by the respondents in Panchayati Raj Institutions n=307**

S. No.	Constraints	Significance of difference (Z-values)
1.	Epistemic	6.0195*
2.	Operational	6.0535*
3.	Social	5.0304*
4.	Economic	4.2048*
5.	Technological	5.6368*
6.	Psychological	8.0602*
7.	Educational	0.8730NS
8.	Constraints (overall)	67.4762*

\* Significant at 5 per cent level of significance, (Z-table value = 1.96)

NS= Non-significant

tatives and Government Officials with respect to educational constraints faced by them.

The findings are in close conformity with the results of Subha & Bhargava (2002), Nayak (2004) and Paul & Chakravarty (2009).

Subha and Bhargava (2002) observed that though the new system has provided the weaker section access to the membership and authority position in the Zila Parishads it has not gained much social significance and has not yet developed as an effective institution. The members are yet to be mobilized, they lack awareness and hence are not able to make Panchayati Raj Institutions strong and meaningful and get people's participation. They are also not able to articulate their right and demand in an effective manner. Corruption, money and muscle power continue even in the local election and functioning.

Nayak (2004) reported that among the factors which hinder the performance of Gram Panchayat, lack arrangement of proper training facilities for the Panchayat Representatives was significant.

Paul and Chakravarty (2009) observed that lack of maintenance of resource inventory, provision of funds mostly by the end of the financial year, non-availability of committed cash and kind in matching amount at the appropriate time, sub-standard quality of production inputs, inadequate availability of technical and non-technical man-power, inadequate and lack of timely availability of production inputs, lack of know-how, lack of viable and need oriented projects, insufficient computer facilities *etc.* were among the most important perceived constraints.

## CONCLUSION

The Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions predominantly faced the technological constraints followed by economic, psychological, educational, operational, social and epistemic constraints. The educational constraints were predominantly claimed by Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions involved with people and Panchayat Representatives followed by technological, economic, social, operational, epistemic and psychological constraints and a significant difference was found between the Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions with

regard to their constraints faced by them i.e. epistemic, operational, social, economic, technological, psychological and constraints overall, whereas non-significant difference regarding educational constraints. There was no association between the ranks assigned to Elected Representatives and Government Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions in constraints faced by them.

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