

PERSPECTIVE, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF LOCAL SELF - GOVERNMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Kuldeep Sonkusare

Research Scholar

Department of Public Administration &
LSG

Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur

University Nagpur

Dr. Chandrashekhar Gitte

Associate Professor

Department of Public Administration

Mahila Mahavidyalaya Nandanwan, Nagpur

Abstract :

Local self-government plays a crucial role in rural development by empowering communities to take charge of their own development initiatives. However, several issues and challenges can hinder the effective implementation of local self-government in rural areas. This abstract explores the key issues related to local self-government in rural development. One significant challenge is the inadequate devolution of powers and resources to local bodies. Despite the decentralization policies in place, many rural local governments still lack the autonomy and financial resources needed to plan and execute development projects effectively. This leads to a dependency on higher-level governments and a disconnect between local priorities and actual implementation. The issue of political interference also hampers the autonomy of local self-government bodies. In some cases, local development decisions are influenced by political agendas rather than the actual needs of the community. This can lead to misallocation of resources and hinder the progress of genuine rural development projects. To address these challenges, it is essential to prioritize capacity building for local representatives and administrators, ensure transparent and participatory decision-making processes, and enhance fiscal autonomy through effective revenue generation and management mechanisms. Strengthening local self-government in rural areas can lead to more inclusive, sustainable, and locally relevant development outcomes.

Keywords : Rural development, local leadership, citizen perspective, sustainable development, community empowerment, participatory decision-making.

Introduction :

In ancient times, the local self-government organization was formed for the protection and order of the people. They developed according to the needs of the times. Even in the Vedic period, the existence of local self-government was seen. Even during that period, Gram Panchayats existed during various periods like Maurya Empire Gupta period, in that period, due to lack of means of communication, the central power i.e. the state could not control the distant region, hence local self-government bodies gained importance. In the writings of Megasthenes and Kautilya there is also a mention of local self-government bodies. In the pre-independence era, Indians got the right to self-governance through these bodies. Gram Panchayats were not empowered due to the central control policies of the British. After



independence, local self-government bodies were created to overcome the backwardness of the rural areas and to solve the problems facing the society as well as to realize Mahatma Gandhi's dream of village decentralization. Article 40 of the Constitution of India provided for the establishment of Gram Panchayats. Considering the failure of the Collective Development Scheme and the National Extension Service, the Central Government set up the Balwant Rai Mehta committee to study these schemes. Based on the recommendations of the Mehta Committee, the foundation of Panchayat State was laid in various states of India. As per the recommendations of the Mehta Committee, the Central Government accepted the first Panchayat State in Rajasthan on 2 October 1959. After independence, panchayat state was established in the state of Maharashtra as per the recommendation of Vasant Rao Naik Committee and after that Bongirwar Committee, Baburao Kale Committee, P.B.Patil Committee etc. suggested many reforms, but the local self-government bodies still have many problems and questions. Even so, the local self-government bodies still have many questions and problems that have been discussed in the research essays presented.

Objective :

- 1) To study the problems and questions of local self-government bodies
- 2) Understanding the Current Situation of Local Self-Government Organisations

Research Question :

"Analyzing the Challenges and Prospects of Local Self-Government in Promoting Effective Rural Development"

Literature Review :

1) **Sikligarh P.C. :** Panchayati Raj and Rural Development : Policy Practice and Implication Blue Rose Publishers ISBN 978-93-90380-73-2 This book establishes the link between Panchayati Raj and rural development. Panchayati Raj being a people-centred organization improves the standard of living of people living in rural areas. India is home to villages where the bulk of the population resides while Panchayati Raj is the center of administration and development in rural areas. The government has entrusted development work to Panchayati Raj Institutions by involving people's representatives.

2) **V.M. Sirsikar:** Political Leadership In India Economical Political weekly journal EPW published in this has given information that there is a lot of difference when comparing the central and local leadership of India. Pandit Jawahar explained information about Nehru's concept and local government.

3) **Ronit Mukherjee :** Local Leadership and Public Good: Evidence from The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India Journal of Quantitative Economics Article Original Article Published: 18 August 2018 In this published article, information is explained about how the local administration runs the system from the central level to empower the citizens of the country.



Research Methodology :

Descriptive method has been used to organize the subject based on the available information and secondary fact material has been used in the presented short research paper. An attempt has been made to arrive at a conclusion based on the material.

Analysis of the following questions and issues of local self-government bodies :

The 73rd constitutional amendment conferred constitutional status on the local self-government bodies, but many problems are facing the local self-government bodies in order to carry out the development process in an efficient manner, lack of finance, low level of participation, problems of office-bearers and officers, staff relations, etc.

1) The Problem of Participation :

Attributes in Local Self-Government Bodies Participation in Gram Sabha is still unsatisfactory. People are not aware about Gram Panchayat issue. The level of literacy in rural areas is also a reason for it. If the participation of the people is less, the purpose of Panchayat Raj institutions becomes less. People's participation is low due to money in local politics, caste homogeneity and political animosity. Women's participation is still low in local government institutions. Women are not ready to leave the family sphere and participate in politics. In situations where women are not ready to participate in politics or are hampered by male dominance, they are brought into politics only because of reserved seats, women participate only in name. Real decision making is done by men, nepotism and caste appear to affect participation in rural development. To achieve the objectives of rural development, is important, for this it is necessary to raise awareness through social media.

2) Office Bearers and Officer Relations :

The relationship of conflict between political and administrative elements in local self-government bodies has become the next problem for Panchayat Raj institutions. Although office-bearers lead the Panchayat Raj institutions, they do not exercise control over the administrative officers. As compared to the administrative officers, the powers given to the office bearers are limited, so the office bearers often have to depend on the administrative staff to carry out their work. Conflicts between office bearers and administrative officers have an adverse effect on the administration and functioning of the local self-government bodies and political representative are not well-educated and face problems on their officers due to their ignorance.

3) Administrative Problems :

Gram Sevak Extension Officer, Group Development Officer, Fourth Service Staff in Local Self-Government have to face some problems. Safety issue is also important. Unlike central government employees, local self government employees do not get salary, allowances and facilities, so apathy is seen among them, the effect of which is seen in the administration of local self government bodies. Sometimes political interference also creates problems for the



administration. During the process of administration, political interests put pressure on the administrative officers to take decisions, so the employees cannot work transparently, it affects the development, so it is very important to solve the problems of administration and train them to increase their efficiency.

4) Ethnicity and Religiosity:

The social status of the village was based on inequality after the pre-independence period, after which the constitution has broken down the caste system and created an inclusive society in the countries in an attempt to decentralize democracy. Even in my villages, the issue of ethnicity and religion seems to be at the fore in the local self-government bodies. Even today, castes that are considered influential in the society keep these institutions under their permanent control, so instead of strengthening the democratic system, it is seen that undesirable things are being promoted. It is seen that the principle of democratic decentralization has been trampled on. While implementing the development process, it is seen that casteism and religiosity are creating obstacles at all places from Gram Panchayat to Zilla Parishad. Due to the regret that rural development will not be considered for streamlining, the backward class communities are alienated due to mental depression and the result is rural development.

Conclusion :

- It is necessary to create awareness among the villagers about public participation by using modern media like social media.
- Training the public representatives and officers in their work will certainly not create conflict between the political administrative units.
- If the problems of the administrative bodies are solved and they are given satisfactory wages and service conditions, surely they will work efficiently.
- People following caste and religion should be banned from participating in panchayat elections so casteism will be reduced.

Way Forward :

Rural self-governing bodies are the school of democratic decentralization. In an agrarian country like India, the contribution of these institutions is important for the all-round development of the nation. In the post-independence era, attempts were made to create the kind of discipline that existed in the British administrative system, but instead, corruption was seen to be on the rise, and hence will be public participation important for the overall development of the nation. There should be a separate institution to resolve conflicts between the political and administrative bodies to reduce the apathy of the administration and increase their efficiency if their problems are solved promptly. The administration needs to increase their efficiency and confidence through training. Casteism is a pest of Indian society. Although the Indian administration is no exception to it, in a democratic country like India, in order to realize the principle of equality in the constitution, the local self-government bodies can do public welfare work if more financial support is provided by the central and state governments.

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