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Performance of gram panchayath presidents in implementation of rural development activities

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Abstract

The study was conducted in Dharwad district of Karnataka state. This district comprises of 5 taluks having 127 gram panchayats out of which 60 gram Panchayats were selected by using simple random technique. A pre-tested interview schedule was used to collect the data through personal interview method. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed using percentages, chi-square and correlation. The results revealed that 38.33 per cent of the presidents performed medium role. Fifty five per cent of respondents satisfied in implementation of welfare of the weaker section, 48.00 per cent of respondents satisfied in implementation of rural housing activities, whereas, 93.33 per cent of respondents not satisfied in implementation of roads, bridges, water ways and public distribution system activities. Variables such as education, cosmopolitaness and decision making ability found highly signification association with performance of gram panchayat presidents in implementation of rural development activities. Correlation test was carried to know the relationship between independent variables with performance of gram panchayat presidents accordingly education, annual family income and mass media utilization were found positive and highly significant relationship with performance. The major problems were lack of the funds (88.33%) and lack of training (66.66%) and lack of co-operation from members (61.67%). Subsequently, majority of presidents suggested that providing area and population based regular allotment of funds to gram panchayats for effective implementation of rural development activities.

Keywords: Gram panchayat presidents, role, performance

1. Introduction

The Panchayat Raj has come into existence with the sole aim of decentralization of government power for the welfare of rural people. After independence panchayat raj has become a backbone of Indian democracy. In three tier system of panchayat raj the non-officials are playing an important role in establishing linkage between local bodies, and the beneficiaries. The local self government institutions are expected to plan and implement the activities for rural development. Presidents elected to various PRIs are very important not because they are politically influential but because they are direct carriers of knowledge of various rural development activities to the rural people who are convinced to a greater extent by them. Further, no development can take place unless there is an active participation of people.

Gram panchayats are the grass root institutions to plan, design and implement the rural development activities, gram panchayat is considered as best instrument to meet the needs of people as the programmes are manifestation of will of masses at local level. Active involvement of gram panchayat presidents in execution of rural development programmes will provide a better climate for people participation. However, genuine participation takes place only when people are empowered to analyze their own situation takes place their own decision to get involved in implementation of decision and share benefits. The 73rd constitutional amendments provide an opportunity for governance to be carried out by direct participation of people and also scope for local level planning. The panchayats have been assigned 29 subjects listed in the XI schedule. Every president of the panchayat is responsible for involving common people in the process of development and the officials are catalytic agents only. The president is the supreme authority, who plays an important role in implementation of rural development activities may differs due to the different age groups, educational level, caste, income level etc., there are several problems like administrative, technical, social, financial, political and personal which are also influence the implementation of rural development activities by president ultimately affecting the panchayat efficiency. Considering these, the present study was under taken with the specific objective to identify performance of gram panchayat presidents in implementation of rural development activities

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1. To know the overall performance of gram panchayat presidents in implementation of rural development activities.
2. To know the specific performance of gram panchayat presidents in implementation of rural development activities.
3. To know the association between profile characteristics and performance of gram panchayat president.
4. To know the relationship between profile characteristics and performance of gram panchayat president.

2. Methodology

The study was undertaken in Dharwad district of Karnataka state. Expost-facto research design was employed for the study. The district comprises of five taluks, out of which five taluks (dharwad, Hubli, Kalghatgi, Kundgol, and Navalgund) were selected for the study. From each taluk 12 gram panchayats were selected. Thus, a total sample size was 60 gram panchayat presidents. A pre-tested interview schedule was used to collect the data through personal interview method. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed using percentages, chi-square and correlation. Implementation of rural development activities referred to the frequency which presidents performing their role in implementation of rural development activities. The identified 29 statements relating to the functions of presidents were prepared and were administered to 60 gram panchayat presidents the response were obtained on three-point continuum viz., highly satisfied, satisfied and not satisfied and scored was assigned with weights of 3,2,1 for each activity, the total score was obtained by summing up their scores over all the individual items based on mean and standard deviation the respondents were grouped in to three categories of high, medium and low performance in implementation of rural development activities.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Overall Performance of Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities

The results on Table-1 revealed that 38.33 per cent of the presidents performed medium role followed by 35.00 per cent belonged low and 26.67 per cent belonged high level performance in implementation of rural development activities. The results showed the majority of presidents perform medium role reason might be being president of gram panchayat usually possessed high education, mass media utilization, social participation, contact with development department officials cosmopolitaness that directly influence

on implementation of rural development activities. The findings of data supported by Mankar (2003).

Table 1: Overall Performance of Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities (N=60)

Sl. No	Performance	Number	Per cent
1	Low(<35.91)	21	35.00
2	Medium(35.91-39.48)	23	38.33
3	High(>39.48)	16	26.67

Mean=37.69,SD=4.19

3.2 Specific Performance of Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities

The results presented in Table-2 revealed that regarding specific performance of gram panchayat presidents accordingly 43.34 percent respondents highly satisfied in implementation of drinking water facilities, 36.66 per cent respondents highly satisfied in implementation of strengthening and maintaining library activities. Whereas, 55 percent of presidents satisfied in implementation of welfare of the weaker section in particular of SC's and ST's, 48.00 per cent respondents satisfied in implementation of rural housing activities and 45.00 per cent respondents satisfied implementation of minor irrigation, water management and watershed development activities. Activities like fisheries, minor forests produce, small scale industries including food processing industries, non conventional energy sources even single respondent not satisfied an equal proportion 98.34 percent not satisfied in implementation of khadi, village and cottage industries, family welfare, and also an equal proportion 96.67 percent not satisfied in implementation of women and child development, fuel and fodder activities respectively, an equal proportion of 95.00 per cent rural electrification including distribution of electricity, technical training and vocational education, maintenance of community assets, subsequently, equal proportion 93.33 percent respondents not satisfied in implementation of roads, bridges and water ways, adult and non formal education activities respectively and an equal proportion of 90.00 percent of respondents not satisfied in implementation of market and fairs, public distribution system activities respectively. Probable reasons for above results might be lack awareness and training because majority of presidents not satisfied with their performance in implementation of specific activities may be due lack of awareness, financial constraints and lack co operation. This finding is supported by the findings of Belli (2008) [1] who observed that majority of the gram panchayat presidents not satisfied in implementation of Horticultural activities in rural development

Table 2: Specific Performance of Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities (N=60)

Sl. No.	Developmental Activities	Highly satisfied		Satisfied		Not satisfied	
		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1	Agriculture including Agricultural Extension activities	2	3.33	23	38.34	35	58.33
2	Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, Land consolidation and soil conservation	0	0.00	10	16.67	50	83.33
3	Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development activities	12	20.00	27	45.00	21	35.00
4	Animal husbandry, dairy and poultry development activities	0	0.00	10	16.67	50	83.33
5	Fisheries development activities	0	0.00	0	0.00	60	100.00
6	Social forestry and farm forestry development activities	3	5.00	12	20.00	45	75.00
7	Minor forests produce development activities	0	0.00	0	0.00	60	100.00
8	Small scale industries including food processing industries development activities	0	0.00	0	0.00	60	100.00
10	Rural housing activities	15	0.00	29	48.33	16	26.67
11	Drinking water	26	43.34	20	33.33	14	23.33

12	Fuel and fodder development activities	0	0.00	2	3.33	58	96.67
13	Roads, bridges and water ways activities	1	1.66	3	5.00	56	93.34
14	Rural electrification including distribution of electricity	0	0.00	3	5.00	57	95.00
15	Non conventional energy sources development activities	0	0.00	0	0.00	60	100.00
16	Poverty alleviation programme activities	2	3.34	5	8.33	53	88.33
17	Education including primary and middle school	3	5.00	18	30.00	39	65.00
18	Technical training and vocational education	1	1.66	2	3.34	57	95.00
19	Adult and non formal education	0	0.00	4	6.67	56	93.33
20	Strengthening and maintains of Libraries	22	36.66	19	31.67	19	31.67
21	Cultural activities	0	0.00	1	1.67	59	98.33
22	Market and fairs management	1	1.66	5	8.34	54	90.00
23	Health and sanitation including hospitals, PHCs and dispensaries	6	10.00	20	33.33	34	56.67
24	Family welfare activities	0	0.00	1	1.67	59	98.33
25	Implementation of Women and child development activities	1	1.66	1	1.67	58	96.67
26	Social welfare including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded peoples welfare activities	2	3.34	8	13.33	50	83.33
27	Development activities related to Welfare of the weaker section in particular of SC ^s and ST ^s	17	28.33	33	55.00	10	16.67
28	Public distribution systems activities	0	0.00	6	10.00	54	90.00
29	Maintenance of community assets activities	0	0.00	3	5.00	57	95.00

3.3 Association between Profile Characteristics with Performance of Gram Panchyat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities

Results Table-3 it could be observed that independent variables like education, cosmopolitaness and decision making ability were found to have positive and highly significant association at one per cent level. other variables like *viz.*, age, family occupation, social participation, and contact with development department officials were found to have positive and significant association at five per cent level. Similarly, caste, annual family income and mass media utilization were having non-significant association with performance of gram panchyat presidents. Probable reasons for above results might be education and cosmopolitaness will expose the individuals to the external world but performance requires individual effort rather than group. The results of the present study are in conformity with the finding Devarajaiah (2010)^[3].

Table 3: Association between Profile Characteristics with Performance of Gram Panchyat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities (N=60)

Sl. No.	Profile Characteristics	Chi-square Value
1	Age	11.0363*
2	Education	17.2169**
3	Caste	7.2009 ^{NS}
4	Family Occupation	12.9892*
5	Annual Family Income	3.077 ^{NS}
6	Mass Media Utilization	5.6939 ^{NS}
7	Social Participation	13.1105*
8	Contact with Development Department Officials	10.5524*
9	Cosmopolitaness	19.7834**
10	Decision Making Ability	20.5990**

* = Significance at 5% level of probability, ** = Significance at 1% level of probability, NS = Non-significant

3.4 Relationship between Profile Characteristics with Performance of Gram Panchyat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities

The data Table-4 illustrated that variables such as education, annual family income and mass media utilization were found highly significant relationship at 1 per cent level whereas, age, social participation, cosmopolitaness and decision making ability were found significant relationship at 5 per cent level, other variables such as caste and family occupation

were found non--significant relationship with performance of gram panchyat presidents. The probable reasons for above results might be non-expose with development activities may not get knowledge on the aspects that directly influence performance. The results of the present study are in conformity with the finding of Mamathalakshmi (2013)^[5].

Table 4: Relationship between Profile Characteristics with Performance of Gram Panchyat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities (N=60)

Sl. No	Profile Characteristics	R Value
1	Age	0.323*
2	Education	0.485**
3	Caste	0.127 ^{NS}
4	Family Occupation	0.018 ^{NS}
5	Annual Family Income	0.440**
6	Mass Media Utilization	0.552**
7	Social Participation	0.317*
8	Contact with Development Department Officials	0.38*
9	Cosmopolitaness	0.33*
10	Decision Making Ability	0.36*

* = Significance at 5% level of probability, ** = Significance at 1% level of probability, NS = Non-significant

3.5 Problems Faced by the Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation Rural Development Activities and their Suggestions

Data about the nature of the problems faced by the panchayat presidents in implementation of in implementation of rural development activities is presented in Table-5. The major problems were lack of presidents period (96.67), lack of the fund (88.33%), lack of training (66.66), lack of co-operation from members (61.67) .The other problems were in adequate staff (50.00) followed by Lack of awareness and involvement of peoples in maintaince of community assets (41.67). Unless the government provides these facilities, the gram panchayat presidents can't able to implement rural development activities properly. Majority of presidents suggested that any development activity to take place there is need for funds, most of the times government allots equal funds to all the panchayats but some panchayats have wider coverage with many problems in villages. Hence, majority of the presidents have suggested for providing area and population based and regular allotment of funds to panchayat. Training is an important component for developing the managerial ability of the presidents. Majority of the respondents were not aware of

their roles and responsibilities the directly influence on their performance. The results of the study were supported by the finding of Mankar (2003).

Table 5: Problems Faced by the Gram Panchayat Presidents in Implementation of Rural Development Activities

Sl. No.	Problems	Number	Per cent
1.	Lack of Finance	55	91.67
2.	Lack of Training	40	66.66
3.	Lack of Co-operation from Members	37	61.67
4.	Lack of Awareness and Involvement of Peoples in Maintains of Community Assets	25	41.67
5.	In Adequate Staff	30	50.00

4. Conclusion

Majority of Gram Panchyat presidents were performed medium role in implementation of rural development activities. However, some of the activities like fisheries, minor forests produce, small scale industries including food processing industries, non-conventional energy sources aspect even single respondent not satisfied and also few of the respondents not aware of their roles and responsibilities. President is a integral part of the administration of gram panchyat and directly responsible to implement the of rural development activities so providing training to increasing greater efficiency is most important. Development activity to take place there is need for funds, most of the times government allots equal funds to all the panchayats but some panchayats have wider coverage with many problems in villages. Hence, majority of the presidents have suggested for providing area and population based and regular allotment of funds to panchayats it helps perform better roles in implementation of rural development activities.

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