

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN WEST BENGAL: A CASE STUDY
OF NADIA DISTRICT**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDO	:	Block Development Officer
BRGF	:	Backward Regions Grant Fund
CSC	:	Common Service Centre
DTC	:	District Training Centres
E-HRM	:	Electronic Human resource management
ETC	:	Extension Training Centres
GP	:	Gram Panchayat
GUS	:	Gram Unnayan Samity
GPMS	:	Gram Panchayat Management System
HR	:	Human Resource
HRM	:	Human Resource Management
HRP	:	Human Resource Planning
HRIS	:	Human Resource Information systems
IT	:	Information Technology
LG	:	Local Government
LGI	:	Local Government Institution
LSGI	:	Local Self-Government Institution
NREGS	:	National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes
PS	:	Panchayat Samity
PRIs	:	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RLGI	:	Rural Local Government Institutions

RLSG	:	Rural Local Self-Government
RLSGI	:	Rural Local Self-Government Institution
RD	:	Rural Development
RGPSA	:	Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan
SIPRD	:	State Institute of Panchayat and Rural Development
SRD	:	Strengthening Rural Decentralization
ZP	:	Zilla Parishad

ABSTRACT

Rural development is a globally important issue. This issue is also more important for the developing countries like India, where maximum number of people live in villages. Rural Development scenario in West Bengal is also an important and emerging issue in this regard.

Present condition of rural development which requires immediate attention to the Human Resource Management (HRM) system at local self-government institutions for effective and desired rural development in West Bengal. In many cases due to absence of forward planning, ineffective training programme, lack of professionalism, absence of responsibility have made most developmental initiative neglected and incomplete.

Moreover, lack of decision making at all levels, practice of old methods, ineffective leadership, faulty staffing procedure and lack of motivation and co-ordination parallel and desired development in many rural areas have not been fulfilled. And here arises the need to train, to update and motivate local government functionaries through human resource management (HRM) for better results.

A questionnaire has been developed to collect data on operational part of HRM and staff development. Eleven village Panchayats of one district have been selected for this study. The research study takes a look at HRM, a vital tool for institutional effectiveness. More over, the result of the study reveals that the HRM practices have a great impact and significant effect on institutional effectiveness and employee's performance. Therefore, the study has recommended and concluded that HRM practices are a vital tool to achieve expected rural development in West Bengal.

INTRODUCTION

Development is a broader concept than economic growth. Rural development is a globally important issue. This issue is also more important for the developing countries like India, where maximum number of people live in villages. After independence Panchayati Raj Institutions had been involved and expected to play an important role in the development of village areas in India. Special attention and importance were given to these institutions for rural development by planning commission and various committees constituted time to time by the government of India.

Rural development in India is an emerging factor in the challenging global scenario. As because what we mean by proper rural development, has not equally developed in our developing country. Till now most of people live in villages. There are so many people living in below the poverty line (BPL). They are suffering from malnutrition. There is lacuna of food, clothing, and shelter. Ignorance and illiteracy have wrapped up their life. There is not availability of proper infrastructure in Indian villages. Drinking water, road, and communication facilities are major issues in this regard.

According to Chakrabarti, Chattopadhyay and Nath (2011) in India, the 73rd constitutional amendment of 1992 decentralized agriculture, irrigation, health, education along with 23 other items to the Panchayats - the local level self-government body. It was envisaged that the three-tier Panchayat system at the District, Block and the Village level would fulfill the aim of rural development through decentralization of planning, various schemes and their implementation. In West Bengal, where the Panchayats were revitalized before the constitutional amendment, and was taken a great initiative in implementation of three tier Panchayat system – as a part of local level self government body.

Though, West Bengal was pioneer in implementation of three tier Panchayati Raj system for socio-economic development and transformation of rural society. But, what we mean by proper, and desired rural development yet has not been achieved. In West Bengal

uniform rural development yet has not been fulfilled due to lack of accountability, responsibility, proper and accurate planning, faulty staffing procedure, ineffective leadership, practice of old methods, motivation and co-ordination at local self government institutions.

The Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal is a system that has evolved over the years with the objective of introducing local self-governance that is pro-poor and transparent. Over three decades, new institutions have been created and new regulations framed to devolve greater financial and administrative power to the grassroots level, and to introduce development planning and financial accountability from below. In many other parts of India, the Panchayat remains a weak body with limited powers, and, very often, is dominated by the socially and economically powerful (Bakshi : 2011 : 211-212).

The Panchayat structure in West Bengal, though not free of all weaknesses, presented a different picture. Like the path of development itself, the performance of Panchayat institutions across the State was unequal, of course, as not all of them were equally equipped to handle their responsibilities. However, well-functioning Panchayats were often able to make a substantial difference to planning and implementation of development programmes, and, more importantly, to the lives of the poor. The recent developments in West Bengal undermine this achievement, and may well herald a shift in class alliances and power relations in the State (ibid.).

If reviewed the Panchayat system in West Bengal, it may be seen that some village Panchayats are able to produce expected results and many others are unable to do so, even in same district and in same block. What is the reason behind this? Why the difference between the two Panchayats ? Why the difference in degree of rural development related work? Why the difference found in rural infrastructure ?

For effective rural development the Panchayat system should be strong and dynamic; but how and in what ways the Panchayat system may be systematic and dynamic at village level for effective rural development in West Bengal. Can it be done through financial assistance? Is it by providing proper infrastructure or by providing proper planning and projects etc.? 'No'. The one and only way is proper man power planning through human resource management we can get expected outcome in rural development in West Bengal.

In the existing structure, globalization demands change in management and mode of service delivery of village Panchayats. The progress of rural development totally depends upon the service delivery and proper functioning of the Panchayats. In the era of computerization and new developments in science, technology and telecommunication, globalization demands change in socio-economic sector. In the context of a rapidly changing socio-economic development village Panchayats have to face with the emerging challenges for the sake of proper rural development.

Present condition of rural development which requires immediate attention to the Human Resource Management (HRM) system at local self-government institutions for effective and desired rural development in West Bengal. Due to absence of forward planning, ineffective training programme and lack of professionalism GP management parallel and desired development in rural areas has not been fulfilled. And here arises the need to train, to update and to motivate the local government functionaries through human resource management for better results.

Human resources are main and essential capital for organizations / institutions and also for society. Therefore the success and failure of an organization and institution depends upon the human resources. Without proper human resource management functioning of an organization / institution could not be completed. It is also an asset for the society and also for the nation.

As because human resources are an institution's / organization's greatest assets because without them, functions of Panchayati Raj Institutions such as managing, monitoring, implementation of programmes / projects, communication and dealing with stakeholders can not be completed. Human resources and the potentials they possess are the key drivers for an institution's success. With globalization and technological advances, today's institutions (PRIs) are continuously changing. In order to maximize institutional effectiveness, human potentials, individuals' capabilities, time, and talents must be managed and developed. Hence, the practice of human resource management (HRM) in village Panchayat level meets the goal of rural development in West Bengal.

Human resources of an organization can be a source of competitive advantage, provided that the policies for managing people are integrated with strategic business planning and organizational culture (Beer et al. : 1985). Human resources or human capital of a firm that constitute the resource leading to competitive advantage (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams : 1994 : 301). However, employees are a greater asset than physical or financial resources, for the talent of employees is what determines an organization's success (Ann, et al. : 2009 : xvi-xvii). Development of people, their competencies, and the development process of the total organization are the main concerns of human resource management (Pareek & Rao : 1992).

When thinking about the topic of my research proposal as looking for something that I personally would find interesting, but also something that could be a useful contribution to rural development in West Bengal. The title of this research is an exciting one, which is an important and useful topic related to rural development in the state. Panchayat has a unique role for necessary development in villages. Therefore, it is important to understand the way it functions. Hence, the necessity of human resource management - application is essential at Panchayat level activities and programme implementation.

Here the study has concentrated its attention to how human resource management practices contribute to the performance of Panchayati Raj Institutions for effective rural development. This study has also examined the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper has identified the need of human resource management and its impact on rural development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is concentrated its attention, to study the human resource management practices at Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and its contribution to the performance of PRIs towards real rural development in West Bengal.

The specific objectives are :

1. To examine the relationship between HRM and effectiveness of Panchayati Raj Institutions for rural development in West Bengal.

2. To determine the role of staff / elected members of Panchayat institutions would become more competent, efficient, accountable and responsible through human resource management practices towards attainment of institutional effectiveness as well as rural development in West Bengal.

Thus, the study has tried to examine how rural development is possible through Human Resource Management (HRM) by effective utilization of human resources at local self government institutions. And finally considers HRM as a precious issue. It concludes with a discussion about how human resource management systems can be effective in rural development in West Bengal.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

West Bengal is a small state with vast population. There are so many villages spread all over West Bengal. Agriculture is the one of the pillars and determinant of state economy. Rural villages are the heart and soul of the state's progress. If, it could be possible to develop each and every village in the state properly then the progress and prosperity of village people as well as state economy would be developed simultaneously. But how it is possible? It is possible only through proper rural development.

According to census of 2011 total population of West Bengal is about 9.13 crore and about more than 68% population live in villages and a majority of our total population prolong to linger deprived from basic necessities of life. Rural development of this state has failed in many cases in rural areas to produce expected out come. It has been seen that, there is scarcity of food, lacuna of rural infrastructure, road facilities, drinking water, health and sanitation facilities due to the lack of effectiveness of local self government institutions and their functionaries towards rural development.

After thorough assessment of Panchayat level work, few distinct short comings can be detected. These short comings are mostly related with negligence, lack of proper supervision, lack of accountability and responsibility and Lacuna of Capacity Building etc. And other few shortcomings like leadership quality, practice of old methods, ineffectiveness of Panchayati Raj Institutions, lacuna of Resource Mobilization etc. have

also been found. Moreover, emphasis should be given on transparency, implementation of proper training and management system.

Proper idea and encouraging responsibility are also partly or totally absent. In some cases, gravity of proper aim of work has been ignored. Proper training of workers and supervisors has not been given. Projects choosing are also not correct. Urgent and essential works have not been selected after spot verification. In many cases work period have not been followed. Some times works have been done beyond the project period. In many cases much attention to work are not found. Sometimes sanctioned fund could not be utilized in time. Therefore, villagers and stakeholders are not getting proper and accurate information and services all the time. Sometimes, it causes as barrier in the way of smooth and expected rural development in West Bengal.

All these short comings and defects have made most projects and works neglected and incomplete. Above all human accountability, responsibility and moralities are absent and these are the main obstacles towards attainment of rural development goal in the state.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As an institution village Panchayat consists of staff and elected members. Their functions contribute to development of rural infrastructure, health, sanitation, education and socio-economic development of the village people. Their other functions also contribute to management of Panchayat administration i.e. planning, training, directing, controlling, staffing, monitoring and observing etc. All the defects in management system and development related work result from the poor performance of the personnel engaged in the system. Effectiveness and performance of Panchayat institutions like all other institutions depend to a great extent upon the efficiency, capability, competency, experience, effectiveness and responsibility of staff and members engaged in them. What is lacking in the Panchayat administration is the application of human resource management (HRM), so far no attempt has been made to introduce human resource management system at village Panchayat institutions for rural development in West Bengal.

Better rural development is possible only by the Panchayats, those have better managed human resources. If human resources of a Panchayat are good, accountable, responsible

and efficient, rural development under that Panchayat will be accordingly. For this there is the need to build accurate, competent and efficient human resources for perfect Panchayat administration and institutional set up. Through proper planning, training and potential appraisal system it is possible to build perfect management and efficient administration at village Panchayat level for rural development. For this there is an urgent need to develop man power and human potentiality through human resource management (HRM).

Here the study, describes the knowledge acquired from literature reviews to the scope of research. These reviews includes literature on rural development (RD), Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Human Resource Management (HRM) and how it functions in institutional / organizational settings, why people are important and essential as institutional / organizational resources and how this resources can be effectively, efficiently and properly utilized for institutional success towards attainment of rural development.

Survey of related literature reveals that the literature on the subject of village Panchayat and rural development is fairly large, while it is not so in the subject of rural development through human resource management which is a growing area of research. Still the field is largely unexplored. In the following section; a review of literature has been attempted.

Literature Related to Human Resource Management

The main aim of human resource management is to keep up organizational settings as well as maintain good relations among the staff in the organization. It is also related with the upliftment and betterment of individual for achieving organizational goals. Human resource management (HRM) is a process of development and management of people in an organization. It also tries to upgrade, utilize the manpower to achieve the organizational goal in an effective and efficient manner. According to Dale Yoder (1972), “The management of human resources is viewed as a system in which participants seek to attain both individual and group goals.” Thus, human resource management is concerned with the activities of human issues in the organization and act as an important role for necessary achievement of individual and organizational development.

Now a days, it is a common belief in both the business and the academic world that the human resources of an organization can be a source of competitive advantage, provided that the policies for managing people are integrated with strategic business planning and organizational culture (Beer et al. : 1985). Human resources may be defined as total knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes of an organization's workforce, as well as the values, attitudes, approaches and beliefs of the individuals involved in the affairs of the organization. It is the sum total or aggregate of inherent abilities, acquired knowledge and skills represented by the talents and aptitudes of the persons employed in the organization.

Human resources are the institutions best assets. But the quality of these assets varies from organisation to organisation. Each and every people working in an institution are not same. Each individual differs from the other by their nature, behaviour, attitude, habits, intelligence and so on. They also differ from castes, creeds and educational background. Their service towards the institution or organisation also differs according to their merit, effectiveness, efficiency, performance, responsibility, accountability and so on. According to Ghanekar (2000 : 2) human resources are multi-dimensional in nature. "People at work" constituting the human resource in an organization comprise all individuals engaged in any of the organizational activities, regardless of levels, age or socio-cultural backgrounds. All these individuals differ from one another in an almost infinite number of aspects including aspects of their intelligence, personality, and physical make up.

Human Resource Management (HRM) is relatively a new approach to managing staff in any organisation. In this approach men power are considered as the key resources. It is concerned with the management of people in an organization. As the organization's main element is people, their acquisition, motivation, development of skills, training and potential appraisal systems for higher levels of attainments, as well as to ensure the level of commitment are all important activities. All these activities fall in the area of HRM. Indeed the main four activities of human resource management, which may lead an organization, are namely, acquisition, development, motivation as well as maintenance of human resources. "Human resource management refers to activities and tasks useful in maximizing employees' performance. Human resource management, therefore, includes the recruitment, selection, placement, motivation, appraisal, development, communication

with utilization and overall accommodation of employees to achieve organizational goals” (Ann Gilley et.al. : 2009 : xvi-xvii).

Mahapatro (2010) in his book Human Resource Management explores the importance of human resource management practices at organizational level. In this study he observes all organizations, be these business, educational or governmental are basically a social system. People run these. The functioning of this organization depends upon how people work or behave in the organization. The author also believes that, human resource management is also an art of developing people and their potentials for their personal and the growth of the organization. It is the process of integrating the HR and organization together to ensure that their individual and collective goals are closely aligned. Here the author point out that, people are always been considered as critical factor in an organizational set up and it needs to be handled with care.

The study has also been evaluated the concept and practice of employee-employer relationship undergone a change over the last decade. In the globally competitive economy, efforts to boost productivity and quality are a continuous process. Here the study also explores that, modern organizational setting is characterized by constant changing in relation to environmental factors and human resources. As regard to the environmental factors, we find changes in the operating organizational structure, working procedures, customs, norms, economic, political and social patterns in which organizations exist. Moreover, there is a constant change in human resources; the individuals are employed daily with new creativity, ideas and experiences, while the existing workforce is also continuously changing their ideas, attitudes and even values. Thus, every manager has to develop and maintain his competency in managing human resources, which have assumed utmost significance in modern organizations.

Manju Malik (2013) investigates the influence of human resource practices on the employee performance in telecom sector in India. The study explores that world of human resource management is changing more rapidly than we can imagine. Recognizing these challenges of the organization has created the need for fundamental advances in human resource management. Through this research study it is explored that, contribution of human resource management practices including selection, training, career planning, compensation, performance appraisal has an important role on employee performance.

Result of the study shows that, all the tested HR practices are having positive correlation with employee's performance.

Armstrong (2009) in his book *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice* put emphasis on major developments in the theory and practice of human resource management. The study also explores the impact of HRM, corporate social responsibility, high performance work systems, employee engagement, change management, resourcing strategy and employee well-being.

The study also describes the basic features and characteristics of human resource management, strategic human resource management and HR strategies. Here the author provides the necessary framework within which the detailed descriptions of HRM strategies, policies, processes and practices take place. Here the study examines the role of the HR function and the HR practitioner, human capital management; international HRM, corporate social responsibility and HRM research methods.

Hong, Hao, Kumar, Ramendran, Kadiresan (2012) in their study on *An Effectiveness of Human Resource Management Practices on Employee Retention in Institute of Higher learning* reveals that employees are the backbone of an organization. Hence, the retention of the employees is important in keeping the organization on track. In order to retain the best talents, strategies aimed at satisfying employee's need are implemented, regardless of global companies or small-sized firms. Here authors also describe effective human resource management practices namely employee empowerment, training and development, appraisal system, compensation are the main factors for the success of a firm on employee retention. This paper examines how employees regard importance of their empowerment, equity of compensation, job design through training and expectancy toward effective performance management on their retention. The study suggests that training and development, appraisal system, compensation is significant to employee-retention except employee-empowerment.

Long, Perumal, Ajagbe (2012) examines the impact of human resource management practices on employees' turnover intention. Here the study discusses extensively on the impact of human resource practices that can alter the negative effect on the organization due to high employees' turnover. Several previous researches on this issue have been

discussed in this paper to enable authors to develop a conceptual framework and five propositions. Here authors draw the relationship between five specific challenges of the HRM practices i.e. compensation and benefits, training, performance management, career development, employee relation management and turnover intentions. Here the study also emphasises the importance of HRM and its impact on organisational turnover. Therefore the intention of the research in examining these models and relating them to the research is to provide a general view of what the management needs.

Kishori Lal (2005) in his book “Human Resource Management – An Indian Perspective” attempts to highlight as the new millennium progresses and times have changed, and the forces that once worked within organizations regarding people, practices, culture and leadership are different from those that will work going forward. The author believes that, for the first time in human history, we need a new way of looking at the people and their potential. Scientifically and systematically, we need to analyse and identify the potential of every individual in every nation and help them to grow and optimize their potential so that they can not only achieve their own individual development but also contribute to the development of human family, society, nations and the world. In the development of the individual lies the development of organizations, nations and the world.

Here the study addresses itself to a comprehensive, total approach to people problems through achieving a return on investment in human resources, human time being the largest single operating cost for most enterprises. The study confronts the most complex and challenging demand made on management – that of managing people. In India, we have a huge population of more than hundred crores. Managing such a crowd of humanity is a big problem. At the dawn of a new millennium, a growing number of organizations are faced with the challenge of managing and integrating their human resources.

Bratton and Gold (1999) in their book on Human Resource Management : Theory and Practice contributes the subject divided into five major parts. These parts are, of course, interconnected but, at the same time, they reflect different focuses of study. Part one introduces the nature and role of HRM and addresses some of the controversial theoretical issues surrounding the HRM discourse. It also examines the notion of strategic HRM and explores various strategic issues. Part two reviews the external contexts that affect human resource management policies and actions inside the organization. Changes in

organizational structures, job design and employee health and safety are also examined in this section. The discussion in Part one and two provides the context of HRM and prepares the groundwork for Part three to five. Part three to five examine the key HR practices that comprise the selection, appraisal, human resource development and rewards etc.

Jalan (2005) in his book *Management Ethics* point out the importance of human resource utilization is concerned with the quality of human behavior and relationships as they influence performance of the individual as well as that of the organization. It is derived from the basic needs of the organization i.e. to develop human resource both for current and anticipated growth of the organization. Here the author draws the attention to the social problems of a developing country like ours, which has a planned economy with emphasis on accelerated growth and development of different sectors of the economy, have given a new significance to the issue of human resource development.

The author believes that development is a value-laden concept. Theories of development are ridden with controversies. Since development is concern itself with the increase in material and nonmaterial well being of a society, its scale is societal, its scope extending upto the fashioning of a just and desirable society. What are the goals of such a society? How can these be achieved? These are complex questions which have no simple answers. Vivekananda once said : “Man’s development lies in rising above both external nature and internal nature’. Science and technology are concerned solely with man’s victories over external nature, the material world. They have nothing to offer for man’s internal progress. Ethics and morals relate to this internal domain.

Piyush Kanti Mahapatra (2002) in his book *Human Resource Management in Libraries*, put emphasis on human resource management is on the crossroads. Human resource has never been as necessary as key resource. The author point out that, the challenges are facing modern library and information services demand learning, information system and services, speed, responsiveness and capability. The demands can be fulfilled only by persons with good academic background, professional skills, expertise, leadership for accomplishment of the library activities and operations. The united efforts of the work force can fulfill the objectives of the library and achieve the goals of the organisation.

The author believes that, human resource management is relatively a new term used in industry and business areas. Personnel management and human resource management are not synonymous. Human resource management is a concept and approach to shape the organizational work culture, and in libraries it is service oriented. Libraries management should consider the factors which improve the functional aspects and develop personal qualities for best personal contributions. The purpose of human resource management is to motivate, train, encourage, educate and guide the library personnel for accomplishment of the goals of the organisation.

Literature Related to Rural Development

Rural development is an emerging issue in the present global situation. It is also associated with the socio-economic development of India. There are so many villages in India, where rural development yet has not been fulfilled. There are so many people live in below the poverty line. They are also deprived of basic necessities of life. There is also lack of proper infrastructure facility in rural India. West Bengal is a state of eastern India, where rural development is also an important issue.

In view of the above, government of India has taken initiatives for the purpose of rural development. So many projects, programmes and planning launched after independence with the aim of rural development. But all of these initiatives and planning could not be fulfilled. These initiatives also reflect in our five year plans of the country. Governmental activities have been prepared with the aim of the wellbeing of her citizens.

Considering the backwardness of rural India, condition of rural poor and depends upon their wants, desires and wishes a feeling and realization of such institutions which will fulfill the aims and objectives of rural people. In such a feeling Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved in necessary programme implementation through decentralized development of planning.

Singh (1999) conceptualizes rural development as a phenomenon, strategy and discipline and connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. It is a comprehensive and multidimensional concept, and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities, village and cottage industries and crafts,

socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities, and, above all, the human resources in rural areas.

The term 'rural development' is of focal interest and is widely acclaimed in both the developed and the developing countries of the world. There is however no universally acceptable definition of rural development and the term is used in different ways and in vastly divergent contexts. As a concept, it connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. In this sense, it is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional concept and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities – village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities and above all, the human resources in rural areas. As a phenomenon, it is the result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural and institutional forces. As a strategy, it is designed to improve the economic and social well-being of a specific group of people – the rural poor. As a discipline, it is multidisciplinary in nature representing an interface between agricultural, social, behavioural, engineering and management sciences (Samit Kar : 1991 : 4-6).

Villages are the backbone of India. The dream of Gandhi will be fulfilled only after our villages become republics under the Panchayati Raj system of local self government elected by the people of the villages in a democratic manner. Even after six decades of Independence, the development of the rural population has not been solved. The livelihoods of rural areas are lower than even some of our neighboring countries. The basic issues of sanitation, health care and quality of education, employment and overall quality of life remain serious considerations in the development programs of our nation (Palanivelraja, Manirathinem : 2013 : 1).

There are so many books and literatures related to rural development are as follows :

Aarushi Jain (2011) in his Public Private Partnership for Rural Development deals specifically with rural development, better quality of life, development of rural areas and rural people through public private partnership programme. Here the author explores nations building is a complex dynamics of ideological, philosophical, political, socio-economic and cultural forces. There is a neo-participatory role for the public and private sectors in promoting the well being of the people. In the 21st century public private

partnership has become a refined strategy for societal governance. Public private partnership is a creative enterprise where the best of two sectors is brought together to achieve fruitful results.

The author reveals that, in the new millennium, as India grows from strength to strength, there is an imminent need for introspection as to whether all segments of society are able to gain from its growth and achieve a better quality of life. In this context, the synergies that have developed over time between the corporate sector and the rural economy need to be strengthened. The Government of India is doing a yeoman's service in the direction of rural development. The efforts of government need to be supplemented by that of the industrial establishments. There are many industrial houses which are directly or through social welfare foundations set by them, have taken active interest in undertaking significant projects for empowerment of rural masses in the vicinity of their operations.

The author has also made attempt to emphasise about the accelerating rural development through public private partnership and in conclusion he describes the prime objectives of rural development is to improve the quality of life of the rural people by alleviating poverty, providing community infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, electricity, road connectivity, health facilities, rural housing, education and promoting decentralization of powers to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Here the author also describes the need of public private partnership between the government and industry for harmonized rural development and suggests regarding public private partnerships in various schemes, sectors for rural development.

Ocheni, Atakpa, Nwankwo (2012) in their Local Government and Appropriate Capacity Building for Accelerated and Sustainable Rural Development put emphasis on capacity assessment of human and institutional resources for planning and management of rural development at the local government level in Nigeria. The ultimate aim of the study is to provide the basis needed for adopting meaningful policy measures geared towards the building of local skills and capacities for planning and managing rural development at the decentralized levels. The findings of the study reveals that there is lack of initiative for capacity building in relation to accelerated and sustainable rural development at the local government level, failure to build capacity which can be sustained; failure to address critical national, local objectives, capacity building is not treated as a priority, which must

be a continuous process / efforts; lack of formulation of coherent strategies with a realistic time frame. The study concludes by observing that for capacity building there is a need of capacity assessment, analysis of the existing capacity problems; assessment of past approaches to capacity building; strengthening the existing system; technology transfer; etc. at local level government in Nigeria.

Anil Kumar Jana (2015), in his edited volume *Decentralization Rural Governance and Development* put an attempt to examine the process and extent of decentralizing rural development in India over the last two decades following the historic Amendment of 1992.

Thanikasalam, Saraswathy (2014) in their *Role of Gram Panchayat in Rural Development: A Study of Vagurani Village of Usilampatti Block of Madurai District, Tamil Nadu* examines the role of Gram Panchayat in rural development. Here the study describes Panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. Plan documents of both the central and state governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments. Here an attempt is also made to study the role of gram Panchayats in rural development in general and Vagurani village of Madurai district, Tamil Nadu in particular. The finding of the study reveals that, Panchayat Raj institution is playing crucial role in elevating the positions of the rural people.

Kadam (2012) in his study on *Role of Gram Panchayat in Rural Development : A Study of Uttur Village of Mudhol Taluka, Bagalkot District, Karnataka* explains the role and importance of Panchayat in rural development in India. Here the author also describes Panchayat Raj system is playing important role in rural development. The study also explores Uttur gram Panchayat has taken the responsibility of implementing various rural development programmes of both state and central governments. The objective of the study is to identify problems of Uttur gram Panchayat in implementing rural development programmes, evaluating the role of Panchayat and the impact of the same towards the development of rural people. Finding of the study is that, Panchayati Raj institution is playing key role in rural development and enriching the positions of the rural people.

Das and Roy (2012) in their “New Directions in Rural Development” investigate the subject under a collection of twenty one articles on various aspects of rural development in India. Authors, in their exhaustive introduction, explain the problem of rural development in India, so they try to find out how rural development is possible with desired extent. As because, rural development is an important issue in the present day situations.

The article written by Prabhat Datta and Chandan Datta on The Panchayat System in West Bengal in a book edited by G. Palanithurai deals with the structures and processes of the third generation Panchayats in West Bengal against a brief backdrop of colonial past and post-colonial experience before the advent of the present Left Front Government in the State. Here an attempt has been made to identify the characteristic features of the present Panchayat system coupled with innovative institution building initiatives in West Bengal and to assess the performance of the Panchayats, particularly Gram Panchayats, in the light of empirical research studies.

The article written by Debnarayan Modak in a book edited by Anil Kumar Jana on Capacity Building of Panchayati Raj Institutions : The West Bengal Experience is an initiatives of capacity building of local institutions in West Bengal. The article also tries to capitalize on the fruits of such comparisons in order to better understand the very nature of the advances made in this state in this regard over the years.

Dash and Rao (2010) in their Rural Development in India examine the important programmes and policies of rural development as well as its impact on rural India and have forwarded various strategies for future course of action. Authors also have evaluated the concept of rural development is a matter of debate and has been subjected to varied interpretations in different periods. Despite fundamental differences on the term rural development, the common consensus i.e., improving the quality of life of the people living in Rural India and empowering them, had dominated in the different five year plans.

Gangopadhyay and Mukhopadhyay (2010) in their case study on Participatory Learning and Action for Sustainable Rural Development in India put emphasis on development facilitator; a potential paradox can arise when assisting in self-reliant participatory development. Authors believe that, this occurs when the facilitator tries to help and encourage people to develop themselves and in doing so, undermines their self-reliance and

sustainability, the very aim of development in India. Authors also describes some of the critical factors like socio-economic condition of the villages including present status of agriculture, education and health, poverty, un-employment and livelihoods of the people and people's perception on the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Besides, a few self-sustainable and employment generation programmes have also been identified based on societal needs and an action plan as proposed through participatory approaches. The study would be helpful for the planners and administrators not only in better realization of the socio-economic condition of the villagers but also in successful implementation of the proposed integrated approaches for sustainable rural development.

The article written by Chandra B.P. Singh on Panchayats as Institutions : Myth or Reality in a book edited by Ratna Ghosh and Alok Kumar Pramanik is an attempt to identify the factors of institutions-building for PRIs. The purpose is to maintain a diagnostic view throughout in order to suggest some remedies for avoiding institutional degeneration and accelerating the revival process.

Bardhan et al. (2009) conducted the study on Local Democracy and Clientelism : Implications for Political Stability in Rural West Bengal. The study examines factors underlying the unusual stability of political power in rural West Bengal, using data pertaining to the functioning of local democracy from a household survey conduct by the authors. It examines the patterns of political awareness, participation, distribution of benefits by gram Panchayats, and voting across households of varying socio-economic characteristics. The main findings are that (i) political participation is high on average; (ii) within villages Panchayat benefits flowed to poor and scheduled caste/scheduled tribe groups on par or better, compared with the rest of the population; (iii) distribution of benefits across villages is biased against those with more landless households.

Jayalakshmi (2009) in her study on District Administration in India : In the Era of Globalization, is a resource-based view towards development of district administration. This study is an updated and timely piece of work on district administration. The author believes that, in the backdrop of globalisation and there is an urgent need to adopt new methods and techniques of developmental governance. The themes are of enormous topical interest and contemporary relevance. The book is a collection of twenty articles by practitioners, and academicians. The well researched papers present an in-depth,

comprehensive and cogent discussion with reference to new public management and public choice theory. They highlight on challenges to monopolistic role of district administration and a research for alternative ways of problem solving and delivery of services. It also discusses on inadequacy and incapability of the existing district administration in the supply of goods and services to the citizens in an effective, transparent and responsive manner. The author also explores a critical presentation of the existing set up of district administration and provides a framework for making it a more effective and efficient means for redressing the public grievances. The study also emphasizes on new public management to governance, action plan for modernizing and restructuring the district administration, developing an indigenous model of civil services, code of ethics for public service, review of laws, regulations and procedures, public service delivery and grievance redressal, role of e-Governance, right to information, citizen charter, bureaucracy client interface, decentralization and empowering the local bodies and public-private partnership initiatives.

Pillai (2008) in his book *Rural Development in India* describes the turning point of India and its long and arduous struggle for socio-economic development. According to the author in the 21st century India continues to live in villages. This makes it obvious that any process of planning and development in India can hardly succeed without transferring its rural society. The study has also made emphasis on the approach to successive five year plans envisages 'growth, equity, social justice, self-reliance, improved efficiency and productivity as its guiding principles. As a strategy to achieve these objectives, it calls for a 'sharper focus on employment generation and poverty alleviation' through rural development programmes. The author believes that provision of productive employment will help people to stand on their own feet and work with self-confidence and self-respect which will in turn help in people's participation in developmental tasks. It is also felt that information, education and training can play a critical role in creating awareness among the beneficiaries, equipping them with skills required in the process of being able to sustain their own up-gradation and inculcating an attitude wherein they view themselves as part and planners of rural development programme. Here the study also gives special emphasis on the philosophy, policy and programme intervention for rural development in India.

Bhattacharya (2000) in his book on *Indian Administration*, highlights the objectives of the study, promoting Panchayati Raj System in West Bengal. The study also tries to give

importance on duties and responsibilities of Gram Panchayats, Resource devolution and also the role of Panchayats in Rural Development.

Gupta (2004) in his book Rural Development in India has given importance on rural development is the main pillar of Nation's Development. Here the author has placed emphasis on all round economic and social transformation in rural areas, through a multi pronged strategy. Here the author also gives special attention to rural sanitation, solid waste disposal, food hygiene, environmental hygiene, communication, planning, sustainable development and overall quality of the life in rural areas.

Chhetri (2008) in his study on "Panchayati Raj System and Development Planning" reveals the main objective of the study is to see the cohesion between the strong political will for decentralization of powers and a relatively weak and ineffective means of a delivery mechanism to support the will at the grass-roots level. Author therefore, feels an imperative for India's elected Panchayat representatives to undergo training in social responsibilities, particularly in light of the changing scenario of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the priorities thrust upon them. It is against this backdrop that Panchayati Raj System and Development Planning provides a platform for sharing the author's experiences about the function and faults of the PRIs. These experiences will prove useful for India's rural leaders while managing fiscal resources or making decisions with far-reaching and lasting consequences on the life of the villagers.

Joshi and Narwani (2005) in their Panchayat Raj In India : Emerging Trends Across The States examine the importance of Panchayati Raj, as a system of governance at the grass root level in rural India, has been rightly conceived as the most viable and proper mechanism of realizing the goals of democracy and decentralization. The current debate is not on its desirability but on strengthening it by identifying its weaknesses and taking care of the lacunae which are still there in spite of its constitutionalization through the historical 73rd Constitution Amendment Act. The study reveals that, rural India today has become the embodiment of a new revolution which seeks to provide direction to the polity thereby making democracy and decentralization vibrant and feasible for those who deserve it.

Palanithurai (2008) in his book Dynamics of New Panchayati Raj System In India, describes the role of Panchayati Raj System in India from Political, Sociological, legal,

anthropological, economic perspective and in the light of 73rd constitutional amendment. Here the study gives an in-depth understanding of the status of Panchayati Raj in different states, it also addresses a wide range of issues concerning empowerment of women and dalits, multi-level planning, finance, people's participation, state-local relationship, capacity building of Panchayat functionaries, socio-political and economic transformation, common resources management, leadership in Panchayati Raj institutions and theoretical nuances of local bodies.

Sundar Ram (2007), in his book *Dynamics of Grassroots Governance in India : Dreams and Realities*, point out an important contribution to the on-going search for alternatives to the dilemmas of the grassroots democratic institutions over last several years. A distinguished panel of authors review the strength and weaknesses of the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions - whether it serves the basic needs and aspirations of the people at the grassroots level or have become obsolete and, if so, whether a systematic change is required. Providing an analytical description of the dynamics of the grassroots institutions with the Indian experiences, this volume provides significant insights and analytical tools to the debate on the good governance at the grassroots level and draws attention to various unresolved issues and dilemmas. This timely volume seeks to examine the dreams and realities of the rural people towards the good governance objectively and dispassionately.

Dutta and Dutta (2006) in their 'Institutions for Development' have dealt the subject on Panchayat Raj System in India. The study deals with the 73rd amendment, which ushers in a new era on local self government within the country by focusing on thematic areas: women's reservation, Panchayati Raj Institution, resource mobilization at the local level, capacity building of Panchayati Raj institutions and people's participation in Panchayati Raj institutions based on ground realities and facts which are indispensable for development of the Panchayati Raj functioning. As a matter of fact reflections on West Bengal Panchayati Raj history are depicted with an objective to relate the success of PRIs as an institution of development and progress. Keeping this in view a critical and analytical study is attempted for drawing relevant conclusions and suggestions for making the institution more effective and sustainable.

Sudhakar (2002) in *New Panchayati Raj System : Local Self Government in Community Development* put emphasis on the arrangement of new Panchayati Raj system is made to administer development involving people in every stage of the development process

utilizing the skills available with them and using the natural resources available in their areas. It is not only for growth but also for equity and social justice. The author believes that Panchayati Raj system is an innovative mechanism to bridge the yawning gap between the decision making centre and the centre of implementation. It is intended to prepare the citizens for responsible living and to develop leaders who could take control of democratic institutions at state and national level. It envisages more of responsibilities rather than powers and authority.

Rural development in India has got importance not only in national scenario but also internationally. When, it gets exceptional significance in Indian perspective. Most of the people in India live in villages and there is hardly seen parallel progress in rural areas. The lacuna of proper rural infrastructure and backwardness in rural sector may cause major obstacles in the parallel economic development.

In order to expected development in rural areas, top precedence has been given not only in terms of financial assistance, but also in planning for new programmes and policies and its effective implementation. Rural development strategy and policy should be reviewed and evaluated accordingly with the technological and global advancement in the new century. There are so many books, literatures and journals, where rural development has got top priority and as an important issue.

Review of related literature is indicating that area of rural development through human resource management is unexplored. There are so many institutions / organizations found in Government / Public sector, Private sector and Corporate sector in India and abroad where, effective utilization of human resources through human resource management it is possible to enhance institutional effectiveness, which ultimately help the organization to achieve its success and goal. But there is no such initiative in our state of West Bengal in this regard. Review of related literature on rural development revealed that maximum research have been conducted on rural marketing, Panchayats in India, community development, Micro-Finance, Planning, Land Reforms, Food Security, Agriculture and Public Private Partnership for Rural Development etc.. In all these studies emphasis has been given on present institutional structure, development of strategy, policy and planning for rural development etc.

The literature on the subjects of village Panchayat and rural development is fairly large, while it is not so in the subject of rural development through human resource management, which is a growing area of research. A few seminal contributions on the subject of study have been reviewed to identify the major trends and to venture into a new area of research. Government of India and Government of West Bengal's Panchayat and Rural Development Programmes have been evaluated by various Government organisations viz. Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission, Concurrent Evaluations carried out by the Ministry of Rural Development with the help of reputed institutions located at the regional level, RBI, NABARD, NIRD, DFID, UNICEF, World Bank and other organisations like Universities, Research Institutes, NGOs, and Individuals. Their approaches, conceptualization and methodology laid their focus on the success and shortfalls in terms of performance, as measured by resource mobilization, poverty alleviation or assets creation. But they have hardly attempted to strengthen the Capacity, accountability, responsibility and above all morality of PRIs functionaries through human resource management.

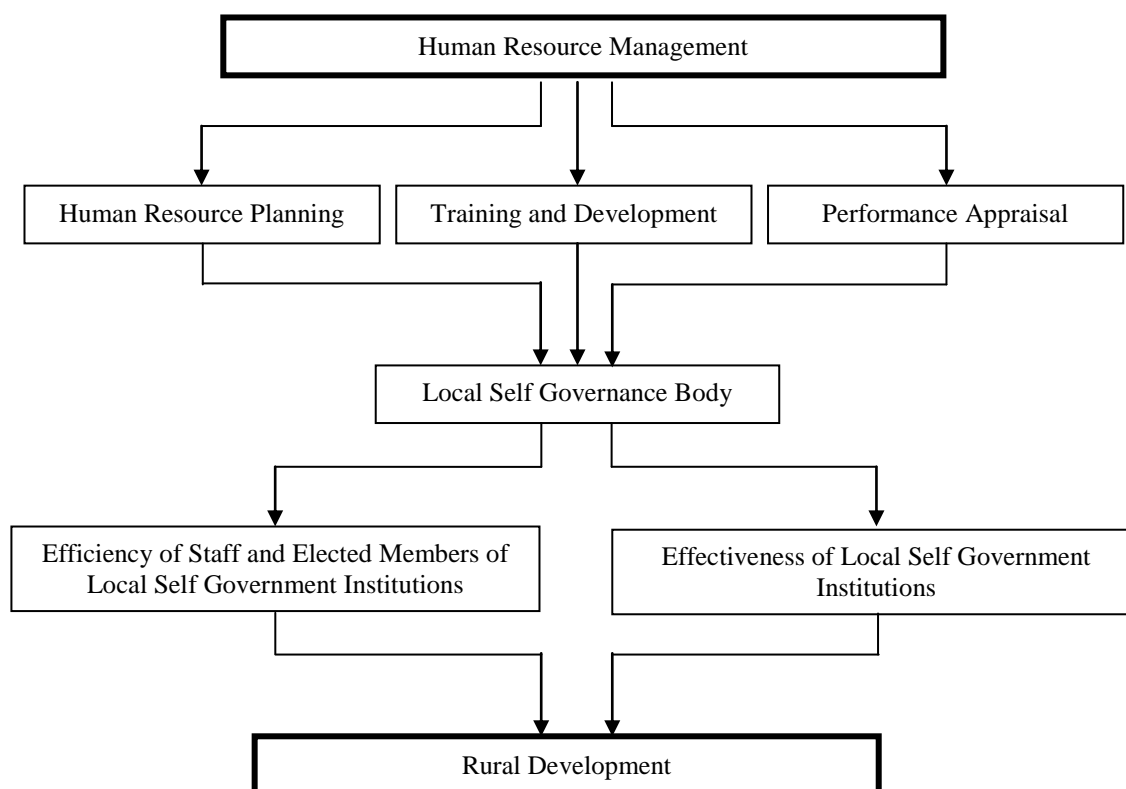
Desired rural development can change the entire rural life and socio-economic condition of the rural people. Better rural development is possible only by those Panchayats, those have better managed human resources. For this there is the need to build accurate, competent and efficient human resources for perfect Panchayat administration and institutional set up. Through proper planning, training and development and potential appraisal system it is possible to build perfect management and efficient administration at village Panchayat level for rural development. For this there is an urgent need to develop man power and human potentiality through human resource management (HRM).

Human resource management is being utilized by other sectors, but unfortunately Panchayat administration has not given emphasis to this professional approach. Therefore, there is desperate need of research in this area which would eventually lead to a better managed Panchayat administration. And through dynamic Panchayat administration it is possible to meet the challenge and goal of rural development in the state.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

All rural development related programmes, projects and planning of both central and state governments are implemented through local self-government institutions. Therefore, rural development mostly depends upon the performance and effectiveness of these institutions. Performance and effectiveness of these institutions also depend upon the competency, efficiency, accountability and responsibility of the staff and elected members. Therefore, the staff and elected members of these institutions have an important and crucial role in rural development. In this context, the studies focusing on the variables that influence the workforce of the local self-government institutions deserve special significance.

Figure 1: Proposed Framework Model



The study aims at studying the interrelationship between the independent variables such as human resource planning, training and development, performance appraisal and individual, institutional effectiveness. The present study shows how these three variables affect the performance of the functionaries of local self government institutions. Here the study illustrates and tries to give a clear picture how human resource planning, training and development, performance appraisal help and assist the workforce to upgrade and update their performance, skills, efficiency, competency and also institutional effectiveness

towards attainment of rural development in West Bengal. Here, e-HRM acts as an important electronic tool and helps to perform for smooth functioning of work. In short, the proposed framework suggests how planning, training and development, performance appraisal as a part of human resource management facilitate the local self government institutions in reaching the goal of rural development through effective utilization of workforce. As the concept and application of human resource management in local self-government institutions is at preparatory stage, there an effort has been made to focus on this concept at every chapter in details.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through long studies few questions on research have been raised. Those are as follows :

How does human resource management system can be a vital tool for effective utilisation of village-Panchayat-functionaries for institutional effectiveness towards rural development in West Bengal?

How far and to what extent have the existing schemes of planning become effective in utilization of human resources at village Panchayat level of West Bengal? How can it be more effective ?

To what extent do present schemes of training and development of village Panchayat staff / elected members ensure effective utilization of human resources in the Panchayati Raj system of Government of West Bengal? How can it be more active and effective ?

How far and to what extent have the existing schemes of performance and potential appraisal system become effective in utilization of human resources at village Panchayat level of this State?

How does performance and potential appraisal system be more effectively implemented at village Panchayat level of the State? How does employee-performance and potential appraisal system influence institutional performance towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal?

In what ways can village Panchayat system be made more effective vis – a – vis rural development through introduction of e- Human Resource Management as a part of e-governance measures?

METHODOLOGY

Here the research study examines the implication of human resource management in Panchayati Raj Institutions for desired rural development in West Bengal. This study has been conducted in West Bengal, a state of eastern India. One district and eleven village Panchayats have been selected for this purpose. This study adopted a descriptive research design. It also involves a field visit to talk to the functionaries of Panchayat institutions. Data have been collected using questionnaire method. The questionnaire is both open ended and closed questions. Interviews have also been considered especially as regards the heads and other functionaries of Panchayat institutions.

The study is based on an empirical work within the broad framework of how human resource management can become a vital tool for village Panchayat institutions towards attainment of rural development goal with special emphasis on the district of Nadia in West Bengal. The population for the study consists of staff and elected members of selected village Panchayats of the district.

This research study has been undertaken to study the factors facilitating and hindering the process of human resource management of Gram Panchayat institutions. A comprehensive questionnaire has been developed to collect data on operational part of human resource management and staff development. The present study confined its attention on eleven village Panchayats of three respective blocks in Nadia District. The design of the research study is descriptive and comprehensive in nature.

Description and comparison of two types of Panchayats like well performed as desired and performed, have been done on dimensions selected for study : (i) Infrastructure (ii) Human Resources (iii) Service delivery (iv) Extent to which the staff / members of Panchayats are employing modern management techniques (v) provisions for staff development programme etc.

The study has been conducted in Nadia district of West Bengal with a sample size of 111 Staff and village Panchayat members (46 staff and 65 members). For the study both primary and secondary data have been used. The primary data has been collected through personally administered questionnaire and interview schedule. Besides interview schedule, observation method has also been conducted in order to have the clearer picture of selected village Panchayats functionaries in terms of their role, responsibility, efficiency, competency in service delivery as well as attitudes towards rural development activities and implication of HRM in institutional effectiveness.

Apart from the above, the study is also based on 'secondary' sources. The secondary sources include-books, journals, periodicals and reports etc. Secondary data collected from official records at various levels like district, blocks and villages through discussions, gathering, views and opinions from the officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions and stakeholders.

Collected data have been analyzed using descriptive statistics, which include of frequency distribution tables, percentages, pie charts and related diagrams. The collected data also have been analysed by using computer packages and Microsoft Excel to interpret the research findings.

This research study has taken its initiative to look into the matter of application of human resource management at local self government institutions time to time from the year of 1992 and onwards. And it may go beyond the noted time-frame too as and when required to facilitate this research studies.

AREA UNDER STUDY

The present study mainly focuses on one district of the state of West Bengal. This study is limited to the local self government institutions at village level. It is also confined its study to the staff & elected members of village-Panchayats. Among 19 districts of the state, the district of Nadia has been taken up for detailed study. There are so many organisations / institutions in India and abroad, enhanced individual as well as institutional capabilities with the help of Human Resource Management (HRM) towards attainment of organisational / institutional goals. Such type of practice and application is hardly found in

the Panchayat systems in West Bengal for desired rural development. Here the initiative lies.

The district of Nadia has an important location with diversity. For administrative convenience, Nadia district is divided into four Sub-divisions. The district has an area of 3927 Sq. Kms. having a population of 5,167,600 as per census of 2011. Out of that rural and urban population are 3,728,727 and 1,438,873 respectively. The district has 17 Panchayats Samities consisting of 187 Gram Panchayats and 8 Municipalities. The percentage of rural population in the district is about 72%.

The geographical boundary of Nadia district comprises Bangladesh to the East, Bardhaman and Hooghly district to the West, Murshidabad district to the North West and North 24 Parganas is to the South and South East. Nadia is situated on the main rail route connecting Howrah / Kolkata and New Jalpaiguri (NJP) including parts of North Eastern States. Nadia district can easily be accessed by rail. The International railway link connecting India and Bangladesh passes through Nadia District with Gede as the last railway station at Indian Border. The district bifurcated by National Highway 34 on the North and East. The district can also be accessed by road from other parts of the country.

DESIGN OF STUDY

Here the study concentrates its attention how the system of human resource management contributes to the performance of village Panchayat functionaries for effective rural development. This thesis examines the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper identified the need of human resource management and its impact on rural development. India is a large country with vast population and most of the people of India live in villages. But most of the villages here have not been properly developed. Though any process of planning and development in India can hardly succeed without transferring its rural society. As because rural development is the main pillar of nation's development (Gupta : 2004). For this purpose, this study has been structured in ten chapters:

The first chapter discusses the idea of human resource management in general and its implication in village Panchayat institutions towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal in particular. Here the chapter also presents objectives, review of literature

methodology, research questions, statement of the problem, rationale and area of this study etc;

The second chapter is about the necessary details of human resource management as a theoretical background for this dissertation. This chapter is also devoted for providing the necessary details of human resource management and its implication for rural development in West Bengal. Here it also emphasises the details of human resource management such as definition, nature, scope, functions and importance etc. for better understanding of the subject.

The third chapter discusses about the rural development in India. Here maximum importance has been given on rural development and the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural development. This chapter is also devoted for providing the necessary details of rural development i.e. definition, concept, importance, objectives and functions of rural development for better understanding of the subject and what is the role of village Panchayat in rural development ?

The fourth chapter confers the rural development scenario in West Bengal. Here maximum importance has been given on the role of the village Panchayat and its functionaries in rural development in West Bengal. Here the chapter tries to show the necessary details of administrative structure and functions of village Panchayats as local self-government institutions.

A description has been made which is based on the study area in chapter five. Here the study has emphasized on the role of village Panchayat in selected blocks of Nadia district. The study also mentions the socio-economic and demographic profiles of three respective blocks of the district. This chapter also tries to examine how rural development is possible through Human Resource Management (HRM) and explains the active roll of the functionaries of village Panchayat for the development in rural areas.

The sixth chapter accentuates how human resource planning practices can be helpful in utilization of human resources of village Panchayat institutions in building up their capacity and efficiency towards attainment of rural development goal. Here the chapter emphasises for providing the necessary details of human resource planning, village

Panchayat level planning and how human resource planning can be more helpful in the effectiveness of village Panchayat institutions for rural development in West Bengal ?

The seventh chapter puts emphasis on necessary details of training and development and its implication for rural development in this state. The chapter also describes the relationship between training and development and institutional effectiveness. Here it also emphasises the necessary details of training and development such as concept, definition, need, objectives, importance etc. for better understanding of the subject. Here an attention has also been given how training and development practices of village Panchayat functionaries can be fruitful for effective rural development in West Bengal.

The chapter eight examines the relationship between performance appraisal and effectiveness of village Panchayat institutions towards rural development in West Bengal. Here concentration has also been given on performance appraisal system at village Panchayat level and how performance appraisal system can be effective in rural development in West Bengal.

The chapter nine deals with the necessary details of e-human resource management system and how E - HRM system becomes effective in rural development in West Bengal ?

The last chapter addresses the phenomenon and findings of data analysis based on field level data, analysed in different chapters of this thesis. This chapter concludes the dissertation by reviewing, linking and interpreting the conceptual categories defined in the above mentioned chapters. Finally, it recommends how human resource management practices at village Panchayat level can be effective in enhancing the capacity, competency, efficiency and effectiveness of the functionaries towards the goal of rural development in this state.

RATIONALE OF THIS STUDY

Good local governance leads towards developing and strengthening the management systems at each level of Panchayats. Successful implementation of various types of programmes, projects, policies implemented by the government from time to time for the purpose of rural development, mostly depend upon the capacity, efficiency, competency, accountability, responsibility and effectiveness of Panchayati Raj functionaries. However,

in some states in the country availability, accessibility, quality and adequacy of such facilities are in deficit. One of the important reasons for such ineffective and non-responsive service is the lack of awareness building, monitoring, capacity building through human resource management, transparency and accountability in the local government institutions.

A number of efforts have been made by central and various state governments to improve the institutional accountability mechanisms. However, they remain largely ineffective in exacting accountability, competency because of the lack of complementarities with the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Though, major efforts in India and elsewhere have been taken to strengthen and promote social accountability, enhancement community participation, capacity building of PRIs functionaries, and transparency in local self government institutions but it is evident that desired rural developments are not found in many rural areas of the country.

This research study carries forward the wide spread impression, is that benefits of the development programmes have not accrued to the rural people to desired extent. Many deficiencies found in Panchayati Raj Institutions, programme implementation and programme monitoring process due to lack of efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce. This feeling has increasingly strengthened over the years. Hence, the purpose of the research study is important and prominent for the present-day situation.

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INTRODUCTION

In India there is sufficient human resource. This is one of the most valuable assets of our country. Human resource is a vital and important asset not only for institutions, organizations, or industry but also for the society and the country. Without proper human resources any organization or country can not enable to reach its desired goal.

To cope with the various development related activities such as economical, social, political and infrastructure, demand of proper human resource management is also a vital issue in the 21st century. But the importance, effectiveness of people as an essential asset, is largely ignored today. It is well known to us human being is the main directives in all sectors i.e. social, economic and political as well as development related work. All types of innovations, initiatives are possible with this valuable asset. In the era of globalization and technological advancement; it is high time to think about these core asset i.e. human resources and consequently how to develop and nurture it for the sake of all types of development, advancement in the country.

Every thing runs with energy and power. For necessary movement of a being energy or power is required. A vehicle can't move without proper energy or power. If, we think about an institution or organisation, what will be the main directives, energy to make run such an institution or organisation? Is it machine ? Is it money ? Or is it man? If we analyse and try to justify the three 'Ms' that is Man, Machine and Money it is found that two other things i.e. machine and money is totally dependant on man i.e human resource (HR). Without human resource progress and functions are not possible. Therefore human resource is the core capital and asset for an institution or organisation. Development and progress of an institution or organisation are therefore dependent on human resources and how to nurture and maintain these valuable assets.

The degree of development between one organisation to another basically depends upon human resources. If an organisation has efficient, responsible and effective human

resources that organisation will be more developed than that of others. Depending upon efficient human resources an organisation can easily avail of its aim and reach its expected goal through proper and timely service delivery. According to Zorlu Senyucel (2009: 6-17) dissatisfaction with the quality of services is one of the main reasons why effective people management is necessary in organizations. Changing expectations of customers, growth in internet usage and rapid development of e-commerce have pressured organizations in every sector to make improvements in its service delivery and employee effectiveness. Organizations are transforming from traditional bureaucratic institutions to flexible service organizations with a focus on employee effectiveness and development.

But how and in what way an institution or an organisation can build efficient, responsible and effective human resources for their organisation or institution ? To find out the answer it may be said that, through proper human resource management (HRM) an institution or organisation can build such type of human resources. The main functions of human resource management (HRM) are human resource planning, training and development, performance and potential appraisal, motivation, communication and much more.

All organizations, like business, educational, governmental or non-governmental are basically run through a system. These organizations maintain their rules and regulations to keep up organisations' discipline. Employees of the organization maintain all these. Therefore the performance of these organizations depends upon how people work or perform their own duty in their institutional setup. Human resources perform as key role towards achievements of organizational success. Human resources of an organization maintain and execute its entire work to reach its goals. Only through human resource management an organization may select, identify competent people for the appropriate post and by proper training, motivation and appraisal system, they can get high level of efficiency to perform their work. Here lies the importance human resource management.

Organizations are created by the rules and resources drawn upon and enacted by people; and the nature of organizations is a result of people's actions. Thus an organization's behaviour reflects people's psychological, ethnic, racial, cultural, political and social make up. People are the most important assets of an organization. The importance of people in organizations is immense because it is the people that plan, design, implement, sustain and end an organization's life. From this rather simplistic but vital point, we can assume that one of the most important functions in an organization is the management of the human

resource function (Zorlu Senyuçel : 2009 : 10-11). As described by Michael Armstrong (2009:15) the notion that people should be regarded as assets rather than variable costs. People and their collective skills, abilities and experience, coupled with their ability to deploy these in the interests of the employing organization, are now recognized as making a significant contribution to organizational success and as constituting a major source of competitive advantage.

To extract potentiality for developing people, human resource management also plays an active role in an organization. It is also a help for personal and even the development of an organization. Therefore both the people and organization are responsible to each other. It is the method of merging the HR and organization together to make sure that their individual and collective goals are closely associated. In organizational set up people have always been measured as crucial factor. Other resources of the organization i.e. technology, finance, materials etc. can be purchased as and when required, but human resources are vital and it needs to be nourished with care.

People are social being. All people on the earth are not equal in merit, value, education, culture, politics and so on. Therefore, it is a herculean task to manage, develop and utilize people in proper way. According to Zorlu Senyuçel (2009) dealing with people is probably the most difficult thing we will ever encounter in life. People are very complex creatures. Not a single person thinks, feels, sees, hears, tastes, understands and behaves the same way. We all come from different ethnic, cultural, national, religious and political backgrounds. This makes each and every one of us unique with different set of morals, beliefs and values. This complexity and variety also reflects on our every day work lives. People's characteristics, values and beliefs form attitudes and behaviours that strongly influence their choice of employment.

At present global situation competitiveness among organizations are growing rapidly. To upgrade productivity, quality and the process of service delivery, organizations are increasingly adopting new approaches to HRM that accentuate not only development of manpower but also organisation's ability.

In competitive global scenario and in present situation organizations get a lot of favourable advantages, those have expert human resources too. For organizational effectiveness, the

practice of human resource management is not only necessary but also essential for the sake of sustainability. In present global economic situation, an organization or an institution wants to deliver their quality products and services in time. And in the 21st century, due to lack of practice of HRM some organizations are not able to produce expected results. Therefore, special care is also a vital issue now a days.

In reality, present organizations are facing so many problems and challenges which are mostly related to human resources. To solve these problems and challenges, organizations are taking different ways to achieve their goals. There is urgent need to understand these problems, diagnose the problem and find out fruitful necessary solution too. But sometimes it fails due to proper coordination among staff and proper practices of human resource management. Every employee has their responsibility and accountability towards their organization. Without these an organization can't proceed and succeed. Sometimes it hampers the organizational progress and settings. What we mean by "proper coordination" among the staff is not possible to find without proper practice of human resource management.

To understand the subject it is essential to know what is Human Resources (HR), what is Management and what is the meaning of Human Resource Management (HRM) and how it functions in institutional / organizational settings, why people are important and essential as institutional / organizational resources and how these resources can be effectively, efficiently and properly utilized.

This chapter tries to examine how rural development is possible through Human Resource Management (HRM) and explains the active roll of HRM for the development in rural areas. And finally considers HRM as a precious issue. It concludes with a discussion about how human resource management systems may be effective in rural development in the state of West Bengal.

WHAT IS HUMAN RESOURCE?

Human resources are the main force to precede an organization to its desired goals. It is the working force of an organization and takes away to its desired aim. Human resource denotes to the individual or set of individuals or personnel who create the workforce of an

organization and is responsible for performing the tasks as assign to them for necessary attainment of organizational aims and objectives.

Now-a-days, it is a common belief in both the business and the academic world that the human resources of an organization can be a source of competitive advantage, provided that the policies for managing people are integrated with strategic business planning and organizational culture (Beer et al.: 1985).

There are so many definitions related to “human resources”. The most popular and suitable definitions are as follows :-

“From the national point of view, the knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes obtained in the population; whereas from the view point of individual enterprise, they represent the total of the inherent abilities acquired knowledge and skills as exemplified in the talents and aptitudes of its employees” (Megginson, Leon : 1977 : 4). Human resources may be defined as the total knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes of an organization's workforce, as well as the values, attitudes, approaches and beliefs of the individuals involved in the affairs of the organization. It is the sum total or aggregate of inherent abilities, acquired knowledge and skills represented by the talents and aptitudes of the persons employed in the organization.

Human resources are the institutions best assets. But the quality of these assets varies from organisation to organisation. Each and every people working in an institution are not same. Each individual differs from the other by their nature, behaviours, attitude, habits, intelligent and so on. They also differ from caste, creeds, religious and educational background. Their service towards the institution or organisation also differs according to their merit, effectiveness, efficiency, performance, responsibility, accountability and so on. According to Ghanekar (2000 : 2) human resources are multi-dimensional in nature. “People at work” constituting the human resource in an organization comprise all individuals engaged in any of the organizational activities, regardless of levels, age or socio-cultural backgrounds. All these individuals differ from one another in an almost infinite number of aspects including aspects of their intelligence, personality, and physical make up.

Human factor not only merely means consisting of behaviour, needs, habits, emotions, desire, sentiments, like – dislike etc. but also more than too. According to Michael Jucius

(1973), “human factors” which refer to “a whole consisting of inter-related, inter-dependent and interacting physiological, psychological, sociological and ethical components”. According to B.B. Mahapatro (2010:18) human resources are human wealth or means that can be drawn on. Human wealth or human capital of an organization can be treated as its human resources. There has been a greater appreciation of the fact that the more an organization invests in its human resources, the greater the return from the investment is likely to be.

Wright, McMahan, and McWilliams (1994) argued that it is the actual human resources or human capital of a firm that constitute the resource leading to competitive advantage.

According to Ann Gilley et.al. (2009 : xvi-xvii) human resources refer to the workers employed by an organization. Unlike the typical, straightforward, standard measures used to value fixed and liquid assets, organizations lack widely acceptable means by which to value the contributions of their employees. For example, employees cannot be depreciated like physical resources and, more importantly, are seldom reflected in the net worth of an organization. However, employees are a greater asset than physical or financial resources, for the talent of employees is what determines an organization’s success.

WHAT IS MANAGEMENT?

Management may be defined as a discipline, task, culture etc. It is versatile in nature. In every organization there exists some form of management. However it may be good management or bad management practices. If good management exists there, the development of the organization and individual will be much better. There are numerous definitions of management. Probably the most popular are often quoted is “getting things done through other people”. Management is a distinct process consisting of activities of planning, organizing, actuating and controlling, performed to determine and accomplish stated objectives with the use of human beings and other sources (Terry et al : 2002 : 4-5).

Management is task. Management is a discipline. But management is also people. Every achievement of management is the achievement of a manager. Every failure is a failure of a manager. People manage rather than “forces” or “facts.” The vision, dedication, and

integrity of managers determine whether there is management or mismanagement (Drucker : 1986 : 3-6).

Management is a critical element in the economic growth of a country. By bringing together the four factors of production (viz. men, money, material and machines), management enables a country to experience a substantial level of economic development. A country with enough capital, manpower and other natural resources can still be poor if it does not have competent managers to combine and coordinate these resources. Poor economic growth of many Asian and African countries very well illustrates this point (Tripathi & Reddy :1991 : pp.1-5).

Management is the dynamic, life giving element in every organization. It is this element that coordinates current organizational activities and plans future ones. It arbitrates disputes and provides leadership. It adapts the organization to its environment and often shapes the environment to make it more suitable to the organization. In a competitive economy, the quality and performance of the management determine the success of an organization; indeed, they determine its very survival. Nowadays, no organization can long hold monopoly on capital or technology. But good management can definitely become its monopoly and give it a competitive edge over its rivals (ibid.).

Peter Drucker (1986) rightly observes that without management, a country's resources of production remain resources and never become production. In the words of George (1974 : 1), management is "the central core of our national as well as personal activities, and the way we manage ourselves and our institutions reflects with alarming clarity what we and our society will become.

Management is an activity process, composed of some basic functions, for getting the objectives of any enterprise accomplished through and with the efforts of its personnel. Wherever and whenever objectives are to be achieved through organized and cooperative endeavour, management becomes essential for directing and unifying group efforts towards a common purpose. As human aims and beliefs are mostly realized through the establishment of diverse institutions in our society, management is universally needed for operating all such organizations. A little reflection will make it clear that our present day society has become a pluralistic society, that is, a society of multifarious institutions.

Management, viewed as a functional concept, is of equal necessity to the educational, religious, charitable, social security, welfare, health care and other non business institutions as it is required for business organizations. Furthermore, the greatest and most comprehensive of our social organizations viz., the Government of all types needs management as such as others require, perhaps more than all other social organizations (Chatterjee : 1996 : 1-2).

The role of management in our society is critical in human progress. It serves to identify a great need of our time to improve the standards of living of all people through effective utilization of human and material resources – President John F. Kennedy (Beckett : 1971 : 8).

From the beginning, managerial thought dealt almost exclusively with the ways in which men could influence other men to get things done in organizations that were comprised predominantly of men. That is to say, a principal theme pervading management thought across the years has been to get people to perform work effectively, individually and collectively (ibid.).

Frederick W. Taylor (1911) described management as ‘knowing exactly what you want men to do, and then seeing that they do it in the best and cheapest way.

It is interesting to look at the word management and divide it into ‘MANAGE MEN T –T’. If the word “tactfully” is substituted for “T” the word “management” would read “manage men tactfully”. Thus the word itself indicates the most important aspect of management that is managing human beings in a tactful manner. This particular aspect of tactfully managing the human resource is considered so vital that Dale Yoder says “ managing people is the heart and essence of being a manager” (Ghanekar: 2000 : 3).

Examining the critical components of management frames the process of improving the success of an organization. The management process involves a group of similar activities performed by a manager, regardless of the type and size of the organization. These activities are planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling (Ann Gilley et.al. :2009 : xvi-xvii).

WHAT IS HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT?

The main aim of human resource management is to keep up organizational settings as well as to maintain good relations among the staff in the organization. It is also related with the up- liftment and betterment of individual for achieving organizational goals.

Human resources management (HRM) is a process of development and management of people in an organization. It also tries to upgrade, utilize the manpower to achieve organizational goal in an effective and efficient manner.

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a relatively new approach to managing staffs in any organisation. In this approach men power are considered as the key resources. It is concerned with the management of people in an organization. As the organization's main element is people, their acquisition, motivation, development of skills, training and potential appraisal systems for higher levels of attainments, as well as to ensure the level of commitment are all important activities. All these activities fall in the area of HRM.

Indeed the main four activities of human resource management, which may lead an organization, are namely, acquisition, development, motivation as well as maintenance of human resources. "Human resource management refers to activities and tasks useful in maximizing employees' performance. Human resource management, therefore, includes the recruitment, selection, placement, motivation, appraisal, development, communication with, utilization, and overall accommodation of employees to achieve organizational goals" (Ann Gilley et.el. :2009 : xvi-xvii). As described by Byars & Rue (2006) Human resource management is defined as a system of activities and strategies that focus on successfully managing employees at all levels of an organization to achieve organizational goals.

The term "human resource management" has been commonly used for the last few years. Previously, the field was generally known as "personnel administration". Now the name of human resource management (HRM) is popular and essential for all organizations and institutions

The practice of Human Resource Management (HRM) in an organizational setup, is not only beneficial to the organization but also for the employees of the organization.

According to Graham (1978) the purpose of HRM is to ensure that the employees of an organization are used in such a way that the employer obtains the greatest possible benefit from their abilities and the employees obtain both material and psychological rewards from the work. As described by Pareek & Rao (1992) the development of people, their competencies, and the process of development of the total organization are the main concerns of human resource management.

Human resource management is a part and parcel of an organization. It maintains and nurtures organizational strategy and employee-employer relationship towards achievement of organizational success. "HRM is distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of highly committed and capable workforce, using an array of cultural, structural and personal techniques (Storey : 1995 : 5). HRM is managerial perspective which argues the need to establish an integrated series of personnel policies to support organizational strategy (Buchanna, Huczynski : 2004: 679). HRM is a strategic approach to managing employment relations which emphasizes that leveraging people's capabilities is critical to achieving competitive advantage, this being achieved through a distinctive set of integrated employment policies, programmes and practices (Bratton and Gold : 2007 : 7).

The practice of human resource management is very important for organizational effectiveness. According to Huselid (1995) the impact that HRM policies and practices have on the overall firm performance is very important, not only in terms of human resource management but also industrial relations, and industrial and organisational psychology. According to Fucini and Fucini (1990) this theory views the adoption of HRM practices by organisations as leading to intensification of work and to a generally greater exploitation of employees within the workplace.

According to Boxall & Purcell (2001) historically, the field of human resource management has been concerned with the study of specific HR functional areas often categorized as selection, training, appraisal and compensation by the field of industrial and organizational psychology. The HRM system facilitates the acquisition, development and motivation of human capital and when combined within the complex firm environment creates unique resource for the firm (Wright, Dunford & Snell : 2001 : 701). Wright, McMahan, and McWilliams (1994) argued that it is the actual human resources or human

capital of a firm that constitute the resource leading to competitive advantage. Nowadays, it is a common belief in both the business and the academic world that the human resources of an organization can be a source of competitive advantage, provided that the policies for managing people are integrated with strategic business planning and organizational culture (Beer et al. : 1985).

As described by Guest (1987) HRM comprises a set of policies designed to maximize organizational integration, employee commitment, flexibility and quality of work. The practice of human resource management (HRM) is concerned with all aspects of how people are employed and managed in organizations. It covers activities such as strategic HRM, human capital management, corporate social responsibility, knowledge management, organization development, resourcing (human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and talent management), performance management, learning and development, reward management, employee relations, employee well-being and health and safety and the provision of employee services.

Ulrich and Lake (1990) remarked that: ‘HRM systems can be the source of organizational capabilities that allow firms to learn and capitalize on new opportunities.’ But HRM has an ethical dimension which means that it must also be concerned with the rights and needs of people in organizations through the exercise of social responsibility. Scott, Clothier and Spriegel (1977) have defined Human Resource Management as that branch of management which is responsible on a staff basis for concentrating on those aspects of operations which are primarily concerned with the relationship of management to employees and employees to employees and with the development of the individual and the group. According to C.H. Northcott (1958) human resource management is an extension of general management, that of prompting and stimulating every employee to make his fullest contribution to the purpose of a business. Human resource management is not something that could be separated from the basic managerial function. It is a major component of the broader managerial function.

Thus, human resources management can be defined as that part of management concerned with all the decisions, strategies, factors, principles, operations practices, functions, activities and methods related to the management of people as employees in any type of

organization. All the dimensions related to people in their employment relationships, and all the dynamics that flow from it.

According to Dale Yoder (1972), “The management of human resources is viewed as a system in which participants seek to attain both individual and group goals.” Thus, human resource management is concerned with the activities of human issues in the organization and act as an important role for necessary achievement of individual and organizational development.

IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The role of human resource management for individual, institutional or organisational development is very important. In the era of globalization and technological advancements importance of human resource management is increasing day by day. People are the core asset or main capital of an organisation. But if the people of an organisation are not well developed, efficient, effective or well versed with the modern techniques, then desired development of an organisation could not be possible. The success of an organisation not only depends upon the financial capital, market, machine, infrastructure etc. but also on human resources.

An organization’s success or failure depends upon the nature, efficiency, effectiveness and quality of human resources. Successful organizations are those that consider their human capital as their most important asset. Though, through human resource management an organisation can achieve its expected goal by proper utilizing its resources. Here is the importance of human resource management. The importance of human resource management can be described in the following way.

Human Resource Management (HRM) has a place of great importance. It helps management to set standard guidelines for necessary personnel policies and programmes i.e. recruitment, selection, training and development, placement and other polices. For the selection of appropriate staff in right time and right place human resource management plays a vital role. It also helps in employees’ development by enhancing their efficiency, skills, capacities through training and development process. HRM also helps to

organization for proper and effective utilization of manpower and other resources. It helps the personnel to upgrade their potentiality through potential appraisal system and motivation. It helps and prepares the personnel according to the changing need of the organization and environment. For the accomplishment of organizational goals HRM prepares and motivates the employee. It helps the organization to enhance profitability by reducing costs through proper manpower planning, programmes, innovations and up-gradation. It also helps to keep peace, harmony and work culture and good employee – employer relation in the organization.

Human resource management also plays an important role in the society. It helps workers to live with pride and dignity by providing employment which in turn gives them social and psychological satisfaction. Role of HRM in the development of a nation is also very much significant. It builds efficient, committed and effective citizen for the nation, which ensures proper utilization of natural, physical and financial resources of a country.

Human resource management has a place of great importance. According to Peter F. Drucker (1986) —The proper or improper use of the different factors of production depend on the wishes of human resources. Hence, besides other resources, human resources need more development. Human resources can increase cooperation but it needs proper and efficient management to guide it. Importance of personnel management is in reality the importance of labour functions of personnel department which are indispensable to the management activity itself. Because of the following reasons human resource management holds a place of importance :

At first, it helps management in the preparation, adoption and continuing evolution of personnel programmes and policies. Secondly, it supplies skilled workers through scientific selection process. Thirdly, it ensures maximum benefit out of the expenditure on training and development and appreciates the human assets. Fourthly, it prepares workers according to the changing needs of industry and environment. Fifthly, it motivates workers and upgrades them so as to enable them to accomplish the organisation goals. Sixthly, through innovation and experimentation in the fields of personnel, it helps in reducing costs and helps in increasing productivity. Seventhly, it contributes a lot in restoring the industrial harmony and healthy employer-employee relations. Eighthly, it establishes mechanism for the administration of personnel services that are delegated to the personnel department.

Thus, the role of human resource management is very important in an organisation and it should not be undermined especially in large scale enterprises. It is the key to the whole organisation and related to all other activities of the management i.e., marketing, production, finance etc. Human Resource Management is concerned with the managing people as an organizational resource rather than as factors of production.

Human resources are assuming increasing significance in modern organization. Obviously, majority of the problems in organizational setting are human and social rather than physical, technical or economic. The failure to recognize this fact causes immense loss to the enterprise and the individual. It is a truism that productivity is associated markedly with the nature of human resources and their total environment consisting of interrelated, interdependent and interacting economic and non-economic (political, religious, cultural, sociological and psychological) factors. Thus, the significance of human resources can be examined from time to time (Mahapatro : 2010 : 3).

Managing people at work is most crucial job and the importance of human resource management is universally recognized from different standpoints. Social significance of personnel management is evident since it enhances the dignity of people at work by satisfying their social need. Personnel management has professional significance since it provides healthy working environment and promotes team work amongst the people at work. Personnel management has direct significance for the organization since it helps accomplishing its goals. Individuals in the organization also realize the importance of personnel management since it facilitates their own growth and development and provides them maximum satisfaction in relation to work performance.

Thus, in the management of all the “M”s – Money, Markets, Materials, Machines and Men – the “Management of Men” is most fundamental and dynamic as well as challenging task. It is the men, not machines, not materials, not money and not the markets who make or mar the organization. Therefore, personnel management gains utmost importance in obtaining effective results through people at work and in gaining their commitment as well as winning their willing cooperation for the successful accomplishment of all desired goals. The vital significance of HRM / personnel management is largely due to the fact that the success of an organization heavily depends on the services of its loyal employees with genuine desire to be co-operative with the management (Ghanekar : 2000 : 11).

For sustainability, performance of the organization, maintenance of supply and demand of human resources, active, reactive and creative nature of human resources, motivational and other aspects of human resources are some of the causes for growing interest for human resources.

Human resources play a vital role in various developmental aspects of modern economics. There are found two important issues in the developing countries like India i.e. employment and poverty, which is a great concern for our country. In the five year plan these two issues come back repeatedly. How to solve these problems and how to build up proper manpower through optimum utilization of human resources would be also major concern not only for a state but also for the nation.

According to Arthur Lewis “there are great differences in development between countries which seem to have roughly equal resources, so it is necessary to enquire into the difference in human behaviour”. It is often felt that, though there is affluence of natural resources, planning, projects, availability of financial and physical resources, national and international grant play prominent roles in the developmental sector and for the growth of modern economics, but inspite of that, all these endeavour will not be fruitful without keen attention to efficient and committed manpower. Therefore it is said that all development comes from the human mind.

HUMAN RESOURCE AND THE NATION

Human being is the backbone of a nation. Without proper human being a nation can't rise with its own. Though, there is abundance of natural, physical and economical resources in our country, but due to lack of proper utilization and maintenance, fruitful and expected results sometimes are not seen. Human resources are the capital of a nation. As because all planning, projects, programmes (as per five year plan), national resources are mainly initiated and utilized by human resources. They are responsible for the conversion of traditional economies into the modern and business economies. Therefore, lack of proper utilization of human resources is mostly responsible for the backwardness of the nation. Countries like developed and developing are mentioned mainly depending upon the degree of human resources. Progress of all other economic and developmental aspects of the countries also depends upon the quality of human resources.

The key aspect in this respect such as attitudes, values and ultimately quality of the people of a country determine its all round development. All the transformation from conventional system to modern system, traditional economy to modern economy, usual technology to modern technology are making human resources as the part and parcel to the nations as well as for all round development. Only committed, efficient, skilled and effective human resources can properly maintain, nurture and utilize the nation's resources and which is simultaneously related with the nation's development.

NATURE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

People are the asset of an organization. When the people serve for an organization they present themselves not only as individual but also through collective interactions. When people come to work place, they come with not only technical skills, practical skills, knowledge etc. but also with their personal feelings, such as perception, desires, motives, attitude, aptitude, values etc. Therefore management of employee in an organization does not mean management of not only technical skills, knowledge etc. but also other factors of human resources.

The nature of the human resource management can be highlighted in its following features:-

Human resource management is versatile in nature. It differs from one organization to other organization. It sometimes depends upon the position and arena of the organization. The nature of human resource management is extensive and far-reaching. Therefore, it is very difficult to define it concisely. However, we may classify the same under the following heads:

People Centered : All activities of human resource management is concerned with the people. It is pertinent in all types of organisations. It is concerned with all categories of personnel from top to the bottom of the organization.

Personnel Activities or Functions : Human Resource Management performs various functions related with the management of people of the organization. It executes several

functions such as manpower planning, training and development, appraisal and motivation, employment, placement and compensation of employees.

Continuous Process : The function of human resource management is not confined with a limited period of time. It is a continuous process. For the smooth functioning, development of the organization and achievement, accomplishment of the organizational goal it should be performed continuously.

Inherent Part of Management : The main characteristics of human resource management is inherent in the process of management. Either this function is performed by all the managers or higher officials of an organization or the personnel department only. If a manager is to get the best of his people, he must undertake the basic responsibility of selecting people who will work under him.

Pervasive Function : The another important features of human resource management is a pervasive function of management. It is executed by all managers or officer at various levels in the organization. It is not a responsibility that a manager or higher official can leave totally to somebody else. However they may get help and advice in managing manpower from the specialists who have competence in personnel management, HR management or the same.

Basic to all Functional Areas : Human Resource Management look after all the functional area of management such as financial management, production management, marketing management etc. Therefore, every higher level officer or manager from top to bottom working in any department has to execute their duty (along with their personnel functions) with the coordination of the personnel department.

Based on Human Relations : Human being is the most important element in the organization. It should not be treated as other resources in the organization. As because every people at work has different culture, attitudes, needs, aspirations, expectations etc. Managers of the organization should have special care and attention to these factors. They should have human relations skills for necessary co-ordination, training, transfer, promotion and deal with people at work.

A Challenging Task : With the globalization and technological advancement the environment of the organization and society is also changing rapidly. So, it is a challenging task to understand the changing needs of the organization and society as well as attaining and accomplishing the employee, organizational and societal objectives with the available resources.

According to K. Aswathappa (2011 : 7) the nature of HRM refers to the application of management principles to management of people in an organization. This is too simple a statement and fails to capture the essence of HRM. In its essence, HRM comprises the following :

- HRM consists of people-related functions as hiring, training and development, performance review compensation, safety and health, welfare, industrial relations and the like. These are typically the functions of ‘personnel management’ and are administrative and supportive in nature. Appropriately called ‘doables’, these activities are highly routinised and have been often outsourced.
- More important functions of HRM are the building of human capital. Human capital refers to the stock of employee skills, knowledge and capabilities that may not show up in a balance sheet but have significant impact on a firm’s performance.
- HRM necessitates alignment of HR policies and practices with the organization’s strategies – both corporate as well as functional.
- As stated above, HRM involves the application of management principles and functions to doables and deliverables of people management.
- HRM assumes that it is the people who make the difference. They alone are capable of generating value and adding to the competitive advantage to organization.
- HR activities, both doables and deliverables are not the sole responsibility of the HR specialists. Line managers are equally responsible for carrying out the activities.
- HR functions are not confined to business establishment only. They are applicable to non-business organization too, such as education, health care, recreation and the like.

SCOPE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The scope of HRM is vast and extensive. Therefore, it is very difficult to define it concisely. Human resources are obviously the main resources in an organization. Among other resources of the organization human resources are the most crucial task to manage. All the activities related to people at work come under the jurisdiction of HRM. The main activities of HRM are human resource planning, job analysis, job design, recruitment, training and development, employee remuneration, employee motivation and potential appraisal etc.

As described by Indranil Mutsuddi (2010:13) the Scope of HRM is immense for any organization playing in today's dynamic business environment. The entire process starts right from the manpower planning process and revolves around an organisation's hiring practices, employee and executive motivation, maintenance, performance evaluation and compensation management, industrial relations and the employee retention plans and strategies.

However, the scope of Human Resources Management is extended to all the decisions, factors, principles, strategies, functions, activities, design and implementation of various policies, procedures and programmes concerned with the management of people at work in any type of organization and all the issues related to employee and employer relationship etc.

Human resources are undoubtedly the key resources in an organization, the easiest and the most difficult to manage. The objectives of the HRM span right from the manpower needs assessment to management and retention of the same. To this effect Human resource management is responsible for effective designing and implementation of various policies, procedures and programs. It is all about developing and managing knowledge, skills, creativity, aptitude and talent and using them optimally.

Human resource management is not just limited to manage and optimally exploit human intellect. It also focuses on managing physical and emotional capital of employees. Considering the intricacies involved, the scope of HRM is widening with every passing day. It covers but is not limited to HR planning, hiring (recruitment and selection), training and development, payroll management, rewards and recognitions, Industrial relations,

grievance handling, legal procedures etc. In other words, we can say that it's about developing and managing harmonious relationships at workplace and striking a balance between organizational goals and individual goals.

HRM in Personnel Management: This is typically direct manpower management that involves manpower planning, hiring (recruitment and selection), training and development, induction and orientation, transfer, promotion, compensation, layoff and retrenchment, employee productivity. The overall objective here is to ascertain individual growth, development and effectiveness which indirectly contribute to organizational development.

It also includes performance appraisal, developing new skills, disbursement of wages, incentives, allowances, traveling policies and procedures and other related courses of actions.

HRM in Employee Welfare : This particular aspect of HRM deals with working conditions and amenities at workplace. This includes a wide array of responsibilities and services such as safety services, health services, welfare funds, social security and medical services. It also covers appointment of safety officers, making the environment worth working, eliminating workplace hazards, support by top management, job safety, safeguarding machinery, cleanliness, proper ventilation and lighting, sanitation, medical care, sickness benefits, employment injury benefits, personal injury benefits, maternity benefits, unemployment benefits and family benefits.

It also relates to supervision, employee counseling, establishing harmonious relationship with employees, education and training. Employee welfare is about determining employees' real needs and fulfilling them with active participation of both management and employees. In addition to this, it also takes care of canteen facilities, crèches, rest and lunch rooms, housing, transport, medical assistance, education, health and safety, recreation facilities, etc.

HRM in Industrial Relations: Since it is a highly sensitive area, it needs careful interactions with labor or employee unions, addressing their grievances and settling the disputes effectively in order to maintain peace and harmony in the organization. It is the art and science of understanding the employment (union-management) relations, joint consultation, disciplinary procedures, solving problems with mutual efforts, understanding

human behavior and maintaining work relations, collective bargaining and settlement of disputes.

The main aim is to safeguarding the interest of employees by securing the highest level of understanding to the extent that does not leave a negative impact on organization. It is about establishing, growing and promoting industrial democracy to safeguard the interests of both employees and management.

The scope of HRM is extremely wide, thus, can not be written concisely. However, for the sake of convenience and developing understanding about the subject, we divide it in three categories mentioned above.

According to B.B. Mahapatro (2010 : 29-30) scope of human resource management was very limited in the beginning. Their activities were confined to administration, arranging little parties and picnics. This was the ancient time when Adam Smith saw 'factors of production' as land, labour and capital. Things have changed since then. The scope of the management in general and personnel in particular has changed considerably, covering more areas and responsibilities.

However, American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), conducted fairly an exhaustive study in this field and identified nine broad areas of activities of HRM. These are given below:

Human Resource Planning : The objectives of HR Planning are to ensure the organization has the right types of persons at the right time at the right place. It must prepare human resources Inventory with a view to assess present and future needs, availability and possible shortages. Thereupon, HR Planning must forecast demand and supplies and identify sources. Last but not the least, HR Planning must develop strategies long-term and short-term meet the man-power requirement.

Design of Organization and Job : This is the task of laying down organization structure, authority, relationship and responsibilities. This will also mean definition of work contents for each position in the organization. This is done by "job description". Another important step is "Job specification". We shall go into the details of these terms shortly. Job

specification identify attributes of persons most suitable for each job which is defined by job description.

Selection and Staffing : This is the process of recruitment and selection to staff. This involves matching people and their expectations with which the job specifications and career path available within organization.

Training and Development : This involves an organized attempt to find out training needs of the individuals to meet the knowledge and skill which is needed not only to perform current job but the future needs of the organization.

Organisational Development : This is an important aspect whereby developing healthy inter personal and inter-group relationship “Synergetic effect” is generated in an organization.

Compensation and Benefits : This is the area of wages and salaries administration where wages and compensations are fixed scientifically to meet fairness and equity criteria. In addition labour welfare measures are involved which include benefits and services.

Employee Assistance : Each employee is unique in character, personality, expectation and temperament. By and large each one of them faces problems everyday. Some are personal some are official. In their case he or she remains worried. Such worries must be removed to make him or her more productive and happy.

Union-Labour Relations : Healthy Industrial and Labour relations are very important for enhancing peace and productivity in an organization. This is one of the areas of HRM.

Personnel Research and Information System : Knowledge on behavioural science and industrial psychology throws better insight into the workers expectations, aspirations and behaviour. Advancement of technology of product and production methods have created working environment which are much different from the past. Globalization of economy has increased competition many fold. Thus, continuous research in HR areas is an inescapable requirement. It must also take special care for improving exchange of

information through effective communication systems on a continuous basis especially on moral and motivation.

Strauss and Sayles (1977) have included the following functions within its scope :

Recruitment of labour, selection and placement, Analysis, description and evaluation of the work, Compensation and schemes of appraisal work, Keeping records of the personnel, Welfare programmes, Special services like safety, inspection and control, Training and educational programmes, Labour relation, Public relations, Personnel appraisal and development.

Conclusively, it can be said that the scope of human resource management is widely spread to all types of organization private or public, industrial or political, religious or social, big or small.

OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management has come to be recognized as an inherent part of management, which is concerned with the human resources of an organization. Its objective is the maintenance of better human relations in the organization by the development, application and evaluation of policies, procedures and programmes relating to human resources to optimize their contribution towards the realization of organizational objectives.

The overall purpose of human resource management is to ensure that the organization is able to achieve success through people. HRM aims to increase organizational effectiveness and capability – the capacity of an organization to achieve its goals by making the best use of the resources available to it. Ulrich and Lake (1990) remarked that: ‘HRM systems can be the source of organizational capabilities that allow firms to learn and capitalize on new opportunities’. But HRM has an ethical dimension which means that it must also be concerned with the rights and needs of people in organizations through the exercise of social responsibility (Michael Armstrong : 2009 : 5).

According to Scott, Clothier and Spriegel (1977), — The objectives of Human Resource Management, in an organisation, is to obtain maximum individual development, desirable working relationships between employers and employees and employees and employees, and to affect the moulding of human resources as contrasted with physical resources. The basic objective of human resource management is to contribute to the realisation of the organisational goals. However, the specific objectives of human resource management are as follows :

- ❖ To ensure effective utilisation of human resources, all other organisational resources will be efficiently utilised by the human resources.
- ❖ To establish and maintain an adequate organisational structure of relationship among all the members of an organisation by dividing of organisation tasks into functions, positions and jobs, and by defining clearly the responsibility, accountability, authority for each job and its relation with other jobs in the organisation.
- ❖ To generate maximum development of human resources within the organisation by offering opportunities for advancement to employees through training and education.
- ❖ To ensure respect for human beings by providing various services and welfare facilities to the personnel.
- ❖ To ensure reconciliation of individual / group goals with those of the organisation in such a manner that the personnel feel a sense of commitment and loyalty towards it.
- ❖ To identify and satisfy the needs of individuals by offering various monetary and non-monetary rewards.

According to B.B. Mahapatro (2010 : 22-24) objectives are pre-determined goals to which individual or group activity in an organization is directed. Objectives of personnel management are influenced by organizational objectives and individual and societal goals. Institutions are instituted to attain certain specific objectives. The objectives of the economic institutions are mostly to earn profits and of the educational institutions are mostly to impart education and / or conduct research so on and so forth. However, the fundamental objective of any organization is survival. Organizations are not just satisfied with this goal. Further, the goal of most of the organizations is growth and or profits.

Institutions procure and manage various resources including human to attain the specified objectives. Therefore, basically the objectives of human resources management are drawn

from and to contribute to the accomplishment of the organizational objectives. The other objectives of Human Resource Management are to meet the needs, aspirations, values and dignity of individual employees and having due concern for the socio-economic problems of the community and the country.

The objectives of Human Resource Management in general may be stated as follows :

- ❖ To create and utilize an able and motivated workforce to accomplish the basic organizational goals.
- ❖ To establish and maintain sound organizational structure and desirable working relationships among all the members of the organization by designing jobs and by establishing responsibility, accountability and authority for each job in relation to other jobs.
- ❖ To secure the integration of individual and groups within the organization by coordinating the individual and group goals with those of the organization.
- ❖ To create facilities and opportunities for individual or group development so as to match it with the growth of the organization.
- ❖ To attain an effective utilization of human resources in the achievement of organizational goals.
- ❖ To identify and satisfy individual and group needs by providing adequate and equitable wages, incentives, employee benefits and social security and measures for challenging work, prestige, recognition, security, status etc.
- ❖ To maintain high employee morale and sound human relations by sustaining and improving the various conditions and facilities.
- ❖ To strengthen and appreciate the human assets continuously by providing training and developmental programmes.
- ❖ To consider and contribute to the minimization of socio-economic evils such as unemployment, under employment, in-equalities in the distribution of income and wealth and to improve the welfare of the society by providing employment opportunities to women and disadvantage sections of the society etc.
- ❖ To provide an opportunity for expression and voice in management.
- ❖ To provide fair, acceptable and efficient leadership.

- ❖ To provide facilities and conditions of work and creation of favourable atmosphere for maintaining stability of employment.

Management has to create conducive environment and provide necessary prerequisites for the attainment of the personnel management objectives after formulating them. The primary objectives of HRM are to ensure the availability of competent and willing workforce to an organization. Apart from this, there are other objectives too. Specifically, HRM objectives are of four fold: societal, organizational, functional and personal.

Societal Objectives : The societal objectives are socially and ethically responsible for the needs and challenges of society. While doing so, they have to minimize the negative impact of such demands upon the organization. The failure of the organization to use their resources for society may limit human resources decisions to laws that enforce reservation in hiring and laws that address discrimination, safety or other such areas of societal concern.

Organizational Objectives : The organizational objectives recognizes the role of human resources management in bringing about organizational effectiveness. Human resource management is not an end itself; it is only a mean to assist the organization with primary objectives.

Functional Objectives : Functional objectives try to maintain the departments' contribution at a level appropriate to the organizational needs. Human resources is to be adjusted to suit the organizational demands. The department's level service must be tailored to fit the organization it serves.

Personal Objectives : Personal objectives assist employees in achieving their personal goals, at least in so far as these goals enhance the individuals' contribution to the organization. Personal objectives of employees must be met if they are to be maintained, retained and motivated. Otherwise, employees, performance and satisfaction may decline giving rise to employee turnover.

As described by H.L. Kaila (2005 : 14-15) objective of human resource management will vary from organization to organization and will depend on the organization's stage of

development. At one extreme, for example, the human resource specialist will be seen as someone who looks after the administrative side of people management, i.e. preparing contracts of employment, maintaining personal files and so on. At the other extreme he or she will be seen as an integral and vital part of business planning process. The objectives of HRM, therefore, are many and various and will at different times include some, if not all of the following :

- Advertising management on the human resource policies required to ensure that the organization has a high performing workforce, has people equipped with change and meets its legal/employment obligations.
- Implementing and maintaining all necessary human resource policies and procedures to enable the organization to achieve its objectives.
- Assisting in development of the organisation's overall direction and strategy, particularly with regard to human resource implementations.
- Providing the support and conditions that will help line managers achieve their objectives.
- Handling crises and difficult human relations situations to ensure that they do not get in way of the organization achieving its objectives.
- Providing a communication link between the workforce and the organisation's management.
- Acting as custodian of organizational standards and values in the management of human resources.

FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management (HRM) function includes a variety of activities and plays an important role in determination of staffing needs, recruitment of proper personnel, training and development of the best employees and dealing with performance related issues etc.

Human Resource management has an important role to play in equipping organizations to meet the challenges of an expanding and increasingly competitive sector. Increase in staff numbers, contractual diversification and changes in demographic profile which compel the HR managers to reconfigure the role and significance of human resources management.

The functions are responsive to current staffing needs, but can be proactive in reshaping organizational objectives (Mahapatro : 2010).

According to Armstrong (2006 : 53) HR functions are concerned with the management and development of people in organizations. They are involved in the development and implementation of HR strategies and policies and some or all of the following people management activities: organization development, human resource planning, talent management, knowledge management, recruitment and selection, learning and development, reward management, employee relations, health and safety, welfare, HR administration, fulfilment of statutory requirements, equal opportunity and diversity issues, and any other matters related to the employment relationship.

The functions of HRM can be broadly classified into two categories viz. Managerial functions and Operative functions.

Managerial Functions

Managerial functions of personnel management involve planning, organizing, directing and controlling. All these functions influence the performance of operative functions.

Planning : The planning function of human resource department pertains to the steps taken in determining in advance personnel requirements, personnel programmes, policies etc. It is a pre-determined course of action. Planning is determining of personnel programmes and changes in advance. In other words it involves planning of manpower requirements, recruitment, selection, transfers, promotions, training etc. It also includes forecasting of personnel needs, changing values, attitudes and behaviour of employees and their impact on organization.

Organising : Under organisation, the human resource manager has to organise the operative functions by designing structure of relationship among jobs, personnel and physical factors in such a way so as to have maximum contribution towards organisational objectives. It is essential to carryout the determined course of action. Thus organization establishes relationships among the employee so that they can collectively contribute to the attainment of company goals.

Directing : The next logical function after completing planning and organizing is the execution of the plan. Basic function of personnel management at any level is motivating, commanding, leading and activating people. The willing and effective co-operation of employees for the attainment of organizational goals is possible through proper direction. Tapping the maximum potentialities of the people is possible through motivation and command. Thus, direction is an important managerial function in building sound industrial and human relations besides securing employee contributions. Coordination deals with the task of blending efforts in order to ensure successful attainment of an objective. The personnel manager has to coordinate various managers at different levels as far as personnel functions are concerned. Personnel management function should also be coordinated with other functions of management like management of material, machine and money.

Controlling : After planning, organizing, directing the next important step is controlling. At this point the performance is to be verified in order to know that the personnel functions are performed in conformity with the plans and directions. Controlling involves checking, verifying and comparing of the actuals with the plans, identification of deviations if any and correcting the identified deviations. Thus, action and operation are adjusted to pre-determined plans and standards through control. Auditing, training programmes, analyzing labour turnover records, directing morale surveys, conducting separation interviews are some of the means for controlling the personnel management functions.

Operative Functions :

The operative functions of personnel management are related to specific activities of personnel management viz. employment, development, compensation and relations. All these functions are interacted with managerial functions. These functions are to be performed in conjunction with managerial functions.

Employment : It is the first operative function of HRM. Employment is concerned with securing and employing the people possessing required kind and level of human resources necessary to achieve the organizational objectives. It covers the functions such as job analysis, human resource planning, recruitment, selection, placement and internal mobility.

Job Analysis : It is the process of study and collection of information relating to the operations and responsibilities of a specific job.

Human Resources Planning : it is a process of determination and assuring that the organization will have an adequate number of qualified persons, available at proper times, performing jobs which would meet the needs of the organization and which would provide satisfaction for the individual involved.

Recruitment : It is the process of searching for prospective employees and stimulating them to apply for jobs in an organization.

Selection : It is the process of ascertaining the qualifications, experience, skills, knowledge etc. of an applicant with a view to appraising his / her suitability to a job. This function includes :

Placement : It is the process of assigning the selected candidate with the most suitable job. It is matching of employee specifications with job requirements.

Induction and Orientation : Induction and orientation are the techniques by which a new employee is rehabilitated in the changed surroundings and introduced to the practices, policies, purposes etc. of the organization.

Human Resources Development

It is the process of improving, moulding and changing the skills, knowledge, creative ability, aptitude, values, commitment etc. based on present and future job and organizational requirements. This function includes :

Performance Appraisal : It is the systematic evaluation of individuals with respect to their performance on the job and their potential for development.

Training : It is the process of imparting to the employees the technical and operating skills and knowledge.

Management Development : It is the process of designing and conducting suitable executive development programmes so as to develop the managerial and human relations skills of employees.

Career Planning and Development : It is the planning of one's career and implementation of career plans by means of education, training, job search and acquisition of work experiences. It includes internal and external mobility.

Internal Mobility : It includes vertical and horizontal movement of an employee within an organization. It consists of transfer, promotion and demotion etc.

Transfer : It is the process of placing employees in the same level jobs where they can be utilized more effectively in consistence with their potentialities and needs of the employees and the organization.

Promotions : It deals with upward reassignment given to an employee in the organization to occupy higher position which commands better status and / or pay keeping in view the human resources of the employees and the job requirements.

Demotion : It deals with downward reassignment to an employee in the organization.

Organization Development : It is a planned process designed to improve organizational effectiveness through modifications in individual and group behaviour, culture and systems of the organization using knowledge and technology of applied behavioral science.

Compensation : It is the process of providing adequate, equitable and fair remuneration to the employees. It includes job evaluation, wage and salary administration, incentives, bonus, fringe benefits, social security measures etc.

Maintaining Good Human Relations : Human Resource Management covers a wide field. Practising various personnel / human resource policies, and programmes like

employment, development and compensation and interaction among employees creates a sense of relationship between the individual worker and management. It is the process of interaction among human beings. Human relations is an area of management practice in integrating people into work situation in a way that motivates them to work together productively, co-operatively and with economic, psychological and social satisfaction.

WHY THE PRACTICE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT NEED TO BE ESSENTIAL AT ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL FOR ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT

With the advancements of globalization, socio-economic and technological conditions the nature and environment of an organization are also shifting. In connection with this, the functions, work pressure and boundary of an organization are also changing and expanding varies rapidly. To tackle the situation and to reign over the prevailing issues, attention and care must be given to organizational human resources. As human resources are the core and vital assets of an organization. But how is it possible to maintain and nurture human resources properly? It will be possible through human resource management.

As described by Aswathappa (2011 : 34-35) people is a rewarding experience. It is the people who possess skills, abilities and aptitudes that offer competitive advantage to a firm. It is only human resource that is capable of deciding, implementing and controlling activities. No computer can substitute human brain, no machines can run without human interventions and no organization has mandate to exist if it cannot serve people's needs. HRM is a study about people in organization – how they are hired, trained, compensated, motivated and maintained.

For proper and in time service delivery the organization should be effective and dynamic with proper utilization of human resources. In this era functionaries of an organization should be aware and acquainted with about the modern technological changes, its application, policy and programmes for necessary development and effectiveness of an organization. Lado and Wilson (1994) define a human resource system as a set of distinct but interrelated activities, functions and processes that are directed at attracting, developing and maintaining a firm's human resources. According to Daniel Radcliffe (2005) human

resources are considered by many to be the most important asset of an organisation, yet very few employers are able to harness the full potentiality from their employees.

Proper and in time service delivery is possible when an organization is properly developed and effective by proper utilization of its resources. There is a link between the organizational effectiveness and societal development. If an organization has competent, efficient workforce, then it is possible to produce expected and proper service in time which will be ultimately helpful for societal as well as development of the nation through parallel economic growth.

A factory is built not by god, but by human beings. It is people who build factories, structures of an organization and manage them successfully. How an idea is conceived by an entrepreneur, how building is constructed and machinery installed, how needed inputs are marshaled and put to use, and how goods and services are produced, is a saga which is not less thrilling and exciting than a general leading army to victory in a war. HRM as stated above offers a comprehensive picture about the people in organizations (Aswathappa: 2011 : 34-35).

Changing socio-economic, technological and political conditions, human resource managers of the future shall have to face more problems in the management of labour. Human resource managers of today may find themselves obsolete in the future due to changes in environment if they do not update themselves.

With the changing technological, political, socio-economic conditions the functionaries of an organization are also facing severe problems in relation to management of people and in time service delivery. Even the functionaries of an organization may find themselves archaic and unfit in the long run due to rapid changes in environment if they do not update and acquainted with the modern environmental and technological changes.

As described by Ajit Kumar Kar (2012) the companies these days are on the edge of the cliff due to cut throat competition, technological changes and innovation. Faced with economic uncertainties, risky strategies, competing priorities, limited resources and managerial complexities, organizations are often “hopeful skeptic” when it comes to

strategically embracing the value of human resource management. Thus, the role of HR is changing fast to adopt and adapt to new organizational structure and culture.

At present day situation for the necessary survival and effectiveness of an organization it needs to develop and update the skills, efficiency, effectiveness and morality of human resources through proper planning, training and development, motivation and appraisal system. Which is ultimately helpful for reduce costs, innovation, increase quality, performance and organizational development.

Rapid technological changes have thrown challenges to human resources in organizations. Organisations today demand change and challenges. Each day we face new challenges in organisations, for which most experienced and able employee of an organisation even do not match with the business requirements and ultimately make himself off-balance. The old way of doing the business without creative thinking and change strategies, may pose threat to individual as well as organization. Optimum utilization of Human Resources can only meet the challenges of competitive environment.

If we intend to improve organizational performance, we have to improve performance of human resources. The contribution of effective Human Resource Management ultimately leads to organizational effectiveness. Today there has been growing realization that aligning the Human Resources Management with the corporate strategies is the major challenge before the companies. Industrial organizations, witnessed that human resource management, is most crucial function, because it is management of sentiments, minds than the people. Strategic HRM involves a set of managerial decisions and actions that are intended to provide a competitively superior fit with the external environment and enhance the long run performance of the organisation. The emphasis has been on more fully integrating HRM with the strategic needs of the organization (Kar : 2012 : 1-6) .

As Guest (1997) argues ‘the distinctive feature of HRM is its assumption that improved performance is achieved through the people in the organization.’ If, therefore, appropriate HR policies and processes are introduced, it can also be assumed that HRM will make a substantial impact on farm performance.

The role of the HR function is to enable the organization to achieve its objectives by taking initiatives and providing guidance and support on all matters relating to its employees. The basic aim is to ensure that the organization develops HR strategies, policies and practices that cater effectively for everything concerning the employment and development of people and the relationships that exist between management and the workforce. The HR function can play a major part in the creation of an environment that enables people to make the best use of their capacities and to realize their potential to the benefit of both the organization and themselves (Armstrong : 2006 : 76).

Thus the practices of human resource management need to be essential for all round development,

Though, critics have noted some problems in the realization of this objective. Management of men is the toughest job on the earth. It is rather easy to manage finance, marketing and production as they are not living beings. Predicting human behaviour exactly, completely and accurately always not been possible as behaviour of human beings is influenced by a number and variety of factors. Hence a number of problems crop up in managing human resources. There are difficulties in identifying the people, use right kind of recruitment techniques and sources, difficulty in identifying the right kind of selection tests, interview etc., difficulty in convincing the employees accept the ratings of performance appraisal, difficulty in motivating the employees to undergo training seriously and apply the knowledge / skills acquired on the job, difficulty in changing behaviour of employees in accordance with the required behaviour of the organisation. ‘Human resource management profession faces a crisis of trust and a loss of legitimacy in the eyes of its major stakeholders. The two-decade effort to develop a new ‘strategic human resource management’ (HR) role in organizations has failed to realize its promised potential of greater status, influence, and achievement’ (Kochan : 2007: 599).

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CHAPTER – III

RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS : AN ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

India is a large democratic country with vast population. There are so many villages spread all over India. Agriculture is one of the pillar and determinant of Indian economy. Rural villages are the heart and soul of Indian progress. If, it can be possible to develop each and every Indian villages properly then the progress and prosperity of village people and Indian economy will be developed accordingly. But how is it possible? It is possible through proper and grass-root level development.

All other developing countries like India; maximum people live in villages. According to census 2011 maximum people live in rural areas. A country's strength and weakness mostly depends upon the condition of villages. A country's economic, socio-cultural and political progress mostly depend upon the condition of rural people. Therefore rural development is one of the important and essential parts of our nation. Conditions of rural people can't rise without proper rural development.

Rural development is necessary not only because an overwhelming majority of population living in villages but also because initiations of rural activities is essential for the overall economic development of the country. It has always been the feeling that Panchayat's are the most suitable agency for democratic decentralization, which could be equipped with adequate powers and responsibilities so that they could formulate and implement programmes of economic development (A. Vijayakumar : 1999 : 31). According to P. Gopinandhan Pillai (2008), in the 21st century India continues to live in villages. This makes it obvious that any process of planning and development in India can hardly succeed without transferring its rural society. R.K. Gupta (2004) mentioned that rural development is the main pillar of Nation's Development.

Rural development is, thus an essential aspect of national development. Of course, a country like India cannot develop its multitudinous villages in isolation from its large urban

centres and developing industrial sector, but the essence of national development lies in the villages, in an economy in which more than two third of the population is directly dependent upon agriculture and nearly half the national income originates in rural areas. The massiveness of india's rural economy is reinforced by the intensiveness of the poverty of its villagers, nearly 40 percent of whom live below the poverty line as computed by the planning commission (C. M. Singh : 1988 : 32-33).

Rural development in India is an emerging factor in the challenging global scenario. As because what we mean by proper rural development, has not equally been developed in our developing country. There are so many people who live in below poverty line (BPL). They are suffering from malnutrition. There is lacuna of food, clothing and shelter. Ignorance and illiteracy wrapped up their life. There is not availability of proper infrastructure in Indian villages. Drinking water, road, and communication facilities are the major issues in this regard. The sufferings of the rural people know no bounds.

Villages are the backbone of India. The dream of Gandhi will be fulfilled only after our villages become republics under the Panchayat Raj system of local self government elected by the people of the villages in a democratic manner. Even after six decades of Independence, the development of the rural population has not been solved. The livelihoods of rural areas are lower than even some of our neighboring countries. The basic issues of sanitation, health care and quality of education, employment and overall quality of life remain under serious considerations in the development programs of our nation (Palanivelraja and Manirathinem : 2013 : 1).

According to Joshi and Narwani (2002) the development of a society or country does not mean that the main benefit of it goes to a few and the rest are getting only marginal benefits. This type of development is a vertical development in which a few get all the advantages of development while the majority is benefited only marginally. In India we are witnessing this type of development. Actually, good development is that where every one or most of the people in a society get the real and substantial benefit of the development. That type of development is horizontal development in which every body gets equitable advantage out of it. Any country or society can claim itself to be developed only if it achieves the horizontal development assuring the substantial benefit of it to all.

In spite of multi-directional and multi dimensional approach, rural development is still a distant dream, which eludes solution. The problem is how to improve the socio-economic and cultural levels of the rural environment as well as rural habitants' income. Poverty alleviation is only one aspect of rural development. Further, since the initiative for development has been emanating from the Government and other urban-oriented agencies, the impact has been weak. Rural development has not yet reached the take off stage (Vasant Desai : 1988 : p.vii).

For necessary rural development the government of India has taken so many initiatives since independence.

The Community Development programme was launched in the country in 1952 with a view to bringing about social and economic change in rural life. Due emphasis was given on people's participation and uplift of the people through their own initiative and self-help. The National Extension Service was established soon after with a view to reinforcing the administrative infrastructure at lower levels of administration. Thus people's involvement, as recognized in the Second Five Year Plan also, became the critical issue in these programmes. The thrust of Second Five Year Plan was to establish statutory Panchayats as village level as a vehicle for national extension and community development programmes. It was soon realized that the community development programme was not yielding desired results. Accordingly, the Balwant Rai Mehta Study Team was appointed in 1957 to study the impact of the community development and national extension programmes in all aspects and assess the extent to which these have succeeded in utilizing local initiative. The Mehta Team observed that development cannot progress without responsibility and power. Community development can be real only when the community understands its problems; realizes its responsibility, exercises the necessary powers through its chosen representatives and maintains a constant and intelligent vigilance on local administration. It was from this standpoint that the Mehta Team recommended for the establishment of popular administration in terms of statutory elective local bodies at district, block and village levels and devolution to them of the necessary resources, powers and authority (S.P. Jain : 1999 : 41-42).

Thus, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) had been established in different states for socio-economic and rural development in the country.

The new system envisages a three-tier structure namely gram, block and district Panchayats. The entire Panchayati system is operating in the area of a district. To administer development, the entire development administration is being divided into three units. All the three units are independent in certain respects and inter dependent in certain respects. Gram Panchayat will function at lowest level and Block Panchayat will function at the Block level and District Panchayat will function at the district level. Roles and responsibility, powers and duties for each tier will be clearly demarcated and they have to function as per the powers conferred upon them. Development activities have to be carried out by lower level units and planning, coordination, monitoring and supervision activities have to be carried out by the district level body namely District Panchayats (Palanithurai : 2002 : 10).

This chapter is devoted for providing the necessary details of rural development i.e. definition, concept, importance, objectives and functions of rural development for better understanding of the subject and what is the role of Panchayat in rural development.

RURAL : CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

There is no single, universally preferred definition of rural that serves all policy purposes. The option of rural definition varies who benefits from a policy and who does not. The definition of rural may also differ depending upon the place. Different 'rural definitions' as described by the authors from their point of view are as follows :

The definition of "rural" varies from country to country, though it is generally used in contrast to "urban". For example this word is defined based on population density in Japan. The notion of "rural" also varies from Asia and African countries; therefore it is difficult to define it universally. The term "rural" generally used to describe areas where a maximum of the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural work including farming, forestry, and fisheries etc.

The Term 'Rural' essentially denotes a non-urban style of life with a distinct occupation structure, social organization and settlement pattern which prevailed practically all over the world for thousands of years, specially after 'homosapiens' learnt the intricate art of agriculture. Methodologically, it is a difficult exercise to establish parameters to define rural or ruralness (C. M. Singh : 1988 : 32).

As Alan W. Childs and Garg, B. Melton (1983 : 5) put it, "as a psychological construct, 'ruralness' might of course be defined on the basis of the attitudes and values typically held by people living in rural communities, particularly as they are differentiated from Urban Dwellers."

The word 'rural' which has been derived from the Latin word ruralis, from rus or rur which means country (Pearsall, Judy : 2000 : 1254). The etymon, rural meant the area which is not included in urban domain and signifies the poor infrastructure : infrastructure like roads, transport, power house, insurance and banking, health, education, cottage industries, communication and modern equipments of development. Rural has become the acronym of agriculture and farming. It is pertaining to the country of distinguished from the city or the town (The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language : 2003 : 1102).

The area related to agriculture purpose and not coming under the notified area to town, semi-town and forest, wherein populace are engaged in agriculture and allied activities, where there is lack of industrial units and manufacturing units, opportunities of placements, where life commences with nature and ends with nature's mercy is called rural area. Rural area means underdeveloped area of population. It covers the maximum area and maximum people (Vidyarthi Chaman Ram : 1996 : 8). In general, a rural area is a geographic area that is located outside cities and towns.

Rural areas are also known as 'countryside' or a 'village' in India. It has a very low density of population. In rural areas, agriculture is the chief source of livelihood along with fishing, cottage industries, pottery etc. The quest to discover the real rural India still continues in great earnest. Almost every economic agency today has a definition of rural India.

According to the Planning Commission, a town with a maximum population of 15,000 is considered rural in nature. In these areas the Panchayat takes all the decisions. The

National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) defines 'rural' as an area with a population density of up to 400 per square kilometer, Villages with clear surveyed boundaries but no municipal board, A minimum of 75% of male working population involved in agriculture and allied activities.

DEVELOPMENT : CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

The concept of development is versatile in nature. Through development it means sufficient food, improved health, better communication, improved housing, better nutrition, improved transportation and increased control over other resources etc. It is a process of transformation that involves not merely the economic, socio-cultural, political and physical structure but the whole society also.

Development is a continuous process for progress, by which people uplift from the present condition to the next better condition. By this process people get self-dependency by assuring equitable distribution of opportunities and resources, and ensuring socio-economic equality and synchronization among all sections of the society.

In the present global economic context, development means the availability of improving facilities i.e. food, clothing, housing, drinking water, education, health services, employment, science and technology, trade, commerce, transport facilities, communication facilities etc. with the aim of the prosperous life of the citizen of the country. For development it requires proper planning, programme and its appropriate implementation for right utilization of the resources.

Different authors define the "development" concept in the following manner :

According to Stiglitz (2002), development can be regarded as a transformation of society, a movement from traditional ways of thinking and traditional methods of production to more modern ways. As described by Sen (1999) development generally is concerned with the enhancement of individuals' ability to shape their lives.

Development is the process of enlarging people's choices (UNDP : 1990 : 1).

According to Samit Kar (1991 : 4-6) the very concept of development has undergone a sea-change, particularly during the present century. He defined the development as follows :-

- ❖ The classical economists have traditionally defined development as growth. This is commonly visualized as the growth of per-capita Gross National Product (normally defined as the value of goods and services produced within a country or a region during a particular year).
- ❖ Since the growth model ignores distribution of income amongst the various groups altogether, neo-classicists have redefined development as growth with social justice, commonly known as “Growth with Equity Strategy”, social justice can be conceptualized in terms of redistribution of incomes and income-generating assets.
- ❖ In recent years, more and more attention has been focused on the ‘Basic Human Needs’ and the Quality of life and it has become fashionable to define development in terms of improvement in the quality of life. The World Bank and many international organizations have adopted the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI), as the basic development indicator, measured out of maximum of 100. PQLI is measured on the basis of the literacy rate, the life expectancy and the infant mortality rate and is today the most widely used non-monetary indicator of development.

Development is a subjective and value loaded concept, and hence there can not be a consensus as to its meaning. The term is used differently in diverse contexts. It basically means ‘unfolding’, or ‘opening up’ something which is latent. When applied to human beings, it therefore means ‘unfolding’ or ‘opening up’ their potential powers. Generally speaking, the term development implies a change that is desirable. Since what is desirable at a particular time, place and in a particular culture may not be desirable at other places, or at other times at the same place and in the same cultural milieu, it is impossible to think of a universally acceptable definition of development. At best, development in the context of society could be conceptualised as a set of desirable societal objectives which society seeks

to achieve. Thus defined, development is cherished by all individuals, communities and nations, irrespective of their culture, religion and spatial location (K. Singh : 1999 : 19-21).

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED : 1987 : 43), 'sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. In simple words, sustainable development is a process in which the set of desirable societal objectives, or the development index, does not decrease over time. Constancy of natural capital stock, including natural resources and the environment, is a necessary condition for sustainable development. The set of 'sufficient conditions' includes an appropriate institutional framework and governance system for implementation of sustainable development policy.

Thus, a common theme within most definitions is that 'development' encompasses 'change' in a variety of aspects of the human condition.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT : CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

There is no universally accepted definition of rural development. The term is used in different ways in vastly divergent contexts. As a concept, it connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. In short, rural development is a process that aims at improving the standard of living of the people living in the rural areas. Rural development may be defined as overall development of rural areas to improve the quality of life of rural people. It is an integrated process, which includes social, economical, political and spiritual development of the poorer sections of the society.

There are no universally accepted approaches to rural development. It is a choice influenced by time, space and culture. The term rural development connotes overall development of rural areas to improve the quality of life of rural people. The term 'Rural Development' is of focal interest and is widely acclaimed in both the developed and the developing countries of the world. There is however no universally acceptable definition of rural development and the term is used in different ways and in vastly divergent contexts. As concept, it connotes over all development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. In this sense, it is a comprehensive and multi dimensional

concept and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities - village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities, and above all, the human resource in rural areas. As a phenomenon, it is the result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural, and institutional factors. As a strategy, it is designed to improve the economic and social well being of a special group of people the rural poor. As discipline, it is multidisciplinary in nature representing an intersection of agricultural, social, behavioral, engineering and management sciences (Katar Singh : 1995 : 18).

Rural development is generally conceived as a multi-sectoral activity which includes, besides agricultural development, rural industries, the establishment or improvement of social overhead facilities or infra-structure, such as schools, clinics, roads, communication, water supply, markets, welfare sources, improved nutrition, literacy, adult education etc. The primary objective of rural development is the enrichment of the quality of the rural masses, particularly the poorer and the weaker sections of the rural society (Shah : 1990 : 7).

According to Madu (2007 : 110-122), rural development as a means of helping rural people set the priorities in their own communities through effective and democratic bodies. These bodies provide local capacity, invest in basic infrastructure and social services, deal with past injustices, and ensure the safety and security of the rural population, particularly that of women.

In the words of Robert Chambers (1983 : 147) rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of rural development. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless.

Bale (1999) defined the basic elements of rural development to include social infrastructure, physical infrastructure, and financial services. The interaction of these three elements is expected to push development in rural communities. Rural development is characterized in terms of the manifestation of income and employment, equitable access to productive resources, sustainable development of natural resources and human capital.

According to the World Bank (1975), rural development is defined as “a strategy aiming at the improvement of economic and social living conditions, focusing on a specific group of poor people in a rural area. It assists the poorest group among the people living in rural areas to benefit from development”.

The term ‘rural development’ is of focal interest and is widely acclaimed in both the developed and the developing countries of the world. There is however no universally acceptable definition of rural development and the term is used in different ways and in vastly divergent contexts. As a concept, it connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. In this sense, it is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional concept and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities – village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities and above all, the human resources in rural areas. As a phenomenon, it is the result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural and institutional forces. As a strategy, it is designed to improve the economic and social well-being of a specific group of people – the rural poor. As a discipline, it is multidisciplinary in nature representing an interface between agricultural, social, behavioural, engineering and management sciences (S. Kar : 1991 : 4-6).

Rural development, in the context of national economic development, can be interpreted as a special effort at restructuring the social milieu of the rural society to induce growth through human resources development in a labour surplus economy. This interpretation of rural development shows that prevalence of a collective social will and the involvement of the people are necessary preconditions for rural development. The rural development programmes can be implemented and development funds be spent, even without promoting collective social will and cutting across interest groups. However, such programmes run the risk of being tied to targets, in terms of disbursement of allocated funds and vastly enlarging the bureaucracy in the process with little care for the actual results (A.K. Tiwari :1999 : 2-3).

Rural development is a strategy by which more employment opportunities are created in rural areas and efforts are made to increase the level of income and there by raising the standard of living of rural masses.

According to International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), "Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people the rural poor. The group includes small and marginal farmers, tenants and landless labourers".

Development is a quantitative as well as qualitative change aiming to shape 'ruralness' in the desired direction. As P.R. Bose and V.N. Vashist (1980 : 32-33) say, "Rural Development thus means development of rural areas in such a way that social, economic, technological and natural components of rural life change in a desired direction and within the framework of national goals and objectives and without prejudice to the development of urban area of the country".

Thus, rural development is a process of developing and utilizing natural and human resources, technologies, infrastructural facilities, institution and organization and government policies and programmes to encourage and speed up economic growth in rural areas, to provide jobs and to improve the quality of rural life towards self sustenance.

OBJECTIVES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The objectives of rural development, according to the World Bank, are not restricted to any single department but spread over several, and the resultant mix serves to raise agricultural output, create new employment, improve health and education, expand communications, provide housing etc.

According to Singh (1999), the main objectives of rural development in all societies, irrespective of their economic, political and socio-cultural systems are :

Firstly, to increase the availability and improve the distribution of the life sustaining goods, such as food, clothes, shelter, health and security. Secondly, to raise per capita purchasing power and improve its distribution by providing better education, productive and remunerative jobs and cultural amenities and thirdly, to expand the range of economic and social choices to individuals by freeing them from servitude and dependence.

Therefore, a measure of rural development should provide, at the minimum, an indication of per capita availability of life sustaining goods or per capita income in rural areas, as well as some idea of the distribution of income, assets and other means of socio-economic welfare.

The main objectives of rural development are to eradicate all the obstacles in the way of development for effective implementation and utilization of planning, programme and resources in rural areas. Main objectives are : removal of poverty, raise standard of living, removal of un-employment, educational development, drinking water supply, rural sanitation, to check migration from villages, to reduce under employment, development of infrastructure i.e. agriculture and allied activities, rural Industries, social services infrastructure etc., development of transport facilities, development of communication, environmental development, development of medical health and family welfare facilities in rural area, healthy living conditions etc.

As described by Vasant Desai (1988), the objectives of rural development encompass higher production, improved productivity, increased employment, higher income as well as minimum acceptable levels of food, shelter, education and health. Thus, it covers all aspects of human development. And this is to be achieved with the full co-operation of the rural people.

IMPORTANCE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is a globally important issue. This issue is also more important for the developing countries like India, where maximum number of people live in villages. Therefore, rural development is necessary not only to satisfy the majority of the population live in villages but also development of rural activities is essential to the acceleration of development needs for the rural people and parallel economic development in the country.

There are so many backward and remote areas in India where so many people are not getting their minimum necessities like food, cloth, shelters, health care and sanitation. They are deprived also of getting basic necessities of life. According to census 2011 maximum people live in villages. There are so many people live in below poverty line (BPL). They are suffering from malnutrition. There is lacuna of food, clothing, and shelter. Ignorance

and illiteracy wrapped up their life. In some cases there is not availability proper infrastructure in Indian villages. Drinking water, road, and communication facilities are the major issues in this regard.

It has assumed that the importance of rural development is growing rapidly day by day in India in view of the global economic scenario. After independence government of India has introduced so many projects and programmes to solve the problems of villages. But still now all these initiatives have not been fruitfully utilized and implemented for this purpose. Even there are so many villages found in India, where the basic necessities of life and proper infrastructure are partly or totally absent. The percentage of people live in below the poverty line in rural areas has been gradually increasing.

Under the above circumstances it is found that rural development is not only important but also essential for parallel development in the country. Now two things are required for effective rural development i.e. efficient management and an appropriate organization. The key to success surely lies in building up competent, efficient and effective functionaries (village Panchayat) with trusted, dedicated and motivated in nature.

Rural development is necessary not only because an overwhelming majority of the population lives in villages but because the development of rural activities is essential to the acceleration of pace of the overall economic development of the country. It has assumed greater importance in India today than in the earlier period in the process of development of the country. There is much evidence to show that public interest in it has been growing rapidly. The Government has initiated a number of programmes to solve the chronic problems of villages in India. Even then, the percentage of people living below the poverty line in rural areas has been steadily increasing from year to year (V. Desai : 1988 : 10).

Rural development is a dynamic process, which is mainly related with the development of rural areas. This concludes agricultural growth, economic and social infrastructure development, public health, education, village planning, road and communication etc.

Rural development is a national necessity and has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons :

To develop rural areas as a whole in terms of infrastructure, culture, economy, technology and health, to develop living standard of rural mass, to develop and empower human resource of rural areas in terms of their psychology, skill, knowledge, attitude and other abilities, to provide minimum facility to rural mass in terms of drinking water, education, transport, electricity and communication, to develop rural institutions like Panchayat, cooperatives, post and banking, to provide financial assistance to develop the artisans in the rural areas, farmers, unskilled labourers to improve their economy, to develop rural industries through the development of handicrafts, small scaled industries, village industries, rural crafts, cottage industries and other related economic operations in the rural sector, to develop agriculture, animal husbandry, to restore uncultivated land and provide irrigation facilities and motivate farmers to adopt improved seed, fertilizers, package of practices of crop cultivation and soil conservation methods, to develop entertainment and recreational facility for rural mass, to develop leadership quality of rural areas, to improve rural marketing facility, to minimize gap between the urban and rural in terms of facilities availed, to improve rural peoples' participation in the development of state and the nation as a whole, to improve scopes of employment for rural mass for the sustainable development of rural areas and to eliminate rural poverty.

Rural development is also important in India as because of the following reasons.

- ❏ About three-fourth of India's population live in rural areas, thus rural development is needed to develop the nation as a whole.
- ❏ Nearly half of the country's national income is derived from agriculture, which is major occupation of rural India.
- ❏ Around seventy per cent of Indian population gets employment through agriculture.
- ❏ Bunks of raw materials for industries come from agriculture and rural sector.
- ❏ Increase in industrial population can be justified only in rural population's motivation and increasing the purchasing power to buy industrial goods.

- ❏ Growing disparity between the urban elite and the rural poor can lead to political instability.

According to Brajesh Kumar's (2012 : 104-105) point of view presented here, has some support in the development experience in India. In one of the study by National Council of Applied Economic Research (1999) have brought forward some striking facts about the development indicator for the rural communities in rural India is the point in case at present.

- About half of the population of rural India is illiterate and suffering from capability poverty.
- About 40 per cent have extremely low income.
- Over 50 per cent of the rural population cannot afford the cost of education and health care.
- National policies and programme during the last half a century have not helped schedule cast and schedule tribes to emerge from the perennial poverty trap.
- 63 per cent of the villages do not have all weather connecting roads.
- About one-half of all the villages in India do not have any source of safe drinking water.
- In many parts of India 25 per cent villages still waiting for the village primary schooling facility.
- Only about 22 per cent of all villages have a health sub-centres within the village.

Rural development signifies a set of programmes especially designed for the up-liftment of the rural masses, based on economic criteria and promotion of the social welfare of all, by way of amenities and services covering the basic needs of the rural society, like drinking water, health, primary education, rural communication and transport (A.K. Tiwari :1999 : 2).

Thus, the importance of rural development lies on properly development of living standard of rural masses, rural infrastructure, development and empowerment of human resource, development of living standard, improvement of scopes of employment for rural masses, elimination of rural poverty etc. The importance of rural development is also essential for the parallel economic development in the country.

PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA : AN OVERVIEW

Panchayats are the backbone of the villages. For necessary rural development and upliftment of the village people Panchayats act as a key role since time immemorial. The idea and establishment of Panchayat system in India is not a new invention, as the Panchayat is a very ancient institution. If we review the existence of Panchayat system in the Indian history it will be found that it is a part and parcel of Indian society since long back. It has a long history. However, its structure had been assorted from time to time. The concept of 'Panch Parmeswar' in rural India is very old in this regard. We also find the existences of village Panchayat in the ancient and medieval literatures.

As described by R.P. Joshi, G.S. Narwani (2002 : 20) historical roots of the local self-government in India can be traced from the ancient past, through its present of urban and rural bodies reflect a distinct impact of the British period. According to J.C. Johari (1974) the system was first introduced by King Prithu while colonizing the Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna. There are so many references to the existence of Gramsanghas or rural communities in the Manusmriti and the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata. There is also found a description of rural communities in the Arthashastra of Kautilya.

Panchayats are a unique institution that has existed in India through the ages, functioning merely by 'Common Consent' and with 'the real sanction of the local public opinion' (Sidney Webb : 1983 : ix). Panchayati Raj is often believed to be the most important political invention of independent India. As the Panchayat is a very ancient institution, the little village republics were governed by their Panchayats. It is to be noted that the system was first introduced by King Prithu while colonising the Doab between the Ganges and the Jamuna (J.C. Johari : 1974 : 810).

A description of these rural communities is also found in the Arthashastra of Kautilya. In the Ramayana of Valmiki we read about the Ganapada which was perhaps a kind of federation of village republics. An account of the village common-wealth burring the seventeenth century is found in Shukracharya's Neetisara. In fact, a village in India has been looked upon as the basic unit of administration since the earliest Vedic times.

In the Ramayana of Valmiki we read about the 'Pur' and 'Janapad' which was perhaps a kind of federation of village republics. According to R.P. Joshi, G.S. Narwani (2002 : 23) in the regime of Chandragupta Maurya village was the smallest unit of governance. 'Gramik' was the village head and elected by the people. In the Gupta period also, the 'Gramik' was the village head and a village was the smallest unit of governance.

Panch-Ayat means a group of five persons selected by the villagers. Indirectly, it denotes the system through which rural people are governed. It indicates that there was some method of self-government. In the old Sanskrit scriptures, there is a word 'Panchayat', which means a group of five persons, including some spiritual men. But, gradually, the concept of the inclusion of a spiritual man in such groups vanished. In the Rigveda, there is a mention of 'Sabha', 'Samiti' and 'Vidath' as local self-units. Subsequently, the panchayat became a group of any five selected persons of the village to decide village disputes. The concept of 'Panch Parameshwar' or Panch – the God' existed in the ancient age (R.P. Joshi, G.S. Narwani : 2002 : 23).

There was also existence of local self-government during the Medieval period. The existence of local self-government was also found in British period though, it was not the main purpose of the British Government. The Local Self-government Resolution, 1882 during the period of Lord Ripon, the Royal Commission Report (1909), Montague Chelmsford Report (1918) and ultimately the Government of India Act, 1935 was the important milestone towards the empowerment of Panchayat system in India during the British period.

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, uttered that India lives in villages. Gandhiji had also given the idea of 'Gram Swarajya'. As Gandhiji said "greater the power of the Panchayat, the better for the people as true democracy'. At the time of Indian independence most of the people of India lived in villages. Therefore the progress and prosperity of the nation depends upon the necessary upliftment of the Indian villages.

Thus, the spirit of democratic decentralization at the village level was existent right since the ancient period. It became more and more organized and took proper shape by the time India became independent in 1947 (R.P. Joshi, G.S. Narwani : 2002 : 28). Thus, at the time of independence the opportunity was provided to fulfill the vision of democratic decentralization in our country.

With these ideas and the Article 40 of the Constitution of India, which declared that ‘the state shall take steps to organize Village Panchayats and to endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as the units of self-government,’ tilled the way for the introduction of Panchayati Raj System as scheme of democratic decentralization in India.

Under the above circumstances Community Development Programme (CDP) was started in 1952 with the aim of necessary improvement of the economic and social condition of rural people. National Extension Service (NES) was also introduced in 1953 as a part to community development. But all these initiatives proved unsatisfactory. The two successive plans had failed to generate real eagerness among the people as well as to produce desired results. Hence, a study team under the chairmanship of Balwant Rai Mehta was appointed by the Government of India in 1957 to review the CDP and NES and suggest measures for necessary implementation of uniform Panchayat Raj schemes all over India.

Present Panchayati Raj system is the outcome of the failure of the Community Development Projects (CDPs) as well as the recommendation of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee Report. The Committee recommended three tier Panchayati Raj System i.e. Gram Panchayat at village level, the Panchayat Samiti at the Block level and the Zilla Parishad at the district level for encouraging people’s participation in socio-economic development at the village level.

To make the PRIs more effective and functional, Government of India appointed the Ashok Mehta Committee in 1977 to study the role and powers of the PRIs in rural development and give suitable suggestions. For effective people’s participation through the Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural development, the Planning Commission experts, under the leadership of Dr. C.H. Hanumanth Rao, were deputed (1982) to study the planning system at district level. The team suggested in favour of decentralization of planning.

The Union Government also appointed G.V.K. Rao Committee in 1985 for necessary suggestion on poverty alleviation programmes and organization of PRIs. In 1986 Government of India formed L.M. Singhvi Committee. According to R.P. Joshi, G.S. Narwani (2002 : 38-39) this committee was formed to suggest steps for revival of Panchayati Raj. It advocated that Panchayati Raj should be primarily viewed as the local self-government system and should be strengthened accordingly. It is the foundation stone

for the country's democratic political system. Management of rural development was its secondary role. The existing constitutional provision in Article 40 is too general and also discretionary. It cannot give a firm basis for Panchayati Raj, which has been weakened due to neglect and unscrupulous politicking in various states. The committee advocated constitutional recognition to strengthen Panchayat Raj, which became the basis for the 64th Constitutional Amendment Bill.

After the L.M. Singhvi Committee (1986) followed by Sarkaria Commission (1988), P.K. Thungan Committee (1989) and Harlal Singh Kharrar Committee (1990) have been constituted to make PRIs more functional and effective.

As a result of the recommendations of various such committees and the tempo generated, the Central Government decided to give a constitutional Amendment Act in 1993 to provide uniformity to the Panchayati Raj system throughout India. Reservation to Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and Women was also guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. Though most the state governments amended their Panchayati Raj Acts during 1993 and 1994, yet things have mostly remained on paper. Political will is still lacking, powers, staff and resources to the PRIs have hardly been transferred. The PRIs still remain more an agency of development rather than institution of self-government (Joshi, Narwani : 2002 : 40-41).

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

Rural development is an important and vital issue in India. Panchayati Raj Institutions, the grass root units of local self government have been considered as instruments of socio economic transformation in rural India. Indeed, the prosperity of entire country depends on the prosperity and self-sufficiency of the villages. The Panchayati Raj system fulfils the long felt need of making the village administration truly independent and genuinely representative of the popular will, and putting village people in direct charge of their affairs.

Rural development has been massively a government supported process rather than the people-led process in India. To formulate and implement rural development programs an appropriate institutional structure is required. This need was met by the establishment of Panchayat Raj Institution (PRIs) in India. Further, the PRIs, being local self-governing

bodies ensure, the opportunity for people's participation and involvement in the formulation and implementation of rural development programs. Thus, the PRIs are entrusted with the task of promoting rural development in India (R. N. Kadam : 2012 : 16-17).

All the programmes, policies and planning initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development Department, Government of India or Panchayat and Rural Development Department of the respective State Government, for necessary development in rural areas and to build better India, mainly implemented through the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Hence, Panchayati Raj Institutions have an active and key role in rural development. It needs active participation in the developmental related work at local level. It is also essential to develop co-operation with the local people for their necessary feedback, requirement, and desire etc. for implementation of developmental related work. Thus, Panchayati Raj Institutions play an important and significant role in rural development.

In view of the above circumstances and 73rd constitutional amendment act the development of rural villages envisage to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Village Panchayat is a solely grass root level government machinery. Therefore development of a village mostly depends upon the Gram Panchayat. Keeping in view the needs and aspirations of the local people, Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved in the programme implementation and these institutions constitute the core of decentralized development of planning and its implementations.

In accordance with this so many projects, planning, programmes implemented by the government of India after independence. The aim was rural development and up-liftment of rural people. There is also provision for rural development in the five year plans of India.

The role of Panchayati Raj institutions as instruments of rural reconstruction and development needs no emphasis. They have been reorganized with wider powers and financial resources not merely as institutions of political participation but institutions of social and economic development. Panchayati Raj has come to be associated with two broad images. First, it is a government by itself and second it is an agency of the state government. In the integrated exercise of planning for social and economic development, co-ordinate roles, the present set up is a three-tier representative structure of government

where the administrators, elected leaders and local population participate in the developmental effort (R. N. Kadam : 2012 : 15).

In the words of Committee on Plan Projects, “so long as we do not discover or create a representative and democratic institution which will supply the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon local objects conforms with the needs and wishes of the locality, invest it with never be able to evoke local interest and excite local initiative in the field of development” and the team recommended a three-tier model of Panchayat Raj to serve as instrument of rural development in India (Committee on Plan Projects Report : 1957 : 5).

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India popularly known as an agent of rural transformation are not merely a formal arrangement with specific form and function but have a certain legitimacy and meaning by which they are identified. After independence there have been several attempts to make Panchayat a more viable institution and crystallize certain practices which are necessary for rural development (B.P. Singh : 1999 : 108-09).

Now the Panchayati Raj Institutions have got immense important in the process of decentralization. It is the most significant grass root level government machinery involved in rural development process. As described by Ratna Ghosh (1999 : 207) however, Panchayat is an old conception in India and in a way it is an earlier concept of democracy in the history of civilization. Now, Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been proclaimed as the ‘vehicles’ of the socio-economic transformation in rural areas.

Although government of India has introduced so many projects and programmes for the purpose of rural development but still now all these initiatives and planning are not working properly due to lack of proper service delivery, responsibility and accountability of the functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institutions and lack of proper planning and its implementation. Governmental initiative has been designed with the aim of the up-liftment of her citizen. For this since independence government has implemented so many programmes and policies with the aim of rural development.

The Panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. Plan documents of both the central and state governments

and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments. Second five-year plan envisaged Panchayats as responsible for village development keeping transformation of social and economic life of rural areas as its goal of development. It says that, the rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organization in the village which can bring all the people, including the weaker sections, in to common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of administration. To achieve this objective the second Five year Plan entailed the Panchayats to perform civic, developmental, land management, land reform and judicial functions. Subsequent plans and policy pronouncements of national leader to emphasize the role of Panchayats in village development (Agarwal and Ribot : 1990).

Panchayati Raj Institutions, the grass root units of local self government have been considered as instruments of socio economic transformation in rural India. Involvement of people at the grass root level is the most important means of bringing about socio-economic development. Panchayati Raj is identified as institutional expression of democratic decentralization in India. Decentralization of power to the Panchayats is seen as a means of empowering people and involving them in decision making process. Local governments being closer to the people can be more responsive to local needs and can make better use of resources. The democratic system in a country can be ensured only if there is mass participation in the governance. Therefore, the system of democratic decentralization popularly known as Panchayati Raj is considered as an instrument to ensure democracy and socio-economic transformation. Gandhiji advocated that India lives in her villages. Indian independence must begin at the bottom, thus making every village a republic or Panchayat, enjoying full powers. He remarked that true democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village. These dreams lead to the inclusion of Article 40 in the Directive Principles of the State Policy of Constitution of India. Almost after five decades of independence, in the year 1993, the Government of India took a revolutionary step by making Panchayati Raj Institutions a part of the Constitution.

Decentralization is a concomitant of democracy. Thus the underlying idea behind democratic decentralization is to widen the area of democracy by granting both authority and autonomy to the people at the lower levels. Democratic decentralization is not merely

devolution of power. It must also comprise devolution of responsibility. There are two major responsibilities, which the institution of democracy must exercise. The first is financial discipline. The second major responsibility which devolves on Panchayati Raj institutions is protecting and safeguarding the interests of the weaker sections of society - the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the minorities, women and other disadvantaged or potentially disadvantaged sections of society (Vasant Desai : 1990 : 4).

It is hoped that the present Panchayati Raj system will be able to harness and develop the better characteristics of the average villagers in spite of their illiteracy and restricted range of experience. It is also expected that this system will bring new aspiration and fresh inspiration to national self-respect.

In the present Panchayati Raj system, the functionaries have a great role to perform for necessary rural development in India. The degree of rural development mostly depends upon the performance, accountability, responsibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the Panchayat functionaries. In the next chapter emphasis and description has been made on the Panchayat system of West Bengal and how this system become more effective and efficient through human resource management system towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal.

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CHAPTER – IV

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS: THE WEST BENGAL SCENARIO

INTRODUCTION

At the dawn of the new century development is crying need for developing countries like India. Present global situation technology, time, talents and knowledge are changing rapidly. But yet the wave of globalization and technological advances has not spread well in rural areas of India.

Rural development as a concept is not a new one. It had received the attention of great personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and many others much before Independence. Gandhiji's concept of rural reconstruction and Tagore's Shantiniketan were perhaps the first systematic attempts in this direction. Gandhiji said "India lives in villages". This is true even today also. According to 2001 census report nearly 72 per cent of Indian population lives in the rural areas. According to the World Bank definition "Rural Development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek livelihood in the rural area". The group includes small and marginal farmers, tenants, landless labourers, artisans and weaker sections of society (Rao, Prathima : 2012 : 261).

Rural Development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. Alleviation of rural poverty and generation of employment opportunity were the primary objectives of planned development in India. Ever since the inception of planning, the policies and the programmes have been designed and redesigned with this aim. The problem of rural poverty was brought into a sharper focus during the successive plans. Later on, the focus has been shifted to growth with social justice. It was realized that a sustainable strategy of poverty alleviation has to be based on increasing the productive employment opportunities in the process of growth itself. Increased participation of people in the rural development process, decentralization of planning,

better enforcement of land reforms, maximum utilization of natural and human resources, development of skills of rural people and greater access to credit and inputs go a long way on providing the rural people with better prospects for economic development. Improvements in health, protective drinking water, housing, sanitation, energy supply coupled with attitudinal changes also facilitate their social development (ibid.).

West Bengal became a pioneer in India in institutionalising 3-tier Panchayat system for rural local governance (recognised as the second generation Panchayat) since 1978 i.e. 15 years ahead of the country's waking up to a constitutional mandate. Ever since inception, the state sustainably demonstrated strong commitment to rural decentralisation by ensuring regular elections to Gram Panchayat (cluster of villages), Panchayat Samiti (block Panchayat) and Zilla Parishad (district Panchayat), together known as Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), entrusting them with specific responsibilities in land reforms, implementation of various rural development programmes and making the development bureaucracy part of PRIs. The state also ensured representation of the socially backward classes - scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST) and women in PRIs (Perspective Plan for Capacity Building of PRIs in West Bengal : 2008 : 4).

Chakrabarti, Chattopadhyay, Nath (2011) in India, the 73rd constitutional amendment of 1992 decentralized agriculture, irrigation, health, education along with 23 other items to the Panchayats - the local level self-government body. It was envisaged that the three-tier Panchayat system at the District, Block and the Village level would fulfill the aim of rural development through decentralization of planning, various schemes and their implementation. In West Bengal, a state in eastern India, where the Panchayats were revitalized before the constitutional amendment, and took a great initiative in implementation of three tier Panchayat system – as a part of local level self government body.

It is now a journey of nearly three decades and a half since the revival of Panchayati Raj Institutions in West Bengal in 1978. The state has been regarded as a role model of grassroots democracy in different parts of the country and beyond. When Panchayat system was revived in West Bengal in 1978, it was actually a pioneering step. At that time, the institutions of local democracy were either on the decline or almost non-existent in many other Indian states. With the new experiments in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in West

Bengal and in a very few other states in late 1970s and 1980s, and also in a changed political climate, there emerged a new trend of revival of local institutions in general and PRIs in particular throughout the country. This new trend culminated in the initiatives taken by the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for adoption of 63rd and 64th Amendment Acts in order to give effect to the emerging ideas in his own way. Although the attempts failed for some obvious reasons, subsequently, the dream to give the PRIs and local institutions constitutional status came true in a sense in 1992 with the adoption of the Seventy Third and Seventy Fourth Amendment of the Constitution. It is well known that one of the basic objectives of the Amendments was to make the local governments 'self-governing institutions' by giving them certainty, continuity and strength in different ways (Modak : 2015 : 158-59).

In West Bengal, the position is reverse to that of Maharashtra. The Gram Panchayat has been given more powers in comparison with powers given to the Block / District Panchayats. They have 14 obligatory and 21 assigned functions, apart from a large number of discretionary functions. The Gram Panchayats have full powers to approve works. The Panchayat Samitis also perform a large variety of functions related to 18 sectors. The Zila Parishads have a wide range of administrative and financial powers. They are delegated with all the functions of 29 sectors under Schedule XI with 17 other items and 24 departmental schemes for implementation. The PRIs in West Bengal are very strong bodies which function as real institutions of self-governance. However, there is need for strengthening the administrative structure to cope with the increase in powers and functions of the Gram Panchayats (Joshi, Narwani : 2002 : 68-69).

Panchayati Raj System in West Bengal tried to give importance on duties and responsibilities of Gram Panchayats, Resource devolution and also the role of Panchayats in Rural Development (Bhattacharya : 2000 : 106-116). During the regime of Left Front, West Bengal has experienced two generations of Panchayats – the second generation and the third generation. While there are many commonalities between these two generations of Panchayats, the third generation phase lays stress on the development of Panchayats not only as instruments of rural development but also as units of self Government. Thus it combines the instrumentalist and institutionist – perspectives on Panchayats (Datta and Datta : 2002 : 100).

The present study has concentrated its attention to the Gram Panchayats. As because GP has a unique role in rural development, therefore it is important to understand the way it functions. In West Bengal, GP is the grass root level government machinery for development in rural areas.

Here the study also concentrates its attention to how human resource management contributes to the performance of village Panchayat for effective rural development. This thesis examined the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper identifies the need of human resource management and its impact on rural development.

This chapter tries to explain the necessary details of Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal and the role of Gram Panchayat in rural development. Here it also explains the active and important role of the functionaries of Gram Panchayat in rural development and the rural development scenario in West Bengal. It concludes with a discussion about how human resource management systems may be effective in rural development in West Bengal through enhancement of capacity, competency, efficiency and accountability of the functionaries of GP. And finally considers HRM as a precious issue.

EVOLUTION AND STRUCTURE OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION IN WEST BENGAL

It is widely believed that the modern Panchayati Raj system had its roots in the ancient Indian social practices. But its origin and early nature is still not well known. In the Vedic period, the village was the ‘pivot’ of administration. In fact, the Vedic state was essentially a country state with village as the basic unit of administration. The village-government was usually run under supervision and direct control of the village ‘headman’ who was called ‘Gramani’. The village head was assisted by an ‘informal council’ of the village elders. In Mauryan period also, the villages were the basic unit of administration and there was existence of village Panchayats. In Gupta period, the village councils evolved into regular bodies in some parts of India, which became the permanent features of local administration and gained further importance. The settlement of village disputes was one of the most important functions of the village councils. In Chola period, there was also the existence of well organised village Panchayat system which can be compared with the modern

Panchayat system. During this period, villages had economic and administrative freedom. The village administration was performed by the elected representatives by forming village council. The important functions of the village council were: control of village land; survey and measurement of agricultural land; collection of revenues; settling disputes; and management of education (Ghosh and Pramanik : 2007 : 207-210). Existence of Panchayat system was also found in Sultanate period and in Mughal period. Though, as a formal system of local governance was introduced during the British rule.

During the British period, the villagers of Bengal experienced the idea of Panchayat primarily in 1870 through the Bengal Village Chowkidari Act. The Chowkidari 'Panchayat' had no resemblance with the ancient Panchayat system that existed in India in the pre British regime. The 'Chowkidari Act' was purely a handiwork of British Rulers and its ambit was extremely limited. These Panchayats, appointed by the District Magistrates, were merely an agency for the assessment and collection of local tax, which was used to be levied for the support of the village police without having anything to do with the management of affairs of immediate interest to the villagers (Chakraborty : 2008 : 72-73).

The next important step towards introduction of local Self-government in Bengal was associated with the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885. A resolution in this regard for introducing of local governance in India was passed by the then Governor General Lord Mayo. The Act provided for constitution of District Board at district level, Local Board at sub-divisional level and Union Committee at village level (cluster of villages). The union committee was the lowest tier.

Another most important milestone in the development of a system of self government in village level was associated with the Bengal Village Self Government Act 1919. According to M.N. Roy the Bengal Village Self Government Act 1919 was passed to develop a system of self government in the village level. Under that act District Board remained the same but the Local Board was abolished and the Union Committee and Chaukidari Panchayat were clubbed together to form the Union Board. Under the Act the district was to be divided by notification into local areas to be a Union under the Act and the State was to establish a Union Board for every union. The number of members in the Board was between 6 and 9 but the electorate was only a certain category of the citizen based on their land ownership and educational qualification. The Union Board had several duties and powers, some of which were quite similar to those of the Gram Panchayats at present. The

Union Board could impose union rate on buildings as per assessment to be prescribed and had a Union Fund. There was provision of establishing Union Bench to try certain petty criminal offences and Union Court for trying certain petty civil suits in every Union. The Commissioner of the Division had power to dissolve the Union Board after considering views of the District Magistrates and District Board, if the Union Board was not competent to perform. The District Magistrate or the District Board might issue an order in writing to suspend or execute the order or dissolve the union board. Thus the Union Board had a little democratic control.

However, despite the limited opportunity provided by the colonial rulers in respect of the participation of RLGIs, it can hardly be denied that limited experience of the LSG during the colonial era had percolated to the elite section of the society. After independence, those intelligentsia were the forerunners for the establishment of democratic set up including LSG in West Bengal (Chakraborty : 2008 : 80).

Before 1977, West Bengal Legislative Assembly passed a series of Acts on Panchayat system consecutively in 1957, 1963 and 1973. However, the real journey of the Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal started clearly after the formation of the Left Front Government (LFG) in 1977. The experience of West Bengal under the Panchayat system stands in sharp contrast with that of other states and, together with land reforms, the Panchayat has been credited for playing an important role in the impressive economic turn-around of the state since 1980s. West Bengal is the first and only major state to have organized Panchayat elections on a party basis regularly in every five years since 1978 (ibid : 17-18).

The first election to form the Panchayati Raj institutions in West Bengal was held in 1978, following the installation of the Left front government in the State. The State is no lagging behind any other State in fully implementing the Panchayati Raj System. The State has seen through four elections to the Panchayat bodies at regular intervals of five years which no other State in India can claim to have done.

According to Datta and Datta (2002 : 99) the second generation - Panchayats under this phase were political Panchayats. West Bengal was the first State in the country to hold election to the Panchayat institutions on the basis of open participation of political parties and at regular intervals. Panchayats were not merely instruments of rural development but those of mobilization of the masses.

In anticipation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, the main provisions of the Act were incorporated in a comprehensive Amendment of the West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act in 1992. Among other features it provided for reservation of not less than one-third seats for women and also for the SCs and STs (proportionate to their percentage in terms of the total population). Panchayat elections in the State were held on May 30, 1993 as per the provisions of the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act – the first state to do so. West Bengal has the credit of introducing the land reforms for the first time at the Panchayat level. The fact is that economic democracy is a pre-condition for meaningful political democracy and it should be emphasized. There were on an average of 2.84 women candidates per seat in the PRIs elections. This is a remarkable achievement and the credit for this goes to all political parties in the State (Reddy : 1999 : 83-84).

The experiences of local self-governing institutions in West Bengal are considered by many experts as the role model for rest of India. In fact, the Government of India has passed the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 mainly on the basis of the West Bengal model. The 73rd Amendment Act initiated the journey of the ‘third generation Panchayat system’ in the country. So far as the people’s participation is concerned, West Bengal remains the pioneer in the context of third generation Panchayati Raj system in all respect. In addition to the Gram Sabha, the Government of West Bengal has also made a provision for the creation of the Gram Sansad and Gram Unnayan Samity; so that people can directly be involved in the decision-making process as well as implementing functions of the Panchayat. On many counts, the West Bengal Panchayat model has emerged as a pioneering one among the Indian states. In spite of the success of Panchayati system in West Bengal, ensuring people’s participation in the functioning of the Panchayat is a serious challenge to the policy makers of the state as has been reflected in the different government policy documents (Chakraborty : 2008 : Preface).

Panchayats in West Bengal are instruments of pro-poor socio-economic change. They have played significant role in the implementation of land reform programmes in the State and thus to create objective conditions for the successful working of Panchayat bodies (Datta and Datta : 2002 : 99).

Currently in West Bengal the 3-tier Panchayats are to deliver civic and some other basic services to around 70 per cent of over 80 million population of West Bengal residing in rural areas. The population size generally ranges from 10 to 25 thousand under GPs; 1 to 3 lakh under PSs; and 20 to 70 lakh under ZPs. Generally there are 10-20 villages under a GP, 8-15 GPs under the area of a PS and 8-31 PSs under the area of a ZP. A wrong notion is noticed among some people that GPs work under control of a PS and a PS works under control of a ZP; but the 3-tier PRIs have distinct jurisdictions of working independently as institutions of local government, although there are still overlapping of functions among the 3 tiers, being addressed through activity mapping initiative (Perspective Plan for Capacity Building of PRIs in West Bengal : 2008 : 4).

While the Panchayat system in West Bengal attracted even world-wide attention over the last three decades, some critics observed the “concepts of Panchayats being institutions of self-governance” still “either missing or dimly perceived”. Some others observed that PRIs function more as part of the delivery system of the State Government rather than as institutions of self-governance. The State Government itself identified areas in Panchayat functioning which needed systematic improvements e.g. institutionalization of bottom-up planning approach; intensification of people’s participation and of local level organisations in PRI functioning; improved financial management; greater accountability, transparency and inclusiveness; convergence of all other development agencies with PRIs; and greater accountability of development bureaucracy to PRIs (Perspective Plan for Capacity Building of PRIs in West Bengal : 2008 : 5).

Panchayat system in West Bengal is at the crossroads and the challenges of capacity building have become very acute today. There is no denying the fact that the success of the initiatives of capacity building of local bodies presupposes the acceptance of these as really ‘institutions of self-government’ not simply in legal terms, but in day-to-day practices as well. The question of ‘political will’ particularly on the part of the ruling elites is very important in this connection. Over the years, although no substantial departure at the theoretical level has been discernible, yet a shift of emphasis to control these for political reasons rather than making these viable instruments of self-government has become very much evident. As a result, the role of the Panchayats as autonomous bodies has been neglected and these are made to act as institutions remote-controlled by the state government and higher level politicians. Even the attempts at reverse direction making

these centralized and bureaucratic as before are seen from time to time. Accordingly, the tasks of capacity building have been seriously neglected and the Panchayat institutions have acquired a somewhat stereotypic nature (Modak : 2015 : 173).

In spite of the 'political deficits' as mentioned above, there is no denying the fact that the panchayat system in West Bengal has demonstrated enough evidence of its potential to achieve the desired goals of democratic decentralization and popular participation. The success stories of the West Bengal panchayat, which have given it the 'pioneering status' all over the country and even beyond, should not be undermined in this connection. The rising expectations of the rural people, particularly in the sphere of 'service delivery', are to be seen from this perspective. Again, the growing awareness of the rural people in respect of their 'right' to be consulted in matters that affect their lives should also not be missed in this connection. The increasing demands for transparency and accountability are also very important in this regard. Hence, the tasks of capacity building of the Panchayat institutions are to be viewed as 'the need of the hour' not only to honour the 'rising expectations' of the people at large, but also for the cause of advancement of popular participation, which is the hallmark of democracy and social justice (ibid : 174).

If reviewed the system of Panchayati Raj Institutions in West Bengal since inception, it may be found that, maximum efforts have been given on planning, infrastructure, finance, constitutional amendments, resource devolution, decentralization, power and functions of Panchayati Raj Institutions. But there is hardly found the initiatives towards enhancement of capacities, competencies of the Panchayat functionaries to make the Panchayat dynamic and effective. Though, some steps have been taken recently by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal for strengthening of Gram Panchayats and capacity building of its functionaries.

While the Panchayat system in West Bengal attracted world-wide attention, the State Government has been continuously identifying limitations in PRI functioning and bringing about need-based reforms in the Panchayat system from the very beginning. Apart from introducing the spell of major reforms triggered off by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, the State Government embarked on several reform measures in order to strengthen rural decentralisation and to ensure accountability, transparency and inclusiveness that might

lead to good governance at local level. Some of the measures that have some significance for application human resource management in West Bengal may be described as follows :

The concept of human resource management in West Bengal, especially in Panchayati Raj System seems to be in a formative stage. Government of West Bengal launched various projects and programmes towards strengthening village Panchayats institutions and for the development of their staff and elected members through capacity building initiatives.

As a part of these initiatives the Government of West Bengal introduced DFID assisted programme Strengthening Rural Decentralisation (SRD). The SRD programme was formally launched on 22nd November, 2005. In terms of the approved Programme Memorandum, the programme is to close on 31st March 2011. The main objective of the programme was to strengthen Gram Panchayat through capacity building interventions.

Another innovative initiative of self-evaluation for PRIs was introduced in the state from 2006-07 as a part of institutional strengthening and capacity building measures.

Another project for Institutional Strengthening of the Gram Panchayat (ISGP) was taken up by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal with the support of the World Bank. The main objective of the ISGP project is institutional strengthening of the GPs through capacity building initiatives. This project was launched in September 2010 with 1000 selected GPs spreading over nine project districts with the objective to develop institutionally strengthened Gram Panchayats (GPs).

Particularly with a view to developing capacities of PRI functionaries to enable them to perform their roles more effectively in the context of the reforms in the Panchayat system, an action plan was prepared under leadership of State Institute of Panchayats & Rural Development (SIPRD) immediately after the 6th general election to the 3-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in West Bengal held in May 2003, aiming at training of around 60,000 newly elected PRI members within one year of their assuming office. The action plan for capacity building of PRI functionaries also targeted to cover around 15,000 employees directly associated with PRIs, particularly Gram Panchayat employees, in order to develop their understanding about their roles and functions in the light of the reforms.

(Strategy & Action Plan for Capacity Building of Panchayats and Municipalities : 2007 : 10-11) .

An elaborate exercise for assessment of training needs of the functionaries of PRIs and their support institutions, as part of capacity building interventions, was undertaken during the post design phase for SRD programme. The assessment was done in view of the desired changes in the performance of the PRI functionaries in the context of the SRD programme. As it has emerged from the assessment, it would be very difficult to fulfill the needs through training interventions alone; capacity building is indeed a very big target for which training can be one of the various inputs. However, capacity building interventions for all or most of the categories of the PRI functionaries would more or less centre, in varying degrees, on the broad areas of institutional strengthening of PRIs, improved service delivery, implementation of various development programmes / schemes, decentralised planning and monitoring, depending on the actual roles to be performed by them. (Perspective Plan for Capacity Building of PRIs in West Bengal : 2008).

Research shows that, there is a positive relationship between capacity building (CB) and human resource management (HRM).

Capacity building is defined as the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast-changing world. This involves developing skills and systems within institutional framework. It is the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objective. It needs to be addressed at three inter-related levels : individual, institutional and societal (Chaudhuri et al : 2013 : p.8). On the other hand the main aim of human resource management is to keep up organizational settings as well as maintaining good relations among the staff in the organization. It is also related with the up- liftment and betterment of individual for achieving organizational goals.

Human resources management (HRM) is a process of development and management of people in an organization. It also tries to upgrade, utilize the manpower for achieving organizational goal in an effective and efficient manner. As described by Byars & Rue (2006) human resource management is defined as a system of activities and strategies that

focuses on successfully managing employees at all levels of an organization to achieve organizational goals. Through HRM practices it is possible to enhance the capacity, skills and abilities of the workforce of Panchayats towards attainment of rural development goal and success.

Hence, this research study has taken its initiative to look into the matter of application of human resource management at local self government institutions time to time from the year of 1992 and onwards. And it may go beyond the noted time-frame too as and when required to facilitate the studies.

ROLE OF GRAM PANCHAYAT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN WEST BENGAL

West Bengal is a small state with vast population. There are so many villages spread all over West Bengal. Agriculture is the one of the pillars and determinant of state economy. Rural villages are the heart and soul of the state's progress. If, it could be possible to develop each and every village in the state properly then the progress and prosperity of village people as well as state economy would be developed simultaneously. But how is it possible? It is possible only through proper and accurate rural development.

Rural development is an emerging issue in the present global situation. It is also associated with the socio-economic development of West Bengal. There are so many villages in West Bengal where rural development yet has not been fulfilled. There are so many people who live below the poverty line. They are also deprived of basic necessities of life. There is also lack of proper infrastructure facility in rural Bengal.

In view of the above issues government of India has taken initiative for the purpose of rural development. So many projects, programmes and planning launched after independence with the aim of rural development. But all these initiatives and planning could not be fulfilled. This initiative also reflects in our five years plans of India. Governmental activities have been prepared with the aim of the wellbeing of her citizens.

Considering the backwardness of rural India, condition of rural poor and depends upon their wants, desires and wishes a feeling and realization was felt essential of such institutions which will fulfill the aims and objectives of rural people. In such a feeling

Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved in necessary programme implementation through decentralized development of planning.

Almost five decades after independence, on April 24, 1993, the Government of India revolutionized the concept of decentralization of power through the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 by making the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) part of the Constitution. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India are the prime instruments of decentralization of power at the grass-root level (Ghosh : 1999 : 206).

In view of the needs and aspiration and the Balwant Rai Mehata Committee's recommendation as approved by the government of India, Government of West Bengal had introduced the Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal by the Panchayat Act of 1957. The old conception of Panchayat has recently been changed through the introduction of a new term Panchayati Raj instead of the word Panchayat.

Though, the Panchayat Act of West Bengal had several times been modified. The Panchayat Act of 1992 was a refined and modified shape of the Panchayat Acts of 1973 and 1983. Like the other two previous Acts its main object was to introduce democratic decentralization properly and to make the local self-government system more useful as well as to spread the various development activities of the government into the remote villages as well. The Panchayat Act of 1983 had taken pledge to spread democracy at grass roots level and also to empower the Panchayat with all necessary rights and responsibilities to become self-sufficient. The Panchayat Amendment Act of West Bengal of 1992 tried to make that pledge more powerful and consolidated.

In present three tier Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal Gram Panchayat is the grass root level government machinery for necessary implementation of governmental planning, programme and projects with the aim of rural development. As a grass-root level institution Gram Panchayat has an important and unique role in rural development. Village Panchayat works and executes the planning and programmes with the coordination of the village people. They also know the needs and aspirations of local people. They have also feeling the pulse of their local people. They know the likes and dislikes and also the priority of local needs. The real importance of Gram Panchayat lies here.

Most of the civic services are best provided by the Gram Panchayats (GPs), being the closest to the people. The upper tiers may also remain associated with directly providing

certain services requiring higher engineering skill and organizational capacities or having impact over a wider geographical area and may also bear the responsibility of providing necessary supports in delivering services by the GPs. Therefore, the general approach should be to provide as much services as possible by the lowest tier, that is the GP, and the upper tiers working for providing support to the GPs in realizing that goal. (Roadmap for the Panchayats in West Bengal : 2009 : 23-24)

With the establishment of the Panchayati Raj we have to build up a well organised administrative and political agency to implement the goals of development programmes at the grass root level. It was thought that Panchayati Raj Institutions would become an important instrument to fulfill the dream of rural development planning, as they were equipped with organized administrative agencies which were to be aided by local representatives who would voice the aspirations of the community. It was expected that these institutions would play a vital role in planning and development of rural areas. They are the backbone of rural planning and development (Muley : 1987 : 1-2).

Gram Panchayat is the third tier village level government agency involved in development and social justice at local level and acts as an instrument of decentralization of powers. This is the best local self government unit, because of its closest interface with local people. It provides a forum to them to deliberate on the nature of local problems and devise appropriate solutions that are in conformity with the local situations. Local government is in fact a government of the local people, by the local people and for the local people. Being located nearest to the people, the local government institutions are under constant observation of the society. This goes a long way in enhancing local government's accountability. In fact, the role of Gram Panchayat institutions is so pervasive and the services provided by them is so closest to the daily lives of the local communities that the importance and vitality of GP are increasing day by day.

As maximum planning, programmes, projects initiated through Gram Panchayats for necessary rural development, therefore active role of Gram Panchyat is very important. It is base or bottom tier of the PR system. It is the first executive tier having jurisdiction over a village or group of villages.

Functions of Gram Panchayats

All major functions of Gram Panchayat are related to the welfare and development of the villagers. With a view to fulfill the needs and requirements of the villagers every Gram Panchayat has to perform some important functions such as provision of safe drinking water, construction of public streets, public latrines and maintenance of roads, maintenance of peace and harmony in the Panchayat circle, developing and maintaining good drainage system, ensuring cleanliness of the village, upkeep of street lights, dispensary, collection of funds, maintenance of records, budget and accounts, registration of births and deaths, etc. etc. These functions are known as obligatory functions. Some other functions are discretionary and can be performed, if the Panchayat has the resources and funds. These are plantation of trees, setting up and maintenance of insemination centre for cattle, developing and maintaining play ground for sports and setting up and running the library. From time to time some other functions can be assigned to Panchayats by the State government or Union government. But along with these functions of Panchayats, every staff / members of GP has the duty to provide proper and in-time services to his / her villagers.

Functionaries of the Gram Panchayat

Village Panchayat is also called Gram Panchayat. It is the grass root institution of Panchayati Raj System. At village level there is a Gram Sabha or Village Assembly and a Gram Panchayat having a Chairperson known as Pradhan, a Vice Chairperson known as Upa-Pradhan and some members, staff. The executive head of a GP is Pradhan and in his or her absence the executive power vested on Up-Pradhan. The Pradhan is a whole-time functionary and is responsible for all administrative and financial related functions of a GP. The members of GP are directly elected by secret ballot on the basis of universal adult franchise.

The posts created for every GP are :- Executive Assistant, Secretary, Nirman Sahayak, Sahayak and GP Karmee. There is a post of Job Assistant, for implementation of engineering works, which is now a dying post after creation of the post of Nirman Sahayak. There are quite a few contractual posts created for implementation of the MGNREGS. Many of the District, Block and GP level officers of the line departments also have been

given ex-officio responsibility to function as functionaries of the Panchayats and to become members of appropriate Standing Committees. However, their integration with functioning of the Panchayats is still weak.

Programmes and Projects for Rural Development

The Panchayats of the State have been entrusted with the responsibilities for implementation of all programmes directly aimed at alleviation of rural poverty. After 1978 all the centrally sponsored poverty alleviation programmes beginning with the Food for Work programmes and Integrated Rural Development Programme have been entrusted with the Panchayats. There are several studies and concurrent evaluations by the Government of India showing better targeting of both the employment generation and self-employment programmes, which have contributed in faster decline of poverty in the State as mentioned above. In fact alleviating poverty has been a core activity of the Panchayats of the State right from the beginning. Apart from economic gains of the poorer sections the major contribution of the Panchayats has been providing dignity to all of them and enhancing their freedom to participate in various development programmes. The Panchayats are also associated with various social security programmes and are instrumental in reaching those benefits to the poorest sections (Road Map for the Panchayats in West Bengal : 2009 : 9).

Initially the PRIs played significant roles in education and mass education extension, health support, both curative and preventive including environmental sanitation, supply of drinking water, agriculture, irrigation, animal resources development, village plantation, cottage industry and social welfare. With passage of time the role of Panchayat has been further expanded and its functional area has been increasingly extended to include additional activities. All poverty alleviation programmes sponsored by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, have also been assigned to the Panchayat Institutions. The Panchayats play a very significant role in supporting the State initiative in improving nutrition of children and mothers and are taking initiative of their own for raising nutrition level of the poorer people.

Most of the rural development programmes and projects are implemented and executed at local level by GPs. The major rural development related programmes and projects are as follows :

There are so many programmes and projects related with the rural development in West Bengal. Some of the major and important programmes and projects are : Food security programme i.e. Rationing System, Annapurna, Antyodaya, Sahay etc., Social Security Programme – such as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and other Old Age Pensions i.e. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), Provident Fund for Landless Agricultural Labourers (PROFLAL), Aam Admi Bima Yojona (AABY), Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojona (RSBY), State Assisted Scheme of Provident Fund for Unorganized Workers (SASPFUW), Janani Suraksha Yojona (J.S.Y.), Kanyashree, Yubashree, Welfare Programmes rendered by Backward Class Welfare Department and Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education Department, Infrastructure Development Programmes – such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Grants made by Central Finance Commission, Grants made by State Finance Commission, Grants made by Local MP under MPLADS, Grants made by Local MLA under BEUP, Own Fund of LSG, Grants made under various Regional Development and Backward Community Development Schemes etc. There are also some other Programmes like CHCMI, Mission Nirmal Bangla, Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Disaster Risk Reduction Programme and Integrated Natural Resource Management - Watershed Programme.

Under the above circumstances it has been seen that there are so many versatile nature of works, projects and programmes at GP level related to rural development in West Bengal. New programmes and policies are also being implemented time to time. Tackle and maintain with this huge and versatile nature of task is not so easy. To tackle and maintain of huge task towards smooth functioning of GPs and proper rural development depend upon the efficiency, competency and dynamicity of GP personnel. But in practice such types of workforce are in crisis. Such types of effective workforce are earnestly required for most of the GPs for expected and proper rural development in West Bengal.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO IN WEST BENGAL

Rural development is necessary not only because an overwhelming majority of population live in villages but also because initiations of rural activities is essential for overall economic development of the country. It has always been the feeling that Panchayat's are the most suitable agency for democratic decentralization, which could be equipped with adequate powers and responsibilities so that they could formulate and implement programmes of economic development (Vijayakumar : 1999 : 31).

Rural development in India is one of the most important factors for the growth of the Indian economy. Agriculture contributes nearly one-fifth of the gross domestic product in India. In order to increase the growth of agriculture, the government has planned several programmes pertaining to rural development. The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and acts relating to the development of the rural sector. The Ministry is committed to eradicate poverty and hunger from the rural India and to usher in all-round development of the rural masses. It is the apex body spearheading the movement against poverty in the country (Aarushi Jain : 2011 :32).

Rural development under diverse nomenclatures during the past six decades has been an adventurous effort with various policies, strategies and models involving policy makers, planners, administrators, scientists, technologists, academicians and social workers. It is a programme of developing rural communities with a network of organizations and institutional linkages from the national level to the village level with several layers of administration in between. It is multi-faceted programme initiated and launched with great hopes and high promises. The perspectives and strategies of rural development have been changing from the past two decades. Especially in the context of Globalization the nature and content of the development programmes are undergoing tremendous changes. In spite of the large amount of budgetary allocations still number of problems are persisting in rural areas (Rao and Prathima : 2012 : 264-265).

In spite of the implementation of various rural development programmes in India for the past six decades, still the rural areas are at great disadvantage as far as provision of basic infrastructural facilities and services such as roads, drinking water, electricity, schools, hospitals, transport, communications and social security are concerned. Not only these

public facilities and amenities in rural areas are inadequate, but they are also very poorly organized and undependable. As a result, poor villagers are forced to suffer generation after generation with poor education, poor health, unemployment and poverty. So, improvement of their plight requires intensive government intervention with strong political will. In fact, during the post-independent period the successive governments have initiated number of development programmes for rural areas in India. But there are clear indications of the solving down and malfunctioning of many of the programmes undertaken over the years by the central and state government of the rural areas and poverty alleviation (ibid.).

Rural development in West Bengal has drawn remarkable appreciation from a wide cross-section covering the entire country. Scholars, academics and policy planners known to have bitter antipathy towards the leftwing ideology have unhesitatingly come forward to praise the positive drift in the sphere of rural up-liftment in this state, considered as a left bastion. This may pose a curiosity of unfolding the backdrop of this new wind of change blowing all over West Bengal. Recently, the Government of India has announced to revitalize the Panchayati Raj Institutions, where the model of West Bengal will be considered as an “ideal type”. Scholars, administrators and researchers from different parts of India and abroad have come to have a glimpse about the nature of this rural development process. Judging the entire scenario, it would not be a blatant lie and mere exaggeration to say that rural development in West Bengal has been fairly successful to be pro-poor, meaningful, effective and productive in nature and orientation (Kar : 1991 : xiii).

The West Bengal model of rural development may be considered as an answer to this. Reliance on measures like land reforms, Panchayati Raj system, decentralization planning network and fruitful implementation of different poverty ameliorating and rural man-days generating schemes have been fairly successful in bringing new winds of transformation in the horizon of village West Bengal in the recent past. True, political will is a major precondition in this regard. But what is more important, which at times remain latent, is the specific socio-historical legacy of West Bengal. The pro-poor model of rural development in West Bengal has been able to draw large applause from a sizeable section of academics and considerable research and enthusiasm have been directed to find out the basic tenets of this success. But these efforts are usually being carried on, often neglecting the specific backdrop of the entire scenario. The need of the hour is to locate these catalytic factors and

thereby to gauge its impact on society in the contemporary rural perspective of West Bengal (ibid : 1-2).

West Bengal is the fourth populous state in India after Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar. As per Census 2011 estimates, the state has a population of 9.13 Crore accounting for 7.55 percent of India population. Decadal growth of population has reduced to 13.93 percent during 2001-11 from 17.77 percent during 1991-2001. West Bengal is among the most populous regions in India with a population density of 1029 per sq.km. in comparison national average of 382 per sq.km. Availability of a large pool of human resource in the state makes West Bengal a manpower hub in India.

West Bengal has a literacy rate of 77.08 percent as per Census 2011 estimates, as against 74.02 percent at national level. During 2001-11 literacy rate has witnessed growth from 68.64 percent to 77.08 percent, while the number of literates increased to 6,26,14,556 persons. Growth in overall literacy of state is largely attributed to successful implementation of mass education. However, significant regional variations in literacy rate are witnessed among the districts of West Bengal with Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Purulia and Murshidabad having very low literacy rates. There is a greater need to focus on strengthening primary education system in these districts from the state. Further, state female literacy rate at 71.16 percent is higher than national average female literacy rate of 65.46 percent. While better female literacy rates indicate better participation of women in the workforce, compared to the national average, the state has considerable gender literacy disparities with a male-female literacy rate gap of 11.51 percent. Gender inequalities in literacy are more prominent in rural regions with a rural male-female literacy rate gap of 13.43 percent (District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal : 2013).

West Bengal is undergoing significant demographic changes, and hence it is important to achieve inclusive growth across gender, age, castes and regions to sustain the growth momentum. Historically, the state has performed better than national average in healthcare indices, due to a significant focus given on primary healthcare. However, there is a growing need to improve tertiary healthcare services in the state. A comparative view of West Bengal and India overall, in select health indicators, is presented in the table 4.1.

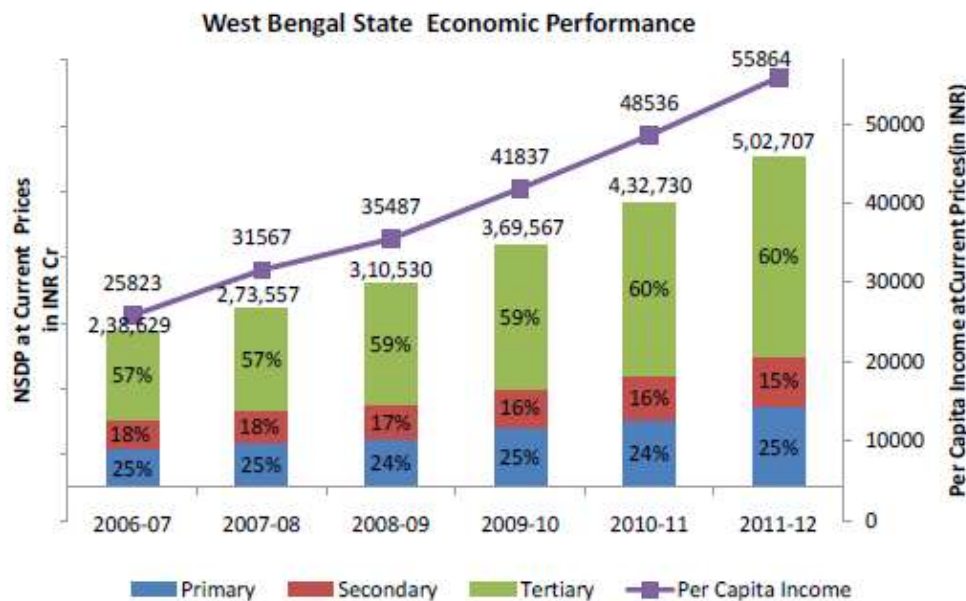
Table : 4.1

Indicator(2010)	Region	
	West Bengal	India
Birth Rate	16.8	22.1
Death Rate	6	7.2
Infant Mortality Rate(IMR)	31	47

Source : District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal (2013), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi

West Bengal has a prominent place in the economy of India. Net income of state (at current prices) had registered a cumulative growth of 16.07 percent during 2006-2012 (Advance Estimates). The state economy growth is marginally lower than national average growth rate of 17.12 percent during the same period. State economy has witnessed a gradual shift from secondary to tertiary sector, while the primary sector contribution remained consistent over the years. Tertiary sector has witnessed maximum growth among sub sectors, contributing to 60 percent of total state income in 2011-12. Net State Income trend is presented in the chart (Table : 4.2).

Table : 4.2

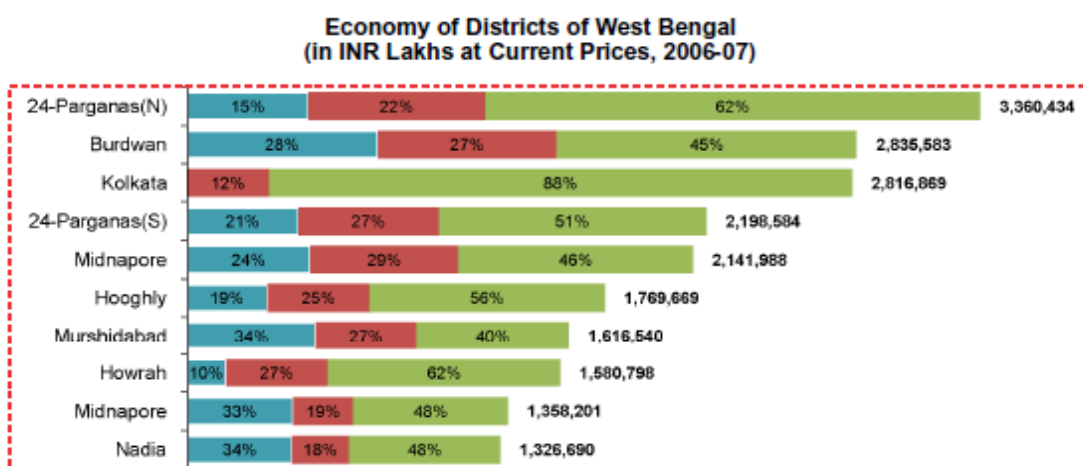


Source : District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal (2013), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi

While the State Per Capita Income (At Current Prices) has increased from INR 25,823 to INR 55,864 between 2006-07 and 2011-12, it is still lower than the national level average of INR 60,972 during 2011-12. Per capita income has increased by INR 30,041 during 2006-07 and 2011-12, growing at a rate of 16.69 percent.

In terms of contribution of individual district to the overall state economy, districts of North 24 Parganas, Kolkata, Howrah, Hooghly, Burdwan, South 24 Parganas accounted for a major share. The leading ten district economies in the state contribute to about 75 percent of state income. District wise GDDP details are presented in the chart (Table : 4.3).

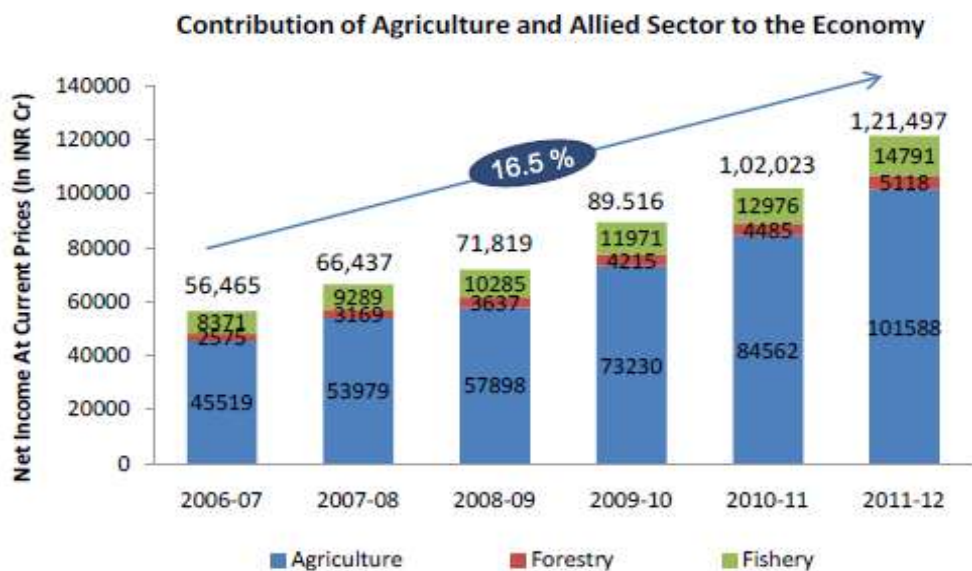
Table : 4.3



Source : District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal (2013), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi

Agriculture and Allied activities have a significant place in the economy of the state. Between 2006-07 and 2010-11, the sector's contribution to State Net Income at current prices, grew at 16.5%. While the absolute growth of the sector at current prices shows an increasing trend, contribution to the overall economy has dipped, owing to faster growth in secondary and tertiary sectors. As per 2011-12 estimates the sector has contributed INR 1,21,497 to the Net State Income, accounting for 24 percent of the total state economy. Cultivation has traditionally dominated the sector while Fisheries has witnessed significant growth in recent years in certain districts. Sub-Sector wise state primary sector income growth trends are presented in the chart (Table : 4.4).

Table : 4.4

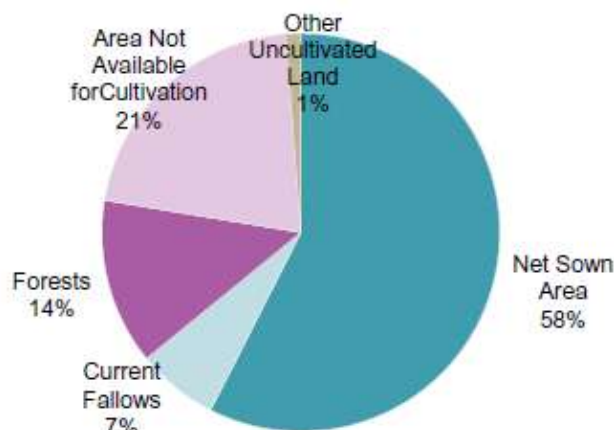


Source : District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal (2013), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi

The state has a significantly high proportion of overall geographical land available under cultivation. As per recent estimates, around 58 percent of the total geographical area of the state is under cultivation with a minimal cultivable waste land indicating the effective implementation of irrigation schemes. However, considering the limited availability of Uncultivated land, agricultural output growth in West Bengal could only be achieved through multiple cropping and simultaneous cropping techniques. Distribution of land usage pattern in West Bengal is given in the table : 4.5.

Table : 4.5

Land Usage Pattern in West Bengal(2010-11)



Source : District wise skill gap study for the state of West Bengal (2013), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi

Land reform is the important step towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal. The government has taken initiatives through Panchayati Raj Institutions for

necessary recording of names of share-croppers and redistribution of surplus land among the landless. The programme of recording of names of share-croppers popularly known as Operation Barga (OB). The Gram Panchayat played most important and crucial role in this regard.

Land redistribution has affected more than 21 per cent of the rural families and 8 per cent of the total cultivated area in the state. There has been a shrinkage at the top categories of the land owning classes in the State. A report prepared by the Centre for study of Social Sciences, Calcutta for International Labour Organisation (ILO) revealed that landholders with more than 10 acres owned a mere 14.3 per cent of the agricultural lands, while the small and marginal farmers owned 29 per cent of the agricultural land in India, in West Bengal the figure is 60 per cent. Adding the land recorded under cultivation of share this figure may exceed 75 per cent. The two measures together have resulted in a structural situation considerably different from that in most other States in India. These steps have tilted the power balance in rural areas in favour of the small and poor producers and have thus created conditions conducive to the empowerment of the poor (Datta and Datta : 2002 : 129).

The employment generation programmes have benefited the local people by creating some useful assets and tackling poverty. The State governments' commitment to decentralization through Panchayats meant that the Gram Panchayats have been able to play an important role in planning and execution of programmes. The study suggests that funds allotted to JRY should be made available to the Panchayats well in advance as late disbursement has led in the past under utilization of resources. It has been observed that in order to make more qualitative improvement in the programme, attention should be concentrated on fewer projects in any particular year with more emphasis on long term asset durability (Slater et al. : 1991 : 63).

In spite of the success mentioned above West Bengal faces today a challenge in reviving its rural area, for effective development. According to census of 2011 total population of West Bengal is about 9.13 crore and about more than 68% population live in villages and a majority of our total population prolong to linger deprived from basic necessities of life. In some cases rural development of this state has failed to produce expected out come. It has been seen that, there is scarcity of food, lacuna of rural infrastructure, road facilities,

drinking water, health and sanitation facilities due to the lack of effectiveness of local self government institutions and their functionaries towards rural development.

In West Bengal agriculture performed better in the 1980s but the growth rate declined thereafter. Manufacturing and services grew at higher rates during the post-reform period. There has been a mismatch in the movement of income share and employment share in the commodity sector. The incidence of casualisation of labour in West Bengal is notable but is lower compared to faster growing state like Gujarat (West Bengal Development Report : 2010 : 38).

In West Bengal, the manufacturing sector has not performed as an engine of growth over the past three decades in a causal sense. The rate of growth of labour demand is given by the excess of the rate of growth of output over the rate of growth of labour productivity. Output growth in the manufacturing sector has played an insignificant role in promoting employment growth in the state (West Bengal Development Report : 2010 : 69).

In West Bengal, the responsiveness of the growth of the services activities to the growth of the commodity sector (agriculture and allied activities and manufacturing) and to the growth of real income of the rest of the economy is found to be more than proportional in such sub-sectors as trade, banking and transport. Growth in sectors like real estate and public administration was less than proportional to the growth in the rest of the state's economy (West Bengal Development Report : 2010 : 73).

Rural development in West Bengal has not been able to produce the expected out come. In west Bengal the situation of rural people is not so good. Often it is found that sanctioned fund could not be utilized in time fruitfully. There may be found the lacuna of proper initiative, infrastructure in rural areas. To find out the actual reason behind the proper rural development in West Bengal it has been found that sometimes there is no shortage of manpower, no shortage of fund, Lacuna of planning and projects. But what is the actual reason behind the rural development in West Bengal. ? To find out the answer it seems that accountability, responsibility, morality, capacity building and above all human resources management are the main issues.

CONSTRAINTS IN VILLAGE PANCHAYAT ADMINISTRATION

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system GP as a grass root level government institution involved in socio-economic development in rural areas. If reviewed the village Panchayat level work a few shortcomings can be detected. These shortcomings are mainly related with the GP functionaries and administration. After through assessment of Panchayat level work few distinct short comings can be detected. These short comings are mainly negligence, lack of proper supervision, lack of accountability and responsibility, Lacuna of Capacity Building initiatives etc. And other few shortcomings like leadership quality, practice of old methods, ineffectiveness of Gram Panchayat, lacuna of Resource Mobilization etc. have also been found in many cases. Moreover, emphasis should be given on transparency, implementation of proper training and management system.

In most cases proper idea and encouraging responsibility are also partly or totally absent. In some cases, gravity of proper aim of work has been ignored. Proper training of workers and supervisors has not been given. Projects choosing are also not always correct. Urgent and essential works have not been selected after spot verification. In many cases work period have not been followed. Some times works have been done beyond the project period. In many cases much attention to work are not found. Sometimes sanctioned fund could not be utilized in time. Therefore, villagers and stakeholders are not getting proper and accurate information and services all the time. Sometimes, it causes as barrier in the way of smooth and expected rural development in West Bengal.

All these short comings and defects have made most projects and works neglected and incomplete. These incomplete and low quality works often can not give proper services to people. These defects often make people hopeless. In fact these are also misuses of government fund. These may be defined as lack of accountability, responsibility and morality also.

If reviewed the Panchayat system in West Bengal it may be seen that some village Panchayats able to produce expected results and many others are unable to do so, even in same district and in same block. What is the reason behind this? Why the difference between the two Panchayats ? Why the difference in degree of rural development related work ? Why the difference found in rural infrastructure ?

For effective rural development the Panchayat system should be strong and dynamic but how and in what way the Panchayat system may be systematic and dynamic at village level. Can it be done through financial assistance? Is it by providing proper infrastructure or by providing proper planning and projects etc.? No. The one and only way is proper manpower planning through human resource management we can get expected outcome in rural development in West Bengal.

In the existing socio-economic, technological and political situation globalization demands change in management and mode of service delivery of village Panchayats. The progress of rural development totally depends upon the service delivery and proper functioning of GPs.

New developments in science and technology, media & telecommunication, globalization are revolutionizing the socio-economic sector. In the context of a rapidly changing socio-economic development gram Panchayats have to face with the emerging challenges for the sake of development in rural areas.

There is a need to make the Gram Panchayat properly as effective grass root level government machinery for rural development. Moreover it is essential to give necessary training to the functionaries of village Panchayat for up-gradation and better understanding of modern techniques and new management system. To build an ideal Panchayat; it needs to develop personal skills of workforce through human resource management. If these are not done, projects and works in rural areas can not be completed in-time and successfully.

The administrators are expected to participate with missionary zeal in the life and development of the villages and these institutions are to be galvanized to become effective instruments of social and economic change (Harichandan : 1983 : 3).

Lack of proper training and development practices, absence of performance appraisal system, lack of effective Planning machinery and competent personnel make many gram Panchayats ineffective and inefficient, which ultimately hinders the process of administering, development and social Justice. And here arises the need to train, to update and motivate the local government functionaries through human resource management for better results.

HOW HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BECOMES ESSENTIAL FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Broadly speaking, the strength of a society to overcome crises, face challenges, and fight stagnation depends, largely, on the vitality and well-being of the institutions within its fold. Institutions are instruments of a society through which it fulfils its needs and aspirations. Society creates, restructures and modifies various political, social, economic and educational institutions in accord with its changing environments and growing constraints. In this regard, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are far more crucial as their impact on the rural society is more pronounced than that of institutions of any other variety. But this holds good for only such PRIs which are healthy and effective. There are a number of them which are congenitally sick. There are still others which grow, reach a plateau, and keep stagnating or degenerating thereafter. They cannot be a vehicle for realizing the dreams of a society (B.P. Singh : 1999 : 104-105).

Human resource management is the basic necessity for rural development in West Bengal. It is increasingly felt that, the expected rural development in West Bengal has not yet viewed uniformly. It has been seen that, there is scarcity of food, rural infrastructure, roads facilities, drinking water, health and sanitation facilities etc. As the rural development has been maximum government sustained process in India, therefore an appropriate institutional structure is essentially required to implement and execute the rural development programmes and projects at local level. In view of the necessity Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India was established. Thus, the PRIs are assigned with the task of promoting rural development in India.

Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal is a system that has evolved over the years with the objective of introducing local self governance and also for rural development. According to the West Bengal Panchayat Act maximum financial and administrative power has been decentralized to the grassroots level and to introduce development planning, implementation of project and financial accountability from below. Thus, the Gram Panchayat is only grassroots level government machinery working towards rural development as well as to change the socio-economic conditions of the rural people. The functionaries of Gram Panchayat feel the needs, the aspiration of local people as they always work with rural people.

According to Bakshi (2011) in many other parts of India, the Panchayat remains a weak body with limited powers, and, very often, is dominated by the socially and economically powerful. The Panchayat structure in West Bengal, though not free of all weaknesses, presented a different picture. Like the path of development itself, the performance of Panchayat institutions across the State was unequal, of course, as not all of them were equally equipped to handle their responsibilities. However, well-functioning Panchayats were often able to make a substantial difference to planning and implementation of development programmes, and, more importantly, to the lives of the poor. The recent developments in West Bengal undermine this achievement, and may well herald a shift in class alliances and power relations in the State

If we think carefully we can find out easily that in organizations manpower is the main power by whom and depend upon an organization keeps her progress and proceeds. But sometimes; it is found that in most cases manpower may not be properly utilized for the sake of organizational development. Some organizations may not be able to concentrate this power effectively, on the other hand some are able to concentrate and utilize this power properly and effectively. Such type organizations may enable to reach their goals.

It may be pointed out that there is a positive correlation between the human resource management and rural development. In this paper an attempt has been made to assess whether Gram Panchayat in West Bengal plays an active role in rural development through human resource management. Through human resource planning, training and development, potential appraisal system it is possible to enhance the capacity and efficiency of staff / members of GP's for better service delivery, monitoring and timely implementation and completion of projects / programmes for rural development in West Bengal.

There are so many government and private organisations, institutions located at state, national and international levels in India and abroad reached their goal and success by effective utilization of human resources through human resource management. Corporate and non-government sector build their competent and efficient workforce through human resource management for in-time service delivery towards attainment of organizational goal. But this type practice is hardly found in the local self government institution in West Bengal.

Better rural development is possible only by those Panchayats, those have better managed human resources. If human resources of a Panchayat are good, accountable, responsible and efficient; rural development under that Panchayat will be accordingly. For this there is need to build accurate, competent and efficient human resources for perfect Panchayat administration and institutional set up. Through proper planning, training and development and potential appraisal system it is possible to built perfect management and efficient administration at GP level for rural development. For this there is an urgent need to developed man power and human potentiality through human resource management (HRM).

Panchayats are to be well developed and well managed along with the technological development, which are demanding responsibility, accountability, leadership, strategic planning and above all morality. There is need to introduce new management techniques to develop human resources for speedy decision making, planning, proper service delivery and capacity building, dealing with stakeholders among the staff / members of GPs to meet the challenges of new millennium.

For expected rural development in West Bengal it is required not only higher level investment but also proper programme, projects, monitoring system and above all efficient, effective and competent personnel.

Here the study concentrates its attention to how human resource management contributes to the performance of village Panchayat for effective rural development. This thesis examined the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper identifies the need of human resource management and its impact on rural development.

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CHAPTER – V

ROLE OF VILLAGE PANCHAYATS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED BLOCKS IN THE DISTRICT OF NADIA WEST BENGAL

INTRODUCTION

Rural development is an important issue in India as well as in the state of West Bengal. As because most of the people in our country live in villages. For necessary development in rural areas government of India has taken so many initiatives for the purpose of rural development. But all these initiatives have not yield fruitful results due to lack of proper planning and their implementation. Since independence so many projects, planning and programmes have been implemented for the purpose of rural development, but all these initiatives have not produced desired results.

In view of the above circumstances and 73rd constitutional amendment act the development of rural villages envisage to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Village Panchayat is a solely grass root level-government machinery. Therefore development of a village mostly depends upon Gram Panchayat.

The role of Panchayati Raj institutions as instruments of rural reconstruction and development needs no emphasis. They have been reorganized with wider powers and financial resources not merely as institutions of political participation but institutions of social and economic development. Panchayati Raj has come to be associated with two broad images. First, it is a government by itself and second it is an agency of the state government. In the integrated exercise of planning for social and economic development, co-ordinate roles, the present set up is a three-tier representative structure of government where the administrators, elected leaders and local population participate in the developmental effort (Dr. Ravindranath N. Kadam : 2012 : p.15).

All the programmes, projects, policies and planning initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India or Panchayat and Rural Development Department of respective State Government, for necessary rural development and to build better India, are

mainly implemented through the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Hence, the Panchayati Raj Institutions have active and key role in the field of rural development.

At present three tier Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal GP is the grass root level government machinery for the necessary implementation of governmental planning, programmes and projects with the aim of rural development. Gram Panchayat works and executes the planning and programmes with the coordination of the village people. They also know the needs and aspirations of the local people. They have also feeling the pulse of the local people. They know the likes and dislikes and the priority of the local needs. Here is the importance of Gram Panchayat.

Though, the effectiveness and dynamicity of Gram Panchayats mostly depends upon the competency, efficiency and effectiveness of the functionaries along with their education, training, socio-economic background, age etc.

In the following sections, in order to understand the socio-economic and political background of leaders and elected representatives, an attempt has been made to examine the pattern of dynamicity and leadership in Gram Panchayat system in Nadia district by using the different parameters, such as gender, caste, age, education, profession, political affiliation and training.

To analyse the socio-economic background, competency, effectiveness, dynamicity and leadership quality of leaders and elected representatives of GPs, two types of data have been used in the study. One, the data of the district under studies i.e. Nadia. This data, have been quoted from the study conducted by Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal and the other data collected by me during my intensive fieldwork in eleven GPs of Nadia district under study. Among the eleven GPs, six are located in Chakdaha block, three are in Ranaghat-I block and two are in Ranaghat – II block respectively. Profiles of Nadia district and respective three blocks i.e. Chakdaha, Ranaghat-I, Ranaghat - II are as follows :

PROFILES OF THE SAMPLE DISTRICT AND RESPECTIVE BLOCKS

The present study mainly focuses on one district of the state of West Bengal. This study is limited to the local self government institutions at village level. It also confines its study to

the staff & elected members of village-Panchayats. Among 19 districts of the state of West Bengal, the district of Nadia has been taken up for detailed study. There are so many organisations / institutions in India and abroad, enhanced individual as well as institutional capabilities with the help of Human Resource Management (HRM) towards attainment of organisational / institutional goals. Such type practice and application is hardly found in the Panchayat systems in West Bengal for desired rural development. Here the initiative lies. The research study has taken the district of Nadia as a model for its more or less performance in rural development related work.

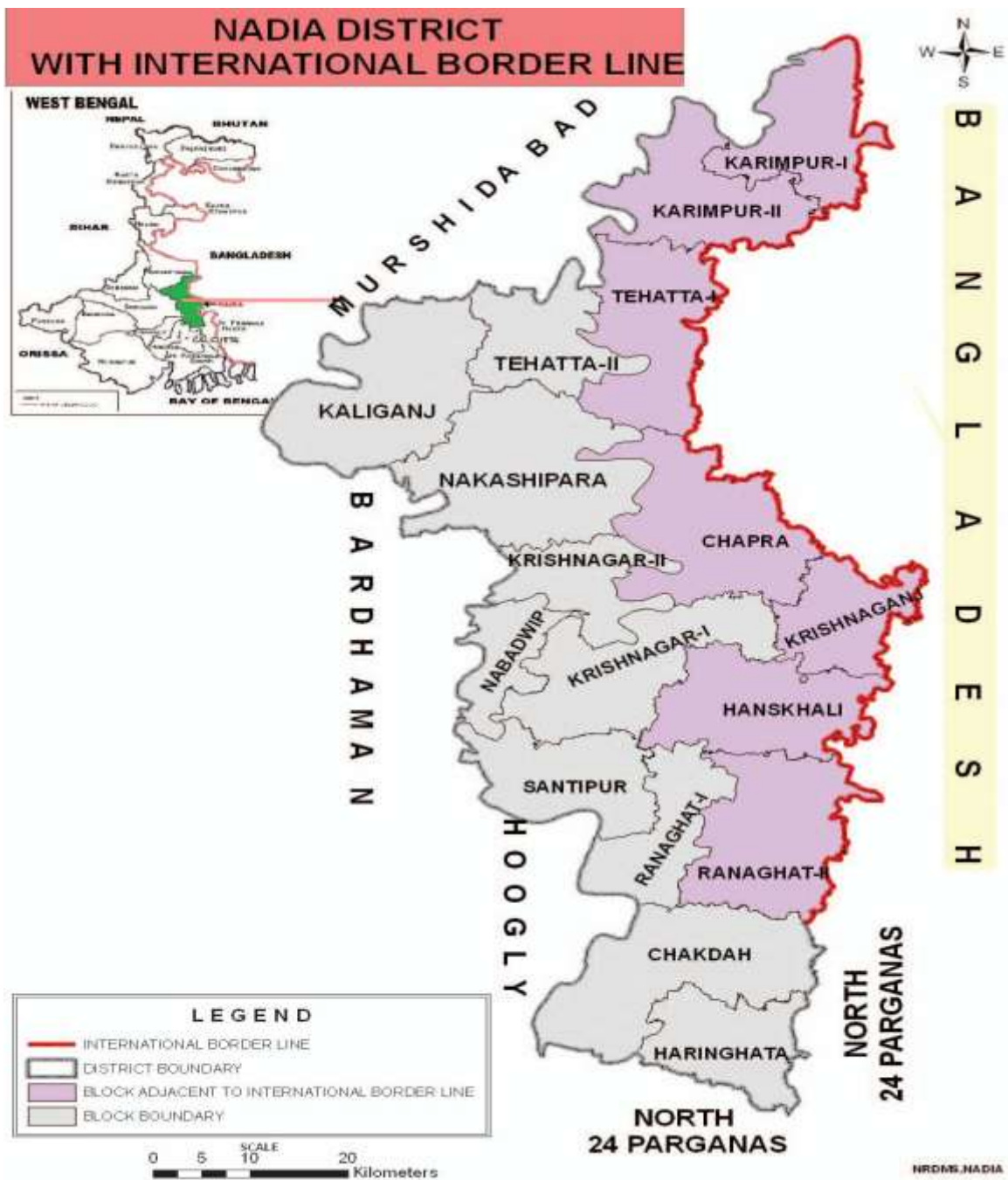
According to Census 2011 Nadia District comprises of 17 C.D. Blocks and 10 Statutory Towns. There are total 1307 Villages and 55 Census Towns in the District. Nadia District occupies 4th position in terms of Scheduled Castes Population in the State. The density of population (population per square km) of the District is 1,316 per square km which makes its rank 6th in the State. The Sex Ratio of the District is 947 (No. of females per 1000 males) which is little lower than the State's Sex Ratio (950).

The district of Nadia has an important location with diversity. For administrative convenience, Nadia district is divided into four Sub-divisions. The district has an area of 3927 Sq. Kms. having a population of 5,167,600 as per census of 2011. Out of that rural population is 3,728,727 and urban population is 1,438,873. In the district SC & ST population are 1,546,917 and 140,700 respectively. The three tier Panchayat system is operational in the district of Nadia. The district has 17 Panchayat Samities consisting of 187 Gram Panchayats and 8 Municipalities.

The district of Nadia falls under the Presidency Division of West Bengal and is situated between 22°53" and 24°11" North latitude and 88°09" and 88°48" East Longitude geographically.

The geographical boundary of Nadia district comprises Bangladesh to the East, Bardhaman and Hooghly district to the West, Murshidabad district to the North West and North 24 Parganas is to the South and South East. Nadia is situated on the main rail route connecting Howrah / Kolkata and New Jalpaiguri (NJP) including parts of North Eastern States. The Nadia district can easily be accessed by rail. The International railway link connecting India and Bangladesh passes through Nadia District with Gede as the last railway station at

Indian Border. Nadia district bifurcated by National Highway 34 on the North and East. The district can also be accessed by road from other parts of the country.



The reason behind its selection lies in :

1) Nadia becoming the first Indian district to earn Open Defecation Free (ODF) status on 30th April, 2015 and has won the United Nations Public Service Award 2015 in the category of improving delivery of public services. The plan, which has now become a showcase project of the state government, was carried out by district administration and UNICEF with the help of Panchayat.

Nadia has given the nation an innovative and inspiring model for eliminating open defecation. Transformation of Nadia to Open Defecation Free district is a story of commitment, thoughtful leadership coupled with overwhelming community participation.

2) As the district Nadia also got the opportunity to take part in the World Bank assisted project i.e. Institutional Strengthening of Gram Panchayat (ISGP). In order to access the grant, Gram Panchayats have required to meet a set of minimum conditions and performance criteria like planning and budgeting, project execution and service delivery, accounting, financial reporting and audit, as well as community participation, transparency and accountability. Among the 187 Gram Panchayats, 111 GPs have been selected from Nadia district of West Bengal with the objective to develop institutionally strengthened Gram Panchayats in the State to be able to deliver efficiently on their governance and service delivery mandate.

3) There are large numbers of Gram Panchayats in Nadia district that have got “Nirmal Gram Puraskar” (NGP) from Government of India for their outstanding performance in the field of Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC).

4) It is also a pride for the district that some Panchayats of Nadia have got the incentive grant for best performing Panchayats under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA). Raghunathpur-Hijuli – 1 No. Gram Panchayat under Ranaghat – II Block of Nadia District has got Panchayat Sashaktikaran award 2015 and stood first in the State in this regard. The Panchayat is also situated in my research area.

5) It is also an opportunity for Nadia district that the State Institute of Panchayats and Rural Development (SIPRD) is situated at Kalyani of this district and plays all the important role to build capacity of all rural functionaries of PRIs, Government and Non-Government and keep them up to date with latest developments.

Further, the reason behind its selection lies in an odd contrast in terms of rural development related work and rural infrastructure facility in the village Panchayats area near administrative town and village Panchayats located in remote rural areas. Considering the uneven socio-economic and rural development related work the choosing of Nadia district in this regard is important.

The district has 4 Sub-divisions, viz. Krishnanagar Sadar, Ranaghat, Kalyani and Tehatta. There are 17 Community Development (C.D.) Blocks, 8 Municipalities and 2 Notified Areas in the district. Krishnanagar Sadar Sub-division has got 7 C.D. Blocks namely, Kaliganj, Nakashipara, Chapra, Krishnanagar-I, Krishnanagar-II, Nabadwip and Krishanganj and two Municipalities, namely, Krishnanagar and Nabadwip.

Kalyani Sub-division has got 2 C.D. Blocks namely Chakdaha and Haringhata and 4 Municipalities, namely, Chakdaha, Kalyani, Gayeshpur and Haringhata.

Tehatta Sub-division has got 4 C.D. Blocks namely Karimpur-I, Karimpur-II, Tehatta-I and Tehatta-II.

Ranaghat Sub-division has got 4 C.D. Blocks namely, Hanskhali, Santipur, Ranaghat-I and Ranaghat- II; three Municipalities namely, Shantipur, Ranaghat and Birnagar and two Notified Areas namely, Taherpur and Cooper's Camp.

Among seventeen blocks my present study has confined its attention to the three respective blocks of Nadia District. That is Chakdaha Community Development Block, Ranaghat – I Community Development Block and Ranaghat – II Community Development Block.

CHAKDAHA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK OF NADIA DISTRICT

Chakdaha block is an administrative division under Kalyani sub-division of Nadia district in the Indian state of West Bengal. Chakdaha police station serves this block. Headquarters of this block is at Chakdaha. Chakdaha community development block has an area of 286.57 sq. km. as per 2011 census, out of which rural area is 261.68 sq.km. and urban area is 24.89 sq.km. Chakdaha block had a total population 405,719, out of which 314,383 are rural and 91,336 are urban population respectively. Among total population 209,513 are males and 196,206 were females.

It belongs to Presidency Division. It is located about 42 km. towards South from District head quarters Krishnanagar, Nadia and about 62 km. from State capital Kolkata towards

North. Chakdaha block is bounded by Balagarh block towards west, Ranaghat-II block towards North, Haringhata block towards south and Ranaghat-I block towards north. Ranaghat, Krishnanagar, Santipur and Kalyani town are the nearby towns to Chakdaha.

Chakdaha development block is one of the seventeen blocks and is actually the biggest block in Nadia district, West Bengal. Chakdah C.D. Block has the highest number of Villages (148). It is under Kalyani Sub-Division. It comprises of 17 Gram Panchayats having total 161 Nos. of Mouzas. Chakdaha block is one of the areas where ground water is affected by arsenic contamination.

In Chakdaha development block there is existence of two types of local self government institutions i.e. Panchayati Raj Institutions and Municipalities. Though, maximum area of Chakdaha block is covered by Panchayat. There are seventeen Gram Panchayats and one Municipality under Chakdaha Block.

The seventeen Gram Panchayats of Chakdaha block are Chanduria I, Chanduria II, Dewli, Dubra, Ghetugachhi, Hingnara, Kanchrapara, Madanpur I, Madanpur II, Saguna, Sarati, Silinda I, Silinda II, Simurali, Tatla I, Tatla II and Rautari. Among 17 Gram Panchayats I have selected six Gram Panchayats namely Chanduria I, Madanpur I, Madanpur II, Simurali, Tatla I, Tatla II for the purpose of my field study.

Chakdaha is a place of business. Singher Hat is the one of the largest vegetables market in this state. Many traders from different district sell and purchase goods from this market. Small traders from nearby towns and villages purchase goods from Chakdaha Town Bazar. Both Wholesale and Retail business have developed here. Economy of Chakdaha and its surrounding region is mostly based on agriculture and Clothes Market. Chakdaha today is totally service sector oriented economy along with business as an unorganized informal sector. People living in this region work in the neighbouring areas and in Kolkata. Industries are almost nonexistent except a few small-scale industries mainly plastic and handloom factories. Supreme Paper Mills Ltd. is one of the most dependable industry in this area.

RANAGHAT – I COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK OF NADIA DISTRICT

Ranaghat-I block is an administrative division under Ranaghat sub-division of Nadia district in the Indian state of West Bengal. Ranaghat police station serves this block. Headquarters of this block is at Habibpur. Ranaghat-I community development block has an area of 142.15 sq. km. as per 2011 census. Out of which rural area is 117.88 sq. km. and urban area is 24.27 sq.km.

As per 2011 census, Ranaghat I block has a total population 232,282, out of which 119,444 are males and 112,838 are females. Among total population rural population is 120,847 and urban population is 111,435. Ranaghat - I block registered a population growth of 13.28 per cent during the 1991-2001 decade. There are four census towns in this block. These are Aistala, Satigachha, Gopalpur and Parbatipur and one notified area is Taherpur.

Ranaghat – I block having multi-racial, multilingual diversified socio-economic structure since the inception of its history of inhabitation. The block administrative jurisdiction comprises of ten numbers of Gram Panchayat named Barasat, Khisma, Kalinarayanpur Paharpur, Ramnagar – I, Ramnagar – II, Habibpur, Tarapur, Nawpara Masunda, Anulia, Payradanga. Among the ten Gram Panchayats, I have selected two Gram Panchayats i.e Habibpur and Payradanga from this block. Habibpur Gram Panchayat is located near block administrative headquarters, whereas the location of Payradanga Gram Panchayat is far from block headquarters.

RANAGHAT – II COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK OF NADIA DISTRICT

Ranaghat - II block is an administrative division under Ranaghat sub-division of Nadia district in the Indian state of West Bengal. Ranaghat - II community development block has an area of 277.17 sq. km. as per 2011 census, out of which rural area is 259.51 sq.km. and urban area is 17.66 sq.km. Ranaghat - II block has a total population 368,681, out of which 314,519 is rural and 54,162 is urban population respectively. Among total population 189,706 are males and 178,975 are females.

Ranaghat – II block is consisting of fourteen Gram Panchayat namely Aranghata, Jugalkishore, Bahirgachi, Duttapulia, Kamalpur, Nokari, Raghunathpur Hijuli-I, Raghunathpur Hijuli-II, Shyamnagar, Baidyapur-I, Baidyapur-II, Debagram, Majhergram, Anishmali and coopers notified area. This block is served by three police stations namely Dhantala, Gangnapur and Ranaghat.

This Ranaghat-II development block is located at the South-East part of Nadia district bordering Bangladesh at Duttaphulia Gram Panchayat. Government initiatives are reaching to the every corner of this block through various schemes for rapid and meaningful improvement of the socio-economic condition and standard of living of people. Agriculture is the main earning source and profession of the people of this block. Flower cultivation is a remarkable profession of a good number of farmers of this locality.

Though major part of local people are agriculture based still some people are engaged in small scale industries and cottage industry, some are in business and some are in government jobs and private sector jobs.

Among fourteen Gram Panchayats; three Gram Panchayats like Raghunathpur Hijuli – I, Baidyapur – I and Baidyapur – II Gram Panchayat have been selected by me. Among three Gram Panchayats two Gram Panchayats located near block administrative headquarters, whereas the location of Baidyapur-II Gram Panchayat is far from block headquarters.

Three tier Panchayat System is operational in the district of Nadia. In the three tier Panchayat system Zilla Parishad is the higher tier located at district level then Panchayat Samity at block level and Gram Panchayat at village level local self government institution. As per records of the Nadia district administration, there is 2637 Gram Sansads in the district forming 187 Gram Panchayats (GP).

The present study confines its attention at village Panchayat institutions in Nadia district. Eleven GPs of three respective blocks of Nadia district has been taken. The following table shows the block wise details of GPs.

Table : 5.1 : Block wise details of village Panchayats :

District	Sub-Division	Block	Village Panchayat
Nadia	Kalyani	Chakdaha	Tatla – I
			Tatla – II
			Madanpur – I
			Madanpur – II
			Simurali
			Chanduria
	Ranaghat	Ranaghat – I	Baidyapur – I
			Baidyapur – II
		Ranaghat – II	Pairadanga
			Raghunathpur - Hijuli - I
			Habibpur

In the three tier Panchayat system in the district Gram Panchayat (GP) is the village level executive body. All village level planning and programmes time to time taken by the Government of India and respective State Government are implemented through village Panchayat. Simultaneously, all local level planning, programmes and policies taken by Gram Panchayat through participatory manner are also implemented and executed by GPs. Therefore GPs have an important and active role in rural development in West Bengal.

PROFILES AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF THE GRAM PANCHAYAT FUNCTIONARIES OF NADIA DISTRICT

Role of the functionaries of Gram Panchayat (GP) is very important for smooth functioning of Panchayats and towards attainment of rural development goal. The functionaries of GP have an active and vital role in rural development. They know well the demographic features and location of the villages. They should also know well the position and condition of village people. There should be a good relation and communication among the functionaries and village people. They should also know well the desires and wishes of village people.

A GP normally covers a cluster of villages. On an average each GP covered a group of villages / paras (10-12) with a population 10,000-12,000 people. According to one estimate, on an average there are 11.7 villages for every GP in West Bengal today (Singh : 1989 : 21). The members of GP are directly elected by secret ballot on the basis of universal adult franchise. The Chairman of GP is known as Pradhan, Deputy Chairman is

called Upa-pradhan. The GP members elect these two functionaries from amongst themselves and they can be removed by majority resolutions in the GP. The Act of 1973 provides that the Pradhan will have general responsibility for financial and executive administration of the GP, he/she will exercise control over the employees of the GP. The act of 1973 has endowed the GP with three sets of powers and functions: obligatory, delegated and discretionary (Chakraborty : 2008 : 95-96).

Therefore, the role of the functionaries of GP that is staff and members is very important in rural development. They are also responsible for the desired and expected development of the villages under a respective GP. All rural development related programmes, projects and planning at village level implemented and executed through GPs. There are so many programmes, projects and planning for rural development in our country. For necessary rural development it needs to know well the rules, regulations and in-time application of the respective programmes, projects and planning.

Therefore we need effective, efficient, competent, accountable and responsible GP personnel for in-time implementation and application of respective programmes, projects and planning for rural development. They should also well-verse with the new management techniques and well aware about all development related programmes, projects its rules and application. The progress and prosperity of the villages mainly depends upon the dynamic and active role of GP personnel. If the functionaries of a GP are competent, efficient and dynamic then the rural development scenario under that Gram Panchayat will be develop accordingly.

Here this chapter has taken initiative to present necessary information regarding socio-economic profiles of GP members. At first the study presents the information regarding the mother tongue of the elected Panchayat members. Information has been presented for four main languages, that is, Bengali, Santali, Hindi, and Urdu while the other regional languages have been clubbed under other language category. The information is presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 : Mother Tongue of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Bengali	Santali	Hindi	Urdu	Other Language
		Total No	Information Available						
Nadia	GP	2687	2682	No	2682	0	0	0	0
				%	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From table 5.2 we find that mother tongue of 100 percent Panchayat members is Bengali. There are no other members knowing Santali, Hindi, Nepali, Urdu and other language respectively.

Here the initiative has also been made to present gender distribution of the Panchayat Members. We know that as per statutory provision, at least one-third of the Panchayat members shall be women. The table : 5.3 show the representation of women in Nadia District.

Table 5.3 : Gender Distribution of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Women	Men
		Total No	Information Available			
Nadia	GP	2687	2678	No	1053	1625
				%	39.32	60.68

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From table 5.3 we find that 39.32 percent of the Panchayat members are women, whereas the percentage of representation men is 60.68.

Here the study presents the distribution of the Panchayat members in terms of reservation category. There are five reservation categories in a Panchayat election. These are – (i) Scheduled Tribe women, (ii) Scheduled Tribe, (iii) Scheduled Caste women, (iv) Scheduled Caste and (v) general women. The rest seats remain unreserved.

The reservation category wise distribution of the Gram Panchayat members of Nadia district is shown in table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4 : Reservation Category wise Distribution of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	ST Women	ST	SC Women	SC	General Women	Unreserved
		Total No	Information Available							
Nadia	GP	2687	2587	No	30	44	391	488	502	1132
				%	1.16	1.70	15.11	18.86	19.40	43.76

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From the above table we find that 19.40 percent members belong to general women category, 18.86 percent members belong to SC category, 15.11 percent members belong to SC women category, 1.70 percent members belong to ST category, 1.16 percent members belong to ST women category and rest 43.76 percent members do not belong to any reserved category.

Age is an important variable in the study of grass root leadership. Traditionally, village leadership remained the monopoly of village elders. Now there is a reverse trend. The study clearly shows that the young leadership is increasingly coming to the Panchayat system.

Let us now present the distribution of the GP members among various age groups. We have classified all members into ten different age groups. These are (i) less than 25 years, (ii) 25- 29 years, (iii) 30-34 years, (iv) 35-39 years, (v) 40-44 years, (vi) 45-49 years, (vii) 50-54 years, (viii) 55-59 years, (ix) 60-64 years and (x) 65 years or more. The distribution of Panchayat members in Nadia district among ten different age groups is shown in table 5.5.

Table 5.5 : Age Distribution of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Age (Years)							
		Total No	Information Available		< 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59
Nadia	GP	2687	2626	No	129	333	409	587	428	307	252	93
				%	4.91	12.68	15.58	22.35	16.30	11.69	9.60	3.54

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From the above table we find that the age group having highest number of Panchayat members is 35-39 years, followed by the age group 40-44 years. In fact, 17.59 percent of the members are under the age of 30 years implying a clear dominance of the young age representatives in Panchayats.

Educational qualification not only brings knowledge, but also ensures social respect and degree of self-confidence. In this sense, education proves an important factor in developing leadership qualities. Here the study presents the educational profile of the GP members. This is shown in table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6 : Educational Profile of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Gender	No of Members for whom information Available	Type	Illiterate	Neo-Literate	Literate	Drop-ped out before or at Class IV	Passed Class IV	Drop-ped out before or at Class VIII	Passed Class VIII	Passed Class X	Passed Class XII	Graduate
Nadia	GP	Male	1615	No	6	23	104	46	90	153	356	314	203	265
				%	0.37	1.42	6.44	2.85	5.57	9.47	22.04	19.44	12.57	16.41
		Female	1049	No	5	24	88	47	101	173	324	165	51	62
				%	0.48	2.29	8.39	4.48	9.63	16.49	30.89	15.73	4.86	5.91
		Total	2664	No	11	47	192	93	191	326	680	479	254	327
				%	0.41	1.76	7.21	3.49	7.17	12.24	25.53	17.98	9.53	12.27

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From the above table we find that 11 (0.41 percent) Panchayat members are illiterate, out of which 6 are male and 5 are female. Another 47 (1.76 percent) Panchayat members are neo-literate. Maximum number of Panchayat members (25.53 percent) has passed Class VIII but not Class X. Second highest number of Panchayat members has passed Class X but not Class XII. Third highest category is completing Graduation but not Post Graduation. In case of women, maximum members have completed Class VIII. Second highest category is dropout before or at class VIII, while the third highest category is passed class X.

Another important factor that influences the grass-root leadership is occupation. Here the study presents the main occupation of the Panchayat members. Here it also present them in nine categories and the remaining members are placed under others category. The occupational distribution for the Panchayat members is shown in table 5.7 below.

Table 5.7 : Occupational Profile of the Panchayat Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Agricultural Labourer	Pattadar & Bargadar	Small Farmer	Cultivator	Employed in Cottage Industries	Business	Service	Teacher	Member of Self-Help Group	Others
		Total No	Information Available											
Nadia	GP	2687	2625	No.	247	33	321	586	91	516	104	144	43	540
				%	9.41	1.26	12.23	22.32	3.47	19.66	3.96	5.49	1.64	20.57

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

Here we find that majority of the Panchayat members are cultivators while the second and third highest categories are others and business respectively. Here it also shows that 12.23 percent members are small farmer and 9.41 percent members are agricultural labourer respectively. In fact 5.49 percent and 3.96 percent of the members of GP are attached with Teacher and Service related work by profession respectively.

Here the study also states that whether the currently elected members were also previously elected or not. The distribution between previously elected members and first time elected members is shown in table 5.8 below.

Table 5.8 : Distribution between Previously Elected and First Time Elected Members

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Previously Elected Members	First Time Elected Members
		Total No	Information Available			
Nadia	GP	2687	2525	No	768	1757
				%	30.42	69.58

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

From the table 5.8 it has been that 30.42 percent of the Panchayat members were elected previously while 69.58 percent are first time elected members.

Finally, the study gives emphasis on whether the members of GP have received any training on functioning of Panchayat before. This is shown in table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9: Whether the Elected Members have received any Training (on Panchayat) before.

District / Mahakuma Parishad	Tier	Members		Type	Yes	No
		Total No	Information Available			
Nadia	GP	2687	2369	No	509	1860
				%	21.49	78.51

Source : Compiled from Information on West Bengal Panchayats, Their Members and Functionaries (2010), Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

Here we find that nearly 78.51 percent of the Panchayat members have not received any training on Panchayat functioning before. While 21.49 percent of the Panchayat members have received training on Panchayat functioning before.

DIFFICULTIES FACED DURING THE FIELD WORK

The field work has been done within a span of two years. It has been divided into three phases. In the first phase a pilot survey has been conducted. It has been followed by the second phase of intensive field work by conducting interviews of Panchayat representatives and staff of eleven Gram Panchayats of Nadia district. In the third and final phase along

with the continuation of taking interviews of Panchayat staff and elected representatives, some observations also have been made during this time. However, the field work took more than the stipulated time due to some field level problem.

Rural development is an emerging issue in West Bengal. Though the state is pioneer in implementation of three tier Panchayat system and socio-economic development in rural areas, but in spite of that parallel and desired rural development in the state yet has not been fulfilled. The field work has been done in one district namely Nadia. There is plain area in the district and most of the people live in villages. It has also been seen during field visit the uneven socio-economic development in the district. But in spite of it, there are numerous difficulties in carrying out the field work. During field visit dual scenario has been detected in many Gram Panchayats (GPs). The GPs those have competent, efficient, effective and sufficient workforce, performance of those GPs related to rural development work is better and advanced than that of others, those have not such type of effective workforce. The degree of rural developmental work of these GPs is not up to mark.

During my field visit it has been witnessed that some GPs have worked properly through utilizing their funds in time. In these areas communication facilities, infrastructure, sanitation, health etc. are almost satisfactory. In this regard I like to focus that, the staff and elected representative of these GPs are responsible, competent and accountable. On the other hand some GPs have failed to fulfill their target. These Panchayats are unable to produce expected outcome in rural development related work. There are also lacuna of responsibility, accountability, capacity and leadership quality among the staff and elected members.

Further, during field visit it has also been seen that, there lies an odd contrast in terms of rural development related work and rural infrastructure facility in the village Panchayats area near administrative town and the village Panchayats located in remote rural areas. There are a few Panchayats located near block headquarters and a few are located far from the block headquarters. In these Panchayats communications and transport facilities are in deficit. Conditions of roads in these rural areas are not so good. Vehicles are not always available.

During field visit it has also been detected that there is a keen tendency among the Panchayat staff to keep up their posting in a GP near block headquarters due to

communication and transport facilities. Therefore, the GPs located in remote rural areas have not always got proper, effective and sufficient workforce.

Though, GP personnel i.e. staff and members are always co-operative and helpful during interview and have assisted me in many ways giving their personal experiences. At the time of field visit it has been observed that, there is a lack of knowledge, education and proper training among the elected representatives. Due to this backwardness many representatives can not carry out their functions properly. Even they are not always well known about the rules and regulations of GP administration. There is also lack of knowledge in computer application in many staff and elected members. This same picture has also been found with women representatives. Most of the Women representatives are not well aware of the benefits of GP level programmes, projects and planning and its outcomes. They have not come through proper training and necessary education. In many cases they take helps from others.

Many a time's appointments have been cancelled due to non availability of Panchayat representatives on a scheduled date, time and venue. Field study further reveals that, some of the elected members are not always co-operative and helpful. Some Panchayats do not maintain proper records, files and information. Even they do not maintained punctuality during office hours. Many important data have not been readily available. Lack of coordination among staff and elected members has been seen in time of my visit. In many cases it has also been understood that, there is a gap between staff and villagers. At the time of interview a number staff and elected members have hesitated in giving their answers.

Development is a broad issue. Development of rural areas envisaged with the Panchayat system, therefore rural development is an important issue for Panchayats. In the three tier Panchayat system Gram Panchayat as a grass root level government institution play an important and executive role in rural development. Therefore, the progress and prosperity of villages mostly depends upon the GP and its functionaries i.e staff and members. Village Panchayat is an institution, whereas, its functionaries are the dynamic-force. By whom (Human Resources), as an institution, a GP can utilize its resources (Financial, Natural and Others) properly and effectively towards attainment of its goal.

Profiles of GP functionaries, basically members in the district of Nadia, clearly show that, GP leaders and elected representatives represent from all the sections of the society and all kinds of occupations and professions – both rich and poor, men and women, high and low caste, educated and illiterate. As the character of Panchayat leadership and dynamicity totally depend upon the functionaries and their quality like education, age, occupation, gender, similar type of experience and training. These are the important parameters towards understanding the status, quality, competency and effectiveness of the workforce.

Under the above circumstances and look after the profiles of the GP functionaries basically members in Nadia district, it has been seen that there is lack of proper education, experience and training among the members of GPs which are the main obstacles for the development of leadership quality and in the process of rural development. It also seems to me that mere qualities which are essentially required to build ideal and efficient personnel like education, age, experience, training etc. are in crisis among the GP members. Therefore, we can not all time get dynamic and effective Panchayat. For building up a strong and dynamic Panchayat it needs to build up a strong and dynamic workforce first.

For effective rural development the Panchayat system should be strong and dynamic but how and in what ways the Panchayat system may be systematic and dynamic at village level for effective rural development in West Bengal. Can it be done through financial assistance? Is it by providing proper infrastructure or by providing proper planning and projects etc.? No. The one and only way is proper man power planning through human resource management we can get expected outcome in rural development in West Bengal. Through human resource planning, Training and Development, Potential Appraisal and E-Human Resource Management system it is possible to build up efficient, competent and dynamic workforce at GP level for rural development.

In the next chapter emphasis has been given on how human resource planning, Training and Development, Potential Appraisal and E-Human Resource Management system can be effective in utilization of human resources and building up a competent and effective workforce at GP level towards attainment of a rural development goal in the State.

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CHAPTER – VI

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING: FINDINGS FROM THREE BLOCKS OF NADIA DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

Planning is the vital part of an organisation to execute the work properly and perfectly. Successfully execution and completion of any kind of work mostly depends upon appropriate planning and its implementation. Therefore, successfully implementation and execution of any kind of programme, project and work and to get proper and positive response from it, there should be proper and accurate planning and its implementation. Planning helps and assists an organisation for necessary attainment of its goal.

Present condition of rural development which requires immediate attention to the planning system at village Panchayat level in West Bengal. Due to absence of forward planning, lack of effective planning machinery, desired and equal rate of rural development yet has not been possible in this state. Here arises the need to train and to up-grade the Panchayat functionaries for building up effective planning machinery for better results.

Planning is an institution's / organization's main directive. Without it, functions of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) such as managing, monitoring, implementation of programmes / projects, communication and dealing with stakeholders could not be completed in time and properly. Planners and the potentials they possess are the key drivers for an institution's success. With the globalization and technological advances, today's institutions (PRIs) are continuously changing. In order to maximize institutional effectiveness, human potentials, individuals' capabilities, time, and talents must be managed and developed. Hence, development and up-gradation of competent planning machinery at village Panchayat level meets the goal of rural development in the state.

Rural development is an important issue in India as well as in the state of West Bengal. After independence Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved and expected to play an important role in rural development in India. Special attention and importance has been given to these institutions for rural development by planning commission and committees constituted by government of India.

India is a large country with vast population, where desired and effective rural development can only be possible through proper programme, policy and ultimately strong planning and its implementation. Without proper planning it is not possible to complete the implemented projects, policies in time. In the state of West Bengal actions have been undertaken to start the process of decentralization of planning from lower levels beginning from Gram Panchayat to Panchayat Samity and Zila Parisad. Here an attempt has been made to evaluate the planning process at village Panchayat level in the state.

Though, West Bengal is a pioneer in implementation of three tier Panchayati Raj system for socio-economic development and transformation of rural society. But, what we mean by proper, and desired rural development yet has not been possible. In West Bengal parallel rural development yet has not been fulfilled. Due to lack of proper and accurate planning, often it is found that sanctioned fund could not be utilized in time fruitfully. Implemented projects, programmes have not been completed in time due to lack of proper monitoring and supervision.

Better rural development is possible only by those Panchayats, those have better managed workforce and planning machinery. As because proper and accurate planning and its implementation is possible only by those Panchayats, those have good, accountable, responsible efficient and committed workforce. Development under that Panchayat will be accordingly. For this there is the need to build accurate and efficient planning machinery for perfect Panchayat administration and institutional set up. Through proper human resource planning, training and development it is possible to build perfect management and efficient administration at GP level for development in rural areas.

In practice Panchayati Raj has been playing an agency-role and as such as it has not been able to inspire local initiative at lower levels. It has developed in the image of a power mechanism and not so much as a developmental mechanism. These bodies are not involved in any real sense in the process of planning from below (Muley : 1987 : 2).

Human resource planning (HRP) is the foremost and important part of human resource management related with the requirements of organisation's human resources. Human resource planning is also called 'Personnel planning', 'Employment planning', and

‘Manpower planning’. It is important in human resource management programs because it ensures the right person at right place, at right time.

Human resource is the total knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes of an organisation’s work-force as well as the values, attitudes and benefits of an individual involve. Human resource is the most valuable asset of an organisation, not money or physical equipment. An organisation’s performance and resulting productivity are directly proportional to the quality and quantity of human resources.

The importance of planning human resources in a public organization cannot be over-emphasized. Human resource planning refers to the evaluation and identification of human resource requirements of the activities that are planned in order to meet socio-economic goals of the society (Dunn and Stephen : 1972 : 2). Therefore, according to Yesufu (2006) no activities can be done without planning; just as nothing can be done in any organization without first determining the organization’s human resource needs.

Thus, it requires planning to ensure that all the people working in the organization or institution are capable, competent of doing those tasks that need to be done. As because, people are the important assets of an organization. Therefore, it needs to be nourished as a vital asset with care. But, in practice we give greater attention and emphasis in other elements of the organization than that of people. But, how could it be done anything well without people?

Here an attempt has been made to evaluate the planning process at village Panchayat level in West Bengal. The study also gives attention on Gram Panchayat level planning process. As because, Gram Panchayat Institutions are expected to play an important role in planning and implementation of various developmental programmes as grass root level government machinery for rural development in West Bengal.

Here the chapter draws an attention for providing the necessary details of human resource planning (HRP) such as concept, definition, objectives and importance. Here importance has also been given on village Panchayat level planning and how human resource planning can be more effective through village Panchayat institutions for rural development in this state.

Here an attempt has also been made to examine and describe the existing Gram Panchayat planning system in three blocks of Nadia district in West Bengal and try to understand how far and to what extent have the existing schemes of human resource planning become effective in utilization of human resources at the village Panchayat level in our state? How can it be more effective? For necessary analysis of the existing participatory planning system at GP level, primary data has been collected from three respective blocks of Nadia district by using different parameters.

PLANNING: CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

There are so many definitions in human resource planning. Many authors have given different definitions of planning from time to time. The main definitions of planning are as follows:

In simple words, planning is deciding in advance what is to be done, when, where, how and by whom it is to be done. Planning bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go. It includes the selection of objectives, policies, procedures and programmes from among alternatives. A plan is a predetermined course of action to achieve a specified goal. It is an intellectual process characterized by thinking before doing. It is an attempt on the part of manager to anticipate the future in order to achieve better performance. Planning is the primary function of management.

Planning is an element of management which can be defined in a variety of ways. According to Adesina (1990), planning is a method of deciding what we want to accomplish. It is essentially concerned with concepts of the future, and problems requiring imagination, choice, design and deliberate fore thought.

Conyers and Hill (1984) defined planning as a continuous process which involves decisions or choices about alternative ways of using available resources, with the aim of achieving particular goals at some time in the future. According to Nyerere (1969), planning involves making decisions about which of a number of courses of action to adopt in other words, making choices. He further emphasized that, it is not possible to provide everything for everybody at once and that the plan represented the result of process of

choosing which thing should be given priority attention. Planning, he said; means choosing between many desirable activities because not everything can be done at once.

According to Williams (2000) planning involves deciding what should be done, how it should be done and when it should be done in determining organizational goals and the means of achieving those goals of the organization.

Planning therefore helps to ensure that individuals working together in an organization understand the purpose of their organized effort and the task ahead of them. Thus, it helps people within the organization to know what is expected by them (Anyadike, Nkechi O. : 2013 : 57).

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING (HRP): CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

Meaning of Human resources planning differs from one organization to another. In some organizations, human resource planning means development of management. There are so many definitions relating to this.

Human Resource / Manpower planning involves having the right number and the right kinds of people at the right places, at the right times, doing the right kind of tasks that result in long run maximum individual and organizational benefits. According to Sikula and McKenna (1984 :128), it is the “process of determining human resource requirements and the means of meeting those requirements in order to carry out the integrated plans of the organization”. In the opinion of Vetter (1967 : 15), Manpower planning is the “process by which management determines how an organization should move from its current manpower position to its desired manpower position”.

Dessler, (2001), opined that human resource planning is an ongoing process that is not static involving many interrelated activities which must be modified and updated as conditions require. It includes the planning and development of human resource program, such as recruitment, performance appraisal, and training to ensure that people’s needs in the organization, are met. According to Frantzeh (1981) as regards manpower, planning entails taking care of current and future manpower needs of the organization.

Human Resource / Manpower planning is concerned with anticipating future manpower needs at different levels in the organization by visualizing the future and determining how best the needed manpower can be recruited.

Dale S. Beach (1967) states : “all organizations – those that are expanding, those that are dynamic in character, and those that have a high turnover – must systematically plan their short –term, medium term and long term manpower needs”.

According to Gordon MacBeth (1969 : 55), manpower planning involves two stages : The first stage is concerned with detailed “planning of manpower requirements for all types and levels of employees throughout the period of the plan”, and second stage is concerned with “planning of manpower supplies to provide the organization with the right types of people from all sources to meet the planned requirements”.

G. Stainer (1971 : 3), defines manpower planning as “strategy for the acquisition, utilization, improvement and preservation of an enterprise’s human resources. It relates to establishing job specifications or the quantitative requirements of jobs determining the number of personnel required and developing sources of manpower.

According to W.S. Wickstrom (1971), manpower planning consists of a series of activities first forecasting future manpower requirements, secondly, making an inventory of present manpower resources, thirdly, anticipating manpower problems by projecting present resources into the future and comparing them with the forecast of requirements to determine their adequacy, both quantitatively and qualitatively and fourthly, Planning, recruitment, selection, training, development, utilization, transfer, promotion, motivation and compensation to ensure that future manpower requirements are properly met.

Thus, manpower planning is a continuous process. It cannot be rigid or static; it is amenable to modifications, review and adjustments in accordance with the needs of the organization or the changing circumstances. In the opinion of Coleman (1970), “Manpower planning is the process of determining manpower requirements and the means for meeting those requirements in order to carry out the integrated plans of the organization”.

OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING (HRP)

Objective of manpower planning is to maintain and improve the organizations ability to achieve its goal by developing strategies that will contribute its optimum contribution of human resources. The main objectives of human resource planning are : first to ensure optimum uses of human resources, secondly to assess or forecast future skill requirement and thirdly to provide control measures to ensure that necessary resources are available as and when required.

According to B.B. Mahapatro (2010 : 38-39) the objective of human resource planning may be summarized as below :

Forecasting Human Resources Requirements : HRP is essential to determine the future needs of HR in an organization. In the absence of this plan it is very difficult to provide the right kind of people at the right time.

Effective Management of Change : Proper planning is required to cope with changes in different aspects which affect the organization. These change needs continuation of allocation / reallocation and effective utilization of HR in organization.

Realizing the organizational Goals : In order to meet the expansion and other organizational activities the organizational HR planning is essential.

Promoting Employees : HRP gives the feedback in the form of employee data which can be used in decision making in promotional opportunities to be made available for organization.

Effective Utilization of HR : The data base will provide the useful information in identifying surplus and deficiency in human resources.

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 113) the Objectives of manpower planning are as follows :

Manpower planning has the following principal objectives. These objectives not only help the organization to facilitate proper functioning of the organization, but also act like a bridge so as to ensure that the HR practices are linked with the strategic goals and objectives of the organization :

To ensure having an estimate of employee requirement along with matching skill or competency so as to efficiently meet organizational needs and objectives.

- ❖ To provide information about how existing manpower are to be employed and what types of skills and or competencies are to be developed for achieving the desired levels of performance.
- ❖ To indicate the requirement of additional manpower when and wherever required by the organization.
- ❖ To cope immediate changes or fluctuations regarding the requirement of a particular skill and or competency in the workforce.
- ❖ To ensure productive and efficient utilization of human resources and reduce manpower wastage.
- ❖ To assess and forecast future skills requirements of the employees in the organization.
- ❖ To provide control measures so as to enable employees to train and develop themselves for higher pursuits and effective performances.
- ❖ To form the basis of career planning and succession planning in the organization.

In short, planning for people in organizations involves trying to obtain :

- The right people
- In the right number
- With the right knowledge, skills and experience
- In the right place
- At the right time
- At the right cost

Manpower planning helps an individual to improve his skills and utilize his abilities and potentials to the maximum possible extent. It helps the organization to improve its efficiency and productivity. It also helps the nation to achieve the desired economic and social advancement. Accordingly, A.F. Sikula (1977 : 148) rightly observes that “the ultimate mission or purpose is to relate future human resource to future enterprise needs so as to maximize the future return on investment in human resources”.

In effect, the primary aim of manpower planning revolves around attempts at “matching or fitting employee abilities to enterprise requirements with an emphasis on future instead of present arrangements” (Ame Cox : 1966 : 104-114).

Thus, manpower planning can be seen as an attempt to balance the demand for employees with the numbers available. However, it is not merely concerned with numbers or the “quantity” but also the “quality” of human resources. At a broader level, manpower planning seeks to accomplish individual, organizational and national objectives.

IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Manpower planning is important to the individuals of an organization since it assists them in the development and application of critical skills and knowledge. Effective manpower planning has positive benefits not only for the individual employees but also for the organization. Organizations many times face the problems of under utilization of human resources. Prudent manpower planning provides for rewarding opportunities for proper utilization of human resources.

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 113) the importance of manpower planning are as follows :

- To determine requirement level
- To anticipate redundancies and avoid unnecessary dismissals.
- To determine optimum training needs and levels
- To provide a basis for management development programs
- To deploy the manpower in new projects
- To assist in productivity bargaining
- To study the cost of overheads and value of service functions and effectively control costs.
- To decide whether certain activities need to be subcontracted.
- To form the basis for effective talent management
- Enabling the organization to expand or contract its business activity
- Providing a basis for career and succession planning

According to A. Ghanekar (2000: 35), manpower planning basically aims at maintaining and improving the organization's ability to achieve its goal by developing and utilizing human resources most effectively. Effective manpower planning provides adequate lead time for the procurement and training of employees. If practiced properly and precisely, it helps in increasing productivity, reducing unnecessary absenteeism, decreasing employee turnover and accomplishing other important organizational objectives.

According to H.L. Kaila (2005 : 25-27), now a days, organizations are becoming more and more dependent upon people. They are increasingly involved in more complex technologies and are functioning in more complex economic, social and political environments. As a result, the organizations face shortages of the right kind of human resources. Human Resource Planning enables to get the right type of personnel in the organization.

There are growing importance of Human Resource Planning, due to following reasons :

Personnel Requirements : Human Resource Planning involves forecasting of personnel requirements in an organization. In other words, Human Resource Planning helps management to anticipate personnel shortages and surpluses and develop ways to avoid or correct problems before they become serious.

Recruitment and Selection : A proper forecasting of personnel requirements enables the organization to determine proper sources of recruitment. The required personnel can be selected either from internal or external sources. The organization can also adopt a proper selection procedure depending upon the needs of the jobs. Proper tests can be designed to select the right candidate for the right job.

Placement of Personnel : Human Resource Planning facilitates proper placement of the employees in the organization. Placement refers to fitting the right person at the right place of work. Proper placement brings job satisfaction to the employees and enhances employee's efficiency.

Performance Appraisal : Human Resource Planning assists in performance appraisal of the employees in the organization. Performance appraisal refers to identification of

strengths and weakness of the employees, relating to their jobs. The performance appraisal is conducted to find out whether the existing work force has the necessary qualifications and qualities as per the job requirements. If there is weakness, then additional training or some other measures can be undertaken.

Promotions : Human Resource Planning ensures right promotion of the employees in the organization. Promotion involves higher position, higher power and higher pay. Human Resource Planning involves performance appraisal. Necessary performance reports are prepared. The organization would be in a position to promote the right person depending upon the performance appraisal reports.

Training : Human Resource Planning ensures training of the employees in the organization. Training involves imparting knowledge and developing attitudes, skills and social behavior of the employees. Human Resource Planning identifies the training needs of the personnel. If the personnel are lack of knowledge and skills, then necessary arrangements can be made by the organization to provide training.

Transfer : Human Resource Planning facilitates proper transfer of the employees in the organization. Transfer involves side-ways movement of the employees in the organization. There may be a situation where there is surplus personnel in one department and shortage in another department. This situation can be correct by effecting transfer at the right time.

Career Development : Human Resource Planning facilities career development of the employees in the organization. Career development refers to developing career of the employees in the organization. Human Resource Planning is conducted taking into consideration the long range plans of the organization. The plans are made known to members of the organization. The employees can plan for their careers within the organization once they come to know of the qualifications and qualities that would be required to implement the long range plans.

Organisational Development : Human Resource Planning assists in organizational development. Organizational development takes place when there are better results in the form of higher productivity or efficiency. Human Resource Planning ensures the development of the organization. It avoids surplus or shortage of personnel in the

organization. The organization with qualified and able personnel can easily solve the problem of low productivity, absenteeism, inter-department conflicts, resistance to change etc.

Motivation of Personnel : Human Resource Planning is concerned not only with the identification of the personnel in terms of quality and quantity, but it is also concerned with the improvement and motivation of the human resources. The organization would make every possible effort to have dedicated and committed personnel at all levels in the organization (Vaz Michael and Paralikar Vinayak : 2003).

BENEFITS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Indranil Mutsuddi (2010) described that, manpower planning has several benefits. These are as follows :

- Reducing labour costs associated with attrition
- Reducing recruiting and replacement costs
- Focus training resources appropriately
- Increase the ability to take advantage of new business opportunities
- Improve employee morale and satisfaction
- Control rapid expansion or reduction of the workforce
- Monitor staffing and retention policies of the organization.

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING PROCESS

Human resource or manpower is the most important asset for an organization. Without proper human resources an organization can't develop its appropriate plans and strategies. Therefore, what do we mean by proper service delivery is not possible for such type of organization. For proper service delivery and expected outcome of the organization, it needs to maintain proper manpower planning to remove the scarcity of the existing manpower setup as well as future requirements. For this it needs to have the right number and the right kind of people at the right place.

B.B. Mahapatro (2010 : 46-47) described the HR planning is how to achieve that match of skills, knowledge and behaviours. It is about :

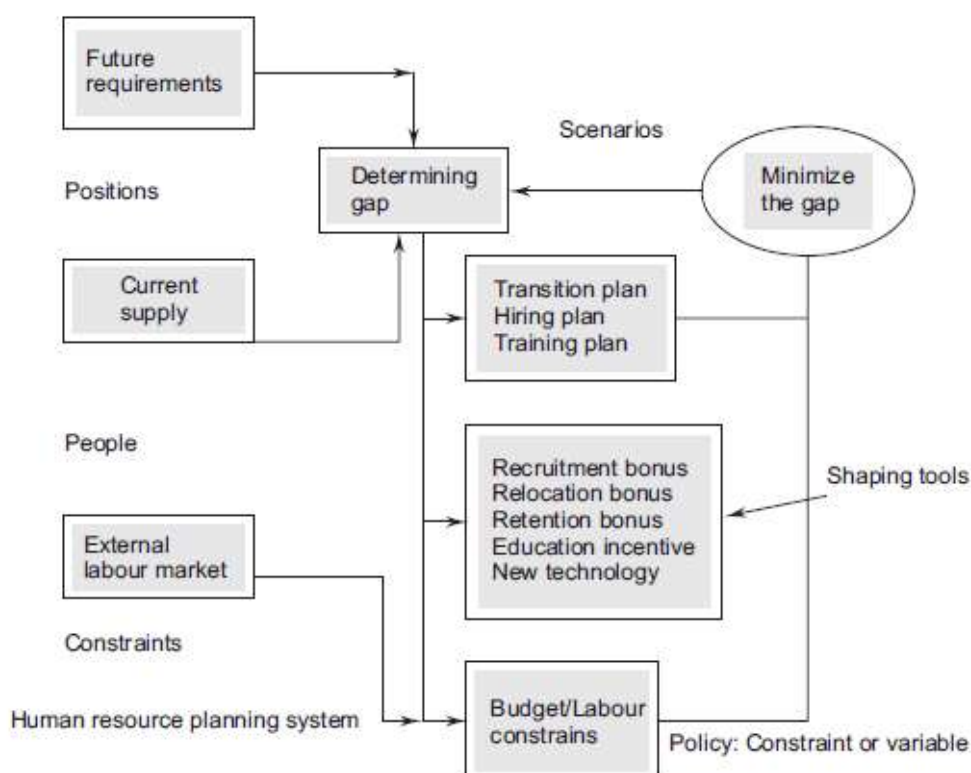
Developing an understanding of everything possible about the internal and external environment and how these will affect our current and future workforce. It is about understanding the make up of our current workforce and the necessary skills, capabilities and aptitude that will be required to achieve business outcomes in our current and changing environment.

Also, it provides the opportunity for longer term thinking about future service pressures and needs, and what you need to do now to get workable strategies in place not only for the employee's development, but for strategies financial and human capital management. HR planning has a critical role to play in delivering improved services and is an important issue for an organization.

At its simplest, HR planning is a planning process and analytical capability to measure and compare the current workforce with the future workforce. This planning process provides insight into the best policies and initiative needed to improve the overall human resources system. It has a critical role in developing personnel requirements / data elements, which should be linked to strategic organizational planning, budgeting processes and all recurring recruitment needs, training recruitments and planning activities.

Process of an integrated workforce planning system uses future requirements and current workforce information

Human Resources Planning :



Source : B.B. Mahapatro. Human Resource Planning

Policy : constraint or variable

Thus, the scope of human resource planning is to build a longer term context within which short term staffing decisions can be made. Human resources planning are a living process and needs to be periodically reviewed in order to respond to changing circumstances. Regular monitoring will ensure that organizational elements will avoid strategic drift and ensure that organisation's human resource planning remain current. This process is still about the ensuring that sufficient people with the right skills are in place to deliver a seamless service to the internal and external stakeholders.

INTEGRATING HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING WITH ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING :

Each and every organization in this universe has a specific goal(s). Those organizations also have an aim how to reach the goal(s)? For this each organization tries to set an organizational plan or strategy, so that the organization can easily avail the desired goal. If we review the plans or strategies of some selected organizations it may be found that, preference has been given in economic development, production, marketing etc. But, the

employees of the organization, the maker of organizational goal, there is no such plan or strategy for them. Though, the people of an organisation are the main assets. All the programmes, policies, projects related to organizational development implemented and executed by the people. The development, prosperity and progress of an organisation all depend upon the people.

Therefore, for effective organizational development it needs to integrate the human resource planning with organizational plans.

Bruce P. Coleman (1970 : 89-95), has described “Human resource planning is the process of determining manpower requirement and the means for meeting those requirements in order to carry out the integrated plan of the organization”.

Human resource management is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization’s most valued assets, that is, the people who individually and collectively contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the organization. At the start of the 21st century, there were increasing claims that the route to competitive advantage would be achieved through people. In a situation where identical non-people resources in the form of finance, raw materials, plants, technology, hardware and software are made available to competing organizations differences in economic performance between organizations, must be attributed to differences in the performance of people (Francis C. Anyim et. al : 2012 : 68-69).

Human resource planning is also called ‘Personnel Planning’, ‘Employment planning’, and ‘Manpower planning’. Human resource planning is the process of determining an organization's human resource needs. It is important factor in human resource management programs because it ensures the right person at right place, at right time. It helps the organization to achieve overall strategic objective (Anyadike, Nkechi O. : 2013 : 59-60).

According to Goetz (1989), human resource planning is the process of assessing the organization's human resource needs in light of organizational goals and making plans to ensure that a competent, stable work force is employed. It systematically forecasts an organization's future supply of, and demand for, employees.

Through human resource planning an organisation can avail right number and kinds of people at the right place and at the right time, which ultimately help the organization to perform the necessary tasks effectively and efficiently. It will also help the organisation for necessary attainment of organisation's objectives and goals.

Human resource planning is used by an organization to ensure that they have the right number and the right kind of people at the right place and at the right time. Where this process is carried out properly, it brings maximum long-run benefits to both the organization and the individual employee.

According to Mutsuddi (2010) the penalties for not being correctly staffed are costly to any organization in today's business context. On the other hand under staffing loses the business economies of scale and specialization, orders, profits and most importantly the customers. Over staffing is wasteful and expensive, if sustained, and it is costly to eliminate because of modern legislation in respect of redundancy payment, consultation, minimum periods of notice etc. Hence, in order to ensure the competitive efficiency of the business, any organization requires meticulous planning of its staffing activity. This involves the assessment of present and future needs of the organization to be compared with the present resources and future predicted resources along with the involvement of appropriate steps so as to effectively plan and balance the demand and supply of manpower in the organization. This is known as human resource planning (HRP) or manpower planning.

Thus, all organisations or institutions need to update and upgrade in all respect with the changing global scenario and technological advancement. In the increasing environmental instability, radical changes in technology, demographic shifts, and versatile nature of works etc. have created an extra pressure on the organisation. Therefore, parallel development i.e. physical resources and human resources are essentially needed to keep up the organisational progress and prosperity. Here arises the need to integrate human resource planning with organisational planning.

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS :

Planning and implementation of human resource management are essential for acquiring and improving capabilities required to perform various functions for the present and also for the future. Planning should be made to develop individual capabilities and discover inner potential for personal and organizational improvement. By this way the organizational culture can be created and maintained through interpersonal relationships at various levels, collaboration, professional expertise and human resource development climate (Piyush Kanti Mahapatra : 2002 : 7).

Performance, competencies, knowledge, attitudes and values, skills and expertise are needed to achieve the best results. Higher degree of performing tasks and better quality of results require higher level or degree of skills and expertise as well as utilization of human resource in the most effective way. Properly motivated, competent and responsible employees are the assets of the organization for organizational survival, growth and excellence. Proper utilization of human resource can overcome the constraints of all other kinds of resources (ibid. : 8).

The basic principle for human resource planning is the competitive organizational strategy of the enterprise as a whole. Mathis and Jackson (1977) see human resource planning as the process of analysing and identifying the need for the availability of human resources so that the organization can meet its objectives. According to Griffin (1977), human resource planning involves assessing trends, forecasting the supply and demand of labour and then developing appropriate strategies for addressing any differences.

Human resource planning is a continuous process. Through human resource planning and implementation, it is possible to ensure right kind and right number of people at right place. It also helps to create development mechanisms and climate for better results and outcomes of an organisation. Such type of developed mechanism and environment create competent, efficient, committed persons who ultimately assist the organisation by contributing their best to the organisation. In such way human resource planning help very much in the organizational effectiveness.

E.W. Vetter (1967 : 15), has described “Human resource planning is the process by which the management determines how an organization should move from its current manpower position to its desired manpower position. Through planning the management strives to have the right number and the right kinds of people at the right places, at the right time, to do things which result in both the organization and the individual receiving maximum long range benefit”.

In the era of globalization organisation’s strategy, nature, culture, gravity and volume of works are also changing rapidly. With this advancement human resources of an organisation should be acquainted with new systems and competencies through the process of training, development and such other mechanisms. Human resource planning performs a key role in this process. Thus, planning ensures organizational effectiveness.

VILLAGE PANCHAYAT AND LOCAL LEVEL PLANNING

For real development it needs to build proper planning and its implementation. The GP is the grass root level government institution for rural development in India. The process of rural development has been changing parallelly with the advancement of modern technological and socio-economical changes. Since independence, so many programmes, projects and plans have been implemented for the purpose of rural development. But all these initiatives have not been successful in many cases due to lack of proper planning and its implementation. Now attention has been given towards grass root planning process and its implementation at Gram Panchayat level thereof.

India is a large country with vast population where desired and effective rural development can only be possible through proper programme, policy and ultimately strong planning and its implementation. Without proper planning it is not possible to execute and complete the projects, Programmes and policies in time. In the state of West Bengal actions have been undertaken to start the process of decentralization of planning from lower levels beginning from Gram Panchayat to Panchayat Samity and Zila Parisad. Here attempt has been made to evaluate the planning process at village Panchayat level in this state.

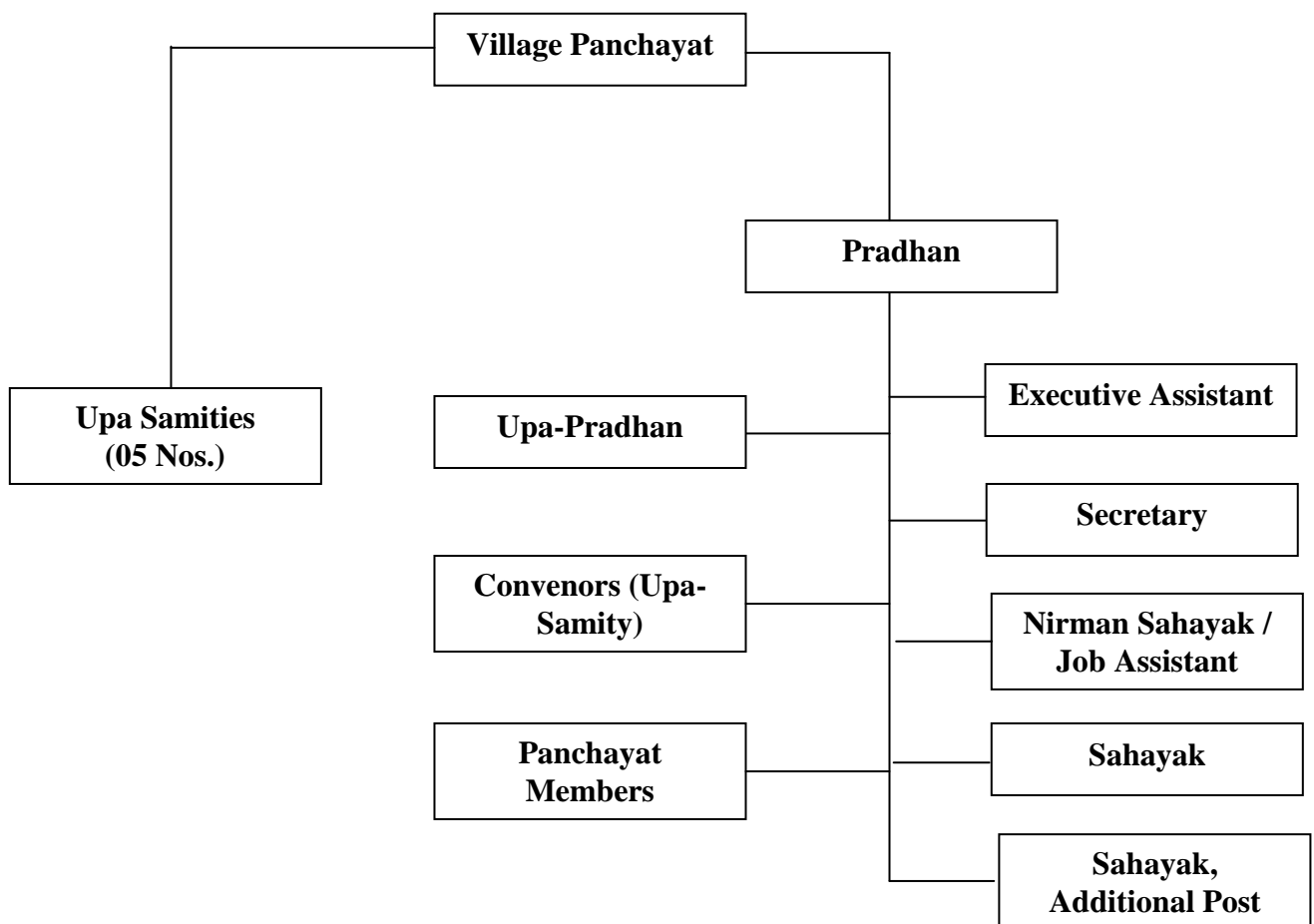
The main responsibility of the Panchayati Raj Institutions is to accelerate the pace of development and involve all people in this process so that the felt needs of people and their

development aspirations are fulfilled. The decentralized planning is a multi-level planning process where desired and effective rural development can only be possible through proper programme, policy and ultimately strong planning and its implementation. As because, without, proper planning it is not possible to complete the implementing projects, programmes in time.

Rural development in West Bengal is also an emerging issue. West Bengal is one of the pioneers in installing a 3-tier Panchayati Raj System for rural local governance in India. For necessary development in villages, participatory planning has been implemented at GP level for socio-economic betterment of rural people. In this participatory planning system local people can also participate in the planning process and also can give their opinion to influence the process towards fulfillment of local needs. Gram Panchayat Participatory planning is one of the significance of West Bengal Panchayat system.

To study the planning process at GP level it needs to understand the administrative structure of GP in West Bengal.

Administrative Structure of Village Panchayat



Village Panchayat also called Gram Panchayat. It is the grass root institution of Panchayati Raj System. At village level there are a Gram Sabha or Village Assembly and a Gram Panchayat having a Chairperson known as Pradhan, a Vice Chairperson known as Upa-Pradhan and some members. In fact, the functionaries of village Panchayats have an important role to play in local level planning process.

Objectives of preparation of Gram Panchayat level planning

It has been widely experienced that sustainable long term progressive and replicable development can be achieved only if bottom up approach is taken for planning at grass root level. Therefore, objective of Gram Panchayat level planning is to enable the Gram Panchayats to initiate bottom up participatory planning, to process and implement such plan, to understand patterns of settlement, habitation, and social structure and to identify local resources, to assess the felt needs of the people. It has to identify the gravity of development gaps and problems in each sector, to prepare development report for five year plan period integrating schemes in a participatory manner.

Steps in the preparation of Gram Panchayat level planning.

Gram Panchayat level planning process comprises the following steps:

Identification of issues by Gram Sabhas / Ward Sabhas, based on vision document of the Panchayat which has already been prepared, determination of solution by Upa-samity of GP, prioritisation of solution and fund allocation by GPs, resulting in the preparation of first draft of GP plan, reconsideration of draft plan in second Gram Sabha meeting and finalisation of plan by the full meeting of the GP.

It is a fact that the development needs of a locality can be identified best by the people of the locality and not by experts who are seated at the capital of the state or the nation. So the felt needs of the people of a locality are identified in the Gram Sabha, which is a forum for direct democracy. All voters of a constituency of a local body are members of the Gram Sabha of that constituency. The Panchayat Acts have spelt out the rights and

responsibilities of the Gram Sabha. Among other things, the Gram Sabha is given the right to fix the priority of development projects and select beneficiaries of different projects.

The planning exercise ought to comprise of a five year perspective plan for the period corresponding with the national plan period and preparing annual plans that define and priorities areas and schemes from the perspective plan. The perspective plans would capture the overall picture of the Panchayat and allow people to understand what planning and governmental funding could hold out for them. Once a perspective plan is prepared, drawing out the annual action plan for GP and the annual plan can also easily undergo appropriate modification within the overall perspective plan, in case there is need to make correction (Annual Report 2008-2009, P & R. D. Department, Govt. of West Bengal).

Vision document if already prepared will help the Gram Panchayat to prepare its plan. Considering the size and availability of personnel of Gram Panchayats, it is obvious that they would need assistance and help in the preparation of projects and schemes, but the decision should be that of the Gram Sabha. Development Meets / Workshops at Gram Sabha level would be necessary leading to the emergence of a draft plan, with schemes and projects listed in priority.

According to Aparajita Baxi and Jun-ichi Okabe (2008), the gram Panchayat forms the lowest tier of the three tier Panchayat system in West Bengal. The functions of the gram Panchayat involve local level planning and implementation of various development programmes. The gram Panchayat consists of gram sansads or rural words. Each gram Sansad has an elected Panchayat representative / member. The Pradhan is selected from among the Panchayat members. A specific number of members are elected from each gram Panchayat for representation of at the higher tier of the Panchayat, that is, the Panchayat Samity. Elected members of the Panchayat samity are also ex-officio members of the gram Panchayat.

The Panchayat members form five committees that plan and monitor the different development work taken up by the gram Panchayat.

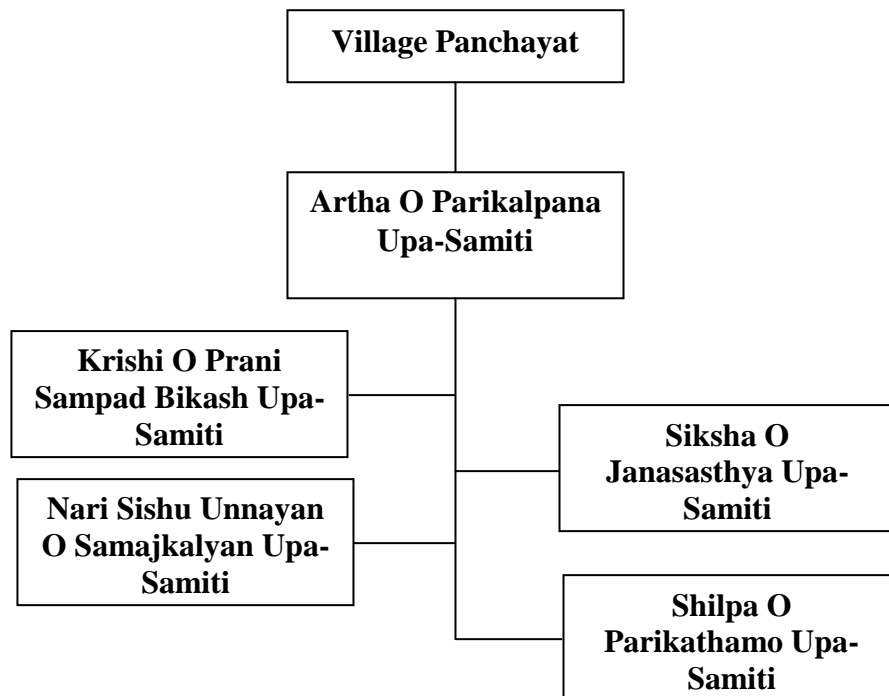
- i. Finance and Development
- ii. Agriculture and Animal Resources

- iii. Education and Public Health
- iv. Woman and Child Development
- v. Industry and Infrastructure

Each committee has a convenor selected from the Panchayat members. The Panchayat Pradhan and Upa Pradhan (Deputy Pradhan) are convenors of the Finance and Development Committee.

GP level planning in West Bengal is participatory in nature. To understand the process of participatory village Panchayat level planning, it needs to assess the structure of Upa Samitis from the following diagram :

Upa-Samitis of the Gram Panchayat



Under the above circumstances it is found that, GP level participatory planning system is not simple but critical one. To assess the proper and accurate planning and it's right and in-time implementation there is an urgent need of competent gram Panchayat planning machinery. For this the GP functionaries i.e staff and members should be competent, efficient and dynamic, otherwise fruitful and expected results may be absent, which ultimately hinders the progress of rural development.

If we assess the GP level planning process in West Bengal it will be found that the functionaries of GP act a vital role in preparation of GP planning. In West Bengal GP planning is Upa-Samity based participatory planning. In GP level participatory planning process village people have also a vital role to play.

In village Panchayat participatory planning process Gram Sabha and Gram Unnayan Samity also have great role. But overall planning proecess i.e convene meeting, liason with village people, inform village people about the meeting and other related issues, convene the meeting of Gram Sabha and Gram Unnnyan Samity initiated and maintained by village Panchayat functionaries.

Moreover, identification of issues by Gram Sabhas / Ward Sabhas, based on vision document of the Panchayat, determination of solution by Standing Committees of Gram Panchayat, prioritisation of solution and fund allocation by Gram Panchayats, preparation of first draft of GP plan, reconsideration of draft plan in second Gram Sabha meeting, finalisation of village Panchayat plan by the full meeting of the Gram Panchayat. This is the brief description of village Panchayat level participatory planning process. Where, staff and elected members of GP have an active and vital role. Though they have other duties to perform.

The village Panchayat Participatory planning is a time bound long time process. Success of village Panchayat level planning mostly depends upon the capacity, efficiency, competency and accountability of GP functionaries. As because the functionaries of GP work with the rural people, they execute the rural development projects and programmes with the help of rural people, they know well the needs and aspirations of the local people. They have also an idea of priority and importance of the local needs and requirements according to demographic location. Hence, development and up-gradation of the gram Panchayat level planning machinery is very important for effective people's participation and rural development in the state.

Under the above circumstances and depending upon the gravity and volume of local level planning procedure it is found that planning at village Panchayat level is very important towards attainment of rural development and the functionaries have a dynamic and vital

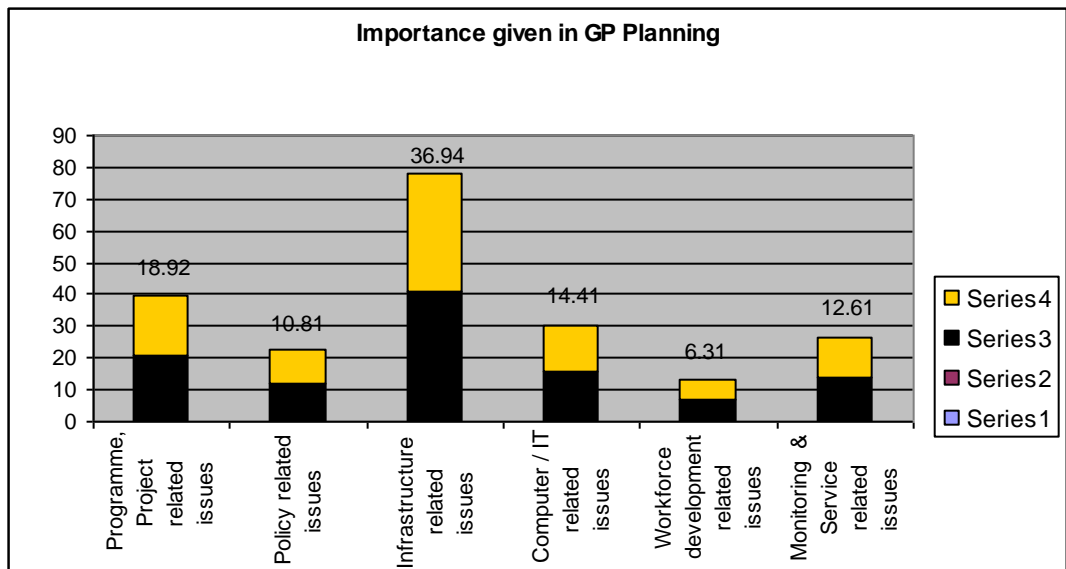
role since beginning to finalization of the planning process according to prescribed time schedule. But during field visit and at the time of data analysis it has been found that at GP level planning maximum efforts given on rural infrastructure, projects, programme, accounts related issues but there is hardly found planning on human resource related issues i.e. building up competent and efficient workforce at GP level. It is also found during field visit; there is lacuna of planning knowledge among the functionaries basically members of GP. Here an initiative has been taken to show some field level primary data analysis in this regard as below :

Q-1. On which of the following issue(s) most emphasis given in GP level planning?

Table : 6.1 : Importance given in GP Level Planning

Variable	Number	%
Programme, Project related issues	21	18.92
Policy related issues	12	10.81
Infrastructure related issues	41	36.94
Computer / IT related issues	16	14.41
Workforce development related issues	7	6.31
Monitoring & Service related issues	14	12.61
Total =	111	100

- Out of 111 respondents, 36.94% respondents have agreed that in Gram Panchayat level planning most emphasis given in infrastructure related issues, 18.92% respondents have said that Programmes Project related issues are the vital issue in planning and 14.41% have said that Computer / IT related issues have got top most importance in GP level planning.

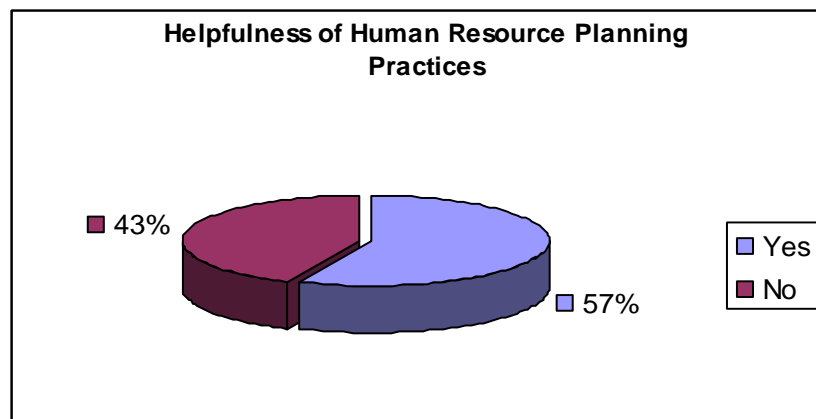


Q-2. Do you think human resource planning practices are helpful for institutional effectiveness?

Table : 6.2 : Helpfulness of human resource planning practices

Variable	Number	%
Yes	63	56.76
No	48	43.24
Total =	111	100

- 56.76% respondents have agreed that human resource planning practices are helpful for institutional effectiveness; while 43.24% have said that human resource planning is not helpful for institutional effectiveness.



Q- 3. Are there any formal & written human resource planning practices in your institution?

Table : 6.3 : Existence of formal & written human resource planning practices

Variable	Number	%
Yes	46	41.44
No	65	58.56
Total =	111	100

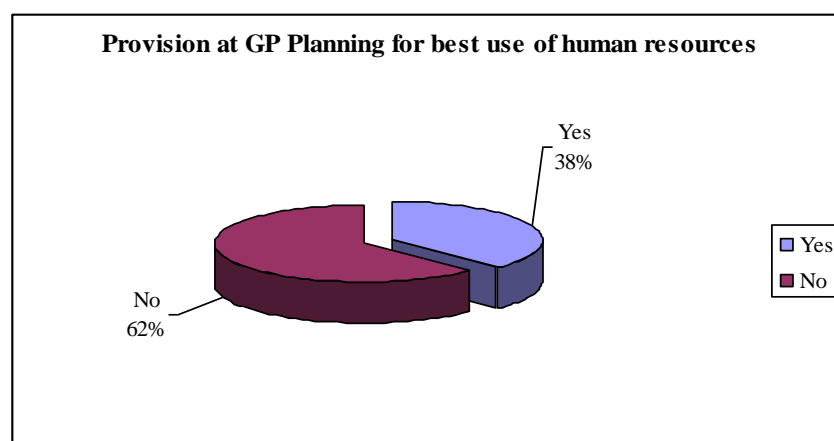
- In total 41.44% respondents have said that there is formal and written human resource planning practices at Gram Panchayat level and 58.56% have the view that human resource planning practices are partially / totally absent at village Panchayat level.

Q- 4. Whether there is any provision at GP Planning to ensure the best use of human resources

Table : 6.4 : Provision at GP Planning for best use of human resources

Variable	Number	%
Yes	42	37.84
No	69	62.16
Total =	111	100

- In response, 37.84% have opined that there is a provision in Gram Panchayat planning to make the best use of human resources, but 62.16% have not agreed that there is a provision of such type of practices at GP level to make the best use of human resources.



Q- 5. Do you think the current human resource planning strategy is integrated with your institution’s strategy for achieving the institutional goals?

Table : 6.5 : Integration of human resource planning strategy with institution's strategy

Variable	Number	%
Yes	38	34.23
No	73	65.77
Total =	111	100

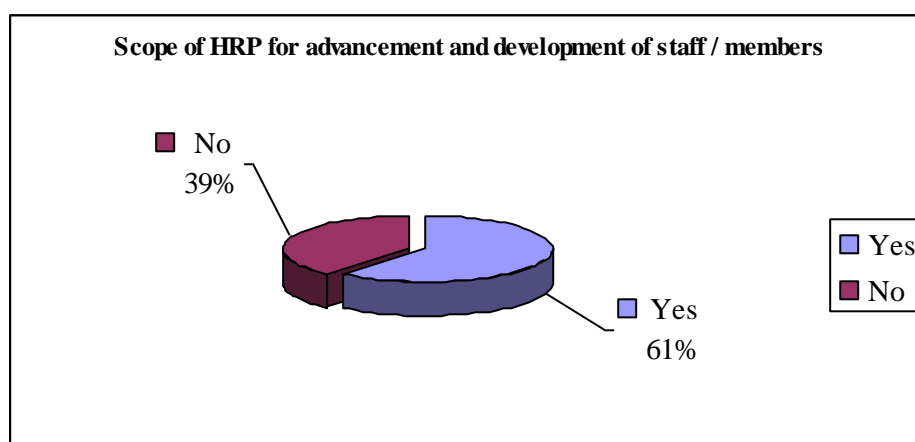
- Nearly 34.23% have said that current human resource planning strategy is integrated with institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals and 65.77% have not agreed to this point of view.

Q-6. Do you think human resource planning (HRP) practices provide scope for advancement and development of staff / members

Table : 6.6 : Scope of HRP for advancement and development of staff / members

Variable	Number	%
Yes	68	61.26
No	43	38.74
Total =	111	100

- 61.26% have said that human resource planning practice provides scope for advancement and development of staff / members, while 38.74% respondents have not agreed with this view.



Q-7. Do you think staff and members have vital role for the smooth functioning of GP and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes?

Table : 6.7 : Role of Staff / Members for smooth functioning of GP

Variable	Number	%
Yes	78	70.27
No	33	29.73
Total =	111	100

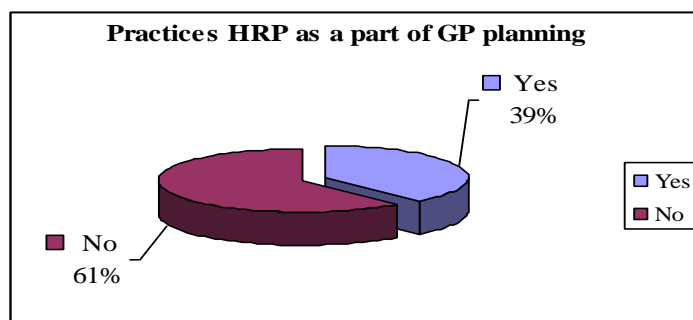
- 70.27% respondents have agreed that for smooth functioning of the village Panchayat and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes staff / members have vital role, while 29.73% respondents have not agreed with this.

Q-8. Does your institution have any human resource planning practices as a part of Gram Panchayat planning?

Table : 6.8 : Practices HRP as a part of GP planning

Variable	Number	%
Yes	43	38.74
No	68	61.26
Total =	111	100

- In total 38.74% functionaries have said that human resource planning practices is the part and parcel of GP planning and 61.26% have the view that much attention not been given on human resource issues in GP planning.



Q-9. Whether there is any scheme in GP planning to meet the individual as well as institutional needs.

Table : 6.9 : Scheme in GP planning to meet the individual as well as institutional needs.

Variable	Number	%
Yes	48	43.24
No	63	56.76
Total =	111	100

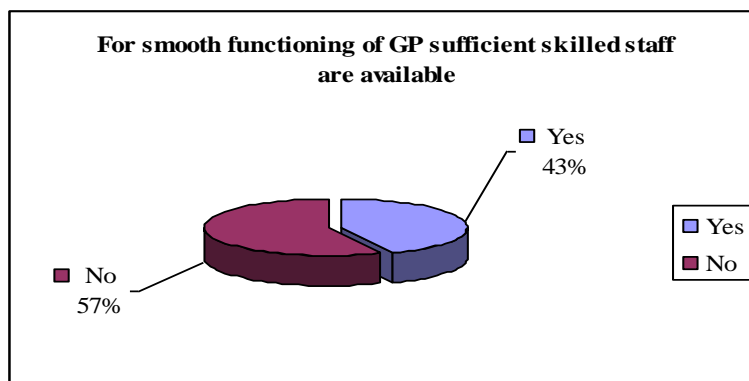
- 43.24% respondents have said that GP planning practices meet the individual as well as institutional needs and 56.76% have not agreed to this point of view.

Q-10. Whether for smooth functioning of GP sufficient skilled staff is available

Table : 6.10 : For smooth functioning of GP sufficient skilled staff are available

Variable	Number	%
Yes	48	43.24
No	63	56.76
Total =	111	100

- Only 43.24% respondents have said that sufficient skilled staff is available for smooth functioning of Gram Panchayat, while 56.76% respondents have said that there is shortage of skilled staff for smooth functioning of GP.



Q-11. Whether GP planning provides guidelines so as to enable staff to train and develop themselves for higher pursuits and effective performance.

Table : 6.11 : Guidelines in GP Planning for higher pursuits

Variable	Number	%
Yes	44	39.64
No	67	60.36
Total =	111	100

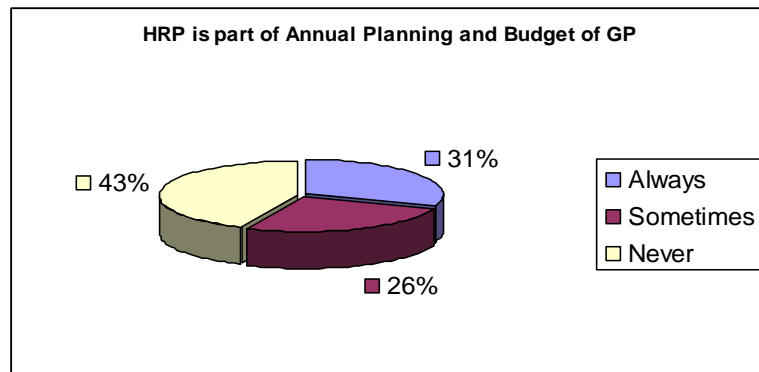
- In all 111 functionaries (39.64%) have opined that Gram Panchayat planning provides necessary guidelines to staff for higher pursuits and effective performance and 60.36% have said that GP planning hardly provides the guidelines to staff for higher pursuits and effective performance.

Q-12. Whether human resource planning is a part of annual planning & budget of GP.

Table : 6.12 : HRP is a part of Annual Planning and Budget of GP

Variable	Number	%
Always	34	30.63
Sometimes	29	26.13
Never	48	43.24
Total =	111	100

30.63% respondents have opined that human resource planning is a part of annual planning and budget of village Panchayat institutions, 26.13% have said sometimes it maintains as a part of annual planning and budget, and 43.24% respondents have said that least importance is given on human resource planning as part of annual planning and budget of village Panchayat institutions.

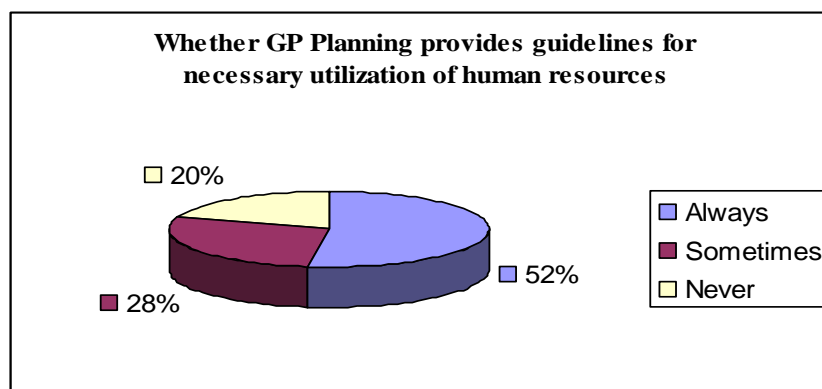


Q-13. Whether GP planning provides information about how existing manpower are to be employed and what types of skills and or competencies are to be developed for achieving the desired levels of performance?

Table : 6.13 : Whether GP Planning provides guidelines for necessary utilization of human resources

Variable	Number	%
Always	58	52.25
Sometimes	31	27.93
Never	22	19.82
Total =	111	100

52.25% respondents have said that Gram Panchayat planning always provides information about how existing manpower are to be employed and what types of skills and or competencies are to be developed for achieving the desired levels of performance and 27.93% have said that sometimes this matter is discussed at village Panchayat planning and 19.82% respondents have said that village Panchayat institution never tried to discuss about the development and enhancement of capacity and competencies of functionaries it its planning.

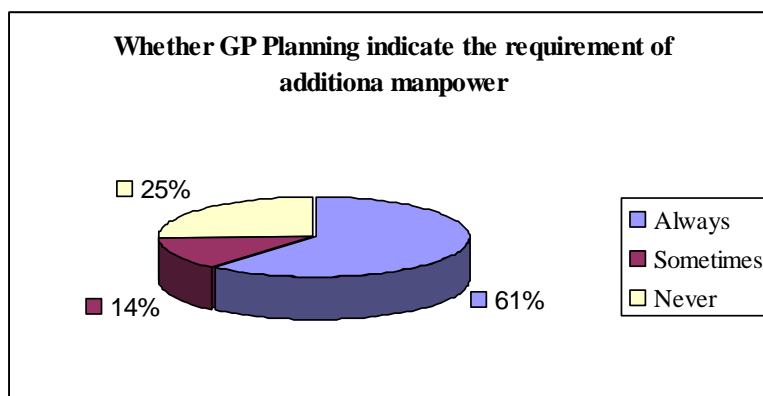


Q-14. Whether GP planning indicates the requirement of additional manpower when and wherever required by the institution ?

Table : 6.14 : Whether GP Planning indicates the requirement of additional manpower

Variable	Number	%
Always	68	61.26
Sometimes	15	13.51
Never	28	25.23
Total =	111	100

61.26% have said that GP planning indicates the requirement of additional manpower when and wherever required by the institution and 13.51% have said that sometimes village Panchayat planning indicates the requirement of additional manpower and 25.23% respondents have said that Gram Panchayat institution never tried to discuss about the requirement of additional manpower when and wherever required by the institution.



HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT :

Rural development is an important issue for the developing countries like India. For necessary rural development it needs to develop proper institution, planning and its implementation. An important advantage of planning is that it makes effective and proper utilization of enterprise resources. It identifies all such available resources and makes optimum use of these resources. But effective and accurate planning mostly depends upon the quality, efficiency and competency of the planners, those who take and make the plans effective and fruitful.

Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal is a system that has evolved over the years with the objective of introducing local self governance and also for rural development. According to the West Bengal Panchayat Act maximum financial and administrative power has been decentralized at the grassroots level and to introduce development planning, implementation of projects and financial accountability from lower level. Thus, the Gram Panchayat is only grassroots level government machinery working towards rural development as well as to change the socio-economic conditions of rural people. The functionaries of Gram Panchayat feel the needs of aspiration of local people as they always work with them.

The future of the country really depends upon effective Panchayati Raj and people's participation or co-operation. It is the only effective instrument, which can put speed and substance in our planning process and ensures the most effective use of the country's resources productivity. In that lies the future both of democracy and real development of the economy as well as of people in the country. In the years to come, Panchayati Raj will be a catalytic agent of integrated development of rural areas (Ravindranath N. Kadam : 2012).

In fact the elected representatives play the key role in the decision making process, leaders are regarded as facilities of the process of development. Since the emphasis of rural development policies is bringing about people's participation in the development programmes, it is possible to achieve this through the leaders (B.C. Muttayya : 1979 : 1). The administrators are expected to participate with missionary zeal in the life and development of the villages and these Institutions are to be galvanized to become effective instruments of social and economic change (Harichandan C : 1983: 3).

The introduction of Panchayati Raj institutions was a revolutionary step towards rural upliftment in this country. It was expected that the Panchayati Raj would bring a change in the entire rural life of India. It was expected that these institutions would prepare the village plans in such a manner that their backwardness could be effectively halted and the villages would develop a progressive outlook and mode of life. But after eighteen years of experience it has been found that much has remained to be achieved (Muley : 1987 :1). Panchayati Raj had succeeded in politicizing rural India. It has not succeeded in building these institutions into an effective instrument of planning and development (Tyagi : 1971 : 133).

In practice it has been seen that, GP level participatory planning process is a long term and time bound process. The GP level planning process is not so simple but critical one. The functionaries of GP have important and vital role in the planning process. But due to lack proper education, lack of planning knowledge and lack of leadership quality, sometimes it is not possible to build effective and accurate planning machinery at GP level. This ultimately hinders the progress of participatory planning process and socio-economic development in rural areas.

For expected rural development in West Bengal it is required not only higher level of investment but also required proper programme, projects, monitoring system and above all efficient, effective and competent personnel.

For effective grassroots level planning and its proper implementation, efforts need to be given on building up a competent village Panchayat level planning machinery. Here it needs to build up efficient, effective and competent village Panchayat functionaries equipped with planning skills and talent. After through analysis of Panchayat level planning it is found that, importance has been given on infrastructure, agriculture, poverty alleviation, sanitation, health, education etc. but there is a lack of interest and initiative for the development and management of Panchayat level functionaries. It has been also observed that, gram Panchayat functionaries have been taken an active role in planning process. If they are not competent, efficient, accountable, responsible, how they can take appropriate and effective planning, need based planning for village development. But in practice there is hardly found such type policy which helps and makes the Panchayat functionaries effective and dynamic towards attainment of rural development goal.

Human resource planning (HRP) is the basic necessity for rural development in West Bengal. Through HRP it is possible to build perfect Panchayat administration and competent planning machinery. It is increasingly felt that, the expected rural development in West Bengal has not yet viewed uniformly. Human resource planning on the one hand involves forecasting the human resource needs, setting objectives and designing strategies for the achievement of the set objectives by identifying resource needs and defining modalities for plan implementation. On the other hand it helps the organization for necessary attainment of goals. As because human resource is the core and vital assets of an

organisation. If organisation's human resources are competent, committed and efficient, the success and progress of the organisation will be accordingly.

According to Agabi (1999), manpower planning is about rational decisions directed at effective human resource development. The ultimate purpose of this planning is to ensure regular and adequate supply and maintenance of relevant human resources in all sectors of the economy, at all times. With the increased stress on district and local planning through five year plans and various committees, Panchayat Raj in this field of planning has become immensely important (Devidas M. Muley : 1987 : 2).

If we think carefully we find out that in organizational setup manpower are the main power by whom and depend upon an organization keeps her progress and proceed. But sometimes it is found that in most cases the manpower may not be properly utilized for the sake of organizational development. Some organizations may not able to concentrate this power effectively, on the other hand some are able to concentrate and utilize this power properly and effectively. Such type of organizations may able to reach their goals.

Here the study concentrates its attention to how human resource planning contributes to the performance of gram Panchayat for effective rural development. This thesis examined the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper identifies the need of human resource planning and its impact on rural development.

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CHAPTER – VII

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT : POLICIES, PRACTICES AND REALITIES AS EVIDENT IN THREE BLOCKS OF NADIA DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are the organisation's core and vital assets. All other assets like money, materials and machines controlled and executed by human resources. An organisation's progress and success depend upon the quality and performance of human resources. According to Lucas and Ojo (2008 : 326) human resources, are the most valuable asset of any organization, with the machines, materials and even the money, nothing gets done without man-power.

Village Panchayat is one of the vital units of three tier Panchayat system in West Bengal. Major rural development related activities of government are implemented at grassroots level through Gram Panchayats. Therefore, Gram Panchayats are the only medium for rural development at village level.

All rural development related activities, such as planning, monitoring, execution and evaluation of works are done by the functionaries. At every step of planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation, human intellect plays an active role. The necessary output, proper service to users, proper monitoring, planning, fulfillment of the objectives and institutional / organizational goals depend upon the human resources of that institution / organization with their efficiency, competency, performance, cooperation and necessary support. All persons are not equal in relation to their intellect, nature and behaviour in an organisational setting, but every person can be efficient and effective in his own job with proper training and development practices.

A village Panchayat requires many kinds of resources but human resource is one of the valuable and vital than other resources. Activities and achievement of Panchayats depend upon very much on the activities and performance of the Panchayat personnel. Success and

performance of a Panchayat depend upon the accountability, responsibility, competency of its workforce. If a staff does not perform his duty properly, it affects not only the performance of the Panchayat, but affects other staff also. On the other hand if a staff is well motivated, trained, efficient, punctual, accountable and responsible towards his work, he can be an ideal to other co-workers. Thus, individual performance not only influences other co-workers, but also the Panchayat.

At present global situation and fast changing environment the nature, volume of works of GP are changing rapidly. In the present Panchayati Raj environment traditional role of administration is fast changing in view of the technological and economical advancements. As we aware that the maximum Panchayats are not ready to run parallelly with the challenges of new era, hence, Panchayats need the right leaders and staff who have strategic vision, well versed with latest techniques of management. They should also be competent and dynamic towards institutional effectiveness.

Through training and development it is possible to improve and develop personal efficiency, competency and capabilities, which lead to the best personal contributions. The basic functions of human resource management are to motivate the people, to give them proper training for necessary development, to identify the potentiality to get the best contribution from the individuals, and to achieve goals and success.

Training and development is part and parcel of human resource management. According to Anthony Landale (1999) in human resource management, training and development is intended to enhance the performance of employees through a learning process that involves the acquirement of knowledge, improvement of skills, concepts, rules or changing of attitudes and behaviors in organizational settings. It is known by other names, like employee development, human resource development and learning and development.

Human capital is an important asset for organizations under intense competition. Training and Development function enables human capital to unleash their dexterity. A profound training program acts as a vehicle to enhance employee skills and enable them to perform better in their job. Training and development is very crucial to the employees, the organization and their effectiveness (R. Devi, R. N. Shaik : 2012 : 722).

The world is experiencing technological and informational revolution that makes for variations in nature of business. To meet these variations and beat out the competition in ever changing business scenario, human capital is a major weapon used by organizations. Contemporary management thinking suggests that, human capital can be a competitive advantage to organizations. This competitive advantage can be made sustainable only when human capital is knowledgeable and dexterous. Training and Development function ensures that human capital inculcate required knowledge and abilities. Thus, Training and Development function is considered as significant function in any organization. In India, more importance is given to the conduction of a training program to enhance human assets of firms (ibid.).

Through training and development process it is possible to improve the skill, knowledge, attitude, behaviour and efficiency of the workforce in organizational setting. It also helps to develop their proper and in-time service delivery.

In global competitive and the fast-changing socio-economic developmental scenario, organizations or institutions have to do versatile nature of work. The nature, kinds and volumes of work are also changing rapidly. To face this situation, organizations or institutions need to have competent, efficient and effective workforce, so that the organisations or institutions can overcome this situation. Here, the need and importance of training and development arises.

Training refers to the teaching, learning activities carried on for the primary purpose of helping members of an organization to acquire and reply to knowledge, skills, and abilities and attitudes needed by that organization. It is the act of increasing knowledge and skill of an employee for doing a particular job.

Training and development of employees is critical in organisations in this era of competition due to the fact that organizations need to survive, grow and develop. Consequentially, training and development has become an issue of strategic importance (Henry Ongori, Jennifer Chishamiso Nzonzo : 2011 : 187).

Employees training and development programmes are becoming a necessity for every organisation now a days. Training is equipping the employees with required skill to

perform the job. It makes people aware of the rules and procedures to improve the performance in current job and prepare them for identical job (Tiwari : 2014 : 94).

After independence so many initiatives have been taken by the government of India for necessary rural development of the country. But all these initiatives and planning have not been fulfilled the aim. According to the recommendation of Mehta Coommittee - report Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved for necessary rural development in India.

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system Gram Panchayat (GP) is the lower level institution and act as grass-root level government machinery for rural reconstruction in West Bengal. Therefore, GPs have a great role for necessary up-liftment of rural areas in this state.

In present global situation and fast changing environment the nature and volumes of work of GP are increasing day by day. There are so many projects, planning, programmes, acts and regulations are implemented for the purpose of rural development. New programmes and projects are also being implemented by the State and Central Government to escalate the growth of rural development.

Hence, for effective execution and utilisation of projects, planning and programmes it needs to build competent, efficient, effective GP functionaries so that they can easily understand the direction of the same.

Here emphasis and attention have also been made for providing the necessary details of Gram Panchayat level training and development practices and to what extent do present schemes of training and development of Gram Panchayat staff / elected members ensure effective utilization of human resources in the Panchayati Raj environment? How can it be more active and effective through village Panchayat institutions for necessary rural development in this state ? Here this chapter emphasis and attention has been given for providing necessary details of training and development such as concept, definition, objectives, importance etc. for better understanding of the subject. Here importance has also been given on Gram Panchayat level training and development practices and how this practice can be more effective towards development of the functionaries through village Panchayat institutions for rural development in the state.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT : CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

There are so many definitions related to training and development. In fact there seems to be no definition that can stand on its own as every definition seems to be complement of one another. Some important definitions on training and development are as follows :

Training is equipping the employees with required skill to perform their job. Development is the growth of employees at every level of management by planned and organised process. The main aim of training and development is the best possible utilization of employees' capabilities. Development is the growth of employees at every level of management by planned and organised processes. The main aim of development is the best possible utilisation of employees' capability. Employees development is thus an organised activity of employees professional growth (Tiwari : 2014 : 94).

According to Dale Yoder (1970 : 332), "the use of the terms training and development in today's employment setting is far more appropriate than "training" alone since human resources can exert their full potential only when the learning process goes far beyond simple routine".

Training is the process of imparting knowledge, skills and abilities to employees. Training is considered as a technical skill enhancement program of employees. Training is defined as a planned learning experience designed to bring about permanent change in an individual's knowledge, attitudes, or skills (Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick : 1970).

According to Huselid (1995) training and development enhance employee skills, knowledge and ability which in turn enhance task-performance of individual and in the long run increases the organisational productivity.

According to John et al (2002) training does bear fruitful results not only to the organisation but also to the employees. Training is an opportunity for promotion and self improvement, improved job satisfaction through better job performance, a chance to learn new things and there is greater ability to adapt and cope with changes.

According to Abiodun (1999) training is a systematic development of knowledge, skills and attitudes required by employees to perform adequately on a given task or job. It can take place in a number of ways, on the job or off the job; in the organization or outside organization. Adeniyi (1995) observed that staff training and development is a work activity that can make a very significant contribution to the overall effectiveness and profitability of an organization.

Training is a human resource development process which becomes an important factor in the economic development of the country. The development of an organization is truly depending on excellent performance of their workers. Usually, training were done in a way of theoretical as well as practical in order to let the trainees have better understanding on the training given to them. Hence, the best way to get excellent performance from the workers is through training and not forgetting an effective training program design (Abiddin : 2006 : 8).

Employee training attempts to improve or add to the existing level of knowledge so that the employee is better equipped to do his present job, or to prepare him for higher position with responsibilities. Continuous growth and development of employees makes an organization viable and it adapts itself to changing environment (Ghanekar : 2000 : 158-159).

Training has been observed as part of human development. Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are for people to live a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge through training, and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available many other opportunities remain inaccessible (D. A. Olaniyan, Lucas. B. Ojo : 2008 : 327).

Thus, training is concerned with the teaching / learning carried on for the basic purpose of enabling the employees to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes needed by that organization (Ghanekar : 2000 : 158-159).

NEED OF TRAINING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Every organization should provide training to all employees irrespective of their qualification, skill, suitability for the job etc. Training is not something that is done once to new employees; it is used continuously in every well run establishment. Further, technological changes, automation require up-dating the skills and knowledge. As such an organization has to retrain the old employees.

Specially, the need for training arises due to the following reason.

- To match the employee specifications with the job requirements and organizational needs. An employee's specifications may not exactly suit to the requirements of the job and the organization irrespective of his past experience, qualifications, skills, knowledge etc. Thus management may find deviations between employee's present specifications and the job requirements and organizational needs. Training is needed to fill these gaps by developing and moulding the employee's skills, knowledge, attitude, behaviour etc., in tune with job requirements and organizational needs.
- Organisational viability and the transformation process : the primary goal of most of the organization is their viability and efficiency. But the organizational viability is continuously influenced by environmental pressures. If the organization does not adapt itself to the changing factors in the environment, it will lose its market share. If the organization desires to adopt these changes, first it has to train the employees to impart specific skills and knowledge in order to enable them to contribute to the organizational efficiency and to cope with the changing environment. In addition, it provides continuity to the organization process and development. The productivity of the organization can be improved by developing the efficiency of transformation process which in turn depends on enhancement of the existing level of skill and knowledge of the employees. The achievement of these objectives mostly depends on the effectiveness of the human resources that the organization possesses. Employee effectiveness can be secured by proper training.
- Technological advances : every organization, in order to survive and be effective, should adopt the latest technology i.e. mechanization, computerisation and

automation. Technology alone does not guarantee success unless it is supported by people possessing requisite skills. So, organization should train the employees to enrich them in the areas of changing technical skills and knowledge from time to time.

- organizational complexity : Increased mechanization and automation, manufacturing of multiple products have made most organizations complex. This in turn, creates the problems of coordination and integration of activities at various levels. This situation calls for training in the skills of co-ordination, integration and adaptability to the requirements of growth, diversification and expansion. Companies constantly search for opportunities to improve organizational effectiveness. Training is responsible for much of the planned change and effectiveness in an organization as it prepares the people to be the change agents and to implement the programme of effectiveness.

- Change in the job assignment : Training is also necessary when the existing employee is promoted to the higher level in the organization and when there is some new job or occupation due to transfer. Training is also necessary to equip the old employees with the advanced disciplines, techniques or technology.

Thus, due to technological changes, organizational complexity, organizational viability, to match employees with organizational needs and to up-dating the skills and knowledge of the employees the need of training and development is very important and essential.

OBJECTIVES OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

According to Chris Obisi (1996) the aim of training and development is developing competences such as technical, human, conceptual and managerial for the furtherance of individual and organizational growth.

According to O. Jeff Harris Jr. (1976 : 422), “Training of any kind should have as its objective the redirection or improvement of behaviour so that the performance of the trainee becomes more useful and productive for himself and for the organization of which

he is a part. Training normally concentrates on the improvement of either “operative skills”, “interpersonal skills”, “decision making skills”, or a combination of these.”

As described by Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 244) training and development has the following objectives, namely :

- To impart the basic knowledge, and job related skills to the new entrants and enable them to understand and perform their jobs well.
- To equip the employees to meet the challenges of the changing requirements of the job and the organization. This is mainly concerned with adopting and developing newer skills and competencies for futuristic jobs.
- To ensure that employees are being updated with new techniques and ways of performing the job or operations. This involves upgrading the technical expertise of the employees according to the needs of the business or changing business environment.
- To prepare employees for higher level tasks and build up a second line of competent managers. Keeping the high attrition rate in IT/ITES sectors this is a very important strategic aspect for any organization to breed a line of competent successors to fill in vacancies wherever they come.

IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

From the standpoint of employees, training serves as an important means for the developments of effective or productive work habits, methods of work, and in consequence it improves job performance, it prepares individuals for modified jobs, avoids unnecessary absenteeism, turnover arising out of faulty selection or placement and it also prevents chances of accidents. It does not only mean increased remuneration of the employee but it also increases their loyalty to the organization by providing them a broader outlook on life emerging from the spirit of self-reliance, dignity and self esteem that develops out of it. It

enables employees to develop and rise within the organization with full confidence (Ghanekar : 2000 : 161).

Socio-economic development is an emerging issue for the developing country like India. In the challenging global scenario organizations, institutions are facing so many problems. There is also heavy competition among the organizations and institutions. To tackle the emerging situation organizations forced to maintain total quality and adopt latest technology.

Training assumes greater significance in view of these changing conditions. Training is inevitable as it develop the skills and knowledge of employees and enables them to take up challenging jobs. Further new employees cannot be placed on job without training. Training also helps the employees whose performance is below expectations and standards. Training builds up self confidence in employees. Skills, knowledge and abilities acquired through training develop total human resources of an organization.

Thus, the importance of training and development lies not only in the organizational effectiveness but also in individual development.

BENEFITS OF TRAINING

Benefits of Training to Employers

The employers invest in training because they reap several benefits out of the exercise, which can be summed up as under:

Faster learning of new skills : Training helps the employers to reduce the learning time of their employees and achieve higher standards of performance. The employees need not waste time in learning by observing others. If a formal training programme exists in the organization, the qualified instructors will help the new employees to acquire the skills and knowledge to do particular jobs quickly.

Increased productivity : Training increases the skill of the new employee while performing a particular job. An increased skill level usually helps in increasing both quantity and quality of output. Training can be of great help even to the existing employees. It helps

them to increase their level of performance on their present job assignments and prepares them for future assignments.

Standardization of procedures : Training can help the standardization of operating procedures, which can be learnt by the employees. Standardization of work procedures makes high levels of performance rule rather than exception. Employees work intelligently and make fewer mistakes when they possess the required know-how and skills.

Lesser need for supervision : As a generalization, it can be stated safely that trained employees need lesser supervision. Training does not eliminate the need for supervision, but it reduces the need for detailed and constant supervision. A well-trained employee can be self-reliant in his/her work because s/he knows what to do and how to do. Under such situations, close supervision might not be required.

Economy of operations : Trained personnel will be able to make better and economical use of the materials and the equipment and reduce wastage. Also, the trained employees reduce the rate of accidents and damage to machinery and equipment. Such reductions can contribute to increased cost savings and overall economy of operations.

Higher morale : The morale of employees is increased if they are given proper training. A good training programme moulds employees' attitudes towards organizational activities and generates better cooperation and greater loyalty. With the help of training, dissatisfactions, complaints, absenteeism and turnover can also be reduced among the employees. Thus, training helps in building an efficient and co-operative work force.

Managerial Development : The top management can identify the talent, who can be groomed for handling positions of responsibility in the organizations. Newer talent increases the productivity of the organizations. By providing opportunity for self-development, employees put in their best effort to contribute to the growth of the organization.

Benefits of Training to Employees

The employees are the ultimate link in an any organization, who carry out the operations. Training can help them in several ways, as mentioned below:

Increasing Confidence : Training creates a feeling of confidence in the minds of employees, who feel comfortable while handling newer challenges. It gives a feeling of safety and security to them at the work place.

New Skills : Training develops skills, which serves as a valuable personal asset of a worker.

Career advancement : The managers can develop their skills to take up higher challenges and work in newer job dimensions. Such an exercise leads to the career development of the employees, who can move up the corporate hierarchy faster.

Higher Earnings : Higher earnings are a consequence of career development. A highly trained employee can command high salary in the job market and feel more contended.

Resilience to change : In the fast changing times of today, training develops adaptability among workers. The employees feel motivated to work under newer circumstances and they do not feel threatened or resist any change. Such adaptability is essential for survival and growth of an organization in the present times.

Increased Safety : Trained workers handle the machines safely. They also know the use of various safety devices in the factory, thus, they are less prone to accidents.

It can be concluded that in light of several benefits, training is an important activity, which should be taken very seriously by the employees as well as the employers.

TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL SUCCESS

Training and development play an important role in the effectiveness of organisations and as well as to the enhancement of capacity and efficiency of people in work. It helps not only personal development but also the organization to maintain productivity and in time service delivery.

Training and Development contributes in such a way that employees can enhance their dexterity. There is a causal relation between training and employee performance. Training

helps organizations in achieving their strategic objectives and gives organizations a competitive edge. In this context, organizations train and develop their employees to the fullest advantage in order to enhance their effectiveness (V. R. Devi, R. N. Shaik : 2012 : 730).

Training and development is very crucial to the employees, the organization and their effectiveness. The organizations have long understood that their most valuable asset is their human capital and many are convinced for large investments in employee training and development. It is an undisputed fact that effective training is an investment in the human resources of an organization, with both immediate and long – range returns. However mere investment is not enough; firms need to manage training programs more effectively so that they can get the highest returns from their investment (ibid : 202).

According to Lucas and Ojo (2008 : 330) staff training and development would enhance organizational effectiveness. The objectives of training and development are the same. Both enhance the individual's capacity to contribute optimally to the development of the organization.

Employee training equips the employees with adequate skills and knowledge to contribute to the organization's efficiency and cope with the changes in the environment. There should be a continuous re-assessment of the managerial caliber and skills to cope with environmental changes. Technological changes make the skills obsolete, which necessitates training activities. As a brief review of terms, training involves an expert working with learners to transfer to them certain areas of knowledge or skills to improve in their current jobs. Development is broad, ongoing multi-faceted set of activities to bring someone or an organization up to another threshold of performance, often to perform some job or new role in the future.

The components of organization and nations revolve around training and development. However, staff training and development meets organizational expansion due to environmental changes and technological innovations. Opportunities for framing are used as responses to organizational expansion and change (Lucas and Ojo : 2008 : 330).

Training holds the key to unlock the potential growth and development opportunities to achieve a competitive edge. In this context, organizations train and develop their employees to the fullest advantage in order to enhance their effectiveness. Performance of an employee is a dependent factor on variables like knowledge, skill and abilities. Training and development provides employees required knowledge, skills and abilities to do a job. Training is a tool to fill the gap and the firms should use it wisely to improve employee productivity (V.R. Devi, R. N. Shaik : 2012 : 202).

Many organizations spend time and money on training efforts to teach new skills to employees who are using a small fraction of skill developed in the past training. Efforts are made to develop employees and allowing those who want to become more involved (which are most of them) usually will have much higher returns. An additional benefit is, they are then more valued employees whose change in attitude is reflected in their work.

The effectiveness and success of an organization therefore lies on the people who form and work within the organization. It follows therefore that the employees in an organization to be able to perform their duties and make meaningful contributions to the success of the organizational goals need to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge (Lucas and Ojo : 2008 : 326).

Thus, the continuous employee training and development has a significant role in the development of individual and organizational performance.

The strategic procedure of employee training and development needs to encourage creativity, ensure inventiveness and shape the entire organizational knowledge that provides the organization with uniqueness and differentiates it from the others (Jelena Vemić : 2007 : 209-216).

Employee training and development does not imply only obtaining new knowledge, abilities and skills, but also the possibility to promote entrepreneurship, introduce employees to changes, encourage the changes of their attitude, introduce the employees to important business decisions and involve them actively in the process of decision making (ibid.).

Thus, training and development practices enhance the organizational success through improving the capacity, capability, efficiency of the workforce.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AT VILLAGE PANCHAYAT LEVEL IN WEST BENGAL

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system village Panchayat as a grass-root level government institution engaged in for necessary implementation and execution of various projects, planning and programmes in village areas. The role of village Panchayat is very important in rural development as a local level body.

Hence, the role of village Panchayat in rural development is not only important but also vital and essential. If reviewed training and development practices at village Panchayat level, it is found that the infrastructure so far created for training of the functionaries of PRIs remained restricted to one State Institute of Panchayats & Rural Development (SIPRD) at Kalyani, Nadia. This institution is engaged mostly in programme specific training and training of functionaries of upper tier PRIs, district and block level government officials.

There are also some not-so-equipped Extension Training Centres (ETC), dealing mostly with training of Gram Panchayat employees, also catering to the needs of off-campus training of SIPRD and the Department.

In view of the above, some temporary District Training Centres (DTCs) with residential facilities for around 40 participants, were set up to meet the training needs of the Gram Panchayat functionaries. This system started functioning from 3rd August, 2008 starting with training of newly-elected Pradhans & Upa- Pradhans.

In compliance of the state policy, around 2000 Gram Panchayats (cumulatively) developed minimum training facility, mainly with support from BRGF and the SRD programme, by converting their meeting halls into training halls for workshops with community level workers, Gram Unnayan Samiti members, functionaries of CBOs including SHG members. With support from RGSY, BRGF and the SRD programme, all the Panchayat Samitis also

could develop minimum training facility by converting their meeting halls into training halls equipped with satellite network. Initiative was taken towards August 2007 to set up a permanent District Training Centre in each district with support from the SRD programme fund, BRGF and other resources, following a guideline issued from the PRDD indicating standard requirements for each training centre.

Major training programmes conducted by the SIPRD, ETC and DTC are as follows :-

Training Programmes Conducted by State Institute of Panchayats & Rural Development (SIPRD)

Major training programmes conducted by SIPRD is basically on Panchayati Raj Institutions, Rural Development Programmes: NREGS, SGSY, PMGSY etc., Public Health and Sanitation, Computer fundamentals and different application softwares, Induction level training programmes, Rural Engineering, Programmes of different departments, Off-Campus programmes of NIRD. Besides, SIPRD deals with exposure visits on functioning of PRIs for officials of different states and foreign officials according in compliance of requests made by different authorities.

Training Programmes Conducted by Extension Training Centres (ETCs)

Although the ETCs have been functioning with inadequate staff, quite a good number of training programmes could be organized in the ETCs during 2008-09, mostly out of fund provided out of the SRD programme and BRGF. The ETCs were mostly used for training of Gram Panchayat employees. Also, SIPRD utilized the infrastructure of the ETCs for its off-campus training programmes, particularly those for Karmadhyakhas of Panchayat Samitis & Zilla Parishads. Various wings of the Department including the SRD Cell, Paschim Banga Rajya Sishu Siksha Mission, SGSY Cell and the Computerisation Cell also utilize the ETCs for training on various issues including centrally sponsored programmes, SAHAY programme, Sishu Siksha / Madhyamik Siksha Karmasuchi, for improving financial management of GP & PS and SRD.

Training Programmes Conducted by District Training Centres (DTCs)

The background and necessity of setting up the temporary District Training Centres (DTCs) for training of elected functionaries of Gram Panchayat has been already

mentioned. All trainings in DTCs have been conducted in residential mode. As explained earlier, the training programmes in the DTCs are managed by the District Panchayats & Rural Development Officers with the help of Assistant Training Coordinators, Abasik Prasikshan Sanchalaks and trained District Resource Persons.

DTCs were also utilized for training the Sanchalaks and Additional members of the Upa-Samtis. Duration of such training was four days. The temporary DTCs were also used for training of Gram Panchayat functionaries on the SAHAY programme.

Unfortunately, the procedures of employee training and development within our organizations are undeveloped. They are mainly performed occasionally, and not connected with organizational strategy, nor do they have some strategic significance. They are mostly enforced when such business problems occur or are perceived that are considered relievable or solvable by organizing a training, course or seminar for some of the employees. Employees' view the training as an imposed obligation, rather than a way to maximize their potential and they do not realize that by improving their performances and innovation of their knowledge they may contribute to better business results of the organization they belong to. Unfortunately, top managers do not realize this as well. From their relationship with the employees it is plain to see that the employees are still treated as an expense, rather than an investment worthy of investing. In our organizations there is no culture of obtaining and sharing of knowledge (Jelena Vemić : 2007 : 213).

Under the above circumstances it has been found that at the village Panchayat level training and development practices maximum efforts and importance has been given on project related work i.e. NREGS, SGSY, PMGSY, Public Health and Sanitation, Computer fundamentals and different applications, softwares, Induction level training programmes, Rural Engineering etc. But it is hardly found training and development practices on human resource development related issues, which maximize their potentiality and enhance their knowledge and capacity. This is earnestly required to harness the potentiality towards maximum utilization of workforce. Training and development of human resources make the workforce competent, efficient and effective. Such type of competent workforce may perform the assigned job properly and in time.

It is also found that scope of training for village Panchayat level functionaries is narrow than that of the functionaries of Panchayat Samity and Zilla Parishad.

If the village Panchayat functionaries get the facilities of training (such type of training which enhances capacity, efficiency and competency), then it is possible to build competent and efficient workforce for rural development. Such workforce can be utilized for proper development in rural areas. Such trained workforce not only initiates and executes the programmes for rural development, but also provide appropriate service to the community in time with efficiency.

An attempt, in this regard, has been made to examine and describe the existing Gram Panchayat level training and development practices in three blocks of Nadia district in West Bengal and try to understand how far and to what extent have the existing schemes of training and development become effective in development through proper utilization of human resources at the village Panchayat level in West Bengal. How can it be more active and effective? For necessary analysis of the existing training and development system and to detect in which issues importance has been given in GP level training and to determine the effectiveness of training in utilization of human resources at the village Panchayat level primary data have been collected from three respective blocks of Nadia district by using different parameters.

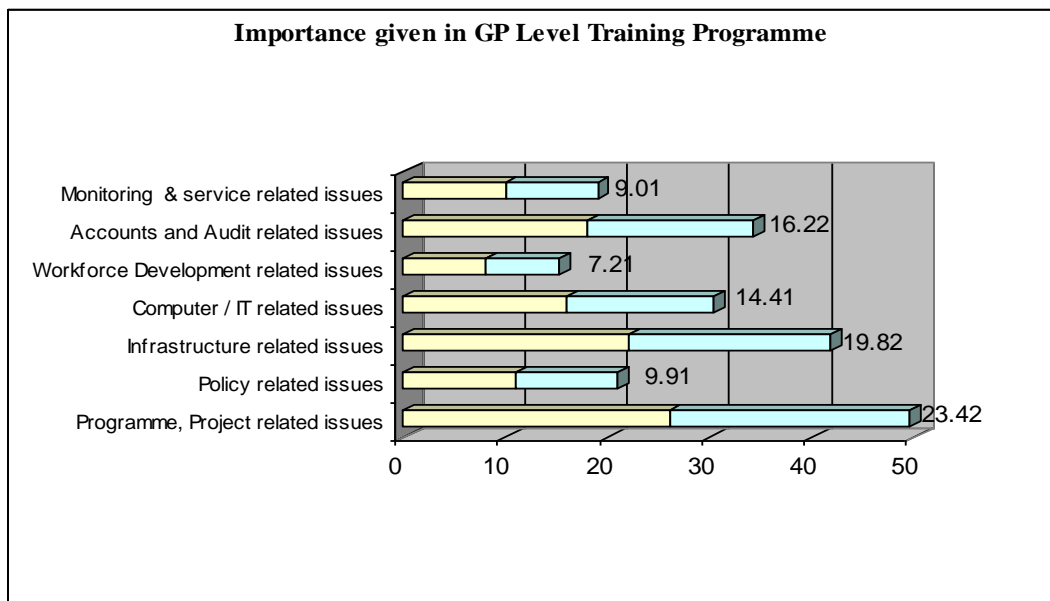
At the time of field visit and data analysis the following main issues have been seen effective related to GP level training programme :

Q-1. On which of the following issue(s) most emphasis given in Gram Panchayat level Training Programme?

Table : 7.1 : Emphasis given in GP Level Training Programme

Variable	Number	%
Programme, Project related issues	26	23.42
Policy related issues	11	9.91
Infrastructure related issues	22	19.82
Computer / IT related issues	16	14.41
Workforce development related issues	8	7.21
Accounts and Audit related issues	18	16.22
Monitoring & service related issues	10	9.01
Total =	111	100

- ❖ Out of 111 respondents, 23.42% respondents agree that in Gram Panchayat level Training and Development programmes most emphasis given in programme, project related issue, 19.82% respondents have said that infrastructure related issues are the vital issue and 16.22% have said that Accounts and Audit related issues got top most importance in GP level Training programme.

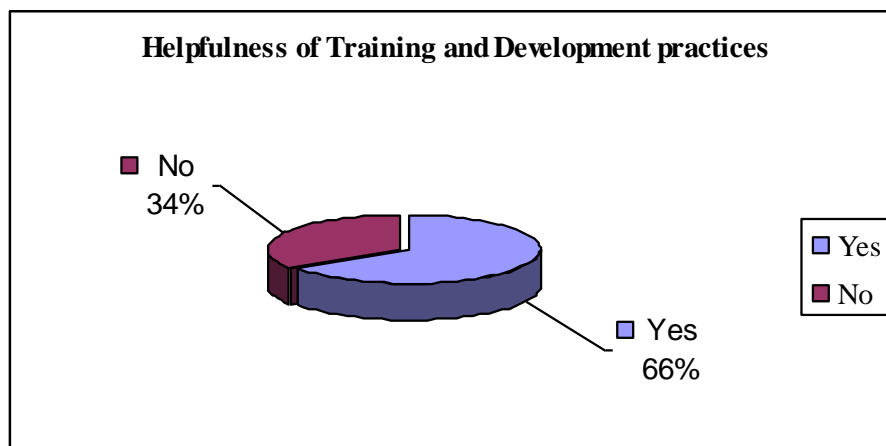


Q - 2. Whether Training and Development practices at village Panchayat level are helpful for institutional effectiveness?

Table : 7.2 : Helpfulness of Training and Development practices

Variable	Number	%
Yes	73	65.77
No	38	34.23
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 65.77% respondents agree that training and development practices are helpful for institutional effectiveness; a GP should redesign its training practices to meet their needs, while 34.23% have said that training and development practices are not always helpful for institutional effectiveness.



Q - 3. Whether there is any formal & written training and development practices

Table : 7.3 : Existence of formal & written Training and development practices

Variable	Number	%
Yes	62	55.86
No	49	44.14
Total =	111	100

- ❖ In total 55.86% respondents comment that there is formal and written training and development practices at Gram Panchayat level and 44.14% is of the view that there is partially / totally absent of in-time training and development practices at village Panchayat level.

Q - 4. Do you think the current training and development strategy is integrated with your institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals?

Table : 7.4 : Integration of training and development strategy with institution's strategy

Variable	Number	%
Yes	53	47.75
No	58	52.25
Total =	111	100

- ❖ Nearly 47.75% opine that the current training and development strategy is integrated with institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals and 52.25% do not agree to this point of view.



Q-5. Whether existing training and development practices have improved the efficiency and competency of staff / members as expected

Table : 7.5 : Effectiveness of training and development practices

Variable	Number	%
Yes	64	57.66
No	47	42.34
Total =	111	100

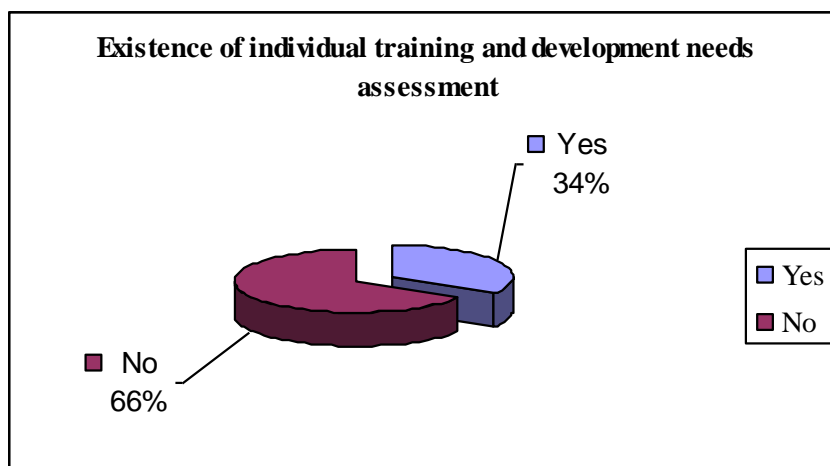
- ❖ In total 57.66% functionaries agree that the existing training and development practices have improved the efficiency and competency of staff / members as expected and 42.34% respondents are of the view that much attention need to be given on training and development practices at GP level towards enhancement of efficiency and competency among the staff / members.

Q-6. Whether there is any system to assess individual training and development needs

Table : 7.6 : Existence of individual training and development needs assessment

Variable	Number	%
Yes	38	34.23
No	73	65.77
Total =	111	100

- ❖ Only 34.23% respondents have said that there is a system to assess individual training and development needs, while 65.77% respondents have said that there is no such type of system to assess individual training and development needs at GP level.



Q-7. Whether training and development needs are reflected in the annual budget

Table : 7.7 : Reflection of training and development needs in annual budget

Variable	Number	%
Yes	57	51.35
No	54	48.65
Total =	111	100

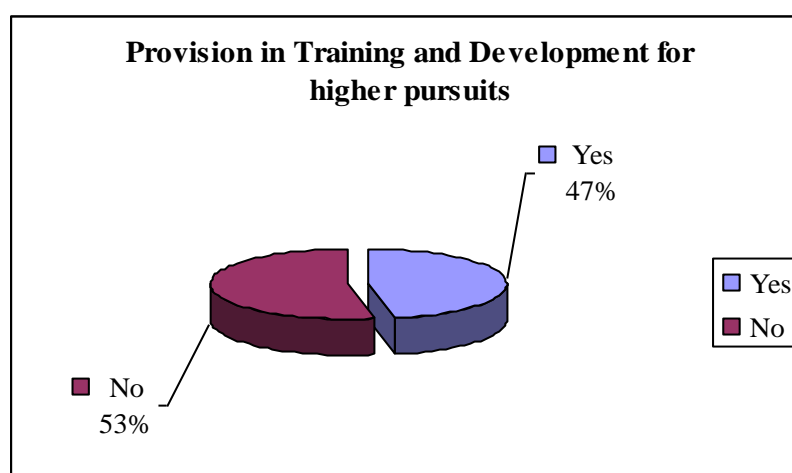
- ❖ Out of 111 functionaries, 51.35% have agreed that there is a provision of training and development needs in annual budget, while 48.65% have said that there is no such provision to ensure the best use of human resources in the annual budget.

Q-8. Whether Training provides the guidelines so as to enable staff / members to train and develop themselves for higher pursuits and effective performance.

Table : 7.8 : Provision in Training and Development for higher pursuits

Variable	Number	%
Yes	52	46.85
No	59	53.15
Total =	111	100

- ❖ In all 111 functionaries (46.85%) have said that GP training provides the necessary guidelines to staff / members for higher pursuits and effective performance and 53.15% have said that Gram Panchayat training hardly provides the guidelines to staff / members for higher pursuits and effective performance.



Q-9. Whether Job skills, knowledge, ability are considered in training needs

Table : 7.9 : Whether Job skills, knowledge, ability are considered in training needs

Variable	Number	%
Yes	53	47.75
No	58	52.25
Total =	111	100

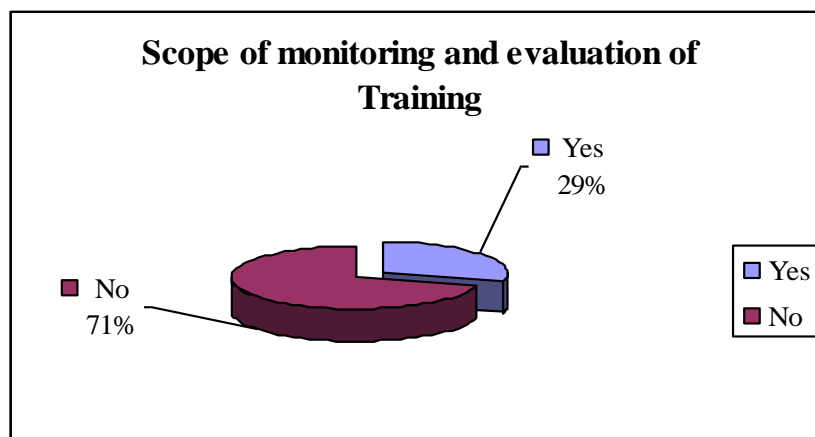
- ❖ 47.75% respondent have agreed that for training needs job skills, knowledge, abilities are considered vital, while 52.25% respondents have not agreed with this point of view.

Q-10. Whether results of training is monitored and evaluated

Table : 7.10 : Scope of monitoring and evaluation of Training

Variable	Number	%
Yes	32	28.83
No	79	71.17
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 28.83% functionaries are satisfied with after training monitoring and evaluation system, while 71.17% have said that, there is no such type of monitoring and evaluation system.



Q-11. Whether it ensures that, training and development facilities are available for all staff / members of GP ?

Table : 7.11 : Availability of Training & Development facilities

Variable	Number	%
Always	52	46.85
Sometimes	32	28.83
Never	27	24.32
Total =	111	100

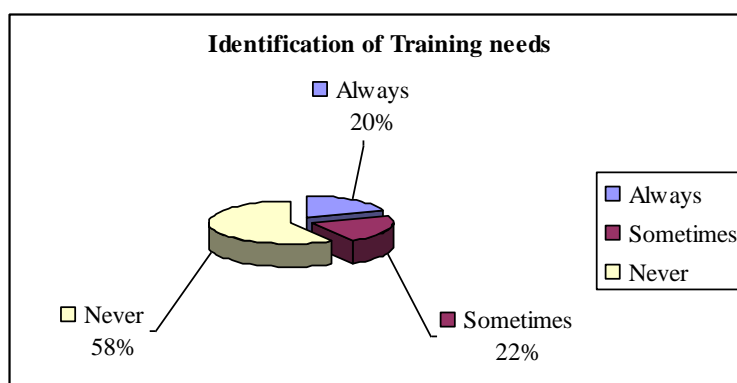
- ❖ 52 (46.85%) respondents have said that, there is availability of training and development facility for all staff / members at Gram Panchayat, 28.83% have said that sometimes it is available for all staff / members and 24.32% respondents have agreed that village Panchayat does not ensure the training and development facility for all staff / members.

Q-12. Whether Training needs are identified through a formal performance appraisal mechanism.

Table : 7.12 : Identification of Training needs

Variable	Number	%
Always	22	19.82
Sometimes	24	21.62
Never	65	58.56
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 19.82% have said that, the identification of training needs are always based on through performance appraisal mechanism, 21.62% have said that sometimes it is maintained the identification of training needs through performance appraisal mechanism, whereas 58.56% respondents have said that identification of training needs never based on through performance appraisal mechanism.

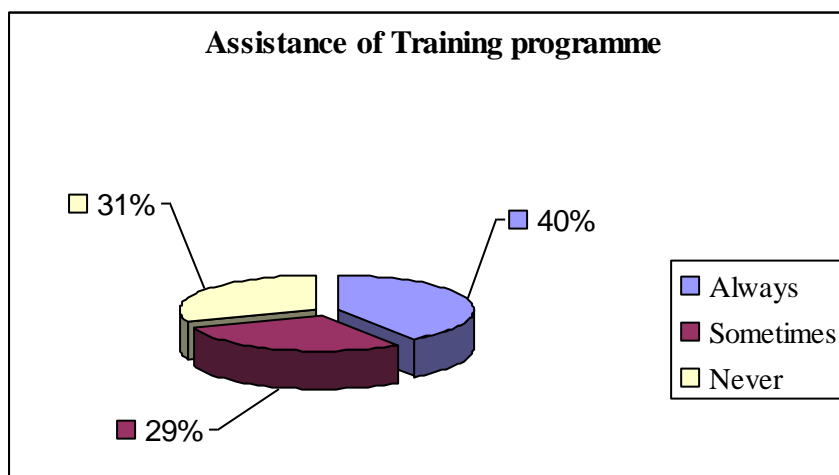


Q- 13. Whether Training assists in building up self confidence, leadership quality and decision making skill among the staff / members

Table : 7.13 : Assistance of Training programme

Variable	Number	%
Always	45	40.54
Sometimes	32	28.83
Never	34	30.63
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 40.54% respondents have agreed that, training assists in building up self confidence, leadership quality and decision making skill among the staff / members, 28.83% have said that, training sometimes assists in building up self confidence, leadership quality and decision making skill among the staff / members, whereas 30.63% respondents have opined that, training never assists in building up the above qualities among the staff / members.

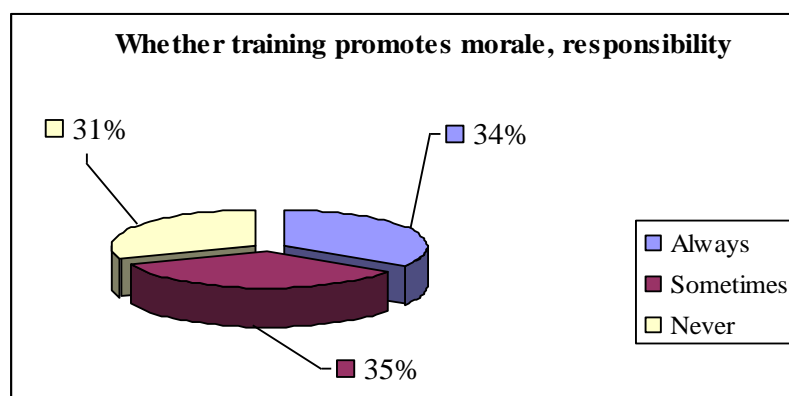


Q-14. Whether training promotes morale, a sense of responsibly, accountability, co-operative attitude and good relationships among the staff / members

Table : 7.14 : Whether training promotes morale, responsibility

Variable	Number	%
Always	38	34.23
Sometimes	39	35.14
Never	34	30.63
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 34.23% respondents agree that, training and development practices promote morale, a sense of responsibility, accountability, co-operative attitude and good relationships among the staff / members at Gram Panchayat level, 35.14% agree that the training and development practices sometimes effectively used for this purpose, whereas, 30.63% respondents opine that GP level training and development practices do not promote morale, a sense of responsibly, accountability, co-operative attitude and good relationships among the staff / members.



Under the above circumstances and after reviewing the village Panchayat level training and development practices it has been detected that, training related to development of human resource related issues that is potentiality, accountability, competency, responsibly, knowledge and morality are neglected in many cases. After through analysis of Panchayat level training it has also been found that, maximum efforts in training given on central and state sponsored projects, programmes, Computer, IT, accounts and audit, infrastructure, etc. but there is a lack of interest and initiatives for development and management of Panchayat level functionaries i.e. members and Staff through training.

It has also been observed that, Gram Panchayat functionaries have taken active role for building up effective Panchayat administration and towards development of rural areas. If they are not competent and efficient how they can take appropriate and effective planning, need based planning for village development. But in the existing training system there is lacuna of building up efficient and competent workforce. There is hardly found such type of policy which helps and makes Panchayat functionaries effective and dynamic for this purpose.

For effective Panchayat administration and real rural development, efforts need to be given on building up efficient, effective and competent village Panchayat functionaries equipped with strategic skills, new management techniques, leadership quality, responsibility and morality through proper training and development.

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CHAPTER – VIII

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL : CONCEPTS AND REALITIES AS EXPERIENCED IN THREE BLOCKS OF NADIA DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

The success of every organisation mostly depends upon the quality, competency, efficiency and commitment of its human resources. In an organisational setting each and every employee has a particular duty and importance to the organisation. Organisational progress mostly depends upon their performance, efficiency and commitment. Effective performance appraisal system therefore helps to retain qualified and competent staff and also helps to motivate employees to disclose their full potentiality. According to Shen (2004), performance appraisal is the process of identifying, observing, measuring, and developing human resources in organizations.

Organizations run by people. Therefore, people are the main directives of an organization. If the people of an organization are all well motivated, efficient and competent then the performance of that organisation will be accordingly. Therefore success of an organization depends upon the performance of workforce.

The activities and achievement of Panchayat depends upon very much on the activities and performance of Panchayat personnel. Success and performance of a Panchayat depends upon the accountability, responsibility and efficiency of Panchayat personnel. If a staff or member does not perform his/her duty properly, it affects not only the performance of the Panchayat, but also hinders the progress of development related work in rural areas. On the other hand if a staff is well motivated, trained, efficient, punctual and accountable towards his work, he can not only enable to provide in time service to the Panchayat as well as to the people but also persuade developmental work in village areas.

There are some factors of human resource management which improve and develop personal efficiency and capabilities, which lead to the best personal contributions. Performance appraisal is one of the most important elements in this regard. The basic

functions of performance appraisal are to motivate people, to give them proper training for necessary development, to identify the potentiality to get the best contribution from individuals, and to achieve organizational goals and success.

Present condition of rural development which requires immediate attention to the performance appraisal system at village Panchayat level in the state. Due to absence of individual performance appraisal, lack of motivation and co-ordination it is not always possible to build effective and efficient workforce at GP level. And here arises the need of performance appraisal to motivate and to identify the potentiality of Panchayat functionaries for better results.

Performance appraisal is an essential part of Human Resource Management. Through which it is possible to develop and motivate the employees of an organisation. For effective service delivery and necessary completion of work in time, functionaries should be competent and dynamic. Otherwise in the fast changing global scenario it is not possible to handle huge and versatile nature of work.

Therefore, role of workforce in an organisation is not only vital but essential also. To motivate the people and to extract the potentiality towards attainment of organisational success, performance appraisal acts as an important tool.

In the fast changing trends towards globalization, today many organizations are striving hard to modernize themselves. One of the most important hallmarks of a modern organization is to have a performance appraisal system (Ghanekar : 2000).

Performance appraisal is an integral part of the Human Resource Management system (Longenecker & Goff : 1992 : 18-23). According to Aquinis (2007) in the performance appraisal, the focus is to identify weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development.

Performance appraisal system is used in the organizations to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of their employees. Performance Appraisal system is needed because every employee has a different attitude to handle the work. Performance Appraisal tends to improve the work performance, communication expectations, determining employee

potential and aiding employee counseling. (A. Aggarwal and G. S. Mitra Thakur : 2013). Performance appraisal is a key in human resource management function which is viewed as a subset of performance management (Asamu Festus Femi : 2013 : 89).

In West Bengal rural development is a vital issue since independence. Proper and desired development in West Bengal yet has not been possible due to uneven socio-economic development. Government of India introduced so many programmes, policies and projects for the purpose of rural development since independence.

Democratic decentralization and establishment of Panchayati Raj Institutions was an important step towards attainment of rural development in India. Village Panchayat institutions have been involved in rural development as a grass-root level government institution and with the aim of democratic decentralization.

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system village Panchayat as a lower level institution has a great role for rural development in West Bengal. As because, they work with village people. They know well their wants and requirements. They prepare also village level planning and execute the same for rural development. For desired rural development, it needs to involve dynamic GP personnel.

Here emphasis and attention have also been made for providing necessary details of village Panchayat level performance appraisal system and how does employee-performance and potential appraisal system affect institutional performance towards attainment of rural development goal in the state. Here it also describes the necessary details of performance appraisal such as concept, definition, objectives, importance etc. for better understanding of the subject.

Here an attempt has also been made to examine and describe the existing Gram Panchayat level performance appraisal system in three blocks of Nadia district in West Bengal and try to understand how far and to what extent have the existing schemes of performance and potential appraisal system become effective in utilization of human resources at Gram Panchayat level in West Bengal. How does performance and potential appraisal system be more effectively implemented at village Panchayat level of the state? How does employee-

performance and potential appraisal system affect institutional performance towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal?

For necessary analysis of existing performance appraisal system and to detect motivational factors in utilization of human resources through performance appraisal system at village Panchayat level, primary data have been collected from three respective blocks of Nadia district by using different parameters.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL : CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

Performance appraisal is variously known as employee evaluation, employee efficiency rating, performance rating, merit rating, employee development programme, development report, personnel development or progress record or report, personnel performance record, employee progress report, employee service rating, personnel rating, employee ability rating, and they all mean the same thing. It is a systematic, orderly and objective method of evaluating the present and potential usefulness of the employees to the organisation. As said initially, the performance appraisal system is considered to be hallmark of modern organization and not only in the Western countries but also in India, more and more organizations are striving to have systematic appraisal of the performance of their employees (M.N. Rudrabasavaraj :1991 : 210-211).

Performance appraisal is the systematic evaluation of the individual with respect to his performance on the job and his potentials for development. It is defined as “a process of evaluating an employee’s performance of a job in terms of its requirements” (W.D. Scott, R.C. Clothier : 1977 : 160).

According to Bernardin (2007) performance of an individual can be defined as the record of outcomes produced as specified job functions or activities during a specified time period.

According to L.M. Prasad (2006) appraisal is the evaluation of worth, quality or merit, so performance appraisal of employees means the evaluation of their performance performed during a certain period of time. In the organizational context, performance appraisal is a

systematic evaluation of personnel by supervisors or others familiar with their performance.

According to Flippo (1976), performance appraisal is “a systematic, periodic and so far as humanly possible, an impartial rating of an employee’s excellence in matters pertaining to his present job and to his potentialities for a better job”.

“Performance Appraisal includes all formal procedures used to evaluate personalities and contributions and potentials of group members in a working organization. It is a continuous process to secure information necessary for making correct and objective decisions on employees” (Dale Yoder : 1976 : 173).

According to Beach (1980), “Performance appraisal is a systematic evaluation of individual with regard to his or her performance on the job and his potential for development”. Mani (2002 : 158) states that performance appraisal is an analysis of an employee's recent successes and failures, personal strengths and weaknesses and suitability for promotion or further training.

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 342) performance appraisal is the formal, structured system of measuring and evaluating an employee’s job related behaviours and outcomes to discover how and why the employee is presently performing on the job and how the employee can perform more effectively in the future so that the employee as well as the organisation can mutually benefit.

OBJECTIVES OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Cook and Crossman (2004 : 106) highlight that the fundamental objective of performance appraisal policy is to facilitate management in carrying out administrative decisions relating to promotions, dismissals, layoffs and pay increases.

Performance appraisal essentially helps to identify employees who are performing their assigned tasks well and those who are not and also the reasons for such performance. Today’s appraisals are believed to have three basic objectives : the amount of annual increment, promotion, and training (Ghanekar : 2000 : 132-133).

The most obvious objective of performance appraisal policy is that of assessment and the evaluation of an employee's performance, as objectively as possible, against specified job goals (Williams : 2002 :1).

According to Joseph Tiffin (1947), the objectives of performance appraisal are :

- To prevent grievance
- To improve job performance
- To increase analytical abilities of supervisors
- To assist management in promotion, demotion, and transfer problems
- To reveal areas where training is needed

According to M.W. Cumming (1972 : 111-112) “the overall objective of performance appraisal is to improve the efficiency of an enterprise by attempting to mobilize the best possible efforts from individuals employed in it. Such appraisals achieve four basic objectives including the salary reviews, the development and training of individuals, planning job rotation and assist in promotions”.

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 343) the objectives of performance appraisal are as follows :

- Performance appraisal is a tool for communicating the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for the different job roles. The appraisal criteria acts as a guide to the attitudes and behaviours that the organisation would like their staff in their various capacities to have.
- To enhance an organisation's corporate value in the pursuit of innovative quality in the areas of customers, employees, society, products, technology, management and fairness. These values are translated to performance measures that are used in the appraisal system. This enhances awareness of corporate values and promotes behaviours that are in line with the organisation's values.
- To effect promotions based on competence and performance.

- To confirm services of probationary employees upon their completing the probationary period satisfactorily.
- To assess the training and development needs of employees.
- To generate adequate feedback and guidance from the immediate superior to an employee working under him.
- To decide upon a pay raise where regular pay scales have not been fixed.
- To provide inputs to system of rewards (comprising salary increments, transfers, promotions, demotions or terminations) and salary administration.
- To let the employees know where they stand in so far as their performance is concerned and to assist them with constructive criticism and guidance for the purpose of their development.
- To improve communication by providing a format for dialogue between the superior and the subordinate, and improves understanding of personal goals and concerns.
- It can be used to determine whether HR programs such as selection, training and transfers have been effective or not.
- To generate significant, relevant, free and valid information about the employees.

Thus, the practice of performance appraisal meets the need of individual development and organizational achievement. According to Williams (2002 : 27) states that performance appraisal policies are part of a larger set of human resource practices. Furthermore, it is the tool for evaluating the degree to which every employee's day-to-day activities tie in with the goals of the organization.

IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Performance appraisal is important for employees at all levels throughout the organization. The parameters, the characteristics and the standard for evaluation may be different, but the fundamentals of performance appraisal are the same. But performance appraisal is more effectively used as tools of managing employee performance (Anderson : 2002 : 132).

Thus, it becomes clear that performance appraisal is an important tool of human resource management as it reflects evaluative judgements of traits, characteristics and work performance of employees. Performance appraisal system can be put to a very wide range of utility covering the entire spectrum of human resource functions in an organization. Performance appraisal can be used as a basis for sound personnel policy in relation to placement, transfer, promotion and reward. The importance or utility of performance appraisal is really very great since it facilitates the accomplishment of individual and organizational objectives (Ghanekar : 2000 : 134).

An employment privileges may be earned by superior performance, the appraisal plans serve as a basis for counseling employees about their strengths and weaknesses or for improving their productive efficiency and for bettering employee relations through developing mutual confidence. Appraisal plans are also of great significance in the areas of career and succession planning, training and development needs analysis, human resource planning, compensation, handling grievances and disciplinary cases. An objective evaluation of employee performance constitutes an important element of job satisfaction. Evaluation of employees is, therefore, applied formally or informally to all employees – operative, technical, professional and executive. A good rating programme should encompass all levels and categories of employees (ibid.).

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 344) need, importance and advantages of performance appraisal are as follows :

- Scientific basis for judging the merit or worth of employees.
- Sound basis for promotion, demotion, transfer or termination of employees.
- Helps in distinguishing between efficient and inefficient workers.

- It reveals the defects in the selection procedure
- Helps to know the potentials of the subordinates systematically.
- Helps correct placements.
- It helps in constructively guiding the employees.
- It prevents grievances and develops a sense of confidence.
- Protects the management against the charges of discrimination.

NEED OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Performance appraisal thus meets the vital need of emotional security which Norman Maier (1955) considers as one of the five primary needs all employees seek to satisfy on the job. As mentioned by Maier, this need for emotional security consists of three elements: the need to belong, the need to know where one stands, and the need for approval.

Performance appraisal data may be useful in human resource (manpower) development in several manners. Ambitious subordinates, who are looking forward to an opportunity for advancement, usually welcome an honest appraisal even if it is adverse. A promotion minded individual can ask for the target programmes of a position he seeks and use the information given by performance appraisal to prepare himself for the job and enhance his candidacy. Employees with strong career aspirations who have transfer value and can get jobs elsewhere also welcome an honest appraisal since it helps in their career advancement whether in this or other organization for better prospects (Ghanekar : 2000 : 133).

Douglas McGregor (1957 : 89-94) observes : “formal performance appraisal plans are designed to meet three needs / one of the organization and the other two of the individual viz. (i) They provide systematic judgement to back up salary increases, transfers, demotions or termination; (ii) They are means of telling a subordinate how he is doing and

suggesting needed changes in misbehaviour, attitudes, skills or job knowledge. They let him know where he stands with the boss; and (iii) They are used as a base for coaching and counseling the individual by the superior”.

According to Williams (2002:3), for many organizations, the primary goal of performance appraisal policy is to improve employee and organizational performance. However, a potential problem with performance appraisal policy and possible cause of much dissatisfaction, is expecting too much from one appraisal policy. Rudman (2003:107) contends that a performance appraisal policy that is effective for developing employees may not be the best for determining pay increases. A properly designed performance appraisal policy can help achieve organizational objectives and enhance employee performance.

Thus, performance appraisal policy helps individual as well as organizational effectiveness towards attainment of individual and organizational success.

ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE THROUGH PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Performance appraisal is the strength of performance management, which in turn affects the organizational performance. It helps to identify and overcome the problems faced by the employees on his / her work (Mackey and Johnson : 2000 : 3).

Performance appraisal system, if used effectively, can help the organization to improve productivity; to promote internal control through appropriate feedback and corrective actions; to diagnose individual and organizational problems; to foster positive work culture; to encourage, recognize and reward achievements; and to seek an all round human resource development. An effective performance appraisal system has the potential to minimize many existing problems and thus to reduce non-productive costs. This helps in overall improvement in the quality of work life (QWL) (Ghanekar : 2000 : 134).

Performance appraisal policy has been viewed by organizations and human resources practitioners as an effective tool for human resources management. However, effective performance appraisal policy remains a practical challenge to managers and employees because of cognitive, motivational and behavioural factors. At an organizational level, the

performance appraisal policy impacts other human resources policies as well as organizational strategy. The effectiveness of an organization's performance appraisal policy is a prerequisite for ensuring the success of its selection, training and employee performance. At a strategic level, the need for rapid and effective organizational changes in today's dynamic social, economic and political environment requires that employees continually re-align their performance with the evolving goals and objectives of the organization. The need to continually re-align employee performance characterizes many organizational units which continue to struggle with getting their employees to embrace the philosophy and practices that are geared at enhance employee performance (Michael A. Akinbowale, Melanie E. Lourens : 2013 : 19-26).

Performance appraisal has increasingly become a part of a more strategic approach to integrating human resource activities and business policies and may now be seen as a generic term covering a variety of activities through which organizations seek to assess employees and develop their competence, enhance performance and distribute rewards (Femi : 2013 : 89).

According to Fajana (1997) performance appraisal is a system which provides organizations with a means of identifying not only what people's performance levels are but which areas those levels need to be improved if maximum use is to be made of human resources.

According to Yalcin (2002) in today's competitive business world, it is understood that organizations can only compete with their rivals by innovating. Organization can only innovate by managing their human resources well. The human resource system can become more effective by having a valid and accurate appraisal system used for rating performances of the employees. Unfortunately, the number of organization using an effective performance appraisal system is limited.

Thus, performance appraisal acts as a key role towards better performance of an organisation.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GRAM PANCHAYAT INSTITUTION

According to Prasad (2005) in the present highly competitive environment, organizations have to ensure peak performance of their employees continuously in order to compete and survive at the market place effectively.

According to Wade and Ricardo (2001 : 26), the basic purpose of a performance appraisal policy is to improve performance of employees, teams and the entire organization. Performance appraisal policy may also serve to assist in making administrative decisions concerning pay increases, transfers or terminations.

Organizational performance and its resultant efficiency and effectiveness can only be achieved when individuals are continuously appraised and evaluated. The inability of organization to install an effective performance appraisal strategy has hindered them from achieving competitive advantage which they require more, now than ever before (Chris Obisi : 2011 : 92).

According to Atiomo (2000) every organization should ensure that the individual is clearly aware of what his functions and responsibilities are to make performance appraisal effective.

All other developing countries like India, socio-economic development have not been equally developed. There is a developmental gap between urban and rural areas. The facilities which have been found in urban areas are partly or totally absent in rural areas in many states like West Bengal. Though, the span of rural areas is larger than urban areas. There are so many villages in West Bengal where maximum people live in villages. But proper and desired rural development yet has not been possible.

In view of the above government of India after independence has taken so many initiatives for the purpose of rural development. Among those initiatives establishment of Panchayati Raj Institutions was a great attempt towards socio-economic development in India.

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system, the upper tier is Zilla Parishad, middle tier is Panchayat Samity and the lower tier is village Panchayat. Village Panchayat is the grass-

root level government institution and working with local level people. It is the local level executive body, by whom all planning, programmes, projects implemented and executed at village level. For this, in the three tier Panchayati Raj systems village Panchayat has a great and important role for development in rural areas.

For necessary and desired rural development the role of village Panchayat is not only vital but essential also. The role and responsibility are also increasing day by day with the implementation of new projects, programmes and policies. For necessary, in-time implementation and execution of projects, programmes, and policies; it needs not only proper planning and financial assistance but also to develop dynamic, competent and effective village Panchayat workforce.

If reviewed the GP level functions and functionaries it will be found that, there are various type of functions and functionaries at gram Panchayat level. The volume of works is versatile in nature. It is also found that efficiency, competency and capacity of village Panchayat level functionaries i.e. staff and members are not equal. Sometimes it is found that, some staff / members have higher capacity, efficiency and competency than that of other staff / members. Those dynamic staff / members are the most effective in implementation and execution of GP level work. Their responsibility and accountability are also higher than that of others.

They are also devoted to their work. They are the important and essential support of village Panchayat institutions. Though, they work hard but there is hardly found the practice of individual performance appraisal system. There is not availability of reward system for good, efficient and competent personnel at village Panchayat level.

Practice of performance appraisal encourages staff / members for their individual development as well as in over all development of the organisation. It also encourages the functionaries to give their full efforts towards the institutional developments. It builds committed, efficient, accountable and responsible workforce, which ultimately helps for necessary attainment of institutional goal as well as rural development of the state.

Under the above circumstances and depending upon the gravity and versatile nature of work it appears that performance appraisal system at Gram Panchayat level is very

important towards attainment of rural development and to building up a competent, effective and dynamic workforce.

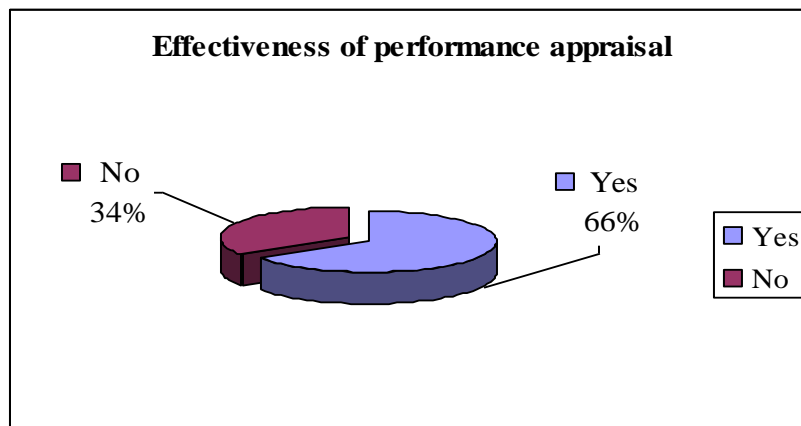
During field visit it has also been found that there is lacuna of performance appraisal system at GP level. Here initiative has also been taken to show some field-level primary data analysis in this regard as below :

Q-1. Whether the practice of performance appraisal at Gram Panchayat level are helpful for institutional effectiveness

Table : 8.1 : Effectiveness of performance appraisal

Variable	Number	%
Yes	73	65.77
No	38	34.23
Total =	111	100

- ❖ In total 65.77% respondents have agreed that the practice of performance appraisal at Gram Panchayat level are helpful for institutional effectiveness and 34.23% respondents are of view that the practice of performance appraisal at Gram Panchayat level are not helpful for institutional effectiveness.



Q-2. Whether there is any formal and written performance appraisal system in your institution

Table : 8.2 : Existence of formal and written performance appraisal system

Variable	Number	%
Yes	49	44.14
No	62	55.86
Total =	111	100

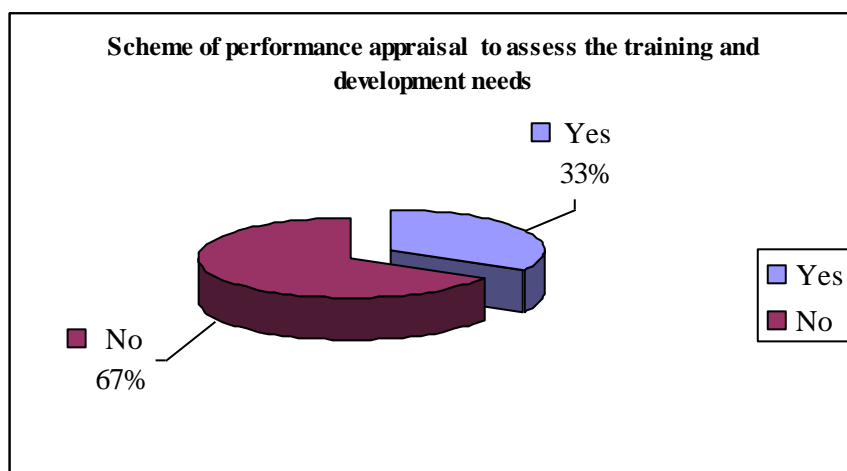
- ❖ Nearly 44.14% have said that there is formal and written performance appraisal system at GP level, whereas 55.86% have said that, there is no such formal and written performance appraisal system.

Q-3. Whether there is any scheme of performance appraisal to assess the training and development needs of the Gram Panchayat functionaries

Table : 8.3: Scheme of performance appraisal to assess the training and development needs

Variable	Number	%
Yes	37	33.33
No	74	66.67
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 33.33% functionaries have the views that, there is a system of performance appraisal to assess the training and development needs of Gram Panchayat functionaries, whereas 66.67% do not agree to this version.



Q-4. Whether there is any practice to guide staff / members so that they can be more focused on their work through motivation

Table : 8.4 : Practice to guide staff / members through motivation

Variable	Number	%
Yes	53	47.75
No	58	52.25
Total =	111	100

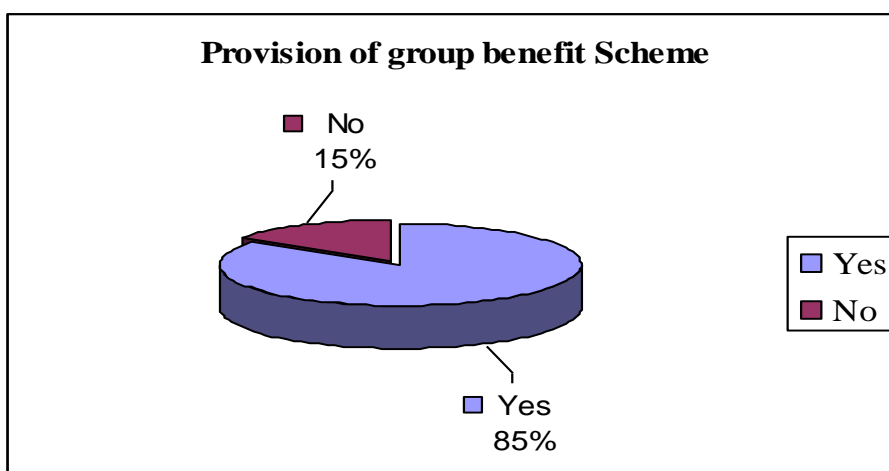
- ❖ In all 111 functionaries (47.75%) have said that, there is a practice at GP level to guide staff / members so that they can be more focused on their work through motivation, while 52.25% have said that there is no such type of practice at GP level to motivate staff / members.

Q-5. Whether there is any provision for group benefit scheme for staff at Gram Panchayat level

Table : 8.5 : Provision of group benefit Scheme

Variable	Number	%
Yes	94	84.68
No	17	15.32
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 84.68% respondents have opined that, there is a provision of group benefit scheme for staff of Gram Panchayat, while 15.32% have said that there is no such type of provision at Gram Panchayat level.



Q-6. Whether there is any reward system for good, responsible and accountable staff / members at Gram Panchayat level.

Table : 8.6 : GP level Reward System

Variable	Number	%
Yes	23	20.72
No	88	79.28
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 20.72% have said that there is reward system for good, responsible and accountable staff / members at Gram Panchayat, while 79.28% have said that there is no such reward system for good, responsible and accountable staff / members of Gram Panchayat.

Q-7. Whether performance appraisal system is effective in up-gradation of staff / members at Gram Panchayat level.

Table : 8.7 : Effectiveness of Performance appraisal system

Variable	Number	%
Yes	68	61.26
No	43	38.74
Total =	111	100

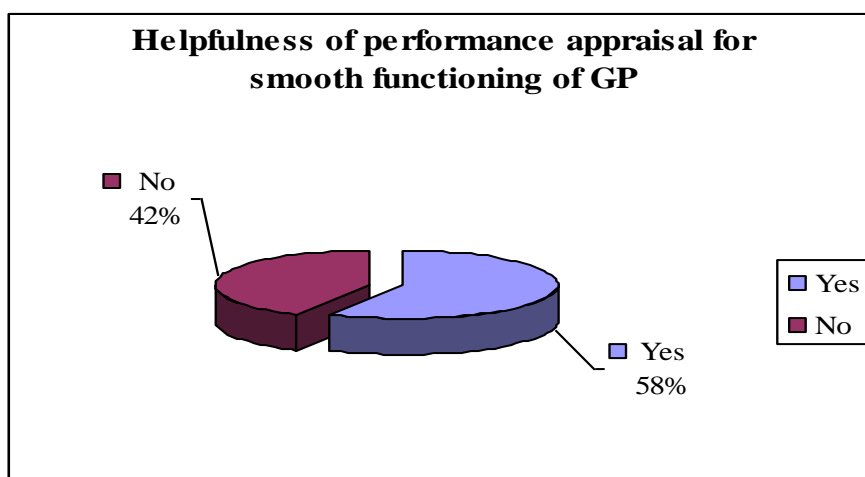
- ❖ 61.26% respondents have agreed that potential appraisal practices are helpful for up-gradation of staff / members, while 38.74% have said that performance appraisal are not helpful for gradation of staff / members at GP level.

Q-8. Whether for smooth functioning of GP and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes performance appraisal system is helpful

Table : 8.8 : Helpfulness of performance appraisal for smooth functioning of GP

Variable	Number	%
Yes	64	57.66
No	47	42.34
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 57.66% respondents have opined that, for the smooth functioning of the village Panchayat and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes performance appraisal system is helpful, but 42.34% have said that performance appraisal always may not be helpful for smooth functioning of village Panchayat and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes.

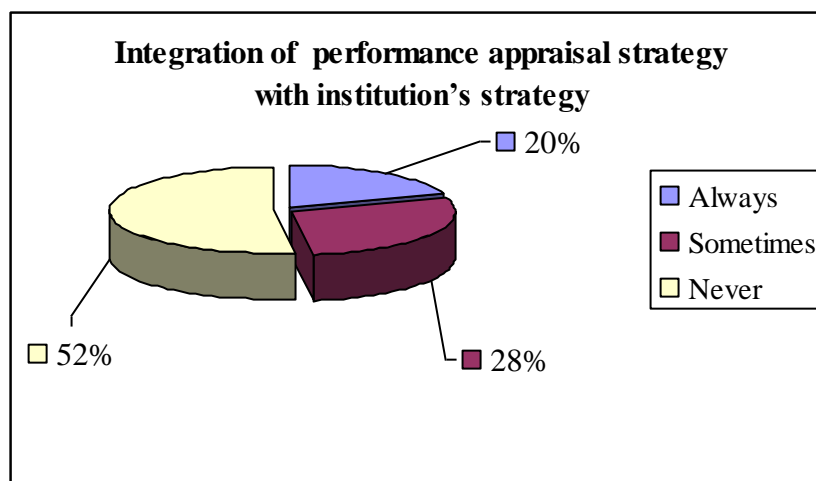


Q-9. Whether present performance appraisal strategy is integrated with your institution's strategy for achieving institutional goals

Table : 8.9 : Integration of performance appraisal strategy with institution's strategy

Variable	Number	%
Always	22	19.82
Sometimes	31	27.93
Never	58	52.25
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 19.82% respondents have agreed that, present performance appraisal strategy is always integrated with institution's strategy for achieving institutional goals, 27.93% have said that present performance appraisal strategy is sometimes integrated with institution's strategy for achieving institutional goals, whereas, 52.25% respondents have opined that, there is no such type of practice at GP level.

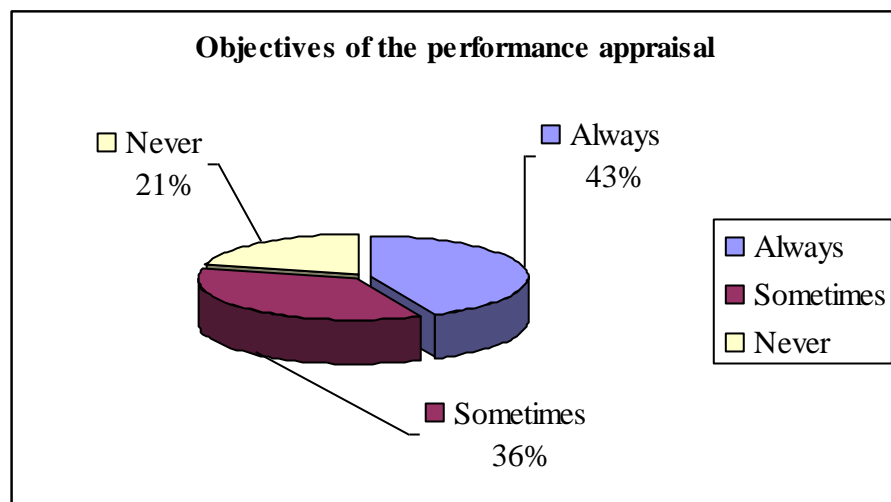


Q-10. Whether objectives of performance appraisal system are clear to all staff / members.

Table : 8.10 : Objectives of the performance appraisal

Variable	Number	%
Always	48	43.24
Sometimes	40	36.04
Never	23	20.72
Total =	111	100

- ❖ 43.24% have said that, objectives of performance appraisal system are always clear to all staff / members, 36.04% have said that the objectives of performance appraisal system are clear sometimes to all staff / members, whereas 20.72% respondents have said that objectives of performance appraisal system are never clear to all staff / members.



Under the above circumstances and after reviewing the GP level work it has been detected that performance appraisal system is partly or totally absent in many cases. After through analysis of Panchayat level work it is found that, importance has been given on infrastructure, agriculture, poverty alleviation, sanitation, health, education etc. but there is a lack of interest and initiative for the development and management of Panchayat level functionaries i.e. members & Staff etc. Moreover, it is also observed that, at gram Panchayat level there is not existence of individual performance appraisal system for good, competent and efficient personnel.

The practice of performance appraisal does not only motivate staff / members of village Panchayat, but also helps to extract their potentiality. It also encourages the functionaries to give their full efforts towards the institutional developments. It builds committed, efficient, accountable and responsible workforce which ultimately helps for necessary attainment of institutional goal as well as rural development for the state.

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CHAPTER – IX

E – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT : A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THREE BLOCKS IN NADIA DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and technological advancement nature, volume and variety of functions of an organisation is fast changing. In the competitive global scenario organizations are facing so many problems against their progress and prosperity. To keep up their progress intact the organisation needs to develop and nurture their vital assets i.e. human resources. They should also adopt advance technology.

Advance technology such as computer, telephone, internet, and intranet has performed a revolutionary change in the corporate sector. With the help of advance technology organizations perform their jobs smoothly and efficiently within a short span of time. It is not only savings of time but savings of cost also.

Gram Panchayat is one of the vital components of three tier Panchayat systems in the state. Major rural development related government programmes are implemented at grassroots level through Gram Panchayat. Therefore, Gram Panchayat is the only medium for rural development at village level.

Among Indian states, the state of West Bengal is a premier for effective implementation of Panchayati Raj system. Panchayat system in the state is advanced and updated too. As a part of e-governance initiative government of West Bengal has launched IT system at each tier of Panchayats. In the three tier Panchayat system Gram Panchayat as a grass root level government unit working towards development in local areas. The advance technology i.e. the computer and internet facilities as a part of e-governance measures are also available at Gram Panchayat level. It also gives the Panchayat system a positive response and extra opportunity towards advancement of new millennium. Computer and internet facilities at GP level not only help for the smooth functioning of GP but also to facilitate the development related activities in rural areas. It is also time and cost savings. There are so

many works at GP level that are done and maintained by computers. For necessary storage and posting of projects data, to maintain GP accounts, produce certificates etc. there is specific software named Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) at GP level. Thus, Panchayats have become more advanced and effective.

The prime focus of the software (GPMS) is to standardize the accounting system of PRIs and to make account keeping easy, transparent and comfortable to the users. GPMS also helps the Gram Panchayats in rendering a number of citizen centric services viz., issue of Birth & Death Certificates, Assessment of Tax on Land and Buildings, Issue of Trade Certificates etc. But in the existing system there is no such provision of e-human resource management scheme for necessary development of workforce and web-based application of human resource management system at GP level.

Though, smooth functioning of GP as well as development of rural areas mostly depends upon the performance of GP personnel. If they are not efficient and dynamic all the initiatives and planning taken by GP will be in vain. Through implementation of e-human resource management (e-HRM) system it is possible build effective and dynamic personnel at GP level. There are so many organizations in India and abroad improved their personnel capacities and competencies through e-HRM. But such type of practice is totally or partially absent in our Panchayat system.

Electronic Human resource management (e-HRM) is a part and parcel of human resource management. It is the advanced form of human resource management. It facilitates standardized work culture in organisations and also simplifies the work of people at their work places. Through e-HRM it is possible to maintain and execute the others human resource management related work such as planning, training and development, performance appraisal, recruitment, selection, reward and remuneration etc.

e-HRM in this regard is helpful to track the position of human resources of an institution. Through e-HRM it is possible to arrange and conduct training and development programmes, performance appraisal, evaluation of workforce planning etc. Employees can also use the system of e-HRM to plan their personal development.

Paauwe, Farndale and Williams (2005 : 3) said that “the HRM function is subject to radical and dramatic change because of the implications of web-based organizing”. The combination of information technology (IT) tools in HRM processes has been named “electronic Human Resources Management”. e-HRM strives to implement all the operational activities that HRM is concerned with, with the help of technological tools in a fast and accurate way.

According to U. V. Patil (2013 : 27) e-HRM is relatively a new term. e-HRM technology is a way of aligning and coping up with organization HR strategies, policies and practices. The e-HRM technology supports the HR function through web-technology based channels.

E-HRM is a good way of implementing HR strategies, policies, and practices in organizations through a continuous and directed support by full use of web-technology-based channels and networks. The word 'implementing' in this context has a broad meaning, such as creating something to work, putting something into practice, or achieving something. E-HRM, therefore, is a concept - a way of 'doing' HRM. The e-HRM business solution is designed for human resources professionals and executive managers who need support to manage the work force, monitor changes, gather the information needed in decision-making and controlling them and to co-ordinate the employees in organizations. At the same time it enables all employees to participate in the process and keep track of relevant information. (K. Reddi Swaroop : 2012 : 133-138).

Rural development is a vital issue in West Bengal and for necessary rural development the role and responsibility of Panchayati Raj Institutions are also important. In three tier Panchayati Raj system GP is the grass-root level government institution working with the local people. GP as a local level executive body, responsible for necessary implementation and execution of governmental plans and programmes. Here emphasis has been made to what extent, technology be used effectively in village Panchayat activities. In what ways can village Panchayat system be made more effective vis – a – vis rural development through introduction of e-HRM as a part of e-Governance measures.

Here in this chapter attention has been given on e-human resource management system at GP level for effective rural development in West Bengal. Here emphasis has also been made how e - HRM system becomes effective in rural development in the state.

This chapter is also devoted to provide the necessary details of e - HRM and its implication for rural development in West Bengal. Here the study puts emphasis on necessary details of e - HRM such as concept, definition, nature, functions, advantages and importance etc. for better understanding of the subject.

CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF E -HRM

e-HRM (Electronic- Human Resource Management) is a web-based solution that takes advantage of latest web application technology to deliver an online real-time Human Resource Management application. e-HRM is a way of implementing HR strategies, policies and practices in organisations with the full use of web-technology based channels. To understand e-HRM, one must know what it actually means. Electronic human resource management is a relatively new term in organizations. There are so many definitions on e-HRM. The most selected definitions are as follows :

According to Bondarouk and Ruël (2009 : 507) e-HRM is an umbrella term covering all possible integration mechanisms and contents between HRM and information technologies aiming at creating value within and across organizations for targeted employees and management.

According to Lednick-Hall and Moritz (2003) e-HRM as conducting HR transactions using the internet or intranet. Voermans and Van Veldhoven (2007 : 887) write, 'e-HRM could be narrowly defined as the administrative support of the HR function in organizations by using Internet technology'.

According to Sanayei & Mirzaei (2008) e-HRM is a way to implement human resources strategies, policies and practices in organizations through the use of internet channels and take full advantages of them.

According to Indranil Mutsuddi (2010 : 585), Electronic Human Resource Management System (e-HRM System) is a web-based solution that takes advantage of the latest web application technology to deliver an online real-time human resource management solution.

“In order to meet the demands of today’s knowledge-based economy, companies must maximize the potential and productivity of their employees. Information Technology is playing an important role in HRM practices” (Lengnick & Moritz : 2003).

Bondarouk and Looise (2004 : 16) define e-HRM as ‘a way of implementing HRM strategies, policies, and practices in organizations through the conscious and direct support of and/or with the full use of channels based on web-technologies’.

E-HRM can be used for transactional activities (i.e. those that involve day-to-day transactions and record keeping); traditional HRM activities such as recruitment, selection, training, compensation and performance management; and transformational activities that add value to the organization (Thite and Kavanagh : 2008).

Moreover, Ruel (2009) defined E-HRM as an inclusive term contains all the mechanisms of integration and its contents between the human resources management, information technology, which aims to create value within organizations. Moreover, it was defined by Oiry, (2009) as the use of Web technology in the practice of human resources and administrative policies.

According to Ramayah (2011) e-HRM is a technology that provides the human resources functions with opportunities to create new areas to contribute to organizational success. Furthermore, Strohmeier (2007) concluded the definition of e-HRM as the process of innovation and continuous improvement in the management of human resources caused by all this new phenomena and major changes.

FUNCTIONS OF E-HRM

There are so many functions of e-HRM in an organization. According to P. Suchitra (2014 : 31-38), the main functions of E-HRM are as follows :

E-Job Design and E-Job Analysis : In a de-jobbing environment, alternative work schedules, flexi work, broad job banding, employee empowerment and multi skilling, HRM managers job is to identify and match employees skills and companies requirements. e-HRM plays a vital role in such de-jobbed environment.

E-HRP: Computer programmes are extensively developed and used for the purpose of planning HRM requirements based on data and information. e-HRP is an important function of e-HRM.

E-Recruitment: Alternatively called online recruiting, e recruitment is being widely used these days. e-Recruiting offers several benefits to the firms practising it. e-Recruitment is one of the most important functions of e-HRM.

E-Selection: The purposes of e-selection are mainly three (a) achieving cost reduction, (b) maximum utilization of human capital, and (c) sustainability. The second objective of e-selection is to achieve maximum utilization of human capital. This is being achieved through high retention rates, increased percentage of candidates who meet employment requirement and improved productivity after the new hires. Sustainability is the last objective of e-selection. Sustainability refers to the organizations ability and willingness to maintain the e-enabled system and also progressively evolve the system to satisfy changing requirements. Sustainability is necessary to ensure that the business continues to reap ongoing benefits from e-enabled systems.

E-Training and Development : It provides a complete scalable and open infrastructure that allows organizations to manage, deliver and track employee training participation in online or classroom based environments. It aims to ensure that HRM provides the right resources, competent and experienced trainer and consolidate training initiatives scalable cost effective basis, apart from measuring training effectiveness.

E-Payroll : It takes care of employee salary payment. E-payroll model automatically collected data regarding employee attendance and work regard for generating paychecks and tax reports. It enables to cross simultaneously fro data entry to fully recognized results and multiple employee groups.

E-HRM Records:- HRM records are created, maintained and updated with the help of computers easily and rated fast way.

E-Performance Management : The use of technology in performance management tends to increase productivity, enhance competitiveness and motivate employees through

facilitating measurement of individual's performance via computer monitoring activities facilitates the process of writing reviews or generating performance feedback.

E-Learning: It refers to the use of Internet or an organizational Intranet to conduct training online. It has become increasingly popular because of large number of employees, who need training.

E-Compensation: It represents a web-enabled approach to an array of compensation tools that enable an organization to gather, store, manipulate, analyse, utilize and distribute compensation data and information.

Thus, e-HRM assists in smooth functioning of human resource management system in organizational set up.

NATURE OF E-HRM

When HR department makes use of the Internet and related technologies to support their activities, the process becomes e-HRM (where e stands for electronic). E-HRM is the complete integration of all HR systems and processes based on common HR data and information and on interdependent tools and processes. Fully developed e-HRM could provide the data gathering tools, analysis capabilities and decision support resources for HR professionals to hire, pay, promote, terminate, assign, develop, appraise and reward employees in ways that fully engage them in managing their own outcomes, maximize the contribution of each employees, and support execution of firm's strategy (Hal G. Gueutal and Dianna L. Stone : 2005 : 54).

E-HRM has the potential to change all traditional HRM functions. For example employees in different geographic locations can work together. Use of Internet enables companies to search for talent cutting across time and distance constraints. Recruiting can include online job postings, applications and candidates screening from the company's Website or the Website of recruiting firms, such as monster.com, naukri.com and clickjobs.com. Employees from geographic locations can all receive the same training over the company's computer network (Raymond A. Noe : 2007 : 52).

In addition E-HR can contribute to enhanced performance of HR in four ways: self service, call centres, productivity improvement, and outsourcing. Using company's intranet, all the employees can self-service many of their personal transactions, such as updating personal information and changing benefits allocations. Thanks to technology, a centralized call centre can be created within the organisation. From the call centre, HR specialists can answer questions from all far flung (Company's) employees, reducing the need for HR department at each location (K. Aswathappa : 2011 : 794-795).

More and more companies are installing internet and computer-based systems for improving HR productivity. Technology also makes it easier to outsource HR activities to specialist service providers by giving vendors real-time, internet-based access to the employer's HR information database (ibid.).

ADVANTAGES OF E- HRM

According to S. R. Kulkarni (2014 : 63-64) the advantages of e-HRM are as follows :

Tracking of Applicants : In the existing economic environment any job advertisement receives huge response. It is required to cross check applicants from one job to another, and to track each applicant through the selection process. Frequently applicants passed over from one job may be a good match for another.

e- Employee Profile : The e-employee profile web application provides a central point of access to the employee. It includes contact information and provides a comprehensive employee database solution. It is very much useful in making decisions with less cost and at fast speed.

e-Recruitment : Today the internet has become a primary means for employers to search for candidates and for applicants who look for a job. The employers post their vacancy position in the job search web portals. These websites help in review resumes in online mode which helps to reduce the recruitment cost.

e-Selection : Most employers are recruiting their employees from the online job search engines (website like Naukari, Monster) etc. The new tests are now conducted using IT based software.

e-Learning : E-Learning refers to the programme of learning, training or education where electronic devices, applications and processes are used for knowledge creation, management and transfer. e-learning covers a wide set of applications and processes. It helps to save time and money.

Classical Virtual Learning : The classical learning model has derived from non- reversible flow of information. The virtual learning system enables horizontal and vertical communication.

e-Training : Most organizations start to think of online learning primarily as a more efficient way to distribute training inside the organization, making it available “any time”, “anywhere” reducing direct costs and indirect costs.

e-Performance Management : A web-based appraisal system can be defined as the system which uses the web (intranet and internet) for effective evaluation of skills, knowledge and performance of the employees.

e-Compensation : Compensation planning is the process of ensuring appropriate salary equitably across the organization while staying within budget guidelines. The usage of intranet and internet for compensation planning is called E-Compensation Management which reduces the cost.

Grievance Redressal : Effective automated grievance management system information can save money, avoid unnecessary ill-will, and avoid the prospect of losing grievances or arbitrations for technical reasons.

Paperless HR work : With the growing awareness for environmental sustainability, many companies are looking for ways to “go green.” Implementing a HRIS will help to reduce almost all of the paperwork associated with HR tasks which can save money and time.

e-Leave : It helps to reduce the cost by defining the work force in advance and to review the past data records of the employee leave etc. In this way it will reduce the cost.

According to U. V. Patil (2013 : 31) the advantages of E-HRM are as follows :

- Improve accuracy and reduce human bias.
- Crucial functions of HRM such as recruitment, selection, training, and development could be carried out using web-based technologies.
- Improvements in administration & efficiency.
- E-HRM helps the organization to reduce administrative work and also helpful for cost reduction programme.
- It helps HR department to get a profile of the employees and current news of the organization.
- HR managers will become more efficient in their working.
- It helps the organization to recruit employees through Internet .This recruiting is a faster communication.
- E-HRM helps to save time.
- Employees concentrate on the work efficiently
- More security of data in E-HRM.
- E-HRM supports multi-language.
- E-HRM is a more dynamic workflow in the business process, productivity.

Thus, e-HRM helps the organisation by improving accuracy, administrative efficiency and by saving time and cost.

E – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS

Institutional success mostly depends upon the quality of human resources. As because all institutional strategies, future plan, programmes etc. maintained and looked after by human resources. If all strategies, plans, programmes taken in right time and right ways and implemented properly, the success of the institution will be accordingly. But effective strategies, plans and programmes are possible only those institution; where effective, efficient and competent workforces are available.

Through human resource management it is possible to maintain and developed human resources of an institution. Human resource management helps to make effective, efficient

and competent personnel for the institution through proper planning, training and development, motivation and performance appraisal system.

According to S K. Srivastava (2010 : 47-50) shaping organization is essential and required task for any management to produce a qualitative and reliable product for their customers. So, today we can easily see a concept of Human Resource Management (HRM) in every organization for internal management and efficient utilization of resource to produce a better and new technological product for their customers. The importance of human resources to any organization need not be over-emphasized. Human resource is the wealth of a nation and an organization. Basically, every organization directly depends on the HRM for good implementation of resource for the task designed and planned by top level management. If an organization has good and responsible human resources then the output of that company automatically would be excellent. HRM is generally the essence of being a manager who has to get things that done by others. It generally leads to the maximum utilization of human resources, reduces excessive labour turnover also.

The only vital value for an enterprise is the experience, skills, innovativeness and insights of its people. Human resources are the key components in every organization. It represents total knowledge, talent, and attitude, creative ability, aptitude and belief of an individual involved in the affairs of an organization. Management of human resources is an integral part for every concern. It is associated with the people at work and their relationships within and outside the enterprise. Recruitment of efficient staff is one of the important activities as it generates the human capital for the concern. In the recent years, the field of human resource management has undergone numerous technological advancements. Internet has made an impact on the overall functioning of human resource department (P. Dhamija : 2012 : 33).

HR processes and procedures have been supported by everything from complicated file-folder systems to automation, going from usage multiple systems and databases to a single version of the whole system. It has progressed with frequent innovations viz; Human Resource Information System, Virtual Human Resources and Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM) etc. E-HRM means conducting of business transactions by using internet along with other technologies. In other words, E-HRM is a way of implementing

HRM strategies, policies and practices in an organization through a directed support of web technology based channels. It influences every area of human resource management (ibid.).

According to K. R. Swaroop (2012 : 133-138) E-HRM is a good way of implementing HR strategies, policies, and practices in organizations through a continuous and directed support by full use of web-technology-based channels and networks. The word 'implementing' in this context has a broad meaning, such as creating something to work, putting something into practice, or achieving something. E-HRM, therefore, is a concept - a way of 'doing' HRM. The e-HRM business solution is designed for human resources professionals and executive managers who need support to manage the work force, monitor, changes, gather the information needed in decision-making and controlling them and to co-ordinate the employees in organization. At the same time it enables all employees to participate in the process and keep track of relevant information.

The concept of electronic human resource management (e-HRM) is an implementation support system (ISS) for HRM. For understanding the better skills, creative abilities and talents of human resources at a very quick time there must be a concept of e-HRM. Generally e-HRM is an interface through which we can directly communicate or know about the right talent through traverse some list or records in our personal database without creating any issue. e-HRM is not a specific stage in the development of HRM, but a choice for an approach to HRM. If we have an appropriate record about our resources that are being used so HRM can do their work very easily. Electronic-HRM automatically reduces a stack of papers or a document type office (S. K. Srivastava : 2010 : 47-50).

Organizations that view their HR as a strategic business partners believe in full maturity of their HR function. Such organizations are focused on attaining leadership positions rather than a year-on-year growth. Bottom-line and top-line growths are expected to be achieved automatically. Total compensation (payroll and benefits) also becomes a focus area where the HR helps the organization attract and retain skilled employees by becoming a leader in compensation management. Using the skill database and the organization structure, the HR function iteratively evolves compensation practices, improves the training function and makes the recruitment function more attuned to the skills needed by the organization. Size and age of an organization has no bearing on the maturity of their HR function. Maturity

has much to do with the focus of “management on people” which constitutes their biggest asset. Thus e-HRM as an Implementation Support System (ISS) can help the organization to quickly mature their HR function and institutionalize best-practices for long-term growth (ibid).

Thus, as a web based tool E- HRM helps to automate and support the human resource process in institution. E- HRM (Electronic Human Resource Management) facilitates to maintain HR data and produce the exact information required to manage human resources in an institution.

E- HRM is a web based tool to automate and support HR processes. The implementation of E-HRM is an opportunity to delegate the data entry to the employee. E- HRM facilitates the usages of HR marketplace and offers more self-service to the employees. E- HRM is an advance business solution which provides a complete on-line support in the management of all processes, activities, data and information required to manage human resources in a modern organisation.

Thus, e-HRM helps and contributes its full efforts towards attainment of success in an organisation.

E-HRM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMNET IN WEST BENGAL

Rural development is an important issue in India as well as in the state of West Bengal. After independence Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved and expected to play an important role in rural development in India. Special attention and importance has been given to these institutions for rural development by planning commission and committees constituted by government of India.

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system the role of Gram Panchayat in rural development is very crucial and important. As GP is the grass root level government machinery, therefore the role of GP and its functionaries (staff and members) have a vital role to play for proper rural development of the state.

Government of India and the state government implemented so many planning, programmes, projects for the purpose of rural development. There are also available funds

and other resources for the purpose of rural development. But the expected and desired rural development in the state yet to be achieved.

In the three tier Panchayati Raj system Gram Panchayat has a great role to play for rural development in West Bengal. As because GP as a grass root level institution implements and executes all governmental planning, programmes and projects at practical field level. They work with the local people. They know well the sufferings of the village people and their desires. They also know the priority of the village level work, which is essential at the time of local level planning and its implementation. Proper planning and implementation are possible only when there are existence of effective, competent and efficient staff and elected representatives at GP level. Other wise all initiatives at GP level will be fruitless and incomplete.

Therefore the role of human resources at gram Panchayat is very important. Planning, programmes, projects, infrastructure and money not only can serve the purpose of necessary rural development in the state, except efficient, competent and effective GP personnel. Therefore human resource is the core and vital issue for rural development in this state. Through human resource management it is possible to nurture, motivate and develop the capacity, efficiency of the staff and elected representatives of GP.

There are so many organizations in India and abroad, enhanced the organisational effectiveness and capabilities through effective use of e-HRM. But such type of practice at local self government institution in the state is partly or totally absent.

Electronic human resource management (E-HRM) as a web based tool help to automate and support the human resource process in institution. It also facilitates to maintain HR data and produce the exact information as and when required to manage human resources in an institution. E-HRM as an on-line support system helps to process, activities, data and information required to manage human resources in an institution.

It is an efficient, reliable, and easy – to use tool, accessible to a broad group of different users. e - HRM is a way of implementing HR strategies, policies, and practices in organizations through the use of web-technology-based channels. It covers all aspects of human resource management like personnel administration, education and training, career

development, performance appraisal, corporate organization, job descriptions, hiring process, employee's personal pages, and annual interviews with employees. Therefore e-HRM is a way of doing HRM in cost effective manner in an organization.

If we look after the Panchayat system in West Bengal at village level, it is found that, there is existing on-line (IT) system as a part of e-governance initiative. The Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) is the most popular e-Governance initiatives of the Panchayats & Rural Development Department of the Government of West Bengal, focused to Gram Panchayats which is the lowest tier of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system and the institution closest to the common people. The prime focus of software is to standardize the accounting system of the PRIs and to make account keeping easy, transparent and comfortable to the users. GPMS also helps the Gram Panchayats in rendering a number of citizen centric services viz., issue of Birth & Death Certificates, Assessment of Tax on Land and Buildings, Issue of Trade Certificates etc.

This website was designed as a part of the management initiatives for running of GPMS in the State. Apart from helping the Department, it also enables the District and Block level authorities to keep themselves informed of the status of running of GPMS in their respective jurisdictions and take administrative decisions based on such information. It is also open for public in general, especially for people who are interested in electronic Governance.

According to annual report (2008-2009) Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal has taken some initiatives towards implementation of e-Governance system at grass root level to fulfil the development plan at an extent level.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become an effective tool for improving governance. The Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) software is an initiative towards implementation of e-governance system at village Panchayat institutions. Apart from streamlining the accounts some other services were added. The most remarkable among these is the introduction of the option of tax on land and building related entries. The added features include data entry relating to value of property, generation of registers of the market values of properties, list of assesses and tax paid by them. A number of GPs are using the software for generating the assessment list. Block level officials like the Block Informatics Officers and Data Entry Operators were also trained to provide

support to the GP employees. Till the end of March 2009 the software has been installed in 1978 GPs out of which 939 GPs were using the software on a regular basis. During the year special emphasis was given to encourage Gram Panchayats to become 'paperless', i.e., to keep accounts using software only. By the end of the financial year 76 GPs have stopped manual accounting. Many other GPs have also reached such competence and the process of allowing them not to write the manual cash book, has been initiated.

In the following sections, an initiative has been taken in order to understand the practice and effectiveness of Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM) in three blocks of Nadia District. Here an attempt has also been taken to examine and describe whether there is any scheme at the Gram Panchayat system in three blocks of Nadia district in West Bengal and have tried to understand in what ways can village Panchayat system be made more effective vis – a – vis rural development through introduction of e- Human Resource Management as a part of e-governance measures.

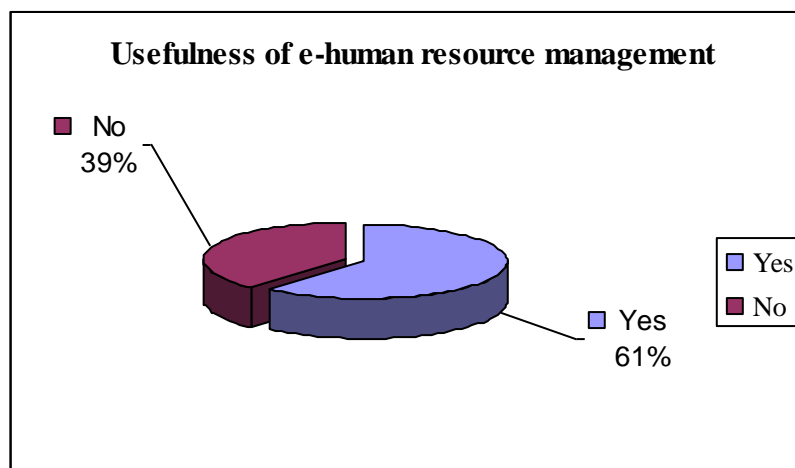
For necessary analysis of the effectiveness of e-HRM system in utilization of human resources at GP level, primary data has been collected from three respective blocks of Nadia district by using different parameters. Which are as follows :

Q-1. Do you think the practices of e-human resource management at Gram Panchayats level is helpful for institutional effectiveness?

Table : 9.1 : Usefulness of e-human resource management

Variable	Number	%
Yes	68	61.26
No	43	38.74
Total =	111	100

- Nearly 61.26% respondents have agreed that the practices of e-human resource management at village Panchayat level is helpful for institutional effectiveness and 38.74% respondents have said that the practices of e-human resource management at village Panchayat level may not always helpful for institutional effectiveness.



Q-2. Is there any web based human resource management system in your institution?

Table : 9.2 : Existence of web based human resource management system

Variable	Number	%
Yes	14	12.61
No	97	87.39
Total =	111	100

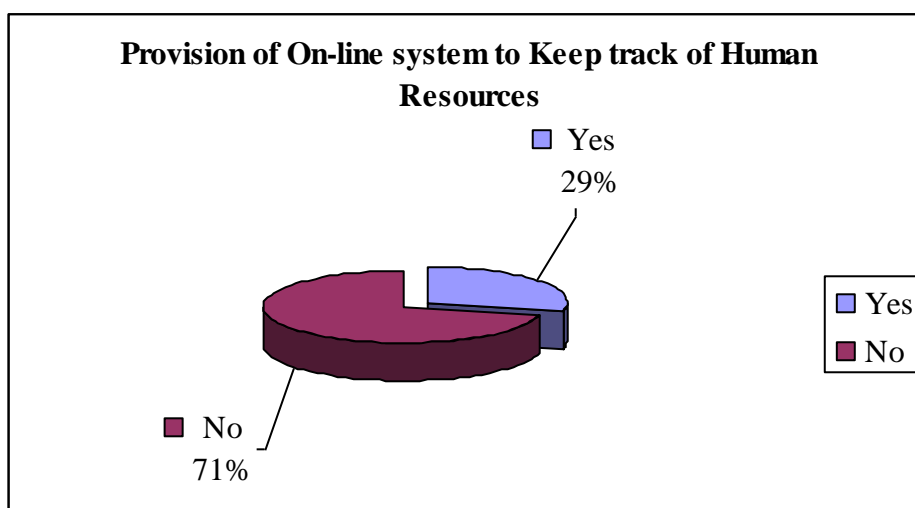
- 12.61% respondents have agreed that there is web based human resource management system at Gram Panchayat, while 87.39% have said that there is not available such type of web based human resource management system at Gram Panchayat level.

Q-3. Whether there is any other on-line system to keep track of the Human Resources at Gram Panchayat level?

Table : 9.3 : Provision of On-line system to Keep track of Human Resources

Variable	Number	%
Yes	32	28.83
No	79	71.17
Total =	111	100

- 28.83% respondents have said that there is existence of on-line system to keep track of the Human Resources at Gram Panchayat level, while 71.17% respondents have said that there is not availability of any such on-line system to keep track of Human Resources at Gram Panchayat level.



Q-4. Is it possible to get the data of trained and untrained staff / members of your Panchayat through on-line system

Table : 9.4 : Possibility to get the data of trained and untrained staff / members through on-line system

Variable	Number	%
Yes	58	52.25
No	53	47.75
Total =	111	100

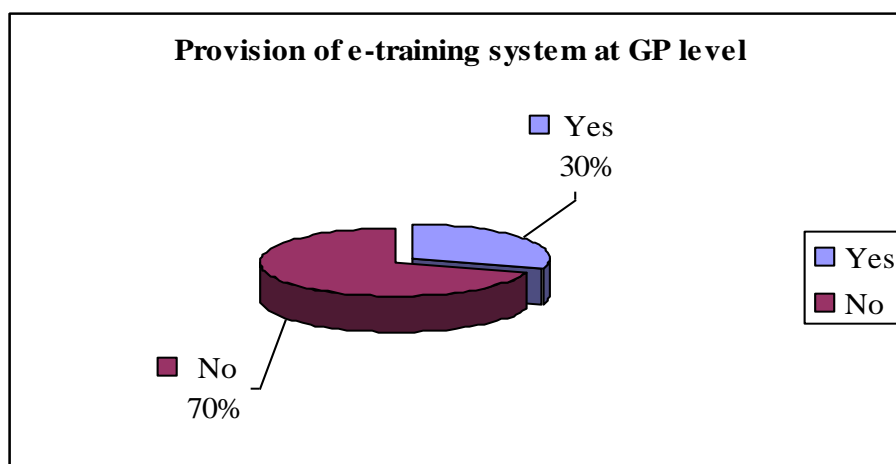
- In response 52.25% have said that at Gram Panchayat level it possible to get the data of trained and untrained staff / members through on-line system, but 47.75% have opined that it is not possible to get the details of trained and untrained staff / members through on-line system.

Q-5. If there is any provision of e-training system at Gram Panchayat level

Table : 9.5 : Provision of e-training system at GP level

Variable	Number	%
Yes	33	29.73
No	78	70.27
Total =	111	100

- Only 29.73% respondents have said that there is provision of e-training system at village Panchayat level, while 70.27% have said that there is no such provision of e-training system at GP level.



Q.6. If there is any provision of e-performance management system at Gram Panchayat level?

Table : 9.6 : Provision of e-performance management system

Variable	Number	%
Yes	28	25.23
No	83	74.77
Total =	111	100

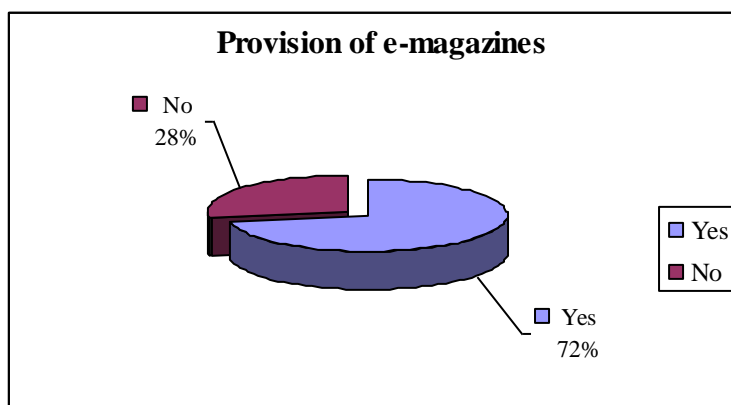
- Out of 111 functionaries 25.23% have said that there is a provision of e-performance management system at village Panchayat level, but 74.77% have said that there is no provision of e-performance management system at Gram Panchayat level.

Q-7. If there is any provision of e-magazines across the Gram Panchayat institutions for the enhancement of knowledge and capability of staff / members?

Table : 9.7 : Provision of e-magazines

Variable	Number	%
Yes	80	72.07
No	31	27.93
Total =	111	100

- 72.07% respondents have agreed that there is a provision of e-magazines across the Gram Panchayat institutions for the enhancement of knowledge and capability of staff / members and 27.93% said that there is no such provision of e-magazines across the Gram Panchayat institutions for the enhancement of knowledge and capability of staff / members.



Q-8. Do you think e-HRM may be helpful to estimate the staff / members strength?

Table : 9.8 : Whether e-HRM may be helpful to estimate the staff / members strength

Variable	Number	%
Yes	67	60.36
No	44	39.64
Total =	111	100

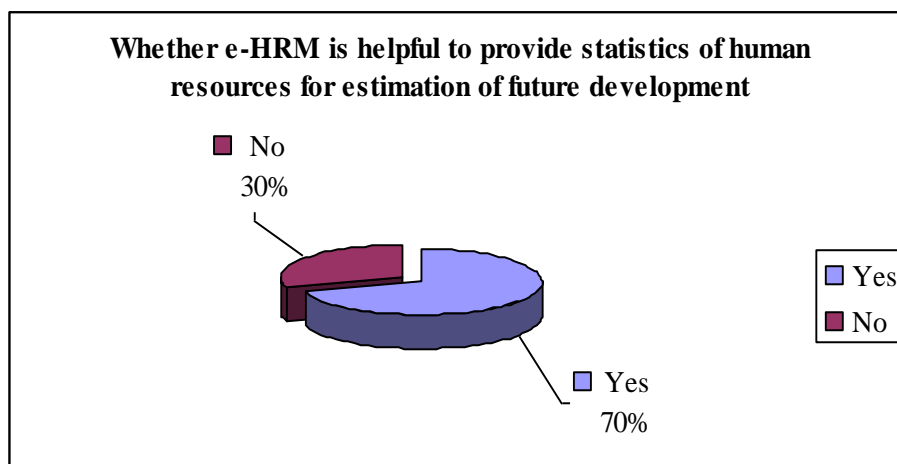
- 60.36% respondents have said that e-HRM may be helpful to estimate the staff / members strength, but 39.64% have said that e-HRM always may not be helpful to estimate the staff / members strength.

Q-9. Do you think e-HRM may be helpful to provide necessary statistics of human resources as and when required for necessary estimation of future development

Table : 9.9 : Whether e-HRM is helpful to provide statistics of human resources for estimation of future development

Variable	Number	%
Yes	78	70.27
No	33	29.73
Total =	111	100

- 70.27% respondents have agreed that e-HRM may be helpful to provide necessary statistics of human resources as and when required for necessary estimation of future development and 29.73% have said that e-HRM may not be helpful to provide necessary statistics of human resources as and when required for necessary estimation of future development.



Q- 10 : Whether it ensures multi site consolidation of information online and real time

Table : 9.10 : Whether it ensures multi site consolidation of information online and real time

Variable	Number	%
Yes	65	58.56
No	46	41.44
Total =	111	100

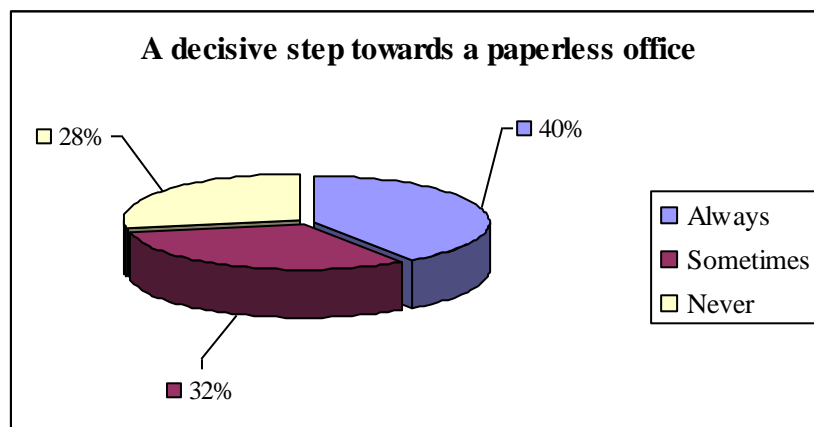
- 58.56% have said that e-HRM ensure multi site consolidation of information online and real time and 41.44% have said that it is not always ensure multi site consolidation of information online and real time.

Q-11. Whether e-HRM is a decisive step towards a paperless office

Table : 9.11 : A decisive step towards a paperless office

Variable	Number	%
Always	45	40.54
Sometimes	35	31.53
Never	31	27.93
Total =	111	100

- 40.54% have said that, e-HRM is always a decisive step towards a paperless office, 31.53% have said that the e-HRM is sometimes a decisive step towards a paperless office, whereas 27.93% respondents have said that e-HRM is never a decisive step towards a paperless office.

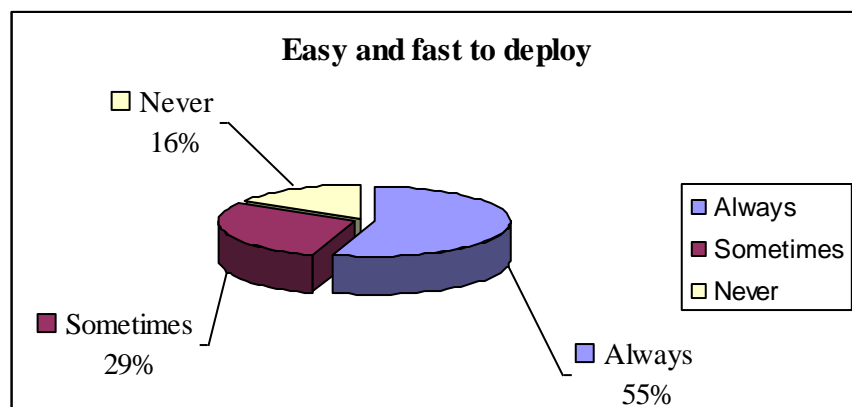


Q-12. Whether e-HRM is Easy and fast to deploy

Table : 9.12 : Easy and fast to deploy

Variable	Number	%
Always	61	54.95
Sometimes	32	28.83
Never	18	16.22
Total =	111	100

- 54.95% have said that, e-HRM is always easy and fast to deploy, 28.83% have agreed that e-HRM is sometimes easy and fast to deploy whereas, 16.22% have opined that e-HRM is never easy and fast to deploy.

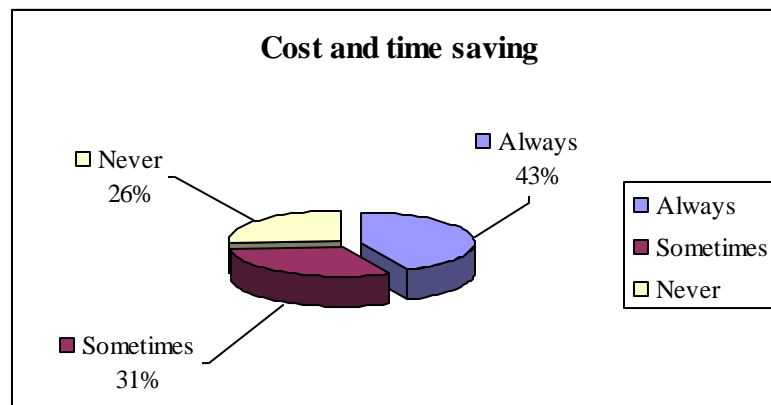


Q-13. Whether e-HRM is Cost and time saving

Table : 9.13 : Cost and time saving

Variable	Number	%
Always	48	43.24
Sometimes	34	30.63
Never	29	26.13
Total =	111	100

- 43.24% have agreed that, e-HRM is always cost and time saving, 30.63% have said that e-HRM is sometimes cost and time saving but, 26.13% respondents have said that e-HRM is never cost and time saving.

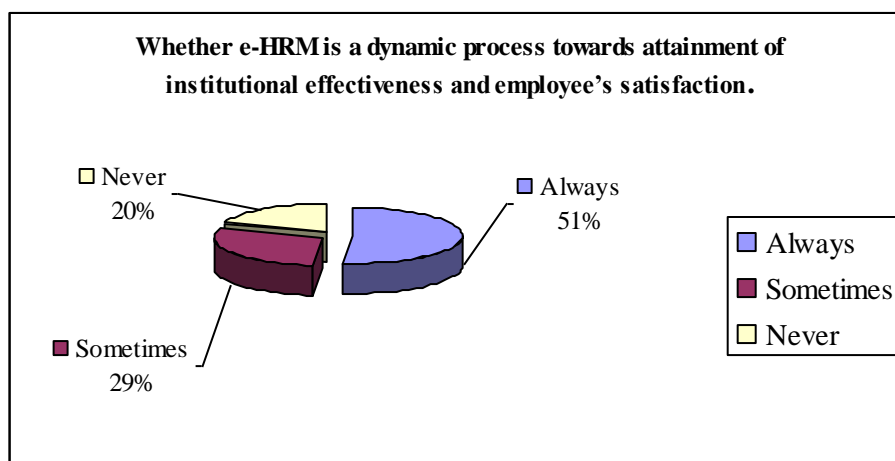


Q-14. Whether e-HRM is a dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and employee's satisfaction.

Table : 9.14 : Whether e-HRM is a dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and employee's satisfaction.

Variable	Number	%
Always	57	51.35
Sometimes	32	28.83
Never	22	19.82
Total =	111	100

- 51.35% have agreed that, e-HRM is always a dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and employee's satisfaction, 28.83% have said that the e-HRM is sometimes a dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and 19.82% have said that e-HRM is never a dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and employee's satisfaction.



If reviewed the e-Governance initiatives, implemented at Gram Panchayat level by Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal for desired development have yet not been fulfilled successfully. The Panchayat and Rural Development Department had taken firm steps to implement Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS), as a part of e-Governance initiative. In GPMS system the prime focus is given to standardize the accounting system of the PRIs and to make account keeping easy, transparent and comfortable to the users. GPMS also helps the Gram Panchayats in rendering a number of citizen centric services viz., issue of Birth & Death Certificates, Assessment of Tax on Land and Buildings, Issue of Trade Certificates etc.

Inspite of such great initiatives there is totally or partly absent the system of E-HRM (Electronic Human Resource Management) facilities as a part of human resource management at Gram Panchayat level. Through E-HRM it is possible to track the position of staff / members of Gram Panchayats spread all over West Bengal. Through E-HRM it is also possible to maintain databases for human resources and also to train, update and motivate the functionaries of Gram Panchayats for institutional success.

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New developments in science, technology, media and telecommunication, globalization are revolutionizing the socio-economic sector. In the era of globalization and technological advancement nature, volume and variety of functions of an organisation is fast changing. In the competitive global scenario organizations are facing so many problems against their progress and prosperity. To keep up their progress intact organisation needs to develop and nurture their vital assets i.e. human resources.

Researches on HRM and organizational performance have been trying to prove the vital causal link between good HRM policies and organizational performance and argue that firms should adopt well-fitted HR policies in order to increase their competitiveness. There are so many organisations and institutions in India and abroad enhanced their capacity and effectiveness through investment in human resource planning, training and performance appraisal as a part of human resource management and have become able to reach their desire goals and success. While acknowledging the potential benefits of Human Resource policies, this paper has explored to what extent local self-government in West Bengal have been deploying these policies as their major weapon to improve their performance. In particular, this paper has argued that, by and large, West Bengal Panchayats have not implemented or not been able to implement HR policies and quality initiatives in a wide extent. Instead of that, their uses of HR and quality policies are erratic and not encouraging in many places and with inconsistent outcomes at times which is not necessarily in the best interest of their employees and / or organizational performance in the long-term.

The overall aim of this dissertation is to concentrate its attention, to study human resource management practices at Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and its contribution to the performance of PRIs towards real rural development in West Bengal. The study also examines the relationship between HRM and effectiveness of local-self government Institutions for rural development in the state and to determine the role of staff / elected members of those institutions would become more competent, efficient, accountable and

responsible through human resource management practices towards attainment of institutional effectiveness as well as rural development in the state.

As a result of this study, it has been found that, there is a positive correlation between HRM practices and organizational effectiveness. HRM practices (namely human resource planning, training performance appraisal and e-human resource management) and development of functionaries of an organization (enhancement of capacity, efficiency, competency and accountability) are significantly closely related. The study indicates that individual capacity, efficiency and accountability have a great impact in determining organizational growth and success.

Development is a broad Concept. Rural development is an emerging issue in West Bengal. Though the state is pioneer in implementation of three tier Panchayat system and socio-economic development in rural areas, but in-spite of that parallel and desired rural development in the state yet to be achieved.

West Bengal is a small state of eastern India with vast population and most of the people of this state live in villages. Agriculture is one of the determinant of state economy. But most of the villages here have not been properly developed as desired. Though, parallel socio-economic development can hardly succeed without transforming its rural society. In three tier Panchayati Raj system Gram Panchayat as a grass-root level institution has a vital role and can also take active part to fulfill actual development in rural areas of the state.

In the context of a rapidly changing socio-economic development Gram Panchayats have to face with the emerging challenges for the sake of proper rural development. In existing structure, globalization demands change in management and mode of service delivery of Gram Panchayat. Progress of rural development mostly depends upon the service delivery and proper functioning of Panchayats.

If reviewed the Panchayat system in West Bengal it may be seen that some village Panchayats are able to produce expected results and many others are unable to do so, even in same district and in same block. What is the reason behind this? Why the difference between the two Panchayats? Why the difference in degree of rural development related work? Why is the difference found in rural infrastructure?

For effective rural development the Panchayat system should be strong and dynamic but how and in what way the Panchayat system may be systematic and dynamic at village level for effective rural development in this state. Can it be done through financial assistance? Is it by providing proper infrastructure or by providing proper planning and projects etc.? No. The one and only way is proper man power planning through human resource management and thus we can get expected outcome in rural development in the state.

The concept of Human Resource Management in West Bengal, especially in Panchayati Raj System seems to be in a formative stage. There are so many organisations / institutions in India and abroad, enhanced individual as well as institutional capabilities with the help of Human Resource Management (HRM) towards attainment of organisational / institutional goals. They have properly utilized HR policies. Such type of practice and application are hardly found in the Panchayat systems in West Bengal for desired rural development. Here the initiative lies. The research study has taken, the district of Nadia as a model for its more or less performance in rural development related work.

During field visit it has been seen better and desired rural development is possible only by those Panchayats, those have better managed human resources. If human resources of a Panchayat are good, accountable, responsible, competent and efficient; rural development under that Panchayat will be accordingly. For this, there is need to build accurate and efficient human resources for perfect Panchayat administration and institutional set up. Through proper human resource planning, training, and potential appraisal system it is possible to build perfect management and efficient administration of village Panchayat for rural development. For this there is an urgent need to develop man power and human potentiality through human resource management (HRM).

Here the study concentrates its attention how the system of human resource management contributes to the performance of Gram Panchayat functionaries for effective rural development. This thesis has also examined the study of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the perspective of rural development in West Bengal. Thus, the paper identifies the need of human resource management and its impact on rural development.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The first chapter discusses the idea of human resource management in general and its implication in village Panchayat institutions towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal in particular. Here the chapter also presents objectives, review of literature methodology, research questions, statement of the problem, rationale and area of this study etc;

The first relevant result of this dissertation is that, it has clarified the meaning of human resource management emphasized in second chapter. Here this chapter also has emphasized what is Human Resources (HR), what is Management and what is the meaning of Human Resource Management (HRM) and how it functions in institutional / organizational settings, why people are important and essential as institutional / organizational resources and how these resources can be effectively, efficiently and properly utilized.

This chapter is also devoted for providing the necessary details of human resource management and why the practice of human resource management needs to be essential at organizational level for all round development. Here it also emphasises the details of human resource management such as definition, nature, scope functions, importance, for better understanding of the subject. And finally considers HRM as a precious issue. It concludes with a discussion about how human resource management systems may be effective in rural development in the state.

Chapter three emphasized the necessary details and theoretical background of rural development. For better understanding of the subject necessary attention has also been given on the definition of rural development as described by renowned authors. Here, in this chapter attention has also been given on the concept, importance and objectives of rural development and have tried to find out the way by which rural development is possible.

One of the most interesting aspects related to this chapter is that here attention has also been given on the historical background of Panchayati Raj System in India since time immemorial. An evaluation and description has also been made on the Panchayati Raj

system in ancient, medieval and modern Indian perspective and have tried to find out whether there is any mechanism towards management and development of human resources.

Chapter four is devoted for providing the necessary details of rural development scenario in West Bengal. This chapter is also devoted to present the evolution and structure of Panchayati Raj Institution in West Bengal. This chapter also tries to explain the necessary details of Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal and the role of Gram Panchayat in rural development. Here it is also explained the active and important role of the functionaries of Gram Panchayat in rural development and the rural development scenario in the state. It concludes with a discussion about how human resource management systems may be effective in rural development in the state through enhancement of capacity, competency, efficiency and accountability of the functionaries of Gram Panchayat. And finally considers HRM as a precious issue.

A description has been made which is based on the study area in chapter five. Here the study has emphasized the role of village Panchayat in selected blocks in the district of Nadia. Here the study has also mentioned the socio-economic and demographic profiles of the sample district and three respective blocks.

Here attention has been given to highlight the role of the functionaries of Gram Panchayat (GP) in rural development. This chapter also accentuates the profiles and social background of the GP functionaries in Nadia district and depending upon their social background the chapter also tries to linkup why human resource management is necessary for building up effective, competent and efficient functionaries at Panchayati Raj Institutions towards rural development in the state.

Chapter Six has made an attempt to present the necessary details of human resource planning (HRP). Here this chapter description has also been made what is HRP? Objectives of HRP, importance and benefits of HRP, process and needs of HRP. Further, a link has also been made with human resource planning to organizational effectiveness. Here attention has been given how human resource planning can be helpful in organizational effectiveness and how it is possible to integrate human resource planning with organizational plan towards attainment of organizational goal.

Finally, chapter six tries to give emphasis on village Panchayat level planning system in West Bengal. Here description has been made on the administrative structure of village Panchayat in West Bengal along with the role and functions of staff / elected members. Here, special attention has also been given on the steps for preparation of Gram Panchayat level planning and ultimately explains how human resource planning can be more effective through village Panchayat institutions for rural development in the state.

In conclusion of this chapter necessary findings of gaps have been detected too. In village Panchayat level planning maximum attention has been given on the implementation of projects, programmes, monitoring, financial issues etc. but necessary planning and attention is hardly found on human resource related issues as well as how to develop and motivate this vital resources for successful implementation of planning, projects and programmes towards rural development of the state.

Chapter seven is devoted for providing necessary details of training, development and its application for rural development in West Bengal. Here importance has also been given on training and development practices at organisational level and how it can be helpful in organizational success.

Further, this chapter is also devoted to present what is the need of training and development? What are the objectives and importance of training and development? How it can be helpful for the employer as well as employee? How can it be supportive to extract the potentiality of the employees towards attainment of organizational goal?

Furthermore, a connection has also been made on organizational success through training. Here emphasis has been given on training, development and consequently how it plays an important role in the success of organisation and as well as to the enhancement of capacity and efficiency of people at work.

This chapter concludes with the attention, given in finding the gaps in training and development practices at village Panchayat level. In most cases maximum trainings organized for village Panchayat functionaries are confined mostly to projects, programmes, monitoring, financial, computer / IT related issues etc. But necessary concentration and importance are hardly found in training on human resource related issues and how to utilize

the workforce properly in effective and efficient manner through training at village Panchayat level.

In chapter eight descriptions have been made on the theoretical concept of performance appraisal system. Here this study tries to give special attention to the concept and definition of performance appraisal as well as its needs, objectives and importance for better understanding of the subject.

Moreover, this chapter is also devoted for providing the necessary details of performance appraisal and its application for rural development in West Bengal. Here attention has also been given on performance appraisal system at village Panchayat level for effective rural development in the state. Here importance has also been given how performance appraisal system becomes helpful towards rural development of the state.

Further, this chapter has also tried to linkup performance appraisal system with Gram Panchayat institutions and relating to this, the description has been made how performance appraisal system becomes useful in institutional success.

Finally, this chapter tries to narrate how performance appraisal system becomes effective in rural development through village Panchayat institutions. Here emphasis has also been made how to motivate the workforce at GP level activities through performance appraisal system. Here concentration has also been given on how to develop and extract the potentiality of GP functionary towards attainment of desired rural development in the state.

To conclude this chapter necessary attention has been given for finding the gaps in performance appraisal practices at Gram Panchayat level. After reviewing performance appraisal practices at village Panchayat level, it has been found that performance appraisal system is partly or totally absent in many cases. There is no such appraisal system for the dedicated, accountable, responsible staff / members of village Panchayat. Though, performance appraisal system is available only for well performed village Panchayats, but not for well performed staff / members.

Chapter nine has made the attempt first on the theoretical concept of e-human resource management. For better understanding of the subject necessary details of e-human resource

management i.e. concept, definition, nature, functions, advantages and importance has also been emphasized.

Furthermore, a connection has also been made with E-human resource management and village Panchayat institutions. Here in this chapter emphasis has been given on the importance of E-HRM system and consequently how it plays an important role in the effectiveness of institutional success as well as to the attainment of rural development goal in the state. Here, concentration has also been given on the present e-governance practices at village Panchayat level activities.

In conclusion of chapter nine necessary attentions have been given for finding the gaps in e-human resource management practices at village Panchayat level. After reviewing the practice of existing e-governance system at GP level, it has been found that e-human resource management system is partly / totally absent. There is no such E-HRM system available at GP level. Though, Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) is available at village Panchayat level, but it has confined its functions only for management of accounts and necessary generations of certificates etc. There is no provision of E-human Resource Management system to track, train and motivate the workforce at Panchayat level.

The last conclusion chapter addresses the phenomenon and findings of data analysis based on field level data, analysed in different chapters of this thesis. This chapter concludes the dissertation by reviewing, linking and interpreting the conceptual categories defined in the above mentioned chapters. Finally, it recommends how human resource management practices at village Panchayat level can be effective in enhancing the capacity, competency, efficiency and effectiveness of functionaries towards the goal of rural development in this state.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the impact of human resource management (HRM) practices at Gram Panchayat level institutions towards effective rural development in West Bengal. Fundamental objective of this research is to study the impact of HRM practices as a critical tool to make workforce of village Panchayat institutions more committed, efficient and

effective, which in turn would help the institutions towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal.

The present study mainly focuses on one district of the state of West Bengal. This study is limited to the local self government institutions at village level. It also confines its study to the staff & elected members of village-Panchayats. Among 19 districts of the state of West Bengal, the district of Nadia has been taken up for detailed study. The research study has taken the district as a model for its more or less performance in rural development related work. The present study confines its attention at village Panchayat institutions in Nadia district. Eleven GPs of three respective blocks of Nadia district have been selected for this purpose.

The important findings of this research work are summarized in this section to understand the areas of convergence of ideas by the functionaries of Gram Panchayat on human resource management towards rural development in the district of Nadia. The major findings are as follows :

One of the key finding during field visits and at the time of data analysis, it has been found that at village Panchayat level planning, maximum efforts and importance has been given on infrastructure, agriculture, poverty alleviation, sanitation, health, education etc. but there is lack of interest and initiatives for the up-gradation of management including regular assessment of Panchayat level functionaries. There is hardly found planning on human resource utilization. It has also been detected that, in many cases there does not exist any human resource planning strategy which is integrated with the institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals.

Another key finding from the study, it has also been found that, there is partially or totally absence of proper and accurate training and development practices at GP level. Maximum training programmes have been organized for GP functionaries, basically on projects, schemes, accounts and audit related but, in the existing training system there is lacuna of building up efficient and competent workforce. There is hardly found such type of training which helps and makes Panchayat functionaries effective and dynamic for this purpose.

A key finding, during field visits and at the time of data analysis, it has also been found that, there is not existence of any performance appraisal system at GP level to ensure

institutional effectiveness through correcting functionalities for standard and improved performance and suggesting the change in employee-behaviour. It is hardly found the system of individual performance appraisal for the functionaries of GP. Moreover, there is no provision of rewarding system for good, responsible and accountable staff / members through regular assessment at Panchayat level.

It has also been found from this study that though there is an initiative of Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) as a part of e-governance measure. But there is hardly found the practice and application of e-human resource management at village Panchayat level to track the position and eminence of workforce towards attainment of institutional success.

Moreover, scarcity of staff in Gram Panchayats is also a vital issue. During field visit it has been found that, in many GPs some vital and necessary posts are vacant. Among them some vital posts i.e. GP Secretary, Executive Assistant remain vacant for long time. This ultimately hinders normal functioning of GPs.

Ignorance is one of the most important issues for elected representatives. During field visit it has found that in some GPs, members are not well acquainted with the formal rules and regulations of GP administration. They are not also well aware about the GP level projects, programmes, policy in details and its outcome.

During field visit dual scenario has been detected in many Gram Panchayats (GPs) in Nadia district. The GPs those have competent, efficient and sufficient workforce, performance of those GPs related to rural development work is comparatively better and advanced than that of others, those have not such type of efficient and competent workforce. The degree of rural developmental work of these GPs is not up to mark.

Further, during field visit it has also been seen that, there exists an odd contrast in terms of rural development related work and rural infrastructure facility in village Panchayats area near administrative town and Panchayats located in remote rural areas of Nadia. There are a few Panchayats located near block headquarters and a few are located far from the block headquarters of the district.

Moreover, during field visit it has also been detected that there is a keen tendency among the Panchayat staff to keep up their posting in a GP near block headquarters due to

communication and transport facilities. Therefore, the GPs located in remote rural areas have not always got proper, active and sufficient workforce.

Furthermore, during my extensive and grass-root level field visit I have seen that there are unequal developments in many Panchayats areas. Here the question arises before me, why such unequal differences exist? To find out the answer it has been detected that, there is a lacuna of proper utilization of human resources. Neglecting the uses of human resources, proper development could not be achieved in those areas.

Some specific findings have also been detected in many cases during filed visit. These are as follows :

- A number of elected representatives have not proper education.
- Few elected representatives are not well known about the Panchayat rules, regulation and systems.
- During field visit it was seen that most of female women representatives in GPs are not aware of the rules and regulations of GP, as they can not read Panchayat manuals or books and they do not come forward with responsibility for developmental work in their areas.
- Ineffectiveness of the existing training programme is a major problem for the functionaries of Panchayats in performing their role. A part of GP personnel have not got training opportunity. Training programme at fixed schedule period have not been followed.
- Absence of forward planning and competent planning machinery.
- Faulty staffing procedure
- Lack of capacity, efficiency and activeness among the staff / members
- Lacuna of proper training and development practices
- Lack of good leadership

- Lack of professionalism in GP management
- Poor performance and loss of financial viability
- Absence of performance-based reward systems and poor work environment.
- Poor relation and co-ordination among the staff and stakeholders
- Loss of focus on the prime objective and growing alienation of staff / members
- Political interference in Panchayat related work.
- Lack of idea in advance technology and their uses

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made, which will pave the way for a healthy human resource management practices in Gram Panchayat institutions towards attainment of desired rural development in West Bengal.

Human resources refer to people whose knowledge, skills, and abilities are utilized to create and to deliver effective services. Human resource is considered as the greatest resource of an organization. An effective quality circle attracts the right quality and quantity of people, develops knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees, and retains employees within the organization. To improve further the village Panchayat system in West Bengal, these institutions must utilize modern technology and new management system for planning and developing their human resources. Moreover, a training and performance appraisal program must be implemented to enhance the capabilities of functionaries' of village Panchayats. Investment in the improvement of knowledge and skills of the functionaries, enables village Panchayats to develop their competency and efficiency towards fulfillment of the goal of rural development in the state.

As Per the findings of the study, the following recommendations may be made to improve upon the performance systems of Gram Panchayats :

- There is an immediate need of the governance shift from the traditional administration to modern management, incorporating human resource management, in the interest of better local self-governance and greater public welfare.
- Human resource management (HRM) system must be implemented at Panchayat level institutions towards institutional effectiveness and staff / members development.
- Developing better HR integration to improve the institution's HR strategy by creating linkage between institutional effectiveness and workforce development.
- Reviewing the institution's HR policies and employee guidelines. Also to ensure that these are open, transparent, fair, and equal to every functionary.
- To pay more attention to employee motivation in order to motivate their potentials to achieve improved and in-time service delivery.
- To create a proper E-HRM in the institution in order to make the HRM system operate better from a technological point of view. E-HRM is convenient and efficient in managing workforce information and data systematically.
- To provide equal opportunities to all functionaries for necessary training and up-gradation. To give functionaries chance to expand their efficiency, capacity and effectiveness in order to perform to expectations.
- Improving workforce motivation by utilising workforce recognition and encouragement through performance appraisal system instead of compulsion with the institution's hierarchy.
- Creating good working conditions for employees in order to promote a positive institutional culture and eagerness.

The study considers the district of Nadia as a model for its more or less positive performance in rural development. After proper field assessment and through interpretation of field level data analysis it has been found that, there is a close relationship between human resource management and rural development. It has also been found that through proper application of HRM at local self-government institutions it is possible to nurture, uplift, and upgrade the workforce towards rural development in the state. Hence, the policy recommendation of this research study may be applicable and recommended for uniform development in the rural areas of other districts of the state.

CONCLUSION

This thesis puts some light on HRM and its application in local self-government institutions for better performance with the help of available literature. There is positive link between HRM and organizational performance. Though quite a number of research activities are underway in corporate and private sectors, but this endeavour is a positive step towards attainment of desired rural development in the state. In this detailed theoretical and conceptual review and its practical field level application, if continued in a same way, might bring valuable findings for the development in rural areas of the state as well as to the nation. This also may be an important milestone in the field of rural development.

With the advancements of globalization, socio-economic and technological conditions the nature and environment of an organization are also shifting. In connection with this, the functions, work pressure and boundary of an organization are also changing and expanding varies rapidly. To tackle the situation and to reign over the prevailing issues, attention and care must be given to organizational human resources. As human resources are the core and vital assets of an organization.

HRM is concerned with the proper and effective uses of employees to achieve organizational and individual goals. Human resource management also assists to make competent, efficient and effective workforce for the organisation. Through which an organisation enables to take proper strategy, planning, programmes and can execute the same also. By such an effective workforce organisations become able to produce in time

service delivery. Therefore, the role of workforce in an organisation is not only vital but essential also. To motivate the workforce and to extract the potentiality towards attainment of organizational goal and success, human resource management acts as an important tool.

Under the above circumstances and after reviewing the Panchayat system in West Bengal it has been detected that HRM policy is partly or totally absent. After through analysis of the Panchayat system it has been found that, importance has been given on infrastructure, agriculture, poverty alleviation, sanitation, health, education etc. but there is lack of interest and initiative for the development and management of Panchayat level functionaries i.e. members & Staff etc. It has been also observed that, there is not such type of planning, training and performance appraisal practices which can make the Panchayat functionaries dynamic, effective and efficient, so that they can take an active and vital role in rural development. If they (staff & members) are not competent, efficient, accountable, responsible, how they can take appropriate and effective planning, need based planning for rural development. There is hardly found such type policy which helps and makes the Panchayat functionaries effective and dynamic for this purpose.

In conclusion Panchayats are to be well developed and well managed along with the advancement of communication, technological development which is demanding responsibility, accountability, leadership quality and efficiency of workforce. It needs to introduce new management techniques to develop functionaries of Gram Panchayat for speedy decision making, planning, proper service delivery and enhancement of capacity to meet the challenges of new millennium.

Therefore, role of human resources at Panchayati Raj institutions is very important and inevitable. Even only planning, programmes, projects, infrastructure and financial assistance are not able to meet the purpose of necessary rural development of the state, without efficient, competent and effective Panchayat personnel. Therefore, human resource is the core and vital issue for rural development in the state. Through HRM it is possible to nurture, motivate and develop the capacity, efficiency, competency of the staff and members of Panchayat institutions and which ultimately helps the Panchayats towards attainment of rural development goal in West Bengal.

Human resource management is being utilized by the other sectors, but unfortunately Panchayat administration has not given emphasis to this professional approach. Therefore, there is a desperate need of research in this area which would eventually lead to a better managed Panchayat administration. And through dynamic Panchayat administration it is possible to meet the challenges and goal of rural development in the state.

Under the above circumstances it is found that rural development is not only important but also essential for parallel development in the country. Now two things are required for effective rural development i.e. efficient management and an appropriate organization. The key to success surely lies in building up competent, efficient and effective workforce with trusted, dedicated and motivated nature.

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QUESTIONNAIRE - I

Name of the Panchayat :

Name of the Block :

Name of the District :

Name & Designation of the Interviewee :

Gender :

Male Female

Category :

Grade A Grade B Grade C Grade D Others

Age Group :

18-26 27 - 35 36 – 44 45 – 53 54 – 60

Educational Qualification :

Up to Class VIII Madhyamik H.S. Graduation
 Masters Beyond Masters

Any Other Qualification :

Computer skill Type writing skill Any other skill, Please specify

Marital Status :

Unmarried Married Divorced Widow/er

How long have you been working with this organization?

More than 1 year but less than 3 3-5 years 5-8 years 8-12 years 12-16 years
 More than 16 years

QUESTIONNAIRE - II

HRM PLANNING

1. Do you think human resource planning practices are helpful for institutional effectiveness? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
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2. Are there any formal & written human resource planning practices in your institution? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
-----	----

3. Do you think the current human resource planning strategy is integrated with your institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
-----	----

4. On which of the following issue(s) most emphasis given in village Panchayat level planning?

i) Programme / Project ii) Policy iii) Computer / IT skill iv) Service delivery
v) H.R. related issues vi) if other, please specify.

5. Whether there is any system in village Panchayat planning for the improvement of programme / Projects ? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
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6. If there is any system in village Panchayat level planning regarding up-liftment of Human Resource related issues? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
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7. If there is any scheme in village Panchayat level planning regarding improvement of the standards, skills, knowledge, ability and accountability of staff / member? If yes, please specify?

Yes	No
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10. Which of the following issue(s) you considered in assessing training needs?
- Job skills knowledge and ability new technologies Proper Service Computer Skill Programme and projects related issues H.R. related issues If any other, please specify.
11. Which training is frequently used by your institution?
- On-the job methods Off-the-job methods Both if Others please specify?
12. Which of the following training opportunities your institutions offer?
- Projects and Programme related training Leadership training, Executive training Technical training Computer training In house training If any others, please specify
13. What is the minimum training length per year?
- No minimum Up to 8 hours 9 to 24 hours 25 to 40 hours Over 40 Hours
14. Do you have any training institute of your own? If yes, then where and briefly describes about its practices
- Yes No
15. Do you hire trainer from outside of the institution?
- Yes No
16. How often your institution conducted training program in year?

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

1. Do you think that, the practice of performance appraisal at village Panchayat level are helpful for institutional effectiveness? If yes, please specify?

Yes No

2. Is there any formal & written performance appraisal system in your institutions? If yes, please specify?

Yes No

3. Do you think the present performance appraisal strategy is integrated with your institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals? If yes, please specify?

Yes No

4. If there is any performance appraisal system in village Panchayat level to ensure institutional effectiveness through correcting employees for standard and improved performance and suggesting the change in employee behaviour? If yes, please specify?

Yes No

5. If there is any scheme of performance appraisal to assess the training and development needs of the village Panchayat functionaries? If yes, please specify?

Yes No

6. Whether there is any performance appraisal system to let the employee know where they stand in so far as their performance is concerned and to assist and guidance them for the purpose of their development? If yes, please specify.

Yes No

7. Whether there is any system to find out the weak points of the employees / members in your Village Panchayat?

YES NO

8. Is there any scheme to motivate the staff / members about their future prospects inside your Village Panchayat? If yes, please specify

YES NO

9. If there any practice to measure staff / members regarding methods and means to improve their efficiency levels in their respective work? If yes, please specify

YES NO

11. If there is any provision to provide proper group benefit programs to your staffs / members in the Gram Panchayat. If yes, please specify.

YES

NO

12. Is there any reward system for good, responsible & accountable staff / member in your gram Panchayat. If yes, please specify.

YES

NO

13. If there is any system of potential appraisal. If yes, please specify

YES

NO

14. Do you think that potential appraisal system is effective in up-gradation of staff / member? If yes, please specify ?

YES

NO

E- HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1. Do you think the practices of e-human resource management at village Panchayat level is helpful for institutional effectiveness? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

2. Is there any web based human resource management system in your institutions? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

3. Whether there is any on-line system to keep track of the Human Resources at Gram Panchayat level? If yes please specify.

4. Do you find e-human resource management system is useful for institutional effectiveness?

a) Very effective b) effective c) not effective

5. Is it possible to get the data of trained and untrained staff / member of your Panchayat through on-line system? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

6. If there is any provision of e-training system at village Panchayat level? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

7. If there is any provision of e-recruitment system at village Panchayat level? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

8. If there is any provision of e-performance management system at village Panchayat level? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

9. If there is any provision of e-magazines across the village Panchayat institutions for the enhancement of knowledge and capability of staff / members? If yes, please specify?

Yes

No

10. No. of staffs / members received IT Training so far ?

11. Do you think through E-HRM it is easy to have access to the information regarding Human Resource related issues?

Yes

No

12. Do you feel the practice of E-HRM is cost and time saving? If yes, please specify ?

YES

NO

QUESTIONNAIRE - III

Please tick (√) one cell for each statement :

Sl. No	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Never
Human Resource Planning				
01.	Whether there is a formal & written human resource planning system.			
02.	Human resource planning is a part of annual planning & budget			
03.	To ensure having an estimate of employee requirements along with matching skill or competency so as to efficiently meet institutional needs and objectives.			
04.	To provide information about how existing manpower are to be employed and what types of skills and or competencies are to be developed for achieving the desired levels of performance			
05.	To indicate the requirement of additional manpower when and wherever required by the institution			
06.	To ensure efficient utilization of human resources and reduce manpower wastage.			
Training & Development				
01.	Whether GP level training programs for its staff / members in all aspects of quality.			
02.	Training needs are identified through a formal performance appraisal mechanism.			
03.	Sent for the training for promotional purposes / as a usual practice			
04.	The objective of the training programmes is complete understanding of different management functions in its totality.			
05.	Training needs identified are realistic, useful and based on the institutional strategy of the Village Panchayat			
06.	The training programmes has improved my decision-making skills			
07.	I feel more confident and better equipped to act as a leader and handle conflicting situations.			
08.	My working relationship between my associates and colleagues has improved.			
09.	I feel better equipped to tackle unexpected events with skill and confidence.			
Performance Appraisal				
01.	There is a formal & written performance Appraisal system.			
02.	The performance appraisal is fair.			
03.	I receive feedback of performance evaluation results about myself.			
04.	Performance of the staff / members is measured on the basis work performance.			
05.	Appraisal system in our institution is growth and development oriented.			
06.	Appraisal system has a strong influence on individual and team behavior.			
07.	Staff / members are provided performance based feedback and			

	counseling.			
08.	The appraisal data is used for making decisions like job rotation, training and compensation.			
09.	The objectives of the appraisal system are clear to all staff / members.			
10.	Performance of all staff / members are reviewed			
11.	Evaluation of performance is based on efficiency and competency in performing their job			
12.	There is a provision for reward system for accountable and responsible staff / member			
13.	Performance appraisal criteria should help to point out if there are any performance areas that need improvement.			
14.	Performance appraisal feedback should be constructive			
E-Human Resource Management (e-HRM)				
01.	e-HRM is helpful for institutional effectiveness			
02.	A decisive step towards a paperless office			
03.	Easy and fast to deploy			
04.	Cost and time saving			
05.	A more dynamic process towards attainment of institutional effectiveness and employee satisfaction			

QUESTIONNAIRE - IV

Please tick (✓) one cell for each statement:

Sl. No	Statements	Yes	No
Human Resource Planning (HRP)			
01.	Do you think human resource planning practice provides scope for advancement and development of staff / members		
02.	Do you think for the smooth functioning of the village Panchayat and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programme staff / members are the vital assets		
03.	Does your institution have any human resource planning practices as a part of village Panchayat planning?		
04.	Whether there is any scheme in village Panchayat planning for necessary development and up-liftment of staff / members		
05.	Whether there is any scheme in village Panchayat planning to meet the individual and as well as institutional needs.		
06.	For smooth functioning of the Panchayat sufficient staff is available ?		
07.	Whether there is system in planning to assess and forecast future skills requirements of the staff / member in the institution		
08.	Whether there is any provision to ensure the best use of human resources		
09.	Whether planning provides the guidelines so as to enable staff / members to train and develop themselves for higher pursuits and effective performance		
Training & Development			
01.	Do you think training and development practices provides scope for advancement and development of staff / members		
02.	Do you think the existing training and development practices has improved the efficiency and competency of staff / members as expected		
03.	Whether there is a process to assess employee training needs		
04.	Whether all employees are availing the training opportunities		
05.	Whether training and development needs are reflected in the annual budget		
06.	Whether employee development plans are addressed in performance appraisals		
07.	Whether Job skills, knowledge, ability are considered in training needs		
08.	Whether training resources are coordinated		
09.	Whether results of trainings are monitored and evaluated		
10.	Whether return on investment on training is measured		
11.	Whether it ensure that employees are being up-dated with new techniques and ways of performing their jobs and provides necessary services.		
12.	Does this involves upgrading the technical expertise of the employees / members according to the changing needs of the institutions		
13.	Does it prepare Staff / members for higher level tasks and build up a second line of competent workforce.		
14.	Whether training builds self-confidence among the staff / members		
15.	Whether training develop the potentialities of staff / members		
16.	Whether training ensure smooth and efficient working and provides quality of services		
17.	Whether training and development practices promotes morale, a sense of responsibly, accountability, co-operative attitude and good relationships among the staff / members		
Performance Appraisal			
01.	Do you think performance appraisal system is useful and helpful for institutional effectiveness?		
02.	Do you think performance appraisal practice provides scope for advancement and development of staff / members		

03.	Do you think to motivate the staff / members performance appraisal is essential?		
04.	Whether there is any practice of performance appraisal to develop and extract the potentiality of staff / members?		
05.	Do you think for the smooth functioning of the GP and necessary implementation of projects, planning and programmes, performance appraisal system is helpful?		
06.	Do you think performance appraisal is useful for effectiveness and motivations of staff / members		
07.	Do you participate in performance appraisals?		
08.	Do you think that performance Appraisal help to provide an atmosphere where all are encouraged to share one another burden.		
09.	Do you think performance appraisal helps people set and achieve meaningful goals.		
10.	Do you think performance appraisal give constructive criticism in a friendly and positive manner		
11.	Do you think that performance of an employees improve after process of performance appraisal ?		
12.	Do you think performance appraisal improves motivation and job satisfaction.		
13.	Do you think performance appraisal helps to change behaviour of staff / members.		
14.	Are you satisfied with your institution's existing recognition, reward and performance appraisal system / policy ?		
E-Human Resource Management (e-HRM)			
01.	Do you think e-HRM system is useful and helpful for institutional effectiveness?		
02.	Whether there is any practice of e-HRM in your institution		
03.	Do you think e-HRM may be helpful to estimate the staff / members strength		
04.	Do you think e-HRM may be helpful to provide necessary statistics of human resources as and when required for necessary estimation of future development?		
05.	Whether it ensure a decisive step towards a paperless office		
06.	Whether it ensure multi site consolidation of information online and real time		
07.	Does it provide cost savings in IT infrastructure by using the Internet		
08.	Does it ensure a more dynamic workflow in the institutional process, service delivery and employee satisfaction		
09.	Whether it is easy and fast to deploy		
10.	Whether there is any on-line facility for necessary development of human resources i.e. on-line training, on-line performance appraisal etc.		

Sl. No	Statements	Yes	No
Human Resource Management (HRM)			
01.	Do you think human resource management practices are helpful for institutional effectiveness?		
02.	Is there any formal & written human resource management practices in your institutions ?		
03.	Does your institutions have written HRM practices and policies such as planning, training & Development, performance appraisal etc?		
04.	Whether the rate of effectiveness of HRM practices in your institution is satisfactory?		
05.	Do you think current HR strategy is integrated with your institution's strategy for achieving the institutional goals?		

BLOCK MAP NADIA DISTRICT



Legend

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