

ROLE OF TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN STRENGTHENING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN HARYANA

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Haryana State came into existence on 1st November, 1966 and the Punjab Gram Panchayat Act, 1952 was made applicable to the PRIs in Haryana followed by the 73rd Constitutional amendment in 1992, the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 was framed which came into force w.e.f. April 22, 1994. Thereafter Haryana Panchayati Raj Election Rules, 1994 were formulated on 24th August, 1994 followed by Haryana Panchayati Rules, 1995, notified on 16th February 1995. Subsequently the Haryana Panchayati Raj Finance Budget/ Accounts/ Audit/ Taxation and works rules 1996 were also notified on 14th August, 1996. Under the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act 1994, the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been entrusted with duties & functions related to all the 29 subjects listed in Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.⁽¹⁾

Three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj institutions in Haryana was introduced at its inception. Haryana as a state was carved out of erstwhile Punjab state. Therefore, it has adopted The Punjab Gram Panchayat Act, 1952, and The Punjab Block Samiti and Zila Parishad Act, 1961. The three-tier system of Panchayati Raj as introduced earlier in the state, included Gram Panchayat, Block Samiti and Zila Parishad. There is a statutory body called Gram Sabha comprising all the adult residents of a village besides the above stated three-tiers. Zila Parishads, the apex body of PR, were abolished in 1973 in the state following the recommendations of Maru Singh Malik Committee.⁽²⁾ Since then, Haryana was having the two-tier structure of Panchayati Raj, i.e., Gram Panchayat and Block Samiti. However, it could not fulfill the goal of democratic decentralisation in the state.⁽³⁾

After the creation of Haryana as separate state in 1966, the elections of Panchayati Raj institutions were not conducted at regular intervals and thus, the powers of these bodies were concentrated in the hands of bureaucracy. It indicates the lack of political will of the state government towards the efficient functioning of PR in the state. In compliance with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, an Act called The Haryana Panchayati Raj Act was enforced on April 22, 1994, replacing the earlier Acts enacted and adopted in the state. The present Act provides for the three-tier system of PR, viz., Gram Panchayat at village level, Block Samiti at block level and Zila Parishad at district level.⁽⁴⁾

1.0 Haryana State Training Policy :

Human Resource Development, specifically Capacity Building, is an extremely important process for improving the performance and competencies of the Human Capital of an Organization, a State and a Country. Capacity Building for excellence and acquisition of requisite skills, knowledge and attitude is absolutely essential for the growth and development of an Organization. This is more so in the context of efficient and effective public service delivery by Civil Servants in the rapidly changing socio-economic and political scenario.

2.0 Objectives :

With the overall objectives of performance-improvement and raising the productivity, Capacity Building in the State of Haryana is targeted to meet the specific needs of the State, building upon the operational guidelines laid down for State Training Policies (STPs) by the National Training Policy (NTP) 1996. The Haryana State Training Policy aims at developing and integrating qualities of responsiveness, commitment, awareness,

effectiveness, accountability and an integrated scientific approach, tempered with sensitivity, amongst Civil Servants.⁽⁵⁾

3.0 Problems with the Training Institutions :

State government has framed a very innovative training policy and it is the basic duty of training institutes to implement it sincerely. No doubt, they are playing important role in imparting training to the officials and members of PRIs. But it has been observed that all training institutes are facing the crisis of faculties and other staff. Mostly the staff has been working on contract/temporary or on deputation basis. Since the training institutes are not well equipped, therefore, there is an urgent need of providing the requisite staff that too should be appointed on some specific period so that they may be able to deliver goods and services to target groups.

Elected representatives of PRIs do not know the government schemes and programmes. However, the remaining half had little knowledge about the schemes and programmes of poverty eradication launched by the central as well as state governments.

Elected representatives of PRIs do not take interest in reading the study material made available to them during the training period. Elected representatives faced problem in reading the study material due to its difficult language. It is expected that the elected representatives of PRIs and concerned officials must update themselves with the latest changes incorporated in the Haryana Panchyati Raj Act, 1994. But it has been observed that the functionaries of PRIs are not provided opportunities to make them fully aware of the recent changes as and when are made in the Act. Thus, their knowledge becomes obsolete.

Training is organized at very distant place from the residences of the elected representatives of PRIs. This caused a great difficulty for the representatives undergoing training. Whatever the training is organized and provided that was more theoretical and little but practical. Moreover, comprehensive training is not provided. No follow up actions were taken to solve the problems being encountered by the elected representatives of PRIs. Training imparted could not motivate the officials and elected representatives of PRIs for becoming more cooperative to each other.

Elected representatives of PRIs reported that training at the right time is not provided to them as and when required it. It has also been observed that every time trainers are changed and they are not well acquainted with new changes in Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. It has also been noted that even training institutes were not updated in this connection. These training institutes go on using old published study material for the training of officials and elected representatives of the PRIs. Training modules should be updated and modified.

Training institutes engage the trainers on contract basis with provision of some honorarium. These trainers are found disinterested because they do not have chances for career advancement. As and when they get better opportunity they felt the training in between. In such a situation it becomes very difficult to make some arrangement substitute. Moreover the initiatives largely depend on either the DRDA office or the BDO office that are not always cooperative in making the training successful. The field agencies are also reluctant to make arrangement of sitting and refreshment for the training of elected representatives of PRIs.

4.0 Recommendations :

It is suggested that the Government should not allow the posts to remain vacant for a long period. The training institutes should be empowered and authorized to make arrangement of staff at its own with a provision that the recruitment engagement made should be objective transparent and fair.

Coordination between the state government and training institutes must be ensured for providing updated information and amendments in the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 to the training institutes.

As there is a coordination problem between training institutes and state government because circulars related to changes made in the Act, schemes and programmes are not sent to the training institutes timely. So they cannot incorporate these changes in the study material prepared for the trainees. Therefore, the circulars must be sent in time to training institutes to make them update the study material.

It has been observed that training institutes give more preference to research than the training. It would be better if equal emphasis is laid on training and research. Research should be supportive to strengthen the training.

To make training more effective and result oriented, it should be organized at cluster level for the convenience of elected representatives of PRIs. It will be easy for labourers, women, SCs and BCs members of PRIs and problems of substitute trainee would also be solved.

Training for the capacity building of PRIs has to be mandatory for all who are directly or indirectly involved in rural transformation. There is an urgent need to formulate a separate training policy and the policy so framed should be implemented in letter and spirit. It should be regularly evaluated and necessary changes should be incorporated to keep pace with the changing requirements of rural development in general and functioning of PRIs particular.

5.0 References :

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- (4) Statistical Abstract of Haryana, 1997-98, Government of Haryana, Planning Department, Economic and Statistical Organisation, Chandigarh, 1999, pp.680-85.
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