



PANCHAYATI RAJ IN GUJARAT - A STUDY

RINKUBEN G. PRAJAPATI

Ph. D. Research Scholar
Dept. of Sociology
Hemchandracharya North Gujarat
University Patan
(GJ) INDIA

DR. P. R. GAVLI

Research Guide, Dept. of Sociology
Shree Ambaji Arts & Commerce
College Ambaji Affiliated to
Hemchandracharya North Gujarat
University Patan
(GJ) INDIA

ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi advocated panchayat raj as the foundation of India's political system. It would have been a decentralised form of government where each village would be responsible for its own affairs. Panchayati Raj has come into existence as an important measure in the direction of decentralization from the very beginning in Gujarat state. Panchayati Raj is being implemented in Gujarat with unambiguous policy and intention to see that community at large may participate in strengthening panchayati raj and in the development journey of government.

Key Words : Panchyati Raj, Digital Panchayat, e- Panchayat,

INTRODUCTION

Panchayati Raj means rule of people selected by the government in order to maintain law and order in the village. In India, the Panchayati Raj now functions as a system of governance in which Gram Panchayats are the basic units of local administration.

In order to make Panchayats more polite, Gujarat Panchayats, Act, 1961 was revoked by Government of India and Gujarat Panchayats Act, 1993 was implemented with effect from 15-4-1994. Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993, is in force in Gujarat state subject to the 73rd amendment in the constitution of India. By this act, the management and monitoring of the panchayati Raj is to be done in the state.

RINKUBEN G. PRAJAPATI

DR. P. R. GAVLI

1P a g e



Balwant Rai Mehta is best known as second Chief Minister of Gujarat. Balwant Rai Mehta was a parliamentarian when the committee was established. He is credited for pioneering the concept the **Panchayati Raj** in India and also known as **Father of Panchayati Raj** in India.

The Panchayat Raj system exists in all the states except Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram and in all the Union territories except Delhi.

The Union territory of India in which the Panchayati Raj system does not exist in Delhi. Explanation: Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram are the states in which the Panchayati Raj system do not exist. The system of local self-government in India is known as the Panchayati Raj.

Three tier system prevails in Gujarat state viz.

1. Gram Panchayat
2. Taluka Panchayat
3. District Panchayat

There are 33 district panchayat, 247 taluka panchayats, and 14,017 gram panchayats in Gujarat state, while revenue villages are 18,584.

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Functions of three-tier panchayat structure in Gujarat state are distributed as under:

1. Gram Panchayat

The panchayat is chaired by the president of the village, known as a Sarpanch. The term of the elected representatives is five years. The Secretary of the panchayat is a non-elected representative, appointed by the state government, to oversee panchayat activities.

1. Drinking water facilities for domestic use and for animals.
2. Scavenging of roads in the villages.
3. Maintenance of govt. properties
4. Lighting arrangement in villages
5. Spread of education including primary education in villages.
6. Planning of rural development
7. Supervision of crops in the outskirts of village.
8. Planning for agricultural improvements
9. Planning for Agricultural Reforms.

RINKUBEN G. PRAJAPATI

DR. P. R. GAVLI

2Page



2 Taluka Panchayat

The Block Pramukh (president) of Panchayat Samiti (Block) is a tier of the panchayat raj system. It is a rural local government body at the tahsil (taluka) level in India. It works for the villages of the tahsil that together are called a development block.

1. Provide health and hygiene services in talukas
2. Control on epidemics
3. Constructions and maintenance of village roads.
4. Establishment and management of primary schools.
5. Agricultural improvements and planning at taluka level.
6. Women welfare, development on youth activities and assistance
7. Help in natural & manmade disasters like flood, fire accidents etc.

3. District Panchayat

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is an IAS or a State Civil Service officer, heads the administrative machinery of the Zila Parishad. He may also be District Magistrate in some states. The CEO supervises the divisions of the Parishad and executes its development schemes.

Control over activities of district panchayats, taluka panchayats and gram panchats, to provide assistance. Management and control on activities transferred from revenue, education co-operation Irrigation, Cattle breeding, agriculture by State Govt. work of activities of Panchayats Department at district level.

In India, the Panchayati Raj now functions as a system of governance in which gram panchayats are the basic units of local administration. The system has three levels: Gram Panchayat (village level), Mandal Parishad or Block Samiti or Panchayat Samiti (block level), and Zila Parishad (district level).

Sources of Income

The income of the panchayat samiti comes from:

1. land and water use taxes, professional taxes, liquor taxes and others
2. income-generating programmes
3. grants-in-aid and loans from the state government and the local zila parishad
4. voluntary contributions



For many panchayat samiti, the main source of income is state aid. For others, the traditional taxing function provides the bulk of revenues. Tax revenues are often shared between the gram panchayats and the panchayat samiti

District Panchayats - 33

Taluka Panchayats - 248

Gram Panchayats- 14,292

Villages - 18,584

Population - 6,03,83,628

State villages have always been assigned importance in our social as well as economic activities. Since, ancient times 'Gram' remain stand as a unit. At present, majority of countries population living in rural areas.

1. Sardar Patel Awas Yojana

Sardar Patel Awas Yojana for land less agricultural laburers and village artisan living Below Poverty line in rural areas of the State. Sardar Awas Vasahat, Rampun, dist. Vadodara Govt. has made strategic planning for solution of houses in the village. The poor has right to live new life and to turn to new culture as colony of poor population.

2. Panchvati Yojana

Rural life of village people of the State is varied and women with folk-culture atmosphere but skirt areas of the villages had tremendous prosperity of trees.

Village children took innocent joy in swings in the shadows of trees and environment. However, with the lapse of time, this was extinct, the entire situation had adverse effects on rural life.

It is planned to see that the follow lands of the village may be affronted and restored with the cooperation of village people. People awareness may be created at village level and there may be tree planting and afforestation near the residential areas of the village. The State Govt has implemented Panchavati Yojana in the entire State with a view to maintain faith in traditional cultural heritage.

3. E-Gram Vishvagram Yojana



The present Gujarat government has resolved to make the rural citizens “World Citizens”. That is the reason for the modernization of the villages and help the rural folk enter the digital age by implementing the E-Gram plan

Gram have now entered the ranks of cities where use of computers is part of everyday life. The state government provides the necessary hardware and software to link the Gram Panchayats, Taluka Panchayats and District Panchayats to the Secretariat, Gandhinagar.

The Government has resolved to provide E-services at the Gram Panchayat which are at par with those provided in urban areas. Hence the E-Gram service is supposed to be the key part of the village Panchayat office. Moreover, the rural people will be able to avail accurate information quickly through the computer placed at the Gram Panchayat office.

The State Government has established “E-GramVishv Gram” society, to provide E-services to the rural people at their doorstep.

The only state in India which has the infrastructure to provide E-services through computers to 13685 Gram Panchayats.

An unprecedented achievement of provision of computer services to 100% of the 13685 Gram Panchayats.

All the Talati cum Mantris of the state have been trained on the E-Gram software.

All the 25 District Panchayats (100%) and 224 Taluka Panchayats (nearly 100%) of Gujarat have been connected through the Gujarat State Wide Area Network (GSWAN).

The people in the rural area are connected to the world through the E-Connectivity offered at 13685 Gram Panchayats.

7400 Gram Panchayats have been linked to BISAG studio, Gandhinagar using K. U. Bands. In the first phase the priority is to make available through E-Gram certificates of birth and death, proof of income, proof of caste, bona-fide certificate, proof of residence, etc. as well as forms applications of various government schemes.

Facility of Satellite based Direct Digital Reception system at the District Panchayat, Taluka Panchayat and Training Centers for exchange and proliferation of information as well as training of Panchayat members and employees.



Establishment of Taluka Information Centers having touch screen kiosks to provide necessary information related to each Taluka Panchayat office and the Accounts of the Panchayat. Online availability of the Accounts of the Panchayat through E-prima software.

Inclusion and implementation (as a pilot project) of the internal official processes of the Panchayats through the Intra Panchayat software.

5. Samras-yojana

In state elections, there are parties and symbols, but there is no symbol of any party in gram panchayat elections. There are convincing reasons for this is an unique custom of Arya culture. Original existence of the village, its originality, its events, customs etc. are preserved. Various communities-castes take part in festivals on many occasions and have maintained family spirit. In order to see that such specialty is not scattered, the frames of panchayats Act have not kept any party in the basic election.

In all 3,794 gram panchayats have become samaras in six stages till now.

The govt. has sanctioned substantial amount of Rs.2306.40 lakh as incentive grant.

6. Swatchcha-Gram-Swasth-GramYojana **Clean village, healthy village scheme**

A new scheme has been introduced in 2007-08 to ensure that village is properly cleaned, there may arise good spirit on cleanliness, level of cleaning as well as level of rural life may go high. Consequently financial assistance may be given for slaving and cleanliness, which may be used for preservation of cleanliness and to purchase sanitation implements. Inspired by this, the Gram Panchayat may be alert to make the village neat and clean.

The State Government has decided to celebrate the year 2007-08 as 'Nirmal gujarat' its important point are as under :-

Gram Panchayat should spray medicines, in dirty places, public gutter lines and roads.

Dung-hills should be shifted to proper places and the place should be decided outside the village

Scavenging tax should be introduced in gram panchayat and village sanitation arrangement should be intensified.

Toilets should be constructed in the all of local self governments, schools, panchayat ghar, anganwadi, primary health centers etc.

- Slogans/ posters of 'Nirmal gujarat' should be displayed at public places in the village.
- Arrangement for individual and community toilets should be made.
- Total sanitation campaign should be organized in village areas.
- Maintenance of animals should be ensured at a proper distance from residential places.
- State govt. shall allocate the amount equal to collection of scavenging tax by the village as incentive grant.
- The village which will collect incentive grant by the State Government at 110%
- A provision of Rs. 500.00 lakh has made during financial year 2007-08 under this scheme.

Swatchh Gam Swasth Gam Yojana Progress Report

Sr. no.	Year	Budget Provision	Grant allotted
		Rs. In lakhs	Rs. In lakhs
1	2007-08	500.00	200.00
2	2008-09	1000.00	1000.00
3	2009-10	500.00	500.00
4	2010-11	200.00	200.00
5	2011-12	200.00	200.00
6	2012-13	4000.00	1112.90
7	2013-14	4000.00	2859.23
8	2014-15	4500.00	2920.19
9	2015-16	4500.00	3896.49
	Total		12888.81

7. Tirth Gram Yojana

The state government contributes 1,00,000 rupees to encourage the selected Tirth Gram.

The Tirth Gram Yojana has been formulated to strengthen the goodwill amongst the people living in the rural areas of the state, to promote unity and help the overall development of the village

The following are the areas which would be encouraged by this plan.

- Brotherhood
- Social Goodwill
- Peace
- Overall development of the village
- Commencement of plan

The plan was implemented in 2004-05. The future of Gujarat depends on a foundation of good culture and values.

8. Jamin-Sampadani-Yojana

Basic civic facilities like street lighting, electricity in houses internal roads, approach roads, could not be provided in poor-oriented rural houses scheme colonies in rural areas on account of inadequate sources. Consequently, life style of settler is not satisfactory. It has been planned to work as follows under the provision of land acquisition and structural facilities included in the scheme.

(A) Land acquisition for rural housing

To make available the village site lands for the villages where village site is not available for rural housing scheme and to be provided with complex structural facilities under various rural housing schemes.

Price of land shall be determined by district level evaluation committee.

Rs.2 lakh per gram panchyat and for different areas as per existing price.

About 500 villages will be covered under the scheme per annum.

Allotment of total Rs.1000.00 lakh under this scheme.

(B). Providing basic infrastructural facilities for rural housing scheme.

Priority to new scheme of planning of complex on the basis of availability of village site lands. Preliminary facilities may be provided in conversion of existing clusters of rural housing viz. Sardar Patel Awas Yojan. Indira Awas Yojana into complex in the village.



In order to increase standard of rural life, structural facilities viz drinking water, sewerage, street lighting electricity in house internal roads, approach roads etc. should be included under the scheme. Various rural housing schemes viz. Sardar Patel Awas Yojana, Indira Awas yojana of the state govt. etc may be amalgamated. Assistance shall be provided subject to limit of Rs. 5 lakh per village. However additional Rs.2 lakhs shall be used with sanction of the office of the Development Commissioners from the grant of 12th Finance Commission, if necessity arises. Minimum 15 (fifteen) houses shall be planned in a complex. 700 (seven hundred) villages shall be covered under this scheme every year, for which approximately Rs.3612 lakh shall be allocated.

CONCLUSION

Mahatma Gandhi, described village as a unit for gram swaraj. Gram swaraj means, totally independent from neighbors for one's own great desires, but it is reliable each other as dependent republic.

Panchayati Raj is also known as 'Local self government' because it deals with the decentralised governance and administration of people at the basic or local level ie village, panchayats and small towns.

The panchayat samiti collects all the prospective plans prepared at Gram Panchayat level and process them for funding and implementation by evaluating them from the angles of financial constraints, social welfare, and area development. It also identifies and prioritizes the issues that should be addressed at the block level.

The panchayat samiti is the link between the gram panchayat (village council) and the zila parishad (district board). The name varies across states: mandal parishad in Andhra Pradesh, taluka panchayat in Gujarat, and mandal panchayat in Karnataka.

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