

An Evaluation of Rural Development Programmes' Monitoring System: A Study in Himachal Pradesh

Tek Chand

Ph.D Scholar, Dept. of Commerce, Himachal Pradesh University Shimla-5, India

Abstract

Rural development is a comprehensive term. It essentially focuses on action for the development of areas outside the mainstream urban economic system. It is the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in rural areas, often relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. In this paper a sincere endeavour has been made to evaluate the satisfaction of rural households towards the monitoring and evaluating system of rural development programmes. It has been found that, the maximum respondents have given favourable responses about the programmes' monitoring and evaluating system. Respondents have positively responded that present scenario grievances have been settled rapidly in transparent way. Further, the respondents have been opined that current rural development programmes are seems more accountable as compare to earlier programmes. In this paper, suggestions have been given so that in the future, more such well regulated and result oriented programmes should be given more priority and improve the monitoring system of schemes more effectively.

KEYWORDS: RDP, Grievances, Transparency, Accountability, Satisfaction
Introduction

Rural Development has assumed global attention especially among the developing nations. Globally, rural areas account for three in every four poor people spending less than 85 rupees in a day. Almost all the hungry people live in lower-middle-income countries. The population of India is about 17.5 per cent of the world population, which makes it bigger than the size of Europe. India has the largest rural population in the world, 68 per cent of Indians still lives in rural areas. A country like India where majority of the population lives in rural areas has great significance. Rural development is a topic which is pretty easy to understand but hard to implement. The definition of rural development varies from one point of view to the other. The rural development may be centred around income criterion in which the concept is made to address the problem of rural poverty. In recent trend, "Rural Development" is recognised as to improve better quality of individual life. A better quality of life generally calls for higher income, right of better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty, a cleaner environment, more equality of opportunity and greater individual freedom. A number of programmes consisting of various sets of schemes were launched on 2nd October, 1952 and presently are going on with different names having concurrent development objectives.

The GOI has evolved a comprehensive multi-level and multi-tool system for monitoring implementation of various rural development schemes across the country. And the department of rural development has also developed a very strong and robust accountability frame work for all its programmes. Building on the principle of eligibility through Socio Economic Census 2011, and accountability through the multi-pronged framework of financial audit, social audit, geo-tagging and use of IT-DBT, the programmes of DoRD have made significant progress in institutionalizing a transparent framework with zero tolerance for corruption. The

Department has set up an advisory group on internal audit to suggest system for continuous improvement in implementation of schemes and better compliance.

With all the above mentioned systems in place, rural development programmes have a very strong robust accountability framework. This has facilitated the adoption of transparent system of record keeping, public information and citizen grievance redressal system. DoRD hopes to further deepen these processes by conducting programmes at Gram Panchayat level from time to time with periodic public updation of display records in Gram Panchayat offices. Reforms to simplify Record Registers, Community Information Boards, use of logo with financial details etc. is being relentlessly pursued to further strengthen the accountability from time to time. It greatly enhances the transparency and accountability of rural development programmes towards the rural areas and population.

Review of Literature

Singh (2013) has stated that only 3.5 per cent respondent obtained work within 15 days as per Act. Further, Singh reported that programme has removed gap between male and female workers and he also found that delay in payment of wages which affect day-to-day activities. Likewise he mentioned that programme helps to bring down the level of unemployment and reduced the supply of labour in field of agriculture sector. Apart from the above, he reported that near sixty per cent workers spent their increased income on household needs and it has a significant impact on the economic condition of rural population.

Reddy and Raju (2014) have observed that, the programme of IAY could not succeed in providing the houses to the right person across the states by the existing method, just because of some powerful political leaders intervention and using their own methods which are suitable for their locality and situation. Author suggested that the IT based selection process can create the transparent system of selection and it would also help for effective implementation of IAY programme across the states in India.

Ering et al. (2014) author said that although a number of policies, programmes have been initiated and executed, and theories propounded, they have tended to serve the interest of the political elite and their cronies. To large extent, these policies and programmes have made the policy makers richer and in most cases the programmes abandoned. Author recommended an alternative approach to rural development is, the participatory approach, it will infuse with elements of meticulousness.

Venkateswarlu (2017) has found that this housing scheme is successfully implemented in the Kodad Constituency. Total 4695 houses allotted during the study period. First highest beneficiary belongs to SC community and second highest belongs to BC community, just because of Kachha house preference and other has either mixed or Pakka house preferences. According to author that huge amount of money spent for providing housing facility to houseless during the study period and cost of per house remains different just because of different choice of preference. Author stated that lack of awareness is the main hurdle to get benefit of this housing scheme.

Objectives of the study

1. To evaluate the monitoring system of rural development programmes.
2. To know the perceptions of rural households towards the accountability of rural development programmes.

- To give suggestions on the basis of findings to make programme more effective and result oriented.

Hypotheses

H1: Rural development programme has no impact on Grievances Redressal System.

H2: Rural development programme has no impact on Transparency.

H3: Rural development programme has no impact on Accountability.

Material and Methods.

The study is purely based on primary data. For accomplishing the objectives of the study, primary data was collected through questionnaire. The sampling elements comprised of 350 out of 324 responded, rest of sample were either not received or uncompleted. Multistage random sampling method was adopted to select the sample. So far as the collection of primary data was concerned, it was collected from the rural development programmes’ beneficiaries of Himachal Pradesh. Consistent with the study objectives the statistical tool Chi-square test has applied to test the hypothesis.

Analysis and discussions

(SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)

Impact of RDP on Grievances Redressal System

In the proceeding paragraphs, a sincere endeavour has been made to study the impact of rural development programmes on grievances redressal mechanism on the basis of some selected demographic variables i.e. gender, age and income.

Table 1

Gender-wise Bifurcation: Impact of RDP on Grievances Redressal System

Gender	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Male	102	77	8	7	4	198
	31.5%	23.8%	2.5%	2.2%	1.2%	61.1%
Female	64	47	9	4	2	126
	19.8%	14.5%	2.8%	1.2%	0.6%	38.9%
Total	166	124	17	11	6	324
	51.2%	38.3%	5.2%	3.4%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 1.578 df = 4 P.Value = 0.813

Source: Primary Probe

On the application of Chi-square test, calculated value of Chi-square test is 1.578 with P-value is 0.813. The P-value is found greater than level of significance (5%). Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. It can be concluded that there is an insignificant association among the gender and their opinion towards the impact of rural development programmes on grievances redressal system.

Table 2

Age group-wise Classification: Impact of RDP on Grievances Redressal System

Age group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 30	25	22	3	1	1	52
	7.7%	6.8%	0.9%	0.3%	0.3%	16.0%
30-45	54	43	5	5	1	108
	16.7%	13.3%	1.5%	1.5%	0.3%	33.3%
45-60	63	44	6	3	1	117

	19.4%	13.6%	1.9%	0.9%	0.3%	36.1%
Above 60	24	15	3	2	3	47
	7.4%	4.6%	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	14.5%
Total	166	124	17	11	6	324
	51.2%	38.3%	5.2%	3.4%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 8.809 df = 12 P.Value = 0.719

Source: Primary Probe

The calculated value of Chi-square test is 8.809 and P-value is 0.719 which is higher than the table value at 5 per cent level of significance. It means null hypothesis accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that there exist an insignificant association among the different age-group of respondents and their opinion towards the impact of rural development programmes on rapid grievances redressal system.

Table 3

Income group-wise Distribution: Impact of RDP on Grievances Redressal System

Income group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 40,000	26	20	0	0	2	48
	8.0%	6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	14.8%
40,000 - 80,000	71	48	11	8	2	140
	21.9%	14.8%	3.4%	2.5%	0.6%	43.2%
80,000 - 1,20,000	51	36	2	1	2	92
	15.7%	11.1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	28.4%
Above 1,20,000	18	20	4	2	0	44
	5.6%	6.2%	1.2%	0.6%	0.0%	13.6%
Total	166	124	17	11	6	324
	51.2%	38.3%	5.2%	3.4%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 17.742 df = 12 P.Value = 0.124

Source: Primary Probe

The Chi-Square value for the association between income and grievances redressal system under rural development schemes and it obtained 17.742 with 12 degrees of freedom and a significance probability greater than 0.05 - i.e. an insignificant result, it means null hypothesis accepted. On the evidence of this data there is no doubt that there exist an insignificant association between income and impact of development programmes on grievances redressal system.

Impact of Rural Development Programmes on Transparency

Here an attempt has been made to analyze the beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding the transparency in rural development programmes on the basis of certain selected independent variables; such as gender, age and annual family income of the respondents.

Table 4

Gender-wise Classification: Impact of RDP on Transparency

Gender	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Male	94	73	12	7	12	198
	47.5%	36.9%	6.1%	3.5%	6.1%	100.0%
Female	61	46	10	4	5	126
	48.4%	36.5%	7.9%	3.2%	4.0%	100.0%

Total	155	119	22	11	17	324
	47.8%	36.7%	6.8%	3.4%	5.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 1.088 df = 4 P.Value = 0.896

Source: Primary Probe

In order to check the statistical significance between the gender and their opinions towards the impacts of rural development programmes on transparency. The calculated value of Chi-square test 1.088 and corresponding P-value is 0.896 which is higher than 5 per cent level of significance. It means null hypothesis accepted. It can be concluded that there is statistically insignificant association among the gender and their opinion about the working transparency.

Table 5

Age group-wise Bifurcation: Impact of RDP on Transparency

Age group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 30	22	20	4	1	5	52
	42.3%	38.5%	7.7%	1.9%	9.6%	100.0%
30-45	48	43	8	5	4	108
	44.4%	39.8%	7.4%	4.6%	3.7%	100.0%
45-60	62	43	7	2	3	117
	53.0%	36.8%	6.0%	1.7%	2.6%	100.0%
Above 60	23	13	3	3	5	47
	48.9%	27.7%	6.4%	6.4%	10.6%	100.0%
Total	155	119	22	11	17	324
	47.8%	36.7%	6.8%	3.4%	5.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 12.498 df = 12 P.Value = 0.407

Source: Primary Probe

For approving the hypothesis, Chi-square test has applied and its value comes to be 12.498 with corresponding P-value 0.407, which is greater than 5 per cent level of significance. As per the acceptance of null hypothesis, the perception about the existence of transparency in rural development schemes, it is concluded that there is no change in the perception of respondents about the above statement. The perception on functioning transparency is common to all, irrespective of the age groups.

Table 6

Income group-wise Distribution: Impact of RDP on Transparency

Income group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 40,000	23	21	1	0	3	48
	47.9%	43.8%	2.1%	0.0%	6.2%	100.0%
40,000-80,000	65	46	9	9	11	140
	46.4%	32.9%	6.4%	6.4%	7.9%	100.0%
80,000-1,20,000	47	35	8	0	2	92
	51.1%	38.0%	8.7%	0.0%	2.2%	100.0%
Above 1,20,000	20	17	4	2	1	44
	45.5%	38.6%	9.1%	4.5%	2.3%	100.0%
Total	155	119	22	11	17	324
	47.8%	36.7%	6.8%	3.4%	5.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 17.071 df = 12 P.Value = 0.147

Source: Primary Probe

The statistical technique Chi-Square test of independency has applied; its calculated value is 17.071 and P-value is 0.147 which is greater than table value at the 5 per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative is rejected, means result of the statistical test is “non-significant” and variables are independent or there is no relationship between the variables.

Impact of Rural Development Programmes’ on Accountability

In this section an attempt has been made to analyze the beneficiaries’ satisfaction regarding the working transparency under the some selected rural development programmes on the basis of certain selected independent variables; such as gender, age and annual family income of the respondents.

Table 7

Gender-wise Distribution: Impact of RDP on Accountability

Gender	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Male	88	73	22	9	6	198
	27.2%	22.5%	6.8%	2.8%	1.9%	61.1%
Female	64	46	11	5	0	126
	19.8%	14.2%	3.4%	1.5%	0.0%	38.9%
Total	152	119	33	14	6	324
	46.9%	36.7%	10.2%	4.3%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 4.97 df = 4 P.Value = 0.290

Source: Primary Probe

In order to check the statistical significance between the gender and their opinions towards the impacts of rural development programmes on accountability. The calculated value of Chi-square test 4.97 and corresponding P-value is 0.290 which is higher than 5 per cent level of significance. It means null hypothesis accepted. It can be concluded that there is statistically an insignificant association among the gender and their opinion about the impact of RDP on accountability.

Table 8

Age group-wise Distribution: Impact of RDP on Accountability

Age group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 30	23	22	4	1	2	52
	7.1%	6.8%	1.2%	0.3%	0.6%	16.0%
30-45	50	39	12	4	3	108
	15.4%	12.0%	3.7%	1.2%	0.9%	33.3%
45-60	53	48	11	4	1	117
	16.4%	14.8%	3.4%	1.2%	0.3%	36.1%
Above 60	26	10	6	5	0	47
	8.0%	3.1%	1.9%	1.5%	0.0%	14.5%
Total	152	119	33	14	6	324
	46.9%	36.7%	10.2%	4.3%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 14.207 df = 12 P.Value = 0.288

Source: Primary Probe

The calculated Chi-square value in case of age group and impact of rural development programmes on accountability, value comes out to be 14.207 at corresponding P-value 0.288 which is $P > 0.05$ i.e. the null hypothesis accepted at 5 per cent level of significance and it can be summarized that there is an insignificant

relationship between age group of respondents and their opinion about the impact of the rural development programmes on accountability.

Table 9

Income group-wise Classification: Impact of RDP on Accountability

Income group	Nature of Response					Total
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
Below 40,000	26	17	2	3	0	48
	8.0%	5.2%	0.6%	0.9%	0.0%	14.8%
40,000-80,000	60	50	19	6	5	140
	18.5%	15.4%	5.9%	1.9%	1.5%	43.2%
80,000-1,20,000	51	29	7	4	1	92
	15.7%	9.0%	2.2%	1.2%	0.3%	28.4%
Above 1,20,000	15	23	5	1	0	44
	4.6%	7.1%	1.5%	0.3%	0.0%	13.6%
Total	152	119	33	14	6	324
	46.9%	36.7%	10.2%	4.3%	1.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 16.644 df = 12 P.Value = 0.163

Source: Primary Probe

The statistical technique Chi-Square test of independence has applied; its calculated value is 16.644 and P-value is 0.163, which is greater than table value at the 5 per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative is rejected, means result of the statistical test is “non-significant” and variables are independent or there is no relationship between the variables.

Conclusion

Thus, from the above analysis and discussion it can be summarized that the GOI is very serious about good governance. The government has introduced and implemented multi-level and multi-tool system for monitoring of various rural development schemes across the country. And it has also developed a very strong and robust accountability frame work for all its programmes. Accountability through the multi-pronged framework of financial audit, social audit, geo-tagging and use of IT-DBT, the programmes of DoRD have made significant progress in institutionalizing a transparent framework with zero tolerance for corruption. Likewise, it has also taken significant steps to enhance the participation of grass-root bodies in implementation and making such programmes are more result oriented. Consequence is that, the analysis section of this paper demonstrates that fifty or more than fifty per cent of rural households have been strongly admitted that present scenario grievances are settled rapidly and public participation in monitoring and implementation of programmes and selection of beneficiary enhanced the transparency in rural development programmes. And they acknowledged that current RDP's a strong lawful act provisions make respective individual or agency more accountable for his assignment. On the basis of findings, following suggestions have been given that with the passage of time, the government should evaluate and update programme monitoring system at specific intervals. So that the standards can be maintained and continue to find out new ways to increase the monitoring system.

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