

Panchayat System and the Present Political Crisis in HARAYANA

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Abstract

The Right to Information Act has been called "a path to the right to food" since it opens the door to other rights, such as the BPL card, the ration card, and other services. With a name like "road to right to employment," RTI requests are used to check up on things like the status of employment paperwork, pay, and unemployment benefits. 9 That's why this approach is certain to raise questions about potential inaccuracies and holdups. Considering the above discussion of the intertwined nature of RTI and decentralization, this section will attempt to shed light on the intersection of RTI and Panchayati Raj Institutions (hereinafter PRIs) in India by analyzing the connections that show how RTI has been affecting people's lives at the grassroots level by combating corruption and questioning the accountability of public authorities.

The concept of open government has gained prominence over the last two decades, both at home and abroad, and is widely held to be the distinguishing characteristic of a representative democracy. That an educated populace is an absolute need for this definition to hold is self-evident. It's undeniable that knowledge is the blood of a democratic society. In the same manner, the dissemination of reliable information is crucial to the success of a democratic political system. 2 Thus, it should be the norm, not the exception, for the government to keep its citizens apprised of its activities.

I Introduction

In light of this clarification, this article will examine and discuss the following topics

related to RTI: (a) RTI from the perspective of the newly emerging concept of rights-based approach; (b) the origin and historical background of RTI in India; (c) how RTI has been enhancing the spirit of transparency, accountability, and good governance; (d) how RTI is a culmination of the civil society movement and how it has been further gearing up the instrument of social audit; and (e) the role of R The value of RTI as a weapon against corruption needs no more elaboration. A key finding of ARC-first II is that "the hidden culture of public offices is the citadel of corruption," making RTI an effective weapon in the battle against bribery. Proof points to RTI's effectiveness in combating corruption via its primary mechanism—educating public servants and the general public alike. The strength of the people's engagement is what will make the Act's successful implementation produce an environment of vigilance. 9 Because it challenges India's pervasive culture of secrecy and calls on its people to be "the bastion of transparency," the Right to Information Act (RTI) is widely regarded as a watershed piece of legislation in the country. Since the information is "secret or classified," the government has used it as a "instrument of control" for quite some time. As a result of RTI, all information linked to government operations is made publicly accessible online, which is a shift in mentality for public authorities who have historically been instructed to defend and foster anonymity in public office.

When it comes to individualization, RTI is a great resource for a democratic society. The poorest people throughout the world, from isolated tribal villages to the downtrodden in metropolitan slums, benefit from its practicality. Multiple worries about necessary necessities are stressed. RTI is critical to open government and the accountability of public decision makers, in addition to its usefulness in enhancing transparency, citizen engagement, and the rule of law.

For democracies to evolve from representative to participatory forms, public participation is crucial. Participation by citizens in elections and other political activities is essential to the health of democracies. Elections are no longer the sole way for people in a democracy to make their opinions heard; this paradigm has long since passed its expiration date. Participation on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis is the foundation of contemporary democracies, whereas traditional watchdog groups, audit departments, and opposition parties are relics of the past. Citizens now have the

constitutionally protected right to hold their government accountable by demanding information on a regular basis. 11 It's possible that India has an RTI system on par with the best in the world. 12 Proponents of the shift from representative to participatory democracy in Beawar in April 1996 were astute enough to time their dharna to coincide with the election season for the national legislature. Citizens of India had been stuck in an endless political cycle of picking between incompetent leaders, but now they had a chance at change. During the election campaign for the Beawar, discussions and rethinking of democracy were held in hopes of bringing about a change. The dharna's participants echoed calls for citizens to use their right to free speech by bringing up problems and questioning the government's response. It marked the beginning of efforts toward a more representational type of democracy in which the working poor and disenfranchised could assert their right to participate.

Right to know laws herald a change from representative to direct democracy. Various participation experiments are carried out as part of participatory development, and many people feel that RTI, which ushers in people-centered administration, is the key to enhancing participatory democracy. The terms "participatory evaluation" and "participatory monitoring" describe scenarios in which participants actively contribute to and shape the assessment and monitoring of outcomes. A more watchful environment, encouraged by the Right to Information Act, would help facilitate the functioning of a more participatory democracy.

II Fundamentals of the Freedom of Information Act

The Right to Information (RTI) movement in India can trace its origins back to a grass-roots effort in Rajasthan, India, which got support and financing from NGOs. A small hamlet called Dendinger in central Haryana's Rajsamir district was the first to feel the effects of the unrest, and from there it expanded to Bhim, a rural town on the borders of Ajmer, Pali, and Bilawal. 1 Central Ajmer experiences low yearly rainfall, making it an unfavorable environment for agriculture and other types of subsistence. Located in the heart of Rajsamir district, Devdungri is a tiny village. The Right to Information Act of 2005 (RTI Act) took root in this environment and has since grown to become an essential pillar of Indian democracy. It is still crucial for rural regions to have access to government-funded famine aid and other rural

development programs. Because of this, the responsibility falls on the panchayats, which have been given the mandate to carry them out by higher authorities.

Many people in central Rajasthan depend on government-funded building projects as their only source of revenue due to a dearth of employment and economic prospects. Almost all of these employees originated in the small town of Sohargarh. Underpaying salaries is a prevalent practice that contributes to the hostility and dissatisfaction among wage employees. Dandi Rapat is home to the Irrigation Department's upper-level management. A significant portion of Dandi Rapat's workforce lives in the neighborhood of Sohargarh. Chunni Bai and Bhawar Singh discovered that their coworkers weren't getting paid fairly and petitioned for a raise. When viewed in this light, the public's discontent with the government in this country predates the establishment of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanga. (MKSS). Sohargarh, a small hamlet in the Deogarh Tehsil of the Rajasm and District, is the birthplace of the right to information (RTI) campaign. The locals joined together to rise up against their aristocratic master.

During the Sohargarh conflict, the Dendinger group was accused for not adequately compensating its troops. In 1989, the subordinate Engineer's salary of Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 per day was the subject of petitions to the State Famine Commissioner and the Executive Engineer in command of the project. The Rs was worth a lot more than this. When graft reared its ugly head again, salaries were cut to Rs.9 from Rs.11 in a matter of days. Aruna Roy, Nikhil Dey, Shekar Singh, and Anchi, four social advocates who emigrated to the United States in 1987 with identical aims, were instrumental in turning the fight for equitable pay into a political campaign. Since leaving the esteemed Indian Administrative Services (IAS) in 1975 to assume the helm in social work, Aruna Roy has become the organization's eldest and most important member, and her work is now known around the world. Nikhil Dey is a young academic who abandoned his education in the United States in order to become a positive influence in the world. Shekhar Singh, a native of Rajasthan, was instrumental in developing the idea by fostering dialogue and informing others about the code that underpinned it. The ability of MKSS advocates to communicate with the group's rank-and-file members would be severely hindered without his efforts.

On May Day, 1990, these advocates, by then well-known and respected in the community, formally organized under the name Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangha than (MKSS), which translates to Worker and Peasant Empowerment Organization.

III The Panchayat System and the Current Political Crisis in HARAYANA

Understanding the problem of corruption in the state at the local level is vital for the present study, which focuses on the operation of Right to Information at the gramme panchayat level in Uttar Pradesh. Conflict emerges when diverse socioeconomic groups attempt to work together to deal with the panchayats that distribute the monies. Those on the margins of society, with less sway in the legislative or judicial branches, are the first to feel the effects of conflict. The powerful are able to exert their influence on the police and the courts via the use of intimidation and other types of coercion in this culture. As a corollary, this equation emphasizes the role that affluent peasant landowners have in shaping agricultural production, policy, and commerce at the state level. Every stage of the agricultural value chain from planting to packing is a component of this technique. There are bureaucrats, land and electricity administration, government-cooperative dealers in the business of crops and seeds, and affluent farmers. It has been suggested that denying individuals of lower socioeconomic class access to education and literacy is part of a greater plot to keep them stuck in ignorance, helplessness, and subservience to those of higher social position. This is an excellent illustration of the "mailbag" concept in action.

As James Manor points out, the environment in which social capital arises is a vital contextual aspect effecting the establishment of trust, social capital between groups, and the democratic functioning of institutions, and decentralization is a perfect example of an anti-corruption instrument. The shape of segmented-ness is not "fixed," but rather changeable, in societies in transition, which is vital to remember while trying to comprehend the consequences of segmented-ness on social capital. Since independence, India has undergone rapid change as a result of democracy and development, leading to the creation of new identities and shifts in the balance of power between caste and class groups, which have resulted in both fusion and fission and, ultimately, horizontal and vertical Mobilization. Indicators of social and

economic growth and division tend to be lower in countries where the currency has appreciated. These cultural and social movements within civil society paved the way for the political mobilization of the lower caste movements, led by the political parties that supported those movements. Most of the time, Dalits and the Most Backward Castes have been at conflict with one another (MBCs). Concurrent with the emergence of state-sponsored violence, capitalist competition also emerged. They milk the designers of the welfare system for all the money they can get their hands on. And therefore, the equation of struggle has taken traction not only between higher and lower castes, but also between people at the grass-roots level.

IV Issues in Haryana's Panchayat Raj Institutions in India

Regardless of the country's unique past, government structure, or societal norms, PRIs are always faced with the same basic challenge: how to guarantee that all countries are held to the same standards. As a result, nearly every nation has at least some of the following worries about the PRIs' design and administration. Panchayati raj systems vary from state to state, with some, like Kerala, Karnataka, and West Bengal, having more evolved and effective systems than others. For purposes of extrapolation, it is useful to consider that UP is illustrative of the problems with PRIs in other states. To begin, state lawmakers provide examples of how PRIs are being used locally as part of a broader struggle for control and influence. When faced with the requests of other political leaders, PRIs rarely succeed in withstanding and opposing them. The problems of supremacy and arbitrariness that plague PRIs are made much worse by the lack of a clearly defined position for political parties in panchayats.

In working with government entities, 73rd Amendment Act PRIs are not given any guidelines for how to proceed. It also provides only vague justifications for ending PRIs, so countries often do so for purely political motives. It's been twenty years, and these are still the most fundamental problems with the 73rd Amendment Act; the government needs to pay them more attention.

V The RTI procedure, as seen by the PIO

Value RTI now has a different form at the grassroots level. I spoke with a number of PIOs, and not one of them could characterize RTI to me in any way other than as

blackmail. Before they began creating their own narratives, lions were constantly boasting about how great they were. I could make something up to justify giving a distorted explanation of RTI. Blackmail is likely used by RTI, if not frequently then at least occasionally. To understand the gravity of this form of extortion, an illustration is required.

In the upcoming poll, two people will be vying for the role of Pradhan. (General Secretary). With the help of the Right to Information Act, he wanted to investigate the allegations made against him by his opponents and those who tried to undermine him. He blackmailed his opponent with a Right to Information inquiry into his assets, money, and family, and the other candidate eventually conceded. For instance, a Pradhan discovered a village clerk who had taken tens of thousands of rupees in bribery. The Pradhan threatened him repeatedly until he improved the infrastructure of his Mohalla by constructing a proper path in front of his home and installing running water. Using coercion to coerce intelligent people into doing your work has been proven effective. Blackmail in the shape of monetary requests has been used by some of them.

This is why societal oversight systems require the open and honest application of the Right to Information (RTI) Act. (SAMs). This part focuses on an attempt to address the issue of RTI application in Uttar Pradesh at the Gram Panchayat level. This part will demonstrate, first, that the study's objectives have been met, and, second, that some of the ostensible difficulties with the study's assumption have simple solutions. The writers state that "improved governance," "increased development effectiveness," and "empowerment" are "three main explanations underscoring the necessity of social responsibility." Systematic connections between these claims add depth and credibility to each other. Since improved administration and people's freedom go hand in hand, it's possible that they'll bring development effectiveness to a whole new level.

Methods of participation include discussion, dialogue, and action with the goal of affecting and molding policies and organizations for the benefit of the impoverished.

More and more people are trying to make a difference in the world by participating in civic society, but there isn't much of a forum for them to do so.

Sources of Funding

Most of the residences in the region of interest are owned by middle- and lower-income families (about 80%). Approximately one-third of the population polled gets by mostly on farm labor income. Only 20% of households are not totally reliant on agricultural labor but perform some farming themselves. About 40% of the sample families' income comes from non-farm work, with the remaining 10% coming from a variety of different sources.

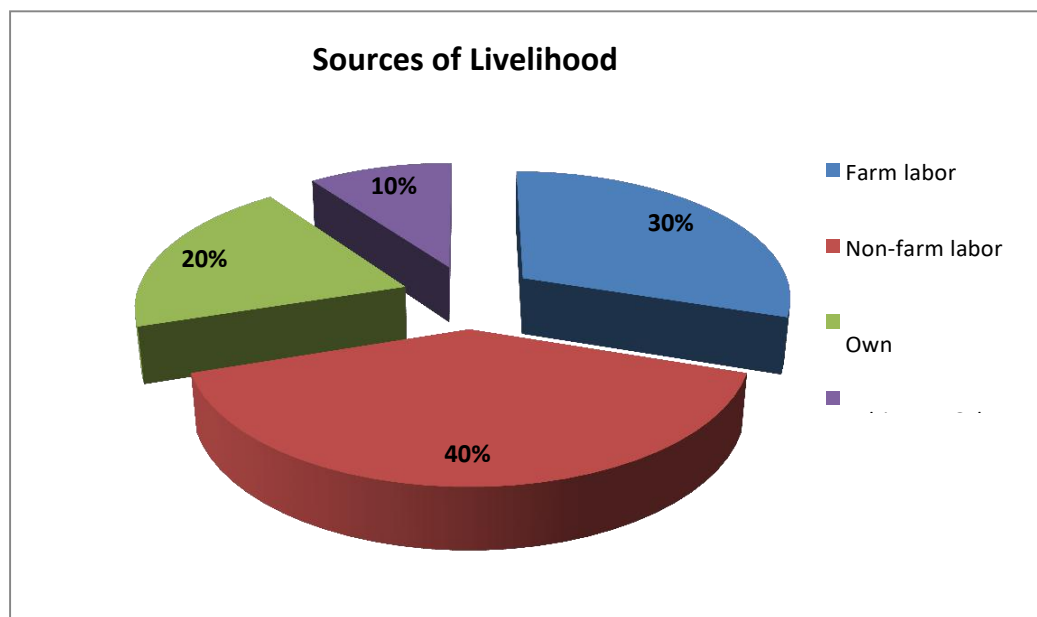


Figure (5.1) Sources of Livelihood

Results

Regression coefficient for Awareness is (.506), which is positive and significant (p .05), suggesting that there is a high degree of responsiveness between a respondent's level of Awareness and their level of Participation in MGNREGA. To a certain extent (determined by education and experience), the log value of the number of days worked or engaged in an activity increase by a factor of .50 for every point on

the scale of awareness. Therefore, we may infer that respondents' familiarity with MGNREGA has a substantial bearing on how actively they participate in the initiative. We can rule out the notion that respondents' familiarity with MGNREGA has no impact on their participation in the programme due to the abundance of evidence suggesting otherwise.

The null hypothesis that family income has no effect on respondents' willingness to participate in MGNREGS projects can be confidently rejected given that the t-p-value statistic's is less than .05 and the regression coefficients for the independent variable "Monthly Income of the Family" are negative. Regression coefficients and t-statistic p-values with positive signs show statistical significance when controlling for age. According to the data, it is safe to reject the alternative hypothesis that older respondents are less likely to participate in MGNREGS-related activities. Regression coefficients on the Literacy variable are found to be positive, and the corresponding p-values for the t-statistics are also found to be statistically significant. Since the data suggests otherwise, we may conclude that respondents' literacy level has a substantial effect on their participation in MGNREGS activities and so reject the null hypothesis. Disputing the findings of Deininger and Liu (2010), who discovered a lower participation tendency for illiterate families, this research demonstrates that households participate in MGNREGA activities regardless of literacy level. A Look at How MGNREGA Affects Household Expenditures and Incomes

With the promise of 100 days of employment at a minimum wage, MGNREGA gives those living in rural regions a chance to break out of poverty. In the eyes of many, the Act represents our last, best chance to eradicate poverty forever.

Making local employment options available to those who are less fortunate in rural areas. The poor and the marginalized have a safety net in the form of MGNREGS. Food and other basics might be purchased using the money saved and earned via this initiative for low-income rural inhabitants. Those living in rural regions use the money they receive from MGNREGA to improve their standard of living by investing in things like improved nutrition, medical care, and house maintenance. Here, the author assesses how much of an uptick in quality of life the respondents saw as a consequence of the MGNREGA funds.

Conclusion

The mindsets of RTI petitioners and public authorities have shifted, allowing RTI to accomplish its aims of strengthening the demand and supply sides of the information market. The Right to Information (RTI) mechanism has been used by citizens to investigate the progress of their claims for socioeconomic rights such as the Right to Education (RTE) and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Values of transparency and accountability have been established through RTI at the general practitioner (GP) level, where many various initiatives and programmes are executed. The norm of administrative confidentiality has been called into question as a direct consequence of RTI. It has aided people in dealing with the challenges of advocating for their own rights and engaging in debates about the political and economic issues that influence their daily life. Increased responsibility stemming from patients' active involvement will make general practitioners more cautious as they carry out their obligations as the implementing agency.

Furthermore, corruption is a process that is firmly embedded in our social and political culture, and as a result, it works to spread the transfer of all wealth into few hands, leaving a substantial portion of the population without access to these resources. General practitioners are permitted to make RTI requests, which helps fight corruption in all its forms and promotes a more responsible and transparent approach to medicine.

Interviews with PIOs and RTI applicants suggest that submitting an RTI request to the government is not a straightforward process. The Public Information Officer (PIO) faces many obstacles while responding to requests for information under the RTI law. Lack of knowledge and experience in handling RTI applications is a common source of delays in answers. Authorities inside the government have always showed little excitement for processing RTI requests, seeing them as mere "administrative overhead," which is consistent with the administration's usual penchant for secrecy.

Consumers may not be aware of all of their available alternatives, which may lead to PIOs providing insufficient information (first appeal, second appeal, and complaints). Both the right to education (RTE) and the right to work (MGNREGA) have been claimed by the people, demonstrating the positive impact that RTI has had on their

lives. This is a rare event, unfortunately. As a result of administrative and legal requirements imposed by RTI regulations, the processing of RTI applications is hampered. Currently, there is a major issue with the inefficiency of the record-keeping system. A significant delay in data collection may be traced back to ineffective record keeping practices. Public authorities are required to keep all of their records properly catalogued and indexed in a way that makes it easy for people to exercise their Right to Information under the Act, and within a reasonable time and subject to the availability of resources, they must digitize and network all of their records across the various systems in the country so that people can easily gain access to these records from anywhere in the country. After speaking with PIOs, we learned that the status of recordkeeping is a problem even in the Central Government Ministries. Existing record management rules only address filing documents according to their chronological age, since this is consistent with the store-before-destroy philosophy. Most local organizations lack the fundamentals—cataloging, indexing, and orderly storage—required to respond quickly to an RTI request. Even if data is stored in a well-organized form, it may still be challenging to get useful results under certain conditions. This may be the case because data collected at the grass-roots level has traditionally been presented in bulk rather than in a form that can be easily analyzed for specific insights.

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