



**GOA INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
& RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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FORWARD

Goa Institute of Public Administration & Rural Development (GIPARD), is the State's Apex Institute for training, capacity building, research & consultancy activities; in areas of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Public Administration, Women & Gender Studies, Disaster Management etc. GIPARD imparts educational training to the elected representatives of local bodies, self help groups, employees of Government & Government aided institutions, non-government organizations, academicians and students etc. GIPARD functions as the Administrative Training Institute (ATI) as well as the State Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (SIRD&PR). GIPARD is an autonomous body registered under the Societies Act 1860.

As on date the Institute is in its 25 years of existence. Over the last two decades, the Institute has grown leaps and bounds. Presently, the Institute is conducting around 250-300 training programmes annually imparting training to more than 10000 persons covering around 25,000 training man days. The Institute conducts training programs sponsored by the Ministry of Rural Development Government of India and also the programmes sponsored by the Department of Personnel and Training Government of India. Besides, the Institute conducts demand based training programmes of various Government departments. The Institute has signed MoUs with 28 Colleges in Goa and few more other State and Central Government institutions for mutual cooperation and coordination in training and research. The Institute is also focusing on social audit of programmes of the Government and also promoting research activities by providing financial support to the college faculty to undertake minor research studies.

This publication is the first in the series of minor research studies sponsored by this Institute to the faculty of various colleges on various topics of public interest. The researchers have furnished their report upon completion of their study. This is basically a micro level study comprising a small sample and the findings are indicative on the subject of study giving further scope to the researchers for a larger study including scope for pursuing PhD. This publication is being published as GIPARD Working Papers giving a summary account of the

study reports submitted by the researchers with a scope to the authors to publish their full paper in the journal of their choice.

In all there are 20 minor research studies conducted by the faculty from 12 colleges. The research areas comprised variety of subjects like Atal Asra Yojana, RTI, Quality of Wells, Accomplishments of SDG-4.7, migrant students problems, water management, participation of youth in local bodies, Garbage Management Committees, Village Child Committees, Welfare scheme for STs, SHGs, management of floral waste, PDS and natural resources management. The findings and recommendations would help the Departments and Organizations concerned to take steps as may be required for improvisation and improvement.

The team GIPARD comprising core faculty Ms. Arlette M. H. Mascarenhas, Ms. Ashwini Acharya, Ms. Sarita Patil, Ms Hegel Da Costa and Dr. Seema Fernandes Assistant Director deserves appreciation for working hard in compiling and bringing out this publication. Thanks are due to Shri Sumedh Gurjar Director, Research and Development Centre YASHADA (ATI Maharashtra) and Dr. Narayan Desai, Master Trainer GIPARD and former Principal of Angle Higher Secondary Canacona for their inputs for the research studies.

(Dr. S. Shanbhogue)
Director

Assessment of Atal Asra Yojana for Tribal Community in the State of Goa

- MS. PRATIKSHA GURAV♦

ABSTRACT

Goa Government's Atal Asra Yojana, a housing assistance scheme for tribal communities in Goa, extends supplementary financial support beyond what is offered by the Government of India's housing schemes. This study seeks to understand the awareness and satisfaction levels with regard to the scheme and identify areas in need of improvement for a more efficient implementation and effective intervention of the scheme.

The study concentrated on three village panchayats in the Quepem taluka, chosen for their significant tribal populations. A total of 180 beneficiaries were surveyed, with primary data collected through field surveys using a tailored questionnaire, and secondary data sourced from e-journals and online resources.

It found that the targeted beneficiaries were aware of the Atal Asra Yojana, having heard of it by word of mouth, government offices, or panchayats. The respondents, however, found the application process burdensome due to complex formalities and documentation requirements, leading to delays. Dissatisfaction with the timing of financial disbursements was also expressed.

The study recommends an online application platform to streamline the process and enhance transparency, an increase in the financial assistance amount to adequately cover real housing, and house repair costs. A faster sanctioning of the full amount, instead of instalments, ensuring funds are used for their intended purpose, a simplification of the required documentation, minimising windows for red tape or bureaucratic hurdles, will improve both the process and the scheme's intended aim of improving the lives of Goa's tribal population.

INTRODUCTION

The Atal Asra Yojana scheme of the Department of Tribal Welfare, Government of Goa, offers the state's tribal communities supplementary financial assistance, above and beyond what is available under the Government of India's Rajiv Awas Yojana and Indira Awas Yojana, for the construction and repairs of their homes.

Under the scheme, assistance of up to Rs. 2.00 lakhs for new housing constructions and up to Rs. 75,000 for repairs in existing homes can be availed. This provision may extend to Rs. 2.50 lakhs and Rs. 1.00 lakh, respectively in deserving cases, provided the applicant has not been covered under the Rajiv Awas Yojana or the Indira Awas Yojana. This financial support is contingent upon the applicant producing requisite documentation and certificates to establish he belongs to a tribal community.

♦ Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Rosary College of Commerce & Arts, Navelim – Goa.

This study, with specific attention to the Quepem taluka, serves as a valuable resource for understanding the awareness levels and areas in need of improvement within this Government scheme aimed at enhancing rural well-being.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- ❖ Assess the level of awareness about the Atal Asra Scheme among tribal communities.
- ❖ Understand beneficiary preferences in implementation and gauge their satisfaction with the scheme.
- ❖ Identify challenges encountered during the disbursement of benefits and suggest improvements for more effective implementation.

METHODOLOGY

According to the 2011 census, Goa is home to a tribal population of 149,275. The study focuses on three village panchayats – Morpila, Padi, and Ambaulim – in the Quepem taluka, chosen for their substantial tribal populations. A total of 180 beneficiaries (60 from each panchayat) were included in the study.

Data collection relied on both primary and secondary sources, with primary data collected through field surveys utilising a tailored questionnaire and secondary from e-journals and online resources.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Atal Asra Yojana, a flagship scheme of the State Government, aims to support economically disadvantaged individuals. Findings reveal that the target beneficiaries are aware of the scheme having heard of it through word of mouth, government offices, or panchayats.

Respondents indicated that the application process was burdensome due to complex formalities, and the required documentation, including 'no objection certificates' from respective authorities, that resulted in substantial delays. Beneficiaries also expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of financial disbursements and wanted faster allocation of at least the first instalment. The procedural complexities and a lack of support and awareness regarding documentation requirements affected satisfaction levels.

The study recommends an online platform be provided by the government through which applications can be made and processed, providing confidentiality and enhancing transparency.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggests several improvements to the Atal Asra Yojana:

- ❖ The application process, which currently consumes substantial time, should be streamlined.
- ❖ An increase in the financial assistance amount, which is currently inadequate for the construction/or repair of even a small house.
- ❖ Expedition of the sanctioning process, transferring the full amount at one go to allow for continuity in construction work, instead of instalments as is the current practice.
- ❖ Reduction in the costs and delays associated with mandatory formalities, such as architect-drawn construction plans and 'no objection certificates' from respective authorities.
- ❖ Ensuring that funds allocated under the scheme are used for their intended purpose.
- ❖ Simplifying the documentation process to minimise bureaucratic hurdles.
- ❖ Introducing an online application facility to expedite and improve the application process.

Identification of Problems Faced by Migrant Rural School Students of Goa for Acquisition of English Language

- MR. SANJAYAN T.S[♦]

ABSTRACT

A significant population in India speak English as a second language however the importance it gets, and how it is taught varies across regions and curriculums. This study aims to uncover challenges faced by migrant school students in Goa in their pursuit of English language proficiency, especially within the context of Higher Secondary school education. It also seeks to address the challenges faced by English language teachers in navigating the teaching processes in schools.

The findings will help educators, curriculum developers, researchers and policymakers address these gaps and introduce innovative teaching methods. This paper is also a contribution to the literature on second language acquisition, multilingual education, and rural development in India.

A combination of surveys, interviews, observations, and tests on a sample of 200 migrant students aged between 16-17 from rural Goan schools representing diverse linguistic backgrounds was used to source data. The study also obtained insights from 42 English teachers from both rural and urban areas.

The study found migrant students from rural areas were disadvantaged due to limited exposure, time constraints, and inadequate pedagogical methods. Their parents who were often less educated, and did not necessarily emphasise the importance of English, a dependence on their respective mother tongue for everyday communication, and reticence in speaking in classrooms were identified as added factors.

A more individualised focus on the students, with the involvement of parents in the early stage of their education, greater interactive learning, and encouragement of reading in identified genres of the student's interest, have been suggested. The study calls for an Introduction of an 'English language intervention package' for second-language learners, student support service centres and a revision of the English language question paper to also assess listening and speaking abilities. It also stresses the need to maintain an optimal teacher-student ratio for individualised attention and ongoing professional development for teachers, and stresses on merit-based selection of teachers.

INTRODUCTION

English, a global language, is widely spoken in India as a second language of many of its citizens. English is an academic subject in almost every state in India, and its place as first, second or third language varies based on regions and curriculums. Some schools adopt a semi-English approach.

[♦] Assistant Professor, Post Graduate and Research Department in Education, GVM's Dr. Dada Vaidya College of Education, Ponda - Goa.

To effectively learn a foreign language, it should be introduced during a child's early developmental stages, and follow the four fundamental language learning steps: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The appropriate measures taken in these areas should result in proficiency and fluency in a language. In the context of grammar and writing skills, the teaching and learning process should align with students' cognitive capacities. Elements such as sentence structure transformations, vocabulary, word categorisation, spelling, pronunciation, part-of-speech identification, sentence formation, and word meaning within texts are important to enhance language appreciation. Furthermore, issues concerning vocabulary and pronunciation will have to be addressed in all areas of writing - paragraphs, letters, dialogue, describing imagery, essays, narratives, and reports. This study aims to uncover the challenges faced by migrant students of rural schools in Goa in their pursuit of English language proficiency. The scope of this research is confined to Higher Secondary school students in English medium schools in Goa.

Despite the widespread use of English in India, many students in rural areas struggle to learn the language due to factors including, limited exposure, time constraints, inadequate pedagogical methods, and a reliance on their mother tongue for everyday communication.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The research endeavours to achieve the following objectives:

- ❖ Analyse the present status of English language instruction and learning in rural Goan schools.
- ❖ Identify specific learning impediments related to English grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and writing skills among migrant rural school students in Goa.
- ❖ Propose effective and innovative teaching strategies to mitigate these learning challenges and enhance the English language proficiency of migrant rural school students in Goa.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed approach, incorporating surveys, interviews, observations, and tests to collect data from a sample of 200 migrant rural school students in Goa who hail from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The data collection process focuses on students aged 16-17 years attending rural schools. Their language skills were evaluated based on selected topics outlined by the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

To ascertain the factors behind the inadequacies in teachers of the language, the study solicited inputs from 42 English teachers representing both rural and urban Goa.

KEY POINTS

It is for each state to assign status to the English language in its academic institutions. In Goa, English is the primary language. Migrant students must learn the language and its various topics from the very outset of their education. Compared to their peers in urban areas, migrant students from rural areas are disadvantaged firstly from having parents who are often less educated and thus may not be able to provide an equally enabling environment for a faster acquisition of the English language. Additionally, parents in rural areas may not emphasise the importance of English language acquisition and consequently, these students often lack opportunities to read, write, or speak English.

Primary learning difficulties encountered by the students surveyed included issues with spelling, homework, pronunciation, composition writing, penmanship, mastering vowel letters, and reticence when it came to speaking in class.

The challenges faced by migrant students of rural schools in learning English as their second language included:

- ❖ Difficulty expressing themselves in English.
- ❖ Insufficient understanding of the pronunciation, spelling, and grammatical rules.
- ❖ An absence of recognition of the importance of English proficiency
- ❖ Over-reliance on the Grammar-Translation Method leaves them dependent on their mother tongue, and thus reluctant to speak in public.

Teaching and learning a language requires substantial patience, dedication and commitment from the teacher, as well as personal attention.

This study observed that for many teachers, completing the syllabus or curriculum is the main agenda encouraging rote learning and exam answers that are devoid of true understanding.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Language challenges related to grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary are escalating and demand thoughtful resolution. Furthermore, issues pertaining to the willingness of both students and teachers to acquire and disseminate language skills must be addressed effectively. This study endeavours to provide solutions and guidance for Higher Secondary school students struggling to master English. It also seeks to address the challenges faced by English language teachers in navigating the teaching processes in schools.

Based on observations the study suggests:

- ❖ Maintaining an optimal teacher-student ratio in the classroom to facilitate individualised attention.
- ❖ Ongoing professional development of teachers who need to be able to meet the expectations of students of various ages, and the demand of their parents.

- ❖ A sustained focus on students' speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- ❖ Both teachers and students should cultivate the practice of self-improvement through reflection.
- ❖ Teachers must be selected for their competence and purely on merit, rather than favouritism or personal connections.
- ❖ Interactive learning must be encouraged.
- ❖ While encouraging reading, teachers must identify the interest of students in the genre of literature.
- ❖ Promoting the use of an 'English language intervention package' is key to teaching the language to those for whom English is a second language.
- ❖ Revisions are required in the English language question paper formats to assess language skills by including listening and speaking abilities. Within the prose section, there should be scope for the studying to answer creatively, through narration or other creative expressions.
- ❖ Establishment of students support service centres must be
- ❖ During the early stages in a child's education, parents can actively participate, through their respective languages, and pinpoint challenges the student may be facing. This would prove invaluable as an input for teachers to gain insight into the students' specific need and offer individualised attention in the classroom.

The study is significant as it will help teachers, curriculum developers, policy makers, and researchers understand the challenges and needs of migrant, rural school students of Goa and introduce innovations in teaching methods. The study will also contribute to the literature on second language acquisition, multilingual education, and rural development in India.

Competency Architecture for Higher Education Institutions In Accomplishing SDG-4.7

- MS. RENJI GEORGE AMBALLOOR

&

MR. SHANKAR B. NAIK ♦

ABSTRACT

As the 2030 deadline approaches, the pursuit of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for a kinder and more just world intensifies, with varying progress across regions and nations. "Education for Sustainability" (EfS), and Goal 4 - outcome 7 emphasize inclusive, and quality education for all as a pivotal mechanism for instilling sustainability values in students.

This study evaluates the preparedness of teachers in Goa to achieve the targets and competencies for 'Education for Sustainability'(EfS). Furthermore, the study also examines the lack of competencies needed for achieving EfS and proposes strategies for enhancing the identified competencies. Data were collected through an online survey involving 329 regular teachers from higher education institutions (HEIs) in Goa that offer general education. Additional insights were gathered through one-on-one interactions with stakeholders selected through a stratified sampling process, covering academic ranks and fields of study. Stakeholders included state best teacher awardees, government officials, professors, and retired academicians.

The study found that teachers in Goa's HEIs exhibited a significant awareness and understanding of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); however, their awareness and understanding of EfS were only average. Teachers' confidence in incorporating EfS into their teaching was average, but most expressed an intention to do so. Additional training needs in systems thinking, anticipatory skills, and strategic planning were recognized. The study recommends allocating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for EfS, providing competency training, teacher certification, and non-salary grants tied to EfS performance. It also suggests fostering partnerships with local industries and environmental groups, incentivising research, promoting public-private collaboration to develop resources, and implementing monitoring and reporting mechanisms for EfS. Additionally, the study proposes displaying SDG boards in colleges and government departments and organizing conferences and workshops on sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations has set forth the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to establish a world order that promotes kindness and justice for all. As the 2030 deadline approaches, efforts to address the 17 SDGs are intensifying, albeit with varying progress across nations, regions, and sub-regions. Goal 4 has been identified as a pivotal mechanism for fostering interest and inculcating sustainability values in students and youth. Outcome 7, and Education for Sustainability (EfS), is at the core of this effort and requires teachers to play a critical role in cultivating competencies for sustainable practices among students.

♦ Assistant Professors, Government College of Arts & Commerce, Quepem - Goa.

This research helps in understanding the competencies required for teachers in Higher Education Institutions (HIEIs) to achieve SDG 4.7, paving the way for enhancing sustainable education and promoting a caring and impartial world order.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

1. To explore teachers' perceptions of SDGs.
2. To identify competencies that are currently deficient or underdeveloped but necessary to achieve Education for Sustainability.
3. To devise strategies for enhancing the competencies identified in Objective 2.

METHODOLOGY

Primary data were collected from 329 regular teachers in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) providing general education in Goa through an online survey. Supplementary insights were gathered through one-on-one interactions with various stakeholders including:

- ❖ Recipients of the State Teacher Award for Excellence in Higher Education.
- ❖ Ten officials/teachers of the Government of Goa
- ❖ Fifteen senior professors from Goa University and other HEIs in the state.
- ❖ Five retired academics from the state.

Stratified sampling was employed in the selection of respondents to cover all ranks and diverse fields of study.

The online survey encompassed questions related to awareness and understanding of SDGs and EfS. The questionnaire contained inquiries about the EfS competencies that are lacking in students - those competencies which teachers can infuse in students, and for which teachers may need training. Additionally, the questionnaire included probes to investigate methods for boosting teacher confidence in incorporating EfS into classroom teaching.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

This project aims to explore teachers' perceptions of SDGs and EfS while identifying competencies lacking or in need of improvement to achieve EfS objectives. The project further offers a set of public policy recommendations to enhance EfS outcomes.

The study found that teachers in Higher Educational Institutes (HIEIs) offering general education in Goa exhibit a high level of awareness and understanding of SDGs, with an average level for EfS. Teachers' confidence in incorporating EfS into their classroom teaching was also assessed as average. However, the majority of respondents expressed their intent to integrate EfS into their teaching practices.

The study pinpoints specific EfS competencies like system thinking, anticipatory skills, and strategic planning in which teachers require additional training. It provides a range of strategies to boost teacher confidence in implementing EfS in the classroom and integrating it into their teaching approaches.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends several key policy initiatives, including attracting CSR funds, identifying institutes for EfS competency training, certifying teachers in EfS competencies, linking non-salary grants to EfS performance, encouraging institutions to partner with local industries for EfS promotion, collaborating with local environmental groups for experiential learning, incentivizing EfS research, developing EfS resources through public-private partnerships, and introducing mechanisms for monitoring and reporting EfS compliance.

Additionally, the study suggests displaying SDG boards in both English and Konkani in colleges and government departments. Organizing conferences and other events on sustainable development, climate change, global warming, and carbon footprints is also recommended.

Adolescent Substance Use In Goa & Family Dynamics

- MS. SHERYL AFONSO E D'SOUZA & MS. LARISSA RODRIGUES[♦]

ABSTRACT

Goa, a global tourist hotspot, has to contend with the profound influence of diverse cultures on its adolescent population. The research delves into the challenges faced by adolescents navigating a crucial phase of experimentation, hormonal changes and the weight of individual, familial, educational, and societal expectations.

The study aims to understand the extent of substance use among students in Higher Secondary Schools (HSS) in Goa, focusing on the age of onset, frequency, and accessibility of substances. It also investigates the connection between after-school activities, gender disparities, and family dynamics concerning addictive behaviours in adolescents. Further, the study evaluates the effectiveness of initiatives of educational institutions in mitigating adolescent addictions and offers insights into the underlying causes of substance use by adolescents.

Two questionnaires were administered to HSS students and Heads of Institutes, respectively. Given the exploratory and qualitative nature of the study, non-probability sampling was employed to determine the final sample size, and purposive sampling, with representation of female students, was employed to prevent gender biases. Of the questionnaires distributed to 200 students, 126 were returned. Fifteen of 40 Heads of Higher Secondary Schools (out of Goa's 133 HSSs in total) responded to the questionnaires.

The study reveals a concerning trend of substance use initiation before the age of 11, with significant variations among different substances. Familial acceptance of early alcohol consumption and the presence of alcohol in households contributes to the issue. Family dynamics emerge as a pivotal factor, with warm and supportive relationships between parents and adolescents linked to lower substance use. Negative peer relationships are also seen to increase the risk. Parenting styles, particularly an authoritative style, are also identified as a potential influence on adolescent behaviour.

The study scrutinises the roles of educational institutions in addressing adolescent substance use and uncovering gaps in intervention strategies. It observes a lack of specific programmes and limited staff engagement, despite the acknowledgement of the issue.

In conclusion, this research paper underscores the pressing issue of adolescent substance use in Goa and advocates a multi-pronged prevention approach, involving stricter regulations, heightened parental vigilance, and a proactive role of Heads of Educational Institutes. Additionally, it recommends institution-based, community-based, and family-focused prevention programs to effectively curb adolescent substance use. Through its findings, the research aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for addressing a critical public health issue in Goa.

[♦] Assistant Professors, Goa College of Home Science, Campal, Panaji - Goa.

INTRODUCTION

Goa, a global tourist hotspot, experiences the impact of diverse cultures that significantly influence the minds of young individuals. The phase of adolescence, marked by experimentation and influenced by hormonal changes, is also burdened by expectations from the individual, family, education and society. This can have a profound toll on teenagers, leading some to resort to substance abuse as a means of escaping their immediate concerns and burdens. It is imperative to recognize the roles played by the State, as well as those of families and educational institutions, in facilitating a seamless transition from childhood to adulthood.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- ❖ To ascertain the prevalence of substance, use among a select group of students in Higher Secondary Schools (HSS) in Goa.
- ❖ To determine the age at which adolescents first engage in substance use.
- ❖ To examine the frequency of substance use.
- ❖ To assess the ease of access to substances for adolescents.
- ❖ To explore the relationship between after-school activities and substance use.
- ❖ To identify gender disparities in substance use.
- ❖ To investigate the association between family dynamics and addictive behaviours in adolescents.
- ❖ To understand the initiatives taken by educational institutions to combat adolescent substance addiction.
- ❖ To identify potential reasons for adolescent substance use.
- ❖ To propose enhancements to the Adolescent Health Programme of the Directorate of Health Services, Government of Goa.

METHODOLOGY

Two questionnaires were administered to Higher Secondary School (HSS) students and Heads of Institutes, respectively. The study aimed to establish a sample population representing HSS students in the State of Goa. The researchers sought a representative sample from each HSS in the State. Of the 200 questionnaires distributed to HSS students, 126 were returned, forming the sample size for analysis in the study.

Among the 113 HSSs in the State, questionnaires were administered to the Heads of 40 HSSs. However, only 15 Heads of Institutes returned the filled-in questionnaires. Notably, 67% of the returned questionnaires were from institutes in Bardez Taluka, with the remaining from those in Tiswadi Taluka. The majority (67%) of the HSSs included in the study were located in urban areas of Goa.

Given the exploratory and qualitative nature of the study, Non-Probability Sampling was employed to determine the final sample size. Purposive Sampling was selected, with attention given to ensuring the representation of female students to prevent gender biases regarding substance use by adolescents.

KEY POINTS OF THE STUDY

Individuals addicted to substances, regardless of age, often encounter relationship issues and other life challenges. A majority of the HSS students in the study claimed to have never experienced any of the listed problems. However, students who had previously indicated substance use admitted to facing these problems, attributing them to their use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes. Notably, accidents or injuries, conflicts with family and friends, property damage, and relationship problems with friends and family featured prominently among the issues associated with substance use by these students.

With the exception of solvents/inhalants and cocaine, all other substances, such as cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs, were reported to be used by HSS students before the age of 11. This finding is concerning and underscores the easy availability of recreational drugs and cigarettes to extremely young children in Goa. Wine and beer are often considered 'family drinks' and young children in Goa, may be 'playfully' allowed small amounts of these beverages by parents and other family members. However, this practice must be discouraged, as it can be interpreted as endorsing early alcohol consumption. Adolescents, unaware of the physiological damage caused by alcohol, may develop a taste for it that is challenging to overcome, particularly when alcohol is readily available in most Goan households. Notably, a greater number of HSS students in the study had consumed wine compared to beer or whisky/rum, indicating the need to break the trend of permitting children to sample alcohol. Children should be taught to say "No" firmly from a young age when offered alcoholic beverages.

The family's role in a child's upbringing is pivotal and can significantly influence adolescent substance use. The study explored the relationships between HSS students and their parents and 'best friends.' While a small percentage of respondents reported adhering to parental rules both at home and outside, most stated that their parents were aware of their whereabouts after school, reflecting healthy communication between parents and adolescents, and fostering both

independence and guidance. It was also reassuring to note that over half of the respondents described their relationship with their parents as almost always "warm, caring, and emotionally supportive". The analysis corroborated this, with 78% and 64% of respondents rating their individual relationships with their mothers and fathers, respectively, as highly satisfying. However, attention should be directed to the 4% to 11% of adolescents who felt they could "almost never" receive love and support from their parents, as they may be at

greater risk of substance use. Friends hold immense importance for adolescents, and it is that some IISS students in the study did not view their friends to be 'warm and caring' - this too could be a predisposing factor for addictive behaviours. noteworthy

Parenting is often considered an inborn trait, and while there are many 'ideal parenting' guides, not all parents read or adhere to them. Parenting styles can be categorized into four types: Permissive, Authoritative, Neglectful, and Authoritarian. The Authoritative Parenting Style is generally regarded as the most effective. Providing parents with guidelines for navigating the challenging teenage years can strengthen parent-child relationships and deter adolescent substance use.

All Heads of Institutes stated that they conducted programs, seminars, interactive sessions, and guest lectures on the effects of alcohol, drugs, and smoking on health. However, they were unable to provide specific titles for the sessions conducted during the current academic year (2022-2023).

Notably, the Heads of Institutes acknowledged that students in their institutions engaged in smoking, alcohol consumption, and drug use. Surprisingly, 33% of the Heads of Institutes reported that the staff did not actively intervene or counsel students using these prohibited substances. When questioned, students generally "listened but did not interact" during counselling sessions, although a few snitched on classmates abusing any substance.

Regarding the percentage of students engaging in smoking, drugs, or alcohol, the Heads of HSSs indicated that less than 5% of their students were involved in these activities, with mostly boys earning a bad reputation for such behaviour. Nevertheless, five HSSs noted that less than 5% of female students in their institutions also smoked.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Adolescent substance use is a significant concern in Goa, where diverse cultural influences and societal expectations can impact young teenagers. To mitigate drug, alcohol, and tobacco use among adolescents in Goa, several measures can be taken.

The ease with which recreational drugs are accessible to children aged 14 to 17 underscores the need for stricter laws to control the presence of drugs in Goa. It also highlights the importance of closer parental scrutiny regarding adolescents' 'pocket money.' Heads of Institutes should adopt a more proactive role in addressing adolescent misbehaviour.

The study suggests the implementation of prevention programs, including:

Institution-based prevention programs encompassing weekly discussions on substance education, mandatory personality development sessions, and visits to rehabilitation centres.

It also recommends community-based prevention programs involving media campaigns promoting adolescent health, enhanced police patrolling of areas frequented by adolescents, and demand reduction policies.

Family-focused prevention programs advocating for adolescent health through the Directorate of Health Services or the Department of Women & Child Development, along with helplines.

Substance use can lead to problems in relationships and affect other aspects of life. The family's role is crucial in preventing adolescent substance use. In conclusion, a combination of institution-based, community-based, and family-focused prevention programs can effectively combat adolescent substance use in Goa.

Functioning of Village Child Committee: A Study of Tiswadi Taluka in Goa

- MR. AKBAR GADED♦

ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the existence of village-level committees in Tiswadi Taluka, Goa for the protection of child rights, their operational efficacy and the challenges faced by them. Village Child Committees (VCCs) as mandated by the Goa Children's Act, 2003, serve as vital grassroots-level entities responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of children within the community. Despite the legislative framework in place, the establishment and functioning of VCCs are often marred by a lack of awareness, political affiliations, excessive responsibilities placed on panchayats, and inadequate financial incentives.

The prevalent legislation and guidelines were reviewed. A detailed questionnaire and in-person and telephonic interviews of Sarpanches, Secretaries and other VCC members of all 19 village panchayats in the Tiswadi taluka were conducted to collect data. To understand the role of the parent institutions, officials of the Directorate of Women and Child Development, the Goa State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights and Block Development Officers of Tiswadi were interviewed.

The findings reveal critical shortcomings in the functioning of VCCs, with many committees being dysfunctional or ineffective. Key challenges include the lack of awareness and incentive, coordination issues among parent bodies, the limited involvement of child members, and the presence of parallel institutions resulting in a duplication of efforts and complacency among VCC members.

The study offers a set of comprehensive recommendations to address these issues, advocating for increased awareness and education, the development of Standard Operating Procedures for VCCs, regular, documented meetings and monitoring of the same by Panchayats as well as mandatory training programs for committee members. The paper also underscores the pressing need for VCCs to embrace a child-centric approach, effectively fulfilling their role in ensuring the welfare and protection of rural and urban children through a safe platform where they can air their concerns.

In conclusion, this research serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, community leaders, and institutions aiming to strengthen the functioning of VCCs to ensure the effective realisation of children's rights and well-being. While the study is confined to Tiswadi Taluka, its findings hold broader implications for the state of Goa and beyond.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the existence of laws to safeguard children's rights, they continue to be victims of abuse, violence, child labour and trafficking. This underscores the need for tailored measures to protect this vulnerable demographic, frequently deprived of fundamental rights and services.

The Goa Children's Act 2003 mandates the establishment of child committees in every village panchayat and municipality, to serve as grassroots-level protector of children's rights. However, many panchayats and municipalities have yet to establish these committees. Where committees have been formed, the appointed members are often found to be uninformed about their roles and responsibilities.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study seeks to understand the need for Village Child Committees (VCC), assess their operational efficiency, examine the key issues they address, and propose strategies to enhance their implementation.

While concentrating on the Tiswadi taluka of Goa, it bears profound significance for the larger community, disseminating awareness amongst the population and serving as an essential resource for every village panchayat in Goa that is yet to establish a VCC.

Furthermore, it suggests how existing VCCs could better serve their intended purpose and adopt child-centric approaches and strategies. The research also formulates an action plan for the parent institution, the Directorate of Women and Child Development (DWCD) assisting them in framing guidelines to fortify the functioning of VCCs in Goa.

METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative data were used for this study. To ascertain the provisions and mandates governing VCCs, the Children's Act of 2003 and the Guidelines for village and panchayat level Child Committees (as published in the Official Gazette of the Government of Goa, Series I No. 42 dated 15th January 2009 by the DWCD) were reviewed. Data was gathered through a meticulous questionnaire and in-person and telephonic interviews of Sarpanches, Secretaries and other VCC members of all 19 village panchayats in the Tiswadi taluka. To understand the role of the parent institution, the Director of the DWCD, the Chairperson of Goa State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (GSCPCR), the Assistant Director of the Directorate of Panchayats and Block Development Officer (BDO) of Tiswadi were interviewed as per their availability (I managed to get all of their interviews) and convenience. Finally, 103 individuals of the taluka were surveyed through Google Forms to gauge the awareness levels of Tiswadi residents about VCCs.

KEY POINTS OF THE STUDY

Data collected from Tiswadi taluka highlights several issues and impediments to the commitment, responsibility, and motivation of panchayats and their VCCs.

The lack of awareness among villagers, panchayats and VCC members is a significant hurdle. In many cases, VCCs downplayed the importance of children and their concerns. Overburdening panchayats with numerous responsibilities can pose challenges, additionally, the political affiliations of panchayat members can hinder the fair functioning of VCCs. A notable commonality is that almost all panchayats have failed to pay an honorarium to their VCC members, affecting their interest and morale negatively. The majority of VCCs have also failed to conduct regular meetings or maintain records thereof. In most cases, child members of VCCs in Tiswadi taluka are unaware of being appointed to these committees.

The existence of parallel institutions, such as Anganwadis, Health Centres, Police, and Child Rights Commission, all of which also work on the same subject i.e. protecting and securing the needs of children, leads to a duplication of efforts. Miscommunication among coordinating bodies – the DWDC, the GSCPCR, the BDOs and the Directorate of Panchayats can be a significant reason for the complacency and ineffectiveness of VCCs in Tiswadi taluka.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An analysis of the data throws up the inadequate functioning of VCCs in Tiswadi taluka. Many of the established VCCs are dysfunctional, with members rarely convening for meetings. Often despite members themselves asking for meetings and training programmes, these requests have been neglected. Additionally, there are challenges related to miscommunication and coordination among the parent bodies, who have shown limited interest in the formation or in monitoring the functioning of VCCs.

There is an urgent need to allocate an annual budget to support VCC activities and cover honorariums to members. In this context, interviews with 4 child members of VCCs revealed that these young members were uninformed about their appointments, as their names were included by family members who were or had been panchayat members. This necessitates a more rigorous approach and greater regulation from higher authorities and the community.

While this study was confined to Tiswadi taluka, its subject matter holds substantial potential and scope for a broader study encompassing all of Goa.

SUGGESTIONS

The study presents a comprehensive plan of action for the DWCD to strengthen and regularise VCCs in every village panchayat of Goa. This entails generating widespread awareness within the community, and targeting educational institutions in particular, about the significance of VCCs and the pivotal role they can play in children's lives.

The Directorate should formulate a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for panchayats and their VCCs. Panchayats should establish a four-member committee to oversee the election/nomination/selection process of VCC members, ensuring fairness and transparency.

VCCs should prepare an annual action plan that covers agendas, objectives, activities, and budgets for the year, and share the same with the Panchayat.

Monthly meetings and minutes of these meetings must also be shared with the Panchayat. A close monitoring of the VCCs' alignment to SOPs and action against any deviance of the same or corruption must be acted upon.

The Directorate must familiarise newly appointed VCC members with guidelines under the Child Rights Act and the other provisions of the Directorate, through workshops and orientation programmes. Sensitisation sessions should also be held to make VCC members aware of their roles and responsibilities. The institution should mandate biannual training programs on child protection, child rights and committee management for members.

These Child Committees have been established to address children's issues in rural and urban areas, with the primary goal of raising community awareness about child rights and providing a platform for children to express their needs and concerns. There is an urgent need to motivate the existing VCCs to adopt child-centric approaches.

The establishment of VCCs and the representation of children remains neglected, leaving many panchayats disregarding the importance of VCCs and effectively marginalising children in Goa's 191 village panchayats, 13 Municipal Councils, and one Corporation for the capital city of Panaji.

A Study on Assessment of Wells In Bardez Taluka, Goa As A Source of Safe Drinking Water

-DR. VALERIE GONSALVES

&

MS. NADINE DE SOUZA ♦

ABSTRACT

Drinking water sources free from pathogenic and harmful microorganisms are critical to the safety of public and environmental health. This study assesses the potability of water – a crucial step in the conservation and protection of our water resources – of the wells of Bardez taluka in Goa.

Both public and private wells of six villages, namely Bastora, Calangute, Camurlim, Moira, Pomburpa, and Sirsaim, were chosen for an examination of bacteriological contamination with a specific emphasis on the presence of human pathogens. Water samples from five wells in each of these villages were tested using microbiological methods, and assessed in accordance with the Indian Standard Drinking Water Specification (Second Revision) guidelines, with the Most Probable Number (MPN) serving as a statistical estimate - for coliform presence. The Eijkman test was then used on these samples to differentiate between faecal and non-faecal coliforms.

The findings indicate significant contamination of water by sewage in wells across Bardez and underscore an urgent need to preserve water bodies as vital sources of water for human consumption. The results provide a foundation for Village Panchayats to develop policies for assessment, treatment and maintenance of wells, thereby addressing the critical issue of ensuring safe drinking water.

Discussions with panchayat members revealed that testing of public wells is done by the Water Resources Department but private wells fall out of their jurisdiction. Further, there is no mandate for the water of private wells to be tested. The Department meanwhile has distributed water testing kits to panchayats but undermining the effort. The study also stresses on the importance of a more proactive role to be played by Village Sanitation Committees that only act when contamination is suspected, reaching out to government agencies to test their wells.

The study identifies well water contamination in the selected sites, establishing its unsuitability for human consumption. The study recommends that local authorities act upon the microbiological assessment findings to trace and mitigate the sources of contamination. Further efforts are needed to regulate sewage discharge and implement routine testing and monitoring of well water, fostering collaboration with academic microbiological laboratories for enhanced water quality management.

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INTRODUCTION

Drinking water sources free from pathogenic and harmful microorganisms is critical to the safety of public and environmental health.

This study assesses the potability of both public and private wells within the jurisdiction of six Village Panchayats - namely Bastora, Calangute, Camurlim, Moira, Pomburpa, and Sirsaim - of the Bardez taluka, Goa, India.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY

- ❖ To assess contamination by human pathogens in the well waters of Bardez.
- ❖ To gather data on the existing water resources in the area from the panchayats.
- ❖ To provide the data on microbiological contamination to assist local bodies such as Panchayats in raising awareness and in developing policies for the maintenance of wells to ensure safe drinking water.

The study's findings can raise public awareness of the urgent need to protect our water bodies as safe potable water sources.

METHODOLOGY

Six Bardez villages were selected, namely Bastora, Calangute, Camurlim, Moira, Pomburpa, and Sirsaim. Five wells were chosen from each of these villages. Water samples were collected in sterile bottles and stored in the fridge (for a maximum of 12 hours) until inoculation.

Coliforms are part of the intestinal microflora of both humans and other warm-blooded animals and are consequently found in faecal waste making their presence in water indicative of the potential presence of enteric pathogenic microorganisms. Consequently, their absence in a specific volume (100ml) of water indicates that the water is potable or suitable for human consumption. The statistical estimation of the mean number of coliforms is represented in terms of the Most Probable Number (MPN).

Estimation of the MPN of coliforms in the water is conducted by inoculating media tubes with three different sample volumes. Water samples assessed for bacteriological load are certified in accordance with the standards laid down by the Indian Standard Drinking Water Specification (Second Revision).

The Eijkman test (or elevated temperature test) was employed to differentiate between faecal and non-faecal coliforms.

FINDINGS

The tests produced evidence of contamination of well water by sewage at various locations in Bardez.

Bastora: The majority of the wells, under study, in Bastora remain untreated. Two out of the 5 private wells exhibited an MPN of over 1800 in 100ml with the lowest count being 4 MPN/100ml. The Eijkman test indicated total coliform counts with no presence of faecal coliforms.

Calangute: Most of the wells tested were also untreated. One out of the 5 private wells displayed an MPN exceeding 1800/100ml while two fell within the range of 200-1000 MPN/100ml, and the remaining 2 around 50 MPN/100ml. The Eijkman test indicated the presence of faecal coliforms.

Camurlim: The majority of the wells studied in Camurlim are either regularly cleaned or treated. Interestingly, the highest MPN recorded in Camurlim was 1600 MPN/100ml, in contrast to the other locations, where counts exceeded 1800 MPN/100ml. Additionally, two samples showed MPN counts within the range of 200-1000 MPN/100ml, with the lowest of a public well at 8 MPN/100ml. The Eijkman test produced total coliform counts and, at some sites, the presence of faecal coliforms.

Moira: Most of the wells studied here are not treated. Two samples exhibited MPN counts in the range of 1600-1800 MPN/100ml, with the lowest at 32 MPN/100ml. The Eijkman test indicated the presence of faecal coliforms.

Pomburpa: Although most of the wells in Pomburpa are either cleaned or treated regularly, the water was heavily contaminated. Three out of the 5 private wells showed an MPN of over 1800 MPN/100ml, one at 1600 MPN/100ml, and the lowest at 540 MPN/100ml. The Eijkman test indicated the presence of faecal coliforms.

Sirsaim: All the wells in Sirsaim under study were regularly cleaned and treated. One well exhibited an MPN of over 1800 MPN/100ml, while three wells showed an MPN between 200-1000 MPN/100ml, with the lowest at 54 MPN/100ml being that of a public well. The Eijkman test indicated the presence of faecal coliforms.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The study reveals that sewage has been contaminating the wells of Bardez taluka. This information should serve as a foundation for village panchayats to devise policies for the assessment, treatment, and maintenance of wells and other water bodies within their jurisdiction.

Discussions with members of different panchayats revealed that private wells are out of the purview of the Water Resources Department (WRD) which only tests public wells. Nor is there any mandatory requirement for testing waters of private wells. Additionally, the WRD has provided panchayats with water testing kits but some panchayats indicated that they are not trained to use them. Some panchayats have a sanitation committee responsible for water quality who on suspecting contamination request the Goa State Pollution Control Board or the Directorate of Health Services to test the water.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The majority of the wells covered in this study are privately owned and used for various household purposes such as drinking, cooking, bathing, watering plants, and washing clothes. (wasn't the study on private and public wells)

While no faecal coliforms were found in the wells in Bastora, all wells tested in Calangute, Moira, Pomburpa, and Sirsaim and 2 wells in Camurlim were contaminated with faecal coliforms. This data substantiates bacteriological contamination of well water in all six villages. In every case, the samples displayed coliforms, with most indicating contamination with faecal coliforms making the water unsuitable for human consumption.

The following recommendations are proposed:

- ❖ The results of the microbiological assessment of water quality from various locations should be shared with local authorities to facilitate the identification and mitigation of contamination sources.
- ❖ Measures should be taken to regulate sewage discharge in nearby areas and address sewage leakage

Initiatives should also be established for future testing and ongoing monitoring of well water in different locations through collaborative efforts involving microbiological laboratories at academic institutes.

Water Management: Role of Local Bodies

-DR. MARIA FATIMA DE SOUZA*,

MS. MUKTALI CUNCOLIENCAR & MS. VINITA KANDOLKAR ♦

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the water management practices of local bodies in two panchayat areas, Aquem Baixo and Navelim in South Goa District. It assesses awareness levels of the local bodies and households in these two panchayats regarding conventional and non-conventional water sources, with a specific focus on their role in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation for all.

The Village Water & Sanitation Committee is responsible for planning, implementing, managing, operating, and maintaining village water supply infrastructure, including providing tap connections to every household. The committee members are to convene as necessary to address water-related issues within their respective panchayat areas. (is this for both these two panchayats or a general statement). (a specific statement for the two panchayats under study) (query answered in green)

Both Navelim and Aquem-Baixo panchayats lacked records regarding the number of private wells. The Navelim village panchayat is traversed by the river Sal and possesses five public wells accessible to its residents. However, no river flows through the Aquem-Baixo panchayat area but the panchayat records show that it possesses 51 open wells and one tube well.

Findings reveal that both panchayat areas primarily rely on conventional water sources, with limited awareness and implementation of non-conventional sources like rainwater harvesting. Government enforcement and monitoring authorities are recommended to create awareness and encourage non-conventional water sources.

The study concludes that there is a lack of comprehensive water resource records, inadequate awareness among elected members regarding SDG 6, infrequent meetings of the Village Water and Sanitation Committee, and a dearth of specific policies for water management. Most households do not have registered wells, even though they face water-related issues almost on a weekly basis. Recommendations include raising awareness about non-conventional water sources, monitoring water usage, establishing dedicated water management committees, and implementing measures to reduce water pollution.

INTRODUCTION

This study conducted in two panchayats of South Goa – Aquem-Baixo and Navelim – attempts to assess the awareness levels of local bodies and households regarding both conventional and non-conventional water sources.

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Further, the study aims to elucidate the role of panchayats in the pursuit of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 of 'clean water and sanitation for all'.

There is a lack of official records regarding the number of private wells in both Navelim and Aquem-Baixo panchayats. The Navelim village panchayat is traversed by the river Sal and possesses five public wells accessible to its residents. However, no river passes through the Panchayat area of Aquem-Baixo but the panchayat records show that it possesses 51 open wells and one tube well. (what about Aquem Baixo?) (query answered in green)

The Village Water and Sanitation Committee, responsible for planning, implementing, managing, operating, and maintaining village water supply infrastructure, including providing tap connections to every household, convenes as necessary to address water-related issues within their respective panchayat areas.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

- ❖ To investigate and assess access and management of water at the panchayat level.
- ❖ To examine the organisational structure - committees if any - established to ensure clean water supply and sustainable management in the two panchayats selected for the study.
- ❖ To assess the conventional and non-conventional water sources and their management with regard to SDG-6.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, the researchers have relied upon both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected by the researchers in two stages. The researchers prepared two questionnaires viz, questionnaire 1 and questionnaire 2 keeping in mind the objectives of the minor research project study.

In the first stage –Questionnaire 1 was administered in both the Panchayats viz, Navelim Panchayat and Aquem Baxio Panchayat. The questionnaire containing open-ended and close-ended questions was administered to the respondents to solicit the answers to the questions. In all the data was collected from both the panchayats.

In section –II of the second stage of research the researcher targeted a total sample of 200 respondents. 100 Respondents from Navelim Panchayat and 100 respondents from Aquem Baixo Panchayat. The respondents were all citizens of the respective panchayat areas.

Secondary data also has been used for the purpose of this study. The secondary data used was panchayat records. The internet was also used, as one of the sources to obtain the required information. The data collected was analysed using simple percentage analysis. Both panchayat areas lack specific organisational structures and policies dedicated to water management. However, both Navelim and Aquem Baixo panchayats ensure safe drinking water facilities for their residents.

While Navelim Panchayat does not face water pollution issues, there are challenges in this regard at Aquem Baixo. The majority of households in both panchayats do

not possess wells; the few private wells that do exist are not officially registered with the Panchayats.

Regrettably, neither panchayat undertakes significant efforts to conserve water.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ In both panchayats, residents rely primarily on conventional water sources. While there is awareness about non-conventional sources of water, such as rainwater harvesting, they have not been adopted.
- ❖ The government must establish enforcement and monitoring authority for the adoption of non-conventional water sources. Such establishment is imperative for overseeing the adoption of non-conventional water sources, ensuring regulatory compliance, safeguarding public health, and optimizing sustainable resource utilization in both the panchayat areas under study
- ❖ Panchayat should assume responsibility for harnessing non-conventional water sources.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals that:

- ❖ Panchayats lack comprehensive records about water resources.
- ❖ There is a dearth of awareness among elected members regarding SDG 6.
- ❖ The Village Water and Sanitation Committee, while being appointed, seldom meets due to the lack of a mandate.
- ❖ No specific policies or precautions are in place for water management.
- ❖ The majority of respondents do not have their wells; those who do have not registered them with the panchayat.
- ❖ Respondents say they face water-related issues every week.
- ❖ Both panchayats are primarily dependent on conventional water sources.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Increasing public and panchayat awareness regarding non-conventional water sources.
- ❖ Local bodies should take special care to monitor the efficient utilisation of water within their jurisdictions.
- ❖ Local bodies can establish a dedicated organisational committee responsible for water management. A separate committee would help in a more comprehensive approach to water management, addressing diverse sources and aspects to ensure a more integrated and effective strategy for overall community water needs. Records of both private and public wells should be meticulously maintained.
- ❖ Measures should be undertaken to minimise water pollution.

Participation of Youth in Local Bodies- A Case Study of Quepem Taluka

MRS. SIDDHI SHET MASHELKAR

&

MS. SANSKRUTI AYIR[♦]

ABSTRACT

This study examines the crucial role of youth in local governance by investigating their participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) within Quepem Taluka, Goa. The primary objective is to bridge the gap between the youth and PRIs, promoting their involvement in addressing village-related issues and in local governance.

The research focuses on the participation of youth in 11 Village Panchayats within Quepem Taluka, utilising responses from two age groups, 18-25 years and 25-29 years, to provide a comprehensive analysis. Findings indicate that youth participation significantly influences the functioning of Panchayats.

The study highlights key concerns, such as the impact of political party alignments in Panchayat elections, on the functioning of local bodies. Further, it underscores the need for youth-centric issues, skill development, employment, and essential amenities to be prioritised in Gram Sabhas and Village Development Programs.

Recommendations include the framing of policies that prioritise youth participation in local bodies. This entails equipping the youth with knowledge about prevailing laws, acts and provisions and fostering their active engagement in Panchayat reforms. An inclusive approach to youth involvement in village development and planning processes is essential for enhancing local self-government in Goa.

INTRODUCTION

This study endeavours to foster synergy between the youth and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to address various village-related issues and transform the perceptions of both the youth and society regarding youth involvement and participation in local governance. The primary focus of this study lies in the engagement of youth within local bodies across 11 village Panchayats in the Quepem taluka.

This study aims to ascertain the extent of youth participation in Gram Sabha and the involvement of Quepem taluka's youth in local self-government. It explores the perspectives of youth on the fortification of Panchayats and the consequences of youth members' engagement in Panchayat operations.

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PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study primarily delves into youth participation in local bodies, particularly within Panchayats, with the following objectives:

- ❖ To assess the level of youth participation in Gram Sabha.
- ❖ To evaluate the involvement of youth in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

To identify potential opportunities for strengthening youth participation in PRIs.

OUTLINE OF DATA SOURCES

The study was conducted through responses collected from two distinct age groups: 18-25 years and 25-29 years. This approach facilitated a comprehensive analysis.

Out of a total of 200 respondents approximately 56%, constituting 112 individuals, belong to the age group of 18-25 years, while the remaining 44%, comprising 88 respondents, fall within the 25-29 age group.

KEY POINTS OF THE STUDY

The electoral profile of the Panchayats reveals that local candidates participate in Panchayat elections along political party lines, which adversely impacts the functioning of these institutions. This also has an influence on the participation of youth in the panchayats. The involvement of youth when it happens has a significant impact on the functioning of the panchayat.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Gram Sabhas do not prioritise issues that are central to the youth, such as skill development, employment, and essential amenities, which should be prioritised.
- ❖ Village Development Programs are not tailored to the youth and are not planned with their participation.
- ❖ A key reason for the youth's apathy towards participating in the functioning of panchayats is their lack of awareness of relevant Acts, Laws, and provisions governing panchayats.

The involvement of youth is imperative for enhancing the quality of local self-governance in Goa. Policies should be formulated to mainstream youth participation in local bodies. They must be educated on the applicable laws and provisions and be encouraged to engage in the reforms within these institutions. An inclusive approach towards involving youth in the development and planning processes within their villages is the need of the hour.

Assessment of Welfare Schemes Concerning Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Dharbandora Taluka, Goa

- DR. GEETANJALI C. ACHREKAR ♦

ABSTRACT

This study assesses the awareness and utilization of social and tribal welfare schemes among Scheduled Tribe (ST) households in the Dharbandora taluka of Goa, focusing on five village panchayats. The objectives include analysing the socio-economic profile of the ST population, studying awareness and perceptions of welfare schemes, examining the relationship between education and scheme awareness, assessing assistance received by beneficiaries, and evaluating the effectiveness of welfare schemes.

Data on demographics, occupation, landholdings, assets, income and aspects about the ST welfare schemes such as awareness, assistance received and implementation was collected from 250 ST households in various ST-dominated wards of five panchayats of the taluka -- Mollem, Collem, Dabhal-Kirpaal, Sancordem and Dharbandora.

Findings reveal challenges in income generation, language barriers hindering scheme access, and variations in availing of financial assistance among different schemes. Notably, a disparity exists between awareness levels and actual beneficiaries. The study found respondents are primarily beneficiaries of social welfare schemes rather than ST-specific schemes. Finally, it underscores the need for optimal scheme implementation to uplift ST communities.

INTRODUCTION

In the state of Goa, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities, such as the Kunbis and Velips, constitute a small fraction of the total population. It is essential to determine whether these communities are aware of the various Government schemes designed for their upliftment and whether they have availed of these same.

This study aims to assess the awareness of social and tribal welfare schemes among ST households and the socio-economic status of STs in the Dharbandora taluka of South Goa. The study encompasses 5 village panchayats: Collem, Mollem, Dabhal-Kirpaal, Sancordem, and Dharbandora. Various social and tribal welfare schemes are administered through the Directorate of Social Welfare and the Directorate of Tribal Welfare in Municipalities and Village Panchayats.

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Those covered in this study are:

- ❖ Atal Asra Yojana
- ❖ Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme (New)
- ❖ Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme (New)
- ❖ Antya Sanskar Sahay Yojana
- ❖ Support to children of ST Widows
- ❖ Ladli Laxmi
- ❖ Griha Aadhar Yojana
- ❖ Senior Citizen Pension Scheme

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- ❖ Analyze the socio-economic profile of the ST population of the area.
- ❖ Investigate the ST population's awareness and perceptions of welfare schemes in Goa.
- ❖ Examine the relationship between the level of education awareness of welfare schemes in a sample of ST households.
- ❖ Assess the type and amount of assistance received by beneficiaries under these schemes.

Evaluate the effectiveness of welfare schemes and recommend measures for enhancing ST welfare in Goa.

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from 250 ST households in various ST-dominated wards of 5 panchayats in Dharbandora taluka -- Mollem, Collem, Dabhal-Kirpaal, Sancordem, and Dharbandora.

The study gathered information using structured interview schedules on demographics, occupation, landholdings, assets, income, and aspects related to awareness of welfare schemes, assistance received, implementation year of beneficiary schemes, perceptions of ST households regarding the role of panchayats, use of self-help group schemes, and Anganwadi facilities, among other factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals the following:

- ❖ There is a major gap between the number of ST respondents who are aware of schemes and those who are actual beneficiaries.
- ❖ Educational backwardness is found to be high among those STs who are aware.
- ❖ Shyness to go to city offices fear of too much documentation and lower educational levels are reasons for the above gap.

- ❖ Welfare schemes for ST communities are well-conceived at the policy level, but their optimal implementation is crucial for the upliftment of the actual beneficiaries from their disadvantaged status.

The Assessment and Functioning of Garbage Management Committees at Village Panchayats in Bardez Taluka

MS. LARISSA RODRIGUES

&

MS. SHERYL AFONSO E D'SOUZA ♦

ABSTRACT

This study examines waste management practices in Bardez Taluka, Goa, focusing on the functionality of Garbage Management Committees established by Gram Panchayats under the Swachh Bharat Mission.

The research aims to investigate committee formation, assess waste management activities, identify challenges, study local waste-handling practices, and propose solutions. Data was collected from 33 village panchayats, evaluating committee functionality, 'black spot' identification, household waste collection, and the presence of Material Recovery Facilities and waste treatment units. Government fund disbursement and utilization were also analysed.

While many panchayats have constituted Garbage Management Committees, several remain inactive, with few providing action plans. Ongoing efforts to address 'Black Spots' face challenges due to citizens' indiscriminate littering. Lack of scientific awareness results in improper waste disposal practices.

Enhancing stakeholder education on scientific waste management and promoting eco-friendly alternatives is crucial. Some panchayats effectively utilize allocated funds, while others face challenges, that impact regular waste collection. Awareness campaigns should guide citizens on proper waste disposal, and collaborations with citizens, educational institutions, and private bodies can drive initiatives for sustainable waste management. A decentralized approach is vital for long-term garbage reduction.

INTRODUCTION

One of the key components of the Swachh Bharat Mission is waste management, solid and liquid (SLWM). The Gram Panchayat, the village-level governing body is responsible for setting up a system of waste collection and treatment and running them sustainably.

An important process is the segregation of waste at source, critical to disposal and recycling. Not doing this leads to more unsegregated waste in landfills which is a health and environmental hazard.

This study attempts to analyse the functioning of Garbage Management Committees in the panchayats of Bardez Taluka of Goa.

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PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- ❖ To inquire into the formation of Garbage Management Committees at the 33 village panchayats of Bardez, Goa.
- ❖ To determine waste management-related activities organized in six representative panchayats of Bardez.
- ❖ To explore the problems faced in managing waste.
To study how Bardez villagers handle their waste.
- ❖ To propose solutions to problems encountered in waste management.

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from 33 village panchayats of Bardez taluka on the functioning of Garbage Management Committees in panchayats. In-depth interviews were conducted with six panchayat secretaries to ascertain what was actually happening on a day-to-day basis with regard to waste collection, disposal, and other related issues including identification of black spots (certain places/spots in a village or alongside a road, where waste is indiscriminately dumped/thrown, usually by passers-by, resulting in an entire area strewn with garbage), collection of segregated waste from households, availability of Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and waste treatment units at panchayats. The status of the disbursement of funds by the State Government and its adequate utilisation by Panchayats was also inquired into.

KEY FINDINGS

- ❖ Most of the Village Panchayats have, at least on paper, constituted Garbage Management Committees. However, many of these remains do not function actively due to a variety of reasons. A negligible number of Panchayats were able to provide action plans for the same of their committees. Inadequate or inefficient collection mechanisms employed by local bodies also lead to roadside dumping of waste, most commonly observed in the outskirts of the village or at the boundaries of two villages.
- ❖ The Panchayats had taken action to remedy the garbage 'Black Spots' in their villages by regularly clearing the waste, or imposing fines. This is an ongoing effort for them as errant citizens (mostly from other towns and villages) litter the streets indiscriminately and repeatedly. Lack of scientific awareness about the management of waste leads to burying or burning of waste by locals instead of handing it over to the authorities.
- ❖ Improper segregation at source is a major issue in certain local bodies and bulk generators of waste like restaurants and commercial establishments.
- ❖ From the survey of residents of the villages, it came to light that only a few people were composting their 'wet' waste, and some (42%) reported it being collected regularly by their panchayats. However, 'dry' waste was collected more efficiently

(91%). Many (65%) were appropriately segregating wet and dry waste. Only 21% reported being aware of an MRF facility in their village, while only 5% reported knowing of a wet waste treatment facility. Awareness related to waste management appeared to be average to low.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A strong effort must be made to educate stakeholders in the scientific management of solid waste. Efforts to promote the use of environment-friendly alternatives to plastics and other environmentally damaging products should be sought out and encouraged by those in power.

Most Village Panchayats in Bardez seemed to be making judicious use of the allocated funds for Waste Management activities of collection and segregation. However, a few Village Panchayats are either not aware of or not taking the adequate and timely steps necessary for obtaining funds from the Government for the waste management activities. As a result, some weaker panchayats are not able to collect waste in their areas regularly.

The Government/Municipalities/Village Panchayats have to make people aware (through flyers, pamphlets, or awareness campaigns) about how to dispose of certain kinds of waste such as construction waste, bulbs, tube lights, electronic goods, etc. Village Panchayats should take the help of proactive and passionate citizens, Schools, Colleges, or other civic/private bodies, particularly to raise awareness on the subject. Concepts like 'Refuse, reduce, recycle, reuse', E-waste collection drives, and workshops can all go a long way in promoting awareness.

A decentralised method of creating awareness and disseminating practical knowledge would slowly but steadily reduce the burden of garbage.

Political Empowerment And Leadership Development Through Self-Help Groups - A Study of Bardez Taluka

-MS. TRICIA VAZ E BORGES ♦

ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on the political empowerment and leadership development of women in Bardez Taluka. SHGs are pivotal in instilling confidence and encouraging active participation among rural women, which is essential for effective decision-making and local governance. With women constituting 50 per cent of the rural population, their involvement in grassroots institutions is paramount for local development.

This study assesses the extent of political empowerment and leadership development experienced by women-elected representatives in Panchayats due to their participation in SHGs. The research covering one electoral term and two elections, 2017 to 2022 identifies the benefits and challenges faced by women as members of SHGs.

Data was collected from a sample of 47 respondents, including women who were elected as Panch members in the 2017 and 2022 village panchayat elections and had been SHG members. Primary data was collected through field surveys using a research-designed questionnaire, while secondary data was obtained from E-journals and online sources.

The study reveals that SHG membership significantly empowers women, leading to their election as Panchayat members. The majority of members joined SHGs through personal interactions with existing members, primarily motivated by a desire to cultivate savings habits and achieve socio-economic empowerment. Respondents exhibited a strong understanding of SHG operations and expressed enthusiasm for their participation. SHGs played a pivotal role in developing management skills and an understanding of finance, improving living standards, and enhancing awareness of rights and government schemes. Women were more engaged in political activities, increasing their participation in Gram Sabhas, advocating for political change, and building confidence.

The study underscores the transformative potential of SHGs in fostering women's political empowerment and leadership development in Bardez Taluka. To enhance the empowerment of women in SHGs, the study recommends introducing more schemes, creating awareness through government and NGO programs, providing training in waste recycling, ensuring the timely provision of loans, and facilitating the sale of SHG products during festivals. The government should support SHGs as facilitators and promoters to create a conducive environment for their growth and development, offering subsidy schemes to boost women's empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Encouraging active participation in decision-making and the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), and Self-Help Groups (SHG) instil great confidence in rural women.

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Social mobilization through SHGs is imperative for political empowerment. Given that women constitute 50 per cent of the rural population, their involvement in grassroots-level institutions is of considerable significance.

SHGs enhance women's equality by encouraging them to be participants, decision-makers, and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social, and cultural spheres of life. This study aims to investigate the role of Self-Help Groups in the political empowerment of their members and the development of leadership skills among them.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study proposes to understand the level of political empowerment and leadership development among elected women representatives of Panchayats, as a result of their participation in Self-Help Groups in Bardez Taluka. Bardez Taluka comprises of 33 Village Panchayats and has 662 SHGs. The study spans two elections and one electoral term, covering the years 2017 and 2022.

OBJECTIVE

- ❖ To assess whether women have acquired leadership and management skills after joining SHGs.
- ❖ To understand how SHGs have facilitated the process of political empowerment of women.
- ❖ To identify benefits gained and problems faced by women as members of SHGs.

OUTLINE OF THE DATA SOURCES

Through the 2017 Village Panchayat Elections, 24 women (who were SHG members) were elected as Women Panch members, covering 19 out of 33 Village Panchayats in Bardez Taluka.

By 2022, the number of elected women Panch members who were also members of SIIGs increased to 30, covering 23 different village Panchayats of Bardez Taluka.

Furthermore, 7 Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) who were SHG members were elected in both the 2017 and 2022 Village Panchayat polls. Thus, a sample of 47 respondents was identified, of which 43 were interviewed, covering 33 Panchayats in Bardez Taluka. Primary data was collected through field surveys using a questionnaire designed for the research sample, while secondary data was obtained from E-journals and other online sources.

KEY POINTS OF THE STUDY

The data collected reveals significant empowerment among SHG members, leading to the election of some, as Panchayat members. Most members joined the SIIG through personal interactions with existing members, primarily driven by the desire to cultivate saving habits and achieve socio-economic empowerment.

Respondents displayed a good understanding of how SHGs should function, particularly regarding conducting meetings, making decisions, and managing funding. They were enthusiastic about their participation in the SIIG and willing to encourage other women to join such groups.

SHGs played a pivotal role in developing business skills among their members, enabling them to establish small-scale businesses and improve their standard of living. Support provided by SIIGs helped members achieve their goals, with their families being supportive and motivating them to participate in various activities.

SHGs have made members more aware of their rights and motivated them to avail the benefits of government schemes. As they became independent and empowered, villagers began to value their opinions at social and community functions.

Through collective action, women mobilized themselves to raise their voices on issues affecting them, increasing their participation in Gram Sabhas. SHGs contributed to their political empowerment by providing a platform for discussing and addressing political issues, building their confidence, and advocating for change within their community.

SHG membership not only made members confident enough to face challenges but also equipped them to train other members of their group. Today, these members can influence policies or decisions that affect their community, with their opinions and perspectives being valued within the SHG, particularly concerning political issues. Their participation in political campaigns and activities has grown due to their economic empowerment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study shows that there is significant economic empowerment among SHG members, which has led to their political empowerment and resulted in some of them getting elected as Panchayat members.

This transformative potential of SHGs in fostering women's political empowerment and leadership development has to be fully tapped and encouraged.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- ❖ Introduce more schemes to expand the benefits available to SHG members.
- ❖ Create awareness of various programs initiated by the government and NGOs.
- ❖ Provide training to women in the field of waste recycling.
- ❖ Ensure timely provision of loans to enhance members' livelihoods.
- ❖ Facilitate the sale of SHG products during festivals such as Diwali and Christmas.
- ❖ The government should assume the role of a facilitator and promoter, fostering a supportive environment for the growth and development of the SHG movement.
- ❖ The government should provide subsidy schemes and work towards increasing the empowerment of women.

Self-Help Groups in Goa: Enhancing Women's Empowerment

-DR. CHRISTINA DE SOUZA ♦

ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of self-help groups (SHGs) in promoting the economic and social empowerment of women in Goa, India. SHGs were established to provide mutual support, microfinance, and self-help opportunities to marginalized women. The research aims to assess the impact of SHGs on women's empowerment and identify the challenges they face.

Data was collected from 30 SHGs through interviews and focus group discussions, supplemented by secondary sources.

The study found that SHGs effectively promote inter-lending and utilization of loans. The SHGs have few young members and the majority are married, literate, and middle-aged. SHGs play a pivotal role in the economic and social empowerment of women.

Challenges faced by the SHGs include rising costs, increases in taxes, inability to access technology, pricing of products, and marketing difficulties. Stress, particularly family-related, is a notable challenge too.

In conclusion, SHGs were found to contribute significantly to the empowerment of marginalized women in Goa, enhancing their financial independence, confidence, and social and economic status. Recommendations include training for higher-value product production, subsidies on raw materials, technology adoption, social media marketing, and expert guidance on product pricing.

SHGs provide a valuable platform for marginalized women in Goa to collaborate, support each other, increase income, and improve their standard of living, with government support playing a constructive role in their success.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of women's empowerment is widely discussed across various intellectual platforms. Self-help groups (SHGs) were initially established to offer mutual support, and microfinance opportunities to marginalized women who lacked access to credit and financial resources. These SHGs provide women with access to microfinance, which, in turn, enhances their socio-economic status and leads to social empowerment.

This study aims to shed light on the economic and social empowerment of women within SHGs and to identify the challenges they encounter. The research findings will inform policy recommendations for the Government of Goa, helping to mitigate these challenges and further enhance women's empowerment through SHGs. This study will be valuable for

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government departments and non-governmental organizations seeking to implement need-based training programs that strengthen SHGs and empower women.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study has the following objectives:

- ❖ To provide an overview of self-help groups in Goa.
- ❖ To understand the socio-economic profiles of SHG members in Goa.
- ❖ To examine the lending practices and loan utilisation among SHG members in Goa.
- ❖ To investigate the economic and social empowerment of women in SHGs in Goa.
- ❖ To analyse the challenges faced by SHG members in Goa.
- ❖ To provide recommendations to address these challenges and enhance women's empowerment within SHGs in Goa.

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through structured interviews of 200 respondents selected randomly from 30 SHGs in the Bardez and Tiswadi Talukas in North Goa District and Ponda in South Goa District using a structured questionnaire. Six to eight members from each SHG were interviewed, and their responses were recorded. Focus group discussions were also conducted with SHG members. Secondary data was obtained from articles in journals, government reports, and online sources.

KEY FINDINGS

- ❖ Most SHG members were married, literate, and middle-aged, with few younger members.
- ❖ SHG members primarily produced items such as sweets, masalas, and pickles.
- ❖ Many SHG members earned low monthly incomes from their product sales.
- ❖ SHGs effectively facilitated inter-lending, with most members availing loans and repaying them.
- ❖ Loans were commonly used for business activities and household needs.
- ❖ Majority of SHGs did not approach banks for loans due to high interest rates.
- ❖ SHGs played a vital role in promoting economic and social empowerment among their members.
- ❖ Major business challenges included rising costs, increase in taxes, lack of access to technology, and marketing hurdles.
- ❖ Skill enhancement, training to manage the business, and guidance to SHGs were readily available and not seen as challenges.
- ❖ Increased stress, particularly related to family, was a significant concern for many members.

- ❖ Cordial relations were maintained within and between SHGs, with minimal challenges.
- ❖ Government support for SHGs was perceived positively, with minimal bureaucratic obstacles and political interference.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SHG model has significantly contributed to the financial independence, confidence, and improved social and economic status of marginalized women, leading to their empowerment. The SHG model in Goa has played a pivotal role in promoting the economic and social empowerment of underprivileged women.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are made to further strengthen and empower women in SHGs:

- ❖ Provide training to SHG members to produce higher-value products to earn increased income.
- ❖ Offer subsidies on raw materials to counter rising costs due to inflation.
- ❖ Encourage the use of technology in product production to enhance efficiency and profitability.
- ❖ Introduce training in social media marketing for a wider outreach to domestic and international markets.
- ❖ Organize sessions by experts on effective product pricing to increase profit margins.
- ❖ Provide SHGs with market information to meet domestic and foreign market demands.
- ❖ Encourage SHGs to register and utilize the online marketing portal www.goabazaar.org for expanded market reach and global presence.

SHGs serve as a platform for marginalised women to collaborate, support each other, earn income, save, and improve their standard of living. Although marketing and technology adoption present some challenges, SHGs have proven to be effective in empowering women in Goa.

SHG – Stepping Stone for Self-Employment Generation

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&

DR. MADANANT NAIK*

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship in the state of Goa, India. The study examines the role of SHGs in developing entrepreneurial skills, employment generation, and the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Data was collected from 25 SHGs in the Ponda taluka through questionnaires and focused group discussions, supplemented by secondary data sources. The study reveals that SHGs have led to increased access to loans for women, benefiting businesses and self-employment. However, a decline in training programs among SHGs over time was noted. The study also highlights the role of local leaders in persuading uneducated individuals to join SHGs. The empowerment index of SHG members significantly improved, indicating enhanced social and economic status. Recommendations include expanding SHG activities, creating cooperative societies for marketing, initiating industry-SHG linkages, offering training to members, conducting awareness campaigns, and providing financial assistance without discrimination.

Policy recommendations include industry-SHG linkage, community resource organizations, common sourcing and marketing of all SHG produce, and incubation centers to support the growth of SHGs in Goa. The study finally underscores the importance of continued support and guidance for SHGs to sustain their positive impact on women's empowerment in the region.

INTRODUCTION

Globally there exists a positive correlation between self-help groups (SHGs) and the reduction of poverty and enhancement of welfare, particularly in rural areas where it allows people to diversify their sources of income.

In the context of the emerging new economy, microfinance has become a potent tool for poverty alleviation. In India, the microfinance landscape is predominantly characterized by the Self-Help Groups (SHGs)-banks linkage programme, designed to offer a cost-effective mechanism for providing financial services to the "unreached poor." Grounded in the principles of peer pressure and group savings as substitutes for collateral, the SHG programme has not only succeeded in crafting financial products tailored to the unique needs

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of the rural poor but has also reinforced collective self-help capabilities at the local level, leading to their empowerment.

Self-help group initiatives, often in the form of credit or micro-credit schemes and savings, have significantly transformed the lives of impoverished women, facilitating increased income and bolstering self-esteem. This transformation is evident through the proliferation of self-help groups across the state.

This study aims to examine the structure, conduct, and performance of self-help groups and their impact on women in the state of Goa. The study primarily focuses on economically disadvantaged and underserved populations, striving to uncover the causes and circumstances that perpetuate their marginalized status within society, depriving them of the benefits enjoyed by the wider public. It is apparent that the lack of awareness and access to financial services has adversely affected this group.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- ❖ To evaluate the impact of SHGs on the development of entrepreneurial skills among their members.
- ❖ To investigate the role of SHGs in employment generation.
- ❖ To examine the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and provide relevant recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

The Ponda taluka consists of numerous panchayats and villages. This study is confined to three panchayat areas due to time and budgetary constraints.

The taluka boasts a total of 284 SIIGs, of which 25 SIIGs (20 percent) were selected for focused group discussions. The research incorporates both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is gathered through structured questionnaires and focused group discussions, while secondary data is drawn from various publications by the Central and State governments and NABARD. Additionally, information is obtained from block officers and individual groups regarding bookkeeping and record-keeping practices.

KEY FINDINGS

The SHG scheme primarily targets housewives who, despite their education and various skills, often dedicate themselves to household chores. A substantial 37 percent of the sampled population consists of housewives. The cumulative percentage of women engaged in businesses and those who are self-employed, amounting to 9 percent, has benefited significantly from their association with SHGs. Their involvement in SHGs has facilitated easier access to loans, often at more favourable interest rates.

The study revealed that while there is an increase in membership, over time, perhaps due to women's commitments to their personal lives, the number of groups engaging in training programs has decreased.

A substantial portion of SHG members in the "persuaded" category is uneducated or have only completed their school education. These individuals were made aware of their social status, personal identity, and the financial and non-monetary advantages that SHG membership can bring. Elected representatives of local panchayats have been effective in motivating these members to join, owing to their involvement in social work, leadership qualities, and knowledge. This rapport simplifies the process of winning trust and persuading local to become members.

The study identified a significant increase in the overall empowerment index, rising from 21.26 percent to 37.34 percent. This signifies an improvement in the social and economic status of female SHG members. Enhancements in areas such as communication skills, confidence, decision-making, and efficient fund utilization have played a pivotal role in rendering members self-sufficient and independent. Furthermore, the study uncovered a notable surge in social awareness among SHG members, bolstering their confidence and motivating them to represent the local community at various levels.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SHG as a medium has managed to reach to the unreached population of the State. The members being from homogenous background mix well leading to productive outcome. The concept aimed to uplift the marginalised or poor section of the society. Members' participation in various exhibitions, local politics, family decisions making and leading a dignified life shows a positive impact on the members of SHG. The current study also revealed that the majority of SHG members being women were housewives but after being associated with SIIG they have started their own business activity and have started generating their own income.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SHGS

- ❖ To address the challenges related to marketing SHG products, state-level authorities should expand the scope of SHG activities throughout the state rather than confining them to specific areas.
- ❖ SHGs within a particular panchayat area can establish a cooperative society responsible for marketing the products of different SHGs under a common brand name. This cooperative society can also undertake sales promotional activities and acquire essential inputs for the benefit of member SHGs.
- ❖ Industry-SHG linkage can be initiated at the panchayat level, where groups in proximity to industrial areas can collaborate with SHGs, providing training and offering tasks or employment opportunities.

- ❖ NGOs should identify members with limited knowledge and competence within SHGs and provide them with appropriate training to enhance their skills. Short-term training programs can be organized at the panchayat level for this purpose.
- ❖ Frequent awareness campaigns conducted by the Rural Development Agency (RDA) can inform participants in SHGs about the various assistance schemes available to them.
- ❖ Financial institutions and banks should provide financial assistance to SHGs based solely on their genuine performance, without any discrimination based on caste, politics, etc.
- ❖ Efforts should be made to include more individuals, especially the illiterate and the most impoverished rural residents, to become SHG members.
- ❖ To encourage saving among SHG members, attractive savings and insurance schemes should be introduced.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ **Industry SHG Linkage:** Industries can support SHGs in their vicinity by utilizing CSR funds to provide training and infrastructure. Additionally, companies can allocate tasks and jobs to SHG members.
- ❖ **Community Resource Organization:** Establishing a panchayat-level organization to assist SHGs in their activities and offer Soft Skill Training programs can enhance the overall development of SHG members.
- ❖ **Exchange Programs (Knowledge and Skill Sharing):** Facilitating discussions and knowledge sharing among SHGs from different states can enhance the skills and expertise of members, preventing them from repeating mistakes and fostering innovation.
- ❖ **Incubation Centre:** An incubation centre is essential to support SHGs as they progress from budding entrepreneurs to small enterprises and beyond. It will refine business ideas and bolster their viability at the outset.
- ❖ SHGs have made significant inroads into remote parts of Goa. The proliferation of SHGs across the state is a clear indication of their growth and progress. The active involvement of SHG members in group activities and their leadership roles in local politics bodes well for the advancement of SHGs.

Managing all SHG activities remains a challenge, but assistance is primarily accessible at the entry-level. These groups require ongoing support and guidance at every stage of their development.

Self Help Groups For Empowerment And Leadership Development Of Rural Woman Under GSRLM: A Case Study Of Chicalim Village Of Mormugao Taluka-Goa

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&

MS. MADHUMEETA DHAR^{*}

ABSTRACT

This academic study delves into the performance of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) operating under the Goa State Rural Livelihoods Mission (GSRLM), focusing on Chicalim Village in Mormugao Taluka, Goa. The research evaluates the impact of SHGs on rural empowerment, particularly concerning women, and their role in poverty reduction within the framework of grassroots initiatives. Utilizing a mixed-method approach involving surveys, interviews, and data analysis from 99 SHG women members, the study highlights the significant increase in decision-making empowerment among participants, impacting areas like education, health, household decisions, and purchasing power. Key findings underscore the positive influence of SHGs on income generation, entrepreneurship skills, and socio-economic well-being, emphasizing their pivotal role in fostering sustainable livelihoods.

Keywords: Empowerment, Self-Help Groups, Rural Women, GSRLM, Leadership Development, Challenges, Awareness, Multi-Stakeholder Approach, Goa.

INTRODUCTION

The Goa State Rural Livelihoods Mission (GSRLM) stands as a catalyst for rural empowerment, specifically focusing on enhancing the lives of impoverished rural women and fortifying the rural economy within the state. This mission takes shape through mobilizing rural households, predominantly women, into robust grassroots institutions. These institutions not only aim at economic empowerment but also at fostering a voice of accountability in critical service domains such as education, health, nutrition, and finance.

The GSRLM, operating as the State Rural Livelihoods Mission for Goa, is a government initiative dedicated to fostering sustainable livelihoods and reducing poverty in rural areas. Its initiatives span diverse avenues including the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), skill development training, financial aid, and market linkages to bolster rural entrepreneurship. Agriculture, livestock, and fisheries also fall under its purview, with various schemes and programs aimed at their enhancement.

At the heart of GSRLM's initiatives lies the concept of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), informal associations of individuals sharing common objectives to mutually progress economically

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and socially. These groups operate on the belief that the poor possess savings capacities, are creditworthy, and operate collectively to access bank loans based on shared wisdom and peer dynamics. The SHG linkage programs operate on the principle of peer pressure substituting collateral security, fostering gradual and sustainable growth among members. The broader National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and its Goa counterpart, GSRLM, revolve around the concept of poverty reduction through the establishment of robust grassroots institutions. These institutions enable impoverished households to access self-employment opportunities and skilled wage employment, leading to substantial income augmentation on a sustainable basis.

Integral to these efforts is the concept of women's empowerment, which aligns with human resource development and capacity building. Empowerment, particularly of women, revolves around fostering self-worth, self-determination, and the capacity to effect social change. Empowered women exhibit leadership, awareness, and an ability to influence developmental processes. This empowerment is an ongoing process involving enhanced awareness, problem articulation, and access to resources and public facilities.

In essence, this evaluation aims to delve into the performance and impact of SHGs under GSRLM in Chicalim Village, Mormugao Taluka, Goa, contextualizing the broader objectives of rural empowerment, poverty reduction, and women's empowerment within the framework of grassroots initiatives.

This study will scrutinize the multifaceted dimensions of SHG performance, shedding light on their role in uplifting rural communities and enhancing the livelihoods of its members, particularly women, in line with the overarching goals of GSRLM.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The study was conducted with the following specific aims:

- ❖ To evaluate the functioning of SHGs formed under GSRLM with special reference to Income generating activities.
- ❖ To list out problems faced by SHG members in the study area.
- ❖ To learn the awareness among the rural women about the Goa Bazaar platform to showcase products made by the women of Self Help Groups and evaluate the success of the Goa Bazaar platform with reference to select SHG in Chicalim Village.
- ❖ The need for study arises on account of the following factors:
 - a. The Rural Woman and GSRLM lack penetration on the market requiring the need to create awareness which is required to promote SHG products and enhance their livelihoods.
 - b. The products by SHG need market linkages and consumer exposure.
 - c. To understand the problems faced by the rural women registered with GSRLM.

- d. The next step to enhance the livelihood of Goa's rural women force is this marketing website namely www.goabazaar.org. The sole aim is the marketing of products made by SHG members.

METHODOLOGY

Sources of Data

The study is based on Primary and Secondary Data. The primary data has been collected from fieldwork through a sample survey, interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. The questionnaires and interview schedules prepared keeping in view the objectives of the proposed study were administered to the 7 SHGs of Chicalim Village organization. The interview schedule collected data from SHG Members from the selected Mormugao taluka, Chicalim Village. 15 Questionnaires have been used for collecting information from the SHG Members of Mormugao taluka and Chicalim Village Panchayat, Chicalim Village. A total of 99 SHG Women Members were surveyed. Secondary data has been collected from Goa Government Websites, Journals, Articles, Papers, and other Research Studies, etc. From the above 12 Self-help Groups, for study 7 SHG were selected under the Chicalim village organization. SAMPLING Population: 12 SHG Sample: 7 SHG

KEY FINDINGS

Key Observations on Self Help Group

1. The majority of SHG members in the study area were found to be lacking in leadership skills when compared to their strengths in communication and decision-making.
2. While many SHG members reported a noticeable improvement in their group's performance after participating in ongoing orientation and skill-based training, it was concerning to note that some identified members did not receive any training to develop their skills.
3. An overwhelming 85.1% of respondents highlighted that their participation in SIIGs has resulted in a significant increase in their level of decision-making empowerment, especially in matters related to children's education, health, household decisions, and purchasing power. It is also noteworthy that the remaining percentage of women who belong to the Nisarg SHG are working and have recently joined, indicating a positive trend towards women's empowerment through the SHG model.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Policy Recommendations for Government on the empowerment and leadership development of rural women through SHGs under GSRLM based on the research:

- ❖ The revolving fund is in short supply to make women financially empowered.
- ❖ The government should evaluate the functioning of SHGs formed under GSRLM with special reference to income-generating activities. This evaluation will help in

- identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and areas for improvement.
- ❖ The government should address the problems faced by SHG members in the study area. These problems include lack of training, inadequate financial support, limited market access, and insufficient infrastructure. To overcome these challenges, the government can provide targeted assistance, such as training and capacity building, financial assistance; production set up and improved market linkages.
 - ❖ The government should create awareness among rural women about the Goa Bazaar platform to showcase products made by the women of Self Help Groups. This awareness campaign should focus on educating rural women about the platform's benefits and how they can use it to promote their products and improve their economic status.
 - ❖ The government should prioritize the development of leadership skills among rural women to strengthen the SHG movement. This can be achieved by providing training and mentoring programs that help women build their confidence, communication, and leadership skills.
 - ❖ The government should encourage collaboration among SHGs to promote collective action and increase their bargaining power. This collaboration can be facilitated by creating networks and forums that enable SHG members to share knowledge and experiences, exchange best practices, and support each other.
 - ❖ The government should create an enabling policy environment that supports the growth and sustainability of the SHG movement. This can include policies that promote gender equality, provide access to finance and markets, and encourage the participation of rural women in decision-making processes.
 - ❖ The government should provide more financial support to SHGs. This can be achieved by introducing new financial schemes that provide low-interest loans, grants, and subsidies for SHGs. Additionally, the government can partner with financial institutions to provide access to credit and other financial services.
 - ❖ The government should support SHGs in improving their market access.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study aimed to evaluate Self-Help Groups (SHGs) formed under GSRLM, focusing on income-generating activities, challenges faced by SHG members, and awareness levels about the Goa Bazaar platform. Using questionnaires and interviews with 99 SHG women in Chicalim village, the study discovered that income from such activities significantly improves the socio-economic status of members. Although limited to Chicalim village, the study showcased SHGs' success in enhancing income, savings, self-employment, communication, entrepreneurship skills, and decision-making involvement, fostering individual identity and empowerment.

SHGs engaged in diverse income-generating ventures—from homemade products to agriculture, jewellery making, tailoring, and traditional crafts—demonstrating entrepreneurship and innovation. Collective efforts in manufacturing coir mats indicated mutual support among groups. These economic activities not only boosted income and savings but also honed entrepreneurship skills, significantly benefiting members' socio-economic well-being.

Moreover, conducting a value chain analysis of seven SHGs uncovered primary activities like sales, production, and supportive procurement and marketing efforts. This analysis becomes pivotal for strategic decision-making, allowing SHGs to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for enhancing operations, thereby elevating their competitive edge and income generation potential in the market. Ultimately, the study underscores the critical role of such analyses in empowering SHGs and fostering their sustainable growth within the economic landscape.

SUGGESTIONS

Here are three important suggestions for policymakers and government officials to address the constraints faced by these 7 SHGs:

- ❖ **Provide dedicated spaces and infrastructure:** The lack of dedicated spaces for economic activities is a major constraint for the SHGs. Policymakers should provide support for the construction of dedicated spaces, such as community centers or marketplaces, where the SHGs can conduct their economic activities. Additionally, there is a need for improving infrastructure such as electricity, water supply, and transportation to enable better access to markets and resources.
- ❖ **Enhance access to finance:** The SHGs require easy access to finance to expand their economic activities. The government can create programs and schemes that provide low cost finance to the SHGs, along with capacity building to manage and repay loans effectively. The government can also provide incentives to banks to lend to these SHGs, with favorable terms and interest rates.
- ❖ **Improve market access and marketing skills:** The SHGs often lack market linkages and marketing skills, which restricts their ability to sell their products and generate revenue. The government can help build capacity for marketing and provide information on market demand, pricing and quality requirements. It can also facilitate the development of market linkages with buyers, retailers, and wholesalers. These efforts can help to increase the market access and sales of SHG products, and in turn, improve the income and livelihoods of the members.

SHG And Their Role In Promoting Livelihood In Urban Areas- A Case Study Of Margao And Cuncolim Municipalities, In Particular The GSUDA DAY-NULM Scheme (SM&ID)

MS. TRACY ALMEIDA E AGUIAR

&

MR. SALMAN KHAN[♦]

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) operating under the Goa State Urban Development Agency (GSUDA) Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Urban Livelihood Mission (DAY-NULM), specifically focusing on the Social Mobilization & Institutional Development (SM&ID) scheme in Margao and Cuncolim municipalities. SHGs, crucial community-based entities, play a vital role in enhancing financial self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods. The research examines grassroots institutions, including SHGs, Area Level Federations (ALFs), and City Level Federations, exploring their role in livelihood creation. Key findings highlight the positive impact of SHGs on members' livelihoods, emphasizing financial support as the primary motivator for SHG participation. The study recommends enhanced awareness programs for the DAY-NULM scheme and proposes comprehensive training programmes covering financial literacy, leadership, marketing, livelihood skills, packaging, production, and digital marketing technologies to further empower SHG members and contribute to urban livelihood improvement.

INTRODUCTION

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) stand as potent tools for fostering social, political, and economic empowerment, particularly within the context of micro-finance institutions in India. Defined as "small voluntary associations of poor people," SHGs have gained prominence for addressing common challenges through mutual aid and self-help. While the formal inception of the SHG concept traces back to NABARD in the late 20th century, recent times have witnessed substantial growth, marked by financial inclusion and entrepreneurial attributes. These groups, abundant in Goa, bring individuals together from similar socio-economic backgrounds, fostering collective efforts for social and financial development.

The primary objective of this study is to illuminate the pivotal role played by Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in income generation, enabling the attainment of essential amenities for sustainable livelihoods and financial self-reliance among rural women. With a focus on the utilization of the GSUDA-DAY-NULM SCHEME by SHGs, the research aims to engage

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with diverse stakeholders to gain insights. This exploration seeks to lay the groundwork for a strategic plan and model that capitalizes on SIIG strengths, addresses daily challenges, and incorporates geotagging of SHG locations. The geotagged information will serve as a valuable resource for interested stakeholders and future research endeavours.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY

The research study aims to delve into the objectives and motivations behind the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the rural areas of Goa, particularly focusing on the diverse reasons that drive women to join or initiate these groups. While financial assistance, income generation, and entrepreneurship opportunities are commonly cited purposes, the study seeks to uncover additional motivations such as total dependence on livelihood, seeking additional income, socializing, and personal interest. These SHGs, comprising women from various educational, ethnic, and age backgrounds, play a vital role in providing a platform for regular meetings where members can not only conduct SHG proceedings but also engage in social interactions, knowledge-sharing, and skill development. Identifying the challenges faced by these SHGs is crucial to enhancing their contribution to the livelihoods of their members. Moreover, understanding the current status of human resources, facilities, and the obstacles confronted by SIIGs will inform strategies to address these issues, ultimately empowering women towards entrepreneurship through skill enhancement and training programmes, including digital and marketing skills.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To study the livelihood activity of the SHGs in the jurisdiction of Margao and Cuncolim Municipalities, under the GSUDA-DAY-NULM SCHEMES (SM&ID).
- ❖ To identify the challenges faced by these SHGs in creating improvement in livelihoods on a sustainable basis (Purpose under SM&ID).
- ❖ To identify ways in which the challenges can be addressed.
- ❖ To geotag the locations of SHGs (in Cuncolim&Margao) and make the data available as a useful resource for interested stakeholders.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data is collected through one-on-one interviews with 240 members from 65 SHGs across Margao and Cuncolim municipalities. A multi-stage sampling technique is used for data collection. In the first stage, Margao and Cuncolim municipal areas were chosen through cluster sampling. Next, a stratified sampling approach was used to select 25 SHGs out of 34 in the Margao municipal area and 40 SHGs out of 65 in the Cuncolim municipal for analysis. The questionnaire for the interview covered personal information, SHG particulars, and the members' livelihood. The locations of SHGs are progressively geotagged, utilizing geospatial data collection software. The same data is made accessible online in the form of maps. Data

mining and statistical methods were employed for data analysis. Microsoft Excel and Python Programming Language were used as tools for analysis. The data is also being analyzed using text mining in the form of frequent itemset mining to identify patterns in the form of most common phrases and manual intervention.

KEY FINDINGS

- ❖ The study found a need for more effective awareness programs to enhance understanding of the DAY-NULM scheme.
- ❖ Members assessed the positive influence of their participation in an SIIG on their livelihood using a 10-point scale. The collective score across all members was highly positive, with Cuncolim participants expressing a slightly higher impact than Margao members.
- ❖ The SHGs significantly impacted members' livelihoods, providing financial support through low-rate loans and a supportive platform for socialization. Members noted satisfaction with the purpose and objectives of joining SIIGs, emphasizing the role of SHGs in empowering women towards entrepreneurship.
- ❖ Members were asked to rate the extent to which their joining objectives were met, resulting in an overall score of 6.5. Margao members rated it at 6.32, while Cuncolim members rated it at 6.64.
- ❖ High satisfaction indicates that joining objectives, especially financial support, were generally met. However, some members, joining for skills enhancement and entrepreneurship, may rate satisfaction lower due to a focus on financial matters rather than competency development.
- ❖ Respondents rated their awareness of the DAY-NULM Scheme, resulting in an overall score of 6.16. Margao members rated it at 5.96, while Cuncolim members rated it at 6.31.
- ❖ Awareness gaps highlight the need for more effective awareness programs, suggesting regional language video content for wider dissemination.
- ❖ Members identified "financial support" as the primary motivation for joining SHGs, followed by "socialization," "interest," and "additional income." Some members joined to develop entrepreneurial and leadership skills.
- ❖ Self-Help Groups (SHGs) encounter multifaceted challenges that impede their effective functioning. These include a dearth of dedicated meeting spaces, insufficient institutional support in terms of technical assistance and training, limited financial management skills hindering income generation, difficulties accessing markets due to inadequate knowledge and transportation, challenges in securing credit despite efforts by microfinance institutions, resource scarcity affecting the quality of training programs, a digital literacy gap impacting information access and communication, hurdles in obtaining FSSAI licenses due to awareness, resource, and space constraints, a deficiency in marketing and

entrepreneurial skills hindering product promotion and business expansion, and a broader struggle stemming from limited awareness regarding funding, market opportunities, and potential collaborations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Capacity building is vital for the self-sustainability of Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Training programmes encompassing bookkeeping, leadership, communication, and conflict resolution can empower SHG members to run their groups effectively. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and government agencies can play a crucial role in providing these training sessions. The following training programmes are recommended for SHG members:

- ❖ **Accountancy and Financial Literacy:** SHG members should gain proficiency in financial management, budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management through financial literacy training.
- ❖ **Leadership and Management:** Developing strong leadership and management skills is crucial for the effective administration of SHGs, necessitating training programmes in these areas.
- ❖ **Marketing and Sales:** Training in marketing and sales can equip SHG members with the skills to promote products, identify potential customers, and close sales effectively.
- ❖ **Digital Literacy:** In the digital age, basic digital literacy skills are essential. Training in digital literacy enables SHG members to access information, communicate, and use digital tools for their businesses.
- ❖ **Livelihood Skills:** Training in various livelihood skills, including agriculture, handicrafts, tailoring, or other relevant skills, can enhance SHG members' capabilities in their local economies.
- ❖ **Health and Hygiene:** Training programmes focusing on health and hygiene raise awareness among SHG members, fostering healthy habits for themselves and their families.
- ❖ **Packaging:** Packaging training is beneficial for SHG members involved in product production and sales, helping enhance product presentation and marketability.
- ❖ **Production:** Production training covering planning, quality control, processes, safety, health, inventory management, and cost management can improve the quality of SHG products.
- ❖ **Digital Marketing Technologies:** Training in digital marketing technologies, including social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, mobile marketing, and online marketing, can expand the reach and visibility of SHG products.

The challenges can be addressed as follows:

- ❖ **Space for Product Sales:** Collaborate with governmental entities, educational institutes, panchayats, and municipalities to provide sustainable spaces for SIIGs to display and sell their products.
- ❖ **Digital Portal for SIIGs:** Develop a customized digital portal offering group management tools, access to financial services, a marketplace for product sales, a resource centre, a community forum, and training resources to enhance SHG effectiveness.
- ❖ **Central Portal for SHGs:** Establish a central portal managed by a government agency to facilitate SHG registration, maintain a comprehensive SHG database, provide information on funding opportunities, offer a resource centre, and create a networking platform for SHGs.
- ❖ **Regional Language Training:** Provide information and training in regional languages, employing trainers, translating materials, creating online resources, and conducting workshops. This ensures better understanding and engagement by SHG members in various activities and programs.
- ❖ **Mechanism for Inclusion of Specially-abled Persons in SHGs:** Develop mechanisms to raise awareness, ensure accessible meeting locations, sensitize members on disability issues, encourage leadership roles for persons with disabilities, provide tailored support, and advocate for their rights within the larger community.
- ❖ **Tie-ups Between SHGs and Educational Institutes:** Facilitate collaborations between SHGs and educational institutes for training, skill-building, access to technology and resources, joint research projects, marketing and sales support, and access to new markets through events and exhibitions.

The study also provided key inputs for policy-making for financial assistance to SIIGs, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, access to markets, implementing technology and innovations, social mobilization, inclusivity, and collaborations

CONCLUSION

Self-Help Groups (SHGs), community-based entities formed to enhance socio-economic conditions through mutual support, play a pivotal role in urban livelihood development by offering credit, training, and resources for business initiation and expansion. This project focused on assessing the impact of SHGs on members' livelihoods, addressing challenges, and incorporating geotagging in Margao and Cuncolim Municipal areas. Findings revealed significant positive impacts on livelihoods, satisfactory achievement of SHG objectives, and a prevalent need for heightened awareness regarding the DAY-NULM scheme. Financial support emerged as a primary motivation for SHG membership. Challenges were identified, and the study highlighted instances of positive SHG impacts. The scope was confined to Margao and Cuncolim Municipal areas, with data gathered through one-on-one interactions.

Management of Floral Waste

DR. NISHA KEVAT[♦]

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the management of floral waste generated at religious sites, focusing on repurposing it into value-added products. Floral waste, a by-product of religious ceremonies, poses environmental challenges when discarded in water bodies or left to decay in open spaces.

Floral waste, stemming from religious practices, presents a unique challenge due to the fact that it cannot be discarded with regular waste, but dropped into water bodies.

This study was carried out by collecting floral waste was collected from the Sanquelim region and processed into various products, including Agarbatti (incense sticks) Dhoopbatti. The study employed experimental research in a controlled laboratory setting testing six combinations products to arrive at an optimal combination. Additionally, it also found that floral waste can serve as a valuable source of nutrients, resulting in improved plant growth.

The findings of this study underscore the potential for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to contribute significantly in managing floral waste from religious sites. By repurposing discarded flowers into scented products and utilising floral waste to enhance plant growth. SHGs can establish sustainable livelihoods and mitigate environmental concerns.

This study can be shown to the local Self-Help Groups who can use this method as one of the side income sources.

INTRODUCTION

Floral waste constitutes a distinct category of organic waste. When explicitly addressing the utilisation of flowers for religious ceremonies, a substantial volume of floral waste is generated daily. For instance, the Jhandewalan temples in New Delhi yield approximately 200 kg of flower waste per day, increasing to 500 kg on Tuesdays and a potential surge during special occasions like Navratri (Times of India, 11/09/2018).

Although the quantities of discarded flowers may vary across holy sites, it is an incontrovertible fact that a significant amount of floral waste is consistently generated. Due to their sacred nature, these floral remnants are not disposed of in landfills or regular garbage; instead, they are discarded into water bodies, such as streams, lakes, ponds, and rivers.

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This practice pollutes the aquatic environments and adversely affects aquatic life. In some cases, these floral offerings are left to decay in secluded areas, causing aesthetic degradation and a prolonged decomposition process, contributing to an environmental nuisance. The decomposition of floral waste produces foul odours, further compounding the problem. Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have taken the initiative to repurpose floral waste into useful products.

According to the Centre for Science and Environment, floral waste accounts for 16% of the total pollutants in the Ganga River. Toxic substances released from these discarded flowers can have far-reaching consequences, affecting millions of lives.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The present study aims to conduct preliminary research into managing floral waste generated at various religious sites and transform it into value-added products for more beneficial applications.

METHODOLOGY

This experimental research study was conducted in a controlled laboratory setting involving collecting and processing floral waste, preparing Dhoopbatti (incense sticks) from floral waste, and raising seedlings using floral waste.

Floral waste was exclusively collected from the Sanquelim region and transported to the laboratory. The flowers were categorised into yellow and orange marigolds and rose flowers. Petals were separated for drying and subjected for further processing, while the involucre region was utilised for floral waste preparation.

KEY FINDINGS

Of the six combinations tested, the third combination was deemed the most effective, displaying desirable qualities such as flammability, prolonged burning time (measured in minutes), and a pleasing fragrance.

The preparation of incense sticks was not feasible in the laboratory setting, necessitating collaboration with a local Agarbatti manufacturing facility in Parya.

The recommended combination included flower waste (125 g), sawdust (45 g), coal (12.5 g), loban (2.5 g), kapoor (2.5 gm), gum powder (175 g), Cowdung (45 g), corn powder (5 g), potassium nitrate (KNO₃) (2.5 g), incense oil for agarbatti immersion.

It was observed that Vaal and rice seedlings cultivated in a mixture of soil and floral waste exhibited superior growth compared to plants grown in soil only. This implies that floral waste can be a valuable source of additional nutrients for promoting plant growth.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

STIGs can collect the flowers from different temples from their locality and can produce scented agarbattis, dhupbatti etc. The conversion of floral waste into value-added products can also be utilized as a very good source of nutrients for the growth of plants. Both the activities can be taken up by the local Self Help Groups as their livelihood activities, which will lead to a sustainable livelihood.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are community-based groups formed by people to improve their socioeconomic status through self-help and mutual support. SHGs have played a crucial role in promoting livelihoods in urban areas by providing access to credit, training, and other resources that help members start and expand their businesses.

The focus of the study in the project was to find the effect of SHGs on the livelihood of their members, the challenges they face and the ways to address the challenges. It was observed that “financial support” is the main reason for almost all the members to join SHGs. The study also identified the challenges faced by the SHGs along with the ways in which they could be addressed. The study discovered some instances of positive impacts of SHGs on its members.

Efficiency of Public Distribution System – Case Study Analysis of Quepem and Sanguem Taluka Of Goa

-DR. SOHANI PAI VAIDYA ♦

&

MR. NARENDRA GAONKAR *

ABSTRACT

This study examines the efficiency of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Goa, with a focus on the Quepem and Sanguem talukas. The PDS in Goa aims to ensure food and nutritional security, aligning with the National Food Security Act of 2013.

This research study evaluates the PDS from the perspectives of various stakeholders, including civil supplies inspectors, panchayat officials, fair price shop owners, and beneficiaries. It emphasizes the critical roles played by local government bodies, particularly panchayats and civil supplies inspectors, in optimizing PDS operations.

The study employed a combination of primary and secondary data sources, encompassing interviews, questionnaires, research papers, and other reference materials.

Key findings underscore the significance of timely and quality food grain distribution in fair price shops, as well as the efficacy of civil supplies inspectors' surprise visits. The study also highlights the financial challenges faced by fair price shop owners and the need for panchayat officials to activate vigilance committees at the fair price shop level.

The research suggests measures to enhance the efficiency of the PDS, including the necessity for training programs, active committee participation, and clear communication channels among stakeholders. The findings provide valuable insights for government authorities seeking to maintain a consumer-centric focus and promote food and nutritional security through an efficient PDS.

INTRODUCTION

The Public Distribution System (PDS) in Goa is designed to address food and nutritional security by implementing the human life cycle approach, as stipulated in the National Food Security Act of 2013.

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Its primary objective is to ensure access to sufficient high-quality food at affordable prices, allowing individuals to lead a life of dignity. This study endeavours to assess the efficiency of the PDS in the state of Goa from the perspective of selected stakeholders, including civil supplies inspectors, panchayat officials, fair price shop owners, and beneficiaries of the PDS.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The need for vigilant oversight and regulation of fair price shops necessitates active involvement from local governing bodies, primarily the panchayats. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the role of specific panchayats in monitoring the PDS in the talukas of Quepem and Sanguem. Various governmental initiatives have been introduced to ensure food and nutritional security, including the recent Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to ensure “no one goes to sleep hungry in this country.” This research aims to ascertain the extent to which government efforts align with the Prime Minister’s vision and identify the steps required to transform this vision into a reality.

The study also aims to develop a model for raising awareness among the target population about PDS, with panchayats serving as the main facilitators.

The findings of this study are expected to be valuable for civil supplies offices at the taluka level in understanding the challenges beneficiaries face. By assessing the benefits extended by fair-price shops in Quepem and Sanguem talukas in Goa, this study will also be important in ensuring development of villages.

METHODOLOGY

The data sources for this study comprise both primary and secondary data.

Primary data was collected through interviews and questionnaires distributed among the selected respondents. Secondary data was gathered from various research papers, articles, journals, reference books, online resources, and other electronic media.

This study seeks to evaluate the role of local government bodies in enhancing the efficiency of the Public Distribution System in Quepem and Sanguem talukas of Goa. It focuses on four critical stakeholders within the PDS; Civil Supplies Inspectors, Panchayat Officials, Fair Price Shop Owners, and Beneficiaries.

Notably, local government bodies playing a pivotal role in the functioning of the PDS, primarily comprised of Panchayat Officials and Civil Supplies Inspectors. Through purposive sampling method, 3 panchayats in Quepem taluka and 3 in Sanguem taluka were selected for in-depth examination. A sample of three fair-price shop owners from each taluka was also studied.

Moreover, the study covered 200 beneficiaries of the PDS to provide a comprehensive assessment. The research has developed a model for assessing the operational efficiency of fair price shops operating in Goa, underscoring their critical role in ensuring the success of the PDS.

KEY FINDINGS

The Public Distribution System is crucial in guaranteeing food and nutritional security to ration card holders across the Indian states. In Goa, the Department of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs oversees the functioning of the PDS. This study evaluates the PDS in the Quepem and Sanguem talukas based on the perspectives of four key stakeholders; civil supplies inspectors, panchayat officials, fair price shop owners, and beneficiaries of the PDS. The study reveals that civil supplies inspectors conduct surprise visits to each fair-price shop at least once in every three months, scrutinising the records and e-POS smachine data for food grain distribution. The inspection also covers weighing machines, the list of eligible cardholders, and the food grain samples maintained at the ration shop. Panchayat officials play a pivotal role in supervising fair-price shops. However, it was observed that vigilance committees for fair-price shops have been inactive and have not convened to review the PDS's operation in the past six months. Fair price shop owners responsible for distributing food grains to beneficiaries face financial challenges due to inadequate margins.

The study highlights the benefits experienced by PDS beneficiaries, who receive food grains consistently and conveniently. Affordable pricing for food grains is crucial to facilitate beneficiaries in lifting their monthly quotas. The recent decision by the central government to distribute 5 kg of food grains per person to priority household (PHH) beneficiaries and 35 kg per household to Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries in 2023 is a welcome move in support of beneficiaries. The study underscores that the quantity and quality of food grains distributed significantly impact the operational efficiency of fair-price shops. These findings guide government authorities, ensuring a consumer-centric focus on the PDS by enhancing fair-price shop efficiency, benefiting ration cardholders and ensuring food and nutritional security.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has identified that the timely delivery of food grains at the right place, at the right price, in the correct quantity, and with the right quality significantly impacts the operational efficiency of fair-price shops. Regular inspections of fair price shops by civil supplies inspectors, with a mandatory visit to each shop every three months, is an effective way to monitor the PDS.

The study also highlights the financial viability concerns of fair-price shop owners within the public distribution system.

Regarding the role of panchayat officials in overseeing the PDS, it was found that the vigilance committees at the fair price shop level are not active and need training. The study emphasises the importance of monitoring the functioning of the PDS at the fair price shop level to strengthen the food grain distribution network in the best interests of beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the nation's food and nutritional security by ensuring affordable, accessible, and available food for all beneficiaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SUPPLIES INSPECTORS:

- ❖ Conduct training programs to sensitise fair price shop committee members about their roles and responsibilities in monitoring ration shops. Periodic training programs can promote a more active and transparent system, with government authorities collaborating with Civil Supplies Inspectors due to their first-hand knowledge of fair price shop operations.
- ❖ Maintain mandatory surprise visits to fair-price shops for increased transparency and efficiency within the PDS.
- ❖ Share knowledge and insights with fair price shop owners and panchayat officials through awareness programs, thus aiding the best interests of PDS beneficiaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAIR PRICE SHOP LEVEL COMMITTEE:

- ❖ Take a more proactive role in enhancing monitoring operations of fair-price shops at the grassroots level, conducting frequent meetings to address issues at least once a month.
- ❖ Regularly visit fair-price shops to ensure the smooth distribution of food grains.
- ❖ Act as a crucial communication link between fair-price shop owners and beneficiaries, considering the widespread locations of beneficiaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAIR PRICE SHOP OWNERS:

- ❖ Acknowledge the pivotal role of fair-price shop owners in the food grain distribution network. Timely and consistent service in making food grain available and its distribution is essential for the success of the PDS.
- ❖ Exercise vigilance when lifting food grain quotas from taluka-level civil supplies godowns/warehouses, checking stock quality for distribution within the godowns.
- ❖ Resolve beneficiaries' grievances amicably at the fair price shop level, ensuring prompt resolution.
- ❖ Collaborate with fair-price shop vigilance committee members to coordinate the monthly distribution of food grains through the fair-price shop network.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BENEFICIARIES

- ❖ Stay informed about your rights and responsibilities as consumers. Well-informed beneficiaries can better protect themselves against exploitation, empowered with knowledge.
- ❖ Avoid waiting until the end of the month to collect entitled food grain quotas from fair-price shops.
- ❖ Provide feedback regarding food grain consumption through local representatives, who may also be members of the fair price shop monitoring committee.
- ❖ Beneficiary suggestions can be instrumental in understanding the broader societal needs and requirements.

Implementation of the RTI Act 2005 with reference to

Section 4 (1) (B)

-DR. MARIA FATIMA DE SOUZA ♦

ABSTRACT

The Right to Information Act, 2005, represents a pivotal development in the landscape of Indian democracy. This study investigates the implementation of Section 4 (1) (b) of the RTI Act, which requires a proactive disclosure of important information by government bodies.

This study focusing on Urban Local Bodies in the South Goa district, aims to assess citizen awareness of Section 4 and the extent to which ULBS comply with its provisions.

A mixed methodology was employed, incorporating observations, informal discussions, and questionnaires to gather data. The study highlights the lack of full implementation of the RTI Act, even after 18 years of the Act's existence. This is attributed to various factors, including a lack of domain knowledge among municipal officers, delayed website development, frequent officer transfers, lack of responsibility and accountability and inadequate monitoring mechanisms. The study underscores the need for public awareness and enhanced training for officers to promote compliance of Section 4.

It also recommends skills development for office staff of ULBs, particularly in creating and managing information websites, and increased accountability. These measures are essential to strengthen the proactive disclosure mechanisms and promote transparency and accountability, thereby realising the core objectives of the RTI Act, 2005.

INTRODUCTION

The enactment of the Right to Information Act, 2005 is a significant milestone in the annals of Indian democracy, deepening through legislation democratic principles of the country by the participation of citizens.

This study seeks to investigate the implementation of the provisions of Section 4 of the Act by Urban Local Bodies in the South Goa district of Goa.

Section 4 is a critical provision, as it recognises that certain information is so valuable and pertinent to the community that it should be proactively disclosed without needing specific

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requests. Self-disclosure enhances transparency and accountability in governance and reduces the need for citizens to request for critical information.

Urban local bodies play a vital role in local governance, possessing administrative and financial powers to provide essential services to the general public. This study aiming to evaluate citizens' awareness about section 4 of the RTI Act, is therefore of utmost relevance to the public.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This minor research project seeks to assess citizens' awareness level about Section 4 of the RTI Act, with a specific reference to Urban Local Bodies (municipalities) in South Goa. It also strives to evaluate the implementation of Section 4 of in these ULBs.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed methodology is employed to gather data for this minor research study. The researcher uses observation methods, informal discussions, and questionnaires to collect the data. Both primary and secondary data sources are used to fulfil the study's objectives. Websites are reviewed to ascertain the availability of relevant Acts, rules, forms, and other documents accessible to the public.

Primary data: Informal discussions were conducted with the citizens to gain insight. Questionnaire 1 was administered in person to the Chief Officer or the Public Information Officer (PIO). Questionnaire 2 was administered to ordinary citizens, with 30 respondents in each jurisdiction of the municipalities in South Goa.

Secondary data: Secondary data for this study was collected from various research articles, government circulars, and memorandums.

KEY FINDINGS

This study found that 18 years after the RTI Act, 2005 was legislated, the Act is not being fully implemented by ULBS. The well-known adage that "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" underscores the necessity of certain limitations on rights. Thus, the RTI Act, 2005, has specific restrictions in its application. The study discovered that the implementation of Section 4 by ULB is rare, and the requirement for proactive disclosure of information as envisioned in the RTI Act 2005 is not met by the ULB of the South Goa District, highlighting a recurring issue in the implementation of laws and acts intended for the common good of citizens.

The study has revealed that, despite RTI being a tool for citizens to understand the functions of public authorities, particularly ULBs, it is underutilised by the general public.

MAJOR FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- ❖ Domain knowledge of officers in the municipalities responsible for Suo Moto disclosure of information under section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005, is limited.
- ❖ Failure of municipalities to develop their websites as mandated by Section 4 within 120 days of the promulgation of the RTI Act, 2005, due to the lackadaisical attitude of the government authorities. Thus, there is no disclosure of information as envisaged by the RTI Act, 2005.
- ❖ Frequent transfer of officers as per government policies could be one of the primary reasons for the poor compliance.
- ❖ Lack of a monitoring and evaluation system that places responsibility and accountability for compliance as enjoined under section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.
- ❖ An absence of fixed accountability and responsibility on municipality officers. They are not taken to task for non-compliance of Section 4 even 18 years of the implementation of the RTI Act. Inadequate efforts by ULBs to provide information through self-disclosure, as outlined in the RTI Act, 2005.
- ❖ Slow and incomplete digitisation of information has hindered the availability of information to the public.
- ❖ Lack of seriousness and training among municipality officers in understanding and adhering to Section 4 of the RTI Act. The commitment required to update the information is absent.
- ❖ Limited public awareness of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005, and its potential for empowering the citizen. Detailed display of Public Information Officers, Appellate Authority, Nodal Officer, and other facilities required by the RTI Act, 2005 are absent.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ❖ Training should be provided to all Municipal heads, Public Officers (POs), and Public Information Officers (PIOs) by the Department of Personnel and Training on priority to raise awareness and underscore their responsibility in complying with Section 4 of the RTI Act and the implications of non-compliance.
- ❖ Office staff and data entry personnel of ULBs should receive specialised training to enhance their skills in website development, computerisation, and cataloguing of information, making it readily accessible to the public without the need for formal applications.
- ❖ Municipal administrators should be held accountable for the failure of proactive disclosure by ULBs under their jurisdiction.
- ❖ ULBs must prioritise proactive disclosure as it forms the core of the RTI Act, 2005, and their role should be further strengthened for continuous improvement and information updates.
- ❖ The frequent transfer of officers should be addressed to ensure and new appointees are well-versed in the RTI Act. Public awareness campaigns are needed to educate citizens about the importance of proactive information disclosure.



Assessment of Natural Resources Management Works Completed Under MGNREG Scheme During The Years 2016-2019: A Case Study Of Pernem Taluka

– MR. PRASAD S. NAIK ♦

ABSTRACT

This research paper delves into the assessment of Natural Resources Management (NRM) works executed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREG) scheme, focusing on 2016-2019, with Pernem Taluka as a case study.

The MGNREG scheme promotes sustainable livelihoods through NRM, fostering land productivity, ecological balance restoration, and expanding livelihood opportunities for rural households. This study on NRM projects employed qualitative and quantitative research tools. The projects for study were identified based on the information provided by the Block Development Office of Pernem and the MGNREG website. The study was carried out incorporating field visits, interviews of directly involved farmers, questionnaires, and on-site observations. The study identifies several critical findings:

While farmers appreciate the intent of NRM projects, they express dissatisfaction with the quality of the work, citing disparities between the actual execution and official records. Structural issues in NRM assets are attributed to inadequate ground preparation and the use of substandard materials. Discrepancies between the execution of NRM projects and official records are recurring, with exaggerated project dimensions and inaccurate information of location. In some cases, a lack of transparency is observed, where projects mentioned in records are non-existent. Inconsistencies in the implementation of NRM projects and compromise in the quality and long-term effectiveness of these assets are noted.

NRM projects require annual maintenance, which falls outside the scope of the MGNREG scheme, resulting in rapid asset degradation. Farmers propose that if given the funds, they could execute the work more efficiently, urging authorities to heed their recommendations. Most farmers denied detrimental consequences. Further though many farmers consider it negligible, allegations of bureaucratic corruption affecting the proper utilisation of funds are raised. Farmers highlight the need for a clearer vision and higher-quality materials to develop more durable NRM assets.

The study confirms the hypothesis that NRM projects under the MGNREG scheme in Pernem Taluka correlate significantly with increased agricultural production and farmer income. Farmers appreciate the positive impact of NRM assets development on their income and agricultural output.

Finally, the study emphasises the necessity for reevaluating the priorities within the MGNREG scheme, social auditing, regular stakeholders' meetings, and a more proactive approach towards maintenance and customisation of NRM assets. It contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and potential improvements in the execution of NRM projects under the MGNREG scheme.

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INTRODUCTION

The creation of sustainable livelihoods through Natural Resource Management, which enhances the productivity of land, restores ecological balance, and provides diverse livelihood options to rural households, is the key to the eradication of poverty and hunger (Ministry of Rural Development, 2016, p.1). The amendment to Schedule-I of the MGNREG Act determined that 60% of expenditure should be allocated to agricultural and related activities. Consequently, 75% of projects sanctioned under this scheme today are geared towards enhancing water security and promoting water conservation. The underlying objective is to empower impoverished and marginalised farmers by harnessing available natural resources to augment their agricultural pursuits. Moreover, this initiative strives to adapt local natural resources, particularly water bodies, by converting them into community assets.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

To evaluate the Natural Resources Management works carried out under the MGNREG scheme between 2016 and 2019 in Pernem Taluka.

METHODOLOGY

Given the nature of this research project, qualitative and quantitative methodologies were employed to evaluate the quality and various facets of the NRM projects. The selected NRM projects were scrutinised through field visits, guided by data supplied by the Block Development Office of Pernem and the MGNREG website. Farmers (respondents) who were directly involved in the projects were subjected to interviews, and their responses were documented through a structured questionnaire to facilitate a quantitative assessment. The questionnaire also included open-ended questions designed to capture diverse perspectives and suggestions from the respondents. Queries pertaining to the quality of the projects/assets before and after, their current functionality, impact on agricultural production and income, among other aspects, were integrated into the questionnaire. The assets developed under NRM were comprehensively examined through local accounts, primarily from farmers, and personal observations. Given the relatively modest number of such projects in Pernem Taluka and Goa at large, the pool of respondents was limited.

KEY FINDINGS

This study aims to evaluate the Natural Resources Management works executed under the MGNREG scheme between 2016 and 2019, using Pernem Taluka as a case study. The scope of the investigation is confined to Pernem Taluka and the years mentioned above. Similar studies should be replicated in other Talukas across Goa to establish the broader applicability of the work done.

The study revealed that while farmers express satisfaction with the underlying intentions of these projects, they are less content with the quality of the work. On numerous occasions, locals noted a discord between the actual project execution and its portrayal in official records. They assert that the quality of work delivered through the MGNREG scheme falls short of expectations.

Farmers pointed out several reasons for the structural issues plaguing NRM assets. First, the construction teams failed to adequately prepare the ground for solid foundations, leading to premature collapses of walls surrounding creeks and springs. Second, substandard materials with insufficient cement quantities were employed, causing walls to develop cracks within a year or two.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the conclusions drawn from along with recommendations:

- ❖ NRM projects, inherently one-time investments under the MGNREG scheme, demand annual maintenance which falls outside the purview of the scheme. Consequently, these assets degrade rapidly and often become nonfunctional within 3 to 4 years.
- ❖ Visiting the fields of Ms. Shrimati Sukado Gawas in Chandel, Pernem, Goa revealed that the construction completed around the spring adjacent to her fields had entirely collapsed, obstructing the water flow. The root causes of such failures were attributed to suboptimal construction practices and a lack of integrity.
- ❖ Similar circumstances were observed in the case of Mr. Sriram Mishal, where walls constructed along the creek running through his fields had also collapsed. In both instances, inadequate foundation work was cited as a primary reason for the failures.
- ❖ Locals often noted disparities between the actual execution of NRM projects and their representation in records. Project dimensions, such as the length of creek or spring walls, were frequently exaggerated in documentation and discrepancies in the designated starting and ending points.
- ❖ In some instances, site visits revealed the absence of NRM-related works altogether, with locals and farmers asserting no knowledge or recollection of such activities. Two such cases were identified at Rautwada, Chopdem, in 2016-2017 and near the residence of Sonu Dhargalkar of Chichula-Dhargal in 2016.
- ❖ Farmers assert that the quality of work delivered through the MGNREG scheme is subpar. Some even suggest that if the government were to provide them with the funds, they could execute the work more effectively themselves. However, this approach is impractical, and thus, farmers advocate that the authorities heed their recommendations to ensure work is carried out to higher standards.

- ❖ Only a few respondents reported negative repercussions from NRM projects, with the majority denying any detrimental impacts.
- ❖ When farmers were informed about the allocated funds for the projects, some raised concerns about bureaucratic corruption affecting the intended purpose of NRM asset development. Although some farmers believed corruption might be present, they considered it negligible.
- ❖ Farmers highlighted that NRM works were occasionally executed without a clear vision, leading to the development of short-lived assets. While generally appreciative, they expressed the desire for more concerted efforts by the authorities to create enduring assets contingent on a well-defined vision.
- ❖ A substantial number of farmers believed that there was room for the authorities to utilise funds more effectively by using higher-quality materials and creating more functional assets.

The primary goal of rejuvenating natural resources under the MGNREG scheme is to stimulate agricultural activities, support marginal and small farmers, and enhance agricultural production. When questioned about the impact of NRM assets on their agricultural production, most farmers (66%) reported a consistent increase in their agricultural output due to the creation of NRM assets.

This supports our initial hypothesis that a significant correlation exists between NRM works completed under the MGNREG scheme in Pernem Taluka between 2016 and 2019 and the growth of agricultural production and farmers' income.

It was also evident that NRM assets contributed to increased income for a significant portion of farmers, with two-thirds claiming that the assets positively impacted their income, either slightly or significantly.

Our second hypothesis that the quality of NRM works is unsatisfactory was confirmed by farmers who observed inconsistencies in its implementation and quality. Many assets developed to aid agriculture were found to be ineffective within a few years.

Farmers stressed that they had provided suggestions to the construction teams for customising asset creation to better suit their needs, given their intimate knowledge of the fields but these suggestions were ignored.

Despite the central government's insistence on allocating 60% of MGNREG scheme funds to NRM works, Goa's prioritisation of such works deviates from the expected ratio. Works such as roadside bush clearing, and gutter desilting take precedence. A re-evaluation of the MGNREG scheme's priorities is warranted.

Farmers also contended that the authorities involved in NRM asset development demonstrated insufficient concern for the utility of their work.

On a positive note, most respondents found the project instrumental in addressing challenges they had faced previously. For example, one farmer recounted how, before the construction of creek walls, their crops were regularly destroyed by floods during the monsoon season. These constructions now allow unimpeded water flow, safeguarding crops, particularly paddy, from potential devastation. Given the nature of the assets, many farmers noted that the projects were seasonally beneficial and irrelevant throughout the year.

There is a pressing need for social auditing of the outcomes of NRM works completed under this scheme. Chapter IV of the MGNREG Act stipulates that "The Gram Sabha shall conduct regular social audits of all the projects under the Scheme taken up within the Gram Panchayat." Presently, this requirement is rarely met. Adhering to the principles of local governance and political participation, stakeholders should convene at least biannually to discuss shortcomings, weaknesses, and design plans for the coming months.

Farmers noted that annual maintenance of NRM assets is currently lacking, and awareness about such provisions is limited. Therefore, regular stakeholder meetings or social audits can serve as a platform for raising awareness, identifying implementation flaws, recommending improvements, scheduling repair work, listing repair requirements, finalising new areas for asset development, considering customisation based on farmers' insights, and addressing other grievances.

While the MGNREGA suggests that farmers should participate in constructing NRM assets as labourers, this principle is not consistently implemented. Consequently, farmers lose opportunities to communicate their inputs on asset creation and quality checks to the construction teams.

Promotion of Island Tourism in Tiswadi Taluka of Goa- An Empirical Study

-PROF. R. ANTHONY SATHISH♦

&

MS. GAIL BINA PIRES*

ABSTRACT

India's tourism and hospitality industry, a key driver of economic growth, capitalizes on the nation's rich cultural and natural diversity. This study focuses on island tourism, which leverages the unique regional and cultural resources of an island to foster local development. The purpose is to shift the emphasis in Goa from "Beach Tourism" to "Island Tourism," recognizing its potential contribution to economic growth, employment, and foreign exchange earnings. Primary data was collected through interviews and structured questionnaires administered to Panchayats and residents of islands in Tiswadi taluka, Goa. Secondary data was gathered from various sources, including the Department of Tourism publications, reference books, journals, and media. The study covers five village panchayats overseeing Chora Island, Diwar Island, Vanxim Islet, St. Estevam Island, and Cumbarjua Island, examining the role of selected local bodies (panchayats) in island tourism.

Despite contributing to local development, these panchayats face participating specifically in the development of island tourism due to centralized tourism management by the Department of Tourism. Islanders' perceptions, gathered from 250 respondents, reveal scepticism about the benefits of Island Tourism, expressing concerns about the migration of outsiders into their island and the concretisation of their environment.

Island tourism in Goa, with its unique ecological features, has the potential to alleviate stress on the state's ecology. The study highlights the pivotal role of selected panchayats in promoting island tourism, despite challenges from centralized management.

Recommendations include providing financial support, sharing event revenues with panchayats, ensuring community involvement in decision-making, and conducting awareness campaigns to highlight job opportunities associated with Island Tourism. These measures aim to enhance sustainability and foster positive perceptions among islanders.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism and hospitality industry have emerged as significant drivers of growth within India's service sectors.

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With its rich cultural and historical heritage, diverse ecology, and natural beauty, India holds immense potential for tourism. This industry not only serves as a substantial employment generator but also contributes significantly to the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Island tourism focuses on leveraging the unique regional and cultural resources of islands to fulfill the needs of tourists while fostering local social, economic, and cultural development.

Islands endowed with distinctive cultural heritage and natural environments can attract a considerable number of tourists, making tourism a vital strategy for island economic development.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study aims to provide valuable insights for government authorities to make informed decisions, advocating a shift from the current emphasis on "Beach Tourism" to a more diversified focus on "Island Tourism".

The research underscores the current and envisioned role of panchayats in managing Island Tourism in the Tiswadi taluka of Goa.

It sheds light on the existing status of Island Tourism in Goa, encouraging panchayats on respective islands to spearhead initiatives promoting Island Tourism.

The study contributes to the formulation of a sustainable model for Island Tourism development in the state of Goa.

It identifies opportunities and constraints for Island Tourism development in Goa from the perspective of local bodies (panchayats).

The research promotes the development of suitable facilities to enhance Island Tourism for the satisfaction of tourists visiting the islands in Goa.

It proposes new strategies to effectively design the brand architecture of Island Tourism in Goa.

METHODOLOGY

Primary data was collected through interviews and a structured questionnaire administered to Panchayats and residents of the islands in Tiswadi taluka of Goa. Secondary data was collected from publications of the Department of Tourism, reference books, journals, magazines, Ph.D. thesis and other information published in print and electronic media.

KEY FINDINGS

The study delves into the role of selected local bodies, namely the panchayats of Tiswadi taluka, in the development of Island tourism within their jurisdiction. Five village panchayats overseeing islands, namely Chorao Island, Diwar Island, Vanxim Islet, St. Estevam Island,

and Cumbarjua Island, were studied. While these villages contribute to overall local development, they do not exclusively promote Island Tourism due to centralized tourism management by the Department of Tourism in Goa, posing a challenge.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding, the study explored Islanders' perceptions of Island Tourism in Tiswadi taluka. A questionnaire was administered to 250 residents of these islands, revealing that they perceive Island Tourism as less beneficial, anticipating no direct gains and fearing potential migration and settlement of outsiders, leading to concretization and damage to the islands' scenic beauty and culture.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Island tourism in Goa, with its unique flora, fauna, coral reefs, marine life, and geographic features, has the potential to alleviate stress on Goa's ecology. The study emphasizes the role of selected panchayats in Tiswadi taluka in promoting and developing Island tourism although centralized tourism management poses a challenge to these panchayats.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ❖ Provide financial support to panchayats through exclusive funds for Island tourism development.
- ❖ Share revenue generated from tourism events/festivals hosted on the islands with the respective panchayats.
- ❖ Ensure community involvement in tourism planning to enhance sustainability, with the government seeking local Islanders' input in decision-making.

Conduct awareness campaigns among Islanders regarding potential job opportunities and benefits associated with Island Tourism.





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