



GIPARD

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

**PANCHAYAT FINANCES
IN GOA**

OCTOBER 2025

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GIRDA was expanded and converted to Goa Institute of Public Administration & Rural Development (GIPARD) on 01st January 2014.

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It also implements the Goa State Training Policy, 2016 and undertakes Research related to the above areas.

PANCHAYAT FINANCES IN GOA

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FOREWORD

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. It is an ISO 9001: 2015 certified Organization.

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 27 Colleges in Goa and few more other State and Central Government institutions for mutual cooperation and coordination in training and research. The Institute is promoting research activities by providing financial support to the college faculty to undertake minor research studies. GIPARD is also designated as the Nodal Institute for iGOT Mission Karmayogi in Goa.

This publication is the Second in the series of minor research studies sponsored by this Institute to the faculty of various colleges the theme Panchayat Finances in Goa. 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 14 minor research studies conducted by the faculty from different colleges. The findings and recommendations would help the Departments and Organizations concerned to take steps as way be required for improvisation anal improvement.

The Research team of GIPARD deserves appreciation for 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.

(Vasudev N. Shetye)

Director - Training GIPARD

A Comparative Analysis of Revenue Mobilization Strategies in Cudnem and Navelim Village Panchayats: Towards Financial Sustainability

Dr. Guruprasad R. Naik & Ajit Ghadi

ABSTRACT

This study compares how two village panchayats in North Goa, Cudnem and Navelim, raise and manage their revenues in order to understand what makes local governance financially sustainable. Both panchayats face growing demands for better roads, sanitation, water supply, and education, but their ability to fund these needs is uneven. Using interviews, focus group discussions, and a review of existing studies, the research captures the perspectives of panchayat officials and residents on current financial practices and challenges.

The analysis shows that while Cudnem continues to largely depend on government grants, Navelim has begun to diversify its income through service fees and waste management charges, giving it a more sustainable base. Lessons from places like Kerala, the Philippines, and Brazil provide useful models for strengthening local revenues. The study concludes with practical recommendations to help village panchayats move toward greater financial independence and more effective service delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Cudnem and Navelim, two villages in North Goa, exemplify the challenges that rural panchayats face in revenue generation. Both areas are rich in cultural heritage and natural landscapes, attracting attention from various stakeholders interested in sustainable development. However, the increasing demands for improved infrastructure—such as roads, sanitation, water supply, and educational facilities, place a significant strain on their financial capabilities. The disparities in revenue mobilization strategies between these two panchayats may reveal valuable insights into how local governance can be enhanced to meet community needs. Understanding these dynamics is vital for formulating policies that support financial sustainability at the grassroots level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the existing revenue mobilization practices and identify challenges Cudnem and Navelim village panchayats face.

2. To explore potential revenue sources and innovative financing mechanisms applicable to both panchayats.
3. To examine comparative practices from other regions and countries to identify adaptable models that could strengthen revenue generation in both panchayats.
4. To undertake a comparative analysis of revenue mobilization strategies and financial sustainability between Cudnem and Navelim village panchayats.
5. To develop evidence-based recommendations for improving revenue mobilization and promoting financial sustainability in both panchayats.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Firstly, it addresses a knowledge gap regarding revenue mobilization strategies in rural governance. By examining the specific cases of Cudnem and Navelim, the research offers valuable insights into the operational dynamics of village panchayats.

Secondly, the comparative analysis elucidates the differences and similarities in revenue generation approaches and serves as a reflective model for other regions. Through this, the study aims to foster a more systematic approach to revenue generation in village panchayats across India by identifying successful strategies and outlining common challenges.

Thirdly, the implications of the findings extend beyond academic discourse, influencing policy formulation and implementation at the state and national levels. Improved revenue mobilization strategies can lead to better service delivery and enhanced community development, ultimately promoting the overall welfare of rural populations. As India continues to strive for equitable and sustainable development, understanding and addressing the financial challenges faced by local governing bodies emerges as an essential priority.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The completed study provides a thorough exploration of revenue mobilization strategies in Cudnem and Navelim village panchayats, situated in the scenic region of Goa. This research delved into the existing revenue practices employed by both panchayats, revealing the various challenges they face in generating sufficient financial resources to meet local developmental needs. The study assessed the traditional revenue streams, such as taxes and grants, and identified their limitations.

Moreover, the investigation explored innovative financing mechanisms that could be applicable to both panchayats, providing a broader understanding of potential revenue sources. By addressing the

unique context of these rural local governing bodies, the study seeks to contribute to enhancing financial resilience and ensuring effective service delivery in rural communities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design to thoroughly explore the revenue mobilization strategies of the Cudnem and Navelim village panchayats. Through this, the study captured the detailed experiences, challenges, and perceptions of various stakeholders involved in local governance. The comparative design provided a robust framework for analyzing both the similarities and differences in revenue strategies between the two panchayats. The insights gathered through this comparative analysis demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of current revenue mobilization strategies, paving the way for informed recommendations.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection combined semi-structured interviews with panchayat officials and residents and focus group discussions to capture individual and collective perspectives on revenue practices. An extensive review of literature and case studies complemented primary data, providing a comprehensive foundation for analysis and evidence-based insights into financial challenges and opportunities.

Sample Selection

Our sample consisted of panchayat officials, such as elected representatives, financial officers and residents. In total, 25 key informants were selected, balancing a broad range of perspectives with the need for in-depth analysis of each individual's contributions. The diversity of the sample also ensured that we captured both the governance and community dimensions of financial sustainability in the panchayats.

Data Analysis Techniques

Thematic analysis identified shared practices and divergences in revenue strategies of Cudnem and Navelim, shaped by their distinct economic and governance contexts. Comparative insights, supported by parallel studies and best practices, highlighted areas for improvement and informed evidence-based recommendations to strengthen financial sustainability in both panchayats.

CONCLUSION

Navelim Panchayat shows greater financial sustainability owing to its diversified revenue streams, which include service fees and waste management charges. Cudnem, by contrast, continues to rely predominantly on traditional sources such as government grants. By adopting innovative practices and diversifying their revenue base, both panchayats can achieve greater financial independence and ensure the provision of essential services to their communities.

Although the statistical analysis does not reveal any significant difference in the overall revenue mobilization efforts of the two panchayats, Navelim presents a relatively more sustainable model. Effective practices identified from other regions, such as Kerala, the Philippines, and Brazil, offer valuable insights and a potential roadmap for enhancing the financial sustainability of both village panchayats.

Assessment of Garbage Menace scheme in Rural Areas of Quepem Taluka

Pratiksha Gurav & Jyoti Naik

ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of the *Garbage Menace Scheme* in the rural panchayats of Quepem Taluka, Goa. The scheme, introduced in 2017, was designed to support village panchayats in managing domestic waste by providing financial assistance for segregation, composting, and disposal. While the government pledged to cover 98% of costs, delays and cancellations in fund disbursement have left panchayats struggling to manage waste with their limited own limited revenues.

Using the data collected from all of the panchayats in Quepem through surveys, questionnaires, and secondary sources, the study highlights systemic challenges, including inefficient waste collection, lack of recycling facilities, weak community participation, and widespread open burning of plastic. Factor analysis and descriptive tools reveal financial and operational constraints that hinder effective waste management. The study recommends the timely release of funds, community awareness campaigns, stricter enforcement, the use of technology, increased transparency and cost-sharing mechanisms to strengthen the scheme. Effective implementation would help to significantly reduce environmental and health risks for the residents while easing the financial burden on panchayats.

INTRODUCTION

The domestic waste generated in rural households has emerged as a serious concern. While the solid waste generated in rural areas is predominantly organic and biodegradable, the problem lies in the improper segregation of the generated waste. This leads to poor environmental sanitation contributing to unhealthy living conditions. Therefore, in order to facilitate proper waste management, the Government has been providing financial assistance under the *Garbage Menace Scheme (2017)* under the *Rural Garbage Disposal Scheme*.

The State Government provides funds to the village panchayat for the acquisition of land for sites for garbage disposal and for the development of the site and other facilities required for effective

disposal. Under the scheme the village panchayats are mandated to segregate the garbage at source into bio-degradable and non-biodegradable waste. The bio-degradable waste is to be vermin composted through the process of vermiculture, for which the panchayats are required to construct composting pits. The Government covers 98% of the costs related to collection, transportation, segregation, storage, processing, and disposal of garbage, and the remaining 2% is to be borne by the village panchayat, for the first 3 years. However, in practice, funds under this scheme have not been disbursed to any of the village panchayats, leaving them dependent on their own limited revenue funds to manage waste.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to analyze the prospects and the problems of the *Garbage Menace Scheme*. The specific objectives that have been considered for the purpose of the study are:

1. To study the level of awareness of the *Garbage Menace Scheme*.
2. To examine the prospects and problems faced by panchayat members in availing the scheme.
3. To outline the process of disbursement of funds in the implementation of the *Garbage Menace scheme*.
4. To suggest measures for better implementation and disbursement of schemes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Universe: For the purpose of study, the Quepem Block was considered as universe.
2. Sample size: For the purpose of this study, the Quepem block was considered as sample size. In Quepem block there are a total of 11 panchayats and all have been studied.
3. Sources of data: Data required for this study were collected using primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the field surveys conducted through administering a questionnaire designed for each of the research sample. Secondary data is collected from E-journals, websites, and other online sources.
4. Statistical tools were used in this study for the purpose of analysis.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Panchayats are required to take action on open dumps and poorly managed landfills by installing CCTV cameras.

2. Often, villagers do not participate in segregating waste. Hence, panchayats need to focus on creating awareness.
3. While the waste is sorted occasionally at the community level, panchayats lack local recycling facilities even in cases where the funds were granted for treating the garbage at the panchayat level.
4. Panchayats are unable to effectively address the open burning of plastic waste.
5. Grants issued under the *Garbage Menace Scheme* are often delayed, which burdens the panchayats.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Install garbage bins at strategic points; promote household waste segregation.
2. Conduct awareness programs through workshops, campaigns, and gram sabha meetings.
3. Use CCTV to curb illegal dumping; enable reporting via mobile apps/WhatsApp groups.
4. Levy fines for illegal dumping and introduce garbage collection charges; pass a common bill for taxation.
5. Improve use of *Garbage Menace Scheme* funds for infrastructure like treatment plants.
6. Increase sanctioned amounts under the scheme; ensure timely disbursement of funds.
7. Simplify documentation and billing; introduce an online application system for transparency.
8. Modify central funding applications to make them more user-friendly.
9. Raise community awareness about scheme discontinuation; encourage local financial contributions.
10. Pass a bill mandating minimum household contributions to sustain waste management.

Review of GPDP in the State of Goa in Financially Empowering Women and Girls Case Study with Special Reference to Pernem and Bardez Taluka

Salima Gajanan Haldankar & Manju Anant Shetye

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) in advancing financial empowerment for women and girls in Goa, with a focus on eighteen gram panchayats across the talukas of Pernem and Bardez. Introduced under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the GPDP seeks to promote participatory and gender-sensitive development through decentralized planning. Using secondary data, the study analyzes how GPDP initiatives have facilitated access to financial resources, addressed gender-based disparities, and shaped women's involvement in decision-making.

Findings show that while the GPDP framework holds strong potential for inclusion, challenges remain in awareness, fund distribution, and capacity building. Best practices highlight the importance of gender-sensitive planning, digital tools, and targeted skill development programs. The study recommends awareness workshops, capacity-building for women and officials, equitable resource allocation, and stronger monitoring mechanisms. Overall, GPDP offers a vital platform for strengthening women's financial empowerment and inclusive rural development.

INTRODUCTION

The GPDP is a decentralized planning initiative introduced in India under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The overarching goal is to foster participatory planning, with active involvement from village residents, and to ensure the efficient use of financial resources allocated to gram panchayats. In Goa, GPDP's focus includes gender-sensitive development, promoting economic inclusion, and enhancing governance mechanisms and overall development of the village.

The GPDP framework involves the involvement of different stakeholders, which will aid in drafting the expected developmental areas of the village. It involves the formulation of a voluntary association of representation from villagers known as the Village Development Committee (VDC),

which includes representation of ward members and selected representation from each ward, Anganwadi workers, farmers, and the Secretary, usually headed by the Sarpanch of the village.

The decentralization of governance through the GPDP creates opportunities for marginalized sections of society to contribute to and benefit from local development initiatives. For women and girls, who have historically faced exclusion from financial and decision-making processes, the GPDP provides a platform for greater inclusion.

This study examines the impact of GPDP in financially empowering women and girls, with specific emphasis on the talukas of Pernem and Bardez. The research explores how funds and programs under GPDP are allocated, implemented, and utilized to address gender disparities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze the extent to which GPDP has facilitated access to financial resources and information for women and girls in the selected villages under study in the talukas of Pernem and Bardez.
2. To evaluate the responsiveness of GPDP in addressing gender-based financial disparities of selected villages under study using secondary data sources.
3. To identify challenges faced by gram panchayats in implementing gender-focused financial empowerment initiatives under GPDP.
4. To provide possible suggestions for enhancing the role of GPDP in promoting financial empowerment for women and girls based on the observations from the secondary data.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on 18 gram panchayats—nine from Pernem and nine from Bardez. The gram panchayats selected for study are from different categories, i.e., A, B, C and D (refer to the annexure list of panchayats for details). By examining the financial empowerment initiatives under GPDP in these talukas, the study aims to provide an understanding of the GPDP implementations on the overall financial empowerment of women and girl children.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

By identifying best practices and challenges, the study can contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of gram panchayat-led initiatives in promoting financial inclusion and gender equality. Moreover, the study's recommendations can serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working in the field of decentralized governance and women's empowerment.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The literature review reveals several critical insights:

1. The GPDP framework holds significant potential for promoting financial empowerment and gender inclusion, but faces implementation challenges.
2. Financial empowerment of women is essential for achieving broader socio-economic development goals.
3. Gender-sensitive planning and capacity-building programs are key to addressing gender disparities in rural areas.
4. Digital tools and technologies can enhance the efficiency and impact of GPDP initiatives, but require targeted investments in infrastructure and training.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Conduct an intensive awareness workshop for the elected members of the panchayats and other VDC members on GPDP.
2. Implement targeted awareness programs to educate women and girls on GPDP resources and opportunities for this section of society.
3. Train panchayat officials and women self-help groups (SHGs).
4. Organize a seminar in collaboration with the respective government department to create awareness among village women and girl children about schemes on financial empowerment.
5. GPDP should include programs for skill development for women and girl children within the village. A proper plan of activities, a database of beneficiaries, and a follow-up action report of beneficiaries after attending such a program should be maintained at the panchayat level.
6. Develop standardized guidelines to ensure equitable fund distribution to a section of society.
7. Ensure the release of adequate funds to panchayats, including Category C and D panchayats, that allocate resources for the overall welfare of the population.

8. Regular monitoring of the GPDP implementation by the officials is to be undertaken.
9. Involvement of women and adolescent girls in VDCs of gram panchayat for better connection with policy framing.

CONCLUSION

The research underscores GPDP's potential to drive financial empowerment among women and girls in Pernem and Bardez. The panchayats in Goa have managed to promote development in various sectors, but some efforts are also required towards addressing the identified challenges, which can significantly enhance the GPDP initiative's effectiveness. Future efforts should focus on comprehensive awareness programs, inclusive planning, capacity building, and robust monitoring systems to achieve the desired impact.

Including women and adolescent girl children in the decision-making bodies of the gram panchayat, such as the VDC, can play a crucial role in addressing challenges related to financial empowerment. Panchayats should actively consider and incorporate the suggestions and recommendations of these women to strengthen resource planning. Furthermore, the focus of the GPDP should extend to improving the quality of initiatives directed at women and girls, either through dedicated allocations from panchayat funds or by securing adequate resources under relevant schemes and programs for women's empowerment.

Financially Sustainable Panchayats in Goa: A Way Forward

Dr. Renji Ambaloor

ABSTRACT

The study assesses the financial sustainability of village panchayats in Goa, and identifies critical challenges, including the limited devolution of functions, weak revenue generation, and over-reliance on Finance Commission grants, which constitute over 99 percent of panchayat income. Primary data were collected from Sarpanchs, Panch members, secretaries, and domain experts across South Goa, supplemented by secondary sources from state and national institutions. A financial sustainability model was developed, focusing on revenue-expenditure balance, fiscal management, capacity building, transparency, and community engagement. The findings suggest underutilization of heritage, tourism, and digital platforms as potential revenue streams. The study proposes practical measures to enhance financial independence. The broader aim of this study is to strengthen self-reliant, accountable, and effective local governance in Goa.

INTRODUCTION

Goa follows a two-tier Panchayati Raj system under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, with 191 village panchayats and two zilla panchayats. However, not all 29 functions in the Eleventh Schedule have been devolved, and local revenue sources such as taxes and fees remain minimal. Panchayats therefore depend heavily on Finance Commission grants, which form 99% of their revenue. This limited financial base, coupled with low levels of economic activity in several hinterland villages, restricts developmental work and livelihood opportunities.

For this study, financial sustainability is defined as the ability of panchayats to generate adequate resources to meet revenue and capital expenditure while also investing in projects that yield long-term income. The study draws on both primary and secondary data: official reports and documents, field visits to panchayat ghars, and discussions with sarpanchs, members, secretaries, and domain experts. A model for financial sustainability has been proposed, considering key variables such as revenue-expenditure ratios, fiscal management, community participation, capacity building, and transparency.

The analysis identifies significant challenges in utilizing government grants, technical and administrative constraints, and gaps in citizen engagement. At the same time, it highlights opportunities for revenue generation through tourism circuits, market clusters, renewable energy projects, digital governance, local industries, and innovative financial tools. The objective is to offer practical recommendations and policy strategies that enable panchayats to become self-reliant and resilient, thereby enhancing the well-being of local citizens.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to:

1. Assess the current financial health of panchayats in South Goa in terms of revenue and expenditure.
2. Develop a model of financial sustainability by identifying key influencing factors.
3. Suggest policy measures and strategies to strengthen the financial stability of Goan panchayats.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research covers selected village panchayats across South Goa, representing diverse categories. Further, the study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was obtained from reports and documents of the Department of panchayat Government of Goa, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), and other relevant sources. The primary data was collected from selected panchayats across different categories in South Goa. Discussions were held with Sarpanchs, Panch members, Village Panchayat Secretaries, and domain experts. Personal visits to panchayat ghars were conducted.

A model for measuring the financial sustainability quotient was developed based on factors identified through a literature survey and inputs from panchayat officials and domain experts. Based on the analysis of the collected data, the interactions and the literature survey, the study proposed suggestions to improve the financial sustainability of village panchayats. Policy recommendations and strategies for enhancing financial sustainability in Goan panchayats have been incorporated.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As the most immediate units of governance, village panchayats have direct responsibility for service delivery and community welfare. Strengthening their financial base is crucial to enable them to carry

out developmental functions, reduce dependence on government grants, and create new livelihood opportunities. Additionally, by incorporating **primary data from panchayat officials and on-site observations**, the research captures ground realities that often remain unaddressed in official reports. These insights along with revealing financial issues also note the administrative, technical, and participatory challenges that affect governance at the village level.

Through this, the study aims to contribute to designing sustainable models of revenue generation that can be replicated across villages in Goa.

Model for Financial Sustainability

A model for measuring the financial sustainability of panchayats was developed, identifying several key factors:

1. Revenue-expenditure ratio
2. Fiscal management
3. Capacity building
4. Community engagement
5. Transparency and accountability
6. Ease of administrative approvals

This model provides a framework for predicting financial sustainability and guiding the allocation of resources and planning of interventions.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Village panchayats depend heavily on Finance Commission grants. Local taxes and fees contribute less than one percent of total revenue, making panchayats financially weak.
2. Panchayats often lack technical expertise, and skilled human resources.
3. Delays in approvals, tendering processes, and expenditure sanctions slow down project implementation.
4. Panchayats often do not adequately tap into domains like heritage, tourism, renewable energy and local entrepreneurial potential.
5. The introduction of GST resulted in the loss of octroi revenue from fuel stations and similar establishments.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Strengthen coordination between Centre, State, and panchayats for better use of Finance Commission grants and Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) implementation.

2. Simplify procedures for administrative approvals and expenditure sanctions through single-window systems. Ensure timely audits and proper updating of information on platforms like eGramSwaraj.
3. Strengthen gram sabhas, ward sabhas, mahila sabhas, bal sabhas, SHGs, youth associations, and other community-based organizations.
4. Explore digital governance, online service delivery, and dedicated panchayat websites with online payments.
5. Develop tourism circuits, heritage walks, market clusters, renewable energy projects, local industries and waste-to-wealth initiatives.
6. Install solar energy systems on rooftops, ground-mounted areas, carports, public buildings, and community solar gardens.
7. Strengthen revenue collection through reassessment of house taxes, enforcement against defaulters, and transparent property assessments.
8. Consider mandating that industrial units contribute at least 0.5% of CSR funding to village-level activities.
9. Institute awards for panchayats introducing financially viable projects and efficiently utilizing Finance Commission grants.
10. Encourage MLAs and MPs to allocate at least 1% of local area development funds to gram sabha-proposed projects.

CONCLUSION

Village panchayats in Goa remain heavily dependent on government grants. Hinterland panchayats, in particular, face financial constraints due to limited local economic activities. This study has developed a model for assessing the financial sustainability of panchayats and proposed practical measures for improvement, including technological interventions, community engagement, revenue generation through tourism and culture, renewable energy initiatives, and capacity building. Strengthening the financial sustainability of village panchayats is critical, as they are the basic units of administration, directly impacting citizen well-being.

By leveraging local culture, heritage, natural resources, and community participation, village panchayats in Goa can achieve financial self-reliance, enhance their administrative capacity, and contribute to the prosperity and happiness of their citizens.

Panchayat Finances to Futures: A Blueprint for Community-Based Tourism in Colva and Curtorim

Dr. Surabhi Gore

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the financial health of the Colva and Curtorim village panchayats and explores their potential for community-based tourism. Using a mixed-method approach, the research draws on the Theory of Fiscal Federalism, Community-Based Tourism, and Resilience Theory to examine panchayat resources, stakeholder perspectives, and adaptive capacities. Colva's finances largely depend on beach-related tourism, which provides steady revenue but makes the village vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations, overcrowding, and environmental pressures. Curtorim's economy remains rooted in agriculture, offering stability, but is limited by weak infrastructure and inadequate revenue generation.

The study concludes that both panchayats must strengthen local revenue sources, improve fiscal discipline through transparent audits, and expand eco-friendly and culturally sensitive tourism. With proactive governance, community participation, and strategic planning, Colva and Curtorim can build resilience and position themselves as models of sustainable, community-driven tourism in Goa.

INTRODUCTION

Panchayat finances are crucial in decentralized governance and the development of rural areas (Oommen and Datta, 1995). Governed by the principles of the Panchayati Raj system established under the Constitution of India, the panchayats are primarily responsible for economic development and social justice within rural and semi-urban communities. The panchayats manage funds allocated towards various functions, from agriculture, development and infrastructure maintenance, education and public health. The financial management of a panchayat involves budgeting, expenditure, and auditing of funds sourced from various channels, including central and state government grants, local taxes, and revenues from various development programs (Sahasranaman, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-method approach to analyze the financial health of panchayats and explore stakeholder perspectives on potential tourism activities in the villages. The analysis draws on three critical theoretical frameworks: Theory of Fiscal Federalism, Community-Based Tourism, and Resilience Theory. The Theory of Fiscal Federalism examines allocating financial resources and responsibilities between different levels of government: central, state, and local (Musgrave, 1959), with specific attention to how resources are distributed to panchayats and their ability to generate and manage local finances (Singh, 2007). Community-based tourism theory provided a lens to evaluate tourism potential, focusing on tourism owned and managed by local communities in rural areas, aiming to provide broader community benefits (Okazaki, 2008). Resilience theory was applied to evaluate the capacity of village panchayats to adapt to financial, social, and environmental changes, emphasizing flexibility, community engagement, and sustainable resource management (Van Breda, 2001).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The Colva and Curtorim village panchayats represent two distinct but interconnected rural communities, each facing unique challenges and opportunities in their path toward sustainable development. With its thriving tourism sector, Colva holds immense economic growth potential, but faces pressing concerns such as environmental degradation, overcrowding, and overdependence on seasonal tourism. Curtorim is rich in agricultural heritage and can leverage it to diversify its economy. However, it continues to grapple with issues related to infrastructure and sustainable resource management.

The financial analysis of the Colva and Curtorim village panchayats reflects their current economic realities and future potential. Colva's financial health heavily depends on tourism, particularly beach-related activities, hotels, and restaurants. Tourism provides a steady revenue stream but exposes the village to seasonal fluctuations that threaten to disrupt its revenue flow. To ensure long-term financial sustainability, Colva must consider diversifying its income sources by encouraging local businesses, improving tax collection mechanisms, and tapping into sustainable tourism practices.

Curtorim has a more traditional economic structure, with agriculture playing a significant role in its financial landscape. While this offers some stability, the village's financial performance is hindered by poor infrastructure, limited development, and inadequate revenue generation from local sources. It is suggested that Curtorim invest in infrastructure, public services, eco-friendly tourism, and small-scale industries to earn non-tax revenue. Both villages should look to increase their tax collections by expanding local revenue-generating activities and ensuring greater fiscal discipline through transparent financial and social audits.

Economic development, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment will allow them to become model tourism villages, showing how community-based tourism can help the rural economy to prosper. The involvement of various stakeholders, from local village panchayats to state tourism bodies and private enterprises, highlights the importance of coordinated efforts in planning, infrastructure development, and marketing. Both villages need proactive governance, community participation, and strategic development. These villages can improve their governance and self-reliance by fostering competition among panchayats, encouraging citizen participation through initiatives like gram sabhas, and promoting sustainable practices in waste management and local businesses. Strengthening infrastructure, encouraging eco-friendly tourism, and maintaining local traditions will preserve these communities' cultural heritage and enhance their resilience to modern challenges.

There is an increasing need for Colva and Curtorim to prioritize eco-friendly and culturally sensitive tourism. Initiatives such as leveraging digital marketing, promoting local stories through digital storytelling, encouraging film shooting, and enhancing inter-village tourism will create unique experiences for visitors while preserving the essence of these villages. Local communities must be empowered and actively involved in tourism activities, creating a profitable model that preserves the region's cultural and environmental heritage. With the right combination of policy support, stakeholder collaboration, and community engagement, Colva and Curtorim have the potential to emerge as exemplary models of sustainable, community-driven tourism in Goa.

Allocation of Panchayat Finances for Sustainable Development Goals in Goa: A Study of Selected Village Panchayats in Ponda Taluka

Dr. Aditi Rane & Alex Philip

ABSTRACT

This research examines whether panchayats in Ponda Taluka have effectively utilized their finances to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It focuses on three key objectives: (1) assessing the financial status of seven selected panchayats, in terms of Own Source Revenue (OSR) and Devolved Revenue; (2) analyzing their expenditure patterns, specifically spending related to SDG achievement; and (3) proposing measures for more efficient financial management to support SDG implementation over the financial years 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23.

The findings reveal that the governments allocated no special funds to panchayats to achieve Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs). Panchayats expenditure often exceeded grants-in-aid. Moreover, panchayats find it difficult to collect taxes or impose new taxes due to the opposition from gram sabhas and the reluctance of panchayat members to find new ways to increase the source revenue of the panchayats. While the Central Government promotes local self-institutions to be financially autonomous, ground realities tend to differ. Hence, this study advances the argument that, alongside devolving functional responsibilities, both Central and State governments must ensure adequate and dedicated fund transfers to enable panchayats to pursue the SDGs effectively.

INTRODUCTION

United Nations SDGs 2030 were enacted on 1st January 2016. Being a signatory member, India wants to achieve these goals through grassroots-level interventions. Therefore, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, has adopted a thematic approach to SDGs to ensure local action for achieving the global Plan. The approach aims to localize SDGs in rural areas through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), by mapping 17 Sustainable Development Goals into nine themes, each encompassing many SDGs. Gram panchayats prepare the Gram Panchayat Development Plan

(GPDP) and synchronize it with SDGs. Planning, implementation, and monitoring of most of the functions related to SDGs are within the mandate of state and local governments. This minor research study has focused on whether panchayats have been successful in utilizing their finances judiciously in order to achieve SDGs.

Goa has 191 village panchayats across 12 talukas. According to the 2011 Census, Goa has a population of 14.59 lakhs, of which 7,30,923 is rural. Goa comprises two districts: North Goa and South Goa. The North Goa district comprises five talukas and 102 village panchayats. Sattari has 12, Bicholim has 18, Bardez has 33, Pernem has 20, and Tiswadi has 19 village panchayats. In the South Goa district, a total of 89 village panchayats is spread across seven Talukas; Ponda has 19, Mormugao has 10, Salcete has 30, Quepem has 11, Sanguem and Cancona have seven each, and Dharbandora has five village panchayats.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the financial situation of selected panchayats in Ponda Taluka (OSR and Devolved Revenue)
2. To analyze panchayat expenditures, specifically in relation to achieving the SDGs.
3. To suggest measures to utilize the panchayat finances on LSDGs efficiently.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study deals with the financial sustainability of the selected seven panchayats of Ponda Taluka, by assessing GPDP and analyzing panchayat finances over three years, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. It also highlights the challenges these panchayats face at the administrative and financial levels.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

We had to substitute the three panchayats previously identified for the study due to our inability to contact the Secretaries of two panchayats, namely V.P. of Cundaim and V.P. of Querim, and the apathy shown by the Panchayat Secretary of V.P. Tivrem-Orgao.

KEY FINDINGS

1. The bar graphs demonstrate that the grants-in-aid have increased across all panchayats in the year 2021-2022, but have simultaneously declined in the year 2022-2023.

2. The revenue received from own sources has increased across the years for four panchayats, namely Bandora, Queula, Curti-Khandepar, Betki-Khandola, with the exception of one panchayat, Veling-Priol-Cuncolim, from the year 2021-2022 to 2022-2023, where a decrease has been noticed. In the cases of Volvoi and Wadi-Talauli, OSR declined from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 and then increased in 2022-2023. Other panchayats were able to improve upon their OSR.
3. In five panchayats, Bandora, Volvoi, Betki-Khandola, Curti-Khandepar, and Wadi-Talauli, non-SDG-related expenditures have steadily increased over the years. The exception is Queula Panchayat, where non-SDG expenditure rose in 2021–22 compared to the previous year, but then declined in 2022–23. In the case of Veling-Priol Cuncolim, the expenditure incurred on other items (non-LSDGs) has increased in 2021-2022 and decreased in 2022-2023. These village panchayats are identified as financially stronger panchayats as they could afford to spend on non-LSDG items from their OSR. It is essential to note that XV Finance Commission grants will be exclusively spent on the identified LSDG theme.
4. In the case of Curti-Khandepar village panchayat, one of the financially stronger panchayats, the revenue received in the form of grants-in-aid has declined from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 and then to 2022-2023 as it does not receive any other grants except matching grants from the government. In the village panchayat of Veling- Priol-Cuncolim, a sharp drop in the revenue received in the form of grants-in-aid in the year 2022-2023 from the previous years, that is, 2020-2021, 2021-2022. Further, OSR is higher than the revenue received from grants-in-aid in 2022-2023.
5. The village panchayat of Curti-Khandepar incurred equal expenditure on the LSDGs and other (non-LSDGs) during the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. However, in 2022-2023, the expenditure on non-LSDGs has increased.
6. From the above observations, it can be concluded that financially stronger panchayats can afford to spend judiciously on the identified theme of LSDGs, whereas financially weaker panchayats struggle to provide basic amenities under the identified theme of LSDGs.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effectiveness of panchayats in Ponda Taluka in utilizing their finances to advance the localization of LSDGs over three financial years (2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23). The analysis revealed that panchayats largely do not receive special grants specifically for LSDG

implementation, and their expenditure frequently exceeds the grants-in-aid provided. While some panchayats were able to increase their OSR, many faced challenges in expanding revenue collection due to opposition from gram sabhas and reluctance among panchayat members to explore new revenue sources.

Financially stronger panchayats were observed to allocate funds more judiciously towards LSDGs, whereas weaker panchayats struggled to fund even basic LSDG-related activities. The study highlights a significant mismatch between the functional responsibilities assigned to panchayats and the financial resources actually available to them.

Based on these findings, the study recommends that for panchayats to play an effective role in achieving the SDGs, both the central and state governments must go beyond functional devolution and provide adequate, dedicated financial funds targeted specifically at LSDG implementation. Without such support, the goal of decentralized, sustainable development at the grassroots level remains difficult to realize.

Decoding Panchayat Finances: Patterns, Challenges and Prospects

Dr. Maria Fatima D'Souza, Rupali Vijay Sangodkar & Muktali Madanant Naik

ABSTRACT

This study examines the financial patterns, challenges, and prospects of panchayat finances in four selected panchayats of Salcete Taluka, Goa, representing both coastal and non-coastal areas. It focuses on grants from central and state governments, own revenue generation, fund utilization, and financial management practices. Data was collected using mixed methods, including exploratory interviews, structured questionnaires, and analysis of financial records. The study found inconsistencies in government grants. Key challenges identified include poor revenue generation strategies, inadequate use of technology, and lack of skilled staff. The research highlights best practices such as user fees, regular bookkeeping, and innovative local taxes. The broader aim of this study is to contribute toward sustainable and accountable local governance.

INTRODUCTION

Article 243 of the Constitution empowers state legislatures to authorize panchayats to levy taxes, duties, tolls, and fees, in addition to receiving grants-in-aid from the consolidated state fund. Further, it provides for establishing funds for crediting all money received on behalf of the panchayats and for withdrawing such money from those funds. Article 243 also states that the Governor shall appoint a State Finance Commission every 5 years to review the financial position of the panchayat. It is also responsible for making recommendations for the Governor.

The principles governing the distribution of the net proceeds from the state's duties, taxes, tolls, and fees define how resources are shared between the state government and panchayats. Most of the research on panchayat finances has been conducted in Indian states, like Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. However, the conditions prevailing in other states are different to smaller states like Goa. Goa has a long coastline, making it more suitable to study, as it has both coastal belt panchayats and midland panchayats. Hence, this study aims to address this.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study shed light on the financial patterns within panchayats, providing a clearer understanding of how resources are distributed and utilized at the grassroots level. By decoding panchayat finances the study reveals the extent to which panchayat can manage their own funds and generate revenue. These insights will promote financial independence and accountability.

SAMPLE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focused on a sample of four panchayats from Salcete Taluka in South Goa. Random sampling approach has been adopted to ensure adequate representation of two panchayats each from coastal and non-coastal panchayat category. Mixed methodology like quantitative data, case studies and comparative analysis was used to collect data.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the grants received from Central and State Government and own funds generated by the select panchayats in South Goa
2. To investigate the patterns, effectiveness and challenges in fund utilization by the panchayats.
3. To recommend practical strategies aimed at improving the financial health and governance effectiveness of panchayats.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The unit of study was four panchayats. The findings will be limited to the unit of study. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized.

Research Methodology and Design

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods in two stages and targeted a sample of 40 respondents:

First stage: An exploratory study was conducted to understand panchayat-specific issues of finance and utilisation. In-depth interviews with officials of four selected panchayats in Salcete Taluka were carried out using an open-ended questionnaire (*Appendix I*). Informal discussions with Secretaries, Sarpanchs, and Panch members. Informal discussions included two randomly selected Secretaries and two Sarpanchs.

Second stage: To ensure content validity, two draft questionnaires (*Questionnaire-2* and *Questionnaire-2A*) were evaluated by three experts in panchayat administration and academia, who rated each item on relevance, clarity, and simplicity. Incorporating feedback, the final versions were developed: *Questionnaire-2* (29 questions) for Secretaries and *Questionnaire-2A* (53 questions) for Sarpanchs and Panch members. Both were confirmed as content valid by the experts. Additionally, *Form-10* was collected from all four panchayats.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Government and own funds:

Inconsistency in government grants was observed in our study. Navelim exhibited extreme volatility while the panchayats also experienced declines after initial increases. Improvement in self-sufficiency was observed in most of the panchayats. Own funds contributed significantly to the panchayats' finances, especially from 2021-22 onwards. Betalbatim and Cavelossim showed notable growth in financial independence. Only the Navelim Panchayat showed fluctuations in the self-sufficiency ratio.

Expenditure patterns:

Administration and Public Works consistently received the highest allocation across panchayats. However, variability was observed in sectors like Planning & Development, where Navelim saw significant declines, while Betalbatim experienced fluctuations in priorities. Rural Sanitation and Sanitation & Public Health expenditures also showed varying trends, with some panchayats like Betalbatim witnessing substantial growth (1837.29% increase in 2023-24). All panchayats spend a nominal amount on Education and Culture.

Challenges in financial management:

Major issues included weak revenue generation, delayed grants, and inadequate financial planning tools, while corruption and political interference were less reported.

Best practices or successful strategies in managing its finances are:

1. One panchayat has implemented garbage user fees on each household and commercial premises.
2. Financial management practices/procedures are discussed in the gram sabha meetings.

3. Additional taxes, such as a No Objection Certificate for a beach wedding, are introduced.
4. Preparation of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan in one of the select panchayats.
5. Maintenance of cash book, receipt book, and expenditure book on a regular basis and compliance with audit norms.
6. Levying penalties/fines for delay in payment of taxes.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Revision in rates of taxes and other fee structures while monitoring delayed tax/fees.
2. Increasing panchayat's staff to streamline finances and to have a dedicated team to follow up on the fund utilization of developmental works.
3. Appointment of an accountant for a panchayat or a group of panchayats.
4. Effective Implementation of the 73rd Amendment to the Goa Panchayat.
5. Computerization of the procedures of the panchayats including digital payments systems.
6. Consultancy services or external support are needed to encourage panchayats to identify and implement alternative sources of revenue.
7. Establish independent financial monitoring committees at the panchayat level to ensure funds are used for their intended purposes.
8. Actively involving citizens in the decision-making process for local development projects.
9. All stakeholders should be involved in the preparation of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan.

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal both strengths and weaknesses in financial management across the panchayats. Betalbatim and Cavelossim showed improved self-sufficiency, but overall dependence on volatile government grants remains high. Navelim and Curtorim received smaller grants (₹60,000) compared to Betalbatim and Cavelossim (₹2.10 lakh), with no allocations in 2021–22 and 2023–24. Though utilization rates reached 100%, tied and untied funds were not clearly distinguished. Financial planning was reactive, shaped by available funds rather than community needs, with challenges in revenue generation, planning tools, and skilled personnel.

Assessing Panchayat Financing and Governance in Mining Areas: A Case Study Approach

Dr. Madanant Jana Naik & Nagraj Bhagwant Virnodkar

ABSTRACT

This study examines the financial mechanisms, governance structures, and challenges faced by mining-affected panchayats in Sanvordem and Kallem, South Goa. Focusing on a representative sample of elected panchayat members and local residents, the research examines how panchayats manage finances in the context of mining activities, their reliance on government grants, and the limited internal revenue generation. The study identifies key issues such as inconsistent fiscal transfers, inadequate digital adoption, and capacity gaps that deter effective financial management and transparency. Community perceptions, particularly of youth, women, and senior citizens, highlight a layered understanding of local socio-economic impacts, priorities, and aspirations. The research also uncovers positive practices, including engagement with Corporate Social Responsibility and innovative revenue generation strategies. Through this, the study recommends that there is a need for coordinated action by the government, industry, and communities to promote financial independence in mining-affected panchayats.

INTRODUCTION

In Goa, the panchayat system comprises two tiers: the gram panchayat at the village level and the zilla panchayat at the district level. The effectiveness of these bodies in delivering public services and fostering development largely hinges on their financial resources.

This project explores panchayats' financing mechanisms, challenges, and governance structures in mining areas, evaluates their effectiveness, and proposes models and policy recommendations for improving financial management and transparency.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the current financing mechanisms of panchayats in mining areas.
2. To identify the challenges faced by panchayats in managing finances in the context of mining activities.

3. To examine the effectiveness of existing governance structures in ensuring transparency and accountability in panchayat financing.
4. To explore innovative financing models and best practices from other regions or sectors that could be adapted to improve panchayat financing in mining areas.
5. To propose policy recommendations and strategies to enhance panchayat financing and governance in mining-affected regions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study offers valuable insights into how mining companies contribute to local governance through financial support and developmental initiatives. Examining the perspectives of diverse community groups provides a comprehensive understanding of the impact and effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study focuses on a representative sample of two mining-affected panchayats in South Goa: Sanvordem Village Panchayat and Kallem Village Panchayat, both recognized for their significant mining activities.

Sampling Design:

1. Panchayat Representatives: In-depth interviews were conducted with the elected members of the two panchayats.
2. Local Residents: A sample of 80 residents from each panchayat was selected, comprising diverse demographic groups such as senior citizens, youth, and women.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research is geographically limited to the panchayats of Sanvordem and Kallem in South Goa. While the findings provide deep insights into these specific cases, they may not be generalizable to other regions or panchayats. Additionally, self-reported data from interviews and focus groups may introduce subjectivity or bias.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Skill Development Programs: Establish training centers to equip youth and women with skills for diverse industries, reducing reliance on mining-related employment.

2. Sustainable Practices: Promote eco-friendly mining practices to minimize environmental damage and restore degraded ecosystems.
3. Healthcare Improvements: Invest in robust healthcare facilities to address the health challenges arising from mining activities, focusing on women and senior citizens.
4. Community Engagement: Involve local communities in decision-making processes related to mining operations to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed.
5. Alternative Livelihoods: Develop agriculture, tourism, and small-scale industries.
6. Environmental Restoration: Mandate mining companies to fund reforestation and water body rejuvenation projects to restore ecological balance.
7. Enhancing Community Participation: Involve community members in planning and implementing CSR activities to ensure they meet local needs and priorities.
8. Diversifying Income Sources: Explore alternative income generation strategies, such as promoting local industries and leveraging natural resources.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Recommendations for Enhanced Governance:

1. Special Power to Panchayat: The panchayat can be given special powers to settle land disputes. Special provisions should be made to relax land acquisition clauses to develop the village panchayat.
2. Increased Digital Adoption and Support: To improve transparency and accountability in panchayat financing, several policy interventions could be beneficial. Providing technical support and training to enable full adoption of PFMS and PRIA Soft across all panchayats.
3. Streamlined DMF project approvals: Simplify bureaucratic processes for DMF project submissions and fast-track essential development projects in mining-affected communities.
4. Enhanced Inter-agency Collaboration: Strengthen coordination between state and local authorities to ensure timely disbursement of funds and integrated planning.
5. Increased Local Capacity-building Initiatives: Implement targeted training for panchayat officials to improve skills like financial management, digital literacy, and project planning.
6. Strengthening Internal Revenue Generation: Improve property tax assessment and collection, and rationalize fee structures.
7. Enhancing Fiscal Transfers: Ensuring timely and adequate disbursement of grants, along with greater transparency in the allocation process, to reduce financial uncertainties.

8. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Promote PPPs for infrastructure and services by leveraging private resources and expertise in water, sanitation, healthcare, and education. In mining panchayats, PPPs can also support environmental restoration through technical know-how and funding.
9. **Leveraging Natural Resources:** Encourage mining panchayats to explore the potential of leveraging their natural resources beyond mining like promoting tourism, local handicrafts and cultural heritage to diversify the economy.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the complex challenges faced by mining-affected panchayats in Sanvordem and Kallem, particularly in the context of financial management and governance. The closure of mining activities has created a deep socio-economic crisis. Exploring tourism and addressing infrastructural challenges could provide a sustainable path forward, but it requires coordinated action by the government, local communities, and private enterprises.

Financially, panchayats remain heavily reliant on government grants, with limited internal revenue generation and irregular fiscal transfers. Nonetheless, the study highlights positive practices, such as community engagement in CSR activities and innovative revenue strategies. To address these challenges, it is essential to integrate policy reforms, and strengthen partnerships between government, industry, and civil society.

Panchayati Raj Finances (PRFs) in Goa: Case of Hinterland Village Panchayats (VPs) in Ponda Taluka

Dr. Geetanjali C. Achrekar

ABSTRACT

The study examines the financial position of seven hinterland village panchayats (VPs) in Ponda taluka, South Goa, focusing on revenue generation, expenditure, and constraints in financial management. Drawing on interviews with representatives, officials, and residents, along with budget and audited accounts, the analysis highlights a heavy dependence on government grants. Despite statutory taxation powers, most VPs display weak resource mobilization due to political reluctance, inefficient collection, and non-enforcement of arrears. Expenditure is concentrated on administration, sanitation, and public works, while developmental areas such as health, education, and social welfare remain neglected. Limited accounting capacity has led to inflated budgets, unutilized balances, and weak financial reporting. Villagers demand greater transparency and participation in fund allocation. The study recommends strengthening revenue mobilization, building financial management capacity, and institutionalizing accountability to reduce overreliance on grants and better address local needs.

INTRODUCTION

While government transfers constitute the largest share of panchayat finances, local resource mobilization remains critical for long-term sustainability. Local taxation not only enhances financial stability but also fosters accountability and citizen participation. The Goa Panchayati Raj Act (2000) provides village panchayats with powers to levy taxes such as property tax, land tax, education cess, and various fees and duties. However, in practice, intermediate and district panchayats exercise only limited taxation powers.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the financial position of hinterland village panchayats (VPs) in Ponda taluka, South Goa. It assesses their revenue generation, expenditure patterns, and the constraints they face in financial management and implementation of development schemes. Drawing on both stakeholder perspectives and financial data, the study aims to suggest strategies to strengthen the fiscal health and autonomy of these local institutions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the existing trends of panchayat finances, concerning their receipts and expenditure.
2. To analyze the deviation of actual receipts and expenditures from budgeted heads.
3. To assess the revenue mobilization effort of the PRIs in both tax and non-tax spheres.
4. To understand the deficiencies in the existing system of preparation of budgets and accounts.
5. To suggest measures to improve the financial administration of PRIs.

RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION, TOOLS AND METHODOLOGY

The present research project covers seven hinterland panchayats from Ponda taluka in South Goa District: Bandora, Durbhat, Madcaim, Querim, Queula, Volvoi and Wadi Talaulim.

The study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and discussions with Sarpanches, Panch members, Panchayat Secretaries, residents and BDO officials. Secondary data has been taken from the budget and audited statements of income and expenditure accounts. Descriptive statistics, such as graphs, percentages, and various fiscal ratios, have been used for data analysis.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study covers the financial analysis of the seven hinterland panchayats based on budget and audited income statements and information. The developmental progress is analyzed based on the perception of the villagers, who are the ultimate stakeholders of the Ponda Taluka.

LIMITATIONS

A detailed analysis was limited by the gross errors in the microdata provided in the budgeted and audited statements of accounts for the four-year period.

KEY FINDINGS

Panchayat finance faces several challenges, including:

1. **Overdependence on Grants:** Most hinterland VPs in Ponda rely heavily on Union and State government transfers, with limited own-source revenues. Queula VP is the only case where garbage tax collection provides some degree of financial independence.

2. **Weak Resource Mobilization:** Despite having powers under the Goa Panchayati Raj Act, VPs have been reluctant to levy or collect taxes.
3. **Restricted Financial Autonomy:** Scheme-specific grants and limited discretion over expenditures prevent VPs from aligning spending with local priorities.
4. **Expenditure Patterns and Capacity Gaps:** Most funds are spent on administration, sanitation, and public works, while key developmental areas like education, health, social welfare, and employment remain neglected.
5. **Transparency and Public Trust:** Villagers report being poorly informed about budgets and allocations, and demand greater transparency.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of fiscal ratios of the seven hinterland VPs in Ponda taluka, South Goa, it is evident that with the exception of Queula, most are heavily dependent on central and state grants. Own-source revenues from taxes and fees form only a small share of their receipts.

Expenditure patterns reveal that most funds are spent on administrative costs, public works, sanitation, public health, and garbage management, with minimal allocations to education, health, social welfare, and planning. Large discrepancies have also been noted in budget forms (10 and 11), reflecting weak accounting practices. Limited financial knowledge and skills among panchayat officials result in unrealistic budgets. Targeted training and exposure to successful models are urgently needed.

A key finding is the mismatch between VP spending priorities and villagers' expectations. While panchayats focus largely on infrastructure and administration, villagers express a greater need for drinking water, employment, health, sanitation, and community spaces. This gap has led to low trust and confidence in VPs as effective grassroots institutions.

To strengthen their role, hinterland VPs must pursue financial independence by expanding revenue sources, making garbage taxes mandatory, developing income-generating assets, and reducing reliance on external grants. Equally important are measures to enhance accountability and transparency. Such reforms, supported by institutions like GIPARD and the Directorate of Panchayats, can build stronger and financially autonomous VPs capable of addressing local needs effectively.

Panchayat Expenditure through a Lens of Gender-Responsive Budgeting: A Case Study of Panchayats from Tiswadi Taluka

Akbar Gaded

ABSTRACT

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a crucial tool for addressing gender disparities in socio-economic development. Despite constitutional provisions and targeted policies in India, inequities persist, particularly at the grassroots governance level. To address this concern, this study critically examines how panchayats allocate resources and prioritize gender equity in their financial planning.

The study highlights significant gaps in the implementation of GRB principles by analyzing three years of budgetary data (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24) from nine panchayats in Tiswadi Taluka, which include the village panchayat of Curca, Mercedes, Cumberjua, Carambolim, Chimbhel, Goltim Navelim, Chodan, St. Estevam, and Old Goa. This study proposes a Gender-Focused Budget Outlay Sample as a practical tool for panchayats to enhance their financial planning and decision-making processes. This framework is designed not only to ensure equitable allocation of funds to address gender disparities but also to evaluate the impact of budgets on different genders effectively. This approach fosters accountability and inclusivity, enabling local governance to address diverse community needs comprehensively. The key recommendations include enhancing awareness of GRB among panchayat members, introducing women-specific budget categories, and implementing systems for monitoring and evaluating gender-specific impacts.

Introduction

Gender disparities remain a recurring challenge in India's socio-economic landscape. Despite constitutional provisions and targeted policies, inequities persist, particularly at the level of grassroots governance. This study analyzes the budgeting practices of selected panchayats in Tiswadi Taluka through a gendered lens to understand the allocation of funds, budget priorities, the extent of GRB adoption, and its implications for community development.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to:

1. To critically examine the allocation and utilization of panchayat funds through a gendered lens.
2. To evaluate the priorities of panchayats while making financial decisions and resource allocation.
3. To identify challenges and opportunities for enhancing the panchayat's spending on GRB.
4. To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness of panchayat expenditure for women's empowerment.

Methodology

This research adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods. To evaluate how panchayat funds are allocated with respect to GRB, the study analyzed three years of budget data (2021–22, 2022–23, and 2023–24) from nine randomly selected village panchayats in Tiswadi Taluka. Feedback was gathered from the Sarpanch and Panchayat Secretary to understand the priorities, challenges, and opportunities. The data was then compiled and summarized to provide a comprehensive overview. Key sectors, including health, education, sanitation, and social welfare, were scrutinized to identify gendered impacts.

Key Findings of the Study

After an extensive analysis of the panchayat budget, the following challenges were identified:

1. **Budget Patterns:** Panchayats predominantly adhere to generic budget formats that lack specific provisions for women-focused initiatives.
2. **Sectoral Allocations:** Expenditure is skewed towards infrastructure and public works, with minimal investment in education, health, and social welfare, disproportionately affecting women.
3. **Awareness Gaps:** There is limited awareness regarding GRB among panchayat members, which hinders effective gender-sensitive planning.
4. **Lack of Gender-disaggregated data:** While panchayats claim to serve and support the women in the village, the absence of gender-disaggregated beneficiary data makes it nearly impossible to assess the gender impact of their budgets.
5. **Lack of Women-Specific Categories:** There is a significant oversight in panchayat budgets due to the absence of dedicated categories for women-specific funding. This lack of focus means that

the distinct needs and challenges faced by them in the community remain unaddressed, thereby perpetuating existing gender inequalities.

- 6. Dependence on State Funds:** Heavy reliance on state funding restricts panchayat autonomy, affecting timely and context-specific interventions.
- 7. Nominal Budget Increases:** Few panchayats prepare budgets merely as a formality, applying an arbitrary 5% increase across various categories each year without meaningful planning or consideration. This reflects a lack of seriousness in financial management at the panchayat level.
- 8. Budget Preparation Process:** The Secretary and Sarpanch primarily manage the current budget preparation process in panchayats with minimal or no involvement from a dedicated committee. This centralized approach often lacks the comprehensive input and diverse perspectives necessary for effective financial planning.
- 9. Gender Impact Evaluation:** There is a lack of mechanisms to evaluate the gendered impact of budgets, which limits accountability and equity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that panchayats in Tiswadi Taluka have not adopted GRB practices, resulting in underfunded women-specific initiatives and inequitable resource distribution. In response, the study proposes the following key recommendations:

- 1. Introduce Women-Specific Programs:** Panchayats should introduce women-specific programs targeting their unique needs, such as vocational training, physical, mental, and maternal health initiatives, and gender-sensitive education programs.
- 2. Evaluate Gender Impact:** Implement mechanisms to evaluate the gender impact of budgets and collect gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries.
- 3. Increase Allocations for Key Sectors:** To support gender equality and women's empowerment, panchayats should consider increasing allocations for Social Welfare, Education & Culture, Sanitation & Health, and Housing. These areas directly impact women's opportunities and quality of life.
- 4. Awareness and Training:** Increase awareness among panchayat members regarding GRB and provide training and support for budget preparation.
- 5. Dedicated Budget Committees:** Form dedicated committees for budget preparation to ensure a more inclusive and comprehensive budgeting process.

6. **Long-Term Planning:** Develop long-term plans for infrastructural investments and avoid nominal increases without proper planning.
7. **Need for Gender-focused Interventions Through Budgets:** A gender-focused sample budget is designed (attached and submitted as Annexure 1) to enable panchayats to distribute the resources fairly, identify gender gaps in key areas, and evaluate the gender impact of the budget.

Determents of Own Source Revenue (OSR) and Sustainable Development in Gram Panchayats of Goa

Dr. Pravin D. Sawant

ABSTRACT

With the 73rd Amendment Act in 1992 and the PESA Act in 1996, India has witnessed a paradigm shift towards the evolution of local governments. This has contributed to the institutionalization of the panchayats as a part of rural local government. Since its development in 1987, the state of Goa has taken up extensive efforts for institutionalizing Panchayati Raj Institutions in the state. This study examines the revenue structures of selected gram panchayats in North and South Goa, focusing on their **Own Sources of Revenue (OSR)** over a five-year period from 2019-20 to 2023-24. The analysis explores trends in OSR as well as the composition of individual revenue components to understand patterns of revenue mobilization. Based on this examination of financial performance, the study identifies challenges and points toward potential solutions for strengthening the fiscal capacity of gram panchayats.

INTRODUCTION

This study analyzes OSR in the selected gram panchayats of North Goa and South Goa districts. An analysis of the individual revenue components was conducted to understand the structure of revenue mobilization by the gram panchayats. Through this, the aim of the study is to identify areas in which the panchayats can strengthen their revenue generation and achieve greater financial autonomy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To study the present status of the finances of the gram panchayats
2. To study and record the mobilization process of own source revenues by select gram panchayats in Goa.
3. To study the revenue trend of select gram panchayats in Goa.
4. To know the dependency ratio of the panchayats towards revenue.
5. To compare and find out which categories of the district raised more revenue.
6. To examine the challenges and opportunities of OSR for gram panchayats.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study has adopted a convenience sampling method and has aimed to document one of the successful cases of OSR generation. This is based on both types of data, such as primary data and secondary data:

Primary Data:

A structured questionnaire with open-ended questions was adopted to carry out personal interviews with the major informants, and likewise, a group discussion with the Panch was carried out to access the required information.

Secondary Data:

1. Indian Constitution
2. Encyclopedia
3. Dictionary
4. Panchayat council documents
5. Survey reports of the Ministry of Panchayat,
6. Panchayat periodicals
7. Internet

The collected information was tabulated using SPSS software. Further analysis and interpretation will be done using various statistical techniques like percentages, mean, and any other suitable tools.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

1. The present study was conducted in select gram panchayats in Goa. This study is restricted to the role of panchayats in financial development concerning OSR.
2. The study is restricted to the role of panchayats in general financial development with respect to trends in revenue.
3. The study is limited to 5 years, i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24.
4. The study is based on the Annual Reports, Administrative Reports and Form 10 of the related gram panchayats, and it is subject to inherent limitations of the financial statements.
5. Some panchayats have not provided the information as asked by the researcher.

KEY FINDINGS

Government grants remain the leading source of revenue for gram panchayats, followed by tax revenues; other receipts like fees, sales, and charges contribute but are relatively minor. House tax, property tax, business/profession tax, tower rent, hall rent, building permit fees, and service charges constitute the main OSR.

Some panchayats have successfully increased revenue by using local resources such as ponds and markets, constructing shops, renting towers, and managing beach shacks. The following revenue trends and dependencies were observed:

1. Mayem: High volatility, strong recovery in tax revenue, but rising dependence on grants.
2. Dhargali: Steady tax growth, volatile non-tax revenue, fluctuating dependence on grants.
3. Saligao: Consecutive tax declines and significant reliance on grants.
4. Pilerne: Strong recovery in internal revenue, and declining dependency, indicating financial strength.
5. Warkhande-Nagzar: Extraordinary tax growth (188.24%) and reduced dependency.
6. Agarwada: Tax growth but rising dependence on grants.
7. Guirim: Strong tax growth and a shift from independence to reliance on grants.
8. Querim Sattari: Declining tax revenue but decreasing reliance on grants.
9. Betalhatim: Mixed tax performance but significant decline in dependency, increasing self-reliance.
10. Seraulim: Volatile tax revenue, but high early dependency reduced in later years.
11. Borim: Tax declines followed by a strong recovery, and reduced grant dependency.
12. Loliem: Fluctuating tax revenue and rising reliance on grants.
13. Colva: Inconsistent tax collection, sharp reduction in grant dependency by 2022-23.
14. Agonda: Highly volatile revenues and fluctuating dependency.
15. Navelim: Stable tax trends and fluctuating reliance on external support.
16. Kurti: Volatile tax trends and high dependency in 2020-21.
17. Nuvem: Tax decline but consistently low dependency, financially self-sufficient.
18. Curtorim: Mixed tax performance and high dependency in 2020-21.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Decrease interference from political parties and grant panchayats greater autonomy to raise revenues.
2. More than 60% of funds are from the state and central governments, and the balance is through local levels. Thus, there is a need to boost their own revenue resources.
3. For the empowerment of panchayats, it is necessary to enhance their OSR. The tax structure of panchayats should be reformulated, and the taxation domain of the gram panchayats should be expanded.
4. Gram panchayats should be allowed to borrow funds from banks and other financial institutions.
5. Gram panchayats in Goa should consider a special household vehicle and environmental tax, making a levy compulsory on a third vehicle owned by a household.
6. When any person cuts a tree, the panchayat should generate revenue by charging fees for the deforestation.
7. Panchayat may levy the pilgrimage tax and cable television tax.
8. The panchayats should charge seigniorage fees on the stone crusher, sand acquirer, and mining quarries.

CONCLUSION

The village gram panchayats should be granted greater financial freedom in their spending. At present, government grants have strict guidelines, leaving them little autonomy over how funds are used.

Panchayats often prepare ambitious tax collection demands but fall short in actual collection, which leads to imbalances in expenditure. Several reasons for poor tax collection emerged: inefficiency of bill collectors and absence of digital payment options such as Google Pay or BHIM, among others.

Public reluctance also plays a role. Citizens often see amenities as the sole responsibility of the government and panchayats. Weak cooperation from elected members in enforcing revised taxes and the shortage of trained accounts staff further aggravate the problem.

There is thus a genuine need to strengthen their financial position. Central and state governments must provide adequate developmental grants to enable the efficient implementation of rural development programs.

Bridging the Gap: Connecting Panchayat Finances with Community Needs; A Study of Selective Village Panchayats in Goa

Danica Menezes & Tanvi Kurtiker

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the financial operations of five village panchayats in North Goa: Assagao, Casarvanem, Chandel, Hassapur, and Alorna, with a focus on how budget allocations align with community needs. Based on survey data and secondary government sources, the findings show heavy dependence on government grants, limited local revenue generation, weak financial management, and minimal community involvement in budgeting. Key services such as sanitation, waste management, and electricity were identified as priorities, but often underfunded. The study recommends strengthening local taxation, building financial capacity, and encouraging participatory and transparent decision-making. Closer alignment of panchayat finances with community needs can enhance accountability, reduce resource wastage, and support equitable rural development.

INTRODUCTION

Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) are fundamental to rural governance in India, playing a crucial role in local development and service delivery. A significant challenge faced by PRIs is the mismatch between available financial resources and the actual needs of the community. This study aims to examine how village panchayats in Goa allocate their budgets, identify the key constraints they encounter, and propose strategies to enhance the effectiveness of financial planning and resource utilization.

METHODOLOGY

Primary data was collected through a field survey of 220 households using non-probability (convenience) sampling. A structured questionnaire with an interview method was used. The surveyed panchayats were Assagao, Casarvanem, Chandel, Hassapur, and Alorna. Secondary data was drawn from government portals and other websites. The primary data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and visualization to provide a comprehensive summary and key insights into the effectiveness of panchayat allocations, supporting data-driven policy recommendations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Analyze the current state of panchayat finances in terms of sources, expenditure and budget allocation.
2. Assess the level of alignment between panchayat finances and community needs.
3. Identify challenges and opportunities related to financing specific community needs.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is confined to 5 villages in North Goa, i.e. Assagao, Casarvanem, Chandel, Hassapur and Alorna.
2. The study is limited to 220 respondents from the select villages.
3. Time constraints for considering a larger sample size.

KEY FINDINGS

Some of the major issues identified are:

1. Limited Revenue Generation: Heavy reliance on government grants, with low local tax collection.
2. Bureaucratic and Political Constraints: Delays in fund disbursement, political influence in financial decisions, and dominance of certain community groups.
3. Weak Financial Management and Planning: A lack of expertise in budgeting and project implementation, which leads to the underutilization or misallocation of funds.
4. Limited Community Participation: Budgeting decisions often exclude direct community input.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhancing Local Revenue Generation: Strengthening local taxation mechanisms and exploring alternative revenue sources.
2. Capacity Building: Training panchayat members in financial management, planning, and resource mobilization.
3. Participatory Budgeting: Encouraging greater community involvement in financial decision-making.
4. Improved Transparency and Accountability: Strengthening monitoring mechanisms to reduce corruption.
5. Efficient Fund Utilization: Ensuring timely allocation and utilization of funds.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Understanding the Financial Operations of Panchayats

This study analyzes how panchayats manage and allocate resources, highlighting strengths, challenges, and gaps in financial practices. Such insights are essential for enhancing accountability, reducing wastage and corruption, and improving governance at the local level.

Importance of Aligning Panchayat Finances with Community Needs

The alignment of panchayat finances with community needs is essential for the sustainable development of rural areas. When financial resources are directed towards areas that the community prioritizes, it not only enhances the relevance and impact of development projects but also fosters greater community involvement and satisfaction. This alignment ensures that the investments made are pertinent to the actual requirements of the people, which can significantly improve the standard of living and economic conditions in rural regions.

Relevance to Policymakers, Local Governments, and the Community

- 1. For Policymakers:** The findings can inform policy adjustments and reforms needed to enhance the efficacy of local governance.
- 2. For Local Government:** It provides a framework for assessing their financial management practices against community needs, helping them identify areas where they can enhance their budgeting, planning, and execution processes.
- 3. For the Community:** By highlighting the extent to which panchayats' finances align with their needs, the research empowers residents of rural areas to demand more accountability and better performance from their elected representatives.

CONCLUSION

Major revenue sources for the panchayats are grants from the government, fees, taxes and non-tax revenue. Other sources include extraordinary receipts like income taxes and labor cess. A key finding is the mismatch between financial allocations and community priorities. Services such as infrastructure, sanitation, waste management, drinking water, education, and electricity consistently received high importance ratings from respondents, but were often underfunded. This gap demonstrates the challenges of inadequate financial planning, weak local resource mobilization, and limited community participation in budgetary decisions.

Addressing these issues requires strengthening local revenue mechanisms, building financial management capacity, and fostering more participatory and transparent decision-making. Aligning panchayat finances more closely with community needs will improve service delivery and enhance accountability, reduce resource wastage, and contribute to more equitable rural development.

Panchayat Finances and Status of Own Revenue: A Study of Panchayats Located in the Coastal Belt of Goa

Dr. Naresh G. Shirodkar

ABSTRACT

This study examines the finances of four coastal panchayats in Goa, Mandrem, Calangute, Candolim, and Cana Benaulim, drawing on audited income and expenditure statements from 2019-20 to 2023-24. The focus is on revenue generation, with particular attention to the share of own-source income. The analysis shows significant variation across the panchayats. Calangute consistently records the highest revenue, largely through taxes, while Mandrem and Benaulim earn far less and remain more dependent on non-tax income. Candolim occupies an intermediate position but shows similar patterns of reliance. Government grants, once a substantial component, have declined in recent years, making own-source revenue the dominant contributor across all four panchayats. Expenditure patterns also vary, with Calangute and Candolim incurring far higher outlays than the others. The study highlights the need for better revenue management, staff training, and stricter regulation of unregistered or illegal activities to reduce leakages and strengthen accountability.

INTRODUCTION

This study reviews the finances of select coastal panchayats in Goa, with a focus on revenue generation and the status of their own sources of income. It relies primarily on secondary data drawn from audited income and expenditure statements of four panchayats, Mandrem, Calangute, Candolim (North Goa), and Cana Benaulim (South Goa), for the period 2019-20 to 2023-24. All four are classified as Group A panchayats, each with 11 wards.

Findings reveal notable variation in revenue generation. In 2023-24, Calangute recorded the highest revenue at Rs. 18.35 crores, followed by Candolim at Rs. 11.51 crores, while Mandrem and Benaulim reported Rs. 2.18 crores and Rs. 2.17 crores respectively. Calangute also incurred the highest expenditure. In terms of composition, non-tax revenue dominates in Mandrem, Candolim, and Benaulim, whereas Calangute derives 62% of its revenue from taxes. Government grants have declined across all four panchayats, while reliance on own-source revenues has grown, accounting

for 88% in Mandrem, 96% in Calangute and Candolim, and 89% in Benaulim in 2023-24.

The study highlights the need for training panchayat staff in revenue generation and leak detection, as well as stricter supervision of illegal construction to expand the tax base.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the growth and composition of revenue and expenditure of the select panchayats during the last five years (2019-20 to 2023-24)
2. To analyze the position of their own sources of revenue of the select panchayats during the last five years.
3. To suggest measures to improve the finances of panchayats with reference to revenue generation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data source: The study is mainly based on secondary data. The necessary data on the audited income and expenditure statement (Form 10) from 2019-20 to 2023-24 is collected from the selected panchayats. Also, necessary data is collected from the website of the Directorate of Panchayats and the census.

Selection of Panchayats/ Sample: It is decided to select 4 village panchayats, located in the coastal belt of Goa, classified in group A, having 11 wards. viz. three from North Goa District and one from South Goa District, i.e. the village panchayat of Calangute, Mandrem, Candolim and Cana Benaulim. These four panchayats are chosen because there have been a lot of commercial activities and an inflow of tourists in these villages.

LIMITATIONS

1. The study focuses on 4 panchayats located in the coastal belt of Goa.
2. The study focuses on revenue aspects of the panchayats, i.e. particularly their own source of revenue.
3. In certain cases, the percentage calculated is less than 1%; hence, in the present study, it is rounded to 1%. Also, wherever the value is negligible, it is shown as zero.
4. In some cases, the necessary data could not be obtained from the panchayats as the concerned local bodies have not done the audit of their accounts.

SIGNIFICANCE

The study undertaken on the panchayat finances and status of own revenue of select panchayats located in the coastal belt of Goa will help the government, policy makers and rural local bodies to understand the financial position and the status of own revenue of the select panchayats in the state. Accordingly, the stakeholders/ policy makers can take necessary steps or decisions to make the rural local bodies financially independent.

KEY FINDINGS

1. The financial analysis of four coastal village panchayats in Goa, Mandrem, Benaulim, Candolim, and Calangute, reveals the following:
2. For Mandrem, revenue rose from Rs. 89.67 lakhs in 2019–20 to Rs. 2.18 crores in 2023–24. Expenditure grew steadily until 2022–23 but fell by 19 percent in 2023–24. Except for 2022–23, Mandrem has consistently shown a surplus. Grants declined from Rs. 38.95 lakhs to Rs. 25.77 lakhs, while taxes, fees, and extraordinary receipts increased markedly, the latter from Rs. 24.46 lakhs to Rs. 80.53 lakhs.
3. Benaulim saw revenue grow to Rs. 2.32 crores in 2021–22 before declining thereafter. Expenditure fluctuated but remained below revenue, producing consistent surpluses. While income from taxes, fees, and extraordinary receipts increased, government grants declined in the later years. Within own revenue, taxes and fees grew in absolute terms but showed fluctuating shares.
4. In Candolim, revenue rose from Rs. 5.03 crores in 2019–20 to Rs. 11.51 crores in 2023–24, with the steepest growth in 2022–23. Expenditure grew from Rs. 4.84 crores to Rs. 15.10 crores, leading to a deficit of Rs. 3.59 crores in 2023–24. While tax revenue increased to Rs. 3.88 crores, its share declined from 45 to 35 percent. Non-tax revenue rose substantially, and extraordinary receipts grew from 9 to 39 percent of total revenue.
5. Calangute recorded the highest revenues, rising from Rs. 8.67 crores to Rs. 18.35 crores by 2023–24. Expenditure increased to Rs. 13.95 crores, but after several years of deficit, Calangute reported a surplus of Rs. 4.39 crores in 2023–24. Tax income grew from Rs. 6.65 crores to Rs. 11.43 crores, while fees rose sharply from Rs. 39.23 lakhs to Rs. 4.21 crores. Non-tax revenue expanded to comprise 62 percent of revenue in 2023–24.

Comparative analysis shows Calangute as the largest revenue earner, followed by Candolim, Benaulim, and Mandrem. Mandrem and Benaulim operate with relatively low expenditures, whereas Candolim and Calangute spend significantly more. Own revenue now dominates across all panchayats, comprising 88-96 percent of total receipts by 2023-24. Mandrem, Candolim, and Benaulim rely more heavily on non-tax revenue, while Calangute is distinguished by its stronger tax base.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Train panchayat staff and members in revenue generation, leakage detection, and financial management.
2. Regulate unregistered economic activities, illegal constructions, and renovations through supervision.
3. Enforce penalties on house tax defaulters and address issues linked to non-Goan property owners.
4. Strictly regulate tourist indiscipline while using fines and licenses to boost panchayat revenue.

CONCLUSION

Panchayat finances mirror the income and expenditure patterns of any organization. When rural local bodies have access to their own funds, they enjoy greater autonomy in addressing local needs; without such resources, they remain dependent on government support.

In the present study, it is observed that the highest income through its own source of revenue is received by the village panchayat of Calangute. It is also observed that the village panchayat of Calangute generates huge revenue from taxes, but in the case of the other three panchayats, tax revenue is found to be comparatively lower.

Evaluating Autonomy and Citizen Engagement in Panchayat vs. Municipality: Functions, Finance, and Perspectives

Dr. Nikshep Budihal

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the autonomy and citizen engagement of local governance institutions in Goa by comparing Cuncolim Municipality and Dramapur Panchayat. The analysis focuses on the functions, financial capacity, and participatory mechanisms of these bodies. Using a mixed-method approach, the research combines surveys, interviews, and secondary sources to assess governance practices, financial management, and service delivery. The findings reveal limited fiscal autonomy in both institutions, with a heavy dependence on government grants and constraints in budgetary flexibility. Respondents in both areas emphasized the need for greater financial decentralization, more inclusive participatory structures, and improved transparency. The study concludes that while constitutional and legislative provisions have provided a foundation for local self-government, significant reforms in financial devolution, institutional capacity, and citizen participation are essential to enhance autonomy and strengthen grassroots democracy in the state.

INTRODUCTION

Panchayats' revenue generation has been remarkably poor, leading to a heavy reliance on financial assistance from higher tiers of government. This dependence makes them executors of the directives of higher authorities rather than autonomous entities performing their designated functions. Despite constitutional provisions and policy initiatives, challenges persist in ensuring robust financial management at the local level. Addressing these challenges necessitates concerted efforts by all stakeholders, encompassing legislative reforms, capacity-building measures, and enhanced fiscal devolution.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments of 1992 gave panchayats and municipalities constitutional status, empowering them to play a central role in rural and urban development. According to the 2011 Census, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are pivotal in managing rural

governance. Various scholars highlight the importance of decentralization in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) and overcoming challenges such as poverty, infrastructure deficits, and gender inequality.

Financial devolution is another significant area of concern, as indicated by the Fifteenth Finance Commission's recommendations, which focus on strengthening the financial capacity of local bodies for better program implementation. The evolving role of municipalities in urban development is also critical, as urban local bodies manage diverse sectors, from infrastructure to environmental sustainability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the perceived level of autonomy among stakeholders within the panchayat and municipality.
2. To analyze the effectiveness of citizen engagement mechanisms.
3. To examine stakeholders' perceptions regarding the financial management.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE DESIGN

The study focuses on Cuncolim Municipality and Dramapur Panchayat in Salcete Taluka. Cuncolim is noted for its role in Goa's liberation, while Dramapur's proximity to Margao and Navelim makes it a relevant case of a developing village. 96 respondents were selected from each area. A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining surveys and interviews with proportionate random sampling, alongside secondary sources such as literature and government reports.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It focuses on Cuncolim Municipality and Dramapur Panchayat, limiting the applicability of its findings to other areas. The sample size, though statistically valid, may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives, and the time-bound data may not reflect changes over time. The reliance on secondary sources could introduce outdated or incomplete information, while the mixed-method approach may lead to inconsistencies in integrating qualitative and quantitative data. Additionally, the study is based on respondents' opinions, which may involve human error or bias, affecting the accuracy of the findings.

KEY FINDINGS

Governance

1. Meetings: Cuncolim holds weekly (40%), monthly (30%), quarterly (20%), or ad-hoc (10%) meetings; Dramapur holds monthly (50%) or ad-hoc (30%).
2. Community Suggestions: Considered consistently by 50%, inconsistently by 30%, and rarely by 20% in both areas.
3. Autonomy: 40% feel autonomous, 40% restricted, and 20% undecided.
4. Transparency: 60% report challenges; 40% see it as adequate.

Financial

1. Fund Control: Cuncolim - 40% partial, 60% none. Dramapur - 20% full, 40% partial, 40% none.
2. Sources: Local taxes (40%), government grants (60%).
3. Sufficiency: 40% sufficient, 60% inadequate.
4. Budget Restrictions: 60% note constraints, 40% fewer restrictions.

Engagement

1. Citizen Participation: Frequent (40%), occasional (40%), rare (20%).
2. Feedback: Available in 60%, absent in 40%.
3. Marginalized Groups: Cuncolim - 60% included, 40% limited; Dramapur - 50% included, 50% limited.
4. Grievances: 60% partially functional, 40% inadequate.

Service Delivery

1. Performance: Dramapur - 20% very well, 40% well, 40% average. Cuncolim - 10% very well, 50% well, 40% average.
2. Resource Constraints: Reported by 70%.
3. Satisfaction: 50% very satisfied, 30% moderately, and 20% dissatisfied.

Challenges

1. Key Issues: Financial (60%), staff shortages (50%), delays (40%), low participation (30%).
2. Autonomy: 70% want more and 30% find the current level sufficient.
3. Engagement: 80% want improvement and 20% find it adequate.

Perception and Satisfaction with Services

1. Budget allocation satisfaction is higher in Cuncolim (60% satisfied, 20% very satisfied) than in Dramapur (40% satisfied, 10% very satisfied).

2. Satisfaction with basic services is higher in Cuncolim (75%) than in Dramapur (65%).
3. Response times are quicker in Cuncolim (70% satisfied), while Dramapur is slower (60% somewhat quick/slow).
4. Infrastructure improvements are more widely noted in Cuncolim (65%) than in Dramapur (55%).

SUGGESTIONS

1. Decentralize financial authority by giving panchayats greater control over local revenue, while allowing flexibility in reallocating unused funds.
2. Ensure regular monthly meetings with published agendas, along with training workshops on governance, finance, and communication.
3. Strengthen financial resources by developing local revenue sources, securing higher government grants, and partnering with NGOs and private entities.
4. Improve citizen engagement through awareness campaigns, digital or physical feedback systems, and focus groups to include marginalized communities.
5. Enhance service delivery by setting clear performance benchmarks, auditing resource needs, and using centralized platforms to track complaints and responses.
6. Overcome operational gaps by mobilizing community volunteers and conducting bi-annual needs assessments to guide resource distribution.

CONCLUSION

The findings from Cuncolim and Dramapur demonstrate the need for significant improvements in local governance structures to ensure effective service delivery and community engagement. Both panchayat and municipality face challenges in achieving full autonomy in decision-making, with a clear demand from members for greater control and transparency. While resources remain limited and funding is often insufficient, the reliance on government grants and local taxes has constrained the ability to meet community needs. This impacts the quality of services and hinders the panchayats' capacity to address local issues effectively.

A critical aspect of these challenges is citizen participation, which remains moderate, with limited involvement of marginalized groups and weak feedback mechanisms that leave many residents disconnected from governance. Strengthening inclusivity and feedback is essential for building trust.

Service delivery is generally satisfactory but hampered by resource constraints. Cuncolim performs slightly better in response times and infrastructure, yet both areas require better resource management, transparency, and capacity.

Overall, increasing autonomy, deepening citizen engagement, and improving resource use are critical for strengthening local governance in Goa and creating a more inclusive, transparent, and responsive system.





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