

Trial and Trumpets of the Rural Panchayat



Home Science

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ABSTRACT

India will be rich if the villages of India are rich. Panchayat Raj has been said to embrace a totality of ideas such as a. local self government, and agency of government, a development mechanism and so on. Panchayati Raj leadership can play an important role in the interaction between tradition and modernity and also as an educative role in rural development. The commitment, dedication and involvement of elected leaders can play a vital role in educating the rural mass because the majority of the people are illiterate and are ignorant about their welfare should be given greater power

Leadership has a pivotal role in the working of Panchayati Raj institutions. They are the 'eyes' and 'ears' of the rural people. It is the uppermost responsibility of every leader to work for the welfare of the people. Leadership should have the capacity to influence people to cooperate towards common end and also to create conditions of collective response "Leadership play an important role in shaping the socio-economic and political structure of any society". (Varma et al,2006).

Hence the present study was undertaken with the objective of assessing the work carried out by the panchayat president. The data was carried out by the panchayat president. The data was collected through personal visit and field study. The investigator established the rapport at odanthurai panchayat and approached president and conducted interview. The evidence obtained from panchayat records, boards displayed at work sites. A case study method was adopted. The investigator visited odanthurai panchayats from 1999 till date.

The findings are as follows

Information about President

Mr.R.Shanmugam served as the president of Odanthurai village panchayat from 1996- 2006.He studied upto 8th standard and lives in a tiled house and is an agriculturist. His father was served as president for same panchayat for three decade. That made him to think to improve the condition of the panchayat. Hence, he entered into panchayat and politics.

Details about Odanthurai panchayat

Odanthurai panchayat is functioning under Karamadi Block of Coimbatore district in Tamilnadu, India. Odanthurai panchayat is nearer to the town called Mettupalayam and 40 kilometers from Coimbatore city.The panchayat is having rich sources of perennial river called bhavani. Two decades ago the village panchayat was most backward. There were no basic amenities such as safe drinking water, sanitary toilets, roads and houses for the village people. The panchayat has 245 schedule caste households, 210 schedule tribe's households and 887 backward caste households.

The schedule Tribe families were bonded labourers and do not have a land to build their huts. The SC families lived in huts, the primary school functioned in a single room building without any basic facilities. The village people used to fetch drinking water from river Bhavani. The panchayat was established in 1961 and spread over 9 hamlets such as Gandhi nagar, kallarpudur, thooripalam, vinobaji nagar, alamarathur, oomapalayam,uppupalam, naripallam and T.A.S nagar with total area of 1199.95 hectares. There are nine members in the village Panchayat council. Among nine, six are male and three are female. Among 9 members, 2 ward members are from the schedule tribe Irula community, two are schedule caste.

TABLE I PROFILE OF THE ODANTHURAI PANCHAYAT

Population	SC	ST	BC
Male	626	455	2709
Female	312	438	2681
Area of the Panchayat 1199.95hecters.			
Provision of water			
Hand pumps	2		
Power pump	9	submersible	

Over head tank	9
Roads	14 kms
Schools	
Panchayat Union Elementary schools	2
Panchayat union Middle School	1
Private School	1
International Residential School	1
Anganwadi	3
Street lights	
Tube lights	310
Sodium lights	80
Solar lights	70
Post office	1
Sanitary complex	4
Multipurpose health centre	2

Work carried out from 2000 – 2007

The table II shows the work carried out by the president under various schemes

TABLE II Work carried in THE PANCHAYAT

Name of scheme	Facilities	Number	Year	Expenditure
Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission	Drinking water	9	2000	48 lakhs
Indira Awas Yojana / Swarna Jayathi Gram Sarojhar Yojana	Group house	119	2000-01	40,46,000/-
		155	2003-04	45,90,000/-
		51	2005-06	17,34,000/-
		60	2007-08	19,44,000/-
		60	2008-09	19,44,000/-
	Kutch house	27	2009-10	9,35,000/-
		10	2001-02	98,450/-
		15	2002-03	98,680/-
		60	2003-04	6,89,000/-
		10	2003-04	1,49,865/-

Swarna Jayathi Gram Sarojhar Yojana Panchayat General Fund Union Fund	School Building School compound wall Play ground School kitchen shed	1	2001-02 2003-04 2003-04 2001-02 2002-03 2003-04	2,71,568/- 2,82,479/- 2,06,824/- 99,117/- 50,000/- 50,000/-
Panchayat General fund	Concrete road		2001-02 2003-04	5,07,200/- 7,24,000/-
Blue Metal Tar Road Burial ground	"		2001-02	2,78,708/-
Innovative scheme	BT Road		2003-04	11,53,000/-
Panchayat General fund	Calvert		2002-03	18,727/-
Total Sanitation Scheme Swarna Jayathi Gram Ruzgar Yojana Indira Awas Yojana Innovative scheme	Toilets Toilets Toilets Toilets	200 300 35 154	2002-03 2003-04 2001-04 2003-04	1,00,000/- 6,00,000/- 35,000 10,000
Self Help Group Women Complex Swarna Jayanthi Gram Ruzgar Yojana	Multipurpose building	1	2002-03	99,582/-
Innovative Scheme Swarna Jayanthi Gram Ruzgar Yojana, Self Help Group Members	Solar street light Milch animal Calf	65 36 24	2003-04 2003-04 2006-07	6,50,000/- 3,60,000/- 60,000/-

Source: Records from Odanthurai Panchayat Union Office.

The table indicated that under IAY / SGSY 600 houses were constructed for the benefits of the people living below the poverty line in the panchayat. The safe drinking water supplied to all the villages in the panchayat through Rajiv Gandhi national drinking water mission, school building, compound wall, play ground and school kitchen shed were built from the panchayat general fund and SGSY scheme from 2001 to 2004. The infrastructure such as concrete road and BT road was laid for the panchayat. The sanitation was developed, maintained by the construction of 890 toilets with the financial support from various scheme such as SGSY, IAY, Innovative and total sanitation scheme. In order to empower the SHG Women Rs. 99,582/ worth of multipurpose complex was constructed. The central and state government schemes were properly utilized for the upliftment of the panchayat, and also indicated that the president has taken enormous efforts and proved his commendable leadership.

Technology for energy conservation

Apart from various efforts taken by the president it was encouraging to note that he introduced technology by means of which he was able not only conserve the electricity but also he was

able to generate revenue for the panchayat and presented in the table

TABLE III TECHNOLOGY ADOPTED FOR CONSERVATION OF ELECTRICITY

Name of the Technology	Year	Amount	Contribution
Biomass gassifier	2003-04	3,00,000-	Innovation Scheme
Wind mill	2006	1.55 crore	Rs 14 lakh panchayat + 1.15 crore bank loan
Solar light	2003	8lakh	Innovative scheme
Night soil linked community cooking biogas plant	2003	6 lakh	Innovative scheme

Source: Data Collected from President by Personal visit

The table shows that natural resources has been utilized in efficient manner by installation of solar light, wind energy, biomass gassifier and night soil linked community cooking bio gas plant. The electricity bill has been reduced and also generated revenue for the panchayat at present Only through wind mill, the panchayat receive Rs. 20 lakh as income per annum

INCOME GENERATION ACTIVITY FOR SELF HELP GROUP WOMEN, Odanthurai Package Drinking Water Federation

The Odanthurai Package drinking water Federation for Self Help Group at Oomapalayam under society Registration Act 29/2006 on 4th September, 2006, with 48 women from four Self Help Groups. The brand name of water package is called SUG-AM. They have received Rs.20/Lakhs as a loan from Corporation Bank to install the unit. Under the Puthuvazhvu Thittam a 15 days training for operating the machine, quality control, washing, filling and loading were taught to SHG women. At present the unit is functioning 8 hours per day, due to shortage of cans and other equipments. Further the SHG women approached the bank for a loan of Rs.10 lakhs for additional cans and for procuring vehicle and vibrating machine.

TABLE IV AWARD RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT

Name of the Award	Year
State Government Award for best panchayat	1999
Government of India, New Delhi	2000
Gram Seva Grantham	2001
Ultramar Gandhi Award	2001
Jamb van Award	2002
Nirmal Gram Puraskar Award	2006

Source: Interviewed with President

The president Mr.R. Shanmugam received various awards for his tremendous effort.

During the year 2010 the panchayat generated Rs 7.25 lakh as a income . Now the panchayat is hutless village, provided safe drinking water, generating income through Wind mill and Odanthurai drinking water federation package etc. Every month particularly on Wednesday panchayat presidents from various districts are visiting Odanthurai Panchayat to witness the enormous efforts taken by the president.

Conclusion

Social mobilization is the cornerstone of participatory approaches in rural development and poverty alleviation programme. It is a powerful instrument in decentralization policies and programmes aimed at strengthening human and institutional resources development at local level. Social mobilization strengthens participation of the rural poor in local decision making, improves their access to social and production services

and efficiency in the use of locally available financial resources and enhances opportunities for asset building by the poorest of the poor (Sharma,2006)

From this we may conclude that the panchayat president is a Beacon light for Rural Areas, Mr. Shanmugam is a great leader and a role model and changed the environment. Well administered panchayats could be projected as models for emulation through media. No doubt devolution of powers brings changes in the socio-economic life of the people in the rural areas. (Palanithurai,G,2005)

This is what Mr. Shanmugam has achieved in Odanthurai Panchayat. He was able to mobilize the people, get them to work and improve their own conditions and standard of living and make Odanthurai a better place to live.

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