



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Public Administration**

**ROLE OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF PUNJAB POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD TO CONTROL AIR POLLUTION**

**KEY WORDS:** Air Pollution, PPCB, Regional offices of PPCB

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**ABSTRACT**

The Environmental Pollution has become one the chief threats to the survival of mankind. India faces severe environmental deterioration. The rapid growth of industrialization has lead to lots of environmental issues. The major environmental concern of India is air pollution which is usually associated with industrial growth and urbanization is filling the air with poisonous gases, smoke and smog. Air pollution is not only dangerous for human being and animal's life but also seriously affects vegetation on earth. Various laws have been implemented by the Government of India from time to time to control and prevention of pollution and Pollution Control Boards play the significant role at centre, state and district level to control pollution but there are many factors which adversely affect functioning of these boards. The objective of the study to examined the role of regional offices of Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB).

**INTRODUCTION**

The Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) was constituted as the 'Punjab State Board for the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution' by the Government of Punjab on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1975, under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. After enactment of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 the name of the board was changed to Punjab Pollution Control Board. The PPCB implements various environmental legislations through its 16 Regional offices. It is working under administrative control of Department of Science, Technology & Environment, Government of Punjab headed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab being Minister Incharge. The Punjab Pollution Control Board has been entrusted the task of implementation of environmental laws in the state of Punjab. The main objectives of board are:

- (i) Control pollution at the source with due regard to techno-economic feasibility for liquid effluents as well as gaseous emission.
- (ii) Ensure that natural water not polluted by discharge of untreated city sewage.

The Punjab Pollution Control Board has its head office in Patiala and Board has set up 7 zonal and 16 regional offices. The head of the Board is chairman who is implemented the decision and policies in the State. The Administrative, Financial planning and Legal affairs are looked into by the member Secretary under the advice of Chairman.

**Functions**

- i. To advice the State Government on any matter concerning in prevention, control and abatement of water and air pollution.
- ii. To collect and disseminate information relating to water and air pollution and prevention, control or abatement thereof.
- iii. To collaborate with Central Pollution Control Board in organizing the training of persons engaged or to be engaged in program related to prevention, control or abatement of water and air pollution.
- iv. To establish or recognize laboratories for analyzing of samples of sewage/ trade effluent/ air emissions into the atmosphere.
- v. To assess the quality of water of rivers, streams, wells and ambient air in the State and to plan a comprehensive program for the prevention, control and abatement of pollution.

**Regional Offices**

At District level Punjab pollution Board has set up the regional offices to control and prevention of pollution. In 1980 Regional offices were set up in two districts. At present 16 Regional offices are working for combating the pollution problems. Regional offices are working under the 7 Zonal offices.

Numbers of Regional offices are working under one zonal office. One or more than two districts have one regional office. Regional offices are depends on the number of industries or pollution stress. If a District has a lot of pollution stress than that district has number of regional offices. Environmental engineer is the incharge of each regional office. Environment Engineer is assisted by an Assistant Environmental Engineer. Small Scale industries like brick kiln, dry rice sheller, cupola furnaces heat treatment unit, the decision is made by concerned regional office. With regard to the large and medium industries, the decision is made by head office.

**Functions of Regional Offices**

- 1. Inspection of Industries.
- 2. Collection of samples from the discharge point and also from the water courses in their respective jurisdictions.
- 3. Inspection of industries foe which no objection certificates (NOC) are to be granted.
- 4. Air quality monitoring and stock monitoring.
- 5. Maintenance of regional labs.

**Environmental Engineer**

The day to day operations of each Regional office are overseen and managed by the Board's environment engineers. In the many jurisdictional regions under their supervision, they supervise the application of the Board's various pollution control laws and regulations. After receiving reports and recommendations from the personnel of the Regional Office, he processes and decides on the technical issues in accordance with the delegation of authority at that level. In his particular jurisdictional region, he is in charge of creating Action Plans for the reduction of pollution. He is supporting the SEE/Member Secretary /Chairman in head office in making decisions about various board-related issues.

**Assistant Environmental Engineer**

The Regional Office's Assistant Environmental Engineers are in the position to enforce different pollution control legislation in the areas within their control. He serves as the field's reporting officer for a variety of infractions committed by local organizations and companies. He is required to conduct the inspection of various industries under his purview and present the Environmental Engineer with reports that include his recommendations. He responds to each and every public grievance in his sphere of influence. He helps the Member Secretary, Chairman, SEE, and EE at Head Office make decisions about various Board matters.

**Perception of Officials**

Punjab Pollution Control Board is the main organization for dealing regulatory matters related to pollution. The study focused on air pollution and primary data collected from the officials of Regional Offices of Punjab Pollution Control Board

which is directly or indirectly dealing with air pollution related matters. The researcher focused on four cities i.e. Ludhiana, Patiala, Khanna and Mandi Gobindgarh of Punjab which are under the list of most polluted cities in the world. Those Regional offices selected for study which are working in selected cities to control and prevention of pollution. Selected Regional Offices are given below:

- In Ludhiana have four regional offices of Punjab Pollution Control Board. Regional Office Ludhiana I, Ludhiana II, Ludhiana III and Ludhiana IV are situated in Ludhiana city.
- Fatehgarh Sahib Regional Office is situated in Mandi Gobindgarh city. Mandi Gobindgarh and Khanna cities are under Fatehgarh Sahib Regional Office.
- Patiala Regional Office is situated in Patiala city.

### Sample Population

From selected regional offices, officials with designation of EE (Environmental Engineer), AEE (Assistant Environmental Engineer) and JEE (Junior Environmental Engineer) were covered under this study. For the completion of study, total 30 officials were interviewed. All the technical officials selected from all the selected regional offices.

### Findings

#### 1. Perception of Officials about Cause of increasing Air Pollution

On the question of whether they think about the causes of increasing air pollution, all the officials said that only industries are not responsible for air pollution. Vehicles pollution and roads dust are also the major cause of air pollution. During the discussion 33.33 percent officials said that big industries pollute less than small industries due to expensive cleaner technologies.

#### 2. Perception of officials about their functions related to air pollution control

When the researcher asked the officials about their functions related to air pollution control, all the respondents said that they are doing their work under the rule and regulations of air pollution control act. They are checking the industries and other establishment which are involved in pollution activities. They are monitoring and upgrading air pollution control devices (APCDs), switching fuel from coal to piped natural gas.

#### 3. Perception of officials regarding the problems they face in their work

When researcher asked the officials if they are facing any problems in their functions related to their job, all the respondents said that they are facing many problems in their job. They find it difficult to concentrate on job profile amidst of other activities i.e. election duties, work given by administration and other activities, which are not related to their jobs. During discussion all the respondents said that fake complaints and irrelevant RTIs are the hurdles in their functioning.

#### 4. Overburdened with workload

An individual is overburdened when they are under excessive strain or workload. In the modern job, workload is common. Employees are frequently forced to accept or take on progressively more demanding work duties as a result of downsizing, job security anxiety, and an unstable economy. Actually, it could result in issues and conditions that lessen accomplishments. Employees that are overworked frequently experience greater levels of stress, which can affect output and cause physical and mental health issues. The ability to concentrate and pay full attention to job tasks is not always possible for stressed employees. A worker who is given an excessive amount of work to do may experience increased pressure to complete duties, which can lead to emotional pressures like depression and other health issues.

During discussion, all the respondents said that they have so

much workload because all the selected cities are the most polluted cities in the Punjab and out of four selected cities, three cities are the industrial cities. Large number industries, hotels, schools, colleges, marriage palaces, hospitals are under the one regional office. The researcher found that 4 to 6 officials were in the selected regional offices.

#### 5. Lack of Staff

When the researcher asked the officials if their offices are full of staff, all the officials said that there is extreme shortage of staff in their offices. Researcher found that all the regional offices have five to six officers of technical staff. Posts of Junior Environment Engineers are vacant in all the selected regional offices of pollution control board. Researcher also found Regional office Ludhiana III has been lack of clerical staff, and they have hired private clerk for clerical work.

#### 6. Transportation problem

The Researcher found that all the offices have only one vehicle for the whole staff, and all the officials said that they do not have proper facility of transportation. Vehicles are necessary for all officials because one or more than two districts have one regional office. Regional offices depend on the number of industries or pollution stress. If a District has a lot of pollution stress than that district has number of regional offices. Only one regional office has one vehicle for whole staff. Thus, they have to visit on private vehicles for inspection or checking of industries.

#### 7. Perception of official about their infrastructure facilities

The infrastructure of the workplace plays important role in maintaining health and reducing the employee stress. The workplace is where employees spend the majority of their working hours. In those four-wall structures, nine to eight hours are spent each day. Good infrastructure encourages employees to give 100% at their workplace.

When the researcher asked the officials if they were satisfy their infrastructure facilities, majority (56.66%) of respondents satisfied with their infrastructure facilities whereas (43.33) officials were not satisfied with their infrastructure facilities. Researcher found that Out of six selected regional offices, only three i.e. Ludhiana I, Ludhiana II and Patiala have proper infrastructure with their infrastructure facilities and remaining three regional office Ludhiana III, Ludhiana IV and Fatehgarh Sahib have lack of infrastructure facilities, which includes rented building for their offices and inadequate sanitation facilities.

#### 8. Perception of officials about their training

The systematic way of giving staff members the information and abilities required for their present or future position is known as employee training. It is an essential component of professional development, with the goal of improving an employee's performance, productivity, and talents. In Public Administration, Training means a "conscious effort made to improve skill, powers or intelligence and to develop his attitudes and schemes of values in a desired direction.

According to William G. Tropey defines Training is "the process of developing skills, habits, knowledge and attitudes in employees for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of employees in their present government positions as well as preparing employees for future government position.

During the discussion, researcher asked to officials about their training, and all respondents said that their training programmes arranged by Punjab Pollution Control Board. The majority (73.33%) of respondents said that many times they are not able to attend the training programmes due to the work load and lack of staff in their office and 26.66% of respondents said that they always attend the training programmes. During the discussion majority (76%) of

respondents suggested that the technology is upgrading day by day, they need more trainings to match up with new technology and pollution control measures.

### 9. Coordination

The process of uniting, integrating, and synchronizing group members to establish unity of action in pursuit of common goals is called coordination. Departmental activities are integrated through coordination in order to accomplish the organization's overall objective. The organization of the task is extremely systematic. The departments' interdependence provides the staff with appropriate guidance. Employee initiative is encouraged by coordination while they complete their allocated tasks. Coordination that works well boosts productivity and promotes the organization's expansion and success. According to McFarland "Coordination is the process whereby an executive develops an orderly pattern of group efforts among his subordinates and secures the unity of action in pursuit of common purpose.

Coordination and cooperation of staff in offices is necessary to make programmes effective. All the officials said that they are doing their work with proper coordination and cooperation.

### 10. Perception of officials about meetings with other Departments' Officials

When the researcher asked the officials about their meetings with other departments related to air pollution, the majority (80%) of respondents said that they do not have meetings with other departments related to air pollution. However, remaining (20%) said that they rarely conduct meetings with officials of other departments. Due to lack of staff and hectic work schedule they are not able to conduct meetings.

### 11. Perception of officials about Political Interference in their functioning

When the researcher asked the officials whether there is any political interference in their functioning, and then all respondents said that there is no political interference in their work.

### 12. Perception of officials about Industries Checking

When the researcher asked the officials if they visit the industrial units from time to time for checking, all the respondents said that they are visiting industries every now and then for checking as per the visiting protocol laid down by the Punjab Pollution Control Board for red, orange, and green categories of industries.

### 13. Perception of officials about awareness activities for common people

A potent instrument for reducing the negative impacts of air pollution is timely and accurate information. There is not a single source of air pollution. It is composed of numerous sources and elements. Because everyone is accountable for producing pollutants, raising awareness of air pollution is crucial. Educating people about the effects of air pollution on the environment is essential to increase awareness of the problem. Campaigns to raise public awareness are particularly beneficial in ensuring that different government projects are implemented efficiently and smoothly.

One of the largest obstacles to the successful decrease of air pollution is a lack of awareness among the general public. Raising awareness among the common people about prevention and regulate the air pollution is one of the responsibilities assigned to the pollution control board. The researcher observed that officials have not given priority to the awareness initiatives for common people. The researcher asked the officials about their awareness activities for common people. Majority (56.66%) of respondents said that they are arranging seminars and other awareness activities in different schools and college's on environment related days

like environment day, earth day etc and communicate through social media to spread awareness among the common people. The (43.33%) officials said that due to lack of staff and only 80 officers of technical staff in whole Punjab Pollution Control Board at field level, which actually need more manpower to create awareness at ground level.

### 14. Perception of officials related to finances

The Punjab Pollution Control Board's financial resources can be divided into two categories: Own Resources and external assistance. A state board's own resources are mostly made up of investments. Cess reimbursement and consent fee collection. Receipts from consulting and sponsored projects, sample testing fees, appellate fees, receipts from the sale of forms, fines and forfeitures etc, are additional modest sources of own resources. The funds received by a state board from the Government of India, concerned State Government and the Central Pollution Control Board for particular projects like National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring, clean technology and preparation of zoning atlas make up the Board's external sources of funding. Grant-in-aid provided by the concerned State Government.

When the researcher asked the officials about funds, all the respondents said that they have sufficient funds in their regional offices.

### Suggestions

- There is need of more training for officials. During research, majority of officials said that the technology is advancing day by day, therefore they need more trainings to match up with the new technology and air pollution control measures.
- In order to minimize the work stress of the technical staff of regional offices of pollution control board, more vacancies should be created because they are overburdened with work. Large number of industries and one or two districts come under only one regional office. So that's why field level jobs should be created.
- Need to recruit employees on vacant seats of technical and clerical staff. During research, it was analyzed that there is lack of staff. Due to lack of staff, all officials overburdened with work which results in lack of productivity at their workplace.
- Proper transport facilities should be provided to officials of regional offices of pollution control board.

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