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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE IN HARYANA: ROHTAK, JHAJJAR, MEWAT.

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Abstract

The study indicates that most of the DPC's, ULB's, RLB's members in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district are not aware of the introduction of 73rd Amendment Act, have no knowledge of functioning of DPC, do not know about their respective powers i.e. members without previous experience are dominating. Further, officials have not taken steps for better implementation of DPC schemes up to grass-root level.

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Introduction:-

Democracy is deep rooted in Indian villages through PRI's. Rural peoples have been given an opportunity to implement the development plans as desired by them through their representatives i.e. through RLB's members. As per the provision of Article 243Z(D), the DPC's were constituted in Haryana in 2007. So far as the composition of the DPC is concerned, we found that in Rohtak, Jhajjar and Mewat districts, there are 16 elected members, 4 nominated members, some specially invited members.

The present research based on detailed study of the DPC via questionnaire for 565 members of DPC, ULB's, RLB's members in three selected districts i.e. Rohtak, Jhajjar and Mewat. The main objective of the research is to study the composition and functions of district planning committees(DPC's), the decentralized planning process at the block and grassroots levels, the involvement of DPC, ULB's, RLB's members in decentralized Planning, level of awareness among the elected representatives of rural local bodies(RLBs) and urban local bodies (ULBs) towards DPCs, remedial suggestions for making the decentralized planning effective. In order to achieve the objectives, the DPC, ULB's, RLB's members have been interviewed on selected questions which were framed in such a way that they could be easily understand by the respondents and the data collected was categorized in tabular form to show the working of DPC in three selected districts i.e. Rohtak, Jhajjar, and Mewat. In the present work, the finding of the study, limitations, recommendations are given which may be considered by the state government for the better functioning of the DPC in the state.

The study reveals that the majority of the DPC, ULB's, RLB's members belongs to age group of 30-40 years i.e. younger people belongs to 30-40 years age group are likely to be accepted as local leaders compared to the others/older one. Most of the DPC's, ULB's, RLB's members are, by & large, male members i.e. male leaders are dominated over female ones. The average educational standard of the DPC's(except officials), ULB's, RLB's members is not high. The DPC's, ULB's, RLB's members is dominated either by those having no formal education or having Secondary education i.e. Literate and Illiterate people are likely to be accepted as Local Leaders compared to the Educated/Highly educated peoples. Most of the DPC's, ULB's, RLB's members are married. Most of the DPC, ULB's, RLB's members have 1-5 family members. Most of DPC's, ULB's, RLB's members are from the General category which is the dominant category. All the DPC, ULB's, RLB's members in Rohtak, Jhajjar district

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are Hindu but in Mewat district, most of the members are Muslim and remaining are Hindu. Most of the DPC members are Government employee/Agriculturist followed by businessman /others while most of ULB`s, RLB`s members are agriculturist followed by others/Businessmen and none is Government employee. Most of the DPC members are from urban area, all M.C. members are from urban area while all the Zila Parishad, Panchayat Samiti, Gram Panchayat members are from rural area and none from urban area. Most of the DPC members have annual income more than 2 Lakhs while most of the ULB`s, RLB`s members have annual income up to Rupees 50,000/-.

The researcher visited the Rohtak, Jhajjar and Mewat districts and interacts with the DPC`s /officials, RLB`s, ULB`s. It was noticed that the DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members without previous experience are in majority. Most of the DPC members, all the ULB`s, RLB`s members are not aware of the DPC constitution i.e. introduction of 73rd Amendment Act in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members, all the ULB`s, RLB`s members have no response about the function and responsibilities of DPC in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that way of information, agenda of DPC meeting is provided to them while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the way of information, agenda of DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that 1-2 DPC meeting held in a year while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the number of DPC meeting held in a year in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that participation of DPC elected/invitee members is >50% in DPC meeting while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the participation of DPC elected/invitee members in DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that no DPC meeting postponed due to non-quorum while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the postponing of DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that decisions during DPC meeting are taken by officials while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the way of decisions taken during DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that conflict occurs during DPC meeting due to monopoly of official for taking decisions to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the conflict occurs for taking decisions during DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that decisions taken during DPC meeting are not useful for grass-root level due to monopoly of official to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the decisions taken for grass root level during DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members, all the ULB`s, RLB`s members stated that no meeting by officials/DPC members organized at grass root level to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district. Most of the DPC members, all the ULB`s, RLB`s members stated that DPC is not working at grass root level to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district. Most of the DPC members stated that some/no infrastructural facilities provided to DPC members to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the infrastructural facilities provided to DPC members in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that administrative/financial problem is mainly faced during DPC working to a large extent in Mewat district followed by in Jhajjar, Rohtak district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the administrative/financial problem is mainly faced during DPC working in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. All the DPC members stated that annual budget for ULB`s and RLB`s at grass root level is approved in DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the approval of annual budget for ULB`s and RLB`s at grass root level in DPC meeting in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Nearly 50% DPC members stated that adequate funds, adequate powers are provided in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the adequate funds, adequate powers are provided to DPC members in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. All DPC members stated that no training is provided to DPC members for better implementation of DPC scheme at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the about the training provided to DPC members for better implementation of DPC scheme at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. Most of the DPC members stated that there is no DPC project formulation staff, no project team for DPC project formulation, no system to evaluate/implement the DPC project, no system to document the success/failure experiences of DPC projects in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the DPC project formulation staff, no project team for DPC project formulation, no system to evaluate/implement the DPC project, no system to document the success/failure experiences of DPC projects in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. All the DPC members stated that there is no reservation for women`s in DPC for better implementation of DPC projects at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the reservation for women`s in DPC for better implementation of DPC projects at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. All the DPC members stated that there is no programmes on T.V., no monthly magazine published about DPC to spread the

importance of DPC schemes started or going to started at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about programmes on T.V., no monthly magazine about DPC to spread the importance of DPC schemes started or going to started at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district. All the DPC members stated that no suggestions are taken by DPC members/official from grass root level for better implementation of DPC projects at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district while all the ULB`s, RLB`s members gives no response about the Suggestions taken by DPC members/official from grass root level for better implementation of DPC projects at grass root level in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district.

Problems:-

The DPC working facing many problems due to many factors:

- * Illiteracy and ignorance of members: The 1st and foremost problem in DPC working is illiteracy and ignorance of DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members about the provision of panchayat act.
- * Less women participation: The 2nd problem is due to less women participation in meeting and working of DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s.
- * Lack of adequate planning :The 3rd problem is due to lack of adequate planning among the DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members, as development depend on proper planning and equitable use of resources. The planning process till now comes from state government and not from grass-root level.
- * Lack of financial resources: The next problem is due to lack of financial resources and thus heavy dependence on the state in regard of financial matter.
- * Lack of decentralization: DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members feel that whole package of power even after the introduction of 73rd amendment act is in the hands of district collector and they are not allowed to do their duty freely.
- * Lack of guidance and supervision: The lack of continuous guidance and supervision have not been made available to DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members.
- * Lack of timely action against defaulters: Due to lack of timely action against defaulters, the people lose faith in the institutions and in the working of DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s.
- * Lack of secretarial assistance: Due to lack of trained & full time secretarial assistance, the DPC cannot function properly.
- * Delay in the distribution of finance: Problem in the delay in the distribution of finance to the ULB`s, RLB`s.
- * Problem of fair work: As most members are active in their area but not cited as a common problem of the village/town.
- * In case of women members, they do not tackle the problems but depends upon their husbands. In really, their husband acts as members.

Recommendation and suggestions:-

Based on the finding of the study & our exhaustive field experience, in the present section, some recommendations are being to further strengthen the decentralized planning process in Haryana. Though our recommendations are confined to the micro situation in Haryana yet we feel that these recommendations have their relevance for other states of the country. The recommendations are as follows:

- * The 1st suggestion is to remove the illiteracy through describing the educational criterion for the election of DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members. The DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members should posses at least secondary level education.
- * There should be no check on the participation of women members in DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s meeting and their participation be encouraged to put forth their demands before the DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s.
- * As very few members of the DPC had knowledge about the functioning of DPC. They were also not aware of their duties & how to plan. As such, it becomes necessary that frequent training sessions especially in the field of finance, accounts & statistics and frequent meeting, discussions, talks with senior bureaucrats, ministers should be given to the members of DPC. Such training & discussions will enable the members of the DPC to learn about the duties & responsibilities.
- * During our field survey, we observed that chief planning officer(CPO) had not much idea about the functioning of DPC. As such it is recommended that CPO should be expert either in economics or statistics. To this end, arrangement should be made for proper and efficient training of the CPO.
- * It needs to be underlined that the Constitution does not provide for DPCs to prepare district plans on their own, but to "consolidate" local area plans drawn up at lower tiers in both rural and urban areas of each district.
- * For effective grass-root planning:
 - i) People at the village level must regularly sit together in the forum of gram sabha in which heads of all the family show genuine concern for the problems of village.

- ii) The village community, through its planning, should collect information & identify problems.
- iii) the constitutional provisions regarding DPC`s should be implemented with full sincerity & effectiveness.
 - * Politicians should be kept aloof to run such organizations & their interference should be minimized.
 - * State government should make available adequate funds in the form of grants-in-aid.
 - * The ULB`s, RLB`s should be autonomous in working freely & the powers should be given to the ULB`s, RLB`s members.
 - * If the powers & functions of officials, DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members etc. is not clearly defined, there may be a conflict in between them on different issues and thus the DPC cannot function properly.
 - * There should be an adequate personnel system for the ULB`s, RLB`s.
 - * There should be a special guidance & supervisory authority upon DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s for their effective & efficient working.
 - * So, far as staffing is concerned, it is recommended that there should be an agro-economist, data collector, expert of rural development etc. on the DPC. Apart from these, there should also be a credit planning officer in the DPC.

Further, it is recommended that at the time of district planning, geographical situation must be taken into account and spatial planning should be given due importance.

- * There should be a system to check the participation of women members and some special training school for the development of the attitude of the women members so they can do their work on their own behalf without depending on their husbands.
- * As per the provisions of the 74th constitutional Amendment Act, DRDA should be merged with the Zila Parishad but in Haryana this is not done because the politicians/MLA`s fear that once the DRDA is merged with Zila Parishad, the MLA`s will become less important. Since, the Zila Parishad does not have much work, it is suggested that sooner the DRDA comes under the control of Zila Parishad.
- * So far as decentralized planning is concerned, the officials opined that the spirit of decentralized planning is missing. So, it is recommended that the three tiers should be integrated for the proper functioning of DPC.

Conclusions:-

In conclusions, the study indicates that most of the DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members are general category, hindu/muslims(less), less educated, agriculturist/businessmen/others, married, low income group, male members of young age group having nuclear family. The study indicates that most of the DPC`s, ULB`s, RLB`s members in Rohtak, Jhajjar, Mewat district are not aware of the introduction of 73rd Amendment Act, have no knowledge of functioning of DPC, do not know about their respective powers i.e. members without previous experience are dominating. Further, officials have not taken steps for better implementation of DPC schemes like programmes on T.V., publication of monthly magazine, formation of sub-committees at grass-root level, suggestion from ULB`s, RLB`s members, etc. It was noticed that there was a new enthusiasm among rural/urban peoples including women, younger generation. So, government officials should be honestly involved in the planning process and encourage the peoples for their active involvement by providing them knowledge about the importance of DPC through seminar, workshop, T.V., magazine etc. at grass root level so that each people can give suggestion for the better implementation of DPC at grass root level, each women member can take their own decisions and do not depend on their husband, co-ordination in between them DPC`s, RLB`s & ULB`s uplift to decrease the chances of conflict. It is necessary to state that for proper functioning of DPC, we all try to bring a sharp change in the social, economical and political environment in all the three tiers of panchayati raj. Further, the women`s should equally participate and gave their ideas for the betterment of DPC and the different organizations, intellectuals, medias should explore the importance of DPC so that there utility can reach up to grass-root level.

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