

Constraints in Developing a Model Village

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ABSTRACT

As India lives in its villages, village development has been the core of developmental perspective of India since decades. In this line, the concept of model village development is now in the forefront for overall sustainable village development. But keeping in view the stagnant growth the present study was designed and accordingly, the objective was formulated to identify the constraints that are coming in the way of developing model villages. The research was purposively conducted in Ralegan Siddhi of Maharashtra state; declared as a model village and three common villages namely Pimpalgaon Rotha, Randhe, Garkhindi were selected in the vicinity of the model village for validation of the indicators. Thirty-five respondents comprising fifteen females, fifteen male respondents, and five officials were selected from each of the four villages randomly. An open-ended questionnaire was used to obtain the perception of the villagers about the constraints. Garrette ranking technique was used to rank the constraints and a structured schedule was also used to collect information related to the constraints. Friedman test was used to find the most severe constraint. It was found that the most severe constraint in developing model villages was decreased community participation followed by increased migration, the presence of social evil and lack of responsiveness towards society.

Keywords: Constraints, Garrette ranking technique, Model village

INTRODUCTION

India's 68.84 percent of the population lives in its villages which are one of its oldest settlements. Surprisingly after seventy years of independence, India is fighting against poverty, malnutrition, caste system, illiteracy, social evils, and migration in rural areas. In this aspect, many pre and post-independence developmental initiatives have taken place. The ongoing Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna has also been started for holistic village development through creating model villages with the available resources. Still, the fragmented and regional growth has been in the picture. There are few villages that have stood up against the limitations and named as ideal and model villages. Learning from these villages will also help us to the dynamics of village development and we can act accordingly. The holistic and sustainable development is still a dream. To achieve this, initiatives have to be taken up by individual, community as well as governmental level. Keeping in view above things the present study has been formulated to identify the constraints that are in the way of model village development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The village Ralegan Siddhi in Ahmednagar district of the state of Maharashtra was purposively selected as it is recognized as a model village by many national and international organizations along with three randomly selected common villages namely Pimpalgaon Rotha, Randhe, Garkhindi in its vicinity. Based on the review of literature and expert suggestions, constraints were enlisted from sociological, infrastructural and organizational dimensions. Responses to these constraints were recorded on a three point-continuum of most severe, severe and not severe. All the constraints were ranked by the respondents, and then Garrett method of ranking (1969) was followed. Then Friedman test was used to find the most severe constraint among the three. The Garrett ranking formula is:

$$\text{Percentage position} = 100(R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where,

R_{ij} = rank given for i th factor by j th respondent

N_j = number of factors ranked by j th respondent

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed that decreased community participation is the most severe constraint as perceived by villagers with a Garrette score of 82.09. People's participation is the core principle of development of any community. Decreased community participation may hamper these continuous development activities and may also dampen the spirits of those who take continuous and regular initiatives to maintain the status and the development of the model village. Community participation and conducive group dynamics have to be stressed upon in model villages. Increased migration has become a burning problem affecting the rural economy adversely, ranked as second by villagers with a Garrette score of 77.95. Migration when happens under distressed condition especially for youth possess a greater problem. This irreplaceable loss may hamper the process of developing village into a model village. Villagers perceived the presence of social evil in the village as the third important constraint for village development having a huge negative impact on society. This is affecting the most important human resources of a community by reducing their productivity which further leads to negative consequences.

Lack of responsiveness towards society got a Garrette score of 76.75 and ranked as fourth by villagers. Responsiveness to society is important for the participatory development of model village and its

Table 1: Constraints as perceived by respondents (N=140)

Constraints	MGS*	Rank
Decreased community participation	82.09	I
Increased migration to urban areas	77.95	II
Presence of Social evil	76.79	III
Lack of responsiveness towards society	76.75	IV
Unresponsive local gram panchayat.	76.47	V
Lack of electricity	75.23	VI
Absence of local leadership	73.24	VII
Weaker linkage between different developmental agencies in the village	71.55	VIII
Lack of Educational facilities	70.76	IX
Lack of Pro activeness among villagers	64.45	X
Lack of employment opportunity	58.35	XI
Lack of Government support	57.87	XII
Lack of positive attitude towards change	50.4	XIII
Presence of Religious conflict	43.8	XIV
Lack of transportation facilities	42.75	XV
Dominance of upper caste	41.07	XVI

* mean Garrette score

sustainability. As a constituent member of the village, each villager is expected to respond to the beck and call of the village development as they get the protection, support, and succor from the village in the times of crisis. So each one needs to be sensitized to respond to the demands of village development and through such sensitization efforts, the obligations of each villager to serve and sustain the society can be highlighted. Respondents perceived the unresponsiveness of local gram panchayat as fifth important constraint in model village development having a Garrett score of 76.47. Good governance is a critical factor for developing model villages. Gram panchayat is the elected body of governance at the panchayat level. But if they are not responsive, nothing substantial can happen for the village development. Thus it is important to have a responsive panchayat which can play a catalytic role in the model village development process. Lack of electricity was ranked sixth important constraint with a Garrette score of 75.23. In fact, electricity supply on a sustained basis for long hours at least during the dark nights is a basic need of the people. If the electric supply is irregular and erratic, it will become a serious constraint in village development, especially for school children and families and agricultural activities. The absence of local leadership was ranked seventh important constraint by respondents. That is because if no one seems to take initiative in identifying the problem and attempting to solve them, village development can never occur. Interested village citizens need to play a leading role and if they do not, the village suffers as no one seems to care. Generating local leadership and guiding them with technical and interpersonal skills will help develop local leadership. The eighth important constraint as ranked by respondents was a weaker linkage between different developmental agencies in the village with Garrette score of 71.55. Convergence between development institutions is very important for sustainable development of a village. If these agencies and actors are not roped in line with gram panchayat, then weak linkage may persist and lead to poor coordination and the poor results. This will be a great challenge to the local leadership to coordinate these agencies so that all these village institutions and functionaries work toward a common programme with pooling resource for greater impact. Lack of educational facilities was ranked ninth by villagers with a score of 70.76. That is because if most of the villagers are illiterate and less educated, it will be difficult for local leaders to

enlighten them on the need for better villages and the need for more educated people to dispel several kinds of superstitions and prejudice that are usually dogmatic and difficult to change. So better educational facilities need to be provided in villages. The tenth most important constraint as perceived by villagers is lack of pro-activeness among villagers with a Garrette score of 64.45. Pro-activeness is an important attribute of people which refers to the people being action-oriented prior to the occurrence of a problematic situation which saves cost and energy with minimum consequences. The eleventh most important constraint as perceived by villagers is lack of employment opportunity with a Garrette score of 58.35. A model village needs to have village industries, agri-business ventures and small agro-processing enterprises, crafts, and arts enterprises so that there are adequate employment opportunities for the villagers. If meaningful earning opportunities or meaningful employment opportunities are not available, it becomes a serious constraint in developing model villages. The twelfth important constraint is lack of government support with Garrette score of 57.87. Lack of government support in terms of financial assistance

or sanction of proposed village level projects possesses a serious problem in the process of village development. The thirteenth constraint as ranked by respondents is lack of positive attitude towards change with a Garrette score of 50.4. If the villagers are averse to change and resist change it may adversely affect their status quo, then it would become difficult to appraise them on the possible benefits of change and remove undue fears towards change per se. So understanding the need for the change and possessing a positive attitude towards change would be a real asset for the development of model villages. The fourteenth constraint with a Garrette score of 43.8 is the presence of religious conflict in the village. Religious conflicts need to be solved amicably among the village dwellers and establish religious harmony and peace for the welfare of all the villagers which can have ill-effects on society. The fifteenth constraint with a Garrette score of 42.75 is lack of transportation facilities. A model village needs to be well connected through road and rail network. Adequate transportation facilities help the villagers to move around nearby towns freely for agriculture marketing, trade, purchase, and general communication needs. People's cosmopolitaness may also help thus

Table 2: Response of the farmers on the extent of severity of constraints (N=140)

Constraints	Perception of respondents						Mean	Rank
	Most severe		Severe		Least severe			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Sociological constraints								
Decreased community participation	140	100	0	0	0	0	3	I
Presence of social evils	136	97.14	4	2.85	0	0	2.97	III
Migration to urban areas.	139	99.28	1	0.71	0	0	2.99	II
Low educational status of villagers	102	72.85	38	27.14	0	0	2.72	IX
Lack of positive attitude of villagers towards change	94	67.14	35	25	11	7.85	2.59	XIII
Lack of pro activeness of villagers	103	73.57	33	23.57	4	2.85	2.70	X
Lack of responsiveness of villagers towards their society	135	96.42	5	3.57	0	0	2.96	IV
Dominance of upper caste	85	60.71	14	10	41	29.28	2.31	XVI
Absence of local leadership	115	82.14	25	17.85	0	0	2.82	VII
Religious conflict	95	67.85	28	20	17	12.14	2.55	XIV
Organizational constraints								
Lack of government support	108	77.14	8	5.71	24	17.14	2.6	XII
Weaker linkage between different developmental agencies in the village	115	82.14	13	9.28	12	8.57	2.73	VIII
Unresponsive local gram panchayat	121	86.42	19	13.57	0	0	2.86	V
Infrastructural constraints								
Lack of transportation facilities in the village	67	47.85	51	36.42	22	15.71	2.32	XV
Lack of electricity in the village	117	83.57	23	16.42	0	0	2.83	VI
Lack of employment opportunity	101	72.14	25	17.85	14	10	2.62	XI

opening up their minds to new ideas, products, and services. The sixteenth important constraint as perceived by the respondents is the dominance of upper caste with a Garrette score of 41.07. Villagers need to be educated on the issues of equity and equitable distribution of income and wealth among all for all-round development of the whole village, which in turn would benefit them in the long run.

In Table 2 the constraints were worked out by calculating the mean score for each of the sub-dimensions. It also revealed the same result as obtained by Garrett's ranking technique. To find out which constraint is most severe among the four dimensions, Friedman test was used. The results obtained by the use of this test are presented below.

Table 3: Test statistics of Friedman test

Statistics	Value
N	140
d.f.	2
Asymp. sig	.000

Table 3 showed that asymptotic significance obtained from the Friedman test was 0.000 (<5). Hence it can be interpreted that there was a significant difference in between the different constraints faced by people in developing a model village.

Table 4: Mean rank by Friedman test

Constraints	Mean ranks
Sociological	2.20
Organizational	2.17
Infrastructural	1.63

Table 4 further revealed that the mean ranks obtained by the use of Friedman test was highest for sociological constraints (2.20) which means that it was most severe constraint among all the four constraints. Under this category decreased community participation was found to be the most severe one as it is also perceived as the most contributing factor for the development of the model village Ralegan Siddhi. This result was same as the result obtained from Table 1 and Table 2. The mean rank of organizational constraints was 2.17 which are

considered as medium in severity. Under this category, unresponsive local grampanchayat was considered as the most severe one. As the respondents believed that the local body has the responsibility and through cooperation and mobilization of villagers it can really transform the village into a model which is most evident from the success of the villages Ralegan Siddhi & Hiware Bazar. The mean rank of infrastructural constraints was 1.63 which implied that it was the least severe constraints and lack of electricity and employment opportunities were found to be the severe constraints. Both of them have become necessities for a better life.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed the constraints that need to be taken into consideration while planning any village developmental programme. In spite of these constraints, Ralegan Siddhi has shown a promising transformation in the individual as well as in community level. Many kinds of literature reported there are some other villages like Hiware Bazaar, Sukhomajri and Ankapoor have overcome these problems and got national as well as international recognition (Agarwal *et al.*, 2000; Muthuraman, 2006; Foster *et al.*, 2009). These lessons can be learned and applied to develop many more model villages and will be helpful for the ongoing Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna of the government of India.

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