

**A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF PANCHAYAT MEMBERS IN  
THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF AGRICULTURAL  
PRODUCTION PROGRAMMES IN THE ATHIYANNOR**

**N. E. S. BLOCK, KERALA**

A. M. THAMPI and A. G. G. MENON

*College of Agriculture, Vellayani*

Under the decentralised approach in the present administration, the panchayats are given both responsibilities and powers for undertaking developmental activities in the area. It is essential that the representatives of the panchayats are involved in the planning and execution of all developmental programmes in the area. A case study conducted amongst the members of the Zilla Parishad by Dutta (1969) at Varanasi in U. P. found that a sizable majority of the members had general awareness regarding the planning procedure and preparation of block plans. But a similar study on the Panchayat Samithi members at Punjab by Sandhu and Sohal (1966) revealed lack of interest, responsibility and also greater indulgence or groupism in politics by the Panchayat Samithi members as the limitations for organised participation of the people in planning and execution of block programmes. A study has been undertaken with the objective of assessing the extent and nature of participation of the panchayat personnel in the planning and execution of Agricultural production programmes in Kerala.

**Materials and Methods**

The study was conducted in the seven panchayats of the Athiyanoor N.E.S. Block area of Trivandrum District, Kerala. The presidents of the seven panchayats were interviewed and 67 members of 55 wards were served with questionnaire to ascertain their participation in the seven areas of planning and execution of agricultural production programmes in their respective areas of the block. The association of their response with the activities in each of the areas of the process was worked out. The respondents were to denote their extent of participation in the three point continuum, namely, always sometimes and never against each of the activities grouped under the seven areas of the process.

**Results and Discussion**

It is evident from area I of the Table 1 that half the respondents always understood the nature and functions of the planning process and thus made decisions after proper assessment of the village problems and solutions. One third or more of them participated in almost all the planning activities only

sometimes and participated the least with regard to offering of guidance and opinions while planning. This may be due to lack of opportunities given to the Panchayat personnel to discuss programmes in the presence of concerned officials in the Block as well as lack of emphasis upon the growing importance of peoples' participation in programme planning process. The chi-square value was found to be significant which indicates that the factors namely the planning activities and the responses are dependent to each other. In general the Panchayat personnel needs to be more oriented with the process of programme planning.

Activities of the area II did not show significant relation with their responses. About one third of the panchayat personnel always identified, discussed and analysed the problems and needs of the villagers whereas more than half does it only sometimes. This indicates that there is need for more involvement of panchayat personnel and thus make problem-oriented programmes.

It is seen in the area III that through a high percentage of the respondents identified the village problems of larger interest, one third of them considered the feasibility of executing the programmes as well as they fixed the programmes with priority giving due consideration to their objectives and goals while planning programmes in the Block. Though the problems identified have been of larger interest it seems more emphasis needs to be given towards fixation of the programme objectives and goals on feasibility and priority basis.

The significant chi-square value obtained for the data presented in the area IV indicates that the activities and responses are dependent on each other. A sizable percentage of the panchayat personnel analysed the existing conditions prior to the fixation of the programme objective which they also made clear to the villagers. Still it is evident from the table that a majority of them considered programme objectives and goals only sometimes while drafting the programmes. This may be due to the fixing of programmes by the authorities without consideration of the the local conditions and forcing them over the panchayat personee for implementation

It is evident from area V that a sizable majority of the panchayat personnel never shared their opinions and ideas with others while drafting the programmes. This may be due to lack of encouragement and opportunities they have been given by the concerned persons or may be due to the unwillingness of the panchayat personnel to co-operate in this effort. Similarly the feasibility of achieving the programme targets as well as their evaluatability has been considered by the panchayat personnel only sometimes. The activites and their response in respect of the formulation of plans and course of action has been found to be dependent on each other. Organising committees including the panchayat members to formulate programmes will be an effective way for pooling of opinions and ideas of the people.

### Planning and Execution of Agricultural Production Programmes

Areas & Activities	Extent of participation (percentage)		
	Always	Some times	Never
<b>I. Planning as a Process</b>			
(a) Active participation in exchange of ideas and opinions	22.23	44.44	33.33
(b) Proper assessment of village problems and their solution	61.11	27.78	11.11
(c) Feeling of responsibility while planning	33.33	50.00	16.67
(d) Making decisions on planning and implementation of programmes	55.56	33.33	11.11
(e) Timely guidance by officials during the planning process	16.67	44.44	38.89
(f) Follow constructive approach in making decisions	27.78	33.33	38.89
(g) Orientation on the process of planning and implementation of programme	38.89	33.33	27.78
(h) Understanding the nature and function of planning process	50.00	22.72	27.78
$\chi^2_{16} = 38.801$ (Significant at 5% level)			
<b>II. Identification of problems and needs of villages</b>			
(a) Identification of problems and needs of the villages	33.33	55.56	11.11
(b) Discussion on the problems and needs	38.89	55.56	5.55
(c) Analysis of the problems and needs & gathering of details of the problems	44.44	44.44	11.12
$\chi^2_4 = 1.951$ (Not significant)			
<b>III. Establishment of priorities and their solutions</b>			
(a) Identification of problems of larger interest	72.22	16.67	11.11
(b) Consideration of objectives and goals while fixing priorities	55.56	33.33	11.11
(c) Consideration of means and feasibility of execution or programmes	50.00	33.33	16.67

Areas & Activities	Extent of participation (percentage)		
	Always	Some times	Never
(d) Priority for execution of programmes fixed with a balanced approach	55.56	33.33	11.11
$\chi^2_b = 4.952$ (Not significant)			
<b>IV. Decision on programme objectives and goals</b>			
(a) Existing conditions analysed prior to the fixation of programme objectives	55.56	38.89	5.55
(b) Programme objective and goals considered while drafting programmes	22.22	61.11	16.67
(c) Villagers made clear regarding and goals of programmes	66.67	27.78	5.55
$\chi^2_4 = 21.16$ (Significant at 5% level)			
<b>V. Formulation of plans and course of action</b>			
(a) Share opinions & ideas while drafting the programme	16.67	16.67	66.66
(b) Consider feasibility and evaluatability of targets while programming	38.89	55.56	5.55
$\chi^2_2 = 29.35$ (Significant at 5% level)			
<b>VI. Programme Execution</b>			
(a) Take up responsibilities to execute programmes	44.44	44.44	11.12
(b) Recognise and involve local leaders and influentials for programme execution	50.00	33.33	16.67
(c) Give wide publicity to programmes executed	55.56	38.89	5.55
$\chi^2_4 = .02$ (Not significant)			
<b>VII. Evaluation of the programmes</b>			
(a) Evaluate programmes after their execution	50.00	22.22	27.78
(b) Involve local people to evaluate programmes	44.44	38.89	16.67
(c) Review progress achieved while the programme is being implemented	44.44	44.44	11.12
$\chi^2_4 = 5.77$ (Not significant)			

Area VI indicates that a sizable percentage of the panchayat personnel gave wide publicity to the programmes and duly recognised the participation of local leaders and influentials for execution of programmes in the Block. But more than one third of the members got involved in the execution of the programmes only sometimes. The study made by Sandhu and Sohal (1966) has also revealed lack of interest and responsibility of the panchayat Samithi members in planning and execution of programme. This indicates the necessity for emphasising the responsibility, role and participation of the Panchayat members in executing Block programmes. The members' response towards the activities of programme execution remained to be independent of themselves.

### Summary

A study was conducted with the Presidents and members of the wards of the seven panchayats of the Athiyannoor N. E. S. Block on their role in planning and execution of Block programmes. The study revealed that a majority of the members always identified and assessed village problems of larger interest, found solutions and gave wide publicity to programmes executed in the Block. But a majority of them only occasionally took responsibilities to execute programmes, considered feasibility and evaluatability of targets and reviewed the progress achieved by the programme of the block. On the contrary opinions and ideas of a sizable percentage of the panchayat members were never shared and they never had timely guidance during the programme planning process. They also never followed a constructive decision making process while planning programmes in their area.

### സംഗ്രഹം

തിരുവനന്തപുരം ജില്ലയിൽ അതിയന്നൂർ എൻ. ഇ. എസ്സ് ബ്ലോക്കിലെ കാർഷിക പരിപാടികളുടെ ആസൂത്രണത്തിലും നിർവ്വഹണത്തിലും ആ ബ്ലോക്കിൽപ്പെട്ട ഏഴു പഞ്ചായത്തുകളിലെ പഞ്ചായത്ത് മെമ്പർമാരുടെ പങ്കിനെ കുറിച്ച് ഒരു പഠനം നടത്തപ്പെട്ടു. ആറുപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ പഠനത്തിനുവിധേയമാക്കി. നാട്ടുകാരുടെ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും ആവശ്യങ്ങളും കണ്ടെത്തുക, പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾക്കും പ്രശ്നപരിഹാരങ്ങൾക്കും അവയുടെ നിർവ്വഹണത്തിനും മുൻഗണന നിശ്ചയിക്കുക, പരിപാടിയുടെ ലക്ഷ്യം നിർണ്ണയിക്കുക, പരിപാടി തയ്യാറാക്കുക, പരിപാടി നടപ്പാക്കുക, പരിപാടി നടത്തിപ്പിൽ മൂല്യനിർണ്ണയം നടത്തുക എന്നിവയായിരുന്നു പഠനത്തിനു വിധേയമാക്കിയ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ.

മേൽപറഞ്ഞ പ്രക്രിയയിൽ ഭൂരിഭാഗം മെമ്പർമാരും ഏല്പായ്പ്പോഴും ആ നാട്ടിലെ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ വിശാലമനഃസ്ഥിതിയോടെ കൈകാര്യം CTijajicfoajjo, പരിഹാരങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തുകയും, പരിപാടിയ്ക്ക് വേണ്ടവിധം പ്രചരണം നൽകുകയും ചെയ്യാറുള്ളതായി കാണപ്പെട്ടു.

പക്ഷേ ഭൂരിഭാഗം പഞ്ചായത്ത് അംഗങ്ങളും വല്ലപ്പോഴും മാത്രമേ പരിപാടികളുടെ നിർവ്വഹണത്തിൽ ചുമതലകൾ ഏറ്റെടുക്കുകയും, അവയുടെ ലക്ഷ്യസാധ്യതയും, മൂല്യനിർണ്ണയകമ്പവും കണക്കിലെടുക്കുകയും, പരിപാടികളുടെ പ്രവർത്തന പുരോഗതി അവലോകനം

ചെയ്യുകയും ചെയ്തതായി കാണപ്പെട്ടുള്ള കൂടാതെ ഏറിയപങ്കു പഞ്ചായത്തു മെമ്പർമാരും അവരുടെ അംഗങ്ങളും (1961-62) കർഷകങ്ങളും അന്വേഷണം കൈമാറിയിരുന്നതായി പരിപാടികളുടെ ആസൂത്രണപ്രക്രിയയിൽ സമയോചിതമായി യാതൊരുപദേശങ്ങളും മാർഗ്ഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും അവർക്ക് ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. കൂടാതെ പരിപാടികൾ ആസൂത്രണം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ ഉചിതമായ തീരുമാനമാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ കൈമാറാറുള്ളതായും ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ നിന്നും വെളിപ്പെട്ടുവന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്.

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