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The role of panchayat raj institutions in making healthy villages in Karnataka

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Abstract

Introduction: Karnataka's Panchayati Raj system has a long history. It was built by the former rulers as an efficient platform for accomplishing goals. The long-term objective of rural development was set forth by the Mouryans, British, Mysore State rulers, Congress leaders, and other political figures. In Karnataka State, the Panchayati Raj System saw a tremendous upheaval during the 1980s. In Karnataka, Panchayats are responsible for planning, implementation, supervision, and monitoring of making healthy villages in Karnataka. The Panchayat will assist in the effective functioning of village health, sanitation, and nutrition in villages and overall cleanliness to battle malaria, waterborne infections, and other communicable diseases.

Objectives: objective of the study is to understand the healthcare services for rural health and to examine the role of Panchayat raj institutions in making healthy villages in **Methodology:** Explorative research methodology has been used, and the study is based on secondary sources, which are taken from books, annual reports of upper education, journals, and newspapers.

Findings: This study reveals that role of Panchayat raj institutions in making healthy villages in Karnataka and healthcare services proving by Panchayat to the beneficiaries

Conclusion: The State of Karnataka has made significant progress in the Panchayat Raj system's development. The state has made great strides in the administration of development at the local level. The management of many rural development programmes by panchayat has garnered societal acceptance and support. The Panchayat has the responsibility of providing essential healthcare services to people living in villages, and it has been providing facilities through many health schemes which are enacted by the state and central government to develop health.

Keywords: Panchayat Raj Institutions, Healthcare, Healthy village

Introduction

Karnataka's Panchayat Raj system was a rich and historical legacy, established by former rulers as an efficient platform to achieve developmental goals. The concept of long-term rural development was first laid out by various leaders throughout history, including the Mouryans, British, Mysore State rulers, Congress leaders, and other political figures. The focus of Panchayats in Karnataka is to ensure the effective functioning of village health, sanitation, and nutrition, as well as overall cleanliness, to combat malaria, waterborne infections, and other communicable diseases. Panchayats have been the bedrock of Indian villages since the dawn of recorded history. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, envisioned every village as a self-governing republic or Panchayat, believing that true Indian independence must start at the grassroots level. This vision became a reality with the implementation of the three-tier Panchayat Raj system, which aimed to foster public participation in rural development. This system comprises Gram Panchayats at the village level, Panchayat Committees at the block level, and Zila Parishads at the district level, collectively known as Panchayati Raj. The Panchayati Raj institution plays a crucial role in the reconstruction of rural India, as it empowers the community's residents to take charge of their economic development.

The system was officially launched in Karnataka on October 2, 1961, and it witnessed significant transformations during the 1980s. Panchayats in Karnataka are entrusted with the responsibility of planning, implementing, supervising, and monitoring initiatives aimed at creating healthy villages. Through their strategic governance and leadership, Panchayats play a key role in steering the overall growth of villages. The residents themselves, being intimately familiar with their local needs and challenges, take charge of their community's economic development. This participatory approach empowers the villagers and ensures sustainable progress. The Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka stands as a testament to India's commitment to decentralized governance and grassroots development. With a historical foundation and Gandhiji's vision at their core, the Panchayati Raj institutions continue to play a vital role in planning and implementing initiatives for the betterment of rural India, particularly in fostering healthy villages in the state of Karnataka.

Review of Literature

1. **Hammer, Aiyar, & Samji (2007)** Despite the fact that the NRHM plan allows for greater flexibility in how various public health programmes are implemented, it can be difficult to escalate critical interventions at the right time. However, it is generally agreed that Gram Sabhas should have more freedom and control over financial matters and the development of various health programmes. According to experts, GPs should receive additional grants for their different extracurricular activities. In this situation, health professionals who are ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activists) and ANM (auxiliary midwife) certified can significantly improve the use of public funds. They can encourage doctors in general practise to use the public funds given to them for NRHM-covered community-based preventative, promotional, and rehabilitative health-related activities. But regrettably, it is not taking place on the ground.
2. **Vyasulu and Vijayalakshmi (2011)** The NRHM program's effectiveness depends on the decentralisation of health care. Panchayats must offer top-notch medical treatment. However, as the author has noted, they each have their own structural issues. However, due to the subpar medical facilities in remote government hospitals, rural residents still favour home births or deliveries at private hospitals. The government should be urged by the panchayats to hire female physicians for the nearby rural PHCs. Additionally, it was shown that the majority of underprivileged rural women could not afford to pay for high-quality institutional birthing care and were unable to receive any form of postnatal care for the second pregnancy. Measures must be taken by the Panchayat to increase public awareness of maternal health programmes like the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). Additionally, it is believed that one of the main obstacles to the successful implementation of JSY programmes in rural areas is the provision of low-quality maternal healthcare. Panchayat also require qualified professionals for the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Objectives of the Study

1. To comprehend the rural health care services
2. To examine the role of Panchayat Raj institutions in

making healthy villages in Karnataka

Methodology

Explorative research methodology has been used to find out the role of Panchayat Raj institutions in making healthy villages in Karnataka. The present study is based on secondary sources and is taken from books, annual reports of upper-level education, periodicals, journals, and newspapers to comprehend and analyse the new wave of understanding the role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in making healthy villages in Karnataka.

Concept of Panchayat Raj Institutions

The term "panchayat raj" is relatively new, having been coined under British rule. Raj literally translates to "administration" or "governance." As the cornerstone of India's political structure, Mahatma Gandhi promoted Panchayat Raj, a decentralised form of government in which each community is in charge of its own affairs. He called such an idea "Gram Swaraj" (village self-governance). State governments adopted it as legislation to establish panchayats, which was enacted in several states during the 1950s and 1960s. The 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution, passed in 1993 to support the notion, also provided support for it. The Amendment Act of 1993 contains provisions for the devolution of powers and duties to the panchayats in relation to both the preparation of plans for social justice and economic development as well as their implementation in relation to the twenty-nine subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the constitution.

What is a healthy village?

It is impossible to define precisely what is "healthy" for all communities, because this will depend on the perceptions of community members as to whether their village is a "good" place to live. However, a village or rural community can be considered healthy when rates of infectious diseases are low, community members have access to basic services and health care that meets their needs, and the community lives in a state of reasonable harmony. Examples of unhealthy and healthy villages are illustrated. However, these pictures show extremes, and most communities will fall somewhere between the two.

Panchayat Raj Institutions' (PRIs) functions

The fundamental tools of village local government, panchayat raj institutions, play a critical role in improving health, agricultural developments, women and child development, and women's participation in local government, among other things. The Panchayat raj institutions are a significant system that contributes significantly to the management of all domains, including rural development. The pillars of village and rural development include Panchayat raj institutions, which foster a sense of responsibility for rural development and rural management for long-term development. The many programmes for rural development, including primary education at the primary level, health clinics, cottage industries, agricultural development and marketing, transportation, and other local developments, are managed by the village development authority, or panchayatiraj system. Additionally, Panchayat raj organisations seek to promote rural development and environmental conservation.

1. Drinking water supply, drainage, and road building and repair.
2. The emergence of cooperative groups and the growth of cottage and small-scale businesses
3. Creation of organisations for young people.
4. The work carried out by various PRI support organisations in India is documented in this matrix. Activities and sectors are used to categorise each
5. Organization's work. Generally speaking,
6. Organizations use a variety of strategies rather than matching a certain activity focus to a given sector.
7. Sector-based approaches. The activities and industry focuses are briefly described below.

Powers and Responsibilities of Panchayat Raj (PRIS):

1. **Local government:** In their individual jurisdictions, PRIs are in charge of local governance, which includes making choices on the formulation, execution, and oversight of various development initiatives and plans.
2. **Decentralized Planning:** They have the power to create and carry out plans for social justice and economic development at the local level, taking into consideration the particular requirements and goals of the neighborhood.
3. **Resource Allocation:** PRIs manage the distribution and utilization of resources for a range of development initiatives, including those funded by federal and state government grants as well as their own earnings.
4. **Development activities:** They implement a variety of projects aimed at improving rural infrastructure and related areas such as agriculture, education, healthcare, sanitation, and water supply.
5. **Social Justice and Welfare:** PRIs aim to ensure fair distribution of resources and prioritize the welfare of underprivileged and marginalized groups in society. Revenue Collection: They have the ability to collect local taxes, fees, and other forms of funding to support ideas and projects for local development.
6. **Implementation of Government Programs:** PRIs are responsible for carrying out a range of government policies and initiatives, including those pertaining to health, education, rural employment, and poverty alleviation, at the local level.
7. **Community Engagement:** To ensure democratic and inclusive governance, they promote and enable active community participation in decision-making processes and development initiatives.

The Role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Making Healthy Villages in Karnataka

1. **Protection of the Environment:** Panchayat Raj Institutions play a pivotal role in safeguarding the environment, recognizing its direct impact on public health. They prioritize initiatives aimed at creating a clean and hygienic atmosphere that prevents the transmission of diseases and reduces mental health concerns. Panchayats work on improving cleanliness, drainage systems, and solid waste disposal to enhance the overall health and well-being of the community. By eliminating disease vectors from human contact, they effectively curb the spread of illnesses and foster a healthier living environment.
2. **Awareness of Health Issues:** Creating awareness about

health issues is vital for cultivating a healthy community. Panchayats strive to educate villagers about various health-related matters, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their well-being. People must understand the causes of diseases and the ways to improve their health. Through community interactions, Panchayats ensure that all aspects affecting health are brought to people's attention. They advocate for investments in health promotion and emphasize the importance of maintaining positive changes in the environment, hygiene practices, and access to healthcare. Governments and community leaders work together to raise awareness effectively.

3. **Health Care Access:** Panchayat Raj Institutions recognize the importance of accessible healthcare facilities for all villagers. They endeavor to ensure that every individual can access medical services when needed. Special attention is given to providing healthcare services to vulnerable populations, such as children, who might be more susceptible to illness. Panchayats advocate for the establishment of healthcare facilities as close to the communities as possible, preferably within the villages themselves. Collaborating with national and regional service providers, they work to bridge the gap between healthcare resources and the rural populace.
4. **Faecal-Oral Disease Prevention:** The prevalence of fecal-oral diseases poses a significant threat to public health in rural areas. Panchayats prioritize strategies to combat these diseases effectively. Through awareness campaigns and health education, they emphasize proper personal cleanliness when handling food and water. Panchayats implement waste management initiatives to prevent contamination and ensure a clean environment. They focus on maintaining good drinking water quality and proper food preparation to break the transmission pathways of fecal-oral diseases, which can lead to a substantial reduction in illnesses and fatalities.
5. **Provision of Health Specialties through Primary Healthcare Centers:** Panchayat Raj Institutions play a crucial role in ensuring that primary healthcare centers are well-equipped and staffed with specialized medical professionals. By providing necessary healthcare services within the village or nearby areas, they improve the accessibility and affordability of medical assistance for the villagers. This approach not only addresses immediate health concerns but also fosters a culture of proactive health care and preventive measures.
6. **Waste Management and Village Cleanliness:** Panchayats prioritize waste management and cleanliness within the villages. They implement waste disposal systems and recycling initiatives, maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. Regular cleanliness drives and awareness campaigns are organized to involve the community actively in maintaining their surroundings. A clean village not only promotes physical health but also enhances the overall well-being and pride of the community. Providing Safe Drinking Water: Access to safe drinking water is paramount for maintaining good health. Panchayats work towards ensuring the availability of clean and potable water sources for the villagers. They initiate water purification projects and collaborate with relevant authorities to improve water quality. By providing safe drinking water, Panchayat Raj

Institutions contribute significantly to reducing waterborne diseases and enhancing the health of the community.

7. **Health Education for Adults and Women:** Health education is a core aspect of Panchayats' efforts to promote healthy villages. They organize workshops, awareness camps, and seminars focusing on health-related topics for adults and women. Empowering women with health knowledge is particularly crucial, as they often play a central role in family well-being. Panchayats foster a culture of health consciousness, equipping villagers with the tools to make informed decisions about their health and that of their families.

Conclusion

The Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka has made significant progress in spearheading local-level development. Through effective management of various rural development programs, the Panchayats have garnered widespread acceptance and support from the society they serve. One of the critical responsibilities of the Panchayats is ensuring the provision of essential healthcare services to the residents of rural areas. They have been instrumental in implementing numerous health schemes sanctioned by both the state and central governments to improve the overall health and well-being of the villagers. The Panchayats play a pivotal role in the development of villages, acting as the driving force behind progress and prosperity in these rural communities. Their grassroots-level governance and decision-making empower them to address the specific needs and challenges faced by each village. The Panchayat Raj institutions also play a crucial role in advocating for adequate resources and funds to be allocated to rural healthcare infrastructure and services. They raise awareness about the importance of investing in health and sanitation by advocating for improved sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, and proper waste management practices. In conclusion, the Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka has proven to be a driving force in local-level development, with their management of rural development programs and healthcare initiatives garnering acceptance and support from society. As the responsible bodies for the development of villages, they play a central role in making Karnataka's villages healthier. Through their governance, commitment, and collaboration with government authorities, the Panchayat Raj institutions contribute significantly to improving the overall health and well-being of rural communities in the state.

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