

Role of NGOs in Rural Development in India

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Abstract

This paper highlights the role of NGOs in rural development in India. It is a case study of 8 NGOs engaged in health, hygiene and sanitation field in Uttar Pradesh in India. The paper highlights the performance evaluation h People's Participation. This paper also examines Interaction Process, Mode of Intervention and People's Participation: Major, Ambiguities and Dilemmas in NGOs. Further paper highlights the implications of the study.

Keywords: NGOs, Rural Development, Case Study, Staff, Project, Research Design, Opinion

Rural development is a complex process as it involves continuous reorientation and adaptation of traditional values, practices and institutions in order to incorporate increasing corpus of scientific knowledge and technologies to enhance quality of life and welfare of the people. It is essentially a problem of change in modernization which can be handled effectively only with the active participation of the people in every stage of decision-making. It is now widely believed that rural development as a people-centered programme should be viewed as a process of change to brought about and sustained by the people or the target group themselves. For this to happen people have to be organized and enable to be active participants of the development process. Given the manner government machinery operates, this job cannot be performed by the government servants. This role is appropriately suited to the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which have emerged as viable forces for the articulation of people's needs and grievances. Recognizing this government policy has also been to encourage NGOs to participate in the task of rural development wherever and whatever way it is feasible.

NGOs are not a new phenomenon in India. Voluntary effort has always been an important part of Indian culture and social tradition the need for organizing people into accredited associations and their involvement and participation in rural development has now been fully recognized. In the recent years, they have increased in considerable number, acquired greater importance and significance and put up many new experiments in the field of rural development because government organization has not been able to reach the people particularly the rural poor in regard to rural development at the desired level. Although huge amount of money has been allocated and spent on different schemes of rural development over the years. Yet the benefits have not reached the rural poor. Despite significant changes in approaches and strategies to the cause of rural development, the government has not been able to achieve minimum desirable targets in the field of education, nutrition, health, drinking waters and employment.

In India, rural development is too wide and complex a task to be left completely to the bureaucracy. Voluntary action in a planned manner was initiated in the country during the last decades of the 19th century. The Christian missionaries took positive interest in rural reconstruction even in the inaccessible part of the country during the middle of the 19th century. To understand the evolution of NGOs in India it is better to first understand the social reforms in the 19th and 20th century. Because these social reforms are the landmarks in the history of NGOs.

Indeed, soon after independence, Gandhi made a strong plea for disbanding the Indian National Congress (the political party which came into power), and transforming it into a "Lok Sevak Sangh" (Public Service Commission), which was however rejected.

Nevertheless the whole range of “Constructive activities” of the national movement spearheaded by the Indian National Congress were continued in the form of “Non-Governmental Agencies” to whom grants, legal entitlements and charters were made available by the Government. The followers of Gandhi and others who could not or did not wish to join the government or the ruling party established a number of NGOs to work closely with governmental programs meant for diverse social strata from ‘Harijans’ (the untouchables) and tribal to slum dwellers, for setting up important sectors of a mixed economy- the development strategy adopted by the Government such agencies organized handicrafts and village industries, rural development programs, credit cooperative, educational institutions and retained a degree of autonomy in their functioning. However, there has been a significant change over the years in the character of these organizations. Many of the NGOs are now recipients of government funds, as they are being increasingly involved in promoting developmental efforts. As public policy tends to depend heavily on such organizations, it has motivated them to upgrade their technical skills and even to have regular salaried staff.

The early 1980s also witnessed the emergence of ideas on the need for people’s participation and empowerment in poverty alleviation as well as the need to take the diversity among the poor on the basis of class, caste, gender, ethnicity etc. into account. The need to improve the life situation of the poor made the activists from different backgrounds to talk of development by the mid-1980s. Integrated development models replaced the fragmented and compartmentalized development models, which still had charity and welfare components. The gender justice, environment concerns and human rights were understood as part and parcel of structural aspects of the society, which together with class, caste and ethnicity were responsible for the exploitation of the marginalized sections within the society. The priorities and agenda of donor agencies also influenced the development perspective and programs at the grassroots level.

The term NGO is used interchangeably with Voluntary Action, Voluntary Agencies (VOLAGs), Voluntary Development Organizations (VDOs), Voluntary Associations, Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Political Formations or Non-Party Political Processes, Social Action Groups, Grass root Organizations, Community Development Organization, Social Work Agencies etc. The interchangeable use of a wide range of terms reflects the complex nature of the phenomena exhibited by NGOs. They are active from the grassroots level to the National and International level in different roles. They focus upon wide ranging issues including gender, environment, human rights, social justice, education, health etc. Depending upon their ideological and philosophical shades, they adopt different modes of intervention in the field. However, this is greatly influenced by their heavy dependence on external funds. Their organizational structures vary widely from a formal bureaucratic type to informal democratic type voluntary associations.

NGOs in India are legally registered under the society Registration Act 1860, Indian Trust Act 1882, the Co-Operative Societies Act, 1904, the Joint Stock Companies Act, 1956 in order to meet the judicial requirements. To avail the foreign contribution, they need to register under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1976. But most of the NGOs in India are registered under Society Registration Act.

The choice of a strategy to be adopted by an NGO differs from organization to organization and depends on the ideology, motivation and capability of the organization. The experience of some NGOs may act as a catalyst operating externally to the rural communities; others may emerge from within the rural communities indigenously. Most organization in India like Ramakrishna Mission and Hindustan Talim Sangh belong to the former category. These organizations are usually set up the well-wishers interested in rural development or by organizations of experts and educators. Such organizations may operate at the macro level covering the entire country or state, or at the micro level covering a village or an area. The catalysts at the macro level may act as coordinating bodies or may actively involve in delivering services directly to the rural population. For example, the Association of Voluntary agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) serves as coordinating agency at the national level and there are institutions like CHETNA which undertake coordinating work at the regional level.

1. Studies of NGOs: A Methodological Report

The majority of studies on NGOs are speculative in nature. They have primarily explored and analyzed the relationships with the agencies of state, marked and civil society. A systematic discussion of methodological aspects while conducting empirical studies is lacking in most on the cases.

McPherson (1992) developed and tested a theory of dynamic behavior of NGOs. They analyzed the event history data set constructed from interviews using the life history calendar method. The information on ego centered social networks was developed from the general social survey network module. Fogarty (1990) conducted a pilot study of 15 NGOs of different sizes to develop an understanding of efficiency and democracy in NGOs. In this study, the author explored the answers to certain research questions and examined the concept of efficiency and democracy in the NGO sector. Curtis (1992) in another attempt to study NGOs examined a cross-national sample with the help of six control variables viz. education employment status, community size, gender, marital status and age.

For the apologists of qualitative methods, however the sample survey method restricts the scope of data and information to be generated. They argue that an intensive qualitative methodology is more appropriate to develop a comprehensive understanding about the internal dynamics, structural location, and transformative potential of the NGOs (Pandey, 1991). In the recent past, scholars have preferred qualitative methodology and used cases as the primary instrument for the study of a plant or an organization (Heidereich, 1991; Yin, 1994).

In a pioneering study on the role of NGOs and the state in sustainable agriculture development, Farrington and Leiws (1993) used case study method to generate data. They adopted a more flexible methodology, than would have been permitted with a predetermined sampling scheme. Similarly, Schmale (1993) has presented three case studies (From Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia) of NGOs to analyze why many local organizations continue to carryout development work in top down, non-participatory and non-sustainable manner.

Some of these case studies have also employed statistical tools. Torres (1991) made an attempt to understand the effects of increased bureaucratization and commitment on resource mobilization in NGOs through a case study of privately operated, non-profit emergency food pantry in south Texas. Interview technique was used to generate data. The sample consisted of all organizational members of the case organization. Statistical techniques such as co-efficient theta and co-efficient alpha were applied for analysis. A five point Linkert scale was used to measure the level of commitment. Similarly, a number of important studies of environmental NGOs have used case study method, either singly or in combination with other methods. For example, Rich (1994) used case study of environmental NGOs to understand the bottom line of the problem. In another study on environmental NGOs, Princen and Finger (1994) used case study and comparative analysis to explore the implications the extensions, and the general lessons of the case.

From the methodological point of view, two major categories of studies can be identified in the literature on NGOs. The first category uses a qualitative examination of one or two movement type organizations. This provides an in depth knowledge of the discourse and practices of a subset of active organizations. The second category examines the structure of organizational behaviors. The employ two forms of analysis: (a) an essentialist structural linguistic form and (b) non-essentialist form. The essentialist form has been criticized as being arbitrary and reductive because it replaces the complex of meaning that is constantly shaped and changed in communicative action with an abstract construction of social scientist (Mason, 1996). The second form is more attuned to grasp the complexity of meanings given to a social phenomenon by the actor.

Nonetheless, understanding of organizational processes and evaluating the organizational performance of NGOs involve complex methodological issues. The lack of any proven body of theory on NGOs further complicates the problem (Brett, 1993). These studies also expose the problems in methods of data generation and the issues in data interpretation. In the present study, we have basically used a non-essentialist analysis to capture the insider's perspective. We have preferred case study method to understand complexities of issues involved in NGOs. To comprehend a holistic understanding of the cases, the study has employed with case purposive as well as random sampling. Further, to increase the reliability of data and substantiating their validity, multi method technique of data generation and analysis were used.

1.1 The Problem

From the available literature, it is clear that the third sector research has emerged as an important and potent field of research agenda for social scientists in recent times. Despite the ambiguities and vagueness prevailing in conceptualizing and operationalising the NGO sector, scholars have undertaken studies to explore and examine this sector.

Though the research on NGOs is still in its nascent phase, it has been widely acclaimed that this area deserves further research. It has been relatively barren and under researched. The present attempt is humble effort in this direction only.

India was declared a “Welfare State” soon after the attainment of independence with this declaration it made a number of provisions for the social welfare under which the grant-in-aid facilities were made available to the NGOs. This in turn motivated the NGOs to extend their services to rural areas. There was a substantial growth of NGOs in India after independence. Such a growth and development helped a lot in increasing the quality of services with some qualitative improvement in rural areas. Besides, international policies on social welfare and rural development encouraged NGO sector to expand their services labeling themselves as the national and international organizations with an intention to outreach the foreign funding.

Uttar Pradesh has got a rich background of traditional social work because of the hard work and dedicated efforts taken by the philanthropists. The traditional and welfare oriented social work was quite prominent and is still practiced in villages.

The present study is an enquiring into the role of NGOs in rural development working in Uttar Pradesh. Despite the need for further understanding of the functional properties of the NGOs for their effective functioning no research has been done so far on this subject in this region.

2. Research Methodology

During 1980s and 1990s, social scientists have shown an increasing interest in qualitative research methodology including the case study method (Regin and Becker, 1992; Yin, 1994). The need for developing an appropriate research design for such studies has been emphasized simultaneously to follow a coherent research strategy (Mason, 1996; Patton, 1980). Depending upon the context and the type of research questions, they require creativity and critical thinking. In the present study, the research design has been prepared in the wider conception of qualitative research which goes beyond the issues of subjective meaning towards issues of language, representation and social organization (Silverman, 1997). To develop a comprehensive understanding of NGO phenomenon case study is probably, the most appropriate method. Accordingly examination of case studies has been taken up rather than surveying a smattering of many cases. The objective of the approach is to begin to build the base for understanding the ambiguities of NGOs within a carefully developed research design. This study is a starting step, both theoretically and empirically.

Case study may be of one particular case as well as of two or more cases of similar or contrasting nature for comparative analysis. It is particularly suited when the researcher wants to understand the inner working of a specific organization or social group. (McGee, 1980). In the present work eight NGOs working in the field of Rural Development specially catering to health, hygiene and sanitation programs have been taken up for detailed study.

Serious limitations of survey method as well as of extensive application of tools like structured interview schedule and questionnaires for studying grassroots action is well known experience had also shown that during interaction with outsiders, the respondents start sharing many of their personal experiences or problems.

These might not relate to the contents of structured interview schedule or pre-designed questionnaire. The research design should provide time and space for accommodating such digressions and allowing interaction with the people on their home ground which may lead to relevant information on dimensions not yet revealed by the existing theories or experiences (Kirk and Miller, 1988). To develop a comprehensive understanding about their activities with the target group in the field, the researcher needs to make close observations. The observations can be made more keen and natural by establishing a good rapport with the field and people. This requires sufficient time to be spent in the field with the respondents.

Nonetheless, to capture a holistic understanding of the cases from the perspectives of diverse collectivities in NGOs, it was felt an essential to opt for a within case sampling. It was a random sampling of the field area and a purposive sampling of the field workers. Thus within a case combination of interviews, observations, focus group discussion, participation in village level meetings, unobtrusive methods and questionnaires were used and some quantitative data were also collected.

Thus the data was generated using multiple tools. They include the lived experiences of the diverse collectivities of the NGOs. The conceptual framework of the study as developed in the previous section demands adequate space to accommodate the insiders' perspective on various research questions. This makes it imperative to explore the response of diverse collectivities of NGOs in a natural setting. These diverse collectivities interact variously with each other in different contexts. Gathering firsthand information on the nature of these interactions demands establishing a good rapport with them. The researcher needs to go beyond the role of an external, objective data-generating agent. He must give due importance to the phenomenon logy of the action.

While outlining the research design to be used in this study a clue was also taken Mason (1996) who emphasized that a qualitative research design should clearly present the essence of the inquiry and express it in the form of an intellectual puzzle with clearly formulated set of research questions. It should address the following five questions about the essence of the inquiry: -

1. What is the nature of the phenomenon, or entities, or social reality, which the researcher wishes to investigate?
2. What might represent knowledge or evidence of the entities or social reality?
3. What topic, or brand substantive area, is the research concerned with?
4. What are the research questions?
5. What is the purpose of the research?

The following paragraphs broadly discuss the above ideas in the backdrop of the aforementioned questions.

2.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study may be identified as following: -

- (1) To examine the process of people's participation and level of satisfaction of rural people;
- (2) To analyze the approaches of intervention in the field.
- (3) To examine the process of interactions between the Leaders, professionals and the Community level workers;
- (5) To examine the impact on health impact by the projects of the NGOs.

There is a considerable apprehension amongst intellectuals in India about the relationship between the State and NGOs which has always been a tenuous one. Many NGOs have grown large and powerful and have acquired 'say' in the molding of official policies. Others, smaller and more mobile in nature have suffered due to political and bureaucratic intrusions. Both of them face a situation of becoming instrument of interests that are for removed and sinister. As Kothari observes, it is high time that people respond to dual imperative of the role of state being undermined by capitalist growth under the IMF and World Bank type institutions and delivered through GONGOs and of resisting control by states over people's voluntary action. (Jain, 1997).

Uttar Pradesh has got a rich background of traditional social work because of the hard work and dedicated efforts taken by the philanthropists. The traditional and welfare oriented social work was quite prominent and is still practiced in villages. There are a number of NGOs that have been trying to provide health, hygiene and sanitation facilities to the villagers.

These organizations are known by some regional characteristics i.e. the organization structure, the administration style, policies regarding staff, finance, and use of community resources etc. which ultimately decide the quality of the health services they render. These NGOs need a special kind of guidance and assistance in implementing health, hygiene and sanitation programs. It was felt that a systematic research study was needed which might help to understand the organizational structure, health programs and problems of these NGOs.

In the present work eight NGOs working in the field of Rural Development specially catering to health, hygiene and sanitation programs have been taken up for study.

2.2 The Cases

The eight cases selected for this study are: -

1. Action for Women and rural Development (AWARD)
2. Development for Rural People's and Nutrition (DRPAN)
3. Eco-friends (EF)
4. Sakhi Kendra (SK)
5. Shramic Bharti (SB)

6. Nirman Sewa Sansthan (NSS)
7. Kshetriya Grameen Vikas Sansthan (KGVS)
8. Bhartiya Gramotthan Samiti (BGS)

2.3 Methods and Procedures of Data Generation

This study has used both, primary and secondary sources of data. The sources of primary data are the executive body, the organizational staff and the target groups. Besides various programs, workshops and meetings organized during stay in the field, also constituted important source of primary data. Personal discussions with key government officials especially health and sanitation with whom the organization maintains frequent contacts also provided useful data. The local key persons like panchayat officials, school teachers, auxiliary nurse and midwives (ANMs) and local community leaders were contacted to develop a holistic understanding of the NGOs.

A number of the secondary data sources such as the NGO's annual reports, the evaluation reports of some specific programs from external experts, proceedings of the organizational staff meetings, the village meetings, the workshops, the training programs etc. were used. Besides data from the available audio and video recordings of the functions organized by the organizations were also analyzed.

It may be noted that the search for more accurate and consistent explanations of social and political realities has emphasized the involvement of those persons who have been the objects of collective research for years. In this regard, Hamersley (1995) have enlisted the following four fundamental steps to be followed in any social research, approaching the group and establishing relationship with it; the period of observation and collection of information; the organization of collected information; and final returning the material to the group for discussion and elaboration. Since the NGOs were scattered in all over the two districts and to trace out the NGOs in Health, Hygiene and Sanitation activities was a very difficult and time consuming effort; and traveling took quite a lot of time and resources. To find out the NGOs Uttar Pradesh Voluntary Health Association (UPVHA) and Uttar Pradesh Voluntary Association Networking (UPVAN) were contacted. Directory of NGOs for Uttar Pradesh was also referred. After a lot of hard work, only eight NGOs could be traced out for research work. After the procurement of the preliminary information it was decided to carry out the data generation and preliminary analysis work in the following three phases: -

Phase I

In this phase following tasks were accomplished: -

- Acquisition of all possible secondary data through various sources.
- Detailed interview with the chief functionary and one other available executive body member.
- Observing the procedure of implementing various programs and conducting meetings.
- Conducting informal discussions with the organizational staff, and holding a few meetings with the target groups at the village level.

Phase II

After analyzing the data generated during phase I, it was decided to generate more data through.

- Clarifications and verifications of the secondary data, individually from the chief functionary and other key persons involved in the activities of the NGOs. This includes cross verification and triangulation of data obtained from the target groups, the organizational staff and other related persons like the government officials, local village pradhans, school teachers, local community leaders etc.
- Verification of data thus generated from the chief functionary, the staff members, the target groups and the key persons.
- Focus group discussion with the target groups and with the grassroots workers.
- Observation of day-to-day functioning of the organization.

Phase III

During the final phase, some more data were generated using the following tools:

- Village meetings and focus groups discussion in the villages.
- Interviews with the key persons like village pradhans, the school teachers, the local community leaders, the local government officials, etc.
- A brief presentation of the preliminary analysis before the chief functionary, the staff members and the target groups separately and noting down their reactions and responses.

The actual data generation process was slightly different in the eight cases. It occurred due to differences in the field level logistics and the nature of activities.

2.4 Linking the Research Questions and Methods

A qualitative research design should link the research questions, methodologies and methods (Mason, 1996). Table 1 presents a description of the justification of using particular method(s) and data Source(s) to address specific research questions.

Table 1: Research Questions, Data Sources, and Methods and Justification

1. What was the nature of association of the persons involved in the formation of the NGO?	
2. What are the various health hygiene and sanitation programs and projects initiated by the NGO?	
Data sources and Methods	Justification
Chief Functionary + Key person from the community: Interview	Interview would help in understanding the rationale initiating health and sanitation programs/projects in different area. It would also help in getting an account of the process of the development of the organizational structure. The key persons from the community observing the organization would cross check the information given by organizational persons and would also reflect community's perspective
Annual Reports: Documentary Analysis	It would give the year wise account of the project and programs and would reflect the process of emergence of the present organizational structure.
3. What strategies were adopted to implement the selected projects/programs in the field and how did they change over time?	
Data sources and Methods	Justification
Chief Functionary + Project in charge + grassroots workers: Interview	Interview with the Chief Functionary would give a historical account of the mode of intervention of the organization in the field. Other staffs would provide their respective account of the issue.
4. What is the nature of interaction among the Leadership, professionals and the community level workers?	
5. What perceptions and reactions does this interaction develop among the diverse roles?	
Data sources and Methods	Justification
Chief Functionary + Project in charge + grassroots workers: Interview + observation	Interview would reveal information on the changing nature of organizational hierarchies. Information from different perspectives would be supplemented with close observation by the researcher.
The target group + Key person in Community: Interview	The observatory remarks by them would substantiate the previous information.
Proceedings of various meetings: Documentary Analysis	It would reveal the issues discussed in their regular meetings and the comments given by different workers.
6. How do the target groups (i.e. people) perceive this phenomenon of intervention?	
7. How does their perception affect the nature of involvement and participation in the organization activities?	

Data sources and Methods	Justification
The target group + key persons: Interview + focus group discussion	This would reveal the community's perception about the organization and its work.
Annual Reports + other documents about its health and sanitation programs	It would give an account of the health and sanitation programs/projects which the organization has intervened into the community and their implications.
Observation	It would provide a firsthand account of the way, the workers got to the field and interact with the people.

2.5 Techniques of Data Analysis

According to Yin (1994), analysis of the case is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of case studies. He suggests to begin with a general analytic strategy, based on the priorities for what to analyze and why. The case study approach to qualitative analysis is broadly directed at the programmatic and evaluation questions: what was the nature of interaction among the participants? What were participants' attitudes towards the programs? What role did staff play in the programme? What were the major activities in the Programme? What were the primary programme processes (Patton, 1980)? These questions can be attempted from two perspectives: (a) Objective-scientific perspective and (b) Phenomenological Perspective. We have the phenomenological perspective to explore and analyze the meanings and feelings of the participants associated with the process of rural development.

In this study, analysis of data has been done in three stages. In the first stage, the preliminary analysis was done by collating the data, generated during the first two phases of data generation process written documents like the reports, minutes of the staff meetings, training reports were analyzed to develop and understanding of the processes of change in the approach of intervention, nature of health, hygiene and sanitation projects, and their impact on the diverse roles. During the second stage the findings were presented to the concerned collectivities and a discussion was initiated. We involved the subjects themselves in the data analysis process. It was done both individually as well as in groups. Thus for example, during the third phase of the field visit, we discussed the findings with the chief functionary and sought clarifications on the perceptions, interactions and conflicts among the diverse roles. These issues were also discussed and analyzed in the field with the people and the organizational staff. The cross checking through triangulation was prompted to check the authenticity and reliability of the information. During this stage, we also presented our preliminary analysis before them and received their comments. Finally, during the third stage, we collated all the information and drew the final inferences.

The research process during this study was constructed many times out of the situational and contextual demands and decisions. While exercising this flexibility, clue from the argument has been relied that a qualitative research should be conducted as a reflexive practice (Hamersley and Atkinson, 1995). Following Subrahmanyam (1998), it may be said that the analysis and findings are not pre-determined or pre-hypothesized. They are the outcomes of the concepts and processes emerged during different phases of data generation.

2.6 Limitation of Study

- (i) The study could have taken more cases from other state NGOs.
- (ii) The Government health officials could not provide the required health related data of the area.

3. Major Findings and Discussion

3.1. Reaction of the Respondents, Beneficiaries, Leadership, Village Elders, Community Leaders, People's Representatives and Funding Agency

The respondents, beneficiaries, village elders, community leaders, people's representatives and funding agencies show their interest to evaluate the project activities of the NGOs. Some of them remarked very positively but others are not satisfied with it. Overall performance of the project has been analyzed on of the responses of the people i.e. into two categories whether they are satisfied or not satisfied with the project performance.

Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of the various categories of persons about the opinion regarding the performance of the AWARD's project. It is clear that 80 percent beneficiaries, 67 percent Leadership, 43 percent community leaders, 42 percent people's representatives and 57 percent village elders say that they are satisfied with the performance of the NGO whereas 20 percent beneficiaries, 33 percent Leadership, 40 percent respondents, 57 percent community leaders, 58 percent people's representatives and 43 percent village elders say that they are not satisfied with the performance of the NGO. But the Staff of funding agency Mother NGO, New Public School Samiti, Lucknow is quite positive and satisfied with the overall project performance of AWARD.

Table 2: Opinion of Peoples Regarding RCH Project of AWARD

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	61 (80.26)	15 (19.74)	76 (100)
02.	Leadership	10 (66.66)	5 (33.34)	15 (100)
03.	Respondents	30 (60.00)	20 (40.00)	50 (100)
04.	Community leaders	15 (42.85)	20 (57.15)	35 (100)
05.	People's representatives	05 (41.65)	07 (58.35)	12 (100)
06.	Village elders	20 (57.14)	15 (42.86)	35 (100)

Source: Primary Data

It is clear from the table No 3. that 52 percent village elders, 58 percent people's representatives, 52 percent community leaders, 73 percent respondents, 63 percent Leadership and 75 percent beneficiaries say that they are satisfied with the TSC Project of DRPAN whereas 48 percent village elders, 48 percent people's representatives, 48 percent community leaders, 27 percent respondents, 37 percent Leadership and 25 percent beneficiaries feel not satisfied with the project. The funding agency, Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, UP Jal Nigam, HRD Cell Lucknow, remarked satisfaction over the project of the NGO.

Table 3: Opinion of Peoples Regarding TSC Project of DRPAN

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	45 (75.00)	15 (25.00)	60 (100)
02.	Leadership	05 (62.50)	3 (37.50)	8 (100)
03.	Respondents	40 (72.73)	15 (27.27)	55 (100)
04.	Community leaders	17 (51.51)	16 (48.49)	33 (100)
05.	People's representatives	07 (58.33)	05 (41.67)	12 (100)
06.	Village elders	17 (51.51)	16 (48.49)	33 (100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: Opinion of Peoples Regarding Eco Friend's Project

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	37 (67.27)	18 (32.73)	55 (100)
02.	Leadership	07 (58.33)	05 (41.67)	12 (100)
03.	Respondents	27 (51.92)	25 (48.08)	52 (100)
04.	Community leaders	08 (53.33)	07 (46.67)	15 (100)
05.	People's representatives	04 (36.36)	07 (63.64)	11 (100)
06.	Village elders	11 (61.11)	7 (38.89)	18 (100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 reveals the responses of peoples regarding the performance of Water Sanitation project of Eco Friends. It is clear from the table that 33 percent beneficiaries, 42 percent Leadership, 48 percent respondents, 47 percent community leaders, 64 percent peoples' representatives and 39 percent village elders are not satisfied with the performance of the NGO whereas 67 percent beneficiaries, 58 percent Leadership, 52 percent respondents, 53 percent community leaders, 36 percent people's representatives and 61 percent Village elders feel satisfied over the performance of the NGO.

Table 5 contains the opinion of peoples about RCH project of Sakhi Kender. It is clear from the table that 54 percent village elders, 53 percent peoples representatives, 57 percent community leaders, 30 percent respondents, 58 percent Leadership and 38 percent beneficiaries say that they are not satisfied with the performance of the NGO whereas 46 percent village elders, 47 percent peoples representatives, 43 percent community leaders, 70 percent respondents, 42 percent Leadership and 73 percent beneficiaries feel satisfied with the performance of the project. The funding agency SIFSA is not satisfied with the performance of the NGO because there were a lot of complaints against the NGO as well as the NGO could not submit the final data of the project.

Table 5: Opinion of Peoples Regarding RCH Project Sakhi Kender

Ser. No	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	66 (73.33)	34 (37.77)	99 (100)
02.	Leadership	05 (41.67))	07 (58.33)	12 (100)
03.	Respondents	35 (70)	15 (30)	50 (100)
04.	Community leaders	06 (42.86)	08 (57.14)	14 (100)
05.	People's representatives	15 (46.88)	17 (53.12)	32 (100)
06.	Village elders	11 (45.83)	13 (54.17)	24 (100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: Opinion of Peoples Regarding the Project of Shramic Bharti

Ser. No	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	50 (83.33)	10 (16.67)	60 (100)
02.	Leadership	07 (77.78)	02 (22.22)	09 (100)
03.	Respondents	30 (66.67)	15 (33.33)	45 (100)
04.	Community leaders	11 (73.33)	04 (26.67)	15 (100)
05.	People's representatives	07 (58.33)	05 (41.67)	12 (100)
06.	Village elders	10 (58.82)	7 (41.18)	17 (100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 explores the views of peoples about RCH project of Shramic Bharti. It is clear from the table that 83 percent beneficiaries, 78 percent Leadership, 67 percent respondents, 73 percent community leaders, 58 percent people's representatives, 59 percent village elders feel satisfied with the overall performance of NGO whereas 17 percent beneficiaries, 22 percent Leadership, 33 percent respondents, 27 percent community leaders, 42 percent representatives and 41 percent village elders are not satisfied with the performance of the NGO. The funding agency SIFSA reacts positively on the overall performance of the project but complaints about misappropriation of some funds by the NGO.

Table 7: Opinion of Peoples Regarding the Project of NSS

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	37 (67.27)	18 (32.73)	55 (100)
02.	Leadership	06 (66.67)	03 (33.33)	09 (100)
03.	Respondents	33 (68.75)	15 (31.25)	48 (100)
04.	Community leaders	08 (53.33)	07 (46.67)	15 (100)
05.	People's representatives	14 (58.33)	10 (41.67)	24 (100)
06.	Village elders	12 (66.67)	06 (33.33)	18 (100)

Source: Primary Data

It is observed from the table 7 that 67 Percent Village Elders, 58 percent people's representative, 53 percent Community leaders, 69 percent respondents, 67 percent Leadership and 67 percent beneficiaries feel satisfied with the drinking water and sanitation projects of Nirman Sewa Sansthan whereas 33 percent village elders, 42 percent people's representatives, 47 percent community leaders, 31 percent respondents, 33 percent Leadership and 33 percent beneficiaries say that they are not satisfied with the project. The funding agency Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, UP Jal Nigam, Lucknow is also satisfied and have positive attitude towards the performance of the NGO.

Table 8 depicts the opinion of peoples regarding the performance of ‘Targeted Intervention of Truckers of Kshetriya Gramin Vikas Sansthan. It is clear from the table that 34 percent beneficiaries, 30 percent Leadership, 22 percent respondents, 32 percent Community leaders, 37 percent people’s representatives and 29 percent village elders say that they are not satisfied with the performance of the projects whereas 66 percent beneficiaries, 70 percent Leadership, 78 percent respondents, 68 percent Community Leaders, 63 percent people’s representatives and 71 percent Village elders say that they feel satisfied with the project. The funding agency UPSACS is satisfied and happy over the performance of the projects and mainly due to first time experiments of ORWs as female staff.

Table 8: Opinion of Peoples Regarding the Project of KGVS

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	46 (65.71)	24 (34.29)	70 (100)
02.	Leadership	07 (70.00)	03 (30.00)	10 (100)
03.	Respondents	39 (78.00)	11 (22.00)	50 (100)
04.	Community leaders	13 (68.42)	06 (31.58)	19 (100)
05.	People’s representatives	05 (62.50)	03 (37.50)	08 (100)
06.	Village elders	15 (71.43)	06 (28.57)	21 (100)

Source: Primary Data

Table 9 reveals that 32 percent Village elders, 32 percent people’s representatives, 56 percent Community Leaders, 18 percent respondents, 57 percent Leadership and 29 percent beneficiaries say that they are not satisfied with the performance of BGS whereas 68 percent Village Elders, 68 percent people’s representatives, 44 percent Community leaders, 82 percent respondents, 43 percent Leadership and 71 percent beneficiaries feel satisfied with the performance of Indian System of Medicine and Homeopathy.” The funding agency mother NGO New Public School Samiti has not responded over the NGOs performance.

Table 9: Opinion of Peoples Regarding the Project of BGS

Ser. No.	Type of peoples	No (%) of people		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
01.	Beneficiaries	37 (71.15)	15 (28.85)	52 (100)
02.	Leadership	03 (42.86)	04 (57.14)	07 (100)
03.	Respondents	41 (82.00)	09 (18.00)	50 (100)
04.	Community leaders	07 (43.75)	09 (56.25)	16 (100)
05.	People’s representatives	15 (68.18)	07 (31.82)	22 (100)
06.	Village elders	13 (68.42)	6 (31.58)	19 (100)

Source: Primary Data

3.2 Overall Assessment

It is clear from above discussion that there is a casual relationship between NGOs and rural development. Although there is not much change in the health indicators as result of NGOs efforts. But the health indicators are not only instruments to measure the work of NGOs. What the knowledge and views of villagers have been broadened towards health, hygiene and sanitation that can't be described in words. Moreover the positive efforts of these activities cannot be measured in a short span of time, but a lifelong effect on human body and personal life of the villagers. If the knowledge of health, hygiene and sanitation is strong and wide that will certainly develop the social and economic life of the villagers. If the rural areas are well developed that will make the country more developed. Thus the role of these NGOs cannot be assessed only through impact indicators or the services they provide, but should be assessed in a long and wide view for overall development.

3.3 Interaction Process, Mode of Intervention and People's Participation: Major, Ambiguities and Dilemmas

The frequency and nature of interaction between the Leadership and the people heavily influence the people's understanding of the organization. This is reflected in the nature and quality of participation of people, and the degree of co- operation provided by them in the activities initiated by the organization. The prominent mode of intervention through projects bring with it not only an opportunity to work with the people, but it also brings in new concepts, infrastructure, roles, relationship and patterns of interaction. Project management project monitoring and formal reporting become usual components of the organizational work culture. A rigid structure of bottom-up accountability emerges. The grassroots workers are held accountable to the professionals, the professionals are held accountable to the Leadership and the Leadership to the donor agencies. The mechanism through which accountability towards the people can be ensured is largely vague.

Further, the project-based mode of intervention develops a different understanding about this phenomenon among different collectivities. The formation of images of voluntarism is not a one-time phenomenon. It is a continuous process rooted in varying experiences during the course of association with the NGOs. In the beginning, the grassroots workers (who belong to the local area) develop a certain degree of emotional attachment and commitment towards the people and their cause. Although they are paid staff, they attach a moral value to the kind of work they are engaged in. They understand that others see their work with respect and reverence. The idea of helping and benefiting others provides them a feeling of service rather than a job. Their interaction with the people at the grassroots level goes beyond organizational activities. The target groups' members share their personal and collective problems with them. The burning issues confronting their village are discussed frequently and the organizational staff is expected to co-operate and lend a helping hand in resolving them.

The grassroots workers share these experiences with the target group's member and feel the exigency of taking up such issues. They, however, fail to get adequate encouragement and support from the professionals. The professionals give primacy to the project based responsibilities.

Their demand and expectations from the grassroots worker remain confined to the project specific activities. This leads to a process of formation and reformation of meanings. The meanings which a grassroots worker attaches to the NGOs seem to be affected by his social background, early expectation, and experience of formal and informal relationship in the NGOs. Repeated neglect of the workers voice from the Leadership and professional lead to a change in the worker image of the organization. Slowly they start perceiving the NGOs as an organization catering to the ends of Leadership like any other private Organization.

This perception further strengthens; when the workers fail to cover late various inputs and training provided to them their day-to-day activities. They find themselves unable to understand as to how the multiplicity of project-based managerial and technical training inputs will build up their capacity to efficiently play their role as an agent of rural development. They find the project-specific demands too mechanical, routine and boring. They are expected to achieve a fixed target within a specific period of time. They are also involved in a lot of paper work like preparing weekly/monthly progress reports, evaluating reports, filling up different types of forms etc. as in any bureaucratic organization government or corporate. From the grassroots workers perspective, these things hardly address the contextual problems and emerging demands of the people. And this kind of inputs and supports, which they expect from the Leadership and the professionals, does not come forth. Consequently, their notion about the NGOs as a private organization further strengthens and they start perceiving themselves as its paid 'employee'.

The professional, however perceive this whole process of intervention from different perspective. They have to manage a particular project. The project is meant to achieve a set of objectives within the stipulated time period. They visualize their roles in terms of the project, and make efforts to achieve the project objectives efficiently and effectively. However, their pre occupation with achieving the short-term objectives of the project does not provide enough space to go for other activities, even if they are urgent and significant to the people. They fail to address the highly unpredictable nature of the field visits. Due to their alien background, they lack emotional attachment and long term commitment with these peripheral needs of the people and the area. They move to another NGOs if they find better career prospects. They often discourage the grassroots worker from participating in people's mobilization. For them, that is not the role of worker. They are critical of the notion of them creates dependency. However their professional approach (as perceived by them), which largely treats the people as objects of intervention, fails to notice the people and area. They also ignore the fact that it is the moral mental framework of the people, which puts the social service on a high pedestal. This narrow-minded profession discourages the spirit of voluntarism which makes the whole effort instrumental, devoid of any emotional or sentimental attachment to the work.

The Leadership struggles with its own dilemma on the one hand, all sorts of projects are brought implemented and justified in the name of people development and empowerment and on the other hand they find no alternative to the approach of professionals which leads to increasing alienation of the people. Even the Leadership is primarily engaged in fulfilling the requirements of the projects, rather than the needs of the people. They identify and recruit qualified professional to manage and co-ordinate the projects. They have to regularly apprise the donors of the progress in projects. The requirements of projects slowly develop a formal organizational structure, and build up its infrastructural capacity. The managerial, security, and sustainability concerns keep the Leadership away from the field for most of time. The casual interaction of the Leadership with the people remains restricted to the project specific activities, their direct contact with the people and presence in the field reduce drastically. The idea that the projects are tools for achieving the ultimate goal of rural development is hardly understood by the people.

On the people's front, emphasis on project oriented approach starts developing an understanding about the organization in terms of the objectives of the project. For example when a NGOs enters with a community health project, the people in general perceive it as a 'health center' or a 'hospital'.

The gap in the perception of the people, and the idea of the Leadership about the project arises primarily due to inadequate groundwork, deliberations, meetings and sharing the rationale and purpose of the particular project. It affects the nature and quality of participation. People are more likely to participate in activities where they see some immediate tangible gains, like visiting health centers for immunization/ medicines, or sending their children to the school run by the organization where they get free clothes and other supports. The participation on issue like keeping the surroundings clean, exerting pressure on the government run PHCs officials to take up the activities in the interest of the whole village community remains low.

The people expect the organizational staff to be with them while taking such initiatives, which does not come up due to the latter's pre occupation with the fixed target based, time bound approach of the project. The inconsistencies and ambiguities were increasingly observed in all the cases and table 10 summaries some of these findings.

Table 10: Inconsistencies between the Organizational and People's Expectation

Collectivities	Expectations From		Degree of Inconsistency	Reasons	Consequences
	The Organization	The People			
Executive Body	To initiate programmers for emancipation of the target group; to ensure people's participation; to build up the capacity of the NGO.	Address the emerging needs of the people; emancipation of people; spend more time in the field.	Low but growing	Greater attention to project requirements and the organization.	Displacement of goals; diffusion of intensity.
Professionals	To carry out the time bound project activities in the given time frame work, training Networking.	Broaden their approach to incorporate the people's needs and expectations; share problems and guide, spend more time in the field.	High	Pressure of the work as employment; career orientation.	Narrow identity; alienation of the people
Grassroots Workers	Delivery of project inputs in the field.	To represent people to raises the real issues off day to day life; liaison with the Leadership to became more responsive to people's needs	High	Conflicting expectations from the Leadership, professionals and the people.	Demoralizations of the grassroots workers; role conflicts, ambiguity, and stress.
People	To avail the benefits ensured by the projects; to actively participate in the project activities	To resolve the community problems in a holistic manner through sustainable organizations of the people.	Conflicting paradigms	Lack of participation in deciding the priorities; fragmentation of rural society.	Alienation; suspicion, conflicts

4. Major Implication of the Study

The emergence of NGOs owes to both the voluntarism- individual and deterministic structural elements. The one hand they ensure and individual's choice to promote development in the voluntarism framework, on the other, the demands from the rural society create the need for new institution and agencies. Interestingly, these two factors predominate the decision on the kind of intervention to be made in the field area. However, besides the perception of the Leadership or and the requirements of the state or donors, the people's own priorities needs play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of their participation. When the perceived needs of the target groups match with the requirements of the projects launched by the NGOs, the people support the intervention. It paves the way for mobilization, and active participation in the organizational activities. The arena of voluntary action such a context becomes a public sphere, where the people as such, come and join the process, whether they are agree with it or not. This mode of intervention require sufficient space accommodate ground level uncertainties. It also demands adequate time, and a broader interaction space from all the four collectivities.

The lack of such space and restricting the efforts strictly within the boundaries of a project act as major impediments in participative voluntarism. The development of people is an ongoing process and cannot be time bound or target oriented, and squeezed in one financial year. The shift towards the project bound activities heavily reduced the space for interaction with the people. It becomes more focused and narrow. In this mode of intervention, the other peripheral needs of rural societies that arise from time to time pass unaddressed. Consequently the people are alienated form the activities of the NGOs. This project based particularism leads to the fragmentation of the rural society. The inconsistencies and ambiguities in the nature and mode of intervention compete the target groups and the grassroots workers to deconstruct the meanings of the NGO.

Emphasis on projects makes the NGO appear like a private venture started by the Leadership and the paid organizational staff in their own interest. People perceive it as their (i.e. the Leadership or the organizational staff) work and not as 'our' work. This leads to the issue of institutional sustainability of NGOs. The lack of focus on sustainability within NGOs has emerged as one of the major problems of the development process. The task of defining and maintaining a viable working relationship with community groups poses a dilemma for many intermediary institutions. The most serious disincentive to community participation and activity is discontinuity in project and programs initiated by external agencies.

The role of chief functionaries of NGOs needs critical reevaluation. In the process of ensuring security and sustenance concerns of the organization, the need of rural society recedes in the backdrop. Their efforts to build up the capacity of rural society remain confined to building the capacity of the 'organization'. The institutional sustainability of NGOs demands a wider role from the Leadership. Leadership goes beyond mere assembling of financial or human resource for the organization and should take responsibility in strengthening the governance mechanism. The internal policymaking, and governing practices appear to be guided more by aphorism rather than a plan or strategy. On some occasions they are casual, while on other they become strictly rule bound. The whole internal process of Leadership selection is strictly limited to only one collectivity.

On the practical front, this study has some implication for the policy makers, the NGOs and all those who are involved with them. The NGOs, if they aim to strengthen the rural society, must relate their activities with the capacity building of the people in terms of the priorities components decided by the people. Excessive or total dependence on external funding heavily guards accepted that because of their poverty, and need to pay their staff, they often have to compromise with what there is money available for. A careful and comprehensive thinking must be exercised from the beginning to make them self-reliant. This will arrest the tendency of abruptly changing their field area and objectives of intervention. It will also provide them enough space to address the needs of the people, and strengthen their credibility. This requires a long-term perspective. The donors and other supporters must realize the importance of having this long-term perspective.

The concept of strengthening the rural society merely by providing training in puts to staff, or fulfilling infrastructural requirements of the organization pushes the people away from the focus of attention. Even the training inputs provided to the staff fail to deliver the expected results. Further, better co-ordination should be achieved among the different types of training given to the staff at different points of time. Multiple training inputs in diverse areas do not serve any long-term purpose. The impact of training should be evaluated in terms of the practicability of its application in the field and sequential requirements of the trainers.

Efforts that raise the participation, the involvement and co-operation of people, must be given the top most priority. The presence of professionals and the Leadership in the field leaves a positive impact on the people. Each programme and project should contribute towards the self-sufficiency of the organization. For this, the people must be allowed to exercise the right to evaluate the performance of the organization according to their own indicators. Otherwise shadowing the role of the people in decision making, auditing, and evaluating the performance of the work done by the organization, would render it nothing more than a private sphere of action limited to a few people. Of course there may be some successful case here and there, depending upon the Leadership quality is or other local factors, but what is lacking is the organization of the whole process of rural development through voluntarism.

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