



EMERGING TRENDS IN URBAN LEADERSHIP : A STUDY OF MUNICIPAL BODIES IN HARYANA

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ABSTRACT

Political development, democratic growth administrative capability depends, largely, on the quality of leadership at various levels Centre, state, and local. Leadership is, thus, sine-qua-none of success in all human activities. But, in a democratic system, particularly at the lower levels, it assumes greater significance and wider proportions. Basically, leadership is a social phenomenon that interests students of social sciences, particularly, those of sociology, politics, administration and psychology. The plural character of society and the emergence of complex and multi-dimensional socio-political organizations have worked as catalyst to the added significance of leadership. Politico-administrative organizations require integration of organizational and individual goals and achievements for a systematic and well-directed process of social change which usually occurs as a result of or along with political development and modernization.

A municipality is a body politic and corporate, constituted by the incorporation of the inhabitants of a city or town. Its chief attribute is independent succession and continuity of identity notwithstanding increase or decrease in its membership. Any local area, except military cantonments, can be constituted by the state government as a municipality and the government is also empowered to make alterations in the territorial jurisdiction of a municipality. The state government has the authority to classify the various municipalities into 1st, 2nd and 3rd class. The council consists of elected, coopted and associate members. The state government is also authorized to appoint officials not exceeding eight, to act as advisors. The term of a municipality is five years and its membership varies from the minimum of five onwards, depending upon the population of a town. The Municipal President acts as the Chairman of the Council and exercises both legislative and executive powers. In the exercise of his executive powers he is helped and assisted by an Executive Officer.

Key Words : Political, Development, Democratic, Growth, Administrative Capability, Depends, Leadership, Municipal, Act. Swachh Bharat Mission.

Leadership not only facilitates this process, but also helps in filling the latent gaps present in the social, political and administrative organisations. Socio-economic change being a slow but continuous process, especially in a democratic political system, requires different suitable patterns of leadership as the environment may demand. Thus, leadership is an ancient art and requires attention as civilization continues its efforts not only to survive but also to advance. Besides, the growing complexity of urban problems and the need to organize the people "to help bring community to action make it necessary for individuals and groups to provide leadership."



Meaning of Leadership

There are two types of leadership - expressive and instrumental surmising the constructive and destructive modes of the leaders respectively, expressive leaders are those who show solidarity and believe in seeking suggestions from other members of the group. This type can suit behavioral approach which lays stress on the leader-follower relationship and a leader is considered as an integral part of the group. These leaders act in consultation with other for the accomplishment of objectives of their group.

Two more styles of leadership are - positive and negative leadership, positive leadership is that in which the leader works for group maintenance and goal attainment. This is the ideal style of leadership as compared to the negative leadership. Here, the leader does not perform the functions for the prosperity and growth of his group of party but tries to make an overall impression that other persons in the party or group were working at the cross ends in order to rule out the possibility of the work or act, which otherwise that leader would have done to strengthen the party or group he leads.

Definitions of Leadership

It is clear from the above definition that though there is a bit of semblance in their emphasis on one influential personality, yet the latter definitions point more towards inter-personal relationship of 'the great man' and the people. Of late, theorists have been contemplating and trying with general, scattered and sporadic ideas for achieving a comprehensive and universal model of leadership application. Nevertheless, there have been differing views depending upon the administrative, socio-political, and economic environment of the times. The researchers have attempted some models and applied various approaches.

Structuralists view leadership as a special trait or a set of traits, in a person as a constitutional part of the personality structure. In other words, they consider the leader "as an entity possessed of characteristic traits and occupying rather inertly a status position relative to other individuals who are not too clearly related to him." This is based on the old time notion of charismatic personality - referring to a psychological aspect of certain leaders, namely the leaders' capacity to inspire and attract the masses. It means that leadership effectiveness could be explained by isolating psychological and physical characteristics or traits, which are presumed to differentiate the leader from other members of the group.

Leadership in Urban Governments

Good leadership and meaningful public participation are the necessary pre-requisites for building up a sound and responsible urban Government. Municipal level is considered to be the initial stage for providing education and training not only to the available leadership talent but also to a large variety of town dwellers. Thus, local leadership has to be nurtured well before it is transmitted to the state or national level as experience gained at the local level provides insight into the art of politics and government. In India, urban government have produced many a leader and statesman like Feroz Shah Mehta, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Vallabh Bhai Patel, G.V. Mavlankar, etc. These leaders "not only gained valuable experience but also added luster to the municipal politics. These giants of yore had raised the term 'politics' to the high level of municipal statesmanship." The success or failure of urban government depends upon the leader who, after having been recruited, are charged not only with setting goals but are also responsible for their efficient and effective achievement. Leadership of the Municipal Govt. level & provided (5) municipal committee (6) president to the Municipal committee and (c) the executive officer.

The above theoretical discussion in terms of leadership traits and styles generally holds good in the area of local government as well. A Municipal Councilors functions in a particular local setting deeply influenced by the members of his ward and the intelligentsia at the local level. The local government aims at (i) providing a broad base to democracy by striving to achieve the participation of every adult in the



running of the local government; (ii) affording the much needed training ground for future leadership; (iii) proper utilization of the available manpower and other local resources; and other local resources; (iv) developing a sense of community feeling and bringing about civic consciousness; (v) planning an overall strategy for urban development thereby raising the standard of living; and (vi) assuring high standard of quality of life. These tasks are quite challenging and require not only a particular approach but a combination of so many styles and traits. Dynamic leadership at the local level guarantees the smooth functioning of democracy at the state or national levels. Unfortunately not much attention has been paid to develop the expertise or skill of local leaders who form the backbone of local government. In this study an effort is being made not to find out specifically the style of leadership at the local level or a desirability of suitability of a particular individual. The scope of the present study as outlined earlier is only to analyse the role and performance of the Municipal Councilors who are elected leaders of Municipal Punjab. The study relates only to the elected representatives of the citizens. It would, therefore, be essential to briefly describe how they are recruited and what is expected of them.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study deals with the municipal government in Haryana after 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992, its objectives are:

- (i) To examine how far the innovations contemplated in the Haryana Municipal Act 1994 enacted in conformity with the constitutional 74th Amendment Act 1992 have been given effect to.
- (ii) To explore the extent of participation and empowerment of weaker sections and women in municipal government.
- (iii) To assess the performance of municipal bodies in the post - 74th Amendment Act era.
- (iv) To study the role of State Election Commission in ensuring regular free and fair municipal elections to keep the democratic element alive in the local bodies.
- (v) To study whether the objectives of decentralisation and devolution of powers to the urban local governments have been obtained.
- (vi) To analyse the role of political parties/ factions in the working of municipal government.
- (vii) To analyse the role of State Finance Commission in regard to distribution of financial resources to urban local bodies with a view to strengthening their financial position.
- (viii) To study the impact of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act on state local relation in Haryana.

In short, the study aims at discerning the causes of poor performance of municipal governments, and suggesting measures to streamline and revitalise them so as to enable them to act in a more efficient manner to fulfil the expectations of its clientele.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated to be tested in this study:

- i) The Act may encourage mass participation in municipal process.
- ii) The weaker sections and women representatives in municipal institutions would not be able to exercise their powers in real sense.
- iii) It has been assumed that municipal institutions will remain dominated by the bureaucracy and state government even after the enforcement of the Act.
- iv) The Municipal bodies may remain financially weak despite the provision for distribution of taxes between the state and urban local bodies and the recommendations for augmenting their resources by state Finance Commission under the Act.
- v) It seems that municipal institutions shall be able to plan and execute the civic and developmental programmes.



- vi) The municipal institution shall continue to work under political pressures even after the enforcement of the Act.
- vii) It seems that the elections to the municipal bodies shall be held regularly as per the provisions of the Act.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is obvious that the problems that are being faced by the municipal bodies can be studied by collecting empirical evidence based on field study. Consequently, the survey method for data collection shall be used. Official and non-official persons holding positions in the municipal government viz. councillors and bureaucrat, MPs, MLAs and prominent citizens would be interviewed and served questionnaire for eliciting the necessary information for the purpose of this study.

The study shall be based on the primary and secondary data collected from different sources. The former will include detailed study of the records of the selected municipal bodies, their files of specific cases, discussions based on interviews with councilors, officials of State and local government.

The secondary sources will comprise published material in the form of books, articles published in leading journals and magazines, reports of the Government Department of Local governments, and those of concerned municipal bodies.

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

The proposed study will focus on municipal system of Haryana. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act provides for three categories of municipal bodies, namely Nagar Panchayats, Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations, their population being the criteria for determining their nomenclature. It has been left to the State governments concerned to decide the types of local body they will like to have in their jurisdiction. Haryana Municipal Act, 1994 provides for three categories of urban local bodies.

- (i) Municipal Committee for a transitional area with a population not exceeding 50,000.
- (ii) Municipal Council for a smaller urban area with a population exceeding 50,000 but not exceeding 5 lacs; and
- (iii) Municipal Corporations for a larger urban area with a population exceeding 5 lacs to be governed by a separate Act. Of 60 municipal committees and 20 municipal councils, Municipal Committee Ladwa and Municipal Council Thanesar have been respectively selected. The selection of Municipal Committee Ladwa and Municipal Council Thanesar has been made for the reason that the researcher is the resident of the at Kurukshetra city, which forms a part of Thanesar Municipal Council. His association with these two towns will facilitate his research by virtue of his contacts with the residents and easy access to the municipal offices, councillors and officials of the two local bodies. To elicit relevant information having bearing on the subject, the voters belonging to respective areas will be proportionately selected.

A brief sketch of the importance of these three selected municipal bodies is given below:

(A) Municipal Committee, Ladwa

Ladwa is small and important Town Sub Tehsil Ladwa head quarter of the same name situated on Saharanpur - Kurukshetra State National Highway and only 15 Km. away from NH-1(G.T.Road). The town is 20 Km. East of Kurukshetra adjoining Yamuna Nagar Distt. in the east (Haryana) Karnal Distt.(Haryana) in the South, Ambala Distt. (Haryana) in North.

Ladwa is such type of town in Haryana which famous Sikh Dynasty of North Estate. There are some sign of this Dynasty are visible even today in Ladwa Town. Sheesh Mahal and old fort can even be seen today in their dilapidated dated form. A large and lengthy underground emerge from the fort outside the Skirt of city to existing P.W.D. Rest House near Rakshi River. Possibly for the movement of queens for



bathing.

Ladwa is small unknown town in the Map of India. But it is known as big due to AnajMandi which is one of the biggest grain market of Asian Continent in this town a biggest SubjiMandi are being constructed.

The population of Ladwa town is 87,887 as per 2011 census. out of which is 15,331 are male population and 13,556 are female population. The area of the town is 6.59 Sqkm. The number of houses holds as per 2011 census 15665. A literacy rate is 21,139 in which 11,844 is male and 9295 is female.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In the developing countries, local government has been recognized as the most important instrument of the management of the local affairs for socio-economic and political development. The most essential attribute of the local-government is its representative character to shoulder the responsibilities. Local government system has been found in every country as a part of its governmental or constitutional structure, irrespective of its dominant political philosophy and the form of government thereof. Local government has been rightly termed as foundation for a democratic political system. With the emergence of concept of the welfare state during the last phase of the 19th century, the importance of the local government has constantly been increasing because of the fact that it has been an instrument of attaining the objective of a welfare state.

A systematic review of historical background of the municipal governments further reveals that the real growth of the municipal government had begun with the Introduction of the Reforms of 1919 through which the subject of local government was transferred to provincial governments under the scheme of diarchy. The diarchy administration ceased by the enactment the Government of India Act, 1935. This, Act provided for federal, concurrent and State lists and the subject of municipal government was assigned to the Provinces. Thus, these Provisions had changed the legal position of the municipalities by making them dependent on provincial grants.

It is an acknowledged fact that the political development, democratic growth, administrative capability largely depend upon the quality of leadership at various levels including local. Accordingly municipal leadership has also to play a great role in developing countries like ours, where it could be helpful in social transformation by understanding the directions of social changes. After independence, the significance of equitable participatory political culture has considerably been realized but our national and state level political leadership could not have enough political will for giving constitutional status to the local bodies. The pre 74th Constitutional Amendment period clearly reflects that the women and weaker sections participation in municipal process has not reached to the desired level. It is an evident fact that high castes dominated the municipal political scenario in India and the women participation in municipal process had only marginal.

It be observed that no systematic study on municipal leadership has been conducted after the enactment of new Haryana municipal Act, 1994. Only some casual attempts have been made to study the old municipal system in the State before enactment of new Haryana Municipal Act. It was therefore considered appropriate to embark upon a new venture of undertaking research hitherto explored area by conducting a survey to examine the new municipal structure and its functioning in the state with special reference to empowerment of women, devolution of powers, role of bureaucracy, and participation of women in development process.

The new structure established under the new Act may be expected to yield some desired or unintended results. The current structure and organization of the municipal system and the implementation of new model may have some bearings on the municipal process, which is being investigated under this Research Frame Besides, the ongoing debate on issues and the early experiences of municipal system have also motivated the researcher to conduct this empirical study and to examine



the achievement of objectives of municipal bodies in Haryana under this new Haryana Municipal Act.

Haryana occupies a prominent place in Indian federal structure. Therefore, an attempt has been made to understand political milieu of the State in terms of contents and variables in the field of historical demographic socio-economic culture and administrative setup etc. Haryana has a required history both in its nomenclature and territorial dimensions. However, after the advent of the Britishers, a new chapter was opened in the history of Haryana region. It came under the British control in 1804 and was included in the Presidency of Bengal. It remained under a spell of anarchy till 1809 when the Britishers suppressed the revolt of the local people.

Presently in Haryana the Municipal bodies like Municipal Councils/Committees are governed under Haryana Municipal Act 1994 and Municipal Corporation governed under Haryana Municipal Corporation Act, 1994. Presently in Haryana 53 municipal bodies are functioning consisting of one Municipal Corporation at Faridabad 20 Municipal Councils, 31 Municipal Committees and one Cantonment Board at Ambala.

It is evident from the fact that there has been a gradual increase in the number of women leaders in sampled municipal bodies. This clearly indicates that women participation has increased to a great extent after reservation provision made in the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 as incorporated in the latest Municipal Act of Haryana. But it was observed during the field study that women participation has not increased in qualitative terms in the sampled municipalities.

Political socialization and provisions for reservation for women are the main factors contributing to the increased women participation, in sampled municipalities after the enforcement of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. It has also been observed that women leaders of the sampled municipalities have been found younger than their male counterparts. During the course of the study sampled women leaders reported the reasons for taking interest in the municipal politics.

Women participation in political process has been regarded as a healthy sign of matured democracy. However, in India with particular reference to women, participation in political process has only been limited mainly because of various socio-economic and political variables. It is said that women have still been left in periphery of political process and political participation remains elusive to most of them, in spite of their voting in elections and even capturing of some seats of power and influence.

A review of women participation in political and decision - making process in sampled municipalities reveals that women despite attaining the right to vote as early as in the first quarter of the 20th century and even holding high political offices their participation in election process has been very disappointing. It is evident from the fact that very few women availed of the opportunity for candidature for municipal bodies.

A study of the perception of the sampled women leaders of the sampled municipalities has clearly revealed that a large majority of the women respondents admitted that reservation policy has been helping and strengthening women municipal leadership.

The study of the sampled women leaders' general awareness regarding Haryana Municipal Act reflected that most of them were found unaware about the important provisions of the Haryana Municipal Act except reservation provision of the newly enacted Haryana Municipal Act. The study also highlighted that women have been facing more social problems than their male counterparts in municipal bodies while performing their constructive role in municipal politics and in decision-making process.

Decision - making process at grass root level is something different from decision - making process at higher levels. At municipal level, besides the councilors, there are number of individuals, groups, parties and their factions as well as the municipal bureaucracy directly or indirectly participate in the process of decision - making. Municipal decision - making process influenced by several pulls and pressures not only complicated but also influenced the resultant decisions substantially.



SUGGESTIONS

- No doubt reservation provisions have encouraged the women for participation in municipal governing process, but the true effect of the reservation provisions clearly indicates that upper caste elites as well as dalit elites have been the main beneficiaries of the sharing of powers in municipalities. Therefore, in order to ensure equitable representation of the masses in municipal governing process economic criteria should be suitably evolved to provide reservation to the economically weaker sections of the general women as well as for the scheduled caste women. It is also necessary that creamy-layer belonging to the reserved category should not be allowed to get benefits of the reservation provisions.
- The study has further highlighted the low level of awareness of the municipal rules and regulations and present working pattern. Therefore, it is suggested that a comprehensive training programmes for newly elected municipal councilors should be implemented in order to make democracy successful in the true sense. Such training programmes should be aimed at leadership training, micro planning Plan formulation and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The overall strategic type of such training programmes should aim at capacity building of municipalities.
- In order to make municipalities as an instrument of local self-governance, it is highly desired that there should be no political interference in day-to-day working of the municipalities. Tender care and timely assistance should be provided for the healthy growth of municipal leadership specially the women leadership so that they may grow as effective nursery of democracy at grass root levels.
- The reservations provided for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes, backward classes and women for election to the municipal councils Bodies should be utilized for the best among these categories of society of the local areas and not on extraneous considerations but on merit alone to be determined by educational qualifications, spirit of service, interest in citizen's welfare, and dedication.
- Political parties participate in civic affairs by putting up their candidates for election to the municipal council, carry on propaganda in their favour and use all possible means, fair or foul, to get them elected. They also carry with them their vices of factionalism, nepotism, favoritisms and partisanship in the conduct of municipal administration. They are unfortunately not properly organized at local level, and are unable to impose discipline among the local aspirants for membership of the council as is reflected in the contesting of elections by those denied party tickets as rebels. In order to ensure political play a positive and effective role in urban local affairs, it is desirable that they should develop comprehensive programmes on the basis of enquiries made about the needs of the urban people, evolve areas of general agreements on non controversial civic programmes, select candidates for municipal election with care and later on promote them to higher public offices to make municipalities leadership attractive, formulate an agreed code of conduct for promoting civic sense and welfare and for effecting discipline among members.

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