

An Analysis Of The Human Resource Features Of Political Executives Engaged In Local Self Governance

**Joseph Abraham*

INTRODUCTION

The elected people's representatives wield political power and take policy decisions in the day-to-day functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The statutory functions and powers enjoyed by these local bodies are manifold. The Panchayati Raj Institutions are mandatory organizations for local self-governance given by the 73rd constitution amendment. And to a large extent, the states' departmental bureaucracy is placed at the command and disposal of local governments for planning and executing various developmental tasks. During the last one-decade, the decentralization processes have witnessed revolutionary progress and now are being stabilized in the state of Kerala. To learn from these experiences; the educational attainments, age levels, experience possessed, trainings attained, gender composition, socio-economic status and activity patterns of the elected people's representatives need to be separately analyzed to characterize the emergent human-resource behavior patterns of this relatively new segment of political executives. For analytical purpose, the case of a middle layer, out of the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) set up in Kerala with special reference to Ernakulam district is taken up to highlight the human-resource characteristics of the existent elected political executive functionaries, their knowledge of the programmes and training needs that will help engage them in local self-governance of the Block Panchayats. The leadership of elected people's representatives of local bodies, especially by those of the women members is expected to facilitate better convergence and integration of various women oriented programmes. At least, ten per cent of the Plan Fund of the PRIs has to be earmarked for women specific and directly beneficial to women empowerment activities. In this context, the Government officials of those departments having development functions have to follow programme specific instructions for identifying beneficiaries in the Grama Sabhas. A typical Grama Sabha in the Kerala context will mean a gathering of above 300 to 400 households and considering that on an average, one adult is eligible for participating from each household ; it would mean that about 350 odd participants would flock together. Such a large group would be unwieldy for exercising participatory planning for development. Hence, the general, specific purpose and target oriented neighbourhood groups (NHGs) and self-help groups (SHGs) have also been promoted and these in turn are playing a special role in Kerala's decentralized planning efforts.

KERALA'S DEVELOPMENT CRISES AND PLAN MODELS

We have the acclaimed '*Kerala Development Model*'; a high physical quality of life (PQLI), low economic growth, high unemployment rates, relatively high and stable absolute and relative poverty levels over the past decades in the state and grass root level politicalization of social life. "*Persistent stagnation in production sectors, together with growing proportion of expenditures in the social sector was taking the economy to an impasse.*" (George, 1993 in Mohan Kumar 2002, p. 492). The crises of the Kerala Development Model were explained referring to the labor militancy, higher wages, trade union opposition to labor saving technologies, heavy burden of provision of social goods and services (Kannan 1998). All these were hoped to be overcome through the '*Decentralized Development Model*' via the '*People's Planning Campaign*' initiated in the Ninth Five-Year Plan by the Left Democratic Front Government. And this '*People's Plan Model*' pursued an integrated approach devoid of techno-economic refinements of the growth models based on resource allocation principals of axiomatic, atomistic behavior patterns (Thomas, 1998). The Marxist ideologue E.M.S. Namboodiripadu wrote, "*This is a new experiment wherein people have mobilized without resort to caste, creed or political party based differentiations for resource mobilization and plan implementation. Those in power trying to stick to power and those outside it making efforts to capture power by resorting to power politics needs to be replaced by a development politics centered on productivity increases*" (in Thomas, 1998). Again, this "*campaign promises to break the strait-jacket of bipolar front politics in the state and*

**Project Social Scientist, Office of the Chief Economic Adviser, MoRD, Govt. Of India, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.
E-mail : josephmepurath@yahoo.co.in*

usher in a new era of unity for development action cutting across political affiliations” (Thomas and Harilal, 1997). Here in the role of the lowest rung of the ladder of mandatory local self-governing institutional bodies, the Grama Sabhas have been focused upon as to be very crucial. The 'Social Capital' and 'Civil Society' theorists (Putnam, 1993; Heller 1996, 2000) have put forward another model that the proliferation of institutions and increased associational life concomitant to people's planning have positively contributed to the emergence of a vibrant civil society and thereby, facilitated sustained local self-development and good governance. However, as people's plan was on, two economists had already come up with an 'Open Economy Model' and arrived at findings that the states' economy is experiencing a turn around in growth and suggested remedies to the development crises (Harilal and Joseph, p. 2286, p. 2293).

Against such a background, this paper studies the human-resource features of elected people's representatives from a politically highly vibrant state - Kerala. With the 73rd amendment to the Indian constitution, the PRIs have become local self-governments. Through a system of electoral politics, people's representatives come to assume power for rendering the good governance function to the people. These PRIs have been endowed with thirty to forty per cent of the annual plan funds, which work out to about one to two crores per year for each local body, besides; these local governments have statutory powers to mobilize own local resources and get other central shares of transferred funds. Decentralized planning is said to have strengthened the local livelihoods, traditional sectors, and ushered in sustainable development. Opposed to the former, it has been pointed out that decentralization that is taking place is devoid of professionalism and purpose. Besides, the scarce public resources are expended by the local political parties on reckless modes, devoid of any semblance of plans with meager to no net impact on livelihoods and sustainabilities. The human resource characteristics of the political executives who manage these PRIs need to be understood in the above developmental context.

DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

There are fifteen Block Panchayats in Ernakulam district. Altogether, there are 184 elected members to these local bodies that form the middle tier of the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutional setup in the state. Out of them, 9 percent were Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes members; women were 33 and general categories were 58 percent

Table 1 : Number and Category of Reservation of Elected People's Representatives From Block Panchayats													
Sl. No.	Block Code	General (G)			SC/ST			Women Reserved			Total		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	G	SC/ST	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Alan	6	1	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	7	5	12
2	Anga	7	0	7	1	0	1	5	0	5	8	5	13
3	Eda	7	0	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	8	4	12
4	Koov	6	1	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	7	5	12
5	Koth	6	0	6	1	0	1	4	0	4	7	4	11
6	Mula	6	1	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	7	5	12
7	Muva	7	0	7	1	1	2	3	0	3	8	4	12
8	Pallu	7	0	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	8	4	12
9	Pamp	7	0	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	8	4	12
10	Para	7	0	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	8	4	12
11	Paru	7	1	8	1	0	1	3	1	4	8	5	13
12	Vada	5	2	7	1	0	1	3	1	4	6	6	12
13	Vazh	8	0	8	1	0	1	5	0	5	9	5	14
14	Vypi	6	2	8	0	1	1	4	0	4	6	7	13
15	Vytti	6	1	7	1	0	1	4	0	4	7	5	12
16	All	98	9	107	14	2	16	59	2	61	112	72	184

Table 2 : Block Panchayat Political Leadership By Reservation And Gender										
Sl. No.	Block Panchayat	Presidentship is reserved for					Political affiliation			
		General		Women		Men	CPM	CPI	Congress	Others
		Men	Women	General	SC/ST	SC/ST				
1	Alangad	✓					✓			
2	Angamaly	✓					✓			
3	Edappally	✓					✓			
4	Koovappady			✓			✓			
5	Kothamangalam			✓			✓			
6	Mulanthuruthy				✓		✓			
7	Muvattupuzha			✓						✓
8	Palluruthy	✓					✓			
9	Pampakuda	✓					✓			
10	Parakkadavu	✓					✓			
11	Parur	✓					✓			
12	Vadavucode			✓			✓			
13	Vazhakulam			✓			✓			
14	Vypin				✓		✓			
15	Vyttila	✓							✓	

respectively. Out of the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes members, 88 percent of them were men and women comprised of 12 percent. From among the women members, the general category constituted 97 percent and Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes constituted only 3 percent. About 60 percent of all elected members belonged to the general category and from among them, men and women constituted 92 and 8 percent respectively.

MEMBERSHIP OF SCHEDULED CASTES/ SCHEDULED TRIBES

The position of the president in these Block Panchayats were essentially retained by men, as there were eight of them. There were seven women reserved block Panchayath presidents and of them, 5 were from the general and two were from the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes categories respectively. All the five women presidents were appointed due to women's reservations. Similarly, the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes women became presidents due to the reason that two of these posts are reserved for them. No man from the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes category was manning the Presidentship, and it may be due to fact that no such reservation exists for them. Fifty four percent of the presidentships were manned by men, and women chaired the balance forty-six percent merely because these positions are statutorily reserved for them.

In thirteen out of the 15 Block Panchayats, the Communist Party (CPM) was holding the presidentship, out of them, the six women presidents also belonged to the CPM, and another lone women president represented the Left Democratic Front's political ally - the Kerala Congress (J) and lastly, there existed only one Congress manned presidentship in this district.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BLOCK PANCHAYAT MEMBERS

The largest number of elected members belonged to the 36-45 years age group. In this age group, there were more women members than men. Those in the lowest age group of 26-35 years were 17 percent and subsequently, they were at 50, 23, and 10 percent respectively in the progressive age groups of 36-45 years, 46-55 years and 56 years and above. Women members outnumbered men in the 36-45 years age group only, while in the other age groups, men outnumbered the women. Women tend to enter the public sphere late, and are involved in their prime age period and seem to leave out as their age increases. This emergent scenario is more vivid on comparing it with that of men. This may be due to the gender-specific requirements and the role-play being evolved for women in the society.

In the case of male members, a positive association was observed between age level and membership, except in the

Table 3 : Age & Sex Distribution of Elected Block Panchayat Members																			
Sl. No	Block Code	Age Distribution of Members															All		
		≤ 25 years			26-35 years			36-45 years			46-55 years			56 years ≥					
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	Male	Female	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	Alan	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	2	4	2	0	2	2	1	3	7	5	12
2	Anga	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	4	3	7	2	0	2	8	5	13
3	Eda	0	0	0	2	1	3	1	2	3	2	0	2	3	1	4	8	4	12
4	Koov	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	4	4	2	6	0	0	0	7	5	12
5	Koth	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	4	2	1	3	7	4	11
6	Mula	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	5	3	2	5	2	0	2	7	5	12
7	Muva	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	2	6	2	0	2	8	4	12
8	Pallu	0	0	0	2	1	3	3	3	6	1	0	1	2	0	2	8	4	12
9	Pamp	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	5	1	6	3	1	4	8	4	12
10	Para	0	0	0	2	0	2	4	3	7	2	1	3	0	0	0	8	4	12
11	Paru	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	4	2	0	2	3	2	5	8	5	13
12	Vada	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	2	5	0	1	1	2	1	3	6	6	12
13	Vazha	0	0	0	2	1	3	4	3	7	2	1	3	1	0	1	9	5	14
14	Vypi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	7	3	1	4	2	0	2	6	7	13
15	Vytti	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	7	1	1	2	3	0	3	7	5	12
16	All	0	0	0	14	13	27	31	36	67	38	16	54	29	7	36	112	72	184

Table 4 : Age And Educational Levels of Elected Block Panchayat Members By Gender - All 15 Block Panchayaths																
All 15 Block Panchayats																
Sl. No.	Level of Education	26-35 years			36-45 years			46-55 years			56 years ≥			All		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	< 8	1	0	1	3	6	9	6	3	9	7	1	8	17	10	27
2	9 to 10	3	0	3	9	14	23	10	4	14	12	4	16	34	22	56
3	11 to 12	6	3	9	4	6	10	6	2	8	3	0	3	19	11	30
4	Degree															
	a) Arts	2	5	7	8	2	10	4	3	7	0	0	0	14	10	24
	b) Science	0	0	0	1	4	5	3	1	4	0	0	0	4	5	9
5	Others															
	a) PG Only	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	1	4	3	0	3	7	2	9
	b) Professional	0	1	1	2	3	5	1	0	1	2	0	2	5	4	9
	c) Technical	2	3	5	3	1	4	3	2	5	4	2	6	12	8	20
6	Total	14	13	27	31	36	67	36	16	52	31	7	38	112	72	184

36-45 years age group, where the men outnumbered the women members. In the highest age group, i.e. 56 years and above, the share of men and women were at 28 and 9 percent only. As age increases, women move out of the public sphere at a relatively faster rate than men, and this is factually evident enough in the case of these Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). As compared to women, more men enter the public sphere at a relatively younger age and tend to remain as active politicians at older age levels also.

Table 5 : Educational Levels of Elected Block Panchayat Members By Age And Gender - General Members																			
All 15 Block Panchayats																			
S I. No.	Level of Education	General Members																	
		≤ 25 Years			26-35 Years			36-45 Years			46-55Years			56 Years ≥			All		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	< 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7	1	8	4	0	4	12	1	13
2	9 to 10	0	0	0	4	0	4	7	2	9	10	0	10	10	0	10	31	2	33
3	11 to 12	0	0	0	7	0	7	3	0	3	5	0	5	2	0	2	17	0	17
4	Degree																		
	a) Arts	0	0	0	2	2	4	5	0	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	10	2	12
	b) Science	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	3	3	0	3	0	0	0	4	3	7
5	Others																		
	a) PG Only	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	3	0	3	2	0	2	7	0	7
	b) Professional	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	6	0	6
	c) Technical	0	0	0	2	0	2	3	0	3	2	0	2	4	1	5	11	1	12
6	Total	0	0	0	15	3	18	24	4	28	35	1	36	24	1	25	98	9	107

AGE, GENDER AND EDUCATION

Those of the women members from the younger age groups (26-33 years) were relatively having higher levels of education. About 23 per cent of them possessed education up to the plus two level only, and 38 percent each had degree level and professional/technical qualifications. Thus, it is evident that these younger women elected members are educationally better endowed with. The above scenario is seen reversed as it comes to older age groups. Herein, about 60 to 72 percentage of them had education up to the plus two level. And about 11 to 29 percent of them were having degree and professional/technical education. In other words, the older women members were concentrated in the lower levels of educational attainment.

Seventy percent of the male members in the lower age group (26-35 years) were educated up to the plus two level only. And those with degree and professional/technical education constituted 15 percentage each. This finding is

Table 6 : Educational Levels of Elected Block Panchayat Members By Age And Gender - Women Members																			
All 15 Block Panchayats																			
Sl. No.	Level of Education	Women Members																	
		≤ 25 Years			26-35 Years			36-45 Years			46-55 Years			56 Years ≥			All		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	< 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	10	10
2	9 to 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	13	0	3	3	0	4	4	0	20	20
3	11 to 12	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	7	7	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	14	14
4	Degree																		
	a) Arts	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	2	2	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	12	12
	b) Science	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	5
5	Others																		
	a) PG Only	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
	b) Professional	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
	c) Technical	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	6	6
6	Total	0	0	0	0	13	13	0	36	36	0	16	16	0	7	7	0	72	72

diametrically opposite to those pertaining to the younger women in the same age group. Men in the older age groups in 52-71 percent of the cases were educated up to the plus two level. Those with degree level education fell in the range of 16 to 29 percent. The number of professionally and technically qualified male members was in the range of 15 to 21 percent to the total. Thus, comparatively, male members were more educated than women and possessed relatively larger and higher professional and technical educational attainments in these Block Panchayats.

OVERALL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS

Those with 9 to 10th class educational attainment constituted the largest segment at 30 percent from among all the elected members. The plus two level educated members were sixteen percent. Those with up to 8th class education formed only 15 percent and Arts Degree holders were thirteen percent only. The technically qualified hands formed eleven percent. Science degree holders, postgraduates and professionals constituted five percentage each. Even though this general scenario is applicable to both men and women members as above, the educational status position of women members tended to decline as the level of education norms moved upwards. Among them, the single largest level of education attained was tenth class followed by plus two. About 12 per cent were having education up to the eighth class only. Those with arts degree and technical qualifications were at eleven percent each. Science and postgraduate degree holders were at 7 percent each respectively.

Table 7 : Educational Levels of Elected Block Panchayat Members By Age And Gender - SC/ST Members																			
All 15 Block Panchayats																			
Sl. No.	Level of Education	SC/ST Members																	
		≤ 25 Years			26-35 Years			36-45 Years			46-55 Years			56 Years ≥			All		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	< 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	4	5	1	6
2	9 to 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	2	5	0	5
3	11 to 12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
4	Degree																		
	a) Arts	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
	b) Science	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Others																		
	a) PG Only	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	b) Professional	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	c) Technical	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
6	Total	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	1	7	2	0	2	6	1	7	14	3	17

WOMEN ELECTED MEMBERS

Majority of these women people's representatives were having education up to the tenth class. About twenty percent of these women leaders were having education up to the plus two levels. Seventeen percent of them had an arts degree background. Among the graduates, those with science degree constituted only 29 percent, while this category formed only one percent of the total. Those with technical education were to less than one percent. Professionals and postgraduates were very few among the women politicians i.e. at less than one percent.

SCHEDULED CASTES/ SCHEDULED TRIBES ELECTED MEMBERS

The largest segment of the elected Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe members had an educational attainment of below 8th class. Among them, those having SSLC and Plus Two education were at 12 and 29 percent respectively. Only 18 percent of them had degree level educational attainment. The professionally and technically qualified ones comprised of only 6 percent from among them.

[illegible]

Table 10 : Subsidiary Activity Pattern of Elected People's Representatives Whose Major Activity Is Agriculture																																	
Sl No.	Major and Sub- sidiary Income Generating Activity	Political affilia- tion	Politics			Pensioner			Artist			Private Sector Employee/			Advocate			Driver			Media Worker/ Employee			LIC/ Insurance Agent			Social Worker						
			M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
2	Subsidiary income activity	U	14	2	16																			1		1							
		L	10	3	13																												
		O	2	1	3																												
		T	26	6	32																				1		1						
Subsidiary Activity Pattern of Elected People's Representatives Whose Major Activity Is Agriculture {Table No.10 (Contd.)}																																	
Co-Operative Bank Employee	House Wife	Anganwadi Worker	Head Load Worker			Toddy Worker			Contractor			Carpenter			Business			Agriculture (Fisherman/ Fish Farmer)			NIL			All									
			M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T							
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
											1		1																	16	2	18	
																			1		1							2		2	13	3	16
																														2	1	3	
																1		1	1	1								2		2	31	6	37

MAJOR AND SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITY PATTERNS BY GENDER AND POLITICS

MAJOR INCOME ACTIVITIES

The major income earning economic activities reported by elected members were: politics, agriculture, business, pension, private sector employment, service sector employment, and housewifery respectively in the order of priority by all categories of members. When it comes to the members of the left front parties {(Left Democratic Front (LDF)}, the emergent priority did not follow the above observed sequential order. For them, politics, agriculture, pension, private sector employment and services, law, co-operative societies, business and housewifery were the major activities/income sources being pursued. Agriculture, business, politics, housewifery, law, and services were the major activities in the order of priority of the members belonging to United Democratic Front (UDF). It was business, politics and agriculture that constituted the major activities for the Other parties put together. Thus, it is self-evident that for the Left Democratic Front members, politics was the major activity, while for the United Democratic Front and other party members, agriculture and business were the first chosen sphere of activity .

SUBSIDIARY INCOME ACTIVITIES

The major subsidiary activities of Left Democratic Front members were politics, agriculture, and business. For the United Democratic Front members, politics, self-employed services and private-sector jobs were the main subsidiary activities. Politics was the largest income earning activity, irrespective of party affiliations for all the elected members. Among those reporting politics as a major activity, the United Democratic Front members were at 22 percent, and the Left Democratic Front and Others constituted 70 and 8 percent respectively. While from among those reporting politics as a subsidiary activity, the United Democratic Front members were at 42 percent, while the Left Democratic Front and Others represented 50 and 8 percent respectively. Thus, it is evident that for the elected members belonging to the Left Democratic Front, political activity was essentially seen as a major activity, while for those owing affiliation to the United Democratic Front and Other parties, politics was seen as a major subsidiary activity only.

The Left Democratic Front members reporting politics as a subsidiary activity were at 61 percent, while it was 30 and 9 percent respectively for United Democratic Front and Other Front members. In other words, for Left Democratic Front members, political activity was essentially a full-time work and they had no separate subsidiary assignment as such. The United Democratic Front and other party affiliated members did report of having substantial subsidiary activity commitments . This suggests that these people's servants were having different work commitments other than confining themselves to political activity alone.

SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITIES OF THOSE WITH POLITICS AS A MAJOR ACTIVITY

On analyzing the subsidiary activities of those reporting politics as the major activity, the following scenarios emerged. About 23 percent of those reporting no subsidiary activity were United Democratic Front members, while 67 and 10 percent respectively were Left Democratic Front and Other party affiliated members. Those from the United Democratic Front reporting politics as a major activity had not reported of having any subsidiary activities, while the Left Democratic Front members reported of having business, agriculture, private sector employment and housewifery as subsidiary activities. The Other category of politicians reported of no subsidiary activities per se. Thus, it is evident that for those taken who had taken up politics as a major activity had no other subsidiary activity commitments as such, and they were full time politicians .

SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITIES OF THOSE WITH AGRICULTURE AS A MAJOR ACTIVITY

Among those reporting agriculture as a major occupation, the United Democratic Front members formed the largest group at 49 percent, and the Left Democratic Front and Others were at 43 and 8 percent each . Politics was essentially a major subsidiary activity for the United Democratic Front members at 90 percent, while it was at 80 and 100 percent each for Left Democratic Front and Other party politicians reporting agriculture as the main walk of life. The other

subsidiary activities reported by them were; LIC Agent, Contractor of public works, and carpentry; which constituted less than 10 per cent of the total observations.

Table 12 : Scheme Awareness By Elected Members (In Numbers)															
Sl. No.	Block Code	IAY		SGSY		SGRY		RIDF		PMGSY		ARWSS			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
1	Alan	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	0	11		
2	Anga	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	0	13		
3	Edap	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	0	12		
4	Koov	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0		
5	Kotha	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0		
6	Mula	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	8	4		
7	Muva	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	0	12		
8	Pallu	12	0	4	8	3	9	0	12	2	10	0	12		
9	Pamp	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0		
10	Para	11	1	11	1	11	1	10	2	10	2	0	12		
11	Para	11	0	11	0	11	0	0	11	0	11	0	11		
12	Vada	12	0	12	0	12	0	8	4	10	2	7	5		
13	Vazh	14	0	14	0	14	0	14	0	14	0	10	4		
14	Vypi	13	0	13	0	12	1	10	3	13	0	8	5		
15	Vytt	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0		
	Total	183	1	175	9	173	11	152	32	159	25	83	101		
Sl. No.	Block Code	MPLADS		MLASDF		TSC		NCE		NREGS		PLAN FUNDS		ALL	
1	Alan	10	1	10	1	10	1	6	5	6	5	10	1	107	25
2	Anga	10	1	10	1	10	1	6	5	6	5	10	1	107	25
3	Edap	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	143	13
4	Koov	7	5	12	0	12	0	7	5	12	0	12	0	122	22
5	Kotha	12	0	12	0	12	0	1	11	12	0	12	0	133	11
6	Mula	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	1	13	0	156	1
7	Muva	12	0	12	0	12	0	8	4	10	2	12	0	134	10
8	Pallu	12	0	12	0	12	0	6	6	5	7	11	1	118	26
9	Pamp	0	12	1	11	11	1	1	11	2	9	8	4	44	99
10	Para	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	144	0
11	Para	10	2	11	1	11	1	0	12	6	6	0	12	91	53
12	Vada	3	8	3	8	6	5	0	11	3	8	11	0	59	73
13	Vazh	11	1	12	0	12	0	3	9	9	3	12	0	120	24
14	Vypi	11	3	12	2	13	1	8	6	14	0	14	0	152	16
15	Vytt	6	7	7	6	7	6	7	6	11	2	11	2	118	38
	Total	13	0	13	0	13	0	13	0	9	4	13	0	152	4

SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITIES OF THOSE WITH BUSINESS AS A MAJOR ACTIVITY

Of those reporting business as a major occupation, the United Democratic Front members formed 64 percent and 18 percent each by the Left Democratic Front and Other party members. Other subsidiary activity being carried out was in the service sector, that too by a local United Democratic Front member. These businessmen politicians were essentially United Democratic Front members in 62 percent of the cases, and at 18 percent each by the Left

Table 13 : Training Deficient Areas and Needs Assessment of People's Representatives						
Sl. No	Block Code	Do you lack training?		Has your Political party given training on Schemes?		The Training Needed Subjects Identified are (list is prioritized)
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
		(Nos)		(Nos)		
1	Alan	3	8	10	1	NREGA, as Block Member, for Women Schemes
2	Anga	9	4	13	0	Administration and Centrally Sponsored Programmes
3	Edap	12	0	8	4	Localized Training needed
4	Koov	7	5	9	3	Energy Security Mission and TSC
5	Kotha	13	0	13	0	Non Conventional Energy (NCE)
6	Mula	12	0	11	1	Imple. of 11 th Plan, Water shed, People's Plan, Non Conventional Energy (NCE)
7	Muva	12	0	1	11	NREGS, Non Conventional Energy, NABARD, ABWSS
8	Pallu	11	1	6	6	Project preparations, beneficiary election and Evaluation
9	Pamp	12	0	8	4	Project Implementation and Evaluation
10	Para	10	2	4	8	Centrally Sponsored Schemes
11	Para	11	0	0	11	Training on Schemes and Administrative Matters
12	Vada	9	3	7	5	People's Planning, Training in C S S
13	Vazha	13	1	6	8	Non Conventional Energy and Capacity Development
14	Vypin	13	0	0	13	Block Level Training on Centrally Sponsored Schemes
15	Vytti	7	6	2	11	Managerial Development
	Total	154	30	98	86	Human Resource Development

Democratic Front and Other party members each.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF ELECTED MEMBERS

SCHEME KNOWLEDGE

On analyzing the elected people's representatives' awareness of the various schemes, the following are the major findings. The Block Panchayat members were asked to respond to a question as to whether they were aware of the main features of all the major programmes that were listed. About 80 percent of the members were aware of the essentials of the major schemes and only 20 percent were unaware of the details. The most familiar schemes were Indira Awas Yojana (IAY); Swarna- Jayanthi Grameen Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) ; Swarna-Jayanthi Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) ; Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) and People's Plan in that order of rankings. The least familiar schemes were ARWSS ; NCE ; Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS); Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) ; and Members of Legislative Assembly Special Development Fund (MLASDF) respectively. On the functioning of these less-known schemes, more training must be given to these elected members, which is obvious enough. Why are these schemes less known to them? The answer lies in the fact that these schemes have not envisaged a training component within its program framework itself.

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Out of the 184 elected members, only 30 of them reported of lacking sufficient training on schemes, this formed about 17 percent of the total. Which in itself being a lower percentage, is obviously indicative of the deficiency felt for the training needs. Some of the elected members had reported of receiving some training and orientation from their own political party and organizational set up. Both the Left Democratic Front and United Democratic Front members have had this facility, but to a lesser degree by the latter group.

TRAINING DEFICIENT AREAS

The six major schemes and areas identified as needing more training and orientation for the elected members are:

(i) Organizational management and office administration of the Block Panchayats with regard to functions of power and co-ordination opportunities; (ii) Human resource development; (iii) Gender focused planning and implementation; (iv) Non Conventional Energy; (v) Sanitation and environment (vi) Project preparation, evaluation and monitoring of schemes.

MAJOR FINDINGS

✿ Out of the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes elected members, 88 percent of them were men and 12 percent were women. Sixty percent of all the elected members belonged to the general category and from among them, men and women constituted 92 and 8 percent respectively. The Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes women became presidents essentially due to the reason that two posts were reserved for them. No men from the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes category were manning the Presidentship, may be due to the fact that no such reservation exists for them.

✿ Majority of these elected members belonged to the 36-45 years age group. In this age group, there were more women members than men. Women members outnumbered men in the 36-45 years age group only, while in the other age groups, men outnumbered the women. Women tend to enter the public sphere late and get involved only in their prime age period and seem to leave out as their age increases. In the case of male members, a positive association was observed between age level and membership. As age increases, women move out of the public sphere at a relatively faster rate than men, and this is factually evident in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. As compared to women, more men enter the public sphere at a relatively younger age, and tend to remain active till older age levels.

✿ The women elected members from the younger age groups (26-33 years) were relatively having higher levels of education. Older women members were concentrated in the lower levels of educational coverage and attainment. Comparatively, male members were more educated than women and possessed relatively larger and higher professional and technical educational attainments in these Block Panchayats. Those with 9 to 10th class educational attainments constituted the largest segment at 30 percent from among all the elected members. Majority of the women people's representatives were having education up to the tenth class. Most of the elected Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes members had an educational attainment below 8th class.

✿ Politics, agriculture, business, pension, private sector employment, service sector employment, and housewifery were the major income earning economic activities of elected members. For the Left Democratic Front members, politics was the major activity ; while for the United Democratic Front and Other party members, agriculture and business were the first preferred sphere of activities. The major subsidiary activities of Left Democratic Front members were politics, agriculture, and business. For the United Democratic Front members, politics, self-employed services and private sector jobs were the main subsidiary activities. For those who had taken up politics as a major activity, they did not have any other subsidiary activity commitment as such, and they were full time politicians. Politics was essentially a major subsidiary activity for the United Democratic Front members at 90 percent, while it was at 80 and 100 percent each for Left Democratic Front, and Other politicians reported agriculture as their main walk of life. The businessmen politicians were essentially United Democratic Front members in 62 percent of the cases, and at 18 percent each by the Left Democratic Front and Other members each.

✿ Eighty percent of the elected members were aware of the essentials of the major schemes and 20 percent were unaware of the details of the various programmes being implemented. Why these schemes are less known to them? The answer, according to them, lay in the fact that these items were not often envisaged as a training component within the program framework itself. Out of the 184 elected members, 30 of them reported of lacking sufficient training on schemes, this formed about 17 percent. However, these elected members had reported of receiving some training and orientation from their own political party and organizational set up for managing these Panchayati Raj Institutions. Both the Left Democratic Front and United Democratic Front members had availed this facility, but to a lesser degree by the latter group. The schemes and areas identified as needing more training and orientation for the elected members were : office administration and organizational management, human resource development, gender development, energy use and management, sanitation, and project preparation evaluation and monitoring.

CONCLUSION

But for the statutory reservation provision, the presence of backward castes and women among the elected members would have been very low in these new generation local bodies. A gender tailored lifecycle is emergent among these political workers. The gender and age based fragmentations in this segment of human resource is biased in favor of the men folk and is deterrent to women. The women members from the younger age groups were seen to have higher educational attainment, even though the general level of education of these new-generation politicians was low. Political activity is emerging as a major income earning profession. Such professional specifications were more ardent among the left oriented activists vis-a-vis the right wingers. Party based in-house orientations given to elected cadres were much less used by the right wing. To function effectively; these people's representatives need to undergo training need assessments and capacity-building efforts, but as a group, these local politicians are less exposed to both of the above HR functions. The strengthening of the various levels of interfaces between the official bureaucracy and the political executives need innovative interventions to tap better results from the present-day decentralization efforts and local self-governance attempts. These are essential to overcome the present day 'bandwagon effects', 'elite captures' and 'mafia rule' that are apparently visible in the local self-governance institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author acknowledges the useful comments given on this article by Prof. R. Radhakrishna and Prof. S. Sudhakar Reddy at Centre and to the participants in a UGC sponsored seminar at Newman College, Thodupuzha, Kerala.

REFERENCES

- 1) Abraham Joseph (2000). "Development Of Poor Women Through NHGs: Analysis Of Organizational And Functional Aspects." *Journal of Public Administration*, April-June, No.2, IIPA, pp. 32-47.
- 2) Committee on Distribution of Powers (CDP) (1997) . *Final Report*, Government of Kerala. (Also called the Sen Committee after its Chairman).
- 3) Harilal K. N. and Joseph K. J. (2003). "Revival of Kerala Economy - An Open Economy Perspective." *Economic and Political Weekly*, June 7-13, No.23, pp. 22-23.
- 4) Heller (2000). "Degrees of Democracy; Some Comparative Lessons from India." *World Politics*, Volume 52, July, pp. 484-519.
- 5) Heller, Patrick (1996). "Social Capital As Product of Class Mobilization and State Intervention: Industrial Workers In Kerala." *World Development*, Volume 24, No.6, pp. 84-89.
- 6) --- (2004). "Participatory Basis and Women Orientation in Urban NHGs of Poor Women of Kerala." *Women's Link*, Vol.10, No.4, pp. 31-33.
- 7) Kannan K. P. (1998). "Political Economy of Labour And Development In Kerala." *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 26, pp. 40-42.
- 8) Kerala Panchayath Raj Act (1994). Fifth Edition 2005, Law Books Center. Ernakulam.
- 9) Local Administration Department (1999). *Trainers Handbook on SJSRY and NSDP*.
- 10) Mohankumar S. (2002). "From Peoples Plan to Plan Sans Peoples." *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 20-26, No.16, pp. 1492-1493.
- 11) NABARD and Government of Kerala (1995). '*Community Financial Management System of CDS*.' Local Administration Department , Thiruvananthapuram.
- 12) Narayana D. (2005). "Local Governance With Out Capacity Building: Ten Years Of Panchayati Raj." *Economic and Political Weekly*, June 25-July 1, No.26, pp. 28-32.
- 13) People's Planning, Collected Orders (1999). Kerala State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 14) Putnam Robert (1993). '*Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions In Modern Italy*.' Princeton University Press. Princeton.
- 15) Thomas I. M. (1998). "Janakeeyasuthranam Sishtantham Prayogavum". (In Malayalam), Kerala State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram. pp. 102-123.