CHAPTER VI

BUREAUCRATS' PERCEPTION OF THE FORMAL STRUCTURE

In the preceding chapter we have discussed the formal organisation of Panchayati Raj, in so far as it relates to agricultural development functions. But an organisation does not conform to the blueprint, when it operates, as it is subjected to various constraints, emanating both from within and outside it. In order to cope with various pressures it reorganises and restructures itself giving rise to new forms of interactions and interrelations, what Balu calls 'informal organisation.' Thus, for a systematic study of local administration, it is not enough, merely, to know about the normative aspects of the organisation, but it is equally important to understand dynamic processes that obtain within it, influencing motivational and performance capabilities of individuals bureaucrats. In other words, alongside role definition and normative referents, as formally prescribed, it is important to understand how roles are actually perceived and performed by different actors and how norms are operationalised and enforced.

It would be, therefore, interesting to examine the perceptions and evaluation of bureaucrats, of the administrative structure within which roles are located and goals are to be pursued. The bureaucrats have mentioned several gaps in the current administrative structure, which have repercussions for their performance in terms of coordination of various functions, exercise of power and authority over subordinates, securing of supplies of inputs and informing policy making and planning at higher levels. Briefly stated, these gaps, as pointed by our informants are as under.

**Problems of autonomous sub-structures**

Firstly, the creation of autonomous cooperative institutions without firm structural linkages with Panchayat institution has rendered the latter ineffectual in several ways. 1) This has led to a considerable decline in political participation in panchayat bodies. In the absence of adequate resources, in the panchayat body, the political leaders have become detached and disinterested in their positions, as they cannot distribute patronage any longer. This is indicated by the fact that the political leaders do not even regularly participate in the meetings of the Panchayats and
Panchayat Samiti. Several Vikas Adhikaris and AEOs mentioned that panchayats irregularly meet and the Agriculture Production Committees; in the Panchayat Samiti, hold only occasional meetings and at times the intervening period between two meetings run into several months. In one extreme case, an AEO mentioned "I have been in this Panchayat Samiti for past two years but I have not been able to hold a single meeting of the Production Committee for the want of quorum". Moreover, the political leaders seemed to feel purposelessness in their activities for their decisions were rendered inconsequential. A Pradhan, who was also Chairman of the Production Committee remarked, "It is no use taking a decision in production committee to cover a certain area under improved variety of seeds when we cannot assure the supply of seeds and fertilizers to the farmers in time. What use it is to have mere 'paper plans' when we cannot accomplish them".

11) The political leaders, in panchayati Raj also had a sense of loss of power as they did not control resources. They felt that their image was seriously damaged as they had no patronage to distribute. Voicing these feelings, a Pradhan observed, "The farmers do not bother about the Pradhan or Sarpanch. They hardly come to the Samiti office which used to be always flocked by them, when we used to give them loans and
subsidies and supply them seeds and fertilisers. I do not blame them. The question is why should they come to us now, when we have nothing to give them".

iii) The divorce, of Panchayat body which is responsible for production planning, from the cooperative organisation which arranges for the supply of inputs, has created problems of coordination for the extension and the field staff. Pointing to these difficulties an AEO remarked: "it is no use advising farmers about the quantity and quality of fertilizer to be used, because many times a particular type of fertilizer which has been advised for use may not be available or it may be in short supply. This creates confusion for the farmers". Another AEO mentioned, "Some times I am able to help the farmers by supplying them improved seeds, which I receive from agriculture department, under the departmental schemes, but the problem of fertilizer remains, for which I cannot do any thing. But if adequate doses of fertilizer are not given in time, it affects the output and even the seed goes waste". Yet another AEO remarked, "sometimes the quality of seed supplied by cooperatives is poor or even adulterated and that adversely affects the output and creates doubts in the minds of the farmers. This has serious consequences for extension work as the poor and small farmers cannot afford to take risk and do not
try out new methods and revert back to old practices." Similarly, the field staff of the cooperative bank enumerated many difficulties they experienced in eliciting cooperation from the extension staff of the Panchayat. One Loan Inspector remarked "I have to help farmers in filling out loan applications which can be easily done by a Gram Sevak. If he does it, it will be efficient, less time consuming and also less expensive". Another Loan Inspector observed, "I have to spent lot of time in recovery work which can be easily done by the CEO, the Gram Sevak and the Patwari without spending any extra time. But they do not care as they do not think they are responsible for it".

Apart from the problems of coordination of functions, the CEOs had a sense of purposelessness about their role. So much so, some of them even went to the extent of suggesting that they had no work, since their main functions had been taken over by the staff of the cooperative institutions. Discussing about his role a CEO said, "I have no work since Panchayat Samiti has no funds for carrying out cooperative activities. Therefore, the post of CEO should be abolished". Voicing similar feelings another CEO remarked, "I am mainly responsible for effecting recoveries. I wonder why I should be doing that work. It should be entrusted to the revenue department or to the bank staff, on whose
recommendations loans are sanctioned." The Tehsildars were of the view that the Panchayat Samitis had failed to manage the loans and subsidies as they had advanced money to undeserving persons without even ensuring its recovery. The banks are not likely to succeed either because their Inspectors do not have adequate contacts with the farmers and may advance money to undeserving persons. Some of them suggested that this work could be easily manage by the revenue department, with some additional staff. One Tehsildar remarked, "I can easily manage advancing of loans and its recovery with the assistance of one additional clerk to my present staff."

Another Tehsildar said, "I have no say in the advancement of loans but I have to share major responsibility in the recovery work".

Thus, it brings out that establishing cooperatives without firm linkages with Panchayat bodies has created a sense of powerlessness in the political leaders holding positions in the latter and has affected their participation. Further, this has given rise to problems of coordination of bureaucratic functions and created a sense of purposelessness in some officials of their own role and that of others.

Problems of Autonomy of extension staff

Secondly, the Panchayat Samiti officials, on whom
the responsibility of execution and implementation of development programmes rest, maintained that they did not have adequate power and authority to direct the activities of their subordinate staff. Firstly, at the samiti level the extension officers are on deputation to the panchayat samiti, from the government departments and the Vikas Adhikari who is the executive head, does not have any disciplinary control over them. This has serious implications for his functioning as a head of a team, over whose members, he cannot exercise administrative control. Several Vikas Adhikaris felt that they could not function effectively since they had no control over their subordinates. Expressing concern about the inadequacy of power, a Vikas Adhikari mentioned, "I just cannot get work done from my subordinates, as I do not have any control over them. I cannot take any action against the AEO or the CEO if they do not do their job well. At the most I can make adverse comments in their confidential report. But that has no meaning because the final reports have to be sent by their departmental heads and if they are in their good books, they are bound to protect them."

Another Vikas Adhikari said, "For getting the work done from the subordinates one should be in a position to offer them incentives. But I am in no position to
do that and hence they do not take my instructions seriously, and at times even ignore them. They care more for the instructions of their departmental head as they know very well that he can make or mar their career. They know, I cannot do them any good even if they work well so why should they pay any heed to what I say."

Secondly, the Vikas Adhikaris have no jurisdiction over the cooperative banks and the cooperative societies which provide credit facilities and arrange for the supply of seed and fertilizer respectively. Pointing to their problems in planning and achieving agriculture production targets, the Vikas Adhikaris mentioned several difficulties which they encountered owing to lack of coordination of their activities with the cooperatives. These mainly related to supply of inputs like seeds and fertilizers and advancement of credit for construction and repair of wells or purchase of implements. Recounting these problems a Vikas Adhikari said, "it is not uncommon to find that maximum credit limits are not determined in case of some of the cooperative societies and hence their sanctions are delayed. But the farmer cannot wait and in a desperate hurry he tries to use whatever seed and fertilizer is available. This entirely upsets our plan." Another Vikas Adhikari mentioned, "it is our usual experience,
when the AEO goes to inspect the farms in the villages and to advise the farmers, about the use of a certain type and quantity of fertilizer, he several times finds that the cooperative societies, in that area, do not have that type of fertilizer or they cannot supply it in required quantity. In such a situation what can he advise?" Yet another Vikas Adhikari pointed out, "In the meetings of the Gram Sevaks when they raise problems relating to delayed and adequate supply of seeds and fertilizer we helplessly listen to them not knowing what to do."

Thirdly, the Vikas Adhikari has no jurisdiction over the revenue department which assesses the taxes and helps the panchayat body in collecting the same. The Vikas Adhikaris pointed out that generally the revenue department paid no attention to this work. A Vikas Adhikari remarked, "The Panchayat Samitis have meagre resources and even the taxes imposed by it are not regularly collected. At best I can only inform the Tehsildar about the outstanding recoveries. But it is upto him to take any action. He never comes to the samiti meetings, although he should normally attend these meetings. How can he ever understand our difficulties?"
Thus, it is evident from the views expressed by the Vikas Adhikaris that their powers and authority fall too short of the responsibilities they have to shoulder. In the present local administrative set-up they are handicapped in exercising control over their subordinates and in coordinating the activities of other related departments.

Besides, the lack of power and authority of the Vikas Adhikari which affects his functioning as head of the team at the Panchayat Samiti level, the extension officers are equally handicapped in the performance of their role as they have no control over the Gram Sevak. Many of them mentioned that they could not carry out the programmes at the village level because they could hardly exercise any control over the Gram Sevak, who was their main link at that level. But a large number of them were rather in sympathy with him and were highly critical of the present administrative set-up which has created this situation. They attributed the ineffectiveness of the Gram Sevak to the following factors. Firstly, the Gram Sevak is not properly linked either with the Panchayat or with the cooperatives, which are the two main institutions working for agricultural development at the village level. Secondly, being an employee of the Zila Parishad he owes his loyalty to the Sarpanch who alone can help him in matters of transfer
and promotion. Thirdly, since he belongs to Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad services which is not linked at higher administrative levels there is limited scope for his promotion. This affected their morale and motivation.

Thus, it is indicated that not only the Vikas Adhikaris are handicapped owing to lack of power and authority but also the extension officers suffer from the same. In the present administrative organisation the lowest link i.e. Gram Sevak, who has to give effect to all plans formulated at the Samiti level, is the weakest link. In fact, the role is not even properly located in an organisation, leave aside its inter-connection with other related organisations.

Problems of Feedback

Finally, the present organisation does not have channels to provide feedback for informing policy and planning at the higher levels. Several Vikas Adhikaris mentioned that, as the main implementers, they acquired intimate knowledge of the shortfalls of various programmes and the problems encountered in implementing them and became aware of local needs and resources, but their experiences were of no use as they had no say in the district departments, which formulated plans and
programmes. They also brought out that apart from the administrative channels, there were no political links either which could feed policy-making and planning at the district and state levels and make them realistic, as the Zila Parishad was merely an advisory body. Zila Parishad, thus, remains a weak-link in the Panchayati Raj administration. This fact has also been observed by the Sadiq Ali Committee. The Committee report states, in uncertain terms, "our broad conclusion, however, is that in the present form, Zila Parishad as an institution has not made any impact on the development programme. Zila Parishads have not been effective because they have no power to enforce advice and supervision."  

**Evaluation of the system**

Apart from the structural sources identified above, by the officials, as affecting their performance, it may also be influenced by the manner in which the organisation actually functions giving rise to what we have already described as 'informal organisation'. In other words, we are referring to the real or operative aspects of the organisation i.e. the way decisions

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are actually arrived at and communicated, inflow of inputs and material resources arranged, supervision and guidance provided, grievances and complaints heard and resolved, rewards and punishment effected and coordination brought about. In addition to these, in the participating administrative system, the relationships officials come to establish with political leaders and people also have bearing on their performance. Thus, it would be worthwhile to examine which of these factors, in the judgement of the bureaucrats themselves, promote or impede their performance. In other words, our main concern is to discuss the factors that according to the bureaucrats contribute to their efficiency or inefficiency. But before we go to examine these factors, it would be interesting to find out how bureaucrats as a group evaluate the total organisation in terms of its efficiency. In order to elicit their perception of the administrative efficiency the bureaucrats were asked, "People often complain about administrative inefficiency in government. How do you feel about this observation?" It is revealed from the responses that a good deal of consensus is obtained among officials about administrative inefficiency. It is brought out that as many as 78.4 per cent of the respondents have shown their agreement to the statement. But slightly more block officials (83 per cent) feel that
inefficiency prevalent in the administration, when compared to the district officials (75 per cent). However, so far as political leaders are concerned, there is complete unanimity on this point and an overwhelming majority (96.4 per cent) consider the system inefficient. One of the most important factors for the inefficiency is perhaps the sense of inefficacy or ineffectiveness of the bureaucrats themselves. This might stem from the lack of support from the higher levels of administrative system, the internal organisation and the environment within which they function. We shall turn to examine each of these to find out how far the bureaucrats consider these factors as supportive or unsupportive for their role performance and goal attainment.

**Evaluation higher level organisation**

Higher level organisation, here, refers to the district and state level administration, where major policy-making and planning is done, goals are fixed and funds provided. First of all, we shall examine how block and district level officials view higher levels of administration. Their perceptions have been tapped on three important aspects relating to higher level administrative organisation. These are: (1) How well informed are the planners and policy-makers of
the local needs and resources; (ii) How clearly goals are defined; and (iii) How adequate are the resources? The responses to these questions have been presented in table 6:1.

### Table 6:1

**Officials' Evaluation of Higher Level Bureaucratic Organisation**

(responses in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Planners and policy makers are ill-informed about real problems and set unrealistic targets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Goals are not clearly defined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111) There are inadequate funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
1. Total N = 148
2. Since non-responses have been excluded the distributions may not add up to 100.
**Policy making and planning**

It is observed that as many as 87 per cent of the respondents consider that the planners and policy-makers are ill-informed and set unrealistic targets. But these views are expressed by slightly larger number of the block compared to the district officials. This is largely attributable to the fact that there was no serious attempt at the higher levels to utilise existing feed-back channels for informing policy making and planning. Whatever be the reasons if the officials feel that targets are unrealistic, it is doubtful if they will make serious efforts to achieve them.

But all the same these views were confirmed by the officials, in their open-ended interviews and also by the impressions gathered from the official meetings. Expressing his views about decision making on an important matter like fixing of production targets, a Vikas Adhikari mentioned, "Targets are fixed by what is called District Production Committee. But a Vikas Adhikari is not even asked to express his views in the meetings of the committee on the targets fixed for his Panchayat Samiti. What can he say in presence of the Collector and District Agriculture Officer? And even if some body says, nobody hears him. Generally there is no change in the targets once they are announced. What is the sense
of having a meeting if there is no opportunity to members to express their views?" Another Vikas Adhikari remarked, "It is just on paper that the targets should be fixed from below. In reality these are already fixed by the District Agriculture officer and only our 'confirmation' is sought in the meeting, in presence of the Collector."

In addition, the observations gathered from two meetings in which such decisions were taken, support these views. For instance, in one meeting of the production committee held in the Collector's office under his chairmanship, it was observed that the District Agriculture Officer, announced the target fixed for a particular Panchayat Samiti and the Vikas Adhikari stood up and acknowledged the same. But in few cases in which Vikas Adhikaris raised problems or expressed their doubts about realising them, they were either not heard or were pulled up for such a reluctance by the Collector. It was evident that no efforts were made to listen or to understand the problems and difficulties of the Vikas Adhikaris. It really appeared to be a process of 'obtaining concurrence' of the Vikas Adhikari, as one of them had put it or it was 'giving order' as was mentioned by another.
A very similar process was observed, in a monthly meeting, of the Gram Sevaks conducted by an Agriculture Extension officer, at the Panchayat Samiti headquarters, to assess the achievements of the production targets which were already communicated. The meeting lasting about one and a half hours had started two hours behind schedule. It was a regular meeting, held every second or third of the month. It was attended by sixteen Gram Sevaks. The meeting mostly discussed the problems raised by the Gram Sevaks relating to supply of seeds and fertilizers, the poor quality of seeds and fertilizers, the poor quality of seeds supplied, non-availability of improved implements, delays in sanction of loans from cooperative banks and above all non-payment of their travel (T.A.) bills (which were outstanding for eight months). But the AEO skillfully postponed these issues and kept assuring the Gram Sevaks to discuss these towards the end of the meeting. But his assurances did not cut much ice and the Gram Sevak kept on repeatedly bringing the same problems. Finally, he concluded the meeting with the remarks "I have heard the problems raised by you. I shall discuss them with the Vikas Adhikari and see what can be done about them and let you know in our next meeting. But in the mean time you must put up your efforts to achieve the targets."
Apart from the regular meetings, the periodical departmental reports and the official visits are other media for providing feedback to planners and policy makers at the higher levels. There was a general feeling that these reports and field visits were not used to understand the problems of the field officials and the needs of the local people. These had become what many of them described as mere 'formalities' and 'routines'. It was mentioned in this connection, that district official came many times without any prior intimation and also scheduled visits were cancelled without any intimation.

The officials felt, in a situation where feedback was not fully and effectively utilised, the policy making and planning was bound to be ill-informed and unrealistic and was likely to have two possible consequences. Firstly, there will be no serious efforts or involvement on the part of the officials in realizing such targets. Secondly, there will be a tendency to inflate the target figures and 'realise them on the target figures and 'realise them on the paper' as a Vikas Adhikari put it.

Clarity about goals

Another aspect relating to the performance of individual actors is their understanding of the organisational goals. If there is clarity about these goals
among actors they can direct their efforts for the realisation of such goals and have a sense of purposiveness and achievement. But in the absence of such clarity there might be confusion in the organisation and frustrations among individual role incumbents. Thus, clarity of organisational goals is important both for individual satisfaction and organisational performance. It is indicated from the data that about 59 per cent of the officials consider that goals are not clearly defined. However, it is significant that there is greater clarity on goals among district compared to block officials which indicates that the level at which plans are to be realised there is confusion or lack of clarity of the goals themselves. The confusion about the goals at the panchayat samiti level is due to a variety of functions assigned to it by different departments, each stressing its own priorities undermining the priority of others. It might be also due to lack of communication between district and block level officials. However, non-clarity or confusion about the goals creates a sense of purposelessness for the role incumbent and renders him ineffective.

Adequacy of Funds

The third important factor for role performance is the availability of resources and it is revealed that about 60 per cent of the respondents felt that
funds were inadequate. But again lack of funds is perceived more by the block (65 per cent) than district officials (53.2 per cent). But a sizeable number of both district (46.8 per cent) and block officials (36.6 per cent) disagree with this view. Many of these officials were of the opinion that there is not so much a problem of funds as that of proper utilization of available resources. However, lack of funds at the panchayat samiti level was attribute to two main factors. Firstly, the panchayat samitis do not raise their own resources. Secondly, the government had abandoned almost all the schemes under which funds were made available to them. Lack of funds was viewed as a great handicap by the officials, for carrying out even important tasks and it also created a sense of powerlessness in them. These feelings were explicit in the remarks of some of the officials. A Vikas Adhikari said, "I have several costly implements lying unused for several years. They have gone out of order and I cannot get them repaired as there are no funds. What use it is, being in a position where you cannot do even essential things." Another Vikas Adhikari remarked, "It is a waste of public money to give implements to Panchayat Samitis if there are no funds for their repair and maintenance." Yet another Vikas Adhikari said, "Our main work
is extension which requires frequent visits to villages. But there is very little fund for paying T.A. and D.A. to extension staff. In such a situation what work can they do? My movement is also restricted as our budget on zeeb is extremely limited."

Similar views were expressed by Agriculture Extension officers. One of them remarked, "I have to arrange demonstrations to educate farmers about the use of improved seeds and fertilizer. But this cannot be done without funds and no provision has been made for these things. What can one do in such a situation?"

Another AEO observed, "I have to somehow organise a prescribed number of demonstrations but they do not serve much purpose as they are generally conducted on the farms of those who can afford to spend money for that. Therefore, the poor farmers are deprived of these benefits since there are no funds for extension work."

The foregoing discussion suggests that there is general consensus among the officials as a group that the higher levels of administration are ill-informed of the local conditions and set unrealistic targets and there is lack of clarity on the goals and shortage of resources. It is also evident that the impact of these factors is more felt by the block level compared to district level officials, whom have to execute and implement these plans and programme.
Internal organisation

It has already been mentioned that the performance of the bureaucrats is influenced by the manner in which decisions are communicated, power and authority distributed and incentives offered. These are some of the salient aspects of the internal organisation which we shall discuss here. Since each level of administration is involved in implementing and executing decisions, it is important that the decisions must be promptly taken and communicated to avoid delays. But our data (table 6:2) suggests that 78.4 per cent of the officials feel that decisions are delayed at the higher levels. It is also brought out that such delays are experienced more at the district than at the block level. About a fourth block officials hold the view that there is no delay. This may be due to the fact that quite many of them have not to get decisions from higher levels. However, delays at the district level are attributed to three main factors. Firstly, there is a long channel before the issue under reference reaches the concerned decisional authority. Secondly, this is due to lack of inter-departmental and intra-departmental communication. And thirdly, long procedural sequence for effecting policy changes and consequent delay in taking such decisions also contribute to these delays.

In contrast with the district level, the decisions at the Samiti level are generally considered to be of
Table 6:2

Officials Evaluation of the Internal Bureaucratic Organisation
(responses in per centages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Higher officials delay decision making</td>
<td>Total 74.4</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 84.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 73.6</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Officials lack authority to control their subordinates</td>
<td>Total 56.7</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 53.2</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 59.6</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) There is no incentive for good work</td>
<td>Total 83.8</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 87.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 81.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) There is no scope for personal initiative</td>
<td>Total 65.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 70.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 61.9</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Superior officials do not give required guidance</td>
<td>Total 46.0</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 51.6</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 41.6</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Officials are not well trained for their job.</td>
<td>Total 41.0</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 43.7</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 40.5</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1. Total N = 148 Officials 148

District 64
Block 84

2. Since non-responses have been excluded the distributions may not add up to 100.
routine nature. These pertain to transfer of a Vikas Adhikari or an extension officer, sanctioning of a post, filling in of a vacancy and fixing or adjusting of salary of some officials (who are placed in a higher position.) But even such decisions are delayed as is evident from the responses of about three fourths of the block officials who mentioned that the decisions are delayed by higher level officials. These are largely attributed to lack of firmness of higher levels of administration, political pressures and interference. Accounting their experiences of such delays, several officials cited number of instances. A Vikas Adhikari said, "I was transferred to a Panchayat Samiti but the Vikas Adhikari who was already there wanted to continue. He used political pull and succeeded. Consequently, my transfer was cancelled. But it took three months before I received the final orders. There is nothing unusual about it. These things generally happen." Another Vikas Adhikari remarked, "I have been working as a Vikas Adhikari for past one and a half years but I continue to draw ABO's salary which I was drawing before I was promoted. It has not been adjusted inspite of my long correspondence with the department which now runs into more than two hundred letters. What kind of administration is it? What is the fun of promotion when your salary is not fixed in that grade."
Thus, it was revealed that a sizeable number of officials perceived delay in decision-making at higher levels which according to them affect the working of the system at different levels and creates a sense of uncertainty and frustration in the officials.

Inadequacy of authority

Another important aspect of administrative functioning is the authority of the position holders to exercise control over the subordinates. It is indicated that 56.7 per cent officials feel that they lack authority to control their subordinates. But as expected this feeling is more prevalent in block (59.6 per cent) officials who are not in a position to exercise control over their subordinates in the existing, administrative setup. However this feeling of lack of authority is mainly attributed to four factors. Firstly, there is duality of control in case of several position holders. For instance an Extension Officer posted in the Panchayat Samiti is under the control of the Vikas Adhikari as well as his departmental head. Likewise, the Loans' Inspector and Land Valuation officer, whose positions are located in the land development bank are under the administrative control of the Assistant Registrar of Cooperatives. Secondly, there is lack of administrative authority to exercise control over the subordinates. Thirdly, it
arises when equal rank officials are placed in subordinate superior relationships. For instance some of the AEOs are promoted to the post of Vikas Adhikari and some of their colleagues still hold the same post and are placed in superior subordinate relationship.\(^3\) It was evident from the instances quoted regarding such promotions. In one case an AEO told, "My Vikas Adhikari is at least two years junior to me. What authority can he exercise over me." Similarly one CBO remarked, "I have been in service for past seven years and an AEO with three years experience has become the Vikas Adhikari. What does he know of administration? How can he exercise control over me or AEO who has put in five years service?"

Fourthly, supremacy of political leaders over the officials as they give protection to some subordinates or use one against the other thereby undermining the authority of the superior official.

It was pointed out by several of them that lack of authority to control the subordinates created four main problems for the officials in performing their role. Firstly, the subordinates show a tendency to ignore the immediate superior and try to establish relationship with their higher level officials and work to meet the

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3. Currently there are three types of Vikas Adhikaris in Rajasthan. There are officials with general administrative experience, promoted from the post of Agriculture Extension Officer and Veterinary Officers.
expectations of the latter. Secondly, the subordinates try to play the political leaders against their superiors. Two instances may be mentioned, one in which a Loan's Inspector played the secretary against the Chairman of the Land Development Bank and in another a CEO had put a Vikas Adhikari at cross purposes with a Pradhan. Thirdly, the subordinates establish linkages with the political leaders cross-cutting and undermining bureaucratic authority. Fourthly, it creates a sense of insecurity and do not permit the role incumbents to use their own initiative.

Incentives

Having dealt with decision-making and distribution of power and authority, we shall see how respondents perceive reward or incentive system which is essential for human motivation. It is indicated that a sizeable number (83.5 per cent) of respondents consider that there are no incentives for good work. Perhaps this explains why officials do not put in their best in their work. Interestingly this is more expressed by the district officials (87.5 per cent) compared to block officials (81 per cent). This may be because there might be lesser chances of promotion in higher levels. However, it was generally mentioned by the respondents that on the whole there are limited chances for promotions;
firstly, there is no expansion, secondly, senior positions are held by comparatively younger persons and thirdly, certain positions are so narrowly conceived that they have no linkage in the higher administrative system and hence there are no chances of promotion for them. In this connection cases of 'generalist', Vikas Adhikari and Gram Sevaks were often quoted.

It was evident in the open end interviews that the officials did not think of incentives merely in terms of promotions but also looked for other types of rewards such as: commendatory certificates or a letter of appreciation or a cash award. But the general feeling was that no such incentives were instituted. The absence of such incentives not only affected the general morale and motivations of the role incumbents but rendered their authority redundant and created a sense of utter frustration in them. Expressing these feelings a Vikas Adhikari remarked, "I have been in this position since panchayati raj began and some of the AEOs who worked under me are now DAOs (District Agriculture Officers). But I do not see any future for me. Therefore, there is no charm left for me to work hard. I have still six years to go and I do not know if I will gain any thing. I am somehow pulling on." Another Vikas Adhikari said,
"promotions are granted on seniority. But seniority list is never finalised. My experience, upto this time has been that each time it is brought out it is challenged. In such situation there is always uncertainty." An ABO remarked, "I have Gram Sevaks who have put in fifteen years and there is no hope for their promotion. How would such persons be interested in their work"?

Apart from such uncertainties about promotions, the employees are also affected when they have a feeling that fairness and justice is denied to them in matters of granting promotions. In this connection a case of the cooperative department was repeatedly cited by the officials, in which according to them 'undue promotion was given to some relations of Ministers'.

There were sharp reactions from officials on this case. Perhaps the feelings of many of them are contained in the remarks made by an Assistant Registrar of Cooperatives. He observed, "what is the value of good work when promotions are given only to the relatives of Ministers? What standards can we enforce on the juniors when such

4. This case was taken up to high court by a group of Assistant Registrars of the Cooperative department. These promotions were held illegal by the High Court and announcing his decision Justice Ved Pal Tyagi of Rajasthan High Court ordered the Government of Rajasthan to remove the six officers of the cooperative department from their position as in the judgement of the High Court particularly was observed in their appointment. Nav Bharat Times (Hindi Daily), New Delhi, December 12, 1969.
such favouritism is done right before our eyes at the highest levels."

Thus, it is evident from the above discussion that majority of the role incumbents perceived the absence of incentive for good work which affected their morale and motivation. Furthermore, favouritism and partiality in matters of promotions had a demoralising effect on them.

Scope for Initiative

Another important aspect of administrative performance relates to 'personal initiative'. This assumes a significant place when an official has to often deal with problems relating to development and change involving variety of motivational and situational factors; all of which can hardly be comprehended. But an organisation which restricts or does not provide scope for personal initiative to the actors might limit their creative abilities and confine them to a mere routine. It is brought out that over 65 per cent officials feel that there is no scope for personal initiative. Interestingly enough, over 70 per cent with district officials had agreed with the statement compared to 62 per cent of their counterpart in the blocks. One would have expected greater scope for personal initiative.
at district level since there is more power and authority at that level. But this was not found to be so by our respondents. Lack of scope for personal initiative at the district level was attributed to two factors. Firstly, the plans and programmes to be carried out at that level are rather rigid and do not offer any scope for departure and deviation from set norms. Secondly, departure from set practices place the entire responsibility of consequences flowing from it, on the individual. And many of them in this connection pointed out that it was not worth taking this risk because if anything goes wrong there is a tendency to find fault with the official and punish him rather than understand his problems and support him.

However, the officials as a group expressed that lack of scope for personal initiative did not permit them experimentation and adversely affected their creative abilities. Under the circumstances they tended to be what many of them described as 'yes man' and adopted 'play safe' strategy which resulted in administrative delays and personal diffidence and dissatisfaction.

So far we have examined the perceptions of the officials as revealed in their evaluation of the internal organisation which according to them is not
very conducive for administrative functioning as decisions are delayed at higher levels, power and authority to control subordinates is lacking and scope for personal initiative is wanting. Now, we shall turn our attention on items which relate to their own self evaluation. This is mainly confined to two aspects namely their evaluation of supervisory role and training, both of which are important for self-introspection and evaluation.

**Guidance from superiors**

It is interesting to note that when it comes to self-evaluation which is sought to be done in terms of supervision, guidance and training the officials as a group tended to disagree more rather than agree with the statement. It was revealed that 54 per cent officials consider that they get required guidance from 'superior officials'. Likewise, over 58 per cent officials are of the view that they are well trained to do their job. It is interesting to note that 58.4 per cent block officials mentioned that they get required guidance but only 48.4 per cent district officials endorse this view. Also so far as training is concerned about 60 per cent block officials consider that they are well trained for their job. However, we should not overlook a sizeable number (over 40 per cent) who consider that
they are not adequately trained for the job and do not get required guidance. There was lot of dissatisfaction among a section of them which was expressed in the open ended interviews. For instance several Vikas Adhikaris and Extension Officers mentioned that there was hardly any guidance from above and the inspection visits by the higher officials were either like the 'raid of a police party' or 'casual and incidental flying visits' which ended with 'filling in a diary', 'signing some registers' and 'examining some files' and finally 'taking tea'. In brief, they conveyed that there was hardly any serious effort to understand the problems and difficulties of the local officials or give their advise and experiences which may be useful in finding solutions to their problems. These visit, in the wrods of a Vikas Adhikari were nothing more than 'mere routine' and 'formalities'.

It was also mentioned that these visits were rarely pre-intimated and even if that was done the schedule was rarely adhered to. There were last minute changes in such programmes which were rarely intimated to them. However, such changes did result in dislocation of the work of the local officials and made it difficult for them to plan their programme. For instance, in one district, we had found that the collector had planned to stay in a tehsil headquarter for three days and had
summoned all Block and Tehsil officials. Vikas Adhikari and several other officials came from adjoining Tehsils and had assembled thereby about 11 a.m. to learn that the collector had gone back to the district headquarters since there was no electricity. A Vikas Adhikari commenting on this told, "it is nothing new for us. We experience these things many times."

It was also pointed out that in some of the areas, where there was no electricity and it was difficult to reach there owing to poor roads, the visits of the higher officers like Collector and District Agriculture Officer were infrequent and generally did not exceed more than few hours. Expressing his views about such official visits a Vikas Adhikari aptly put it, "such visits cannot serve any useful purpose for any body, excepting completing the formalities."

Similar views were expressed by the block officials about training. Firstly, they felt that there were lesser opportunities for training compared to what it was in the past. "For instance", they mentioned there were no seminars, inservice training, refresher courses and field camps. Secondly, they mentioned that little consideration was shown to the training and experiences of officials while placing them in a position or deputing them for training. General feeling in this regard was well reflected in the remarks of a CEO. He said, "The
government has to run its training institutes and has to give some work to the training staff and hence we are sent there. It is a good change for us from our routine work. But beyond that it has no utility as half of the time in such training programmes they talk ideal things which cannot be put into practice and half of the time is spent discussing field problems for which the instructors have no solution.

It is quite possible that the favourable views expressed by officials about training and supervision may be in self-defence. If they would have pointed to lack of supervision or inadequacy of training that would have been an aspersion on them and pointed to their shortfalls.

Political Leader and the People

In the participatory polity, the officials and political leaders play complementary role to each other as the policy formulation and programming is done by the former and their implementation and execution by the latter. But the best policies and programmes executed in the most efficient manner may be foiled or frustrated if people's participation and cooperation is not forthcoming. It will therefore, be worthwhile to examine how officials evaluate the political leaders
and the people in terms of their support and cooperation. So far as political leaders are concerned we shall concentrate on two aspects namely; i) their cooperation or lack of it and ii) their interference in administration.

Cooperation of Leaders

As far as cooperation of political leaders is concerned it is mentioned by 80 per cent of the officials that they do not get adequate cooperation from leaders (Table 6:3). Interestingly enough, lack of

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<td>Officials' Evaluation of Political Leaders' and People's Cooperation</td>
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<td>(responses in percentages)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Political leaders do not provide adequate cooperation</td>
<td>Total 80.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 84.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) There is too much political interference</td>
<td>Total 82.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 85.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 78.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) The people are not cooperative</td>
<td>Total 69.6</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 62.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block 75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
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Note: 1) Total N = 148 Officials 148
District 64
Block 84

2) Since non-responses have been excluded the distributions may not add up to 100.
cooperation from political leaders is more perceived at the block level where the major responsibility of policy making and planning rested with them. This, according to the officials, was manifest in terms of general lack of interest, of participation and of involvement in the activities of the Panchayat Samiti. For instance, as indicated earlier, the agriculture production committee meetings were irregularly held for want of quorum. Apart from these routine activities they did not evince any interest or sense of involvement in special programmes like 'field demonstrations' 'Crop-cutting competitions' and other special drives.

The officials mainly attributed such behaviour, of the political leaders, to three factors. Firstly; they generally lack interest in development programmes and are more guided by political and power considerations and hence their interest is more confined to political activities rather than developmental. Secondly, lack of funds in Panchayat Samitis do not evoke any interest as they cannot formulate programmes suiting to local needs nor can they distribute patronage to people which is indicative of their power and prestige. Thirdly, the sense of partnership with the government is lacking as there is a strong feeling among the political leaders that they have no latitude and freedom to formulate
their plans and programmes. These are largely imposed from above and they have to work more as the 'agents' to carry them out. These feelings are widely shared by political leaders too. A Pradhan belonging to the ruling party observed, "Decentralisation of power is merely on paper. In reality panchayat samitis have no power. Their power has been slowly taken away by higher officials and ministers by withdrawing funds, resources and staff from them. We have just to carry out programmes given from above and the officials are there to execute them. Where is the question of our cooperation?"

**Political Interference**

The evidence further suggests that not only the officials don't get required cooperation from the political leaders but an overwhelming majority (82.4 per cent) mentioned that there is political interference. Furthermore, this interference was experienced more by the district (86 per cent) compared to block officials (76 per cent). Interference is generally in terms of the pressures political leaders exert on the officials for getting certain things done. These largely relate to: i) staff transfers or cancellation of transfer order, ii) sanction of loans and subsidies and iii) protection against official action in case of
defaulters. The officials cited several instances in which political leaders even of the rank of Ministers and MLA, had exerted their influence, either for getting an official transferred or for withholding or for cancelling such orders. Almost all the officials were of the view that there was no set criteria for effecting their transfers. A few cases seemed to substantiate this view point. In one district, a case of a senior officer of the agriculture department was frequently quoted. It was told that the officer concerned had started his career at a junior level and rose to a very senior position. He retired after serving for sixteen years, on various positions, in the same district but was never transferred from there as he had the 'backing of the Chief Minister'. In another district, a case of a district Agriculture Officer was mentioned by several respondents, who had been in the same district, in the same position for past fourteen years, as he had a 'powerful pull in the department'. A Tehsildar said, "I have completed eleven years as a Tehsildar and I have faced nine transfers. This is all because I honestly do my work and do not yield to any pressures from political leaders."

Another Tehsildar mentioned, "I have completed ten years in this position but I do not recall having stayed in any place for more than nine months whereas Mr. X is in
the same tehsil for six years. Thanks to political leaders who cannot tolerate fair minded and just officials, and like only those who can please them". Likewise at the Samiti level the Pradhan exert their influence in the transfer of school teachers and gram sevaks. Several Vikas Adhikaris mentioned that although transfer of gram sevaks and school teachers was within their powers but in practice their transfer are decided in consultation with the Pradhan.

The other area in which interference was experienced by officials related to the sanction of loans and subsidies. Since this was the main concern of the cooperative banks and the cooperative departments these pressures were experienced by loan's Inspectors, Valuation Officers, Executive Officers and the Assistant Registrar Cooperatives, who are located in the district positions. These officials mentioned instances in which political leaders exerted influence on them to relax the rules either to favour individuals or a cooperative society, in whom they were interested. In one district a case of a cooperative store was cited which was running in a loss yet a loan of ninety thousand rupees was given to it, from the cooperative bank, at the instance of a political leader. There was hardly any chance of recovery of the loan advanced to the cooperative
store was the remark made by a district official of the cooperative department.

Besides, the transfer of staff and sanction of loans, the political leaders put pressures on officials when they take legal or administrative action against a defaulting person or group of persons connected with a cooperative society. The officials in this connection mentioned that the political leaders instead of helping them in the recovery of loans, encouraged the individuals not to repay their dues and also tried to protect them and pleaded for postponement of the recovery from them. Furthermore, when any legal or administrative action was taken against such persons or group of persons, they either implicated the concerned officials by making false charges against them or complained against them to higher level officials. From the instances mentioned by the officials, a few may be cited, to provide supportive evidence for the views expressed by them. An Assistant Registrar of Cooperative who had gone with the court orders to attach the property of a Sarpanch for default of non-payment of loans had to face the charge of dacoity and he is still involved in that case in the court of law, for past three years. In another case reported by a Vikas Adhikari, in which a CEO was charged for accepting bribe as he had taken firm action against a cooperative society in which money was misappropriated.
on this case the Vikas Adhikari said, "the CEO falsely not implicated and I could/do any thing to help him as the political leaders were powerful. Finally the CEO was transferred. But the accounts of that cooperative society is in the same mess and nothing can be done against it." These instances could be multiplied but our purpose in citing such instances is to provide some evidence in support of the views of the officials and more important than that is to understand the manner in which such pressures are exerted. It is important to understand these dynamic processes because it enable us to appreciate the problems of role performance and the nature of relationship obtaining between officials and political leaders, which are the prime concerns of this study. There is a general feeling among officials that lack of cooperation and interference from political leaders affected their performance and also strained their relationships with political leaders. Furthermore, it had a demoralizing effect on them as they had to yield to undue pressures and could not do right and just things in the discharge of their duties.

Thus, it was brought out that not only political leaders donot extend their cooperation to officials but they interfere in the administration. Furthermore, it is suggested that people are also uncooperative. Lack of cooperation from the people is generally attributed
to two factors. Firstly, there is general decline in the interest of people in the activities and programmes of the samiti as they do not get any material benefits from it, as was the case in the past. Secondly, the Panchayat Samitis do not have programmes and activities which can attract the rural people.

Thus, to sum up it could be said that the officials by and large do not find the internal organisation conducive for role performance. They have indicated that targets are unrealistic, goals are not clear and resources are inadequate. These views are held more by block compared to district officials. Furthermore, it is brought out that decisions are delayed, incentives are lacking and their authority fell short of the responsibilities placed on them. They felt that the political leaders and people do not extend adequate cooperation. On the whole the block officials have a more unfavourable evaluation of the internal organisation compared to the district officials. All these views of the officials are bound to be reflected in their performance and more so because the block officials who have to actually implement the plans have more unfavourable evaluation of the internal organisation. Apart from these limitations emanating from internal organisation and
the environment, the role incumbents perceived several gaps in the current local administrative system, which created problems relating to supervision and control, coordination of functions, supply of material resources and informing of policy making and planning at higher levels. Above all there exist problems of linkages between sub-structures and communication cross-cutting levels and positions. Moreover, some of the officials do not find their own role as well as the role of some others, salient or even relevant to the present administrative system. These perceptions are bound to affect role perceptions and the relationship that the officials will be able to build with the political leaders, which will be dealt in the subsequent chapters.