CHAPTER XIII

ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

&

SOCIAL CHANGE

Section- I

ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS OF

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Importance of Administration in C.D. Programme:

The functional administration of the programme has been described in detail in chapter IV of the present study. Here only the points how good administration and favourable attitudes of the workers can strengthen the programme, will be emphasised. No doubt, the success of the programme depends on the optimistic attitudes of the block officials along with active participation and co-operation from the rural masses who are to benefit in the long run. The three tier structure of Panchayat Raj has given a new dimension to community development programme administration in which there is linkage between the administrative organisation and elected representatives at each level. The middle level organisation would be the integral unit of the block. This type of arrangement
has not yet been introduced in Madhya Pradesh.

As has been stated earlier, the C.D. personnel termed as extension workers have been seeking to initiate a self-sustaining process of social change through dissemination of information or communication of new ideas. From the very beginning it has been envisaged that every extension officer has to organise, work with and encourage various forms of community organisations because that is the only way by which people can be inspired into action and assisted to develop their own capacity and resources. The importance of community development agency, consisted of extension workers lies in creating a meaningful community organisation susceptible of community development—a self-sustaining process of social regeneration and community integration. "The community development agency must try to service the group rather than direct it. Having helped in the formation of the organisation, C.D. worker must make it largely self-governing, because the more responsibility the group members have and the more they are able to control their own affairs, the more they feel that the group is their own and not an agency group..... The agency should seek to support and strengthen various community organisations in the block which it brings together in co-operative work and involve them at every phase of development." 1

Thus it comes to be quite imperative to discern the attitudes of agency workers in relation to the programme of community development. With this point in view, extension officers were interviewed and a questionnaire schedule was given to them to be answered. Thus their answers were recorded. At the very

out-set it may be borne in mind that at the time of survey the extension officers were busy in disbursing the payment of relief work to the labourers in their areas. Therefore, some of them could not be interviewed.

**Extension Officers in the Blocks Under Study:**

At the time of survey in June 1966, there were 74 extension officers in all the blocks, e.g. 12 Agriculture Extension Officers, 12 Panchayat Extension Officers, 12 Veterinary Extension Officers, 11 Co-operative Extension Officers (one block under study was managed by C.E.O. of other block not under study), 9 Over-seers (three posts not filled), 8 Extension officers for Industries (four posts vacant), 5 Social Education Organisers (7 posts abolished), 2 Pilot Projects Officers, 1 fishery officer, 1 poultry officer and one co-operative inspector of audit section. Out of these only 33 officers were interviewed including 10 A.E.O.s., 6 C.E.O.s., 6 V.E.O.s., 4 Over-seers, 2 S.E.O.s., and one extension officer for Industries. Thus only 44% could be interviewed. The result of the enquiry is given below. The village level workers were also interviewed and the findings are given separately in the next pages.

**Qualification of the Extension Officers:**

Out of all the officers, 2 were double M.A., two were M.Sc. in agriculture, 6 were B.Sc. in agriculture, 6 were graduates of Veterinary science, 5 were graduate in Arts and one was graduate in commerce, 4 were having diploma in Civil Engineering
and 7 were Matric including one having diploma in agriculture. Six or 13% officers were promoted from the post of V.L.W.

With reference to the period of service in the present post in the blocks including others services in the same capacity the classification is given below in the table.

Table No. 13:1
period 1 of service of Extension Officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>years of service groups</th>
<th>Extension officer in the group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 Years</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 Years</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years and above</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the table shows that 55 per cent of the officers were having the experience of less than 5 years in their post, while two or 6 per cent had more than 10 years experience. Out of all 81% were posted as extension officers in the beginning while 19% were appointed as Gram Sewaks.

First of all the officers were asked why they selected the job in which they were absorbed. The classification is given in the table on the next page.
### Table No. 13:2

Classification of the selection of the jobs by extension officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason of selecting the jobs</th>
<th>Percentage of the respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promotions in the department</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Due to technical qualifications</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interest in the rural life</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deputed by the department</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. No clear response</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. For the betterment of Agriculture</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Non-availability of better alternatives.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Forced by the parents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table makes it clear that 36% joined the job due to promotion and technical qualifications. The latter included veterinary surgeons and agriculture extension officers, 28% joined due to devotion towards rural life and agriculture, while 15 per cent had no any special reasons as they were deputed by their parent departments in the present service. No response was given by 15% of the officers. It was noted that most of them were not very clear while answering this question. An interesting answer was given by one that he did not even think on this question at the time of joining the job.
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In response to the question whether they were fully familiar with the village environment and aware of the village problems in respect of their fields, all of them answered in affirmative but this may not be reliable. It was reported by most of the villagers who were interviewed that the Extension officers were not familiar with the villages and they never tried to solve the problems in their fields in the villages. This at least gives an idea that all the officers were not correct while answering this question. They were then asked how much interesting they found the nature of the jobs. Sixty per cent answered the nature of the job very interesting while 30% mentioned it ordinary and the rest described it not at all interesting. The answer very much interesting also does not ensure correct thinking as the question was not carefully answered as most of the officers admitted.

The officers were also asked whether village problems could be solved through the block agency. While 55% were hopeful, only 6% answered in negative and 21% admitted that problems could be solved if sincere and devoted workers were there, to implement the programme. Only 12% accepted that problems were being solved to some extent. The analysis approved that rural problems can be solved through this agency as more than 50% opined in the favour. To the question whether villagers took active interest in the programmes initiated by them, 60% answered in the favour while 18 per cent clearly stated that the villagers did not show at all interest in the activities. Only 22% expressed that the villagers took the interest and showed favourable response
only in those activities which brought some benefits to them. Any way, most of the persons have taken interest in the block activities.

This is a fact that the villagers show their interest in any programme when they are convinced about its success. With this view the officers were asked whether they could convince the village people about the success of the programmes to be undertaken. While 72% could convince about the success, 22% told that they could convince the villagers after hard labour as it was not a easy job. No opinion was expressed in this regard by the rest. Regarding the interest in the improved implements and methods of cultivation by the farmers, the A.E.Os. were particularly asked to express their opinions though all the extension officers of other fields also answered this question as they had also contacts with the farmers. Fiftyfive per cent plainly expressed that the villagers did not take to improved methods of agriculture while 10% told that very few took interest in these methods and other 10% told that improved methods were followed if successful demonstrations were displayed. The conclusion can be drawn that farmers have taken to the improved methods and implements to an appreciable extent. It depends upon the Extension officers to a great extent to convince the farmers of the superiority of these methods by displaying successful demonstrations in every block. The provision of government plots for the same in every block can solve the matter. But it also requires the attention of the concerned officers to lay out the demonstration in proper time with great care.

The Extension workers were also asked whether they got co-operation from the villagers when required. It was
known that 66% got the co-operation while implementing the block programmes but 24% criticised the villagers for not giving co-operation. No response was forthcoming by the rest in this regard. Then there was the question of accounting people's participation which was concerned with overseers in construction works under the programmes of communication. It was known that after the observation on the spot of the construction work, actual evaluation was done regarding the cost of the particular work including the days of labour and the material used in construction.

In response to the question whether there was any change in the mental outlook of the villagers due to the C.D. programme, 72% admitted that there was change in the mental outlook but they could not explain in what respect the change had occurred. It was answered by 18% that there was change in the thinking of the villagers to some extent while ten per cent could not express their views on this issue. It has been well recognised from the very beginning that to change the mental outlook of the millions of rural masses is quite essential for making the common people of rural areas self-dependent. The programme of rural development can be properly implemented and people can be convinced of the success if they are properly approached. In this connection the officers were asked to express their ways of approaching the villagers. It was noted that most common method was to approach them through village leaders as 42% adopted this. The workers also approached them through groups such as youth clubs, mahila mandals and panchayat Samitis etc. and this method was adopted by 30% workers. They also reached the villagers directly and
individually by making homely contacts. But approach through influential leaders was considered to be more effective and impressive.

The C.D. programme is also meant to give benefits to weaker sections in rural areas. The workers were asked whether land-less and backward people had equally benefitted by C.D. programme compared to land holders and other big classes. The response brings to the conclusion that land-less and backward people have not equally benefitted as 48% of the officers refused to admit it while only 36% gave their consent regarding equal benefits. In matter of superstitions followed by villagers and hinderances in their way, 66% admitted that they (villagers) were superstition-ridden and lack of education, traditional beliefs and influence of old people in the society who resisted the changes were the main hinderances. That superstitions were followed to some extent only was answered by 28% while only 6% believed that they were removed in the villages due to the inception of the programme. It shows that block staff have not been able to minimise the social evils in their area successfully.

In response to the question whether programme had given special benefits to big land holders and other influential persons, 70% clearly admitted that the programme had done so while only 24% expressed that no special benefits were given to above classes. Six per cent were silent on this question. Any way, the above analysis demonstrates that most of the benefits of the programme have been reaped by the big land holders and other influential persons.
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It is generally said that now there is more dependence on the Government than on the village becoming a self-reliant community. The villagers look towards Government for all sorts of help. The extension workers were asked to express their views on this aspect. The result strengthens the above statement as 85% expressed that the people were dependent on Government for their upliftment. Only 6% told that people were not completely but partly dependent on Government while the rest did not answer the question. Regarding the utilisation of the block funds for the welfare activities, 60% admitted that funds were well utilised while 20% made statement about the misutilisation of the funds by the block officials. It was expressed by 10% that only sometimes there was wastage of the block expenditure. No comment was made on the above issue by the rest.

Withdrawl of the Post of Block Development Officers:-

From the very beginning the Block Development Officer (B.D.O.) has been the key personnel in community development programme administration acting as the leader of a number of Extension Officers for different fields of work. His position has been envisaged as the captain of this team including village level workers. Highlighting the importance of this functionary our late Prime Minister Pt. Nehru who took the main initiative in the inception of this programme, once remarked, "the success of community development will depend upon the quality of the B.D.O. If we build up a high level competent and enthusiastic body of B.D.Os. all over the country, we would have provided the wherewithal
for rapid progress. Thus B.D.O. occupied the most vital position in its administrative set up and in the early years of programme, much care was taken in selecting the right kind of person for this post. The U.N. Mission also remarked that the B.D.O. is a new kind of official in the Indian services with a totally new kind of job and patience and time are needed in helping the majority of them to understand and carry out their work as required. In the background of this statement let us study the abolition of this post by Madhya Pradesh Government.

The M.P. Government has abolished the post of B.D.Os. in the State from January 1966 and this decision has spotlighted thinking on the role of this official in implementing the C.D. programme. The M.P. Government contends that the B.D.O. has been made redundant because his work mainly concerns agriculture which the existing department of agriculture can and should handle. The M.P. decision in this respect has created considerable discussion on the role of B.D.O. and doubts are being raised about his utility.

Keeping the above point in view, the extension officers were interviewed regarding their opinions on the withdrawal of the post of B.D.O. in Madhya Pradesh and how had it affected their working and administration of the programme.

The enquiry revealed that 66% did not favour and rather regretted the abolition of the post and they strongly pointed out that the work and administration of the programme were adversely affected due to the abolition of B.D.O. from the scene of

1. Quoted by Shri R. Subramanian in Kurukshetra September, 1966, p. 27
community development programme. While 21% contended that as a result of this, field work was not affected at all but administration was surely spoilt. No comment was made on this question by 9% and only one respondent told that there was no adverse effect either on the field work or administration due to the abolition of the post. This was the only exception which favoured the issue.

Giving an account of their reactions and dissatisfaction on the abolition of the post, the extension officers told that the abolition of B.D.O. has meant the abolition of Blocks and community development programme for the villagers. This proves that B.D.O. has been the symbol and embodiment of community development programme. It was also reported that people had lost faith in the programme and there was much delay in the execution of block activities and work suffered a lot. It was clearly asserted that after the abolition of the post, block programme in a general sense was a kingdom without a king in which every body acted as king, reaching over to the steering wheel of the administration of the programme to give it a twist of one’s own choice. This resulted in the lost of team work and its importance. The officers also admitted that there was no correct guidance in the absence of B.D.Os. and mismanagement resulted in the administration. They agreed that there was co-operation amongst the extension workers previously but after the withdrawal of the post, there was no co-ordination and spirit of team work resulting in the absence of co-operation and harmonious relationship between the block officials.

It is the practical observation that there
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was disobedience towards the officer-in-charge of the block office and other extension workers did not care at all for the compliance of his orders even the Progress Assistants did not supply the necessary information in spite of the instructions of the officer in-charge. The workers were envious of the incharge officer and their consciousness could not permit them to regard a man as their officer who worked with them as an extension officer few days before. The Ex-B.D.Os. who had to work under those extension officers who were their subordinates sometime, had also led to such type of feelings. The juniority and seniority feelings counted much. In a word, there was no controlling authority in the blocks and the administration was adversely affected. The officer incharge also could not exert any influence on the villagers regarding the development activities in rural areas as they regarded as the Block authority to only B.D.Os. It brings us to the conclusion that without the B.D.O. there can not be democratic village development at the block level. At the time of survey the administration of the block was under Sub-Division Officer and how could it be possible for him to control more than four blocks of a district while remaining at district head-quarters, already overburdened with his daily routine administrative business. One officer-incharge reported that he could not even ask the peon for a tumblerful of water with an authority as the latter was under the administration of S.D.O. having no regard for officer incharge. Such type of feeling also prevailed amongst the other officers that officer-incharge could not harm them hence they had no fear at all. No punctuality and discipline were observed in the block offices and
the workers acted according to their own free will. The villagers also did not hear the extension officers whenever the latter visited the villages as they had formed the opinion of the abolition of the blocks.

The above enquiry brings us to the conclusion that the withdrawal of the post of B.D.O. has created disorder in the blocks administration and uncertainty about the developmental activities in the rural areas. Thus the programme which began with so much enthusiasm and hope, has been lost in a fuss. According to M.P. Government, the Agriculture department is best suited to do the work of B.D.Os. but this is to take a narrow view of the B.D.Os. functions. He is much more than an agricultural officer. "It is only today that rural development programmes are for the first time being systematically carried out below the district level. The man who is central to this extension is the B.D.O. and the abolition of his post may put the clock back by many years."

Recently the role of B.D.Os. has been much discussed and he has been considered as the cause of unbalanced progress of community development by official supervisors and non-officials. It is quite natural that there might be varying degrees of efficiency in B.D.Os. and some may not be able and so much competent but it must not result in the abolition of his post. Here it becomes quite worthwhile to remember the remark of the U.N. Mission on the position of this functionary, mentioned in the last page of this very chapter. "There may be some officers who do not work the system properly but the remedy is to change them and not to destroy the system itself."

1. Spotlight on B.D.Os. (The Indian Nation, Patna, editorial, Kukshetra, February 1966, p.14
2. R. Subramanian, "B.D.O. and Community Development" Kukshetra, Sen. 1966, n. 27
The role of B.D.O. has assumed added dimension with the advent of Panchayat Raj as a community activiser and as a co-ordinator of different activities at the block level and as a balancer between the official and non-official organisations. The withdrawal of B.D.O. in M.P. at the time when three tier structure of Panchayat Raj is yet to be introduced in State, may create some administrative problems. Without applying the realistic standards for evaluating the success or failure of the community development programme, the B.D.O. has been made the scape-goat. Of course when the B.D.O. has been over-burdened with the administrative and executive works more than the community development work, how could any one expect him to perform miracles in the rural areas plagued by illiteracy and poor communications; In this way the abolition of the post has led to serious administrative consequences. "The block is a unit in the administrative system rather than a mere agricultural farm. This is not to say that the C.D. system is very good. Its shortcomings are too many. But abolition is hardly practical remedy.... The C.D. programme has net work spread over the entire society in the form of various institutions and organisations. The organisations can be reformed and utilised for better purposes. But to abolish them all of a sudden may be unwise as to keep them in present shape and form."1

The practical device would have been to revitalise the post by appointing a better trained person in C.D. methods as B.D.O. equipped with best type of behaviour and attitudes

1. Spotlight on B.D.Os. (The Times Of India Delhi, editorial, Kurukshetra, op. cit. p. 13
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and having capacity to foster administrative and executive leadership so as to become an ideal entrepreneur of rural development. "The remedy is to re-orient the programme by re-vitalising the B.D.O's post to give a new look to his role and equipping him with better training in C.D. methods and removing the lacuna in our administration in order to enable him to meet the challenge. Removing him from his present position is no solution. After all the body is not destroyed to cure a disease."1

Thus in order to strengthen the P&R institutions vis-a-vis community development which is the need of the hour, the B.D.O's functions cannot be dispensed with and if he is ejected by the front door, the rural situation as it exists today in India, would compel him to be brought in by the back door. All the aspects and consequences should have been well considered before this official was given a burial.

Other Problems:

Co-operation among the community development workers is quite essential for achieving the success. With this view the officers were asked whether they got co-operation from their fellow workers. It was answered by 66% that before the abolition of the post of B.D.O. they used to get full co-operation but after that it was not forthcoming to the desired extent while the rest denied the co-operation from their fellow workers. In order to know whether they were forced to a job which they did not like to do, the question was put to them. The analysis gives the

conclusion that choice or liking has no place before a sub-ordinate worker as 60% approved the above statement, while 40% told that they were not forced to perform a job they did not like.

With a view to make a comparison of their present job with the previous one, the question was put to them. It was learnt that 42% had different jobs previously out of which only 9 per cent liked the job better than before while 6 per cent found no change and 27% admitted that their present job was not better than before but as they were deputed by their departments they had to perform the same. To solve their field problems the workers consulted their immediate senior officers as Panchayat Officers contacted District Welfare and Panchayat Officers, A.E.Os. to Deputy and Assistant Directors of agriculture, C.E.Os. to Assistant Registrar of co-operative societies etc. The village leaders and Sarpanchas of Gram Panchayats were also consulted. The officers also applied their own discretion to come to any conclusion.

As regards the frequency of village tours, no any certain answer was given. Most of the officers could not understand the question and only 66% answered it. Generally they visited the villages as per load of the work. It was also reported that every village of the block was at least once visited in a year. Some officers answered that they had 20 days tour in a month with 10 night halts. Advanced villages where key programmes were implemented were visited more than once in a month. But these answers can not be relied upon as the interview with the villagers revealed that extension officers hardly visited
their villages. In response to the question whether they were able to explain the programmes to villagers fully and satisfactorily, 85% agreed that they explained the villagers about the programmes but they had to face great difficulty and most of the people did not follow perfectly while the rest told that to some extent they could explain the programmes.

Regarding the procedure of working and planned programmes, most of the officers answered that they worked according to planned programmes but sometimes with small changes as it was not always possible to stick to the pre-planned programmes rigidly though they tried to work and implement the schemes according to annual working plan and departmental instructions.

**Problems and Suggestions:**

The extension workers were specially asked to enlist the problems in their field work and to give suggestions. They reported the problems and suggestions according to their own viewpoints. In general it was reported by all that there was lack of people's participation and party politics and groups and factions in the villages hence they could not get complete support from the villagers while implementing the programmes. Shortage of Funds was also a common problem reported by the officers. The officers in charge also listed the problem of conveyance and the difficulties caused by the withdrawal of the jeep from the block. The A.E.0s. told that sometimes there was late supply of seeds and fertilisers along with short supply of the same and they could
not fulfill their promises of giving the same to the farmers with the result that the latter lost their faith. They also reported that due to illiteracy and poverty among the farmers the improved techniques of agriculture could not be popularised. Some of them also reported about the poor soil and inadequate irrigation facilities in their block area. The C.E.0s. complained of the heavy work load and undue interference from the Bank authorities in their work of distribution and recovering the amount of loans from the members. They also reported that often there was mis-utilisation of the loan by the farmers for the purpose other than agriculture and many difficulties had to be faced while recovering the amount as the same was spent on unproductive purposes and the very purpose of giving relief to the farmers through the low rate of interest could not be served as the farmers still borrowed from the village money-lenders on a very high rate of interest. The V.E.0s. reported of the short supply of medicines and villager's indifference of taking proper care of their cattle. They also said that the villagers had not developed the attitude of carrying their diseased cattle to veterinary hospitals but on the other hand they relied much more on their local treatment. This was also the case in other aspects of animal husbandry. The P.E.0s. reported that due to the illiteracy the members of the panchayats did not take to development activities in the rural areas. The very purpose of local self government was also not being served due to party politics and village factions. The Overseers complained about the lack of people's participation in construction works. The Extension officer of Industries reported that desired
was not being achieved in case of developing rural industries. The S.E.Os. reported about the declining interest of the people in the activities of social education particularly in the later years of the programme.

Regarding the suggestions, the views of the workers were also different according to the experiences gained in their field work. The A.E.Os. suggested that there must be Government farms in every block for the demonstrations and there must be proper planning for carrying out the agricultural programmes. It was also suggested that irrigation facilities must be developed in the rural areas and along with the timely supply of seeds and fertilisers, the prices of the fertilisers must be reduced. The supply of jeep was also suggested. In the field of administration they demanded the power to have direct control over V.L.Ws. and clerks of the office. They also suggested that the distribution of taccabi must be through agriculture departments. The C.E.Os. suggested that there must be no delay in the distribution of loan to the farmers. The V.E.Os. suggested that their job being technical must be independent. The Overseers suggested that the construction work must be through Public Works Department.

It was the suggestion of the P.E.Os. that there must be well trained and educated members in the panchayats and government paid full-time secretary in panchayats. They also demanded technical guidance from the concerned departments in matter relating to panchayats.

In general the suggestion of the wide publicity of the programme, mass education and good supervision, were given. Some of the officers did not like to enlist their suggestions
giving the reason that they were never implemented.

Village Level Workers:

The village level worker represents a new type of public servant in the administrative organisation of India. He is a multi-purpose worker to attend all the fields of development of the programme. Thus he is a key figure of development effort in Indian village life and is required to maintain quite close contacts with the village people. In its report of June 1959 on "Public Administration Aspects of C.D. Programme, United Nations defined the functions of V.L.W. as one who serves primarily as a catalyst of community self-help effort. He may in addition perform related community education and community organisation tasks on behalf of his agency. The primary function of a V.L.W. is to be the agent of change. He is to create a community out of a village and give it a 'we' feeling. That is the road to self-help and self-reliance. He is the link between the community and the technicians who can bring the desired know-how to the community.

The V.L.W. is expected to study the felt needs of the people and to strive to work for their satisfaction. From the very beginning of the programme has has been responsible to implement all sorts of schemes at the village level and it is why he has been termed as the multi-purpose extension worker. But recently in Madhya Pradesh he has been turned a specialist and assigned only the duty of carrying out the agricultural programmes according to the instructions of the District Agriculture Department and now he is directly under Agriculture department.
With a view to have a close study of this functionary and his attitudes towards community development programme, certain questions were put to him like Extension officers. In all the 24 villages the V.L.Ws. were to be interviewed as every village was selected from an independent circle. Though every village under study was not the head-quarters of V.L.W. but an effort was made to contact them. Only 14 or about 56% could be interviewed as others were either on leave or on tour out of head-quarters. All had service experience as V.L.W. of more than 4 years. As regards educational qualifications, 4 of them had passed Middle school examination, 9 were Matric and one had diploma in rural science.

Giving the reason of joining the job, 6 V.L.Ws. told that they had joined the job with a desire to serve rural areas and agriculture, 3 had joined with a good hope and promotion in future, 2 were transferred from agriculture departments while two came in the job as they could get job no where and one resigned from the post of a Primary School Teacher in order to join the job of V.L.W. All of them agreed that they were fully familiar with the village environment and aware of village problems in their field work. Out of all, 56% found their job very interesting while the rest found it ordinary. Regarding the village problems to be solved through block agency, 36% were quite hopeful while 30% answered that the problems could be solved to some extent only. It was expressed by 20% that block agency was not capable of solving the village problems. Most of the V.L.Ws. agreed that the village people took active interest in the programmes initiated by
them. Fifty five per cent admitted that village farmers showed favorable response in taking to the improved methods of cultivation and implements and they got their co-operation in implementing the activities.

As regards change in the mental outlook of the villagers it is a sign of pleasure that most of them agreed that the programme had changed the villagers outlook. Most of the workers followed the way of approaching the villagers through village leaders, influential persons and groups. The enquiry proves that landless people have not equally benefitted and the programme had given special benefits to big land holders and influential persons as 70% gave their consent in favour of above statement. Majority of the workers agreed that to a great extent superstitions had been removed in the villages and with the spread of education and change in the mental outlook, new ways of thinking and living were being developed.

But it is sad to learn that the people have not yet understood that they are the prime movers of their own development and they have to take initiative in this direction, on the other hand they completely depends on government's assistance for their upliftment as this view was strengthened by almost all the workers. Regarding the utilisation of the Government funds in the blocks, more than 50% V.L.Ws. agreed that often funds were misutilised from the cost and benefit angle.

V.L.Ws. Reacts upon Withdrawal of Block Development Officers:-

Withdrawal of the post of B.D.O. in M.P. has
created lot of discussion and confusion among the village level workers and controversial views are expressed in this connection. The withdrawal of the post was criticised by 85% as they were against it while only one V.L.W. told that there was no effect in the block administration and field work due to the withdrawal of B.D.O. while another did not answer the question owing to the fear of unfavourable consequences. Those who criticised it told that after the abolition of the post, there was no smooth and co-ordinated team work among the extension workers. They also reported that as a result of it there was no efficiency in the office work and administration was badly affected. The V.L.Ws. experienced delay in getting the orders and supply of essential inputs in the rural areas. They admitted that as there was no B.D.O. in the block office they had no fear with a result that schemes were not timely implemented and no tour programmes were undertaken by them in real practice.

In this regard, the conclusion drawn from the reaction of the Extension officers about the abolition of B.D.O. is confirmed and the enquiry aptly reveals that proper thinking and considerations have not been given to the important figure like B.D.O. before bidding him a good bye.

Problems and Suggestions:

The most important problem which the V.L.Ws. cited was large area under them and heavy work-load. Due to large population under them they could not discharge their duties satisfactorily and contacts with the villagers could not be properly
maintained. Thus he was required to handle a heavy work-load of
more than 1500 families. They told that the conditions under
which they had to work were not satisfactory and they were some-
times they were put to a very odd position when they could not
fulfill their assurances and carry out the plans as the supply
of necessary input was not forthcoming in time. They also could
not get the co-operation of the villagers as the latter were not
encouraged to look upon them as their friends and leaders in
village development works, and the schemes implemented by them
were not appreciably followed by the village people.

The V.L.Ws. also expressed their difficulties
that due to the shortage of funds and time the programmes could
not be completely implemented. They also told that illiteracy and
rural poverty were also the problems in the way of popularising
improved techniques of agriculture and due to the lack of irrigation
facilities much progress was not achieved in using the chemical
fertilisers. The V.L.Ws. told that agriculture was mostly carried
on Batai system in the villages therefore schemes of improved
agriculture could not be successfully implemented.

They suggested that there must be fewer villages
and smaller population under them in order to better serve the
village economy. They also demanded power to implement certain
schemes in the villages and to incur a fixed amount of expenditure.
It was also their suggestion that village programmes must be
prepared by village panchayats and be implemented by V.L.Ws. It
was also suggested by them that every V.L.W. must have a godown
at his disposal in order to stock the supply given to them by the
block offices for distribution to the villagers. It was stressed by some of them that they must get some cultivable land on the 50% subsidy in their head-quarter's village from the government. They also suggested that their services must be properly recognised and appreciated by higher authorities and their T.A. rate must also increase along with housing facilities. They demanded that their position must be safeguarded against the undue interference in their working by the high officials as the higher officials sometimes favoured the farmers at the cost of V.L.Ws. thus degrading the positions of the latter in view of the farmers. Thus different type of suggestions were given by the workers.

As regards the performance of V.L.Ws, there has been some criticism against him in different quarters. Commenting on the role of V.L.Ws, in the State the Agriculture Minister of M.P. Government once remarked that the V.L.Ws. had not yet caught the spirit of the role they were meant for. At a number of places the villagers did not know who the Gram Sewak was...

"Well dressed man with a transistor listening to radio music...
Is he a Gram Sewak? Gram Sewaks were in fact Desh Sewaks. He compared them with the infantry of an army and added that the success of the war on food front much depended on the role which this class played in implementation of agriculture policy. They should identify themselves with the 52 lakhs of cultivators of the State."

1. Lady Village Level Worker:

To educate the rural women in modern household affairs and to organise the Bhajan Mandals and Ramayan in the

villages, lady V.L.Ws termed as Gram Sewika, were appointed under the C.D. programme who had to serve a larger population than V.L.W. in the rural areas, of course, the nature of the field work and activities of lady V.L.W. have been quite different. It has been noticed that in the third stage of the blocks under study, the post of lady V.L.W. had been abolished. In other blocks where the post exists, only one lady V.L.W. could be interviewed as others were not available in the villages under study.

The lady V.L.W. was interviewed on certain aspects of her field work and success achieved thereof. She was Middle passed and had 5 years of experience in the same capacity and joined the service according to her own choice. She admitted that she was well aware of the problems in her field work and found her job very interesting in the beginning but in the latter years due to the lacking interest of the people and shortage of funds, the job was not interesting. She could not answer the question clearly whether the rural problems in her field work could be solved through block agency. On the aspect of interest of rural women in the programmes initiated by her, she told that in spite of her best efforts the women were not coming forward to participate in the programme. She got good response only from young girls who were mainly interested in knitting and sewing. She told that to some extent, there had been change in the traditional outlook of rural women due to the programme. Regarding her approach to village women: she contacted them not directly but through the ladies of village leaders and influential persons. It
was her belief that purdah system had reduced among the village ladies.

On the withdrawal of the post of B.D.O., she expressed that as a result of it there was dullness in the work and the pace of the work had slowed down as there appeared no fear in the absence of a controlling authority. She also reported that there was no congenial atmosphere in the villages for the lady workers and favourable response was not available from the rural women, except their participation in Ramayan and Shajan-Mandals. Regarding her village tour, she visited every village once in a month and contacted the women. The village Patal and Sarpanch were also contacted regarding village problems in her field.

On being asked to list the problems she told that the articles relating to women programmes were not timely available and village women were not ready to find out the time of participation in women activities. It was also reported that in stead of creating a favourable atmosphere in the village to allow her to work, the villagers laughed at the women activities and criticised her. From the report of the village people, it was learnt that the young girls had learnt nothing from the lady V.L.W. except modern fashions of living such as using toilets and wearing modern design dresses. They criticised her for doing nothing constructive in the villages. Of course, it can not be denied that it is a pre-condition for the village level workers to present themselves before the villagers in a very simple life so that they may believe him or her to absorb in village community.