

Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public
Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural
Employment Guarantee Act

ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

Food security is one of the important components of Human Security. The United Nations in its ambitious plan to overcome such challenges initiated Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). There was little to cheer about as the year 2015 came to an end and still there was a large population of the world suffering from hunger and poverty. Thus it led to coming of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) from 2016 onwards till 2030. In which hunger and poverty is one of the primary goals, henceforth for 14 years various non-state actors and state institute in the form of agencies, associations, organization etc., would try to minimize or reduce the hunger and poverty related problems. Thus, major step has been taken by United Nations to ensure Food security at the global level, regional level, national level and local level.

In context of India, the impact of Green Revolution had brought tremendous growth in food production, it led the state from food deficiency to food self-sufficiency i.e. from food importer to food exporter in International level. However in the post-reform period agriculture production has shown deceleration due to factors like low production of foodgrain, diversion of agricultural cultivable lands for non-agricultural uses and reduction of public spending in the agriculture sector, excessive use of chemicals in the form of fertilizers and pesticides. Due to such a scenario there has been huge distress in rural areas creating migration from rural to urban areas for primarily food and livelihood security. In such circumstances it becomes significant to understand the situation of those states where it has limited resources.

Sikkim total population consists of 6, 10,577 persons and about 73 percent of the population resides in rural areas. In terms of food security, the state is not self-sufficient in food production due to its geographical constraints. Thus all such limitations have made Sikkim to be declared as a food deficit state which relies heavily on import of Public Distribution System (PDS).

Thus, the Government has initiated targeted plans focusing on food security, education, rural development, etc. In which PDS and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in other words together we can call it Public Distribution and Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment (PDMRE) are important schemes for the Sikkimese people to get ration at a subsidized rate and to get adequate income to purchase subsidized ration, helping beneficiaries to enable food security at grassroot level.

The present scenario in functioning of PDMRE has led to large limitations and loopholes creating space for malpractices and mismanagement of the scheme. This virtually questions the objectivity of the scheme, which affects the vulnerable people at the grass root level. Thus, loopholes raise strong questions on the policies of the government framed by the Central Government and the State Government and its various agencies.

There are numerous writings about the food security scenario of the rural and urban India. However, there are little or negligible literature dealing with PDMRE its implementation and effectiveness in the mountainous rural state of Sikkim. Such limitations become a major hurdle in the form of deprivation and exploitation especially affecting the vulnerable groups.

An attempt has been made in this study to bridge such gaps as it consisted both quantitative and qualitative methods. In which structured questionnaire and data analysis and interpretation was done through utilising statistical tools like percentage, table and figure. In the qualitative method consisted of open ended questionnaire containing case study and its analysis, personal interview, field observation and its interpretation.

Secondary source in the form of literature, publications, documents etc., on issues related to food security, poverty and hunger was utilised. At the same time Marking Recent Research Related Activities Method (MARRAM) was utilised for extracting relevant information and for analyses. Right to Information was also utilised in order to access information related to research.

The study covered entire four districts of Sikkim, covering sample size of 240 respondents from 12 villages was taken as sample size from the state in the form of multistage random sampling. Study population consisted of people availing the central scheme of PDMRE serving the purpose of the research through various indicators i.e., (a) per capita, (b) household engaged in MGNREGA, and (c) education. It has been further divided into two categories (i) remote area and (ii) semi remote area based on the indicators like presence of post office, education institutions upto std. VIII, primary health centers, metalled road, nearby towns and market.

For the field survey questionnaire or interview schedule (close ended and open ended) was constructed based on the availability, accessibility, affordability and applicability of food for the PDS. Similarly, for MGNREGA working of the wage employment scheme based on adequate wage and work in the form of no. of days

worked, type of work, wage payment, utilisation of wage etc., was studied. In which interview of APL/BPL households, Panchayat members, Village Level Workers (VLW's), Fair Price Shop dealers, and Government officials of the study area was conducted.

The research area fulfills most of the criteria for study as the area has a mixture of above mentioned categories. Due to its sloping hills terrace farming is practiced widely and also People are engaged in dairy farming most of them participate in the PDMRE scheme. It tries to examine the implementation of PDMRE in Sikkim through case study method to know the role of “public action” if any in implementing schemes. At the same time it would also try to analyze its effectiveness in the ground level like perceptions of workers and non workers of MGNREGA, the longevity and sustainability issue and its effect on women folks as promoted by UN in its SDG's post-2015 agenda relating it to the state of food security in Sikkim.

The study aims to build a strong management system of food security at grassroots level trying to bring better governance and public action at the lowest level to make “model rural area” in the form of sustainable village which would be applicable to the hill area of India in general and Sikkim in specific. Thus, in order to achieve such objectives the thesis has been divided into six parts including four core chapters containing topics like Food Production and Consumption in India and Sikkim, Implementation of PDMRE, Its Effectiveness and Challenges in Sikkim and Food Security Management at Grassroots level.

The introductory **Chapter 1** contains the basic blueprint of the thesis which includes literature review on thematic base, rational of study, research questions, objective of study, hypothesis, methodology etc. Basically it tries to build a structure for the research to be taken forward in a greater detail.

Chapter 2 includes Indian agricultural system, the effectiveness of Green Revolution in India and in turn being self sufficient state. It also focuses on Agricultural Production (growth in overall foodgrain production) in India and Sikkim (district level) their growth over a period of time and similarly their level of consumption (average intake of food). Agriculture constitutes about 25 percent share of country's national income and more than half of India's workforce is employed in its agriculture sector. Its largely depends on the south west monsoon season, a good monsoon means a good harvest for the hard working Indian farmer.

Thus, its significance in providing livelihood security in rural areas is undeniable. When it comes to Indian agriculture the impact of Green Revolution cannot be sidelined, as it made India a food self-sufficient state from a food deficient state. In which the food grain production increase tremendously. During this time in order to manage the agriculture sector two very important institutions was set up in the form of Food Corporation of India and Agricultural Prices Commission. To ensure remunerative prices to producers, maintain reasonable prices for consumers, and to maintain buffer stock to guard against adverse impact of year to year fluctuations in output on price stability.

During Green Revolution fertilizers, pesticides, proper irrigation facilities were overuse. Such inputs virtually degraded the quality of soil and depleted the water table of many farming lands. In recent there has been a period of stagnation in foodgrain production in the one hand and rise in population in the other creating urgency in providing food security.

The upcoming challenges in terms of food production are poor storage condition of existing buffer stock and low Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural production to farmers/labourers has been low as input cost is high. The farmers are heavily dependent on fertilizers, pesticides and monsoon to produce more in order to own profit but most importantly to overcome their debt and credit taken from various sources. In failure of crop production means no way out for farmers leading to suicides and migration, which have been serious concerns which could be partially seen from the additional import of foodgrain in 2011.

Many states of India are food deficient states like Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Goa, North East state excluding Assam, therefore they have to depend on the Central government for the support of food grains. On the other hand the Central government also has to depend on the major foodgrain producing states for the supply, who in turn are also suffering from the setbacks of low production.

Over the years agriculture in Sikkim has remained stagnant or no growths especially when it comes to major foodgrain like rice and wheat. It also shows the overdependence in PDS/private agency for the fulfillment of the requirements. Over the years there has been a significant change in food consumption, which can be attributed due to changes in per capita income levels. There has been low off-take due to storage capacity of various state district godown, to avoid the damage of

foodgrain due to lack of scientific storage facilities and late lift off from various FPS of the districts making the state district godown to demand less foodgrain.

Compared to the all India averages of monthly per capita consumption expenditure, the status of Sikkim in both rural and urban areas is high, reflecting on the economic well being of the people especially in consumption level. Post-1991 reforms brought a significant shift where the role of private sector has had a dominant influence. Now product lunched in London, New York, New Delhi, Tokyo and Paris are easily available in capital of Sikkim. Over the years (1993-2005) Sikkim's share of food and non food items in pattern consumption have changed significantly within rural and urban areas.

Traditional food habits has changed where now such items are mere delicacies and consumed less. In past *daeroo* (product made up of grains of maize and millets. It is grinded into fine particles, which is very rich in proteins and nutrients compare to polished rice) happened to be an important meal for consumption which was consumed and had equal status like rice. But in past few decades it has been totally substituted with rice. It has been the main staple diet which is consumed daily and its average intake of rice is two times a day by the locals, making the import of rice more significant.

Chapter 3 explores how PDMRE scheme being one of the important welfare scheme for the people of India in general and the state of Sikkim in specific. The Indian constitution especially article 41 and 47 has given rights to the people of the union in the form of social democracy by initiating welfare policy schemes especially targeted towards the "have nots" the underprivileged or the deprived section of the society. It examines the genesis of PDMRE scheme its objectives and its implementation at the ground level

However flawed method of capturing poverty, corruption, lack of transparency, caste based discrimination, gender based discrimination, illiteracy, remoteness of area, unawareness about the basic right, unawareness about right to information act (RTI), red tapism, religious based belief, political victimization, monopoly of privileged group, conflict zones etc. creating a major hurdle in effective execution in schemes created for the deprived and vulnerable section of the society.

Such inefficiency in the execution at the ground level has pushed the country majority underprivileged masses into further poverty, hunger, malnutrition, gender inequality etc., in the national and global level. So in order to mange such challenges

National Food Security Act, 2013 and Digitization process to tackle corruption and further inclusion of the vulnerable groups has been initiated.

The PDMRE scheme has been of immense significance to the people of state of Sikkim both because of geographical inaccessibility and economic affordability. It has made women to form Self Help Groups by frequently interacting in the MGNREGA scheme. At the same time state coming up with its own innovative scheme to ensure food and livelihood security at the ground level has been a major support.

However in all above schemes the role of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) is important in which Panchayat, Gram Panchayat members, Gram Sabha are important bodies, it is one of the important platforms making people to register their grievance and suggestion bringing more awareness which would in turn help in the further development of the projects. PRI was the dream of Mahatma Gandhi where every village would be a model ideal village by being self sufficient. It aimed for Ram Rajya where village headmen/Panchayat would do its duties to fullest for the welfare of its rural people.

The constitution provides special powers to the Panchayat to empower the grass root level and being the voice for the rural people. However the major problem faced by the many parts of rural India is the lack of adequate function done by the Panchayat at the grassroots level. The role of Panchayat has changed significantly they work for their self interest by involving into corruption and malpractices in partnership with bureaucrats and ministers.

Chapter 4 attempts to examine the effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme at the state of Sikkim through a case study method in which 12 villages were surveyed, from the four district of Sikkim. Research took place in month of December-February, 2015 and June-July. 2015.

It focused on analyzing the effectiveness of the scheme in providing support to the beneficiaries, bringing changes in social and economic condition, good governance at the village, district and state level. It tried to analyse the challenges faced in the successful execution of the scheme at the ground level. The demography of the study area consists of rural setting where majority of the population are engaged in agriculture and allied activities.

In order to get adequate response from the women folks nearly half of the respondents belonged to the female category. Not only to know the effectiveness but also to know the limitations and further improvements.

Some of the findings that provides link between MGNREGA scheme which provides livelihood security and PDS scheme providing food security to the rural people and vice versa. The wages earned in MGNREGA is utilized by the beneficiaries in buying subsidies rations. At the same time due to subsidies rations most of the people are able to save money and utilized that save money combined with the 100 days wage to save and even utilized in for their other livelihood activities.

Rice has been the staple diet over traditional food items in which PDS rice is a major source. Due to subsidized rice BPL and AAY beneficiaries are able to buy protein rich diet in the form of meat. Unavailability of rations at the first week of the month in village FPS is creating dual credit crises among the beneficiaries.

Non presence of whole sale shop and discount shop at the village level is making rural people less to save money. In addition, most of the local shop are selling more than mrp rate by giving reasons like transport charge and labour charge etc. Delay in wage payment for more than five months making villagers especially women to *Gheraoo* or to surround the Khand Vikas Karyalay and Zilla Karyalay at west and north Sikkim to demand the wage. The MGNREGA has made women to form SHG's to run PDS outlets and organic vegetable outlets.

The MGNREGA wages are used in social occasion like buying gift in marriage rituals and providing money in the form condolences in death rituals. It has been also utilized for children education in spending school stationaries and sending them to private tuitions. The scheme has also led to promotion of traditional skills in bamboo basket weaving for carrying materials like stone, sand, cement etc. In some villages cannabis are barter for PDS commodities due PDS items siphoned off by the FPS, which also shows the importance of PDS rations.

Transparency, Accountability and Advocacy are low from the secondary stake holders, Lack of awareness about centrally and state sponsored schemes are a major stumbling block. In most of the cases Local Vigilance Committee are ineffective due to its composition at the Gram Sabha level as members live in different villages making it hard to be effective at the ground level.

Chapter 5 exclusively dedicates toward Food Security Management at the Grassroot Level which not only tries to address the limitations of the implementation and effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme. It also comes up with suitable suggestion in addressing the problems. In order to address the current problems two measures has to be implemented the first is the Short Term Immediate Measures (STIM's) and the second is the Long Term Effective Measures (LTEM's) by utilizing these two measures it would to most extend provide an effective local governance, transparency and accountability from the secondary stake holders and advocacy at the grassroot level.

Some of the agendas in the STIM are innovative ideas like Transfer of functioning of Public Distribution System at the grassroot to the Village Panchayat, Utilisation of MGNREGA workers to strengthen PDS, Panchayat Bi-Annual Accountability Report (PBAAR) to Gram Sabha and Village Sabha level trying to bring better governance and public action, Planning and Advisory Committee (PAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme, Fund Assessment Committee (FAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme, Ward Level Local Vigilance Committee (WLLVC) for PDMRE and other scheme: (Reform), Local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (LTMEC), Awareness through Media: Print and Electronic format: (Weekly/Monthly), Enhancing Consumer Protection for Livelihood and Food Security: A Dilemma of "Keep the Change" and "No Change", "I Care My Sikkimese" initiative.

Similarly in LTEM there is Right to Review (RTR) at the administrative level (Department and Panchayat), Skill Training in Practice (STP) at ground level empowering women folks, Awareness through Education Institution (AEI) by converging the Ministry of HRDD and Institute like UGC and ICSSR for Aware Rural India, Healthy Village is Food Secure Village, Infrastructure for Local Governance: i) Village Meeting Ground, ii) Setting up of Organic Health Medication Centre or *Jeevik Swasth Upchaar Kendra*, iii) Establishing Panchayat Office at every ward/single village level, iv) Setting up of Citizen Service Centre (CSC) at every Gram Panchayat level, v) Setting up of Telecottage for E-Empowerment at Village Level, Setting up of Separate Wing in the Department of Rural Development Dep. or setting up of Separate Dept. of Panchayati Raj.

Both of the measures have focus on village empowerment at general and food security in particular at the grass root level. In which the major objective is to

transform masses from being mere beneficiaries to citizens which not only promises to provide accountability, transparency and advocacy from the secondary stake holders that is state and its agencies but also demands responsibility from the primary stake holders that is the general masses.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion which sums up the thesis apart from it contains some recommendations. It has been divided into three sections, the first section discusses the positive outcome in the form of effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme like it being significant part of village population, more visible compared to other central schemes due to subsidies rations and wage in the form of cash, providing women opportunity as in most cases as they go to fetch PDS rations and considerable amount presence of women in most of MGNREGA sites, it also made to form Awareness Communication at village level to ensure their food and livelihood security etc.

At the same time challenges confronted in the PDMRE scheme like lack of accountability and responsibility from the secondary stake holders which has created vacuum leading to mismanagement and malpractices. Lack of proper coordination and planning has created major problem in monsoon season in PDS and agriculture season in MGNREGA works where the general people has to suffer with bad quality rations and rural livelihood dilemma.

The second section discusses the importance of the STIM and LTEM in providing food security and village empowerment at the lowest level irrespective of class, caste, religion, gender etc., third section deals with the policy towards food security for manual scavengers, de privatization of FPS as done in Chattisgarh, Shuffling of PDMRE officials every 2-3 years to curtail nepotism, bureaucratic capitalism, nexus between FPS and the official in-charge etc., Mandatory visit of PDMRE officials at ground level and setting up of hot line no. which provides anonymity.

Suggestion of full utilisation of Atta is made as there have been Less availability of Atta in FPS and low lift off of Atta from FPS is creating wastage of public money. Alternatives like exchange of allocated quota of wheat with rice from those states which consumes more wheat. Utilisation of wheat budget in aiding the beneficiary to get PDS rice for BPL and AAY free of cost. The state could replace wheat by chana dal and provide it to Old age home, Orphan home, Rehabilitation and Detoxification Centre, Destitute home and Mamtalay.

Inclusion of Atta in I CARE MY SIKKIMESE initiative by providing it to the welfare homes or it could provide it to Government Hospitals, where through its kitchen staff could provide Atta *Roti* in summer and Atta *Kowriee* (stew containing small ball of atta, mix vegetable or meat items) in winter or in both season to the patient.

It also becomes important to do a thorough research on Corporate Social Responsibility in linking it with the food security and livelihood security at the village level. Utilisation of its fund for the skill development or training programme, to make the villagers equip with the newest skill, facilities and update-adapt with the changing circumstances. Usage of funds to come up with innovative ideas for village level programme which would sustain their livelihood opportunities which would halt rural urban migration.

Lastly, 73rd Amendment Act of Indian Constitution provided comprehensive responsibilities for the Panchayat at the local level to ensure food, livelihood security and many more through Panchayat Raj Institutions. However the greatest tragedy being the unawareness about the act, limited financial and administrative devolution, bureaucratic capitalism, Panchayat psychologically being inferior towards bureaucrats, MLA's and Ministers. However they are selected for one common cause that is for the service of the common people. As, majority of our population resides in rural areas the hour of need is the sustainable villages where measures in the form of STIM and LTEM had to implemented. In which there should be cooperation between state and its agencies, civil societies, NGO's and the citizens.



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“Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act”

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "***Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act***" submitted to Sikkim University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is my original work. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

BITU SUBBA (10PDPC02)

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

(HEAD)

(SUPERVISOR)

To My Mother Doma Subba

And

Father Suk Bahadur Subba

With

Lots of

Affection and Gratitude.

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LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS

AAY	Antyodaya Annadan Yojana
AEI	Awareness through Education Institution
AGRASRI	Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APL	Above Poverty Line
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CASSAIP	Centre and State scheme Awareness Information Person
CC	Connectivity path
CCE	Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation
CCS	Consumer Co-operative Societies
CIPLA	Chemical, Industrial & Pharmaceutical Laboratories
CMRHM	Chief Minister Rural Housing Mission
CSC	Citizen Service Centre
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
DCSO	District Civil Supplies Officer
DESME	Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation
DONER	Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region
DWCRA	Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas
EFP	Emergency Food Programme
EGS	Employment Guarantee Scheme

FAG	Fund Assessment Group
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FCI	Food Corporation of India
FCSD	Food and Civil Supplies Department
FPS	Fair price shop
FYP	Five Year Plan
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFSI	Global Food Security Index
GHI	Global hunger index
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPUs	Gram Panchayat Units
GRS	Gram Rojgar Sewak
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human development report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HYV	High Yielding Varieties
IARI	Indian Agricultural Research Institute
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICSSR	Indian Council of Social Science Research
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute

IPR	Information and Public Relations
IRDPA	Integrated Rural Development Programme
KILA	Kerala Institute of Local Administration
KVA	Khanda Vikas Adhikari
LDC	Lower Division Clerk
LPG	Liberalisation, Globalisation and Privatisation
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
LTEM	Long Term/Effective Measures
LTMEG	Local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Group
LVC	Local Vigilance Committee
MBC	Most Backward Class
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDM	Mid day Meal
MDPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MHRDD	Ministry of Human Resource Development Department
MMAAY	Mukhya Mantri Antyodaya Anadan Yojana
MMKSA	Mukhya Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhiyan
MNCs	Multi National Companies
MRP	Maximum Retail Price
MSP	Minimum Support Price
N.A.	Not Available
N.ARR.	Not Arrived

N.R.	No Response
NAM	Non Aligned Movement
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NFSA	National Food Security Act
NFWP	National Food for Work Programme
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NHPC	National Hydroelectric Power Corporation
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Class
PAG	Planning and Advisory Group
PBAAR	Panchayat Bi-Annual Accountability Report
PDMRE	Public Distribution and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment
PDS	Public Distribution System
PRI's	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RGSEAG	Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls
RISAT	All Radar Imaging Satellite
RMDD	Rural Management Development Department
RTI	Right to Information Act
RTR	Right to Review
SC	Schedule Caste
SCS	Special Category States
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEWA	Self Employed Women Association

SGRY	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana
SGSY	Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
SHGs	Self Help Groups
SOM	Sikkim Organic Mission
SSRY	Swarnajayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana
ST	Schedule Tribe
STP	Skill Training in Practice
TPDS	Targeted Public Distribution System
TRIPS	Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights
TRYSEM	Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment
UGC	University Grants Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VLWs	Village Level Workers
WBNP	Wheat Based Nutrition Programme
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Food security is one of the important components of Human Security. The United Nations in its ambitious plan to overcome such challenges initiated Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). There was little to cheer about as the year 2015 came to an end and still there was a large population of the world suffering from hunger and poverty. Thus it led to coming of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) from 2016 onwards till 2030. In which hunger and poverty is one of the primary goals, henceforth for 14 years various non-state actors and state institute in the form of agencies, associations, organization etc., would try to minimize or reduce the hunger and poverty related problems. Thus, major step has been taken by United Nations to ensure Food security at the global level, regional level, national level and local level.

In context of India, the impact of Green Revolution had brought tremendous growth in food production, it led the state from food deficiency to food self-sufficiency i.e. from food importer to food exporter in International level. However in the post-reform period agriculture production has shown deceleration due to factors like low production of foodgrain, diversion of agricultural cultivable lands for non-agricultural uses and reduction of public spending in the agriculture sector, excessive use of chemicals in the form of fertilizers and pesticides. Due to such a scenario there has been huge distress in rural areas creating migration from rural to urban areas for primarily food and livelihood security. In such circumstances it becomes significant to understand the situation of those states where it has limited resources.

Sikkim total population consists of 6, 10,577 persons and about 73 percent of the population resides in rural areas. In terms of food security, the state is not self-sufficient in food production due to its geographical constraints. Thus all such limitations have made Sikkim to be declared as a food deficit state which relies heavily on import of Public Distribution System (PDS).

Thus, the Government has initiated targeted plans focusing on food security, education, rural development, etc. In which PDS and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in other words together we can call it Public

Distribution and Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment (PDMRE) are important schemes for the Sikkimese people to get ration at a subsidized rate and to get adequate income to purchase subsidized ration, helping beneficiaries to enable food security at grassroot level.

The present scenario in functioning of PDMRE has led to large limitations and loopholes creating space for malpractices and mismanagement of the scheme. This virtually questions the objectivity of the scheme, which affects the vulnerable people at the grass root level. Thus, loopholes raise strong questions on the policies of the government framed by the Central Government and the State Government and its various agencies.

There are numerous writings about the food security scenario of the rural and urban India. However, there are little or negligible literature dealing with PDMRE its implementation and effectiveness in the mountainous rural state of Sikkim. Such limitations become a major hurdle in the form of deprivation and exploitation especially affecting the vulnerable groups.

An attempt has been made in this study to bridge such gaps as it consisted both quantitative and qualitative methods. In which structured questionnaire and data analysis and interpretation was done through utilising statistical tools like percentage, table and figure. In the qualitative method consisted of open ended questionnaire containing case study and its analysis, personal interview, field observation and its interpretation.

Secondary source in the form of literature, publications, documents etc., on issues related to food security, poverty and hunger was utilised. At the same time Marking Recent Research Related Activities Method (MARRAM) was utilised for extracting relevant information and for analyses. Right to Information was also utilised in order to access information related to research.

The study covered entire four districts of Sikkim, covering sample size of 240 respondents from 12 villages was taken as sample size from the state in the form of multistage random sampling. Study population consisted of people availing the central scheme of PDMRE serving the purpose of the research through various indicators i.e., (a) per capita, (b) household engaged in MGNREGA, and (c) education. It has been further

divided into two categories (i) remote area and (ii) semi remote area based on the indicators like presence of post office, education institutions upto std. VIII, primary health centers, metalled road, nearby towns and market.

For the field survey questionnaire or interview schedule (close ended and open ended) was constructed based on the availability, accessibility, affordability and applicability of food for the PDS. Similarly, for MGNREGA working of the wage employment scheme based on adequate wage and work in the form of no. of days worked, type of work, wage payment, utilisation of wage etc., was studied. In which interview of APL/BPL households, Panchayat members, Village Level Workers (VLW's), Fair Price Shop dealers, and Government officials of the study area was conducted.

The research area fulfills most of the criteria for study as the area has a mixture of above mentioned categories. Due to its sloping hills terrace farming is practiced widely and also People are engaged in dairy farming most of them participate in the PDMRE scheme. It tries to examine the implementation of PDMRE in Sikkim through case study method to know the role of “public action” if any in implementing schemes. At the same time it would also try to analyze its effectiveness in the ground level like perceptions of workers and non workers of MGNREGA, the longevity and sustainability issue and its effect on women folks as promoted by UN in its SDG's post-2015 agenda relating it to the state of food security in Sikkim.

The study aims to build a strong management system of food security at grassroots level trying to bring better governance and public action at the lowest level to make “model rural area” in the form of sustainable village which would be applicable to the hill area of India in general and Sikkim in specific. Thus, in order to achieve such objectives the thesis has been divided into six parts including four core chapters containing topics like Food Production and Consumption in India and Sikkim, Implementation of PDMRE, Its Effectiveness and Challenges in Sikkim and Food Security Management at Grassroots level.

The introductory **Chapter 1** contains the basic blueprint of the thesis which includes literature review on thematic base, rationale of study, research questions,

objective of study, hypothesis, methodology etc. Basically it tries to build a structure for the research to be taken forward in a greater detail.

Chapter 2 includes Indian agricultural system, the effectiveness of Green Revolution in India and in turn being self sufficient state. It also focuses on Agricultural Production (growth in overall foodgrain production) in India and Sikkim (district level) their growth over a period of time and similarly their level of consumption (average intake of food). Agriculture constitutes about 25 percent share of country's national income and more than half of India's workforce is employed in its agriculture sector. Its largely depends on the south west monsoon season, a good monsoon means a good harvest for the hard working Indian farmer.

Thus, its significance in providing livelihood security in rural areas is undeniable. When it comes to Indian agriculture the impact of Green Revolution cannot be sidelined, as it made India a food self-sufficient state from a food deficient state. In which the food grain production increase tremendously. During this time in order to manage the agriculture sector two very important institutions was set up in the form of Food Corporation of India and Agricultural Prices Commission. To ensure remunerative prices to producers, maintain reasonable prices for consumers, and to maintain buffer stock to guard against adverse impact of year to year fluctuations in output on price stability.

During Green Revolution fertilizers, pesticides, proper irrigation facilities were overuse. Such inputs virtually degraded the quality of soil and depleted the water table of many farming lands. In recent there has been a period of stagnation in foodgrain production in the one hand and rise in population in the other creating urgency in providing food security.

The upcoming challenges in terms of food production are poor storage condition of existing buffer stock and low Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural production to farmers/labourers has been low as input cost is high. The farmers are heavily dependent on fertilizers, pesticides and monsoon to produce more in order to own profit but most importantly to overcome their debt and credit taken from various sources. In failure of crop production means no way out for farmers leading to suicides and

migration, which have been serious concerns which could be partially seen from the additional import of foodgrain in 2011.

Many states of India are food deficient states like Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Goa, North East state excluding Assam, therefore they have to depend on the Central government for the support of food grains. On the other hand the Central government also has to depend on the major foodgrain producing states for the supply, who in turn are also suffering from the setbacks of low production.

Over the years agriculture in Sikkim has remained stagnant or no growths especially when it comes to major foodgrain like rice and wheat. It also shows the overdependence in PDS/private agency for the fulfillment of the requirements. Over the years there has been a significant change in food consumption, which can be attributed due to changes in per capita income levels. There has been low off-take due to storage capacity of various state district godown, to avoid the damage of foodgrain due to lack of scientific storage facilities and late lift off from various FPS of the districts making the state district godown to demand less foodgrain.

Compared to the all India averages of monthly per capita consumption expenditure, the status of Sikkim in both rural and urban areas is high, reflecting on the economic well being of the people especially in consumption level. Post-1991 reforms brought a significant shift where the role of private sector has had a dominant influence. Now product lunched in London, New York, New Delhi, Tokyo and Paris are easily available in capital of Sikkim. Over the years (1993-2005) Sikkim's share of food and non food items in pattern consumption have changed significantly within rural and urban areas.

Traditional food habits has changed where now such items are mere delicacies and consumed less. In past *daeroo* (product made up of grains of maize and millets. It is grinded into fine particles, which is very rich in proteins and nutrients compare to polished rice) happened to be an important meal for consumption which was consumed and had equal status like rice. But in past few decades it has been totally substituted with rice. It has been the main staple diet which is consumed daily and its average intake of rice is two times a day by the locals, making the import of rice more significant.

Chapter 3 explores how PDMRE scheme being one of the important welfare scheme for the people of India in general and the state of Sikkim in specific. The Indian constitution especially article 41 and 47 has given rights to the people of the union in the form of social democracy by initiating welfare policy schemes especially targeted towards the “have nots” the underprivileged or the deprived section of the society. It examines the genesis of PDMRE scheme its objectives and its implementation at the ground level

However flawed method of capturing poverty, corruption, lack of transparency, caste based discrimination, gender based discrimination, illiteracy, remoteness of area, unawareness about the basic right, unawareness about right to information act (RTI), red tapism, religious based belief, political victimization, monopoly of privileged group, conflict zones etc. creating a major hurdle in effective execution in schemes created for the deprived and vulnerable section of the society.

Such inefficiency in the execution at the ground level has pushed the country majority underprivileged masses into further poverty, hunger, malnutrition, gender inequality etc., in the national and global level. So in order to manage such challenges National Food Security Act, 2013 and Digitization process to tackle corruption and further inclusion of the vulnerable groups has been initiated.

The PDMRE scheme has been of immense significance to the people of state of Sikkim both because of geographical inaccessibility and economic affordability. It has made women to form Self Help Groups by frequently interacting in the MGNREGA scheme. At the same time state coming up with its own innovative scheme to ensure food and livelihood security at the ground level has been a major support.

However in all above schemes the role of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) is important in which Panchayat, Gram Panchayat members, Gram Sabha are important bodies, it is one of the important platforms making people to register their grievance and suggestion bringing more awareness which would in turn help in the further development of the projects. PRI was the dream of Mahatma Gandhi where every village would be a

model ideal village by being self sufficient. It aimed for Ram Rajya where village headmen/Panchayat would do its duties to fullest for the welfare of its rural people.

The constitution provides special powers to the Panchayat to empower the grass root level and being the voice for the rural people. However the major problem faced by the many parts of rural India is the lack of adequate function done by the Panchayat at the grassroots level. The role of Panchayat has changed significantly they work for their self interest by involving into corruption and malpractices in partnership with bureaucrats and ministers.

Chapter 4 attempts to examine the effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme at the state of Sikkim through a case study method in which 12 villages were surveyed, from the four district of Sikkim. Research took place in month of December-February, 2015 and June-July. 2015.

It focused on analyzing the effectiveness of the scheme in providing support to the beneficiaries, bringing changes in social and economic condition, good governance at the village, district and state level. It tried to analyse the challenges faced in the successful execution of the scheme at the ground level. The demography of the study area consists of rural setting where majority of the population are engaged in agriculture and allied activities.

In order to get adequate response from the women folks nearly half of the respondents belonged to the female category. Not only to know the effectiveness but also to know the limitations and further improvements.

Some of the findings that provides link between MGNREGA scheme which provides livelihood security and PDS scheme providing food security to the rural people and vice versa. The wages earned in MGNREGA is utilized by the beneficiaries in buying subsidies rations. At the same time due to subsidies rations most of the people are able to save money and utilized that save money combined with the 100 days wage to save and even utilized in for their other livelihood activities.

Rice has been the staple diet over traditional food items in which PDS rice is a major source. Due to subsidized rice BPL and AAY beneficiaries are able to buy protein

rich diet in the form of meat. Unavailability of rations at the first week of the month in village FPS is creating dual credit crises among the beneficiaries.

Non presence of whole sale shop and discount shop at the village level is making rural people less to save money. In addition, most of the local shop are selling more than mrp rate by giving reasons like transport charge and labour charge etc. Delay in wage payment for more than five months making villagers especially women to *Gheraoo* or to surround the Khand Vikas Karyalay and Zilla Karyalay at west and north Sikkim to demand the wage. The MGNREGA has made women to form SHG's to run PDS outlets and organic vegetable outlets.

The MGNREGA wages are used in social occasion like buying gift in marriage rituals and providing money in the form condolences in death rituals. It has been also utilized for children education in spending school stationaries and sending them to private tuitions. The scheme has also led to promotion of traditional skills in bamboo basket weaving for carrying materials like stone, sand, cement etc. In some villages cannabis are barter for PDS commodities due PDS items siphoned off by the FPS, which also shows the importance of PDS rations.

Transparency, Accountability and Advocacy are low from the secondary stake holders, Lack of awareness about centrally and state sponsored schemes are a major stumbling block. In most of the cases Local Vigilance Committee are ineffective due to its composition at the Gram Sabha level as members live in different villages making it hard to be effective at the ground level.

Chapter 5 exclusively dedicates toward Food Security Management at the Grassroot Level which not only tries to address the limitations of the implementation and effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme. It also comes up with suitable suggestion in addressing the problems. In order to address the current problems two measures has to be implemented the first is the Short Term Immediate Measures (STIM's) and the second is the Long Term Effective Measures (LTEM's) by utilizing these two measures it would to most extend provide an effective local governance, transparency and accountability from the secondary stake holders and advocacy at the grassroot level.

Some of the agendas in the STIM are innovative ideas like Transfer of functioning of Public Distribution System at the grassroot to the Village Panchayat, Utilisation of MGNREGA workers to strengthen PDS, Panchayat Bi-Annual Accountability Report (PBAAR) to Gram Sabha and Village Sabha level trying to bring better governance and public action, Planning and Advisory Committee (PAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme, Fund Assessment Committee (FAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme, Ward Level Local Vigilance Committee (WLLVC) for PDMRE and other scheme: (Reform), Local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (LTMEC), Awareness through Media: Print and Electronic format: (Weekly/Monthly), Enhancing Consumer Protection for Livelihood and Food Security: A Dilemma of “Keep the Change” and “No Change”, “I Care My Sikkimese” initiative.

Similarly in LTEM there is Right to Review (RTR) at the administrative level (Department and Panchayat), Skill Training in Practice (STP) at ground level empowering women folks, Awareness through Education Institution (AEI) by converging the Ministry of HRDD and Institute like UGC and ICSSR for Aware Rural India, Healthy Village is Food Secure Village, Infrastructure for Local Governance: i) Village Meeting Ground, ii) Setting up of Organic Health Medication Centre or *Jeevik Swasth Upchaar Kendra*, iii) Establishing Panchayat Office at every ward/single village level, iv) Setting up of Citizen Service Centre (CSC) at every Gram Panchayat level, v) Setting up of Telecottage for E-Empowerment at Village Level, Setting up of Separate Wing in the Department of Rural Development Dep. or setting up of Separate Dept. of Panchayati Raj.

Both of the measures have focus on village empowerment at general and food security in particular at the grass root level. In which the major objective is to transform masses from being mere beneficiaries to citizens which not only promises to provide accountability, transparency and advocacy from the secondary stake holders that is state and its agencies but also demands responsibility from the primary stake holders that is the general masses.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion which sums up the thesis apart from it contains some recommendations. It has been divided into three sections, the first section discusses the

positive outcome in the form of effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme like it being significant part of village population, more visible compared to other central schemes due to subsidies rations and wage in the form of cash, providing women opportunity as in most cases as they go to fetch PDS rations and considerable amount presence of women in most of MGNREGA sites, it also made to form Awareness Communication at village level to ensure their food and livelihood security etc.

At the same time challenges confronted in the PDMRE scheme like lack of accountability and responsibility from the secondary stake holders which has created vacuum leading to mismanagement and malpractices. Lack of proper coordination and planning has created major problem in monsoon season in PDS and agriculture season in MGNREGA works where the general people has to suffer with bad quality rations and rural livelihood dilemma.

The second section discusses the importance of the STIM and LTEM in providing food security and village empowerment at the lowest level irrespective of class, caste, religion, gender etc., third section deals with the policy towards food security for manual scavengers, de privatization of FPS as done in Chattisgarh, Shuffling of PDMRE officials every 2-3 years to curtail nepotism, bureaucratic capitalism, nexus between FPS and the official in-charge etc., Mandatory visit of PDMRE officials at ground level and setting up of hot line no. which provides anonymity.

Suggestion of full utilisation of Atta is made as there have been Less availability of Atta in FPS and low lift off of Atta from FPS is creating wastage of public money. Alternatives like exchange of allocated quota of wheat with rice from those states which consumes more wheat. Utilisation of wheat budget in aiding the beneficiary to get PDS rice for BPL and AAY free of cost. The state could replace wheat by chana dal and provide it to Old age home, Orphan home, Rehabilitation and Detoxification Centre, Destitute home and Mamtalay.

Inclusion of Atta in I CARE MY SIKKIMESE initiative by providing it to the welfare homes or it could provide it to Government Hospitals, where through its kitchen

staff could provide Atta *Roti* in summer and Atta *Kowriee* (stew containing small ball of atta, mix vegetable or meat items) in winter or in both season to the patient.

It also becomes important to do a thorough research on Corporate Social Responsibility in linking it with the food security and livelihood security at the village level. Utilisation of its fund for the skill development or training programme, to make the villagers equip with the newest skill, facilities and update-adapt with the changing circumstances. Usage of funds to come up with innovative ideas for village level programme which would sustain their livelihood opportunities which would halt rural urban migration.

Lastly, 73rd Amendment Act of Indian Constitution provided comprehensive responsibilities for the Panchayat at the local level to ensure food, livelihood security and many more through Panchayat Raj Institutions. However the greatest tragedy being the unawareness about the act, limited financial and administrative devolution, bureaucratic capitalism, Panchayat psychologically being inferior towards bureaucrats, MLA's and Ministers. However they are selected for one common cause that is for the service of the common people. As, majority of our population resides in rural areas the hour of need is the sustainable villages where measures in the form of STIM and LTEM had to implemented. In which there should be cooperation between state and its agencies, civil societies, NGO's and the citizens.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. BACKGROUND

Centuries passed in human history with innovation and discoveries to gain influence, power and advancement over civilization and nation state. In which food has remained a fuel for such advancement, which still remains and in future to will remain as a cornerstone of human civilization. It is a basic necessity (along with shelter, clothing and energy) of mankind, any disruptions in these basic necessities would create an environment of fear, confusion and distrust.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its Human Development Report of 1994 as initiated by Mahabub Ul- Haq from Pakistan and Amartya Sen from India both being developmental economist, focused on human face of development i.e. “human life and dignity” as a new development agenda after Post-Cold War era (Buzan and Hansen, 2007). In which goals like providing equality, reducing poverty and hunger, eradicating life threatening diseases, empowering women, political freedom, environment sustainability for future energy security etc. was the very basic criteria for human development.

An International Organisation initiative for stable and peaceful world development programme which promoted “freedom of want and to live with dignity” and also “freedom of fear” as former emphasised on dignity of life better health, education, environment issue, migration, poverty etc. whereas the later focuses on direct violence i.e. war inter/intra state, nuclear holocaust, genocide etc. Such development especially the former can also be seen through the concept Positive Peace¹ developed by Johan Galtung a Norwegian sociologist and founder of Academic Peace Research.

¹ In order to understand the very meaning of Peace it becomes important to know the types of Peace. The word Peace is divided into Negative Peace and Positive Peace. The former advocated by Kenneth Boulding of United States where peace dealt with absence of manifest violence in the form of war and to avoid armed conflict or the physical violence through mediation and reconciliation. In such an agreement structural violence is legitimize and overlooked in order to deter the direct violence. On the other hand Positive peace not only advocates absence of direct violence but also states on removal of structural violence and providing just and equitable opportunities in form of economic opportunities, but also social-political-cultural development.

Positive Peace has two basic components in the form of equity and harmony. In which former means cooperation for mutual and equal benefit and the latter means attitudinal i.e. suffering from the sufferings of other for e.g. people die of hunger and war; or, enjoying from the joy of others for e.g. happiness through basic facilities like proper nutrition, education, decent livelihood etc. Thus, it not only means absence of structural violence and direct violence but also equitable and just conditions for the human development in social structures (Galtung, 1967). So, promoting peace by peaceful means is also providing a platform for the Human Security in general.

Food security is one of the component and an important aspect of Human Security. It is one among seven security areas including Economic Security, Health Security, Environment Security, Personal Security, Community Security and Political Security providing human security at global level, national and local level (UNDP, 1994). The World Food Conference of 1974 emphasized on the “global food security is a responsibility for all nations”. World Food Summit, Rome of 1996 headed by Food and Agricultural Organisation launched an ambitious plan to eliminate hunger and poverty from the world specifically from developing and under developing countries.

The ambitious plan to reduce hunger and poverty was formally included in Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) which primarily consists of eight major goals : (1) Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (2) Achieving universal primary education, (3) Promoting gender equality and empowering women, (4) Reducing child mortality rates, (5) Improving maternal health, (6) Combating Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), malaria and other diseases, (7) Ensuring environmental sustainability and (8) Developing a global partnership for development (UN-General Assembly, 2000). The World leaders through signing of the UN Millennium Declaration in September 2000 in Millennium Summit held at United Nations, New York (USA). It led world leaders from 189 states to eradicate, curb hunger and poverty of developing and under developing countries by 2015.

However, with its deadline on 31st December 2015 a new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)² was accepted by member of the United Nations unanimously on 25th September 2015. It would come into effect from 1st January 2016 and would replace MDG's with 17 goals and 169 targets to achieve by its member states by 2030 (UN- General Assembly, 2015). As these new goals would further build upon the previous goals and with more involvement of medium and least develop countries, private companies, NGO's and civil society groups.

Hunger and Poverty is one of the primary goals of the new SDG's. So, from the beginning of 2016 till 2030 i.e. for almost 14 years various non state actors and state institute in the form of agencies, associations, organisation etc. It would try to minimize or reduce the hunger and poverty related problems in the world by cooperation and mutual agreement to achieve poverty free world and food security. Thus, major step has been taken by United Nations to ensure Food security at the global level, regional level, national level and local level.

Universal definition of food security stands as “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996).

Thus, Food Security can also be defined as “A state of security from different sources, where there is adequate implementation of effective food policies ensuring ground reality to overcome specifically famine and malnutrition (providing cooked/uncooked nutritious food twice a day minimum) and hunger in general”.

In context of India, the impact of Green Revolution had brought tremendous growth in food production, it led the state from food deficiency to food self-sufficiency i.e. from food importer to food exporter in International level. However, in the post-

² The SDG's consist of 17 goals which consist of achieving 1. Ending poverty, 2. Zero hunger, 3. Good health and Well being, 4. Quality Education, 5. Gender Equality, 6. Clean water and sanitation, 7. Affordable and Clean Energy, 8. Decent work and Economic growth, 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure 10. Reduced Inequalities, 11. Sustainable Cities and communities, 12. Responsible Consumption and Production, 13. Climate Action, 14. Life below water(sustainable utilisation of aquatic resource), 15. Life on Land (sustainable utilisation of green environment) , 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and 17. Global Partnerships for the Goals (UN, General Assembly, 2015, pp. 1-35), accessed on 14th March 2016 from the website http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.

reform period (1991) agriculture production has shown deceleration due to factors like low production of foodgrain, diversion of agricultural cultivable lands for non-agricultural uses and reduction of public spending in the agriculture sector, excessive use of chemicals in the form of fertilizers and pesticides.

Sikkim total population consists of 6, 10,577 persons and about 75 percent of the population resides in rural areas. In terms of food security, the state is not self-sufficient in food production due to its geographical constraints of less land for traditional foodgrain production and due to hills and mountains (Subba, 1984). Thus, all such limitations has made Sikkim to be declared as a Food Deficit State which relies heavily on import of Public Distribution System (PDS) and at the same time over the years the state government investment on agricultural activities has been low especially on conventional crops like paddy, wheat and millet.

At the same time, recent trend among farming communities has been focused on cash crops and vegetables which would fetch them high returns in less time. “High Value and Low Volume” trend has made cultivation of paddy much less attractive which would take long duration of five-six months. Such development has also made over dependence in PDS and open market. Therefore the Government has initiated targeted plans focusing on food security, education, rural development, etc.

In which PDS and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are important schemes for the Sikkimese people to get ration at a subsidized rate and to get adequate income to purchase subsidized ration, helping beneficiaries to enable food security at grassroot level.

The present functioning of PDS has left large dents in the form of irregularities (delay in lift off and distribution), errors of Inclusion and Exclusion, leakages and diversion including transaction cost incurred by the beneficiaries of Antodaya Annadan Yojna (AAY). At the rural employment level (MGNREGA) where ghost cards are made, in white paper the work has stated to be completed whereas in reality little or no work is done in the ground level, involvement of private contractors, delay in wage, low class materials etc., which seriously raises question against corruption in specific and governance in general. This virtually questions the objectivity of the scheme, which

affects the vulnerable people at the grass root level in the urban levels in general and rural areas in specific. Thus, loopholes raise strong questions on the policies of the government framed by the Central Government and the State Government and its various agencies.

As we find numerous writings about the food security scenario of the rural and urban India. Its implementation and effectiveness of PDS and MGNREGA in rural India. Still there is little literature available in the context of hill state of Sikkim dealing with food security through PDS and MGNREGA (PDMRE) its implementation and effectiveness. There are considerable amount of literature dealing with PDMRE, but little or negligible in the mountainous rural state.

Possibly due to low frequency of research activities or its natural limitation in food production in agricultural sector or might be due to spatial (remote and harsh terrain) constrains. However, such limitations become a major hurdle in the form of deprivation and exploitation especially affecting the vulnerable groups. Till now two reports on MGNREGA have been completed, there is no doubt that these reports were very much insightful to the individuals focused on rural employment and development in Sikkim. However, report has some limitation as the report does not cover entire state, has limited sample size (respondents) and there is huge consent among host rural departments in selection of field study which questions the objectivity of a research.

An attempt has been made in this study to bridge such gaps by covering entire four districts of Sikkim, covering sample size of 240 respondents from 12 villages in the form of multistage random sampling in which each stage selection is justified with rational arguments serving the purpose of research. Moreover the study would combine two major central schemes in one theme which is providing food security to the beneficiaries. Thus, the objective is to analyse the implementation and effectiveness of PDMRE to the people of the state and come up with proper management system.

An attempt has also been made in this study to examine the implementation of PDMRE in Sikkim through case study method (including survey research and social policy research) to know the role of “public action” if any in implementing schemes. At the same time it would also try to analyse its effectiveness in the ground level (to analyse not only the benefits got by the direct beneficiaries but also who are indirectly getting

benefit for instance in MGNREGA people who are not working in MGNREGA, their perceptions in its working, the longevity and sustainability issue (including repair works) and its effect on women folks as promoted by UN in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) post 2015 agenda relating it to the state of food security in Sikkim.

The study aims to build a strong management system of food security at grassroots level trying to bring better governance and public action (accountability, transparency and advocacy) at the lowest level to make “model rural area” which would be applicable to the hill area of India in general and Sikkim in specific.

1.2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on food security covers a wide variety of theories and issues providing a sound background of this study. There has been a significant contribution to examine the food security and its management in India but very little literature is available on food security and management in Sikkim.

Food security being one of the important element of human security and its present relevance, state agrarian conditions and its policy by the Indian government and implementation of welfare policy of PDMRE towards its citizen that is in India in general and Sikkim in particular. Thematic review of the available literature is divided into four sections as presented below.

1.2.1. Food production and consumption in India and Sikkim

India or the land of Bharat is a state which feed nearly 1.3 billion people due to its strong agrarian system. State which is widely dependent on primary activity in the form of agriculture and allied activities, in which majority of its population is engaged for the livelihood security. Out of 115 million farming families, 80 percent belong to the small and marginal land holdings (Swaminathan, 2012). It provides employment to 67 percent of total workforce and provides material to several industries (Planning Commission, Govt. of India; 2002-07). Agriculture has been the backbone of Indian economy as it provides formidable share in country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and also it provides major support to agricultural based Industries (Paswan, 2003).

However, Agriculture in past India had to be mostly dependent on the monsoon rain for irrigation. Lack of irrigation facilities from the rivers and canals effected the agricultural production. At the same time most of the farmers who were involved in agriculture were poor and recently got land due to the result of land reform act of proposed by the newly formed independent Indian government. There was continuous shift in economic conditions of farmers from APL to BPL due to monsoon rains and credit loans. One year they become APL due to adequate rainfall helping in better crop production however the next year they slip to BPL due to lack of rainfall leading to crop failure. Majority of the farmers depends or cultivate their crops on rainfall and dry land farmers cultivate climate-resilient crops in the form of millet, pulses etc. (Swaminathan, 2012).

The major breakthrough in agriculture was provided in the third five year plan (1961-66), although the initial three year plans provided a base for upcoming reforms, where it aimed to increase the agriculture production in order to make a self sufficient state. Land reforms were taking place and more area was being included under agricultural utilization accompanied by High Yielding Varieties (HYV) seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc, and the traditional method of cultivating crops were replaced by the new methods in order to boost the production which was the major thrust of the Green Revolution (Planning Commission, Govt. of India, 2002-07). It implementation showed it results when yield increase by almost 30 per cent in the 1980's and the sector showed progress and improvement also helping in the increase in wages (Dreze and Sen, 2013).

The impact of Green Revolution (1960's) had brought tremendous growth in food production, it made the state from food deficient state to food self-sufficient state i.e. from food importer to food exporter in International level. It exported to countries like West Asia, Africa, South East Asia etc., (Paswan, 2003). Such development was due to the advancement in the field of agricultural sciences which was aided by latest discoveries, inventions and eminent agricultural scientist like Norman Borlaug and M.S. Swaminathan.

However, in the post reform period (1991) agriculture production has shown deceleration due to factors like low production of foodgrain, diversion of agricultural

cultivable lands for non-agricultural uses and reduction of public spending in the agriculture sector excessive use of chemicals in the form of fertilizers and pesticides (Shiva, 1991 and Behera, 2012) in comparison to 1970's and 80's. It posed a challenge for the majority of people (over 60 percent), who were directly dependent on agriculture sector as a producers and consumers (Swaminathan, 2012).

At the same time heavy use of excessive chemical fertilizers, pesticides leading to loss of natural nutrient in soil, uncontrolled utilisation of ground water for irrigation causes depletion in water table. Most importantly climate change and its impacts on the agriculture sector, affecting the monsoon rains and at the same time rising temperature directly impacting growth in rabi crops in which with a rise of one degree celsius in temperature leading to reduction of wheat production by 4-5 million tonnes (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2015). Most of the small and marginal farmers of farming community are suffering from hunger and malnutrition. These are the serious issues which are undermining the agriculture growth and affecting the future food security scenario.

Indian state strongly needs once again a next Green Revolution which should be more indigenous in its approach that is having clear picture of the ground realities and the emerging problems especially in agricultural production and productivity to the sustenance of foodgrain for longer duration. In which government initiative to extend Green Revolution to the dry land areas, barren lands are quite appreciative. However, sound and innovative irrigation facilities are required which could sustainably utilize water resource and at the same time provide adequate boost in agriculture production. To combat hunger and malnutrition affecting many Indian citizen who are living below poverty line especially women, children, old age person and disable person.

Such developments in the agriculture sector added more pressure to the existing crisis, in which millions of people in India suffered from chronic poverty and inequality leading to deprivation in availing proper nutritious food and moreover an absence in systematic distribution of Central and State schemes worsen the situation.

Like India, the state of Sikkim also has an agrarian economy, where a majority of its population (64 percent) is engaged in agricultural activities. The overall contribution

of foodgrain production by Sikkim when compared to other states is negligible (Ministry of Agriculture, 2011). Though in terms of food security Sikkim does not contribute to the national food stockpile, but rather is dependent on the Central Government for a major stock of foodgrain.

Over the years agriculture in Sikkim has remained stagnant especially when it comes to major foodgrain like rice and wheat. Some of the major problems identified for this low production were its steep and slope lands, content of high acidic brown soil, high/heavy rainfall leading to washing of valuable nutrients required by crops, limited irrigation facilities, traditional method of farming, low use of high agricultural inputs, lack of adequate seed storage facilities for entire state, low public investment in agriculture sector, Insufficient post production storage, market and transport for farmers (Sikkim Development Report, 2008) .

In foodgrain production, Sikkim has remained stagnant. It had the highest production in 111.6 million tons (mt) in 2007-08 and lowest 99.9 mt in 2003-04. Rice is the staple food of consumption in the state which is continuously decreasing from 21.4 mt (2000-01) to 20.9 mt (2010-11) and similarly in wheat 10.1 mt (2000-01) to 0.5 mt (2012-13). But there has been tremendous increase in Cereals 66.5 mt to 97.4 mt from 2010-11 the increase in cereals can also be seen from the “successful production of maize in past few years” (Food Security & Agricultural Development Department, 2013).

Due to its geographical constraints, climate and development projects encroaching agriculture lands has to now focus more on its strength that is on Horticulture and Floriculture in the form of large cardamom, ginger, oranges, vegetables, orchids, rose, tulip etc. by selling such items to buy rice from outside the state.

Even with such developments in agriculture sector it's hard for the small state of Sikkim to provide food security for its growing population especially when it comes to rice production. Thus, it has a lot to depend on the central scheme of Public Distribution System and the imported rice from the other neighbouring state like West Bengal, Punjab and Haryana etc. for managing food security.

In such conditions it becomes important to know the consumption pattern of the people. During the period of 1993-94 and 1999-2000 in Sikkim per capita expenditure on

consumption were Rs. 321.12 and Rs. 559. 50 which was low as compared to All India level of 328.18 and 590.98 but there was gradual increase from Rs. 321.12 (1993-94) to Rs. 738.52 (2004-05) which was above the All India level of Rs.700.33 (2004-05) which also shows that the purchasing power has also increased leading to higher level of expenditure on food/non food item for consumption (Ministry of DONER, 2011).

Compared to the all India, averages of monthly per capita consumption expenditure, the status of Sikkim in both rural and urban areas is high in different periods i.e. from 1993-2005, reflecting on the economic well being of the people especially in consumption level. Factors like rising incomes, urbanisation, changing relative prices of cereals and non-cereal foods, are leading to diet diversification away from cereals and towards high value agriculture. Preferences are shifting toward high-value products at all income levels (Mullen and Gulati, 2005). In which welfare measures of the central and state could not be overlooked. Thus, it becomes important to study the implementation of welfare measures in the form of PDMRE.

1.2.2. Implementation of PDMRE: A welfare scheme for the people of India and Sikkim

In context of India, food intervention programme have their origin in Bengal Famine of 1943, its rising population (Kumar et al., 2012) and seasonal droughts and floods, which made the state to seriously look at the agriculture system to handle famine in specific and the food insecurity in general. State policies towards strengthening agriculture were done through development of infrastructure like for e.g. establishment of pesticide factories, national extension programme, irrigation projects, agriculture universities etc., at the end of 1940's and Green Revolution in 1960's which was made possible through strong political will, technology and enthusiast Indian farmers (Swaminathan, 2012).

To ensure Availability, Affordability and Accessibility for food production and consumption, the Government of India initiated Universal Public Distribution System (PDS) in 1970's which covered both rural and urban Indian population (as compared to British Raj PDS of 1939 which was mostly centered towards urban areas), it was possible

due to Green Revolution in 1960's which made India a self sufficient state in food production and distribution.

Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in 1997 for food security and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2005 for providing work in rural area with minimum wage, for the poorer sections of rural and urban areas played a significant role in ensuring food security (Mahendra, 1996, Yesudian, 2007 and Right to Food Campaign, 2007).

To promote sovereignty in food production system where people engaging in agricultural activities are given freedom to do what they believe is the best and not constrained by governments and cooperates (Ananya, 2010). An exceptional food situation can have a direct effect on political changes and people's mobilization. 'The 1970-73 drought in Maharashtra led to growing social awareness of the right to work, later enshrined in the state's pioneering "employment guarantee scheme". The 1987 drought in Rajasthan gave birth to powerful movement for the "people's right to information" (Dreze, 2001 in Landy, 2009).

Sikkim is one of the small state of Indian Union comprising total area of 7096 sq. km, its total population consist of 6,07,688 persons and about 75.03 percent of the population resides in rural areas (Census, 2011). Agricultural enterprises constitute 11.6 percent and non-agricultural enterprises account for 88.4 percent of total enterprises where 23.2 percent from latter are engaged in public administration and defense (DESME, 2005).

It is one of the food deficient states of the India, it has been declared a "food deficit" state (Subba, 1984; Lama, 2001 and Chakrabharti, 2010). The per capita availability of rice in the state is 158 gms/ day which is far below the National average of 417 gm during 2001-02 (Economic Survey, 2006-07). In order to secure the state from food insecurity, it is heavily dependent in Public Distribution System (Lama, 2010) and private agency/traders for the import of rice, wheat/grinded wheat (Atta), sugar and pulses/dhal.

The survival of agriculture and food requirements of growing population especially Sikkim needs a strong intervention from government and NGO's etc. It has to

come up with innovative ideas and technologies to sustain and upgrade the agricultural farming (terrace) especially paddy (rice) and wheat cultivation. Thus, one has to strengthen its weakness by applying correct policy at the right time (Chakrabharti, 2010).

Thus, in terms of food security the state is not self sufficient in food production in two ways first of all due to limited land availability for agricultural practices and secondly due to its hilly terrain (inaccessibility, fragility and marginality) which makes it to be poor in agricultural sphere (Subba, 2011). Thus, all such limitations have made the state to be declared as a 'Food Deficit State' one of the major concern which makes the "state to rely heavily on import of PDS" (Lama, 2001).

Article 47 of the Indian constitution promotes the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and improve public health. However, the present scenario of food security policy paves for diversion, poor targeting, insufficient supply and inadequate works grain to be rotted in godown and wasted through export and selling at low prices to private dealers, failing to reach the hungry and poor people (Sainath, 2010).

At the same time large dents in the form of irregularities (delay in lift off and distribution), errors of Inclusion and Exclusion, leakages and diversion. At the rural employment level (MGNREGA) where ghost cards are made for the job card holders, in white paper the work has stated to be completed whereas in reality little or no work is done in the ground level, involvement of private contractors, delay in wage, low class materials etc., which seriously raises question against corruption in specific and governance in general (Bhatia and Dreze, 2006). Thus, terming the scheme as a "costly and corrupting welfarism" adopted by the political parties centre and state level as populist measures to garner vote and to remain in power (Chowdary, 2010).

In such scenario, where there is lapses in system and creating a serious challenge for implementation. Thus, the necessity of "public action" becomes more prominent and relevant which is a joint effort of public (common people), state (both opposition and ruling parties), non state actors (civil societies, association etc.) by coming together and solving problem of a society through "collaborative" civic cooperation and by "adversarial" social criticism and political opposition. Thus, vigilance and activism are

the significant activity of the effective public action (Sen and Dreze, 1999) including awareness.

Involvement of administrative plays an important role in monitoring, implementing and executing of the schemes. However, due to poor involvement of the functionaries, the performance of the programme can adversely affect the scheme (Pant and Pandey, 2004).

In Indian context, Right to Information (RTI) is a landmark effort to improve governance and public administration and eliminate corruption. As it provides all citizens greater access to public documents than was earlier possible (Srivastava, 2013). It is one of the major tool which promises to provide adequate government information regarding its policies framing and implementation, serving both “collaborative” and “adversarial” public action. However, no doubt such schemes like PDMRE and RTI will bring changes but lot depends on its execution in the lowest level and so far there have been both positive and negative effects. In which latter has been in the form of massive corruption, poor governance and lack of spreading awareness from bureaucracy to ministerial level.

In such scenario it becomes significant to know the execution of welfare scheme at the lowest level especially in the state of Sikkim. It’s prospects and challenges of the scheme in getting desired result for the better livelihood conditions of the Sikkimese people.

1.2.3. Effectiveness and Challenges of PDMRE in Sikkim

Food security has been of immense significance to the people of State both because of geographical inaccessibility and economic affordability. The State government has always been consciously addressing the issue with great sense of involvement and responsibility. In order to make food and other provisions easily accessible, the State Government has over the years developed a range of infrastructural facilities (Economic Survey, 2006-07).

State introduced Individual Digitized ration cards with photographs to all eligible residents of the states which reduced the number of cardholders from nine lakhs to around four lakhs at present (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2009). Such initiatives proved to be

useful as it helps to exclude bogus cards and ghost cards. It helped the state to exclude dead person name and give PDS benefit to living person.

However, some of the state in the form of Chattisgarh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh were down the ladders and struggling in its PDS system. It has shown tremendous improvement in context of ensuring food security to its people. It was possible due to proper utilisation of technology, innovation, human resource, implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013 and more importantly strong initiative from the state government. They were able to reduce the leakage, exclusion error and regular distribution of PDS rations (Dreze and Kheera, 2015).

In context of Sikkim it has not been able to implement NFSA, 2013, it has quite often shifted its date of deadline of implementation. Even, though it has been able to execute computerisation of rations cards through end to end computerisation policy. Thus, incorporation of Act would further bring transparency by reducing inclusion and exclusion errors and also bring accountability towards the people.

PDS in Sikkim is one of the important schemes for people to get ration at a subsidized rate and to enable food security. TDPS in 1997 was launched by the government of India which was simultaneously also introduced in Sikkim which is meant for BPL families. The government of Sikkim has initiated self sponsored scheme of giving 35 kgs of rice at the rate of Rs. 4 per kg under Mukhya Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhiyan (MMKSA). Under free of cost rice is distributed to 9,914 families coming under Mukhya Mantri AntodayaYojana (MMAAY).

The State of Sikkim has issued 430547 Above Poverty Line (APL) ration cards and 43428 BPL ration cards. Allotments of these cards have been highest in East Sikkim and lowest in North Sikkim. (Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Dept, 2011). Apart from PDS, the state government has also implemented MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of 2005) in rural areas which can support the people to fetch their basic needs.

MGNREGA was first implemented in North Sikkim in 2006 and later implemented in East, South and West districts from 2007-2008 onwards (RMDD, 2010). It is one of the major source of income for the people of rural areas. It provides income

security in the form of adequate wage, employment in off season, development of village (constructing all weather connectivity path, model houses, spring water preservation, cash crop plantation etc.) and moreover helping rural people to fetch their subsidized PDS rations.

It has made majority of household women to come together and take part in rural development scheme. There have been active women participation which stood at 51 percent in 2009-2010 (Dept. of RMDD, 2011). This is one of the positive sign of women representation in wage employment scheme. It is one of the major social security measure taken by the Govt. of India towards its Union. Many available reports stress MGNREGA being widely helpful for the financial support in the form of income security.

However, in spite of such step towards expanding democracy at the lowest level still majority of problem persist in the form of corruption and ignorance especially in context of PDMRE. There has been serious challenge in the form of wage delay, unavailability of foodgrain, delay of foodgrain, transaction incurred, irregularities in work, coming of private contractors, low quality material used in construction sites which severely effects the better scheme implementation and the women employed in MGNREGA works are working in the job cards of their husband name.

Due to such conditions it creates an environment where common people depends more on government in the form of favour which flows from top to bottom approach, leaving gaps for exploitation. So, strong initiative from the grass root is required in order to ensure food security and livelihood security. Apart from depending on the bureaucracy for the village planning, the villagers itself has to a play an important role and demand their right to the state under the democratic framework of the Indian constitution.

Therefore it becomes important to build a strong management system at the local level. This would provide a better environment at the grass root for proper implementation and effectiveness of the welfare scheme. Also, it would further pave way for sustainable development of village in social, economical and political sphere. A place where there would be food security and livelihood security for all groups irrespective of caste, creed, class, religion in general and especially women, children, old age and disable in particular.

1.2.4. Food Security Management at the Grass root Level

The concept of human security is anything but neutral from a political or an intellectual point of view, as it implies a renewed look at existing paradigms and responsibilities (Tadjbaksh and Chenoy, 2007). Human Security after the fall of Soviet Union has got a significant notice though it doesn't mean that it didn't exist prior to 1991. It was prevalent in the world but was given a less priority as the state security was overshadowed due to Second World War and the start of Cold War.

The growth of Human Security can be seen from two factors first with the end of Bi-polar world and the rise of Uni-Polar world in the form U.S. which was based on democracy, free market and liberalisation. Capitalism and democracy provided equal opportunities which also paved for private property in one hand and to invest in markets at the other. Thus, for these a stability in the global order was important and to ensure the expansion of democracy and privatisation under banner of United States.

Second the prominent rise of the international organisation in the form of United Nations, as through its UNDP promoted human face of development. It is a shift from traditional notion of security that is from state security towards more human centric approach for human development (physical and psychological) and progress towards a more suitable living condition (free from violence, hunger, exploitation etc.).

Such developments helped the Human Security approach to come in limelight in the global level where every member of the United Nations has to acknowledge towards the Human Security aspects in their development of their country. However, such security varies from country to country (UNDP, 1994). For United States human security after 9/11 has focused on terrorism whereas for African and Asian countries. Human security stands for basic needs like adequate amount of food, health and eradication of poverty. However, one common factor that binds these issues is the central focus upon human being.

However, there has been series of criticism on its very meaning where every person wants it but doesn't have the clear meanings. The human security is too broad and vague a concept to be meaningful (Roland, 2007). Thus, in-depth study of the very term is not possible as it has various multiple dimensions which have to be studied separately.

Due to its vastness it has been divided into seven categories in the form of Economic Security, Environmental Security, Food Security, Political Security, Community Security, Personal Security and Cultural Security. Each security deals in providing people freedom from fear and freedom from want and to live with dignity. It not only helps to understand the concept of human security but also means to achieve and ensure human security at the global level, national level and local level.

So in order to understand Human Security and the very concept of freedom from want Food security is one of the important aspects of non-traditional security. The World Food Conference of 1974 emphasized on the “global food security is a responsibility for all nations” and World Food Summit, Rome of 1996 headed by Food and Agricultural Organisation defines food security as “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 2008). It entails protection of human being from the threat of hunger, malnutrition and famine.

International institute advocates for global partnership in the sphere of social, economic and political level. So, to achieve food security in the global and local level, coordination and cooperation among International organisations, countries (developed, developing and underdeveloped), NGO’s/Civil Societies (Self Help Groups), Individuals especially women groups were found to be inevitable.

“Food security is the people’s right to define their own policies and strategies for the sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food that guarantees the right to food for the entire population, on the basis of small and medium-sized production, respecting their own cultures and the diversity of peasant, fishing and indigenous forms of agricultural production, marketing and management of rural areas, in which women play a fundamental role” (Final Declaration of World Forum on Food Sovereignty, 2001). Thus, inclusion of women in the traditional agricultural practices at International forum was the major focus in the new millennium.

Thus, Food Security by being food self-sufficient in which sustainable food production and consumption, not only helps to enhance Human Security at the global level but also helps to strengthen the Individual, the family, the community and the state

at the local level. It provides better and healthy living condition to the present and the coming generations. Democracy not only means mere voting but it goes beyond that creating a space of dialogue not only in Parliament but also in grass roots. Empowerment of people is the hour of need especially the people residing in the rural areas.

The lack of empowered institutions at the local level which was a key constraint for the village planning. It was somehow addressed by the 73rd Amendment of 1992 which aimed to empower the village people (Sundaram, 2010). To some extent it has help in the devolution of powers from state to the local level, depending on the state government initiatives in the form of policy framework. It not only tries to promote bottom approach planning for economic upliftment but also political and social upliftment.

The 73rd Amendment Act of the Indian Constitution not only provides a system to challenge the persisting social norms but also to emancipate from the exploitation. To liberate and emancipate from old tradition of caste discrimination in one hand and from those individuals and agencies that were chosen to serve the people but turned themselves into master and involved in rampant corruption on the other hand (Palanithurai, 2014).

Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) gives immense significance to the local leader in the form of Panchayat or village headmen to exercise grass roots democracy (Mathur, 2006 and Siddartha, 2007). In such circumstances strong management system is required for better governance and public action in the grassroot level. It would make the person in charge more accountable to the people. Thus, written records in the form of reports from each and every Panchayat should be made available for the public scrutiny which would provide “checks and balance”.

In spite of various measures to improve the living standard of rural masses, still around half of our villages have poor socio economic conditions. Most of the villages have been deprived of basic amenities and services in the form of infrastructure for health, education etc., (Nair, 2010). So, Infrastructure development at the centre, state and local (village level) is one of the significant priorities. Thus, investment in infrastructure in roads, communications and indigenous health medication in the form of

Ayurveda etc., (Dharia, 2010). It should be the ultimate goal for the grass root development in general and food security in specific.

At the same time same time there are challenges in the form of irresponsible secondary stake holders who administer such institutions in the bureaucracy and the PRI's personnel distrust in the form of promise breaking, incompetence and antagonism (Tiwari, 2010), affecting the social capital in a democratic setup. It becomes important to address such challenges by making the secondary stake holders more accountable and responsible which would aid in the effective delivery mechanism.

The literatures available in the field of food security and its management indicate that although a lot is available in print on the subject, but it falls short in highlighting the role and effectiveness of PDS and MGNREGA in providing food security in remote areas of Sikkim. In some of the available literature one or two aspects of the food security are touched upon but all the issues are not studied in depth.

The present research work seeks to study the socio economic profile of Sikkim, status of PDS and MGNREGA (PDMRE) and role of women in facilitating the food security schemes and programme of Central and State government. The proposed research work, is an endeavour to fill these gap by studying the impact of food security schemes and programme of the government (Central and State) in Sikkim its management in the larger interest and benefits of people of Sikkim which would facilitate further economic development of the State.

1.3. RATIONALE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

Sikkim over the years has low public investment and reforms in conventional crops like paddy cultivation due to geographical constrains and less expansion of land under cultivation. Due to such constraint it is heavily dependent on the PDS/TPDS and imported rice from the open market and for other essential commodities. About 4,55,962 of the state population reside in rural areas. The proper connectivity, adequate facilities, burden of transaction cost and limited role of “public action” stands to be a major challenge for the people. In such circumstances the PDMRE schemes become more relevant in providing food security for the people of rural remote areas.

In state there are low research activities done on higher studies which have focused on public policy and especially in context of PDMRE. It is also one of the states where Targeted welfare schemes like TPDS and MGNREGA are implemented. The purpose of such study is to identify critical issues especially of working of PDS and Rural employment through MGNREGA and relating it to food security in Sikkim.

A survey was conducted in all four districts where 240 household was taken as sample size from the state through various indicators i.e., (a) per capita, (b) household engaged in MGNREGA, and (c) education. It has been further divided into two categories (i) remote area and (ii) semi remote area based on the indicators like presence of post office, education institutions upto std. VIII, primary health centers, metalled road, nearby towns and market.

The research area fulfills most of the criteria for study as the area has a mixture of above mentioned categories. Due to its sloping hills terrace farming is practiced widely in which maize, ginger, potato, millet, vegetables are grown with minimum paddy cultivation due to shortage of water. People are engaged in dairy farming who supplies their milk and vegetables products in nearby towns and bazaars of Gangtok, Singtam, Geyzing, Sombaria, Namchi, Jorhang, Mangan, Pakyong etc. and most of them participate in MGNREGA scheme.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will address the following research questions:

- Does lack of effective PDS and MGNREGA (PDMRE) policy increase food insecurity in Sikkim?
- Does remoteness of area effect in the PDMRE scheme implementation and its effectiveness in providing economic and social security in general?
- Do women living in rural area participate in PDMRE scheme?
- Does proper management in PDMRE would ensure grass root food security?

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

These are the following objectives of the research study:

- To study the socio economic profile of the state of Sikkim in general and study area in particular.
- To study the status of Public Distribution System (PDS) and rural employment scheme of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Sikkim.
- To critically analyse PDS (distribution and allocation of rations) and MGNREGA (adequate wage and work) in providing food security in remote and developed area of state and the presence of “public action”.
- To study the role of women in PDMRE schemes.
- To come up with effective management system in ensuring food security at grassroots level.

1.6. HYPOTHESIS

- People in remote area are yet to take full advantage of Central schemes of PDS and MGNREGA (PDMRE).
- PDMRE scheme has not yet been managed properly in the state of Sikkim.
- PDMRE facilitate food security in Sikkim.

1.7. METHODOLOGY

A both quantitative and qualitative method has been used for the proposed study. The Secondary source includes available literature, publications, documents etc. on issues related to food security, poverty and hunger which will help in dealing with the objectives of the study. Relevant information from various sources related with the topic would be extracted especially in context of Sikkim.

In order to extract secondary source especially from state and central government, Right to Information (RTI) would also be used as tool in order to collect information (if data not readily available) related to research.

In sample design Stratified multi stage random sampling has been adopted. The area of study selected is all four districts of Sikkim which included exploratory and pilot survey. It was basically conducted in order to feel or get used to the environment, to garner additional information in the form of fooding, lodging, short cut village path and to get additional/relevant input in the interview schedule.

Study Population consisted of people availing the central scheme of PDMRE in rural areas. Sampling technique consisted of Mixed Purposeful Sampling forin-depth study. The Questionnaire/Interview Schedule (Close Ended and Open Ended) based on the availability, accessibility, affordability and applicability of food. At the same time working of wage employment scheme in the form of MGNREGA will also be studied through the interview of APL/BPL households, Panchayat members, Village Level Workers (VLW's), Fair Price Shop dealers, and Government officials of the study area.

1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study mostly covers rural areas as majority of the state areas and population resides in rural areas. The study only deals with two schemes of PDS and MGNREGA (PDMRE) as the latter scheme is applicable only to the rural areas in the one hand and also to get relation between the two schemes in enhancing the food security and livelihood security at the rural areas. Due to the vastness of the area, time constraints and financial expenditure only twelve villages were selected.

Some of the Challenges experienced during the field study are as follows:

In spite by providing application letter and recommendation from the supervisor, the department is unwilling to provide notification letter to conduct field visit to state food godown and various Fair Price Shop and Consumer Cooperative Society. They look suspiciously and are very well versed in passing the buck from one official to the other.

During the process of passing the buck they demoralize by saying it would take one week or even one month to get permission letter and later on stated it's hard to get permission letter. As recently one activist came with similar motive took permission letter conducted his survey and flashed it in the daily newspaper. It was very much irrational justification to get denied. The gazetted officials, non-gazetted officials and

office staff gave a hint that it would be prolonged process in order to get permission letter.

Thus, there were two options, first option to file an RTI and the second option to get an appointment with Food Minister to ask for the permission letter. The first option provided easy information without going to field and second option provided opportunity to visit the field and to interact with the secondary stake holders. So, second option was chosen however first option was kept in alternative if the second option failed.

For almost five days, went around the minister office to get an appointment but couldn't get the appointment due to his official visit at rural areas, meetings etc., started to loose hope however on sixth day was able to get an appointment with the minister. Put forwarded the grievances and the problem faced in the Food dept. while asking for permission letter and also the probability of not getting the permission from the Minister itself. However, Food Minister said *Kasle Bhanyo Maile Permission Letter Dindaina Bhaneraa* i.e. "who said I will not provide the permission letter", we are for you i.e. the people. We and the party are here for the welfare of the citizens.

The Minister provided the forwarding letter to get permission letter from the concerned department and said now you will get the permission letter if you don't get it, come to me and I would personally deal with it. It's an important issue to research and we look forward for its findings and Suggestions. Thus, while coming back to the dept. with the forwarding letter from the minister to get permission letter to visit state food depot, food godown, CCS and FPS.

The food dept. had already sent an application to the university asking for the synopsis of the research. Thus, it was clear from the dept. side not to give permission letter. However, with the forwarding letter from minister the officials who were prolonging the demand instantly provided the permission letter without any delay. Such instances shows two aspects like the powers flows from above and the colonial hangover of bureaucratic mentality of saying "No" and to prolong the time frame to manifest its bureaucratic power of master servant relations towards its citizens.

Problem of lodging and fooding is one of the important problems while doing survey in remote area. Field based study requires sufficient financial resources especially

carrying some amount of hard cash as there would be instances where it requires to pay money or to give *koseli*³ in place of cash especially in context of lodging.

Due to remoteness of study area easy availability of vehicle is not possible. It's expensive to hire vehicle to do field survey due to transport cost and waiting charge. Absence of grocery store and hotel to have snacks and foods while being hungry during the field survey. In many instances remained hungry during field survey. For instance in one field survey walked entire day from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. walked in a steep slope path with negligible spaces for food step. Consumed one packet *wai wai* instant noodles raw at afternoon and reached one village and somehow managed to get place for lodging. At dinner time food was wasted due to incorporation of soof in dal. In which soof was mistaken as dhaniya at the night where whole dal was put in the rice. Due to the taste of soof, food was not consumed and had to sleep empty stomach.

In few places there had been language problem due to old age and some person basically the older ones speak their own languages of Lepcha, Bhutia and Limboo language in which we had to either abandon the household or to find an interpreter who could speak both Nepali language and the tribal language. The older person had vast knowledge and experiences of working of the PDMRE scheme especially its before and after effect of the scheme.

The houses in the study areas are mostly scattered, the minimum time taken to cover distance between one houses to the next house was two - three minute and maximum was five- ten minutes. Most of the time members of the household were found working in the nearby fields of their house. Many times the villagers and the beneficiaries questioned about the intention of the survey. Even by providing basic information about the research at the start of the interview. They believed that we were the part of vigilance and other central government employees coming for inspection.

³ Gift in the form of food items and beverage. It would also help in getting free meals in the form of dinner at night.

1.9. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into six sections including introduction and conclusion which are as follows:

Chapter 1. Introduction

It contains general overview of topic including review of literature, research questions, objectives, hypothesis, rationale and scope of the study. The various conceptual issues related to food security and the method of data collection is discussed in detail.

Chapter 2. Food production and consumption in India and Sikkim

It contains an overview of Indian agricultural system, the effectiveness of Green Revolution in India and in turn being self-sufficient state. It also discusses on Agricultural Production in India and Sikkim (district level) and similarly their level of consumption.

Chapter 3. Implementation of PDS and MGNREGA

Chapter discusses the Public Distribution System and MGNREGA (PDMRE) in general. Implementation of Targeted Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act including state sponsored programme (MMKSA and Chief Minister Rural Housing Mission [CMRHM]) in ensuring food security. It comprises observations on the quality of foodgrain from Food Corporation of India (FCI) godown of Jorethang and Rangpo, District Food godown of the study area, Fair Price Shops and the beneficiaries. It also includes the role of women participation in PDMRE implementation.

Chapter 4. Effectiveness of PDS and MGNREGA in Sikkim

It elaborates the Field Survey conducted in all four districts of Sikkim across 12 villages among the direct and indirect PDMRE beneficiaries household, Fair Price Shop/ PDS centre, Panchayat members, Village Level Workers (VLW's) and Government officials. It highlights the effectiveness of PDMRE towards women folks. The Inter and Intra field study tries to compare not only between the district levels (inter) but also within the district itself (intra) about the effectiveness of PDMRE.

Chapter 5. Food Security Management at Grassroots level

The chapter discusses major findings from the field study and effort has been made to analyse and understand the phenomena. At the same time it also discusses the Management system which would help to enrich the rural development in general and food security in particular. It tests the “Food Security at Grassroots level Model” which would support the better functioning of central scheme.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

It contains summarization of the study where implementation and effectiveness of PDMRE at inter and intra district level is incorporated. An effort has been made to identify challenges and present possible measures to overcome the problem.

CHAPTER 2

Food Production and Consumption in India and Sikkim

2.1. INTRODUCTION

India as a state has been widely dependent on primary activity in the form of agriculture¹ and allied activities where majority of its population are engaged. Though share of agriculture in India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is nearly 14 per cent but it provides support in the form of rural employment to 67 per cent of total workforce which provides material to several industries, which also shows the strength of the sector.

Out of 115 million farming families, 80 per cent belong to the small and marginal land holdings. Majority of the farmers depends or cultivate their crops on rainfall and dry land farmers cultivate climate-resilient crops in the form of millet, pulses etc. At the same time small and marginal farming community are suffering from hunger and malnutrition (Swaminathan, 2012).

Indian Independence had ended the long domination of colonial rule on one hand and broken the shackle from the Zamindari System and bonded labourer on the other making them masters of their own destiny. Post Independent India nearly two third of labour are engaged in primary activity (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1. India: Population and Labour Force Size

	Size [Million]				Annual growth rate [%]		
	1999	2004	2009	2014	1999-2004	2004-2009	2009-2014
Total population	1025.02	1110.63	1190.14	1267.40	1.62	1.39	1.27
Total labour force	394.17	434.91	478.99	525.52	1.99	1.95	1.87
Labour force in agriculture	234.70	248.84	262.99	276.13	1.18	1.11	0.98

Source: FAOSTAT, Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), Accessed on December 22, 2014. As extracted data from webpage: <http://faostat.fao.org/site/550/default.aspx#ancor>

“The Kisan or the peasant, whether as a landless labourer or a laboring proprietor comes first. He is the salt of the earth, which rightly belongs or should belong to him not

¹ The world depends on food in the form of farming in other words cultivation of soil. For agriculture arable farming is one of the significant process by which consist of plants “crops”, vegetables etc.

to the absentee landlord or Zamindar” (Gandhi, 1944). The abolition of the Zamindari System through land reforms legislations like tenancy reforms, ceiling on land holdings etc, which was passed by the state in post Independence era, paved the way for many landless labourers to become land owners and start dedicating their lives to the farming profession (see table 2.1).

Green Revolution has a significant place in the history of Indian agriculture often termed as “gamble in the monsoon” (Vyas, 2003), making the state to be a self-sufficient in foodgrain production especially with the discovery of High Yielding Varieties (HYV) seeds of wheat and rice aided with scientific tools and techniques. But over the last few decades the stagnancy in productivity, negative impacts on environment through Green Revolutions had been widely criticized.

In one side there has been a serious criticism of the Green Revolution due to its negative impacts which is slowly destroying the environment. At the same time whereas there is a wide economic disparity in per capita income between the urban and rural India especially the latter in which Hunger, malnutrition and undernourishment have engulfed the food sufficient state of India (Chowdary, 2010).

Thus, it would deal with an overview of Indian agricultural system, the effectiveness of Green Revolution in India and in turn being self sufficient state. It also focuses on Agricultural Production (growth in overall foodgrain production) in India and Sikkim (district level) their growth over a period of time and similarly their level of consumption (average intake of food).

2.1.1. Agriculture Policy of India: An Overview

Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy, as it constitutes largest share of country's national income though the share has declined from 55 percent in early 1950s to about 25 percent by the turn of the Century. At the same time more than half of India's workforce is employed in its agriculture sector. Lastly, growth of other sectors and overall economy depends on performance of agriculture to a considerable extent. Besides, agriculture is a source of livelihood and food security for large majority of vast population of India, thus having special significance for low income, poor and vulnerable

sections of rural society (Chand, 2001), in which proverb like “if it sneezes the latter gets cold” would be most appropriate, as it provides formidable share in a country GDP and also it provides major support to agricultural based Industries (Paswan, 2003). Strong and healthy agriculture not only lifts Indian economy but also provides employment for the uneducated and educated people of the country.

As majority of its farming areas consist of arable or plantation crops which are primarily dependent on monsoon season, Its significance in providing livelihood security in rural areas is undeniable. The emphasis on agriculture sector in future also will remain due to food security and employment generation helping in alleviating poverty and improving living standards (Vyas, 2003). Supporting the low income, poor and vulnerable groups. Thus, playing an important role in socio-economic development where proper policy for agriculture sector is crucial to improve welfare of masses (Chand, 2004).

India in the past faced the Bengal Famine in 1943 where millions of people lost their lives in which most affected were paddy huskers, agricultural labourers and fishermen (Sen, 1999), later partition of India in 1947 where most of the fertile land of Punjab and Bengal was divided, lack of adequate knowledge and specific policy in raising agricultural production which made agriculture remain stagnant and further created an acute food shortage, which started to become the major problem for the newly Independent Indian state.

A stagnant agriculture at the time of independence growing at an annual rate of growth of 0.3 per cent in the first half of the last century. Due to the planned Government policies, technological support provided by agricultural scientists and hard work put in by the farmers, Indian agriculture has achieved an annual growth rate of 2.7 per cent in the post independence era (Singh, 2004).

2.1.2. Five Year Plan (FYP) and Indian Agriculture

Indian government under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru started the Five Year Plan (FYP), First Five Year Plan, 1951-56 which aimed to improve the status of people and fulfill their basic needs by utilizing the nation’s resources via building industries and dams which was termed as temples of modern India. Such new

developments was initiated in order to build the economy of newly formed state by harnessing the energy of water to produce electricity, to provide irrigation and various factories were set up to extract the raw materials for trade, export etc,

First (1951-56) and Second (1956-61) FYP focused minimum in promotion of agriculture as it focused on rehabilitation of agricultural workers who were landless, financial allocation for soil conservation and the land redistribution system in order to bring social and economical equality. However, equality in the form of land reforms cannot be achieved wholly in many parts of India due to a strong hold on land and influencing role in regional politics (Planning Commission, Govt. of India, 2002)

The initial two FYP were unable to solve the problem of domestic food production making insecure, which made the state to rely on the foreign states for import of foodgrain. India had to face the politics of Cold War between the two super power, the capitalist United States and the Socialist Soviet Union, wherein developing states like India chose an alternate way through Non Aligned Movement (NAM)² to get equal aid in the form of technological support, food aid etc., from both the super powers.

Nonetheless, two very important institutions, namely Food Corporation of India and Agricultural Prices Commission, were created in the beginning of green revolution period, to ensure remunerative prices to producers, maintain reasonable prices for consumers, and to maintain buffer stock to guard against adverse impact of year to year fluctuations in output on price stability. These two institutions have mainly benefited rice and wheat crops which are the major cereals and staple food for the country (Chand, 2001).

The major breakthrough in agriculture was provided in the Third FYP (1961-66), although the initial three year plans provided a base for upcoming reforms, where it aimed to increase the agriculture production in order to make a self sufficient state. Land reforms were taking place and more area was being included under agricultural utilization accompanied by High Yielding Varieties (HYV) seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc, and the

² NAM was a third block of newly formed independent countries mostly comprising of third world state of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It was founded by Pt. Nehru of India, Nasser of Egypt and Tito of Yugoslavia to remain outside and not to favour any super powers.

traditional method of cultivating crops were replaced by the new methods in order to boost the production which was the major thrust of the Green Revolution³ (Planning Commission, 2002).

Table 2.2. Increase in Area (Million Ha), Production (million tons) and Productivity (Kgs Ha) due to Green Revolution in India, 1961-1968

Agricultural Crops	Pre- Green Revolution			Post- Green Revolution		
	Area (Mn. Ha)	Production (Mn. Tons)	Productivity (Kgs. Ha)	Area (Mn. Ha)	Production (Mn. Tons)	Productivity (Kgs. Ha)
Rice	34.1	35.1	1013	42.9	79.6	1855
Wheat	12.9	11.1	851	25.1	62.6	2493
Maize	4.4	4.6	926	6.0	9.4	1570
Jowar	18.4	8.8	533	11.5	9.6	8.34
Bajra	11.5	3.9	286	9.4	5.4	575
Total Foodgrains	115.6	81.0	710	123.5	85.1	1499

Source: Paswan K. Nawal (2003), *Agricultural Trade in South Asia: Potential and Policy Options*, APH publishing corporation, New Delhi, p. 63, 2003.

2.1.3. Green Revolution in India

Green Revolution took place in 1960's (1967-1968) and 1980's (1983-84) and their main features were in the form of double cropping to produce more than one crop in a single year. Traditionally the agriculture practice depended on a monsoon for the single crop production whereas under the new system there would be one extra monsoon which would be fulfilled by storing the river waters through dams and underground water through sophisticated pumps and tube wells, which would irrigate the fields in non rainy season, helping to boost the agriculture scenario aiding in foodgrain production.

Its impact on Indian agriculture system had been tremendous, as it made India a food self-sufficient state from a food deficient state i.e. from food importer to food exporter at an International level. Where it exported the foodgrain to countries like West Asia, Africa, South East Asia etc., all such development was a major milestone in technological advancement in the field of agricultural sciences as shown in Table 2.2.

³ Green Revolution is often known in rapid growth of production in foodgrains in short duration especially rice/paddy and wheat in mid 1960's due to advancement in science and technology in United States of America.

The success of Green Revolution can be seen from two levels: Firstly, at the International level, where the success of Green Revolution in the United States wherein new method of advanced scientific technology was used in the form of fertilizers, pesticides, machineries etc. which was adopted by India especially Mexican wheat HYV seeds Norin-10 developed by Norman Borlaug⁴, Mexican semi-dwarf varieties, Lerma Rojo 64A and Sonora 64 and in HYV rice Taichung Native 1 (Japanese origin), IR8 and Jaya where implemented (ICAR, 2011).

Secondly, the domestic policies of India which appointed agricultural scientists like M.S. Swaminathan, B.P. Pal and leaders like Indira Gandhi, C. Subramaniam and Jagjivan Ram as leaders to execute the Green Revolution. The Policy also incorporated the inclusion of more area to be used under crop cultivation, implementation of the advance scientific technology in selected parts of the country⁵ which had adequate facilities.

The new technology of high yielding varieties of seeds, led to the start of research institutes in the form of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, National Seeds Corporation, Agricultural universities etc, helped in developing the field and boosting agriculture and allied sectors from the end of 1960's. The sectors like dairy, fisheries, poultry becoming progressively more important (Vyas, 2003). Its advancement in technology and scientific tools and techniques with proper dissemination of knowledge to the farmers has also improved the situation of non food grains like oil seeds and foodgrain like pulses and coarse grains.

Under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi introduced Technology mission which looked at concurrent attention to conservation, cultivation, consumption and commerce, an end to end approach was introduced involving attention to all links in the production consumption chain in food and non foodgrain items (Thakur and Sinha, 2011).

⁴ An American plant scientist also known as “father of Green revolution” provided a major breakthrough in discovering HYV seeds of wheat and rice which can produce high yields the first test of seed was done on Mexico which was later on followed on rest of the third world states in 1960's. he was honoured by Noble Peace Prize in 1970 for “Green Revolution”

⁵ Indian government selected fertile lands of Punjab, Harayana, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam etc. which had adequate irrigation facilities for Green Revolution.

2.1.4. Challenges in Sustaining Green Revolution

Though the Green Revolution has brought significant changes in the food production and helped many developing countries to feed their populations by avoiding catastrophes like famines was the result of the synergy among “technology, public policy and farmers” enthusiasm (Swaminathan, 2012). However, ample of evidence to indicate that the initial gains are diminishing food grain production is slackening, production is slower than population, cultivable land diverted towards modern amenities etc. (Thakur and Sinha, 2011).

Over the years the agriculture production in India has been weak as compared to higher growth foodgrain production which was most impressive at about 3.7 per cent compared to population growth of 2.2 per cent seen in the 1980’s due to lack of expansion in cultivated area (Vaidyanathan, 2000).

There are formidable challenges in sustaining Green Revolution especially in the yield factor compared to early 1980’s as its major inputs where fertilizers, pesticides, proper irrigation facilities. However, overuse of such inputs has virtually degraded the quality of soil and depleted the water table of many farming lands. Further, within the agriculture sector too, the development has been uneven in production and productivity across regions and crops.

The shrinkage of net sown area of food grains also led to a fall in food production to 1.8 per cent, lower than the population growth of 2 per cent during 1990’s (Singh 2004). Major reasons for such downfall could be linked with advancement of industries, factories, commercial complex etc., (Paswan, 2003).

Encroaching on agricultural fields created shortage and loss of fertile lands. Though the government tried to compensate by incorporating additional land but such land was mostly owned by low income farmers and depended on monsoon rains making it vulnerable to the natural calamities and were inefficient in fulfilling basic needs like irrigation and modernized inputs financially.

The major aims and objectives of Green Revolution in 1950’s-60’s was to provide food security and to avoid famines and hunger situation in many parts of Latin America

and Asia i.e. Mexico, Pakistan, China, India, South East Asian states and to provide benefits to farmers. However, it created rich and poor farmers⁶, rural impoverishment, displacement of vast numbers of farmers from their land (Shiva, 1991) and farmer suicides.

Thus, sustaining Green Revolution in 21st century especially in India would be a challenging task, as the program should encompass all social, economic, political dimensions of human security issues by inclusion of more agricultural fields in net sown area, food production in dry lands through rain water harvesting and irrigating the fields with sprinklers which would conserve the water and provide irrigation adequately, discovery of agricultural inputs which would provide food security not only to farmers but also to consumers (Planning Commission, Govt. of India, 2002).

The problem of increasing productivity on dry lands has serious socio-economic implications. With every passing year, the gap between the farmer's yields in irrigated areas and in the dry farming region is widening. One year of drought is enough to push a farmer into a deep well of poverty for another two to three years. Drought is a recurring phenomenon in arid and semi-arid areas. With onslaught of drought would make life of million people in such kind of climate to be worse (Sharma, 2008).

Investment in agriculture sector through enhancing irrigation through major, medium and minor modes which includes rain water harvesting, water shed management and spring shed management especially in hill areas; formulating land- use policy of prohibiting conversion of fertile land into non- agricultural purpose; use of organic process to revitalized the soil and minimum usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides as used in Sikkim Organic Mission⁷; highlighting nutritional value of coarse grains for fighting hunger and malnutrition (Thakur and Sinha, 2011).

⁶ In India the impact of Green Revolution was consequential though it provided food sufficiency but on the other side it divided rich and poor farmer wherever the places the revolution was successful it created few hands of rich farmers whereas it left majority of farmers poor. Thus the program was targeted and not universal which benefitted the farmers who can afford the new inputs which in turn undermine the social dimension.

⁷ Sikkim Organic Mission (SOM) was initiated in the year 2003, to sustain the nutrients of soils by use of organic agriculture in form of traditional manures and scientific methods. To provide high income return to the farmers engage in organic farming and also to assist in providing the organic certificate to farmers.

The setting up of food processing plants in various states in order to increase the longevity of food products, building up of scientific warehouses at the district levels with adequate staffs for its maintenance in order to keep buffer food stocks which would reduce the cost of transportation.

The launch of RISAT-1 (all weather earth observation satellite) has made it to move one step further in sustaining Green Revolution by keeping a closer look to agriculture sector where foodgrain crop progress would be closely monitored and according to its development policy would be framed. Inclusion of such scientific inputs is must which boost Indian agriculture.

In order to achieve such objectives both central and state government engagement is must and financial responsibility must be shared equally. The government should come up with more innovative schemes for the welfare of its people who should be adequately supported by the central government.

2.1.5. India's Agricultural Position in the World

Indian Agriculture is the key employer with around 60 per cent of the labour force, down from 70 per cent in the early nineties. This compares with 44 per cent in China (2002) and 21 per cent in Brazil (2004). Indian agriculture is dominated by a large number of small scale land holdings. Out of India's 116 million farmers, around 60 per cent have less than 1 hectare and together they farm 17 per cent of the land. The share of medium to large farms (above 4 hectares) is very small at just over 7 per cent of all holdings, but these farms account for around 40 per cent of the land. The implication is that many of the very small farms are subsistence holdings, with low investment and little productivity growth (Economic Survey, 2007).

Small, Semi medium and medium farmers constitute in majority and provide significant support to the Indian agriculture their proportion in total no. of holding is declining but the land owned by these is marginally declined (Vyas, 2003) due to land division in the form of inheritance among family members.

In the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) specifically in agriculture sector it aimed to provide sustaining the improvements in productivity and production to meet the

increasing demands of the growing population; enlarging the incomes of farmers through appropriate scientific technologies and focusing in watershed management projects, dissemination of latest agricultural knowledge, etc, At the same time state was looking forward to the global market for food export, making the global players involved in chemical fertilizers, recycling of organic wastes and use of bio-fertilizers companies to play an important role in the sustainable agricultural development process.

The New Economic Policy also known as the Post 1991 reforms was implemented in India under the leadership of Narasimha Rao. It aimed to promote Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) in the form of deregulation, in order to integrate the Indian economy with the world economy wherein restrictive measures like license permit raj was abolished, privatization of national owned industries which were failing continuously and going in losses. Similar “reforms were also initiated in agricultural sector where restrictions on rice (Basmati and high quality common rice), wheat (durum) were lifted and exported in the world market” (Paswan, 2003).

Significant changes in its agriculture and trade policies and in net trade position for many individual products. The leading forecasting institutions expect that India will play a bigger role in world markets in future. In a number of markets it is expected to consolidate its position among the world’s leading importers (vegetable oils) and exporters (rice). Given the size of Indian agriculture, changes in its balance sheets for key commodities have a potentially large impact on world markets (Economic Survey, 2007).

India had maintained its agricultural position in the world, it is among the world’s leading producers of paddy rice, wheat, buffalo milk, cow milk and sugar cane. It is either the world leader or the second largest producer in eight out of its top ten products. Some of these are widely traded while others are more specialist products (ibid, 2007).

Though it has only 329 million hectares (mn. ha.) of total area. It has about 2.4 per cent share of total land area in the world but it ranks second in the arable land (157 mn. ha.) which has been decreasing slowly over the years but it’s still next to the US. It has 505 mn economically active populations out of which 273 mn actively participates in agriculture making it to be second in position next to China (FAO, 2011) which also shows the dominant agrarian nature of the Indian society.

India is the world leader in such specialist products as buffalo milk, spices (pimento) and bananas, mangoes, chickpeas etc., which are important in the Indian diet and are also exported. It is the fifth largest cultivator of biotech crops in the world, ahead of China. In 2006, about 3.8 million hectares of land were cultivated with genetically modified crops example Bt Cotton, by about 2.3 million farmers. Reforms introduced in India in the early 1990s have greatly increased overall trade flows, technological developments and macroeconomic policy reforms have brought increased liberalisation (Economic Survey, 2007).

Intensifying agricultural production depends on the availability of water resources for irrigation. India has by far the largest area equipped for irrigation at over 66 million hectares and the largest irrigation potential (FAO, 2014).

Table 2.3. India's Position in World Agriculture (1997-2011)

Item	1997		2008		2011	
	India	Rank	India	Rank	India	Rank
Total Area (Million Hectares)	329	7	329	7	329	7
Land Area	297	7	297	7	297	7
Arable Land	163	2	159	2	157	2
Economically Active Population	541	2	472	2	505	2
*Wheat (Mn. Tonnes)	69	2	79	2	86	2
*Rice	123	2	148	2	157	2
*Pulses	15	1	15	1	17.6	1
**Groundnuts	8	2	7	2	7	2
**Rapeseed	7	2	6	3	8	3
#Vegetables	54.97	2	90	2	105	2
#Fruits	37.13	3	67	2	74	2
#Potatoes	19	6	35	2	42	2
##Sugar cane	265	2	348	2	342	2
##Coffee	0.21	9	0.26	7	0.30	7
###Jute & Allied Fibers	1.72	1	2.02	1	1.96	1
##Cotton	2.86	3	3.77	2	8.5	2
###Tobacco leaves	0.56	3	0.52	3	0.83	3

*Cereals, **Oil seeds, #Fruits & Vegetables and ##Commercial Crops.

Source: Paswan, Nawal K. (2003), Agricultural Trade in South Asia: Potential and Policy Options, APH. Publishing corporation, New Delhi, p. 62. and Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), 2008 and Pocket book on Agriculture Statistics 2013, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and Directorate of Economics and Statistics, New Delhi, Govt. of India.

India ranks first in pulses (17.6 million tones mt), jute and jute like fibers (2 mt), buffaloes in livestock (113 million heads “mh”), milk in animal products (127000 mt), ranks second in wheat (86 mt), rice/paddy (157 mt), groundnut in oil seeds (7 mt), Vegetables and melons (105 mt), Fruits (74 mt), Potatoes (42 mt), Onion (15 mt), Sugar cane in commercial crops (342 mt), Cotton (8.5 mt), ranks third in Rape seed in oil seeds (8 mt), Tea in commercial crops (0.96 mt), Tobacco leaves (0.83), Eggs in animal products (3490 mt), fifth in Chicken (942 mh), total Meats (6228 mt) and seventh in Coffee in commercial crops (0.30) in the world (FAO, 2011). India coming on top five in live stock, animal products, also shows the growing demand and supply in such products both within and outside the country (see Table no. 2.3).

It also highlights that over the period there has been an increase in production of various item which also shows the demand and supply in one hand and the changes in pattern of consumption in India both in rural and urban areas. The availability and sustainability of such products at all times of season also paves for potential public and private investment for development in such sectors which can help in ensuring food security (Paswan, 2003).

In comparison to 1997 and 2008 FAO statistics of India there has been significant changes in 2011 FAO data as in most of the cases there has been increase in production as well as increase in position especially in commercial crops (coffee and cotton) and fruits & vegetables (potatoes and fruits). There has been depletion of arable land from 163 million hectares to 157 million hectares during 1997-2011. There has been a loss of 6 million hectares of arable land which is one of the serious concerns for growing the population of India rather than exclusion there should be more inclusion of arable land for agriculture production and productivity.

Agriculture Exports of non-basmati rice and wheat are continued since September 2011 without any quantitative restrictions. Export of edible oils (except coconut) and pulses (except kabuli chana) remains restricted due to domestic shortage. Food exports have increased from Rs. 232 thousand crore in 2012-13 to 268 thousand crore in financial years 2013-14 registering a growth of nearly 16 per cent.

Increase in value of agricultural exports during 2013-14 was primarily on account of higher exports of marine products, basmati & non-basmati rice, meat & meat preparations, cotton and oil meals. The share of agricultural exports in total exports increased from 13.08 per cent in 2012-13 to 14.17 per cent in 2013-14 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2015).

The data of agriculture ministry reveals that though commodity like rice is exported high in quantity, it has come second to marine products. It also shows that the livestock stock sectors especially the fishery sector providing alternatives to the farmers to actively involve which provides high value returns (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. India: Top 10 Agricultural Exports Items (thousand tones and Value in Rs. Crores)

Sl. No.	Commodity	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
		Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1.	Marine Products	972	16585	965	18841	999	30617
2.	Rice-Basmati	3178	15450	3460	19409	3757	29300
3.	Meat & Preparation	N.A.	14111	N.A.	17903	N.A.	27247
4.	Cotton	2004	21624	2057	20277	1941	22248
5.	Rice (Other than Basmati)	3998	8659	6688	14449	7019	17493
6.	Oil Meals	7406	11796	6578	16520	6564	17034
7.	Spices	936	13220	1009	15365	1029	15981
8.	Paper wood Products	N.A.	8576	N.A.	10385	N.A.	12529
9.	Guargum	707	16524	406	21287	602	11734
10.	Wheat	741	1023	6515	81052	N.A.	9257

Source: Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India, as accessed on January 20, 2015; From webpage: <http://agricoop.nic.in/divisions.html>.

Further enhancement of Marine sector could be improved by bringing awareness among the stakeholders about the quality of product and its price through online services. Also initiating aquarian reforms that will restrict the rights to own fishing vessels only to those who actually fish (Swaminathan, 2010).

Table 2.5. India: Top 10 Agricultural Imports Items (thousand tones and Value in Rs. Crores)

SL. No.	Commodity	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
		Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1	Vegetable Oils fixed edible	8445	46255	11014	61107	10434	56489
2	Wood & Wood Products	N.A.	11857	N.A.	14200	N.A.	15454

3	Pulses	3365	8931	3839	12734	3049	10551
4	Fruits & Nuts (excl. Cashew nuts)	N.A.	4658	N.A.	6298	N.A.	7778
5	Raw Cashew Nuts	810	5339	892	5332	771	4564
6	Sugar	100	314	1122	3094	881	2287
7	Cotton	77	1059	233	2467	178	2371
8	Spices	129	2191	158	2615	148	3431
9	Oil Seeds	N.A.	94	N.A.	406	N.A.	974
10	Cereal Preparation	48	317	52	346	57	404

Source: Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India, accessed on January 20, 2015; as from webpage: <http://agricoop.nic.in/divisions.html>

India's agricultural imports increased from Rs. 100 thousand crore in 2012-13 to Rs 105 thousand crore in 2013-14 showing a growth of 4.73 per cent. The main agricultural imports during this period were vegetable oils, pulses, cashew nuts, spices, sugar and cotton. Share of agricultural imports in the total imports decreased from 4.10 per cent in 2012-13 to 3.87 per cent in 2013-14 as shown in Table 2.5 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2015).

2.2. FOOD MATRIX OF INDIA

It not only becomes important to know the country's production and consumption but also how it helps in strengthening the import and export of commodities. In this context data from 1990 is studied due to its significance as it was the period where it opened its market after it gained independence. It also becomes important how the state has benefitted with the New Economic Reforms especially in the Agriculture Sector.

Table 2.6. India's Agricultural Products (Import-Export and Trade Deficit), 1990-91 to 2012-13

Year	Agricultural Import (in Rs. Crore)	Share of Agri. Imports to total National Import %	Agricultural Export (in Rs. Crore)	Share of Agri Exports to total national Import %	Trade Deficit (in crore)
1990-1991	1205.86	2.79	6012.76	18.49	4806.9
2000-2001	12086.23	5.29	28657.37	14.23	16571.14
2010-2011	57334.32	3.41	117483.61	10.28	60149.29
2011-2012	82819.15	3.53	187609.33	12.80	104790.18
2012-2013 (P)	109211.51	4.09	230141.13	14.10	120929.62

Source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (2013), Ministry of Commerce, Kolkata in Agricultural Statistics Book, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India.

Table 2.6 reveals that the successful innovation in agriculture has also made less to import foodgrain as compared to the early 1950's. At the same time state dependence on items like pulses, edible oils, dry fruits etc. has significantly grown over year's making state to demand and import for its domestic consumption.

2.2.1. Food Production in India, Northeast states and Sikkim

India after Independence vowed to strengthen its agricultural system for providing food security for its millions of population and support its agrarian society (Planning Commission, Govt. of India, 2002) especially to the rural women (see Table 2.7).

Table 2.7. Indian rural population and Labour Force Engaged in Agricultural Activities

Population in Agriculture	Share (%)				Annual growth rate [%]		
	1999	2004	2009	2014	1999-2004	2004-2009	2009-2014
Rural population [% of total population]	72.55	71.10	69.41	67.63	-0.4	-0.48	-0.52
Labour force in agriculture [% of total labour force]	59.54	57.22	54.90	52.54	-0.79	-0.82	-0.87
Females [%Labour force in agriculture]	32.50	32.14	32.33	32.52	-0.22	0.12	0.12

Source: FAOSTAT, Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), as accessed on December 22, 2015. From webpage: <http://faostat.fao.org/site/550/default.aspx#anco>

Many parts of India are rain fed areas which heavily depends on the south west monsoon season, a good monsoon means a good harvest for the hard working Indian farmer, in some instances due to arrival of late monsoon the farmers got a serious setback in agriculture production.

However, agricultural production in India was significantly improved by the onset of the Green Revolution technology (irrigation facilities, fertilizers, pesticides, tractors etc.) which helped India turn itself into a self sufficient state by the end of 1970's, due to its consistent improvement in positive increase of foodgrain production.

Table 2.8 gives us a picture of how over the years there has been an improvement in the agricultural sector, overall helping in the growth of the Indian economy. The pre and the post Green Revolution period have shown remarkable improvements in the overall production of food grains, which shows an increase of 57.6 per cent. The period

between 1950-51 (Pre Green revolution) and 1970-71 (Post Green revolution) in food grain production shows the increase of 57.6 per cent in foodgrain production.

The cereal production nearly tripled from 1951-2010, It had a significant impact of Green Revolution compared to other countries. It not only improved the agriculture but also provided employment through creating jobs to local manufacturing sector which provided fertilizers, pesticides etc. helping in the national economy. It is worth noting that 92 per cent of the increase in production has been technology-led (Singh, 2004).

Table 2.8. Production of Major Crops in India (1950-51 to 2010-11)

Crops	1950-51	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91	2000-01*	2010-11**
Foodgrains	50.82	108.42	129.59	179.39	211.32	244.78
Rice	20.58	42.22	53.63	74.29	91.61	95.98
Wheat	6.46	23.83	36.31	55.14	71.47	86.87
Cereals	15.38	30.55	29.02	32.70	34.72	43.68
Pulses	8.41	11.82	10.63	14.26	13.52	18.24

Source: Agricultural Statistics at a Glance, 1997* and 2013**, Min. of Agriculture in Ninth Five Year Plan (1997- 2002), Planning Commission/Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07), Planning Commission 1997; New Delhi, Government of India,

In 1990's there has been a period of stagnation in foodgrain production it has not been able to repeat the massive production of 1960's and 80's in the agricultural sphere and at the same time there has been increase in population creating an urgency in providing food security. The upcoming challenges in terms of food production, rise in population, poor storage condition of existing buffer stock and low Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural production to farmers/labourers has been low as input cost is high.

The farmers are heavily dependent on fertilizers, pesticides and monsoon to produce more in order to own profit but most importantly to overcome their debt and credit taken from various sources. In failure of crop production means no way out for farmers leading to suicides and migration, which have been serious concerns which could be partially seen from the additional import of foodgrain in 2011.

**Table 2.9. Growth of Population and Food Production in India 1950 – 2011
(Million Tons)**

Period/Year	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2011	2014
Foodgrain Production (mt)*	50.8	82.0	108.4	129.5	179.4	201.6	257	264
Foodgrain Import (mt)	4.8	10.4	7.5	0.8	0.3	---	1.08	N.A.
Buffer Stock (mt)	---	2.0	---	15.5	20.8	40.0	47.2	42.7^
Population (million)	361	439	548	683	846	1000	1210	1259

*Source: Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Government of India, 2010; Census of India Primary Census Abstract, 2011; Directorate of Economics and Statistics, ^As on 1st Jan 2014 Department of Agriculture and Cooperation 2013; Department of Food and Public Distribution** Government of India; Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Ministry of Commerce, Kolkata in Agricultural Statistics at Glance 2013. Ministry of Agriculture 2015.

Table 2.9 indicates that the growth of food production from 1990's -2010 has been very unsatisfactory though it has been able to keep the adequate amount of buffer stocks in various central godown. Food Corporation of India (FCI) warehouses and depots is one of the important steps taken by the central government in order to achieve food security. However, the stocks would not be enough for the population which is increasing tremendously.

The slow growth rate in 1990's in the foodgrain production has been seen in excess use of fertilizers, degradation in soil fertility due to intensive cropping pattern, lack of adequate irrigation facilities due to depletion of water table (IFPRI, 2002 and Shiva 1991), encroachment on fertile lands with upcoming private and state owned development projects, inclusion of less fertile lands etc. There is a serious need for next green revolution which can sustain our agriculture sector and which in turn would help to reduce hunger, malnourishment and poverty (Swaminathan, 2010).

It has been important to measure the progress of agricultural production in foodgrain as the period of 1990's showed the symbol of stagnancy causing serious decrease in production. Thus, Table 2.10 highlights the production of foodgrain for the last decade and it is interesting to note that overall production of food grains has shown an increasing trend. Although there have been minor fluctuations in the production of rice which reduced from 97 Million tons to 89 million tons between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

Similarly, same is for coarse cereals and Pulses where former drop from 41 million tons to 32 million and reaching to some stability to 42 million tons between 2007-08 and 2011- 2012 whereas latter production had decreased to 13 million ton in 2005-06 but since has been on the rise but 2011-12 gives a slight loss of momentum in its production.

There has been a significant improvement in the production of wheat from 70 million tons in 2000-01 to 81 million tons in 2011-12. However, the production of overall foodgrain shows a positive trend between 2007- 2012, with a little glitch in 2009-10 which sharply fall from 230 mt to 218 mt. This overall decline could mainly be attributed to decrease in production of rice and coarse grains.

Cereals are the staple food in India, providing over half the calories consumed, while pulses are the main protein supplement in the diet. Rising incomes and the influence of globalisation have contributed to changes in the diet with a slight decrease in cereals consumption and an increase in pulses, edible oils, fruits and vegetables, milk and meat, which is growing from a low base. In the case of edible oils, the fall in prices after the liberalisation of imports further stimulated consumption (Economic Survey, 2007).

**Table 2.10. Agricultural Production of Foodgrains of India (2000-2014)
(million tonnes)**

Year	Rice	Wheat	Coarse Cereals	Pulses	Total Foodgrains
2000-01	84.98	69.68	31.08	11.07	196.81
2001-02	93.34	72.766	33.37	13.36	212.85
2002-03	71.82	65.761	26.06	11.12	174.77
2003-04	88.52	72.156	37.60	14.90	213.18
2004-05	83.13	68.637	33.46	13.13	198.36
2005-06	91.79	69.355	34.06	13.38	208.60
2006-07	93.35	75.807	33.92	14.19	217.28
2007-08	96.69	78.570	40.75	14.76	230.77
2008-09	99.17	80.679	40.03	14.56	234.45
2009-10	89.08	80.804	33.54	14.66	218.09
2010-11	95.97	86.874	43.39	18.24	244.48
2011-12	105.30	94.882	42.00	17.08	259.28
2012-13	105.23	93.506	40.05	18.34	257.12
2013-14	106.53	95.90	43.05	19.26	264.77

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, 2015; Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation 2015. Reserve Bank of India, 2015. as accessed on January 20th 2015, from webpage: <http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=15813>

Table 2.11 presents the State wise average production of foodgrain during the period between 2000 and 2012. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Tamil Nadu have shown an increasing trend in share of total food grain production in All India level due to its better production. Similarly, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal have shown decrease in their foodgrain production in All India level. It is one of the concerns as these states provides major cushion for Indian state by providing major chunk of food stock in PDS and open market.

Table 2.11. State-Wise Percentage Share of Total Production of Foodgrains (2000-01 to 2011-12) (thousand tonnes)

State/Union Territories	2000-01	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10	2011-12
Andhra Pradesh	7.58	6.29	7.81	8.81	8.50	7.08
Bihar	6.16	5.27	4.13	4.68	4.74	5.42
Chhattisgarh	1.48	3.04	2.75	2.71	2.20	2.65
Goa	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.05
Gujarat	1.30	3.09	2.96	3.54	2.73	3.42
Haryana	6.80	6.20	6.25	6.60	7.09	6.93
Himachal Pradesh	0.57	0.66	0.66	0.67	0.33	0.58
Jammu & Kashmir	0.57	0.72	0.71	0.68	0.68	0.61
Jharkhand	1.03	1.36	0.99	1.80	0.95	1.61
Karnataka	5.62	3.08	6.49	5.26	4.77	4.66
Kerala	0.39	0.27	0.31	0.23	0.28	0.22
Madhya Pradesh	5.21	7.50	6.35	5.21	6.37	7.86
Maharashtra	5.18	4.85	5.81	6.55	5.80	4.84
Orissa	2.55	3.36	3.54	3.51	3.41	2.47
Punjab	12.95	11.62	12.11	11.56	12.28	10.95
Rajasthan	5.13	8.45	5.51	6.93	5.07	7.51
Tamil Nadu	4.40	2.07	2.95	2.84	3.61	3.91
Uttar Pradesh	21.84	20.78	19.44	18.15	19.78	19.39
Uttarakhand	0.88	0.81	0.77	0.77	0.80	0.71
West Bengal	7.06	7.52	7.51	6.92	7.24	6.16
Union Territories	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.10	1.02	0.10
Northeast States						
Arunachal Pradesh	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.14
Assam	2.13	1.90	1.77	1.50	1.78	1.80
Meghalaya	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.11	0.10
Manipur	0.20	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.16	0.26
Mizoram	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.03
Nagaland	0.16	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.16	0.22
Sikkim	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04
Tripura	0.27	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.30	0.28
All India	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics (2013), Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

The data of 2000-12 state wise percentage total food grain production is very much matter of deep concern as major producing state are either in stagnant point or decreasing, the sign of progress through increase is very much minimum. Uttar Pradesh, Punjab), Andhra Pradesh Haryana, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh are the major contributors of foodgrain at the All India level. It shares are more than 60 percent when combined. Thus, a lot depends on their agricultural productivity when it comes to ensuring national food security.

Many states of India are food deficient states (Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Goa, North East state excluding Assam and Union Territories), therefore they have to depend on the Central government for the support of food grains. On the other hand the Central government also has to depend on the major foodgrain producing states for the supply, who in turn are also suffering from the setbacks of low production after successful productions in past like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra etc.

2.3. NORTH EAST STATES AGRICULTURAL SCENARIO

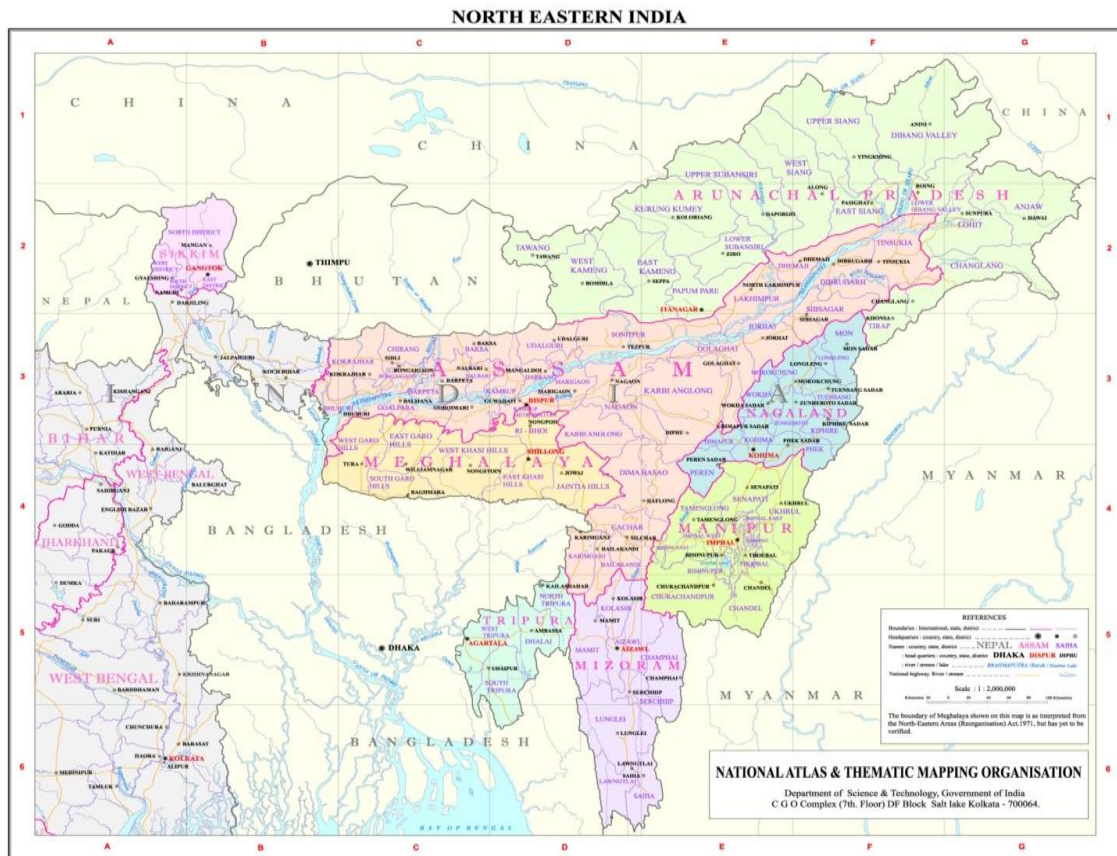
North east also known as seven sisters comprises of seven states Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. Sikkim officially became part of northeast region by becoming member of North East Council (NEC) in 2002. Thus, officially eight states forms to be north east states of India. Majority of the northeast states shares international border with countries like Burma, China, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh (see Map 2.1). The region has a diverse topography, climatic conditions, language, religion, ethnicity and customs. Major issues are unemployment, underground movement, Infrastructure deficit, hindrance in connectivity, and poverty. The economy of the region is overwhelmingly agricultural.

In order to look at the problems Government of India with its special interest of strengthening its union as well as to link India with East Asia in the form of “Look East Policy” promoted Department of Development of North Eastern Region which was setup in September, 2001 and later upgraded to a Ministry in May, 2004 its main aim was to

ensure development with equity for the North East Region (NER) to unleash the potential of its human and natural resources.

Ministry of Development of North East Region or DONER, is a unique Ministry in the Ministry in the Union Government as its activities are regional and more importantly advocating the special needs of the region to the other Ministries and policymakers (Ministry of DONER, 2015).

Map 2.1. Map of North East India



Source: From webpage: <http://mdoner.gov.in/content/ne-region#>. Accessed on March 13, 2016.

As can be seen from table 2.12 that the northeastern states have seen significant increase in its population, at the same time majority of its population still resides in rural areas making agriculture an important source of primary occupation. Thus, it becomes important to know the agriculture scenario in helping the rural livelihood.

Table 2.12. Micro Economic Profile of North East India (2011)

North Eastern States	Area (sq. km) 2011	Agriculture Area (total cropped area) 000' hectare*	Population (Census 2011)	Population %		BPL% 2011-12	Per capita income** (2009-10)
				Rural	Urban		
Arunachal Pradesh	83743	278	1,383,727	77.06	29.94	34.67	51644
Assam	79,000	4160	31,205,576	85.90	14.10	31.98	27197
Manipur	22,327	348	2,570,390	67.55	32.45	36.89	28531
Meghalaya	22,429	338	2,966,889	79.93	20.07	11.87	42601
Mizoram	21,081	133	1,097,206	47.89	52.11	20.4	45982
Nagaland	16,579	452	1,978,502	71.14	28.86	18.88	22418
Sikkim	7,096	152	610,577	74.85	25.15	8.19	48937
Tripura	10,486	350	3,673,917	73.83	26.17	14.05	35799

Source: Census of India 2011, * Directorate Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture; ** NSDP base 2004-05, Ministry of DONER, Govt. of India. Planning Commission report on BPL per cent-Tendulkar Methodology in Agricultural statistics book 2013. As accessed from webpage: <http://www.census2011.co.in/states.php>; <http://www.mdoner.gov.in/content/capita-income-north-east-states-nsdp-2004-05-base>.

The region suffers from weaknesses such as subsistence agriculture with poor infrastructure like roads and markets. The high vulnerability to natural calamities like floods, submergence, landslides, soil erosion, etc. has resulted in low and uncertain agricultural productivity. Due to its difficult terrain, the percentage of cultivated area to total geographical area ranges from 2.2 percent (in hilly states like Arunachal Pradesh) to 35.4 percent (Assam), as compared to 43.3 percent at all-India level (Barah, 2006).

Thus, advanced farming inputs tools couldn't be fully utilized. People of the region used traditional agricultural practices and actively engage in paddy cultivation as rice is the major staple diet of the region. Majority of the region resides in hill areas excluding Assam, comprising of forest lands. Due to the richness in bio diversity it has been identified as one of 18 biodiversity hotspots of the world (Singh et.al, 2010). Due to the less land availability for agriculture multiple crops are grown in the form crop rotation.

Table 2.13. Food Grain Production in North East States (2000-2010)
(thousand tonnes)

State	Rice			Wheat			Pulses			Maize		
	2000-01	2004-05	2009-10	2000-01	2004-05	2009-10	2000-01	2004-05	2009-10	2000-01	2004-05	2009-10
Arunachal Pradesh	1327	135	215.8	6.2	8.7	4.8	6.8	6.8	9.7	52.3	55	60.2
Assam	3998.5	3470.7	4335.9	85.7	68.1	63.5	62.3	61.4	64.6	14.6	13.9	14.1
Manipur	381.7	435.9	319.9	Nil	Nil	Nil	3.2	3	7.2	10.9	8.9	11.7
Meghalaya	179	193.7	206.7	6.9	1.6	0.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	24.3	24	26.3
Mizoram	103.7	104.1	44.4	Nil	Nil	Nil	3.9	4.8	6.5	16.4	15.7	11.5
Nagaland	230	259.8	240.3	10	13	2.4	21.1	25.2	34.7	50	83.5	73.2
Sikkim	21.4	21.6	24.3	10.1	8.3	5.9	5.2	6.6	12.9	59.6	58.2	66
Tripura	513.4	545.1	640	2.2	2.8	1.3	5.9	5.5	4.5	1.6	3	2

Source: Ministry of Agriculture (2013), Govt. of India.

Rice cultivation is practiced in irrigated areas, rain fed areas, terrace lands and shallow water (Gupta et. al, 2010). Thus, it being the staple diet its cultivation becomes important to improve food security; the productivity of rice must be increased by usage of HYVs of rice, better usage of agricultural tools and techniques, develop small farmers-oriented technologies, expansion of area as possible, providing markets for the stakeholders (Barah, 2006).

Food grains maize, wheat pulses are grown in smaller scale due to inadequate irrigation facilities, low soil nutrients, vulnerability of diseases etc., at the same time looking at its growing population the present scenario of its production makes more depended on the Public Distribution System (PDS) for the food security. Due to its high concentration of its people in the rural areas and rising unemployment makes the central scheme of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) more significant in aiding the agricultural sector by building assets which would be useful for agriculture.

However, looking at its positive aspects north east states are like virgin islands where its abundant natural resources provides natural bio diversity, natural resources in the form of forest provides serene environment for tourism, less usage of fertilizers gives these states to go organic in cultivating organic products by following “Low volume high quality” items which would be the future demand from the western market. Thus, it paves opportunity to earn capital and use it as a comparative advantage for importing other goods.

2.3.1. Sikkim: Agricultural Scenario

Like India, the state of Sikkim also is a rural based demography which has an agrarian economy, where a majority of its population (64 per cent) is engaged in agricultural activities⁸. The overall contribution of foodgrain production by Sikkim when compared to other states is negligible (see Table 2.14). Though in terms of food security Sikkim does not contribute to the national food stockpile, but rather is dependent on the Central Government for a major stock of food grains.

Over the years agriculture in Sikkim has remained stagnant especially when it comes to major foodgrain like rice and wheat. Some of the major problems identified for this low production were its steep and slope lands, content of high acidic brown soil, high/heavy rainfall leading to washing of valuable nutrients required by crops, limited irrigation facilities⁹, traditional method of farming, low use of high agricultural inputs, lack of adequate seed storage facilities for entire state¹⁰, low public investment in agriculture sector, Insufficient post production storage, market and transport for farmers (Sikkim Development Report, 2008) .

Sikkim is one of the food deficient states of the Indian Republic, it has been declared a “food deficit” state (Subba, 1984, Lama, 2001 and Chakrabharti, 2010). The

⁸ Government of Sikkim on its various reports: Sikkim Human Development Report 2001, Economic Survey 2006-07, Sikkim Development Report 2008 and Food Security and Agriculture Development Department annual progress report 2010-11 acknowledges were majority of its population depends on agriculture for sustaining daily needs.

⁹ For successful agricultural production irrigation is an important part but in hills of Sikkim it lacks proper irrigation facilities firstly due to its landscape and secondly due to inadequate supply of water.

¹⁰ J.R. Subba (1984) “Agriculture in the Hills of Sikkim”, pb. by Shree Mahavir Books Depot, Delhi. the author also talks about how farmers in the hill has to consume high calories compared to its companion in plains at the same time it has higher and costlier standard of living due to its climate as they have to expend more on their outfits/clothes and food in order to keep them warm and alive.

per capita availability of rice in the state is 158 gms/ day which is far below the National average of 417 gm during 2001-02 (Economic Survey, 2006-07). In order to secure the state from food insecurity, it is heavily dependent in Public Distribution System (PDS) and private agency/traders for the import of rice.

Table 2.14. Agricultural Production of Foodgrains of Sikkim (2000-2013)
(thousand tonnes)

Year	Rice	Wheat	Cereals	Pulses	Total Foodgrains
2000-01	21.4	10.1	66.5	5.1	103.1
2003-04	21.2	8.1	63.8	6.8	99.9
2005-06	21.5	9.0	63.7	6.1	100.3
2007-08	22.9	4.5	72.6	11.6	111.6
2009-10	20.9	4.7	74.8	6.1	106.5
2010-11	20.9	2.7	97.4	5.9	103.4
2012-13	21.3	0.5	96.7	5.8	102.6

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India 2011, Food Security & Agriculture Development Department, Government of Sikkim, 2013.

In foodgrain production Sikkim has remained stagnant it had the highest production in 111.6 million tons (mt) in 2007-08 and lowest 99.9 mt in 2003-04. Rice is the staple food of consumption in the state which is continuously decreasing from 21.4 mt (2000-01) to 20.9 mt (2010-11) and similarly in wheat 10.1 mt (2000-01) to 0.5 mt (2012-13). But there has been tremendous increase in Cereals 66.5 mt to 97.4 mt from 2010-11 the increase in cereals can also be seen from the “successful production of maize in past few years” (Food Security & Agricultural Development Department, 2013)

There has been low production or no growth in agricultural sector especially on paddy/rice, which is the staple diet of the locals. It also shows the overdependence in PDS/private agency for the fulfillment of the requirements. A strong agriculture policy for the state is required where inclusion of more lands are dedicated for paddy cultivation, agricultural inputs in the form of sprinklers¹¹ would provide an adequate irrigation, special programs for promotion of paddy cultivation should also be initiated,

¹¹ An agricultural input which helps to irrigate the crops similar to a natural rainfall it can be used in slope, terraces, and dry lands. Supply of water could be connected through harvested rain water tanks, natural streams tap in reservoir /tanks (FAO). Sprinkler system can save over 20 per cent of water than flood irrigation method www.savewater.com

private and state development projects should not encroach the agriculture fields which provides food security at minimum level.

**Table 2.15. District-Wise Foodgrains Production in Sikkim (2000 -2013)
(thousand tonnes)**

District	2000-01	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10	2010-11	2012-13
East	28.4	27.1	26.4	30.6	24.0	30.1	29.6	27.4
North	8.9	7.5	6.6	5.7	5.4	8.5	6.9	6.5
South	29.2	27.3	28.3	29.5	37.4	34.4	32.5	34.4
West	36.6	35.4	37.9	40.7	25.0	33.4	34.2	34.1

Source: Food Security & Agriculture Development Department, Government of Sikkim, 2015.

The district wise production of foodgrain has also not been encouraging. Among four districts in Sikkim, the West district showed an increase in 2005-06 with a production of 40.7 thousand tons but however, significantly declined to 25.0 thousand tons in 2007-08. North District which is the largest in size compared to other districts, but most of its area is rocky and a mountainous, so minimum agricultural practice is possible. Although cardamom is the major cash crop grown in North district it has failed to cross the double digit in food production.

Similarly, the scenario of East and South district has remained stagnant though latter has tried to increase its performance producing 37.4 thousand tons of food grains (2007-08) but reduced to 34.4 thousand tonne (2009-10). Due to low yield farmers are switching towards cash crops (ginger, maize, cardamom, etc) over traditional crops (rice, wheat, millets etc) see Table 2.15.

The overall production of food grains being very less, it is mostly consumed by the farmers themselves. Therefore a miniscule share reaches the market, therefore contributing very little to the food security within the state. At the same time most of the fields are owned by landlords, where a major share of the yield has to be given to these landlords by the land tenants. Thus, lands reforms in true sense have never occurred in the state “the kazis/landlords still hold considerable amount of land and many Kazis are reported to have 1,500 acres of land even today” (Chakrabarti, 2010).

Thus, poor performance especially in conventional crops and stagnancy accompanied by geographical constraints and inadequate land reforms has made the state to rely heavily on PDS and open market for the consumption of rice. The state of Sikkim belongs to West Bengal regional zone in FCI allocation of rice and wheat.

State allocation of PDS rice consist of Grade A (APL and MMKSA) and common rice (BPL, MMAAY and EXAAY) was allocated to the state of Sikkim. There are two FCI state depot in Sikkim i.e. Rangpo and Jorethang the former covers East, North and parts of South whereas later covers West and remaining parts of South Sikkim. In February due to lack of common rice in Rangpo FCI depot and late delivery of common rice from West Bengal FCI, grade A rice was given in replace to fulfill the monthly allocation requirements of the state.

Table 2.16. Sikkim: State Monthly Allocation and Off-Take of Foodgrains from FCI, FSD Rangpo (thousand quintal)

RICE						WHEAT	
Above Poverty Line		Below Poverty Line		Antodaya Anna Yojana		Above Poverty Line	
Allocation	*Off-Take	Allocation	*Off-Take	Allocation	*Off-Take	Allocation	*Off-Take
19200	12270	9420	6031	5780	3398	2450	2450

Note: *off take from FSD Rangpo. Source: FCI, District Office: Gangtok, 2012

The state monthly (January-March 2012) allocation of rice for APL, BPL and AAY stood at 19200 quintal, 9420 quintal, 5780 quintal respectively and allocation for wheat was 2450 quintal.

However, apart from 100 per cent off-take of Wheat, there was less off-take of rice of various categories for instance APL 12270 quintals gap of 9780 quintals, BPL 9420 quintals gap of 3389 quintals, and AAY 3398 quintals gap of 2382 quintals were not lifted (see Figure 2.16).

The total gap between off take and allocation stood at 12701 quintal. The reasons behind the low off-take can be due to minimum storage capacity of various state district godown, to avoid the damage of foodgrain due to lack of scientific storage facilities and late lift off from various FPS of the districts making the state district godown to demand less foodgrain.

2.3.2. Food Consumption: All India and Sikkim

Over the years there has been a significant change in food consumption, which can be attributed due to changes in per capita income levels. In order to highlight such changes the data from the National Sample Survey (NSS) has been taken, to reflect on the per capita monthly expenditure, as it is based on household survey and it also gives a picture of consumption.

Similarly, data of Human Development Report of Northeastern States of 2011 by Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DONER) has also been taken in order to know the per capita expenditure on consumption of food and non food items for the state of Sikkim and All India.

Per capita income of Sikkim (see Table 2.17) in 1993-94 was Rs 8402 which was above the all India average of Rs 7690 which significantly increased to Rs 48937 in 2009-10 showing a rise of Rs 40535 which is one of the positive developments in economic attainment and well being of a state. Such an increase in per capita income gives more potential of purchasing power

Table 2.17. Per Capita Income of Sikkim and India 1993-2010 (Rupees)

State	1993-94 (1993-94 base)	1999-00 (1999-00 base)	2004-05 (2004-05 base)	2009-10 (2004-05 base)
Sikkim	8402	14890	26693	48937
India per capita NNP	7690	15839	24143\$	33731\$

\$The figures pertain to Net National Income (NNI)

Source: CSO, State Domestic Product (State Series), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation CSO in Human Development Report of Northeastern States, Ministry of DONER, Government of India, 2011.

Table 2.18 highlight that during the period of 1993-94 and 1999-2000 in Sikkim per capita expenditure on consumption were Rs. 321.12 and Rs. 559.50 which was low as compared to All India level of 328.18 and 590.98 but there was gradual increase from Rs. 321.12 (1993-94) to Rs. 738.52 (2004-05) which was above the All India level of Rs.700.33 (2004-05) which also shows the purchasing power has also increased leading to higher level of expenditure on food/non food item for consumption.

Table 2.18. Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure of Sikkim and India (Rupees)

State	1993-94	1999-2000	2004-05
Sikkim	321.12	559.50	738.52
All India	328.18	590.98	700.33

Source: NSS 38th, 50th, 55th & 61st Round on Household Consumption Expenditure in Human Development Report of Northeastern States, Ministry of DONER, Government of India, 2011.

Sikkim being a mountainous state mainly comprises of rural areas (73.05 per cent) and the urban areas which mainly consist of the capital town and Gangtok and a few other smaller towns which are located along the National Highway to Gangtok. Most of these urban areas are located in the East district of the state. In this context it becomes significant to know the differentials in rural and urban consumption and expenditure, further to understand the gap in purchasing power.

Compared to the all India averages of monthly per capita consumption expenditure, the status of Sikkim in both rural and urban areas is high in different periods i.e. from 1993-2005, reflecting on the economic well being of the people especially in consumption level. However, there is a huge gap within the state in terms of expenditure which gradually increased between the rural villages and urban towns from Rs.220.04 (1993-94) to Rs.418.26 (2004-05) respectively.

Table 2.19. Rural and Urban Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure in Sikkim and India (Rupees)

State	1993-94		1999-2000		2004-05	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Sikkim	298.72	518.44	531.68	905.69	688.53	1106.79
All India	281.40	458.00	486.08	854.96	558.78	1052.36

Source: NSS 38th, 50th, 55th & 61st Round on Household Consumption Expenditure in Human Development Report of Northeastern States, Ministry of DONER, Government of India, 2011.

2.3.3. Pattern of Consumption on Food and Non-Food items

Significant changes has been brought by Post 1991 reforms where the role of private sector has had a dominant influence, where consumers are attracted to various food and especially non food items. It shows the mark of 21st century Globalisation where a product lunched in London, New York, New Delhi, Tokyo and Paris are easily available in capital of Sikkim. Over the years (1993-2005) Sikkim's share of food and non food items in pattern consumption_have changed significantly within rural and urban areas.

In 1993-94 the percentage share of consumption of food and non food items within rural areas where 65.65 per cent and 34.35 per cent respectively whereas in 2004-05 the share of consumption changed for food it stood at 54.16 per cent and for non food was 45.84 per cent showing (+) 11.49 per cent increase in non food items and (-) 11.49 per cent decrease in food items. Similarly, within urban area share of consumption of food items and non food items were 55.18 per cent and 44.82 per cent (1993-94) respectively which gradually changed into 41.98 per cent (food) and 58.02 per cent (non food) in 2004-05 which made 13.5 per cent increase in non food items and 13.5 per cent fall in food items.

The share of consumption between rural and urban areas in food items during 1993-94 was 65.65 per cent and 55.18 per cent and in non food items were 34.35 per cent and 44.82 per cent (difference of 10.47 per cent). Similarly, share for non food items between rural and urban areas during 2004-05 was 45.84 per cent and 58.02 per cent and in food items were 54.16 per cent and 41.98 per cent (difference 12.18 per cent). Within Sikkim the rural area consumes more food items as compared to urban areas, but there is a slow increase in share of non food items also whereas in the urban area there has been significant shift of consumption from share of food items to non food items.

The Comparison of share of consumption of food and non food items in both rural and urban areas between all India and Sikkim from 1993-2005 (Table 2.20) shows a

better position of Sikkim in comparison to all India in terms of consumption of food and non food items.¹²

Table 2.20. The share of Food and Non-Food items in Consumption Expenditure in Sikkim and India

State	RURAL				URBAN			
	1993-94		2004-05		1993-94		2004-05	
	Food	Non Food	Food	Non Food	Food	Non Food	Food	Non Food
Sikkim	65.65	34.35	54.16	45.84	55.18	44.82	41.98	58.02
All India	63.18	36.82	55.05	44.95	54.65	45.35	42.51	57.49

Source: Human Development Report of Northeastern States, Ministry of DONER, Government of India, 2011

Thus, there is every probability that if there is an increase in per capita income there is significant increase in purchasing capacity creating more demand for food and non food items in both rural and urban areas. Data also highlights that in Sikkim over the years there has been an increase in per capita income in both rural and urban areas but share of consumption in food items have slowly reduced and has been gradually overtaken by the non food items (Table 2.20) it also shows the effect of PDS which has fulfilled the need of food items requirements which in turn is making the people gradually increase their expenditure on non food items.

Factors like rising incomes, urbanization, changing relative prices of cereals and non-cereal foods, are leading to diet diversification away from cereals and towards high value agriculture. Preferences are shifting toward high-value products at all income levels (Mullen and Gulati, 2005). The state has also witnessed the change in the pattern of food consumption, with a chain of fast food centers in urban areas, availability of non foodgrain like meat, fruits, dry fruits, chocolates, ice cream etc. abundantly in urban area and also some parts of rural area are widely consumed.

Similarly, both at the urban and rural area people consumes eggs, chickens, meat and meat products in the form of *sacchu*, *saekwa*, *geema* etc, milk and milk products like *churpi*, butter and fermented foods like *gundruk*, *sinki*, *kinama* etc, wild plants like *ningro*, *sisnu*, *simrayo*, *tabha*, *ghar traul* and *baan tarul* etc, in their daily lives.

¹² In 1993-94 in non food items the share of All India (36.82 per cent) was more compared to Sikkim (34.35 per cent) and in 2004-05 share of food items of All India 55.05 per cent was high then to Sikkim 54.16 per cent while comparing position of rural areas.

But most importantly these food items are delicacies which are consumed with rice most of the time. In past *daeroo*¹³ happened to be an important meal for consumption which was consumed and had equal status like rice. But in past few decades it has been totally substituted with rice. It has been the main staple diet which is consumed daily and its average intake of rice is two times a day by the locals, making the import of rice more significant.

Due to its physical and climatic conditions it has to concentrate more on cash crops rather on traditional crops to earn money and in turn buy the foodgrain with that earned money (Subba, 2011). However, with such perceptions one has to totally depend on outside “Don’t think your money is going to secure your food or make it safe. Having apples in a country during off-season or in a country where it is not grown doesn’t mean food security” (Mathew, 2010).

So, the state has to rethink in its approach on depending much on PDS and private agencies/traders for the requirements in order to ensure food security for its people. A balance approach is required to strengthen the people living below poverty lines and its agriculture sector where majority of people are engaged. An effective Public Delivery Mechanism, accompanied by sound agricultural infrastructure making agriculture lucrative with the aid of technology with inclusion of suitable lands and in the form of devolution providing Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI’s) more responsible and accountable.

The Agriculture security is one of the bases of food security until and unless the policies that specifically prioritize the agriculture sector especially in its various aspects like the foodgrain production, farmers protection, adequate minimum support price, its tactful management of foodgrain in central pool, state warehouses, district and villages, inclusion of dried lands, building of agriculture related assets especially targeting the small and marginal landed farmers, health insurance scheme for farmers, restating of act which makes farming vulnerable example Land Acquisition Bill. Thus, food security in the coming years would be hard if such kinds of policies are not kept in mind, especially with the rapid growth of population.

¹³ An indigenous product made up of with the grains of maize and millets. It is grinded into fine particles, which is very rich in proteins and nutrients compare to polished rice.

CHAPTER 3

Implementation of PDS and MGNREGA: A welfare scheme for the people of India and Sikkim

3.1. INTRODUCTION

“Political Democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy, what does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity which are not to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity”. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar speech at the Constituent Assembly of India, New Delhi, November 1949 in D.D. Basu, Constitution of India, 2008.

Thus, exploring the noble words it symbolizes that Social and Economic democracy a key aspect for Indian Political democracy which lays the foundation of Modern India which gives the hope for the “have not’s” it could be on the basis of religion, caste, gender, ethnicity etc. to live in par with the “haves”.

Today, India is one of the most populated countries of the world with a population of 1.21 billion. Of which 833,087,622 (68.84 per cent) persons reside in 6,40,867 villages (Census, 2011). These rural residents need strong, effective and efficient policies targeted towards the development of rural areas by removing the “environment of insecurity”, which can be done by bringing economic security and confidence among the rural youth and people. Helping them to engage in activities through which they can earn some money. This mode of occupational security can/is mainly supported by central and state innovative schemes.

So, in order to ensure alleviation from poverty, hunger and employment especially in rural areas the Government of India through its Constitution in the form of Preamble which is a basic structure of the Constitution which states “ people are the ultimate authority and the Constitution emerges from them” and declares “ to secure to all

citizens justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship- equality of status and of opportunity” providing Direction towards its state to exercise welfare measure to strengthen the unity and sovereignty of Indian Union in which every citizen would be proud of being part of its motherland.

Thus, direction in the form of Directive Principle of State Policy a guideline for the state to execute welfare policy of the government of India and to come up with innovative ideas to bring up the living standard through various means in accordance with Article 36 to 51 promoting peace and harmony.

In which Article 41 provides for right to work, right to education and right to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, disablement widow, unmarried etc. At the same time Article 47 states about the duty of State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health. Thus these two articles become prominent when it comes to the livelihood security in the form of providing basic necessities in the form of food and work as acknowledged by the Government of India.

Though, financial limits of the state might be the issue in executing such duties but it should not be the sole obstacle, the state gives abundant of resources to work. So innovative policy, transparent administrative system, responsible and aware citizens are the need of an hour. At the same time central govt. understanding the ground reality major welfare scheme has been initiated and implemented at an All India level basis, with the cooperation from the state governments to ensure food and livelihood security (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Initiatives to Ensure Food Security by Government of India

Schemes	Year	Objectives	Beneficiary
*Public Distribution System (PDS)	1939	a wartime rationing measure to ensure foodgrain availability and distribution in urban areas of Bombay	Urban population of Bombay
Essential Commodities Act	1955	to ensure easy availability of commodities and to protect consumers from exploitation by traders	Communities
Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)	1978	to increase the source of income by providing subsidy and bank credit, training, etc.	Rural Population
Integrated Child	1975	to provide early child development via	Child,

Development Scheme (ICDS)		taking care of lactating women, child and adolescent girl through nutrition, health and education	adolescent girl and women
Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)	1997	to provide foodgrain (10kg per month per family) to the people belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) at a subsidized rate	Family belonging to BPL /AAY household
Swarnajayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SSRY)	1997	to alleviate poverty from urban areas	Urban population
Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)	2000	to provide food security at the lowest level at the lowest rate	Poorest of Poor family
Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)	2001	Providing employment generation in 150 most backward areas (agriculture productivity per worker, agricultural wage rate and ST/SC).	Rural population
National Food for Work Programme (NFWP)	2004	providing additional resource to SGRY where foodgrain are provided for work, to generate employment and provide food security in backward areas	Rural population
Mid Day Meal (MDM) Scheme	2004	to provide food in the form of mid day meal to increase enrollment and attendance in schools	Children
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)	2005	to ensure 100days of guaranteed work with minimum wage to sustain the livelihood.	Rural population
National Food Security Mission (NFSM)	2007	to increase production and productivity of foodgrain (rice, wheat and pulses) for food security in the state	Farming communities
National Food Security Act (NFSA)	2013	Right to food as part of right to life: Aims to cover 67.1% of population, it provides rice, wheat and coarse grains @ 3,2 and 1 to BPL "AAY" household.	Rural and Urban population of India.

Note *- British Raj, Source: Economic Survey 2004-2005, Govt. of India, Tenth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Govt. of India, Millennium Development Goals (2005), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt. of India 2005.

3.2. ORIGIN OF PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (PDS)

Abject poverty and lack of purchasing capacity has made the millions of Indians to go hungry (Dharia, 2010). So, post independent India started to implement innovative policies in the form of welfare schemes and some schemes were taken from erstwhile British legacy for instance the Public Distribution System (PDS) of 1939 which was later on more enhanced according to the changing scenario. These new policies aim to support the general people. However, such initiatives were more or less targeted towards urban

India and the people who were educated like for instance Essential Commodities Act 1955 which was though for the welfare of communities it mainly got useful for some portion of urban classes leaving mass population.

The Great Bengal Famine of 1943 was another such instances which made the present existing system of PDS under the colonial rule to revise its administrative setup for the newly independent state of India. As research done by Sen in his work Poverty and Famines which highlighted that the root cause of famine was not the shortage of food in Bengal as provided by the Famine Inquiry Commission Report 1945 in the form of food shortage due to natural calamities like cyclone, crop diseases in the form of pest, second world war or the Japanese occupation of Burma.

However, it was actually the failure of the administrative policy, politician and policy maker's failure to analyse the pre-famine drought condition, black hoardings, and to restrain the rural population to be destitute in the urban areas which piled up the prior existing urban poor and destitute, failure to come up with specific targeted famine remedial measures. Such past haunted the policy makers of the new India thus making them to come up with firm measures to deal with famine and hunger.

Thus, after the Independence the leaders strongly stressed on improving and strengthening the agriculture sector for food security for its people, in which speeches and gestures like "Everything else can wait but not Agriculture" by Nehru; "Jai Jawan Jai Kishan" by Shastri and formal launching of food stamp by Indira Gandhi on success of "Wheat Revolution" which made food policy as a priority.

The dawn of Green Revolution in India, the government aimed to strengthen its agriculture infrastructure by setting up and reforming the two core bodies in the form of Food Corporation of India (FCI), and Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in the form of food security.

The former looked at the Food Policy by implementing effective price support operations for safeguarding the interests of the farmers, distribution of foodgrain throughout the country for public distribution system, maintaining satisfactory level of operational and buffer stocks of foodgrain to ensure National Food Security.

Thus, it provided farmers, remunerative prices, it made food grains available at reasonable prices, particularly to vulnerable section of the society, it maintain buffer stocks as measure of Food Security and it also intervene in market for price stabilization (FCI, 2015).

Whereas, the latter emphasize on scientific utilization of global plant genetic resources, including conservation of agriculturally rich bacterial resources, to produce efficient, productive and stable hybrids of crops. Generate and disseminate Knowledge related to the processes of production and productivity of agricultural crops.

Develop and use systems approach, crop modelling, bio indicators, nuclear tools, remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) to achieve greater understanding of the production systems, to attain the sustainable agriculture. Pay greater attention to the problems of agriculture under unfavourable conditions in the dry areas, hill and mountainous areas. To combine traditional knowledge of agricultural farming with modern technologies to foster agriculture growth (IARI, 2015).

The modern PDS depends on the support of these agencies for the fulfillment of the food and nutrition requirements for its people where it looks to ensure food security for the country through timely procurement and allocation of foodgrain. It involves procurement of foodgrain farmer farmers through Minimum Support Price (MSP) system which aims to provide minimum rate of profit, building up and maintenance of food stocks, their storage, movement and delivery to the distributing agencies and monitoring of production, stock and price levels of foodgrain.

Main target is the population who are at risk of hunger they are categorized in the form of priority households, Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) families under Below Poverty Line (BPL), establishing grain banks in food scarce areas and involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Public Distribution System (PDS) (Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution System, 2009).

3.2.2. Implementation of PDS

Public Distribution System (PDS) renamed as Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in 1997 to specifically target the vulnerable section of society fighting against hunger and malnutrition. It is one of the world's largest welfare scheme which nearly covers 67 per cent of its population initiated by Govt. of India which allocates subsidized ration in the form of rice, wheat and coarse grains at Rs. 3, 2 and 1 per kilogram respectively see Table 3.2.

PDS supplies were also used for the 'food for work' programme as well as other anti-poverty programme like Annapurna, destitute and old age homes, Antyodaya Scheme etc. Nearly six lakh of Fair Price Shop (FPS) is runned all over India and providing foodgrain.

Table 3.2. Foodgrain distribution under various schemes in 2013-14(in Lakh Mt)

Scheme	Items		Total
	Rice	Wheat	
(A) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)			
Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)	75.68	51.12	126.80
Below Poverty Line (BPL)	109.32	52.71	162.03
Above Poverty Line (APL)	60.04	96.24	156.27
Sub Total	245.04	200.07	445.11
Special Adhoc	12.62	4.22	16.84
Poorest Districts	0.00	0.03	0.03
Offtake against allocation made at economic cost/MSP rate.	3.14	2.03	5.17
(B) Welfare Schemes*			
Mid Day Meal (MDM)	19.86	3.91	23.77
Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP)	4.49	8.50	12.99
Emergency Food Programme (EFP)	0.07	0.00	0.07
Hostels/Welfare Institutions	2.56	0.46	3.02
Annapurna	0.48	0.09	0.57
Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)- SABLA	0.39	0.73	1.12
(C) Other Schemes			
World Food Programme (WFP), Relief, Defence etc.	1.66	0.69	2.35
Open Sale/Tender Sale/ Export	1.69	85.45	87.14
Grand Total (A+B+C)	292.00	306.18	598.17

Source: Food and Public Distribution Department; Food Corporation of India (FCI), Govt. of India, 2015.

It tries to provide food security to the people, employment opportunity by promoting SHG, women and unemployed to actively to run Fair Price Shop (FPS) and provide remuneration to the farmer for their hard work through MSP.

Table 3.3. Minimum Support Price of Wheat and Paddy form 2009-2014(in rupees)

Crop Year	Wheat	Paddy	
		Common	Grade A
2009-10	1,100	950 (+50)	980 (+50)
2010-11	1,170(+50)	1,000	1,030
2011-12	1,285	1,080	1,110
2012-13	1,350	1,250	1,280
2013-14	1,400	1,310	1,345

Note: () denotes bonus

Source: Annual Report 2013-14, Department of Food and public Distribution System, Govt. of India.

The agency with direct contact with the farmers and by providing ruminations in the form of bonuses and by providing minimum prices for their cultivation has indeed supported the farming community to actively engage in the agriculture sector, this could be seen that over the years the MSP has been increased by FCI while the procure food grains (see Table 3.3).

As Govt. of India through agencies like FCI procures foodgrain from the farmers of various states. Similarly it distributes the foodgrain to the network of FCI godown located all over India from there it's further transmitted to various state godown. The offtake or the liftoff of the allocated quotas from the FCI godown by the state agency is detailed by the department.

Table 3.4. Allocation and Offtake of Foodgrains from 2010-14(in Lakh Mt)

Year	Allocation			Offtake		
	Rice	Wheat	Total	Rice	Wheat	Total
2010-11	24.55	5.33	29.88	18.44	4.81	23.25
2011-12	22.29	4.84	27.13	19.17	4.49	23.66
2012-13	23.83	4.67	28.50	20.74	4.23	24.97
2013-14	22.79	4.67	27.46	19.86	3.91	23.77

Source: Department of Food and Public Distribution System, Govt. of India.

Table 3.4 reveals that the reasons for low off take could be of delay in shipment of the allocated quota, previous quota held by the state not being utilized, less allocated

quota compare to the demands by the state. Some of the offtake quota also consisting of backlog quota.

The scale of issue under BPL and AAY has been revised to 35 kg per family per month with effect from 01.04.2002 with an aim to enhance the food security at the household level and reduce the surplus stocks of food grains in the Central Pool (Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution System, 2014).

Further, government by implementing National Food Security Act, 2013 it aims to further strengthen the food security by providing foodgrain minimum 35kg of rice to the vulnerable group of AAY per kg/month at subsidized rate of Rs. 3 (rice), Rs. 2 (wheat) and Rs.1 (coarse grains), covering 75 per cent of rural area and 50 per cent of urban of the Indian Union the percentage may vary upon state to state (see Table 3.5).

It further tries to empower the women of 18 years and above, SHG's by providing to be head of the household in issuing ration card and to run FPS, it also tries to bring transparency and accountability digitization of ration cards and setting up of Vigilance Committee, District redressal grievances cells at District and State levels.

Table 3.5. State-wise coverage of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in India under National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013

Sl. No	State/Union Territory	Percentage %	
		Rural	Urban
Rest of India			
1	Andhra Pradesh	60.96	41.14
2	Bihar	85.12	74.53
3	Chhattisgarh	84.25	59.98
4	NCT of Delhi	37.69	43.59
5	Goa	42.24	33.02
6	Gujarat	74.64	48.25
7	Haryana	54.61	41.05
8	Himachal Pradesh	56.23	30.99
9	Jammu & Kashmir	63.55	47.10
10	Jharkhand	86.48	60.20
11	Karnataka	76.04	49.36
12	Kerala	52.63	39.50

13	Madhya Pradesh	80.10	62.61
14	Maharashtra	76.32	45.34
15	Odisha	82.17	55.77
16	Punjab	54.79	44.83
17	Rajasthan	69.09	53.00
18	Tamil Nadu	62.55	37.79
19	Uttar Pradesh	79.56	64.43
20	Uttarakhand	65.26	52.05
21	West Bengal	74.47	47.55
22	A & N Islands	24.94	1.70
23	Chandigarh	38.54	47.26
24	D & N Haveli	84.19	51.54
25	Daman & Diu	26.66	56.47
26	Lakshadweep	35.30	33.56
27	Puducherry	59.68	46.94
Northeast India			
28	Arunachal Pradesh	66.31	51.55
29	Assam	84.17	60.35
30	Manipur	88.56	85.75
31	Meghalaya	77.79	50.87
32	Mizoram	81.88	48.60
33	Nagaland	79.83	61.98
34	Sikkim	75.74	40.36
35	Tripura	74.75	49.54
All India		75.00	50.00

Source: Planning Commission in PDS Annual Report 2013-14, Department of Food and Public Distribution System, Govt. of India, 2015.

3.2.3. Challenges in Public Distribution System (PDS)

India from the state of “ship to mouth” in the past which totally dependent on the import of food grains now has become the foodgrain exporting state. Though it has reached self sufficiency in foodgrain production, still millions of its population suffers from chronic malnutrition and hunger. Food insecurity in the form of calorie intake and absence of nutritious food in daily consumption has been the major obstacles.

Some of the major causes for such kind of situation are flawed method of capturing poverty, corruption, lack of transparency, caste based discrimination, gender based discrimination, illiteracy, remoteness of area, unawareness about the basic right, unawareness about right to information act (RTI), red tapism, religious based belief,

political victimization, monopoly of privileged group, conflict zones etc. creating a major hurdle in effective execution in schemes created for the deprived and vulnerable section¹ of the society.

Public Distribution System also called as Public Corruption System by some of the critics who *nota bene* the functioning of PDS. The state of the corruption in PDS has been epidemic that is from procurement to “not so” delivery. The cases of diversion of PDS foodgrain to open market has been a common phenomenon, frequent leakages and divergence has been a story of each village, and in the majority of cases official posted in these department and its agencies (central or state) has been able to equip assets in a decade by constructing buildings, farmhouses, etc., Redressal grievances cell which ask more question than answers and fails to execute or response to the crises within the stipulated time frame.

The Government of India has focused significantly towards direct poverty alleviation programme, annually it spends about Rs 11000 crore to centrally sponsored schemes and Rs 28000 crore to the public distribution system (Radhakrishna and Rao, 2006). Still widespread poverty and hunger persist the various reports doesn't fits to the general scheme the govt. is applying.

Table 3.6. India's Food Insecurity Scenario

Report/Indicator	Agency	India Ranking	Total Countries	Year
Human Development Report (HDR)	UNDP	135	187	2014
Global Hunger Index (GHI)	IFPRI	55	130	2014
Global Food Security Index (GFSI)	Economist Group	70	170	2014
Gender Development Index (GDI)	UNDP	132	148	2014
Gender Inequality Index (GII)	UNDP	127	152	2014
Multidimensional Poverty Index (MDPI)	UNDP	55% are under MDPI		2014

Source: International Food Policy Research, 2015; United Nations Development Programme 2015

¹ Women and children are most vulnerable group of society thus equality of women plays an important role in minimizing food insecurity.

Fundamental problems which are inherent in a centrally sponsored programme is the rigid guidelines, which may not fit into local conditions. By the time it reached the poor, it passed through the central government, State government, Panchayat and the beneficiary. At every level, there is red tapism and delays leading to underutilization of funds (Yesudian, 2007).

In such process there is rampant corruption and malpractices in every step where there is leakage and diversion of funds. The funds which are purely meant for the affected person are substantially reduced to half or even never reach to the person. In some states central funds are been showed utilized 100 per cent in different state schemes in “White Paper” but in reality not even a single work had been implemented, pushing people to disempowerment by depriving them from self employment, wage employment, free and subsidized rations etc.

In PDS/TPDS which has been stated as backbone of India’s food security has been infested with irregularities, corruption and mismanagement. A system which has been handicapped and unable to serve the consumers as it was suppose to do where both central and state government are closely linked in corruption.

Firstly, the actual stocks of quality foodgrain never reach to the beneficiary it would be replaced by low quality of foodgrain. Thousands and tons of foodgrain rots in open sky whereas millions of people suffer from hunger and malnutrition (Sainath, 2010) and others die due to insufficient intake of daily required diet.

No doubt digitization and usage of latest technology, Rations run by SHG’s especially women groups of the same village are helping in curving such malpractices, but until and unless people not being aware of consumer rights where education and public action plays an important role for overcoming such challenges.

3.3. ORIGIN OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MGNREGA)

As India being a rural population largely involved in agrarian and allied activities, which is a major source of employment sector compared to industries and service sector, people mostly depend on monsoon or rainy season for the crop cultivation as majority of people live in semi-dry and dry areas where there is scarcity of water for farming.

Sometimes due to unreliable monsoon the crop cultivation fails thus major burden of debt crises occurs at one hand and there is off season which creates unemployment due to such horrific condition it forces farmer either to suicide or to migrate to the cities for better standard of living.

However, in both of the cases farmer is alienated from the self and the family. Thus government by knowing the plight of the rural people especially the farmers, started National Rural Employment Guarantee Act which aim to provide employment through unskilled labour in the off season and to stop the rural to urban migration.

The present Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) can be traced from the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act of 1977, which aimed to revived traditional village industries and provide employment in the form of unskilled labour to the local artisans, the major reason for such act to pass, was due to early droughts of 1970's in Maharashtra making rural people to migrate to cities aided with political intervention was the main reason to pass the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) in the state of Maharashtra in 1977 (Jadhav, 2006).

Also Personalities like Vithhall Sakharam Page² played an important role in advocating campaign for employment guarantee as a fundamental right beginning with an article 'Rojgaracha Hakk' (Right to Employment) in 1949 and subsequent persuasion to the Maharashtra Government to implement Employment Guarantee Scheme on a pilot basis in 1969 (Collector Office Sangli, 2013).

²V.S. Page (1910-1990) was honored with "Dalit Mitra" and Nyayaratha Ramshastri Prabhune Puraskar and regarded as "Father of Employment Guarantee Scheme".

3.3.1. Implementation of MGNREGA

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) where schemes like Food for Work Programme and Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) were merged and incorporated in MGNREGA is a wage employment scheme in the form of manual labourer at the rural areas. Its main objective is to provide source of income to the rural people in one hand and to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institution by developing the village infrastructure on the other. It promotes 100 days of guaranteed work in form employment in off season where one person from each family is eligible for unskilled work.

Table 3.7 reveals that since the inception of the Act in 2006 it started from 200 districts in phase 1 to 648 districts till now has been the major source of rural livelihood employment programme which doesn't distinguish between rural people which has been universal and a demand driven work. Individual willing to do unskilled manual work the concerned person with the aid of Panchayat can easily avail the job.

Table 3.7.Implementation of MGNREGA at All India Level in 2014-15

Total No. of Districts	648
Total No. of Blocks	6,699
Total No. of GPs	2,48,027
Total No. of Job Cards[In Cr]	13.24
Total No. of Workers[In Cr]	28.56
(i)SC worker % as of total Workers	19.11
(ii)ST worker % as of total Workers	14.78
Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Cr]	6.69

Source: Ministry of Rural Development (2015), Govt. of India. As accessed from <http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx>

Majority of work done under the scheme were rain water harvesting, drought proofing, irrigation channel, rural connectivity etc., which basically aimed at targeting at water related areas and making village roads which would sustain the rural livelihood which is mostly depended on the agriculture. It has made the village live more conducive, it has made the people especially the women to participate in the public sphere a first stage of breaking the shackle of the traditional belief and norms, which practiced to keep the women under the control of men.

In the year 2014-15 state³ involved most of the workers engaged in building pucca sanitation (36.5 per cent) was given top priority, apart from that assets creation like rural connectivity (16 per cent), drought proofing (sapling plantation, conservation of soil, agro forestry) [13.7 per cent], water conservation and harvesting by building of tanks plus water sheds (11.2 per cent), micro irrigation (5.1 per cent) (Ministry of Rural Development Department, 2015).

Table 3.8. Status of MGNREGA in India from the financial year 2012-2015

Progress	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Approved Labour Budget[In Cr]	278.71	258.57	220.63
Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs.)	121.41	132.7	142.33
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	51,73,452	46,59,159	13,33,143
% payments generated within 15 days	61.12	49.92	28.75
Total Households Worked[In Cr]	4.99	4.79	3.81
Total Individuals Worked[In Cr]	7.97	7.39	5.66
% of Men Worked	52.93	52.04	49.33
% of Women Worked	47.07	47.96	50.67
% of SC Worked	22.79	22.9	22.37
% of ST Worked	17.92	17.83	18.46
% of Disabled Persons Worked	0.57	0.66	0.67
Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	79.09	60.64	85.62
Number of Completed Works[In Lakhs]	25.53	24.56	12.8
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	61.01	61.86	60.06
Wages[In Cr]	27,153.53	24,415.87	20,929.57
Material and skilled Wages[In Cr]	10,429.98	9,529.26	7,128.20
Total Adm Expenditure[In Cr]	2,194.78	2,372.91	1,864.32
Total Exp[In Cr]	39,778.29	36,318.04	29,922.08
% Total Exp through Electronic fund management systems (EFMS)	13.7	33.05	79.41
Liability (Wages) [In Cr]	322.32	602.7	2,713.90
Material(%)	27.75	28.07	25.41
Admin Exp(%)	5.52	6.53	6.23

Source: Ministry of Rural Development (2015), Govt. of India. As accessed from webpage: <http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx>

³Clean India in asset building which followed the Nirmal Bharat of (United Progressive Alliance) UPA, under the leadership of the Congress (former) and Swachh Bharat Abhyaan of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) under the leadership of Bhartiya Janta Party (present)

The presence of women participation also shows the important contribution provided by the Act in the financial year 2013-2014 out of 28 states 17 states have more than 40 per cent ⁴of women share in the MGNREGA work, which shows a positive sign, in which Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan has more than 60 per cent. However, 6 states of Nagaland, Jammu Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Jharkhand show less than less women participation (see Table 3.8).

The scheme has helped by supporting the families in purchasing the subsidies ration from the FPS and the ration available at the open market. It has also supported the family to buy for non food items. It has benefitted the rural women to spend the MGNREGA earned money independently without depending in his husband money. It has made villagers and especially women groups to actively take part in MGNREGA social audits.

3.3.3. Challenges in MGNREGA

The major problem faced by the MGNREGA is similar to the problem face by other government scheme is that of corruption, govt. of India expend crore of rupees for the effective implementation of the scheme in order to support the living standard of the people. It is one of the major sources of food security through wage employment but it has inherent problems like: Firstly it provides unskilled work which has been diluted by taking the household as the unit, where only one member is entitled to work, and by providing the options of setting the wage below the statutory minimum wage (Patnaik, 2009).

The rural employment scheme has been crippled by mismanagement of funds, delay of the funds, lack of transparency though government has tried to bring transparency by linking the recent data but the problem is with ground level execution, difference between white paper and practice.

It has problems regarding the quality and durability of the assets creation under the scheme. Most of the time assets are created within the periphery of location which is easily accessible by roads it fails to cover the far and remote areas.

⁴ According to the Act the state should promote the share of women participation in the scheme should be atleast 33 per cent.

Delay in wage payment is yet another bone of contention, if wages are delayed by 1-5 months then it will automatically make the person to go for credit in sustaining their livelihoods, in credit system especially in rural areas they are to repay with some interest. Thus affecting them in their overall economic development.

Failure to provide facilities as mentioned in the Act like benefits of creche and unemployment allowance. Thus it debarred the mother to work due to unavailability of the facilities and also the person to search for the employment in other sector or forced to remain unemployed.

Lack of education and the awareness about the scheme among the workers and the general public and failure to keep personal records of the daily workings of the village. Thus, causing hardship in knowing the rights thus enabling some self interest person or groups to misutilise the funds and the position to exploit the worker.

3.4. RELEVANCE OF PDMRE SCHEME IN SIKKIM

Sikkim's natural setting provides major buffer zone between the Indian Union and the three countries of Asia that is China, Nepal and Bhutan without any internal disturbances of secessionist movement and the external intervention in the form of terrorism. Thus, it provides peace and security within the Indian state perspective.

Sikkim has only four districts and north being the largest, but has lowest population primarily due to its rocky terrain, as compared to the other three districts. The state has total four hundred and fifty two villages, of which the North district has fifty six villages which is the lowest. The South district has the highest number of 148 villages and the East has 123 villages (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9. Total no of subdivisions and villages in Sikkim

State/Districts	Sub divisions	No. of villages
North	Chungthang	9
	Mangan	47
	Total	56 (-4)
West	Gyalshing	73
	Soreng	52
	Total	125 (-5)

South	Namchi	98
	Rabong	50
	Total	148 (-8)
East	Gangtok	75
	Pakyong	29
	Rongli	19
	Total	123 (-7)
Sikkim Total (4 Districts) :		9
		452

Note: ()- signifies the villages which are unihabitated as these lies in Forest Block. Source: Census of India 2011, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India.

Due to its geographical constrains and late merger with the Indian Union its progress rate has been low compared to the other states leading to “socio-economic deprivation, politico-cultural alienation, inaccessibility to State resources and technology” (Economic Survey 2006-07) at the same time low productivity and low investment in agriculture sector has been a worrying factor.

Insufficient Agricultural Production, Unemployment specifically in rural areas and Poverty, are highly interrelated elements which affect the livelihood opportunities and specifically food security at the national and at state level. Thus balance between the three components is most important both in urban and rural areas.

Due to such constraints agriculturally it cannot be foodgrain self sufficient state, at the same time it has high youth unemployment rate thus the state has to depend on the central scheme. In which central schemes of PDS and MGNREGA plays an important role for the livelihood security for providing food and seasonal employment to its population for time being until further remedies are sorted out.

The state comes under Special Category States (SCS) which has always depended on centre for its development in the form of grants and aids. It is also a state which has been part of newly initiated central scheme for implementation example MGNREGA in Phase I on North District, 2006, Unique Identification Number (UID), Know Your Customer (KYC) scheme, Swach Bharat Abhiyaan etc. It also shows the state adherence to the Indian Union and flexibility in managing cordial relations with the leaders in power.

3.4.1. Public Distribution System (PDS)/Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in Sikkim

Sikkim relentlessly has been working on providing food security to the general public and the vulnerable section of the Sikkimese society from the day of monarchy “prior to 1975” to the full fledged democracy after it became part of Indian Union.

Historically prior to 1975 the vital organ of country’s foreign policy in the form of defense, external affairs, and communications was under the Indian government of the treaty signed in 1948 “The Standstill Agreement” and the “Treaty of Friendship” in 1950, it basically provided aid in the form of financial and logistical assistance for the development of the state. Since the beginning it depended on food items from the neighboring state of Nepal, Bhutan and India. However it heavily depended on India for its basic requirement.

Table 3.10 shows that after being part of Indian Union, PDS was one of the important scheme of food security to the state of Sikkim. In the state PDS implementation is looked after by the Department of Food and Civil Supplies which aims to provide quality of foodgrain in the form of rice and grinded wheat in the form of Atta at subsidized rates and it ensures fair distribution.

The department functions to provide foodgrain by procuring from FCI godown of Jorethang and Rangpo, Sikkim and its distribution and petroleum products in the form of kerosene oil (blue). At the same time it monitors and regulates the government commodities in food and non food items.

Table 3.10. Major scheme under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)

Sl. No	Name of scheme	Targeted beneficiary	Number of Beneficiaries
1.	Mukhya Mantri Antyodaya Anna Yojana (MMAAY)	Poorest of the poor from the 43,428 BPL families	9914 Families
2.	Below Poverty Line (BPL)	Population estimated to be living below poverty line (41.43% of 5.40 lakhs)	26,914 Beneficiaries
3.	Expanded Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)	Extremely poor people selected from BPL list, 6600 families are covered	6600 Families

4.	Annapurna Scheme	Helpless and aged person above 65 years of age	2500 Beneficiaries
5.	Welfare Institutions	Inmates/Residents in Welfare institutions who are provided with free meals	Inmates/residents in Welfare Institutions
6.	Wheat Schemes	All people who are enlisted to fair price shops	All beneficiaries

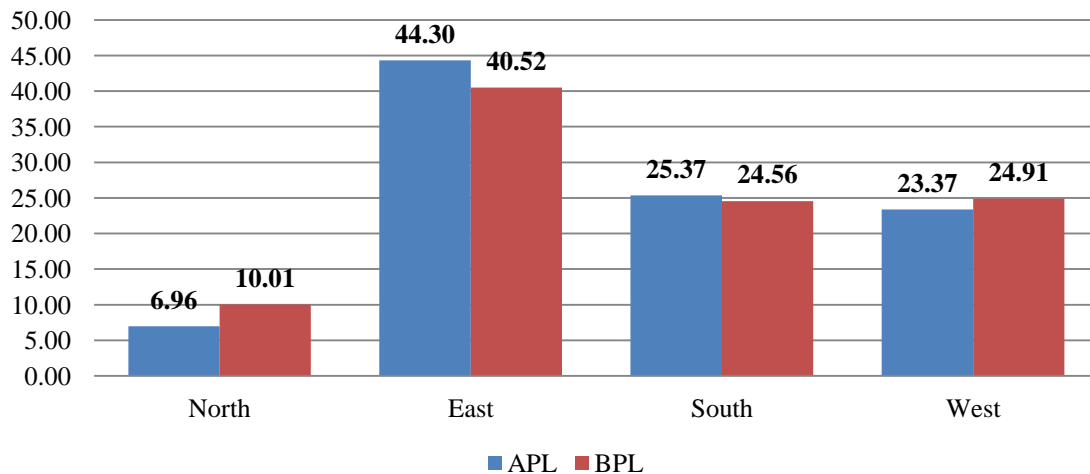
Source: Food and Civil Supplies Department (2015), Govt. of Sikkim. As accessed from webpage: http://sikkimfcs-cad.gov.in/citizen's_charter.html

Department has issued 4,30,547 'Above Poverty Line' (APL) ration cards and 43,428 BPL ration cards till 2011. Allotments of these cards have been highest in East Sikkim and lowest in North Sikkim. (Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Dept, 2011).

The main functions of Food & Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department are:

1. Procurement of food-grains covered under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) from Food Corporation of India as per allotment.
2. Transportation, storage and distribution of food-grains and other essential commodities in the state through a chain of Govt. Food Grain Godowns, Identified Fair Price Shops/Retail Shops, MPCS and Consumer Co-operative Societies (CCS).
3. Ensure regular availability of food grains and other essential food commodities.
4. Provide ration cards to the residents of the state (ibid, 2011).

Figure 3.1.
District wise distribution of APL and BPL ration card holders



Source: Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Dept, 2011

The percentage of APL and BPL ration card is highest in the East district and lowest in the north district (see Figure 3.1). South and West district has average ration card holders from 23 per cent-25 per cent. The reasons might be due to geographical constrains, migration pull and push factors making distribution of population unequal.

Food security has been of immense significance to the people of State both because of geographical inaccessibility and economic affordability. The State government has always been consciously addressing the issue with great sense of involvement and responsibility. In order to make food and other provisions easily accessible, the State Government has over the years developed a range of infrastructural facilities (Economic Survey, 2006-07).

There were 25 food grain godown in 2005-06 which increased to 27 food grains godown in 2011, located in several parts of all the four districts. There are 1420 Fair Price Shops located at different parts of the State to benefit the consumers.

State introduced Individual Digitized ration cards with photographs to all eligible residents of the states which reduced the number of cardholders from nine lakhs to around four lakhs at present (IPR, Govt. of Sikkim, 2009).Such initiatives proved useful

as it helped to exclude bogus cards and ghost cards. It helped state to exclude dead person's name and give PDS benefit to living person.

Table 3.11.
Scheme wise rate and scale of Essential Commodities under PDS/TPDS

Commodity	Rate	Scale
APL Rice	Rs.6.17/kg [^]	2kgs/person/month
BPL Rice	Rs.4/kg [^]	35kgs/family/month
5+ family [@]	Rs. 4/kg	50kgs/family/month
Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)	Rs.3/kg [^]	35 kgs/family/month
Mukhiya Mantri Antyodaya Anna Yojana (MMAAY) Rice [#]	Free of Cost	35kgs/family/month
Expanded Antyodaya Anna Yojana (EAAY) Rice [#]	Rs. 3/kg	35kgs/family/month
Mukhia Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhyaan (MMKSA) Rice [#]	Rs.4/kg	35kgs/family/month
Welfare Institute Rice [#]	Rs.4/kg	5kgs/person/month
Annapurna Rice [#]	Free of Cost	10kgs/person/month
Wheat/Atta	Rs. 6.80 [^] // 8.92/kg [*]	1kgs/person/month
Sugar	Rs.26 [^]	1kgs/person/month
Kerosene Oil	Rs.15-16.20/ liter [*]	1.25ltr/person/month (R) 1ltr/person/month (U)

Note: * represents 2010-11 prices, @-BPL having five and more family members, #- TPDS, R- Rural and U- Urban

Source: Food and Civil Supplies Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2011, Note [^]- Department of Food and Public Distribution System, Govt. of India 2015. As accessed from webpage: <http://pdsportal.nic.in/main.aspx>.

Table 3.11 highlights that state has range of PDS/TPDS schemes to provide food security to its population which has been greatly supported by the central government. Annually Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies Department, Govt. of India orders FCI to release allocated quota of PDS to the state according to their necessities and requirements. For the year 2014 till NFSA 2013 gets implemented central govt. has allocated 3440tons⁵ of rice (including BPL quota of 942 tons, AAY quota of 578) and similarly allocated 245 tons of wheat. In total 3685 tons of foodgrain has been sanctioned for the entire category (Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, Govt. of India, 2014).

⁵<http://dfpd.nic.in/fcamin/allocation/Allocation1415.pdf>

The quota of PDS/TPDS is allocated according on the basis of APL and BPL ration cards in such circumstances for food deficit state like Sikkim where its most of its rural population are poor it requires strong PDS support with the help of BPL cards.

3.4.2. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Sikkim

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 rechristened as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2006 is one of the important wage employment scheme for the rural people of Sikkim⁶ as it provides 100 days of guaranteed unskilled manual work. The first pilot district was the north district where majority of tribal population exists in the form of Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo. The scheme benefitted the rural area specially in connecting rural and remote villages of north Sikkim connectivity path (CC footpath).

Table 3.12. Status of the MGNREGA scheme in Sikkim from 2010-2014

Progress Indicator	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
No. of GPUs	163	165	165	176
No. of Job cards Issued	73,575	75,648	76,810	88,139
Households provided employment	56,401	60,673	57,709	63,288
Payment through accounts %	99	100	100	100
Wage:material ratio	61:39	63:37	67:33	58:42
Cost of one day of employment	174	207	201	245
No of Works Completed	1534	1559	1,803	1,753
Total number of Persondays generated (lakhs)	48.13	50.20	46.38	44.03
Total Funds available (crore)	83.47	113.71	94.65	119.50
Total Expenditure (crore)	85.25	103.86	93.16	110.47

Source: Annual Report 2013-14, Rural Management Development Department (RMDD), Govt. of Sikkim, 2015.

The state NREGS-Sikkim was implemented from 2nd February, 2006 in North District and, from 1st April, 2007 in South and East districts of the state The NREGS, a demand-driven scheme, has its focus on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including afforestation/tree plantation), land development, flood-

⁶ According to provisional Census 2011, it has more than nearly five lakh persons about 75 per cent residing in rural areas out of six lakh seven thousand six hundred and eighty eight (610577) person.

control/protection (including drainage in waterlogged areas) and rural connectivity in terms of all-weather roads (RMDD, Govt. of Sikkim, 2007-08).

Table 3.12 indicates that there has been significant increase in issuing of job cards from 4,498 in 2006-07 to 88, 139. However it has been unable to provide employment in the fullest level. It has left out 17174 households though it has job cards (Ministry of Rural Development Department, 2015), this might be due to the low demand of jobs or person being engaged in the rotation bases. The main objective of the scheme was to provide employment to the rural population especially in off season and to stop the rural to urban migration for seeking job and less focused on asset creation.

Due to rampant corruption and the changing of guard at the centre the newly formed govt. has specifically stressed on asset creation in the rural areas. It has pushed for reform in wage and material ratio that is from 60:40 to 51:49. It was basically done as it would try to minimize the corruption as the state now has to give full account of 49 per cent material dedicated to asset creation. Now, the state has to build some kind of useful asset, it would help the industries sector and help those people and professional who are depending in industries and allied activities. It will also help the women to learn the skilled work under the new scheme.

It now also depends on those states who doesn't adhere to minimum norm of 60:40, for instance in the Financial year 2013-14⁷ like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram whose wage is above 80 per cent and the material is below 20 per cent. This state would have a strong resistance for such move as it would have to employ the job card holders in rotational basis or have to ask for bigger expenditure for the scheme.

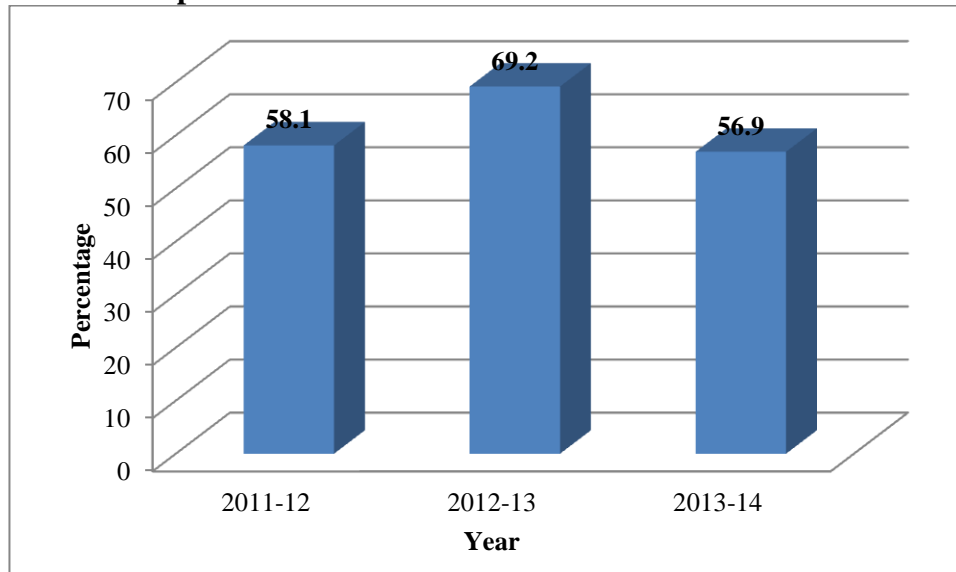
However, second option is nil as the government has started to further reduce the grant on the scheme and targeting the specific districts. Such kind of a move will virtually make the rural people to seek jobs in other places where migration from rural to rural areas and rural to urban areas is undeniable.

⁷http://164.100.129.6/Netnrega/mpr_ht/nregampr_dmu_mis.aspx?fin_year=20132014&month=Latest&flag=3&page1=S

The state has been unable to finish its most of its works on time which is a serious concern as such delay would affect the progress of the work on the hand and secondly it would highlight the mismanagement from the side of the concerned department.

The other tale of the story might be the unavailability of funds, at the same time delay by the agency nominated by the concerned department especially in the material departments like cement, rod, ply woods construction equipments etc. which is the major problem especially in the asset building process. Thus it is the sole responsibility of the department to select the agency which is trustworthy and responsible rather being favoring to some agency which has connection or provides unfair means to get the contract.

Figure 3.2.
Incomplete works within each Financial Year 2011-2014



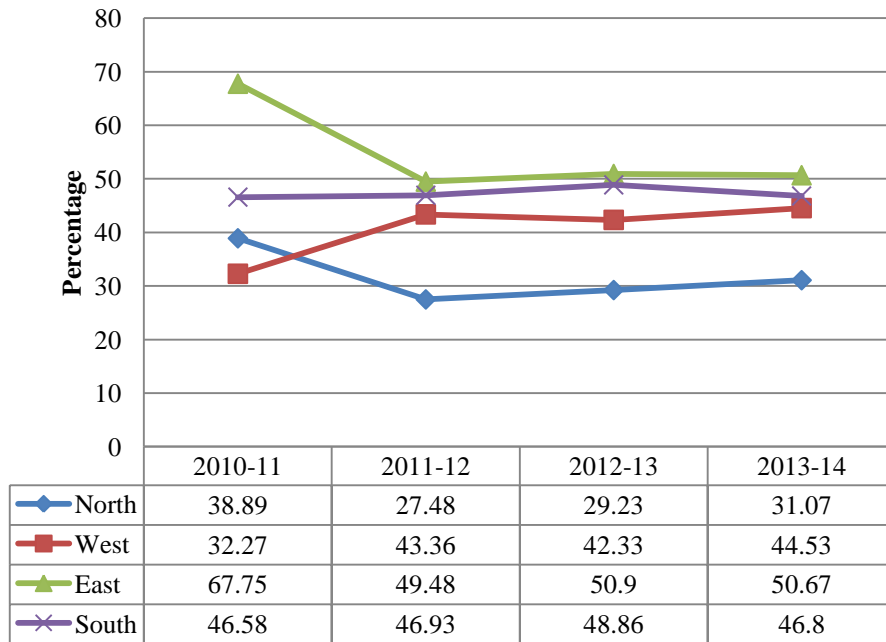
Note: incomplete work - $= \frac{\text{No. of work not completed upto to the current month}}{\{(\text{spill over works upto last year} + \text{work taken up in current year}) * 100\}}$.
Source: Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India, 2015.

The participation of women are overwhelming the percentage of women in employment scheme raised from 26 per cent from 2006-07 to above 40 per cent in 2009-2011 the rise can be seen due to MGNREGA work implemented in remaining three districts which also shows that maximum no of women has now an access to account through wage payment. Financial independence through possession of capital is one of the important aspects of empowerment especially when it comes to women

empowerment. Such wage employment is a major boon for food security for the Individual and for its family.

However, past five years the ratio of women participation in govt. data has been hovering around 44 per cent from year 2010-2014 (Ministry of Rural Development Department, Govt. of India, 2015), though it crosses the 33 per cent minimum requirements, in the field the women participation are higher. This could be because most of the women who are working in the MGNREGA scheme have the job card of her husband and father.

Figure 3.3.
District wise Women Participation in the MGNREGS from 2010-2014



Source: Ministry of Rural Development Department, Govt. of India

Thus equal priority should be given to women also and there should be review on yearly basis of the job card and the person who is frequent and regularly working name should be recorded and the gender should be registered. That would also lead to document the fact which prevails in the ground. The more ratios of women would signify the opportunity provided to women.

The participation of the women worker in the scheme also depends on the geographical setting and the demography north being less populated has less number of

women participation, whereas east by being the capital has most population compared to other districts. Thus, has larger share of women participation at the same time other reasons might be by being close to city the private labour works are more attractive than MGNREGA works⁸ and also majority of male are engaged in private, contract works thus opening space for the women groups.

3.5. STATE INITIATIVES IN PDMRE

The state knowing its constraints geographical remoteness where it has a higher proportion of rural population spends about 70 per cent of its budget share on rural development (Economic Survey, 2006-07). The state often depends on central schemes and budgets for its welfare schemes. Apart from that there are also various schemes which are sponsored by the state for the welfare of its people. Some of the initiatives which especially focus improving rural livelihoods are

- i. Sikkim Organic Mission (SOM) “Sikkim Jayvek Abhyaan”.
- ii. Chief Minister Food Security Mission (CMFSM) “Mukhya Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhyaan”.
- iii. Chief Minister Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) “Mukhya Mantri Grameen Awaas Abhyaan”.

3.5.1. Sikkim Organic Mission (SOM) “Sikkim Jayvek Abhyaan”

The state of Sikkim due to its geographical constraints was not able to fully utilize the agricultural inputs promoted by Green Revolution excluding HYV seeds. However in recent past the increasing negative effect of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals in the soil, water and environment. It has made Sikkim to be in a safer side as the input of fertilizers and chemicals were negligible compared to all India level.

State government banned agricultural inputs like fertilizers and chemicals. It turned 6000 hectares of area of agricultural land into organic farm and aiming to convert

⁸In pvt. labour at construction site the daily wage stands at Rs. 400, for the skilled work like carpenter it's much higher, their daily wage starts from Rs. 500 and above.

the remaining land of 50,000 in phase wise i.e. 18,000 hectare 2013, 18,000 hectare 2014 and 14,000 hectare 2015.

It proposes to completely turn Sikkim into Organic State by 2015. By aiming to provide organic products to its citizens in one hand and high income return to farmers involving in the organic farming. Such process would help to preserve soil and environment. It's natural life time insurance for the people of the state especially to those who are engaged in agriculture for their livelihood.

3.5.2. Chief Minister Food Security Mission (CMFSM) “Mukhya Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhyaan”.

The scheme was initiated by the Department of Food and Civil Supplies on Nov-Dec 2011 which was targeted towards the under privilege groups of the society belonging from the BPL families having 5 and more peoples living jointly. The beneficiary started to get 50kg of rice from January 2012 onwards.

Scheme of MMKSA and 50 kg rice for those “BPL family having 5 and more families” to provide food at free of cost and subsidized rate respectively. Such innovative schemes are limited to rice only which is one of the major initiatives of the state to provide food security to its people by providing adequate foodgrain.

3.5.3. Chief Minister Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) “Mukhya Mantri Grameen Awaas Abhyaan”.

State aims to transform all kutcha “unstable” houses to pucca “stable” houses under the “kutcha house free state mission 2013”, The scheme not only supports the Indian government promotion of convergence which stress on the state government to coordinate with the departments within the state to execute scheme of MGNREGA. The worker of MGNREGA is utilized in carrying building materials like cements, sand, bricks, rocks etc., and in laying basic foundation.

In this scheme topmost priority has been given to the female, in which homes are registered as they are designated as the of the household. Thus giving major share to the

women of the family at the lowest level (Subba, 2014). Such kind of initiatives brings livelihood security to the under privileged, helps in getting, employment, food security through its wages and also building sustainable assets which would help in raising the living standard of the rural people.

3.6. LIMITATION IN PDMRE SCHEME IN SIKKIM

Rural-Urban Dilemma has been the most concerning issue in the era of Globalisation in which so called western development model has been the role model followed by the many of the third world countries. The village has been seen as traditional and old and towns/cities as modern and new. The main aim throughout the five year plan has been to develop villages to transform into towns and cities rather than keep the basic amenity of rural settlement intact by providing basic facilities like hospitals, education, water, electricity, roads, bridges etc. which would flourish the village and villagers and promoting the next Green Revolution rather than to transform it into towns and cities.

Since Indian independence the central government has come out with various poverty and alleviation programme which has been frequently changed, restructured and merged by incorporating new schemes due to its shortfalls or even due to change in governments in centre which has been a case of confusion for the rural people.

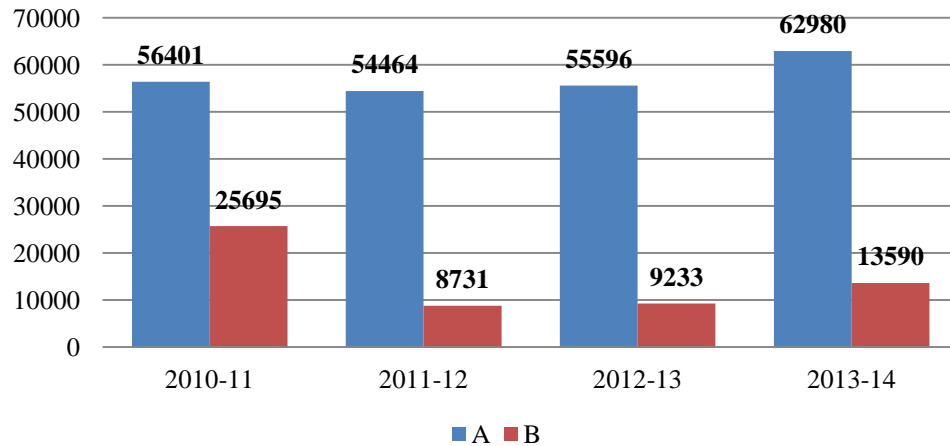
The rate and quantity which has been fixed by the Central government for APL and BPL rice never reaches to that rate in the hands of the consumers either rate is increased or quantity is decreased sometimes both are done failing the purpose of the PDS. Such incidents occur in far flung areas away from centre. Such incidents are totally hidden out from the White Paper.

The concerned state departments responsible for the free flow of PDS are unable to check the malpractices done from its own government centers i.e. food godown to FPS where there is rampant diversion and leakages done by truck drivers, concerned officials and FPS owner. Such mismanagement would affect the allocated quota to various centers which ultimately impacts the most vulnerable poor families of societies.

The delay of delivery of wage to the job card holders is another problem. The wage is reached in a gap of 2-3 month which virtually makes a beneficiary to depend on mercy of private moneylenders and private rations shops for its daily needs. Thus making a person to take credit a vicious cycle of debt crisis where a person earns money but fails to alleviate itself from poverty.

The wages allocated under the MGNREGA schemes is way below the rate provided to manual labour within the state making people to join the high wage rate provided by working as private labourer. Such high and low wages not only create shortages in labour power but also create hindrances in completion of total works aimed by a state.

Figure 3.4.
Number of household availed 100 days of work from each
Financial Year from 2010-2014



Note: A- Number of households provided employment. B- Number of Households Availed 100 days of Employment.

Source: Ministry of Rural Development Department, Govt. of India, 2015.

Figure 3.4 reveals that the total no of household who were working under the scheme has not fully utilized the hundred days of works over the year it has drastically reduced from 45 per cent to 21 per cent, no doubt state is performing extremely well in the front of asset building. However instances of delay in wage payment, job card holder getting sick (debarring person to work in the place of the job card holder), rotation

policies and clash of agriculture and NREGA works could be the major reasons. This circumstance should be further verified and analysed by the field study.

As MGNREGA clearly states no to contractors and involvement of contractors virtually means legally going against the Act, but there is involvement of contractor in MGNREGA especially in making all weather Connectivity (CC) path in its initial job card holders are presented but after that contractors take over's that work.

In all above schemes the role of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) is important in which Panchayat, Gram Panchayat members, Gram Sabha are important bodies, it is one of the important platforms making people to register their grievance and suggestion bringing more awareness which would in turn help in the further development of the projects. PRI was the dream of Mahatma Gandhi where every village would be a model ideal village by being self sufficient. It aimed for Ram Rajya where village headmen/Panchayat would do its duties to fullest for the welfare of its rural people.

The constitution provides special powers to the Panchayat to empower the grass root level and being the voice for the rural people. However the major problem faced by the many parts of rural India is the lack of adequate function done by the Panchayat at the grassroots level. The role of Panchayat has changed significantly they work for their self interest by involving into corruption and malpractices in partnership with bureaucrats and ministers.

Thus, in the next chapters the study would extensively deal with the specific objectives of knowing the effectiveness of the PDMRE scheme in the state of Sikkim, which would try to explore the flaws in execution of the centrally and state sponsored scheme. The scheme indirectly gives a hint to also check the grassroots democracy which is prevailing in the contemporary scenario.

CHAPTER 4

Effectiveness and Challenges of PDS/MGNREGA (PDMRE) in Sikkim

4.1. INTRODUCTION

An attempt has been made in this chapter to examine the effectiveness of PDMRE scheme in Sikkim. As chapter 3 dealt with the implementation part of the scheme where it highlighted its aims and objective for providing a means of sustenance for the people. Now it becomes important to understand and analyse the effectiveness of the PDMRE based on a field study survey and observation which critically examine the policies execution at the grass root level.

The Field Study Area consists of 12 villages from four districts of Sikkim in which 3 villages from each district were selected. Sample size is based on the purpose of the enquiry which consisted of 20 respondents from each village and 60 from each district. Thus, a total of 240 respondents were interviewed from the state. Exploratory survey and Pilot survey was conducted in majority of study area prior to field survey in order to feel or get used to the environment, to garner additional information in the form of fooding, lodging, short cut village path and to get additional/relevant input in the interview schedule.

Study Population consist of people residing in rural areas availing the central scheme of PDMRE belonging from APL, BPL and AAY household, Panchayat members, Village Level Workers (VLW's)¹, Fair Price Shop dealers and Government officials of the study area. Sampling technique consisted of Mixed Purposeful Sampling and Stratified Random Sampling for indepth study. Interview Schedule consisted of both Close Ended and Open Ended questionnaire based on the availability, accessibility, affordability and applicability of food in the one hand and working of wage employment scheme in the form of MGNREGA on the other.

¹ Here VLW's doesn't mean those person recruited by Agriculture Department. In these VLW's means those individual who works as a social worker in the village. Here village level worker may have affiliation with the party or might have no affiliation with any party.

The primary focus of this chapter is to study on effectiveness of the scheme in providing support to the beneficiaries, bringing changes in social and economic condition, good governance at the village, district and state level in one hand and also to analyse the challenges faced in the successful execution of the scheme at the ground level.

Thus, the first section deals with the socio economic profile of the study area consisting of all the twelve villages, second section would study the execution and effectiveness of PDMRE scheme at the village, district and state level, in which tools like Right to Information (RTI) Act, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), Gram Sabha are also incorporated for further analysis in PDMRE scheme. Thirdly it tries to highlight the challenges that PDMRE scheme faces in the form of mismanagement and lack of awareness.

4.2. PROFILE OF THE FIELD STUDY AREA

Table 4.1 highlights the demography of the study area consists of rural setting where majority of the population are engaged in agriculture and allied activities. More than 50 per cent of the people of the study area belong to Schedule Tribe (ST) community. In places such as Rizey, Namphok, Gagyoung, Pabyuik most of people are living as a tenant in the form of *Kuth* and *Adhya* given by land owners.

In which tenant has to look after the land and if possible cultivate the land and give 50 per cent of whatever the farmer has cultivated from the land which ranges from crops like paddy, millet, maize etc to cash crops like ginger, cardamom, vegetables etc. to the land owner and in some cases giving minimum annual rent which ranges between Rs.1000-1500.

Table 4.1. Population Composition of the Field Study Area

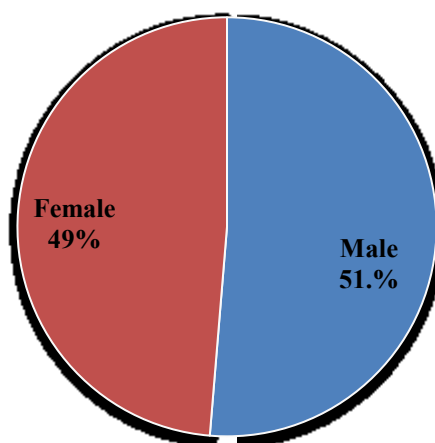
Name of District	Name of Villages	No. of Household	Male	Female	Population
North	Mangshila. U	196	546	511	1057
	Lingthem	238	620	606	1226
	Singhik	290	641	627	1268
	Tikpur	434	1019	892	1911

West	Ambotay L. F.	145	365	358	723
	Chota Samdong	176	459	387	846
South	Kabrey	180	463	468	931
	Gagyong	378	968	905	1873
	Namphok	250	657	639	1296
East	Rizey	105	236	206	442
	Pabyuik	283	628	637	1265
	Parkha	184	401	419	820
All Districts (12 Villages):		2859	7003	6655	13658

Source: Census of India, The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, New Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

Gender equality is one of the important aspect for the development of the society, where balance representation of the female would signify safe environment for girl child, better opportunity and many more. The present study areas have somewhat equal gender representation with just a difference of 2 per cent which shows importance of women in the development of the society (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Gender Ratio of the Study Area



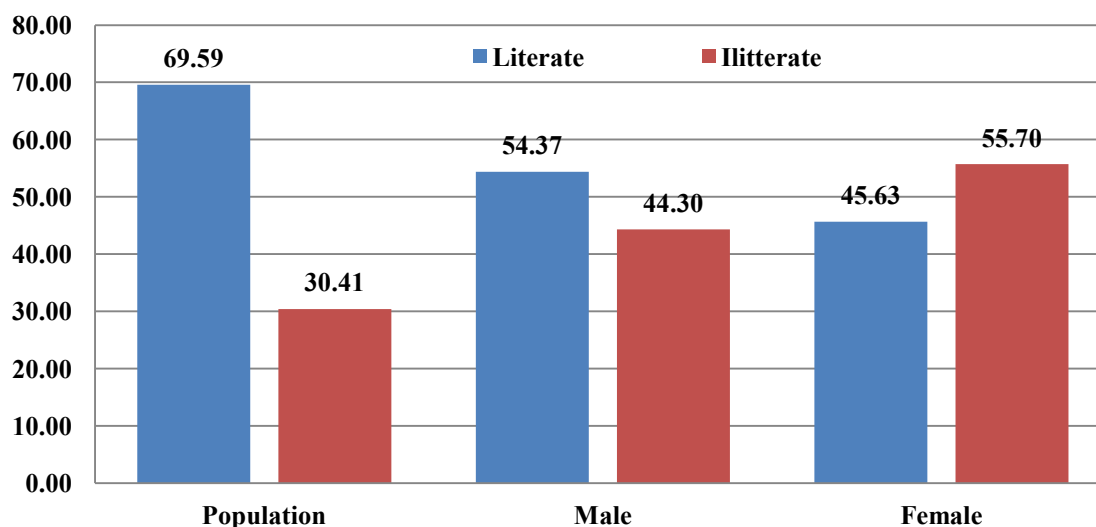
Source: Census of India, The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, New Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

It is significant that such equality was possible due to the environment like geographical constrains and less population where men and women were had to equally participate in private and domestic sphere through fetching woods, agriculture works, selling agriculture items, thus influencing the social customs for the women.

At the same time it can also be seen due to the community settlement as the majority of area has presence of ST population (Lepcha, Bhutia, Sherpa, Limboo and Tamang) and majorities are Buddhist and nature worshippers². The marriage ritual which is followed in Buddhist social costumes in the state is that men should give dowry to female families. Thus such traditional customs virtually debunks superiority of boy child over girl, thus promoting status quo between girl and a boy child and providing gender equality and there is negligible or very low female feticide.

Education is another important aspect to understand the well being of the people, where a population cannot be easily manipulated by the vested interest. Helping in being aware about the latest development in one hand and to make the general population aware, thus being in par with the development and not lagging behind.

Figure 4.2: Literacy Rate (%) of the Study Area



Source: Census of India, The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, New Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

Figure 4.2 reveals that the literacy rate of the study area has tremendously progress as compared to past due to reasons like Right to Education and the state initiatives on education. Majority of the study area has education institutions in the form

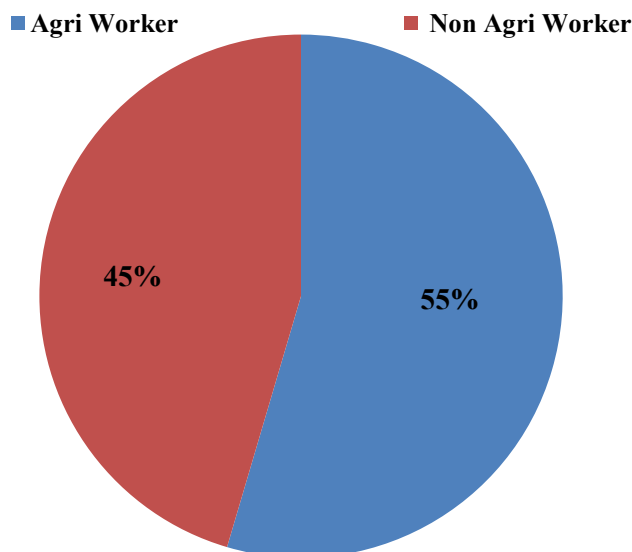
² Originally the Lepchas and the Limboos were nature worshippers where they worshiped the environment which they live in, which consisted of mountains, rivers, forest, earth etc. in the form of deity through their priest and priestess i.e. *Bongthing* and *Mon* (Lepcha); *Phedangmas* (Limboo) in the form *mundhum* “oral chanting”.

of Primary (Lower Kindergarten- class V), Junior High (I-VIII), High Secondary (upto class X) and Senior Secondary (upto class XII). Some of the study areas have presence of schools within the distance of 1 kilometer. Thus majority of its population are literate able to read and write simple English and Nepali.

At the same time when it comes to female literacy rate is lower compared to male but there has been rise of literacy rate within the female group over the past years. It becomes important to open girl's school in other districts also, providing scholarship for the girl student and opening open school for the married and aged women taught by retired teacher of the concern village with minimum financial assistance.

As can be seen from Figure 4.3 major economic activities of the study area basically agriculture and allied activities which consist of main agricultural workers, marginal agricultural workers, agricultural labourer and marginal agricultural labourer working in the cultivation of traditional crops like paddy, maize, finger millet and cash crops like cardamom, dal, potato, ginger, broom, etc. The former especially paddy is slowly been over taken by the later due to reasons like good market prices of cash crops, shortage of inputs i.e. labour, irrigation, price, low volume high quality, overdependence on PDS etc..

Figure 4.3. Distribution of Agri and Non-Agri workers (%)



Source: Department of Economics & Statistics Monitoring & Evaluation (DESME) Ward Profile, 2006

It has also made an increase in non agriculture workers group like private (pvt) construction labour, carpenter, driver, contractors, who has virtually left the agricultural fields creating shortage in the agricultural labourer. Also there is presence of female group which are supporting the agricultural works in the study area.

4.3. AREA COVERED UNDER FIELD STUDY

The household level field survey conducted over 12 villages of Sikkim 3 villages from each district by collecting a sample size of 20 respondents from each village and 60 respondents from each districts and collecting a total of 240 respondents from all over Sikkim (see Table 4.2). The area of study chosen is basically rural area where most of the people are engaged in agricultural and allied activities, followed by non agricultural activities in the form of construction labour, carpenter, small shop owners, private and govt. employs.

The Interview schedule was taken to those household which were availing the benefits of central scheme of PDMRE to know the perspectives about the scheme and its effectiveness in their daily life.

Table 4.2. Total Household Surveyed

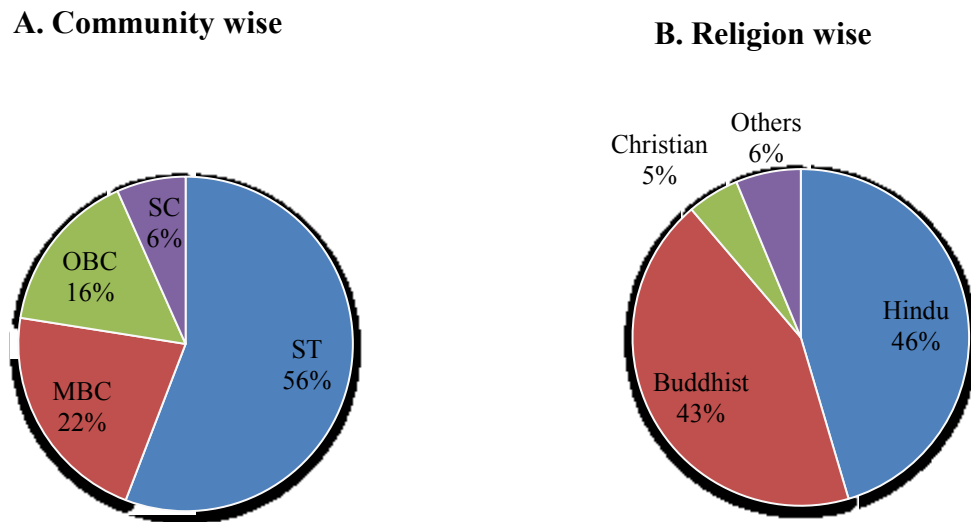
Sl. No	Name of District	Number of Villages	Male	Female	Total Respondents
1	North	3*	34 (57%)	26 (43%)	60 (100%)
2	West	3*	34 (57%)	26 (43%)	60 (100%)
3	South	3*	36 (60%)	24 (40%)	60 (100%)
4	East	3*	35 (58%)	25 (42%)	60 (100%)
5	Total	12	139 (58%)	101 (42%)	240 (100%)

Note: * names of villages i) North (U. Mangshila, Lingthem and Singhik); ii) West (Tikpur, Ambotay and Chota Samdong); iii) South (Kabrey, Gagyong and Namphok); iv) East (Rizey-Namok, Pabyuik and Parkha). Source: Field Survey, December-February, 2014-15, Sikkim.

In order to get adequate response from the women folks in the working of the scheme nearly half of the respondents belongs to the female category. It would not only help to know the effectiveness of the scheme but also to know the limitations and further improvements which would benefit the village in general and women in particular.

Likewise, community and religion is one of the important elements of Indian society which unites the states. Thus it becomes significant to know the effectiveness of the scheme toward the different section of the society in helping them in providing livelihood security.

Figure 4.4. Community and Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents



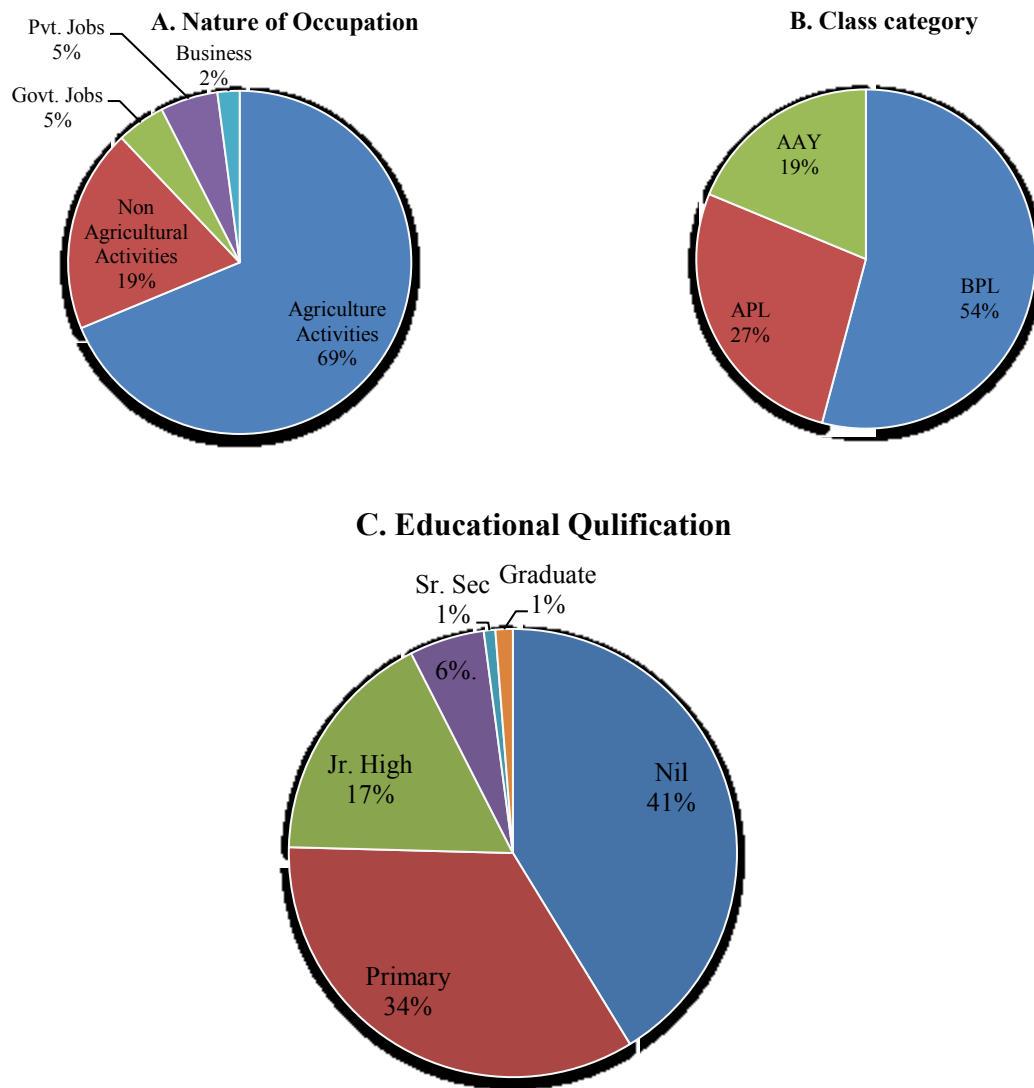
Source: Field Survey, December-February, 2014-15, Sikkim.

Figure 4.4 (A) indicates the community wise distribution of the respondents belonging from ST category from the field study belong to majority Lepcha, Limboo, Tamang, Bhutia and Sherpa community whereas Most Backward Class (MBC) consisted of Rai, Gurung, Thapa, Sunwar etc. Other Backward Class (OBC) consisted of Chettri, Bahun, Pradhan and in Schedule Caste (SC) consisted of Bishwakarma, Rasiley, Giri, Dural, Gadieley etc. The Rai and the Limboo community consist of majority population living below poverty line followed by other communities.

The study area consists mostly of Hindu and Buddhist community due to reasons like the advent of Nepali population and the state once being under the Buddhist spiritual ruler followed by Christian due to advent of missionary in the neighboring state of North Bengal and in some part of the state. Others religion consist of population who follows Sarvadharm and Yumaism the former consist of people who worship god and goddess

of all religion and the later consist of the belief of Lord Yuma the spiritual almighty or the enlightened one of the Limboo community (see Figure 4.4 B) However there is non-presence of respondents who follow religion like Islam, Jainism, Sikhism etc., as they are not practiced.

Figure 4.5. Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents



Source: Field Survey, December -February, 2014-15, Sikkim.

Due to the rural setting, majority of population are engaged and depended in agricultural and allied activities for daily living. In which 5 per cent of respondents are

engaged in public and private sectors for employment in government departments, schools, shop owners, private worker, contractors, pharmaceutical factory and hydel power projects etc. Most of the respondents belong from BPL category followed by APL and AAY category as these schemes especially targets to provide welfare for the people living in rural areas.

The respondent ages were between 25-50 years and they were mostly illiterate who didn't have any basic education. Very few respondent experienced higher studies in the form of matriculation and above, which would not only affect the better standard of living but also creating a major obstacle in effective implementation of welfare scheme (see Figure 4.5).

4.4. STATUS OF PDMRE IN SIKKIM AT VILLAGE LEVEL

The importance of inter-village study not only helps to understand the various composition of the village but also helps to compare the one village over other in understanding implementation of schemes. To understand, why one village is performing well and not others and what are the factors which are making the particular village to function well and not others.

Thus, in the following section inter-village (within district) comparison would be studied in the functioning of the PDMRE scheme. The first district would be north district which is one of the largest in geographical area compared to other three districts of Sikkim. It has less population due to its rocky mountains. Its district headquarter is located in Mangan, which is 55 km far from Gangtok.

4.5. Status of PDMRE in Villages of North District of Sikkim

The area of study chosen were the Upper Mangshila, Lingthem and Singhik where majority of its population belong to tribal community in the form of Lepcha, Limboo and Bhutia. Majority of the population belong to age group of 30-50 (see Table 4.3). Mangshila and Singhik have metalled roads whereas Lingthem has semi *pucca* roads. In distance wise Singhik is closest to the district headquarter compare to Lingthem and Mangshila.

Table 4.3. Gender and Age Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of North District

Name		Gender		Age of the Respondents						Total Respondent
District	Village	Male	Female	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	< 60	
North	Mangshila.U	12	8	1	3	8	3	3	2	20
	Lingthem	9	11	2	5	5	3	4	1	20
	Singhik	13	7	1	3	5	6	4	1	20
Total (3 Villages)		34	26	4	11	18	12	11	4	60

Source: Field Survey, December-February, North Sikkim 2014.

It has High secondary within the village whereas it has to go to neighbouring village for senior secondary school. There is Non presence of college, banks and hospitals, though it has Primary Health Centre within the radius of 1-3 km but most of the people prefer to visit Gangtok (1st preference) and Mangan (2nd preference) hospital due to availability of doctors and proper medicines.

Table 4.4. Community and Religious Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of North District

Community	Category	Mangshila. U	Lingthem	Singhik	Total
	ST	11	20	16	47
	SC	4	0	0	4
	OBC	2	0	0	2
	MBC	3		4	7
	Total Respondents		20	20	20
Religion	Hindu	14	0	2	16
	Buddhist	2	20	18	40
	Christian	0	0	0	0
	Muslim	0	0	0	0
	Others	4	0	0	4
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60

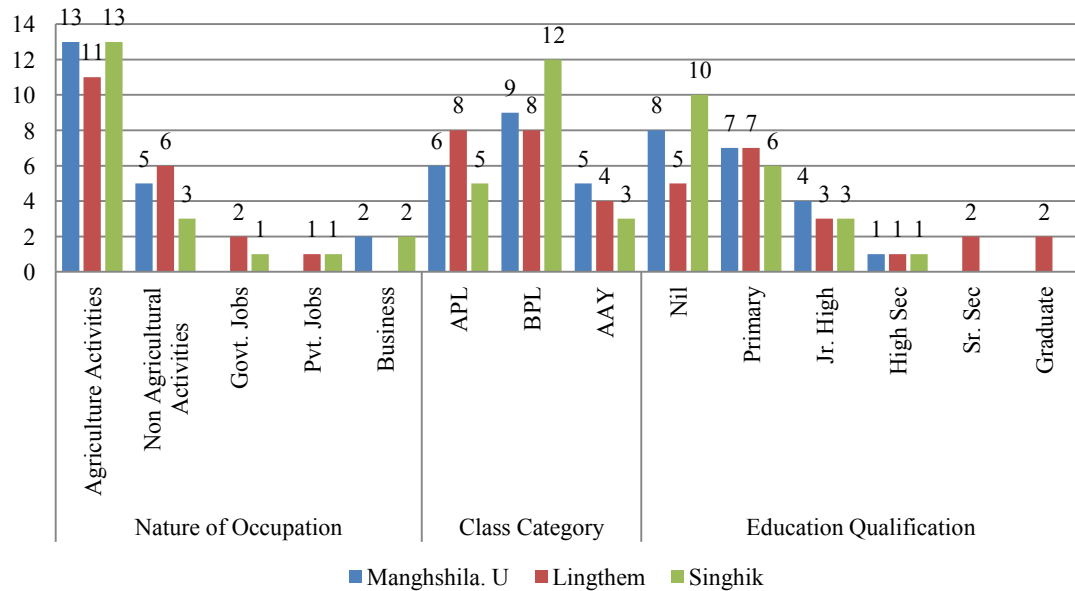
Source: Field Survey, December-February, North Sikkim, 2014.

One of the universal phenomena of the rural setting is the ghettoisation in which specific caste or community beliefs in the notion of sticking together in a caste specific or religious specific community for unity, safety, common belongings and preservation of community. It could be clearly seen from the rural setting of the study area also

Mangshila is heavily dominated by Limboo population who are basically Hindus and some follow Yumaism. At the same time there are few Schedule Caste living in a particular area, Lingthem village which is located in the parts of Upper Dzongu is a restricted area which only permits local Lepcha of the area who are basically Buddhist. Singhik is also a Lepcha dominated area with little presence of other communities.

The village of Mangshila, Singhik and Lingthem has majority of population engaged in agriculture and allied activities where maize, large cardamom, paddy, vegetables are cropped and with some dairy farming is also practiced. Lingthem has been in a better situation in socio economic profile compare to other villages this may be due to better education and the government policy like providing primitive tribe status to the Lepcha community, providing scholarship for the children of the Dzongu area and job opportunities in the form of village tourism etc. (see Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents in Surveyed Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December-February North Sikkim, 2014.

The Panchayat of Lingthim was a graduate and the majority of the respondents were literate compared to the other villages that had less educational qualification. Similarly, first degree college in north district has been allotted in the Mangshila village which promises a better future not only for the people residing in the area for job

opportunities and market but also to the children for the better higher education for the people of the north district as a whole.

4.5.1. Status of Public Distribution System (PDS) in the Villages of North District of Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS in the villages of the North District of Sikkim. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at village level.

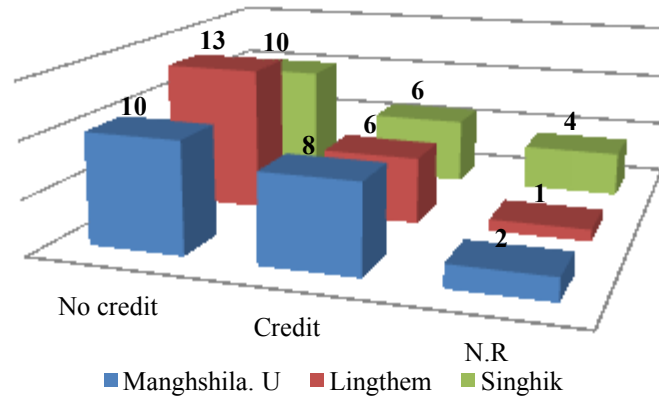
Table 4.5. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of North District

Name of Village	Week					Total Respondent
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	No Response	
Mangshila. U	4	12	3		1	20
Lingthem	2	17	1			20
Singhik	5	10	4	1		20
Total	11	39	8	1	1	60

Source: Field Survey, December, North Sikkim 2014.

Lingthem doesn't have Fair Price Shop (FPS) in its village. The villagers get their rations from the FPS of the neighboring village Passingdong. Singhik and Mangshila have two FPS each. All the FPS of two villages and Passingdong FPS are run by private stakeholders. The rations (rice) are available in second week and k.oil and sugar arrives at the end of the month (see Table 4.5).

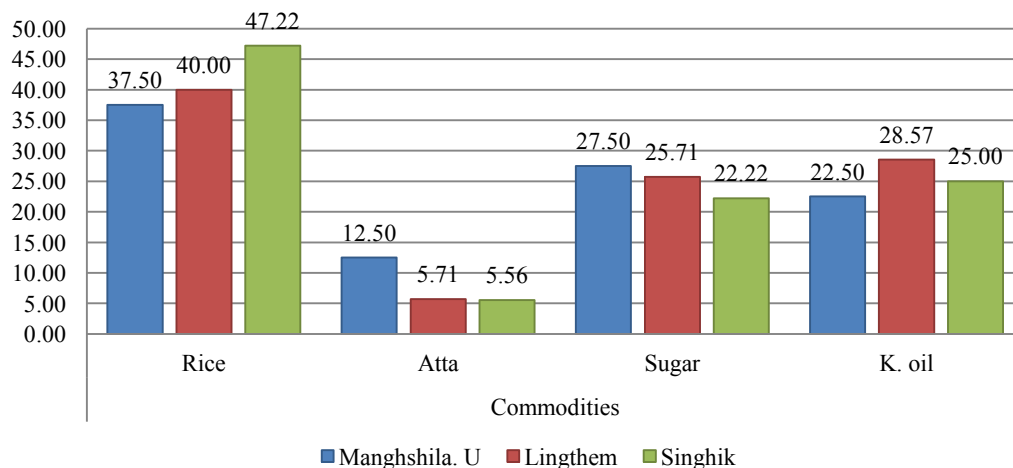
Figure 4.7. Availability of Money while Purchasing PDS Rations in the Villages North District



Source: Field Survey, December, North Sikkim 2014.

Figure 4.7 reveals that though there are fewer amounts of people taking credit for the purchase of PDS rations, but still there is share of people who takes credit, due to untimely arrival of rations at FPS makes people to go for credit while purchasing the allocated rations. It also makes the people belonging from BPL and AAY people to depend on private shops for monthly rations. Lingthem is less dependent on taking credit it could be due to employment, saving and suitable climate for paddy cultivation.

Figure 4.8. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased in the Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December, North Sikkim 2014.

As can be seen from Figure 4.8 the majority of the people depend on rice and less amount of Atta this can be due to less demand in the form of preference or the

unavailability in the FPS. Less amount of sugar is consumed in Lingthem as they prefer salt more than sugar in tea. At the same time there is untimely arrival of sugar and kerosene oil where concerned FPS fails to inform to all its cardholders.

Table 4.6. Monthly Wise Lifting Details of Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of North District

Month	Commodities	Name of the three Villages								
		Mangshila .U			Lingthim			Singhik		
		APL	BPL	AA Y	APL	BPL	AA Y	APL	BPL	AA Y
November	Rice	5 (1)	6 (3)	5	5 (3)	8	4	5	12	105
	Atta	6 (3)	2 (7)	N.A	6(2)	4(4)	N.A	3(2)	8(4)	N.A
	Sugar	N.A	6 (3)	4(1)	N.A	4(4)	3(1)	N.A	N.A	1(2)
	K. oil	5(1)	6(3)		5(3)	5(3)	2(2)	4(1)	12	3
December	Rice	5(1)	7(2)	5	3(5)	7 (1)	4	2 (3)	12	3
	Atta	4 (2)	3 (6)	2 (3)	2 (6)	7 (1)	N.A	N.A	4 (8)	1 (3)
	Sugar	N.A	6 (3)	3(2)	N.L	5 (3)	2 (2)	2 (3)	6 (6)	3 (1)
	K. oil	5 (1)	6 (3)	2 (3)	4 (4)	6 (2)	4	4 (1)	11 (1)	3 (1)
January	Rice	N.L	2 (7)	N.L	N.A	1 (7)	1(3)	N.A	2 (10)	N.A
	Atta	1 (5)	1 (8)	N.L	4 (4)	2 (6)	N.ARR	N.A	1 (11)	N.A
	Sugar	N.A	1 (8)	N.L	N.ARR	2 (6)	2 (2)	N.A	1 (11)	N.A
	K. oil	1 (5)	1(8)	N.L	2 (6)	2 (6)	N.ARR	N.A	2 (10)	N.A

Note: K.- kerosene, parenthesis (), denotes number of person who didn't lift their allocated quota. N.A.- Not Available, N.Arr.- Not Arrived and N.L.- Not Lifted. Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Table 4.6 shows that the sugar has been deleted from the APL list which was earlier provided in the PDS in the state. It has to be noted that most of the time especially in context of Atta, Sugar and K.oil there has been gap in lifting of the quotas when asked about such gap the respondent state the unavailability in the ration or told the quota finished or not yet arrived.

Table 4.7. Average Monthly Consumption in the Villages of North district

Category	Commodities	Mangshila	Lingthim	Singhik
AA Y	Rice	48.0	58.5	51.7
	Dal	3.2	2.5	3.3
	Sugar	2.4	1.8	2.7
	Oil	4.6	3.0	4.3
	Atta	2.0	3.0	3.7
	K.oil	1.5	3.3	3.7

	Meat items	6.3	5.5	6.0
BPL	Rice	55.6	59.4	52.9
	Dal	3.1	4.0	3.0
	Sugar	2.0	3.2	2.7
	Oil	3.6	4.3	5.3
	Atta	2.3	3.7	4.6
	K.oil	2.8	1.8	2.9
	Meat items	6.1	6.6	9.6
APL	Rice	48.3	56.3	49.0
	Dal	3.3	3.1	2.6
	Sugar	1.8	3.4	2.0
	Oil	4.3	3.4	4.0
	Atta	2.0	4.3	3.0
	K.oil	1.8	3.4	3.0
	Meat items	6.7	6.9	9.6

Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Overall Rice has been the staple diet followed by meat items in all the three villages and within the categories followed by Dal, Atta and cooking oil. Meat has been a source of protein where meat items like beef and pork are highly consumed in Singhik and Lingthem. Chicken, Mutton and pork are mostly consumed in Mangshila. Dal is second preference in the unavailability of meat on average 2-3 kgs are bought monthly for the variations in absence of meat and dairy products like *churpee* made from the cream of milk (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.8. Average Monthly Expenditure in the Villages of North District

Category	Commodities	Mangshila	Lingthim	Singhik
AAY	Rice	619.00	603.75	365.00
	Dal	265.00	171.67	145.00
	Sugar	37.80	33.00	105.00
	Oil	456.00	420.00	513.33
	Atta	39.50	60.00	44.00
	K.oil	48.00	82.50	80.00
	Meat items	840.00	840.00	1180.00
BPL	Rice	756.11	790.13	448.33
	Dal	261.88	222.86	215.91
	Sugar	65.00	79.33	125.45
	Oil	480.00	570.00	508.33
	Atta	54.29	76.00	82.75
	K.oil	78.75	42.86	67.08
	Meat items	1031.25	927.50	1200.00
APL	Rice	1194.83	1231.88	957.00
	Dal	340.00	293.33	141.00

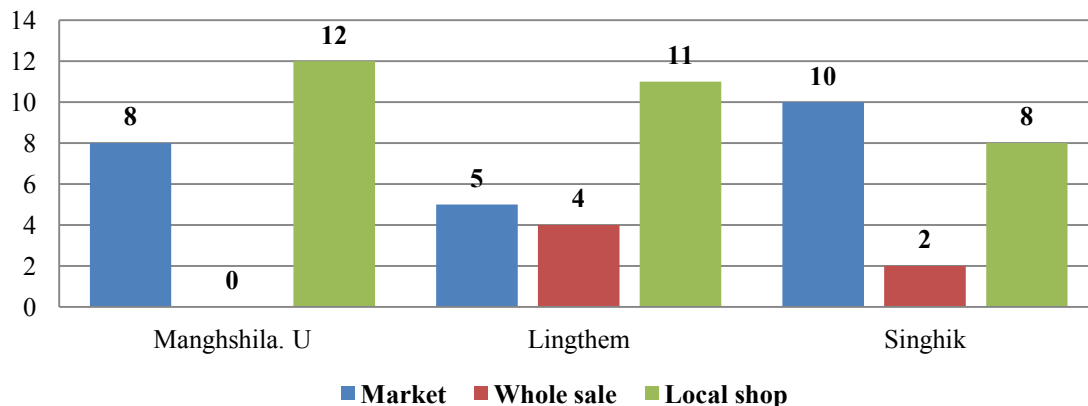
	Sugar	63.00	60.57	83.33
	Oil	520.00	510.00	582.00
	Atta	47.00	91.00	124.67
	K.oil	127.50	86.00	87.50
	Meat items	1000.00	1138.75	1204.00

Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

The expenditure is high among the APL category of all three villages in buying the food items due to rations bought at open market rate. Though some relieve is provided by the availability of K.oil. At the same time due to availability of subsidized rice through PDS has made the BPL and AAY category to utilize the money to buy meat products and other edible items this can be seen from purchasing of meat items and dals. Singhik irrespective of category on average spends high on meat items which accounts above Rs. 1000 followed by Lingthem.

In Singhik, the people belonging from AAY and BPL category expends more on sugar this might be due to reasons like unavailability of allocated quota in FPS making them to fetch sugar from the private shops. The minimum expenditure on food items excluding k.oil is Rs. 304 in among AAY in Lingthem and Rs. 368 among BPL of Singhik and Rs. 441 among the APL of Singhik. This is due to the small family, person living individually, destitute or family member went outside of home for employment.

Figure 4.9. Source Apart from FPS in the Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

In many parts of the rural areas the private shop keepers charges more than Maximum Retail Price (MRP) in food items and non food items in the name of transport and labour charge for e.g. wai-wai instant noodles Rs 10 MRP is sold at Rs. 12-15. In this case whole sale shop and markets provide commodities in MRP or even at lesser price. There is absence of wholesale shop and Self Help Groups cooperatives.

Major source of buying food items apart from FPS in all the three villages are local shop. Mangshila tops when it comes to the purchase from local shop followed by Lingthem and Singhik due to unavailability of nearby markets and whole sale shop (see Figure 4.11). The former doesn't have to reach or pass through Mangan compare to Lingthem and Singhik the later which is closer to the market. The purchase from Whole sale shop is more in Lingthem, most of the time they purchase the commodities from FPS itself.

Table 4.9 highlights that in times of delay or the quality in PDS ration people preferred to query for information. Whenever there is mismanagement in quality and quantity of rations people of Mangshila queries to FPS whereas in Lingthem one third of people queries to Panchayat as there is no presence of FPS in its village. Similarly, in Singhik people tries to get query from all the sources in order to make their presence and grievances heard.

In feedback process there is mixed responses where the query is heard successful or not. At the same time its peculiar that majority of the people of the villages don't complain this may be due to reasons like they don't have complain as all is functioning well, its free rations so we don't complain otherwise the quota might be cut off and beliefs like its better get something then to have nothing.

Table 4.9. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS in the Villages of North District

Name of Village	Agency					Grievances Redressed				
	FPS	Panchayat	Food Dept.	All	NR	Yes	No	Average	No complain	NR
Mangshila. U	13	5		1	1	6	4	2	6	2

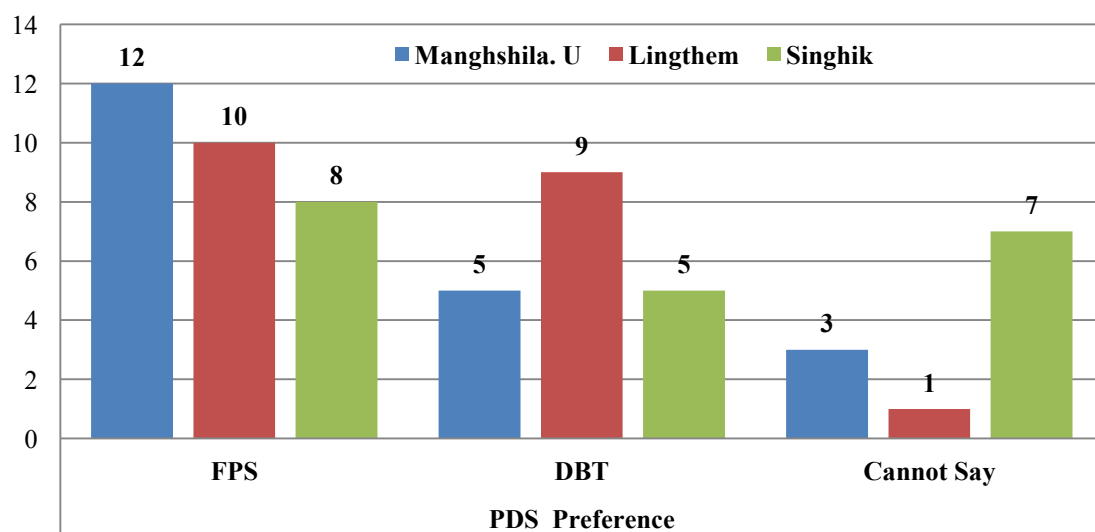
Lingthem	11	6		3		4	3	2	9	2
Singhik	6	5	1	8		4	4	4	8	

Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Thus in order to double check whether FPS is functioning better in their villages PDS preference was asked and majority of the people preferred FPS over Direct Benefit Cash Transfer (DBT) but there are also people who preferred DBT as these were mostly APL groups as they didn't get allocated rice and they preferred to rather get cash over Atta due to its quality and unavailability.

As can be seen from Figure 4.10 that the respondent from Lingthem and Singhik preferred DBT due to presence of bank in Mangan as they have to pass over it. In case of Mangshila preference is FPS, even if they didn't have all four commodities, this was due to travel charge to Mangan and frequent unavailability of bank link in nearby village of Phodong. In Singhik the people didn't get essential PDS items like Atta, Sugar and K.oil even if they complained the FPS redress their complain so they preferred DBT.

Figure 4.10. PDS Preference in the Villages of North District

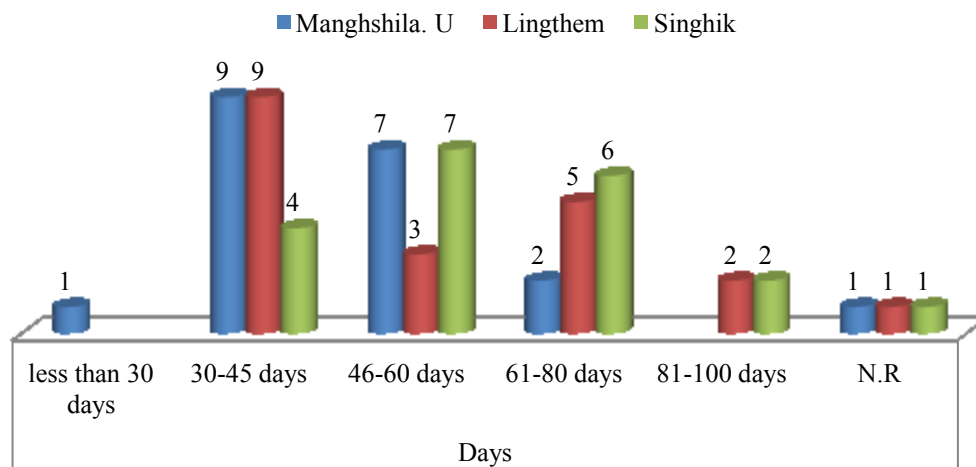


Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

4.5.2. Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the Villages of North District of Sikkim

The 100 days work in the form of making channels, drainage, cardamom plantation etc. For any scheme to run better it requires peoples participation majority of the people of the villages are employed for 30-60 days. People of Singhik has higher number of days employed in compared to other surveyed villages of north Sikkim. Few amounts of people have completed 100days of work (see Figure 4.11).

Fig. 4.11. No. of Days Employed in the Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Table 4.10 highlights important aspect that is to get timely payment of the work one does. In all the surveyed villages of north Sikkim wage payment has been delayed and it ranges from 2-3 months Manghshila to 3-4 months in Singhik and Lingthem and sometimes above five months. Thus with such delay people in their response were very much disappointed with the government. They said they want everybody to involve and work on time but fail to provide the daily wage on time.

Sometimes people fail to get job because they have strain relation with the Panchayat, secondly unaware about the scheme which is mostly a demand driven scheme. They depend on department and Panchayat to provide them with a job rather than demanding for the job by planning among the villagers themselves.

Table 4.10. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay in the Villages of North District

Name of Village	Delay in payment					Payment done regularly in MGNREGA			
	1-2 month	2-3 month	3-4 month	above 5 month	N.R	YES	NO	AVG.	N.R
Mangshila. U	8	6	5	1		2	11	5	2
Lingthem	5	8	6	1		3	12	4	1
Singhik	8	11	1			3	12	3	2

Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Lingthem is the highest went it comes to keeping no records of daily work followed by Mangshila and Singhik as keeping records will not only help to keep track of the number of days worked but also help them to tabulate in times of payment. Few people are self aware and had kept their record in calendar and dairy etc. (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11. Keeping Records of Daily Work in the Villages of North District

Name of Village	Keeping of personal record of daily work			Source of Recording		
	YES	NO	N.R	Dairy noting	Calendar Marking	Other
Mangshila. U	5	13	2	1	2	2
Lingthem	5	15		1	4	
Singhik	5	12	3		3	2

Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Table 4.12 reveals that most of the job cards are provided orally in Mangshila, whereas in Lingthem it was provided by Panchayat and most of the people of Singhik applied through writing application. Involvement of Panchayat and Gram Sabha while distributing job card is significant as most of the people are unaware and by these most of the villagers will come to know about the scheme.

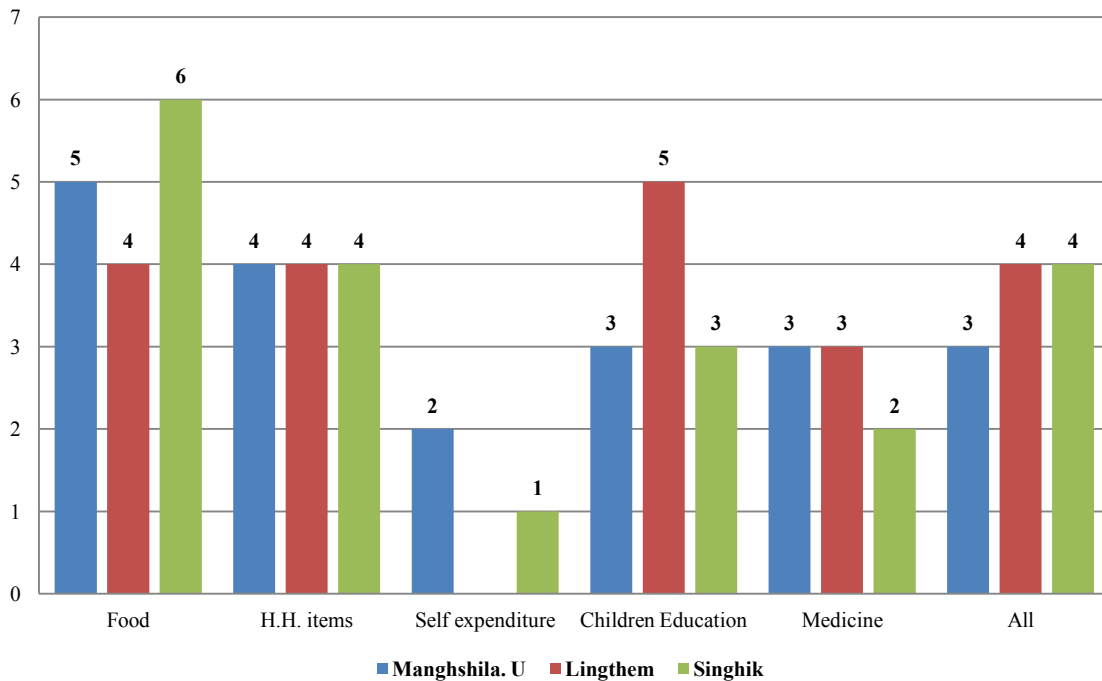
Table 4.12. Issue and Possession of Job Card in the Villages of North District

Name of Village	Method of obtaining job card							Custodian of Job card					
	Plain paper	Orally	Door to Door	Gram Sabah	Panchayat	Supervisor	N.R	Self	Panchayat	Supervisor	GRS	Other	N.R
Manghshila. U	1	13		4	1		1	12	1	5			2
Lingthem	5	2		1	8		4	11	2	5			2
Singhik	8	4		1	6		1	11	4	5			

Source: Field Survey, December, 2014.

Table 4.12 reveals that the majority of the villagers have job cards with themselves. At the same time there are respondent whose job cards are in the custody of supervisor and Panchayat. Some of these job cards were with the authority's custody beyond one month which is against the rule of the scheme.

Figure 4.12. Usage of Wage in the Villages of North District

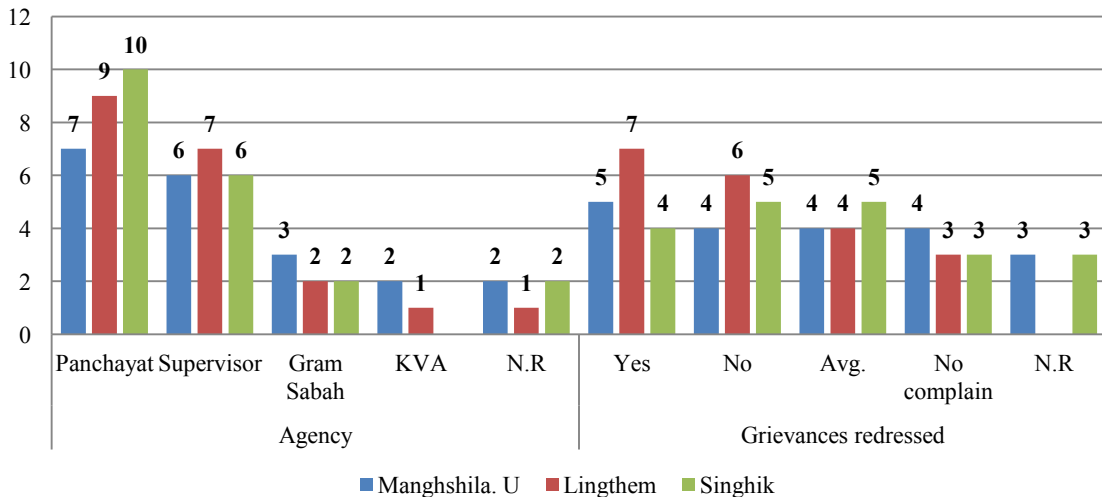


Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Figure 4.12 highlights the significance of the wage helping in buying food items by the people of Singhik and Mangshila. At the same time Lingthem utilizes wage in child education in providing stationeries and paying for tuitions. Buying of household items and medicines in times of sickness through the wage is indeed very much significant for the people of the rural areas.

In all the three villages of north district, if there is any doubt regarding the working of MGNREGA, Panchayat is the important authority for query and grievances followed by Supervisor and Gram Sabah. Less people prefer to go to department to query to the *Khanda Vikas Adhikari* (KVA) this may be due to the accessibility. In Lingthem village there is presence of *Samaj Ghar* or Society Home of the village where every Sunday meeting takes place and in which Panchayat is also a member making it to be easily accessible (see Figure 4.13).

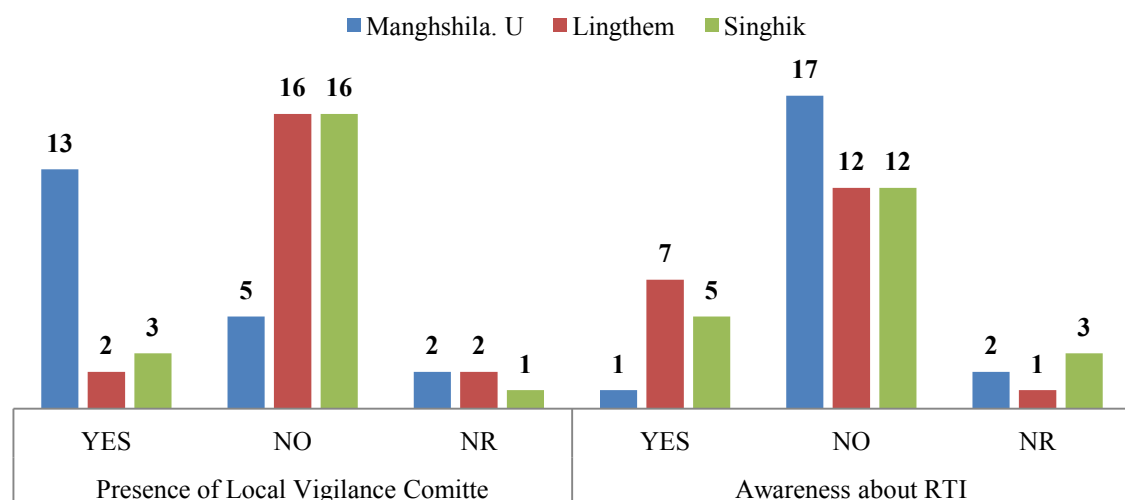
Figure 4.13. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA in the Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

Still, there is presence of unsatisfaction among the people who feel that their grievances are not heard. Some of the people hesitate to complain due to fear of being politically victimized and some due to lack of knowledge and awareness about the working of the while and some of them prefer to remain status quo. At the same time, there is less awareness about RTI (see Figure 4.14).

Figure 4.14. Presence of Advocacy in the Villages of North District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, North Sikkim, 2014.

4.6. Status of PDMRE in Villages of West District of Sikkim

The second district of study is West district which is third most populated district after East and South district. The headquarter of West District is Geyzing which is 104 km (approx.) away from Gangtok. From west district we have selected three villages a) Tikpur, b) Ambotay and c) Chota Samdong. Nearly half of the respondents are female, having an average age of 21-40 years (see Table 4.13). Most of them belong to Schedule Tribe community of Limboo and Tamang following the religion of Hinduism, Buddhism and Yumaism.

Table 4.13. Gender and Age Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of West District

Name		Gender		Age of the Respondents						Total Respondent
District	Village	Male	Female	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	< 60	
West	Tikpur	12	8	2	4	7	3	1	3	20
	Ambotay L	11	9	1	4	5	5	3	2	20
	Chota Samdong	11	9	2	5	6	2	4	1	20
Total (3 villages)		34	26	5	13	18	10	8	6	60

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Respondent apart from ST community are from Most Backward Class (MBC) community which consist of Rai, Manger and Gurung caste and also from Other Backward Class (OBC) belonging from Bahun, Chettri and Sharma caste that are basically Hindus (see Table 4.14).

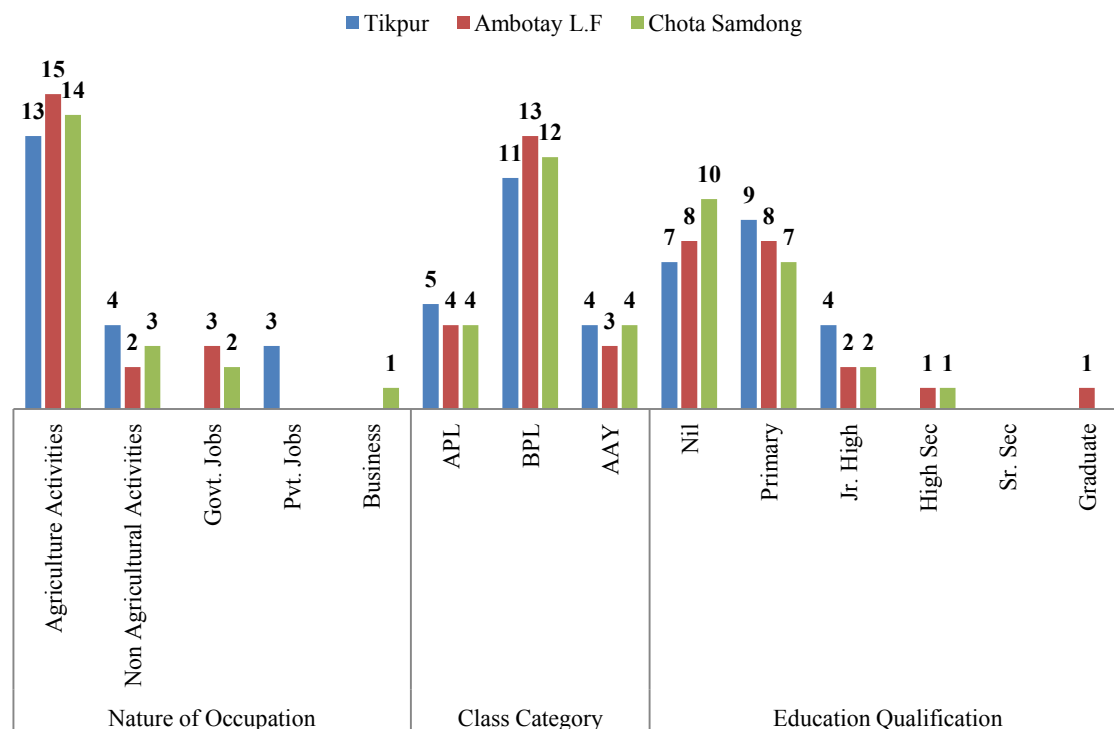
Table 4.14. Community and Religion Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of West District

	Category	Name of Village			
		Tikpur	Ambotay L.F	Chota Samdong	Total
Community	ST	10	11	13	34
	SC	2	2		4
	OBC	3	2	3	8
	MBC	5	5	4	14
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60
Religion	Hindu	11	10	14	35
	Buddhist	9	5	6	20
	Christian		3		3
	Muslim				
	Others		2		2
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.15 highlights that most of the respondents are engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Respondents in areas of Tikpur and Chota Samdong are also employed as carpenters, construction workers, taxi drivers etc. Tikpur has a Junior High School, Ambotay village has a Lower Primary school and Chota Samdong has a High School. There is a presence of a Senior Secondary school within the radius of 3-4 kilometer of these villages.

Figure 4.15. Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents in Surveyed Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

4.6.1. Status of Public Distribution System (PDS) in Villages of West District of Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS in the villages of the West District of Sikkim. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at village level.

The entire three villages of West district have one FPS each which is run by private stake holders. The arrival of PDS rations in the various FPS of villages of west district usually arrives at second and third week. In which the respondent from Tikpur village states that it arrives at 1st week of month. The FPS usually distributes rice at first and other commodities at the end of the month (see Table 4.15).

In Chota Samdong village, people doesn't get PDS rations apart from rice even when it is complained by the Panchayat this may be due to the one or two corrupt person in the village who have misused the village welfare fund and not been punished. It has provided the FPS owner to belief that nothing has happened to them so nothing will happen to us.

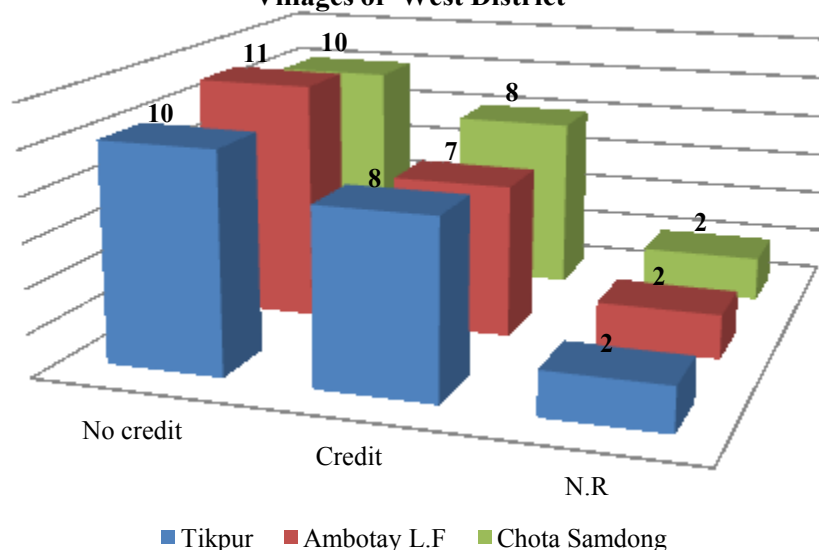
Table 4.15. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of West District

Name of Village	Week					Total Respondent
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	No Response	
Tikpur	7	9	2	1	1	20
Ambotay		13	7			20
Chota Samdong	3	12	4		1	20
Total	10	34	13	1	2	60

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.16 indicates that the credit is high among the villages of Chota Samdong and Tikpur due to untimely arrival of PDS rations making them to depend on money lenders and neighbours to fetch their PDS allocated quotas. At the same time there is no response as they do not usually purchase rations either husband or wives generally bought the rations.

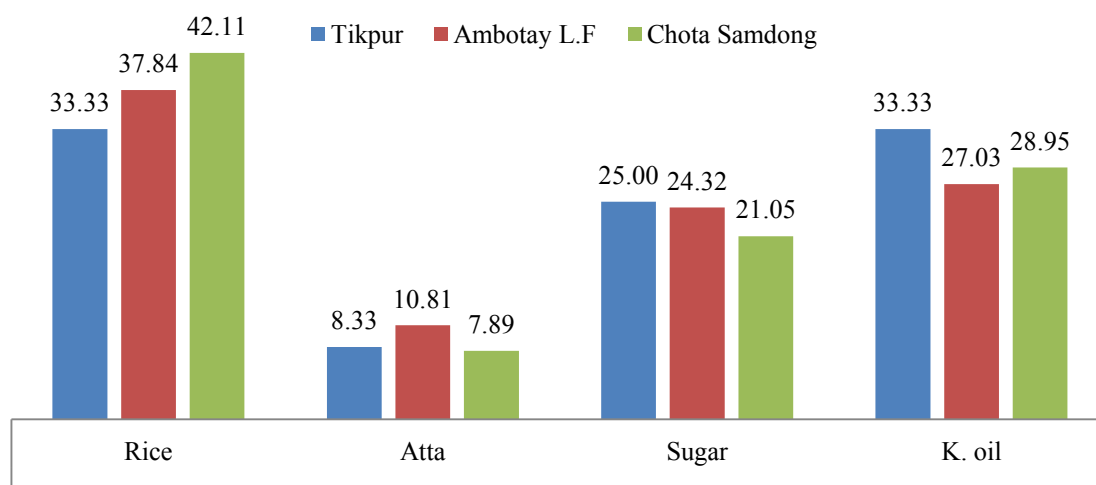
Figure 4.16. Availability of Money while Purchasing PDS Rations in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Rice is purchased high on Chota Samdong followed by the villages of Ambotay and Tikpur this might be due to Chota Samdong village, is unsuitable for paddy cultivation. Thus broom, dal, ginger are usually cultivated in the village alternate to paddy. Tikpur has high demand in both Kerosene oil and Sugar compare to Chota Samdong and Ambotay as majority of household uses wood for cooking.

Figure 4.17. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Atta is less demanded due to preference and unavailability. However people of Ambotay use it as an alternative if rice is out of stock. Sugar is the third most item purchase from rations it is used for tea but most of the time the villager consumes salt tea. Sugar is usually kept for the guest to be given in the form of sweet tea. Untimely arrival of sugar and k.oil is one of the major problems for the PDS beneficiaries (see Figure 4.17).

Table 4.16 clearly reveals that the rice has been lifted off by BPL and AAY respondent of all the three villages of west district especially Ambotay where there is 100 per cent lift off PDS quota. This is also because these village has women self help groups and most of the women actively participates in MGNREGA thus their daily interaction between them and experience of complaining to Panchayat and at Gram Sabha level. There is gap among the BPL category and AAY in lifting PDS rations due to lack of

information about the availability of rations in FPS and unavailability of sugar, atta and k.oil.

Similarly, there is low lifting of rice and atta from APL category of three villages and mostly they purchase k.oil. It is worth noticing that in general there is gap of two or three individuals in lifting PDS rations excluding Ambotay and the unlifted rations are never added in next stock which provides direct benefit to FPS.

Table 4.16. Monthly wise Lifting Details of Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of West District

Month	Commodities	Name of the three Villages								
		Tikpur			Ambotay			Chota Samdong		
		APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY
November	Rice	4(1)	10(1)	4	4	13	3	2(2)	12	4
	Atta	1(4)	7(4)	1(3)	1(3)	5(8)	3	N.A.	2(10)	1(3)
	Sugar	N.A.	7(4)	3(1)	N.A.	13	3	2(2)	4(8)	3(1)
	K. oil	5(1)	11	5(1)	4	13	3	N.A.	1(11)	5(1)
December	Rice	5	11	4	4	13	3	2(2)	12	4
	Atta	N.L.	3(7)	3(2)	3(1)	10(3)	3	N.L.	6(6)	2(2)
	Sugar	N.A.	11	2(2)	N.A.	13	3	1(3)	5(7)	2(2)
	K. oil	5	10(2)	4	4	13	2(1)	N.A.	1(11)	N.A.
January	Rice	3(2)	1(10)	1(3)	N.L.	N.A	N.A	1(3)	8(4)	1(3)
	Atta	N.A.	N.A	1(3)	N.A	N.ARR	N.L	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR
	Sugar	N.A.	2(10)	2(2)	N.L	N.ARR	N.A	1(3)	3(9)	N.ARR
	K. oil	3(2)	N.L	2(2)	N.A	N.ARR	N.L	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR

Note: parenthesis (), denotes number of person who didn't lift their allocated quota. N.A.- Not Available, N.Arr.- Not Arrived and N.L.- Not Lifted. Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

The consumption of essential commodities among the various categories rice has been highest due to its quantity. Among APL of the three villages Ambotay has the highest consumption. Similarly, in BPL category Tikpur has the highest consumption and in AAY category Ambotay and Chota Samdong shares a common spot. In these apart from subsidized PDS rations there has been additional inclusion 5-10 kg of rice for the monthly requirements. It is important here to notice that due to implementation of NFSA 2013, APL and BPL is changed to NPH and PHH respectively for further see Annex X.

Meat items in the form of pork, mutton and chicken are mostly consumed with few amount of beef. Usage of Atta is high among the APL and BPL category of people living in Tikpur compared to the other villages. Dal consumption is high in the village of Chota Samdong. It is also the place where climate favours more for Dal cultivation compared to other food crops.

Table 4.17. Average Monthly Consumption in the Villages of West District

Category	Commodities	Tikpur	Ambotay	Chota Samdong
AAY	Rice	38.8	45.0	45.0
	Dal	2.5	2.5	4.0
	Sugar	1.4	2.3	4.5
	Oil	3.3	4.0	4.5
	Atta	2.0	3.3	2.8
	K.oil	2.8	2.0	3.3
	Meat items	3.5	5.0	5.0
BPL	Rice	57.7	55.5	53.3
	Dal	3.9	2.3	2.9
	Sugar	4.6	2.2	2.4
	Oil	4.3	3.6	4.6
	Atta	3.8	2.6	2.6
	K.oil	3.3	2.0	1.6
	Meat items	5.3	5.5	6.0
APL	Rice	46.0	56.3	46.3
	Dal	2.8	3.3	2.8
	Sugar	3.8	2.8	2.3
	Oil	2.4	4.5	4.5
	Atta	5.0	4.3	2.3
	K.oil	5.5	3.3	4.3
	Meat items	4.4	4.5	5.5

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.18 reveals the Expenditure on rice and meat is higher among all the three villages of the west district followed by cooking oil and dal. The BPL category from Tikpur spends more on rice due to reasons like large number of family in household. Similarly, some of the AAY respondent from Chota Samdong has high expenditure in rice due to low lifting off in FPS and depending in private shops due to unavailability of rations when needed.

Expenditure on dal is higher among the APL category of Chota Samdong, likewise BPL category of Tikpur expends high on dal and AAY category of Ambotay. Altogether there has been expenditure in protein rich diet among all the three villages of west district.

Thus it would also be important to know that minimum monthly expenditure on food items is Rs. 223 for the AAY category of Tikpur and Rs. 263 for the BPL category of Ambotay and Rs, 404 for the APL category of Chota Samdong basically these are

respondents who are living individually, destitute or family members have went to other place for job opportunities.

Table 4.18 Average Monthly Expenditure in the Villages of West district

Category	Commodities	Tikpur	Ambotay	Chota Samdong
AAY	Rice	324.50	289.33	533.25
	Dal	153.33	210.00	180.00
	Sugar	70.00	53.33	53.33
	Oil	450.00	510.00	360.00
	Atta	36.00	50.00	63.50
	K.oil	80.00	50.00	41.67
	Meat items	525.00	750.00	840.00
BPL	Rice	979.73	382.92	583.75
	Dal	320.00	184.62	260.00
	Sugar	191.82	48.85	87.73
	Oil	500.00	424.62	625.83
	Atta	99.71	46.56	38.73
	K.oil	80.45	47.85	72.58
	Meat items	649.09	755.00	758.18
APL	Rice	1015.40	847.50	981.50
	Dal	240.00	260.00	280.00
	Sugar	166.00	82.50	77.50
	Oil	288.00	532.50	570.00
	Atta	110.00	82.50	52.67
	K.oil	142.50	77.50	66.67
	Meat items	660.00	675.00	862.50

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.18 reveals that the closeness of market plays an important role for the choices of the people. In the surveyed area Ambotay has the highest people going to market to buy food items as it has access to two nearby markets which are within 3-4 km, these are Daramdin and Sombaria. They bought food items at MRP rate, similarly Tikpur has access to nearby market of Sombaria which is within the radius of 5 km. making less to depend on local shop.

However it's totally different when it comes to Chota Samdong it doesn't have nearby markets it has to either go to Jorthang, Soreng and Namchi to fetch rations making them to depend mostly on local shop where MRP rate is undermined.

When it comes to buying from wholesale shop few respondents of Chota Samdong and Tikpur are ahead of Ambotay. These are mostly the APL category

respondents who visit market once a month market making them to directly go to the whole sale shop to buy monthly rations at a lot.

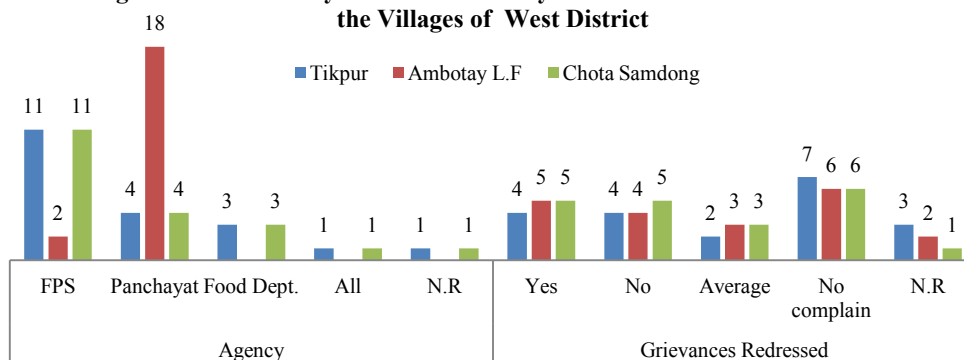
Figure 4.18. Source Apart from FPS in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

When it comes to putting grievances the people of Ambotay consults to Panchayat and most of the time there grievances are heard. As they believe that Panchayat is the most effective person in solving problem in quality and quantity PDS. Whereas people of Tikpur and Chota Samdong first preference is FPS and followed by Panchayat however the redressal is low and less satisfied making it complain less (see Figure. 4.19).

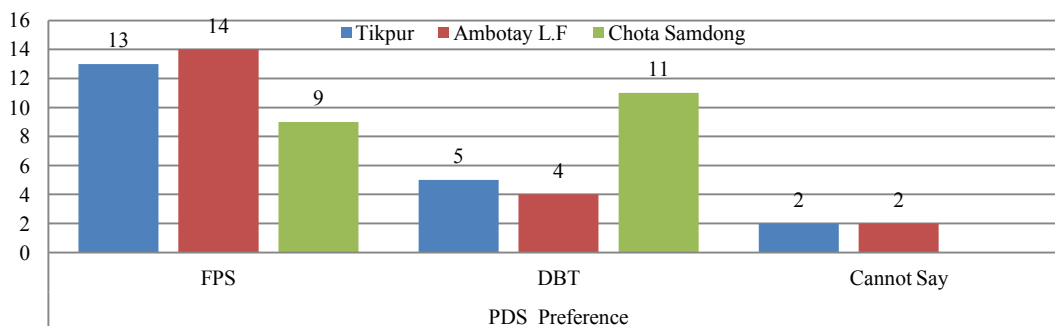
Figure 4.19. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Majority of the people prefers to get PDS rations from FPS in Ambotay and Tikpur village where most of PDS commodities though untimely arrived but still being delivered. Whereas in Chota Samdong most respondent prefer to get DBT due to improper allocation of items and remaining have chosen the FPS as they don't want to take extra burden by wasting their time and money.

Figure 4.20. PDS Preference in the Villages of West District

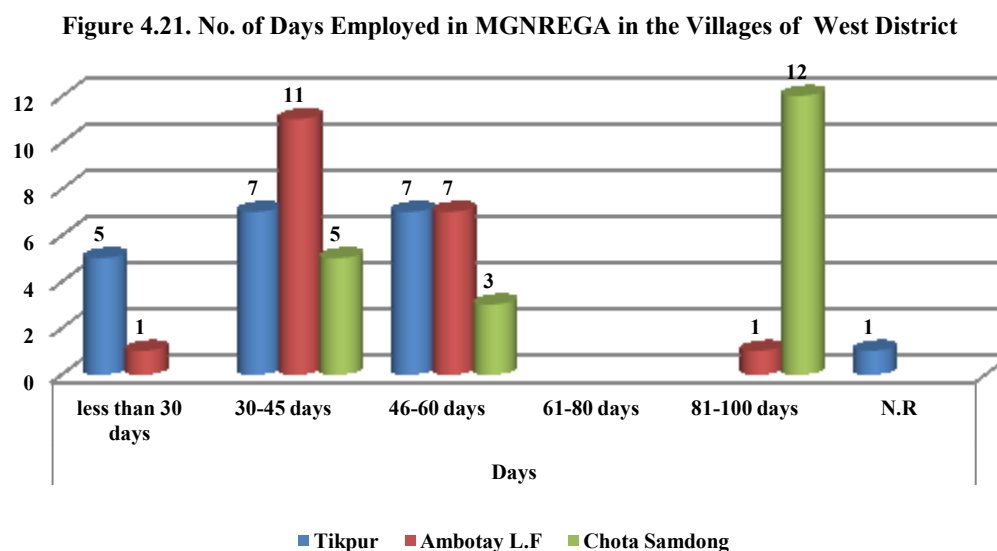


Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

4.6.2 Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Villages of West District of Sikkim

The work such as building channel, drainage, construction of connectivity path, CMRHM, leveling of school ground where the works which were going under the MGNREGA. Majority of the workers were women in the site. Chota Samdong has the

highest number of days employed in followed by Ambotay. In Tikpur most of the people worked for 40 to 50 days (see Figure 4.21.).



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

When asked about the unemployment in MGNREGA the respondent said unavailability of work and some stated that they were unable to go to work as nobody was there to look after their house and field.

Table 4.19. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay in the Villages of West District

Name of Village	Delay in payment					Payment done regularly in MGNREGA			
	1-2 month	2-3 month	3-4 month	above 5 month	N.R	YES	NO	AVG.	N.R
Tikpur	5	10	2	3		4	11	4	1
Ambotay L.F	2	13	2	2	1	3	13	2	2
Chota Samdong	8	8	2	1	1	4	13	2	1

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.19 shows that delay in wage payment is highest among the village of Ambotay and Chota Samdong followed by Tikpur. For wage to be transferred to bank accounts on average it takes 2-3 months and especially in context of Tikpur most of the workers who worked on previous financial were not able to get their wages which range from 6-8 months.

Table 4.20. Keeping Records of Daily work in the Villages of West District

Name of Village	Keeping of personal record of daily work			Source of Recording		
	YES	NO	N.R	Dairy noting	Calendar Marking	Other
Tikpur	8	10	2	2	5	1
Ambotay L.F	7	10	3	3	3	1
Chota Samdong	7	9	4	2	4	1

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

Most of the people didn't kept personal record. Nearly half of the respondent of the Tikpur and Chota Samdong villages kept personal record followed by Ambotay. Those who had kept record basically marked in calendars and note books and some of them kept records through their children (see Table 4.20.).

As can be seen from Table 4.21 that Job card was issued through Gram Sabha in Tikpur whereas the people of Chota Samdong wrote a formal application in order to enroll in the central scheme. Job card was also issued by Panchayat in which people demanded job verbally.

Table 4.21. Issue and Possession of Job Card in the Villages of West District

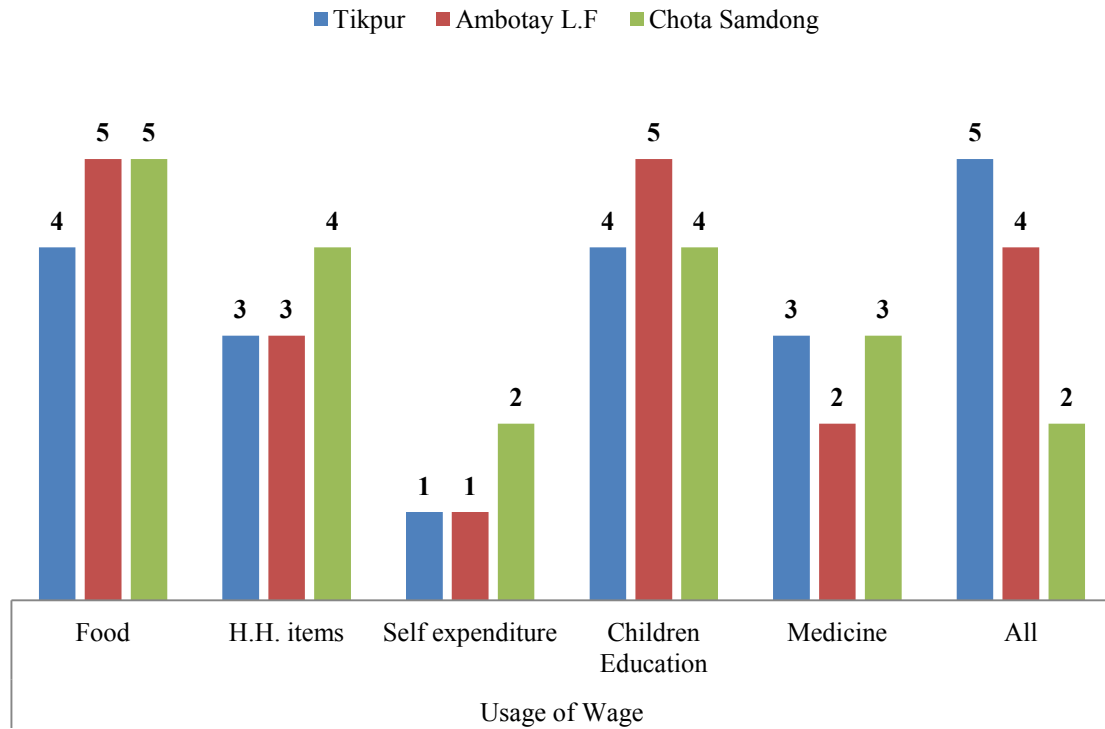
Name of Village	Method of obtaining job card							Custodian of Job card					
	Plain paper	Orally	Door to Door	Gram Sabah	Panchayat	Supervisor	N.R	Self	Panchayat	Supervisor	GRS	Other	N.R
Tikpur	3	4	2	10			1	11	1	4	2	1	1
Ambotay L.F	2	9	1	1	6	1		12	3	2		1	2
Chota Samdong	7	7	1	3	1		1	12	3	3			2

Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

In context of possession of job cards, most job cards are with the possession of the individual itself. But still few job cards are in the hands of different individuals in the form of Panchayat, Gram Rojgar Sewak (GRS), Supervisor etc., which has remained in their possession for almost one month.

Figure 4.22 reveals that most of the wages are utilized in buying food items and for children education. Tikpur utilizes the wage in all the items. Some of the respondents of Tikpur and Chota Samdong stated that delay in wage somewhat helped them to save in the bank which could be used for medical purpose and buying household items.

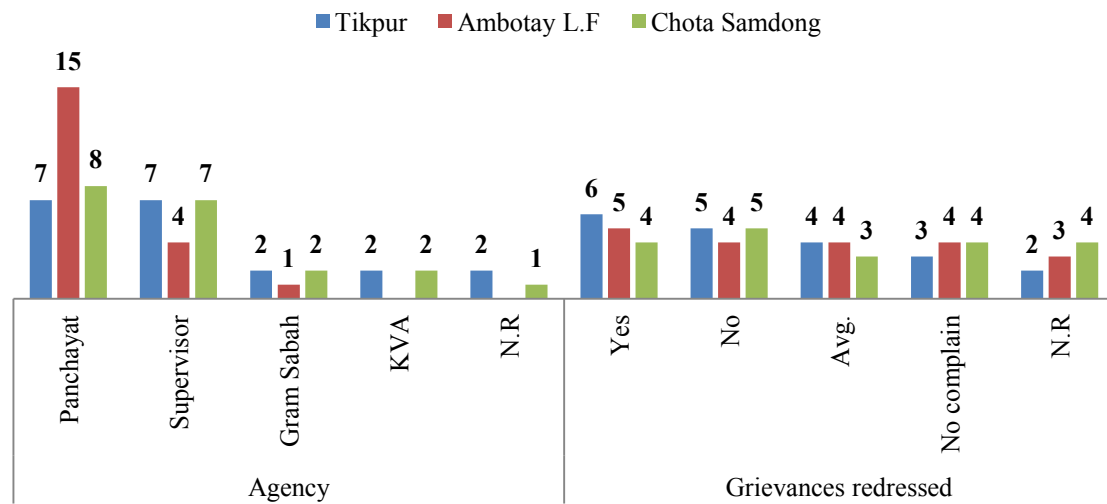
Figure 4.22. Usage of Wage in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

It also shows that in Chota Samdong utilisation on self expenditure as the family members work on a rotation basis so whoever from the family requires money they work on the scheme. And also as banks are far away the person who takes out wage spends 20 per cent of money as self expenditure.

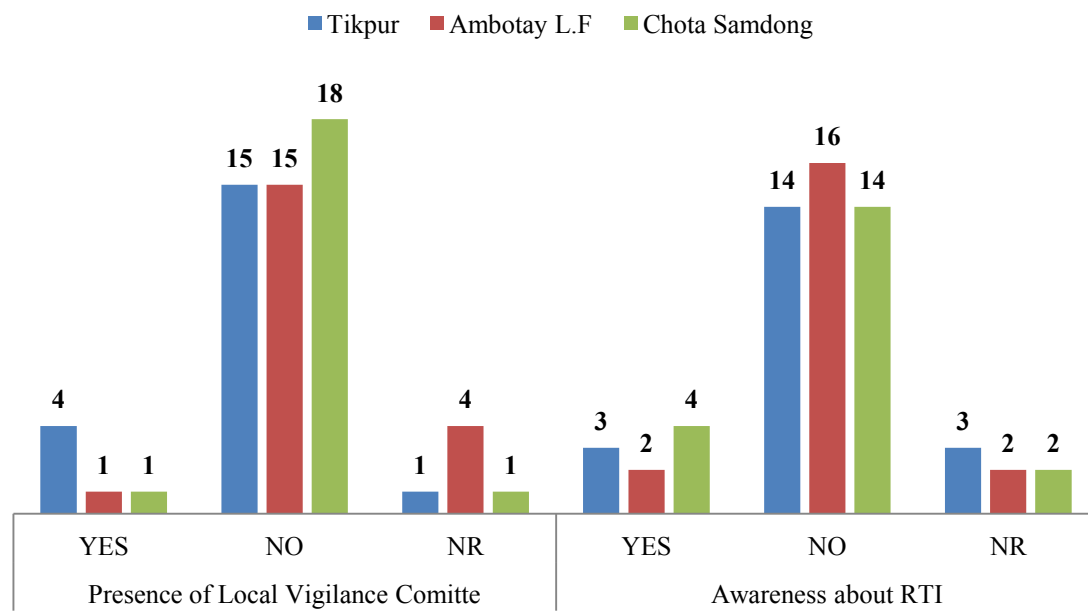
Figure 4.23. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

The complaint to Panchayat is highest in Ambotay followed by Chota Samdong and Tikpur. The people also actively participate in the Gram Sabha making their voices heard. To some extent their queries are been addressed. Some of them even complain to KVA but they said it was fruitless and didn't respond.

Figure 4.24. Presence of Advocacy in the Villages of West District



Source: Field Survey, December-January, West Sikkim, 2014-15.

There is no presence of Local Vigilance Committee and majority of them don't know about the rules and regulation of RTI. Some of them heard it for the first time and some found it to be impractical for the villagers to knock the doors of departments as they have enough work at their farms (see Figure 4.24).

4.7. Status of PDMRE in the Villages of South District of Sikkim

The headquarter of south district is Namchi which is 76.3 km (approx) from the capital Gangtok. The areas studied in south district are the villages of Kabrey, Gagyong and Namphok. The former is in the Namthang constituency and the latter two are from Yang Yang constituency. The people of Gagyong and Namphok majority are living in *Kuth* and *Adhyaa* where they have to provide rent in the form of money (annually) or fifty percent what they produce from the field these are basically paddy, potato, maize etc.

Table 4.22. Gender and Age Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of South District

Name		Gender		Age of the Respondents						Total Respondent
District	Village	Male	Female	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	< 60	
South	Kabrey	12	8	2		5	9	2	2	20
	Gagyong	11	9	2	3	5	3	5	2	20
	Namphok	13	7	1	2	5	3	3	6	20
Total (3 villages)		36	24	5	5	15	15	10	10	60

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

The respondent from Kabrey village where ST community which consisted of Sherpa, Limboo and Tamang Community, In SC it consisted of Bishwakarma community OBC consist of Chettri and Sharma and MBC consisted of Rai, Gurung and Manger. In Gagyong ST community consisted of Tamang, in SC community it was Balmiki and OBC consisted of Chettri, Sharma and Pradhan and MBC were Gurung and Rai. In Namphok most of the respondents belong to Limboo from ST community and in OBC they were Sharma and in MBC it was Rai community (see Table 4.23).

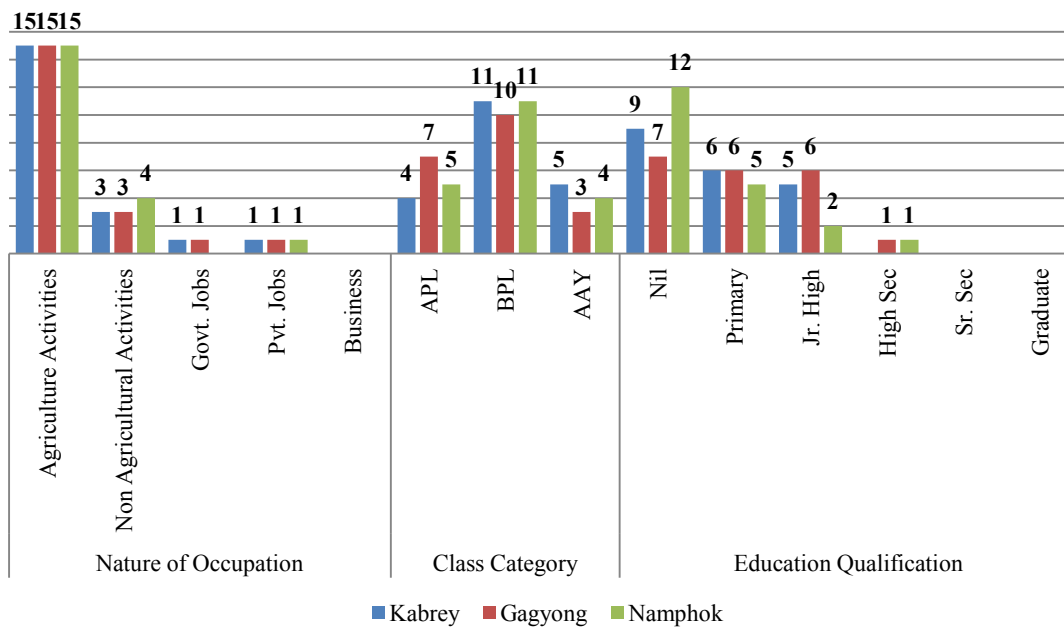
Table 4.23. Community and Religion Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of South District

Category	Name of Village				Total
	ST	Kabrey	Gagyong	Namphok	
Community	ST	9	9	10	28
	SC	2	1		3
	OBC	6	8	4	18
	MBC	3	2	6	11
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60
Religion	Hindu	11	10	10	31
	Buddhist	9	8	6	23
	Christian		2		2
	Muslim				
	Others			4	4
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

The religion has been the cornerstone of the society. The respondent of the study area follows religious faith in the form of Hindu religion followed by Buddhist, Sarvadharm, Yumaism and some of the people followed Christianity. There is virtually non presence of those who belief in atheism.

Figure 4.25. Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents in Surveyed Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.25 clearly reveals that most of the people belong from framing community as they have to till the soil as they are leaving in *Kuth* and *Adhyaa*. Few number of people are engage in activities which are non agriculture like people from Namphok has joined Hydel project as a worker, people from Kabrey are pvt. contractor, carpenters and from Gagyong are private construction labour.

Most of the respondent had no education still Gagyong has better percentage of people having education compared to Kabrey and Gagyong. None of the beneficiaries from the three villages has attended higher studies in the form of Senior secondary and above. However most of the people have enrolled their children in the nearby village school.

4.7.1 Status of Public Distribution System (PDS) in Villages of South District of Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS in the villages of the South District of Sikkim. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at village level.

Table 4.24. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of South District

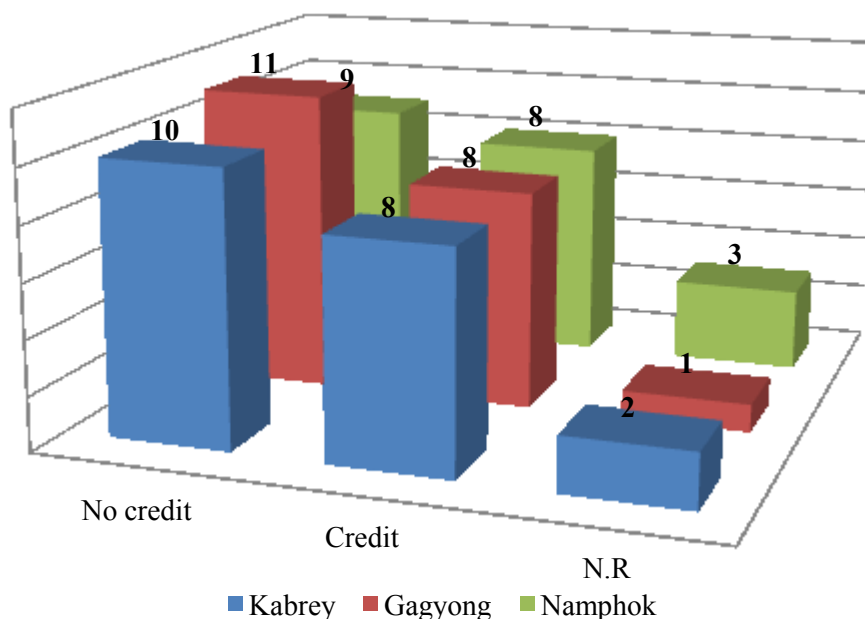
Name of Village	Week					Total Respondents
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	No Response	
Kabrey	2	5	12		1	20
Gagyong	7	10	1	1	1	20
Namphok	5	10	3		2	20
Total 3 Villages:	14	25	16	1	4	60

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

There are total five FPS in the study area of South district. All the five FPS i.e. Kabrey (2), Namphok (1) and Gagyong (2) of the villages is run by private stakeholders. The arrival of PDS rations at FPS is late at third week in Kabrey to second week in Gagyong and Namphok. There are no responses from some of the respondents as they are

unaware of the timing of arrival of rations at FPS. Some of them don't want any strain relation with FPS owners (see Table 4.24).

Figure 4.26. Availability of Money while Purchasing PDS Rations in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

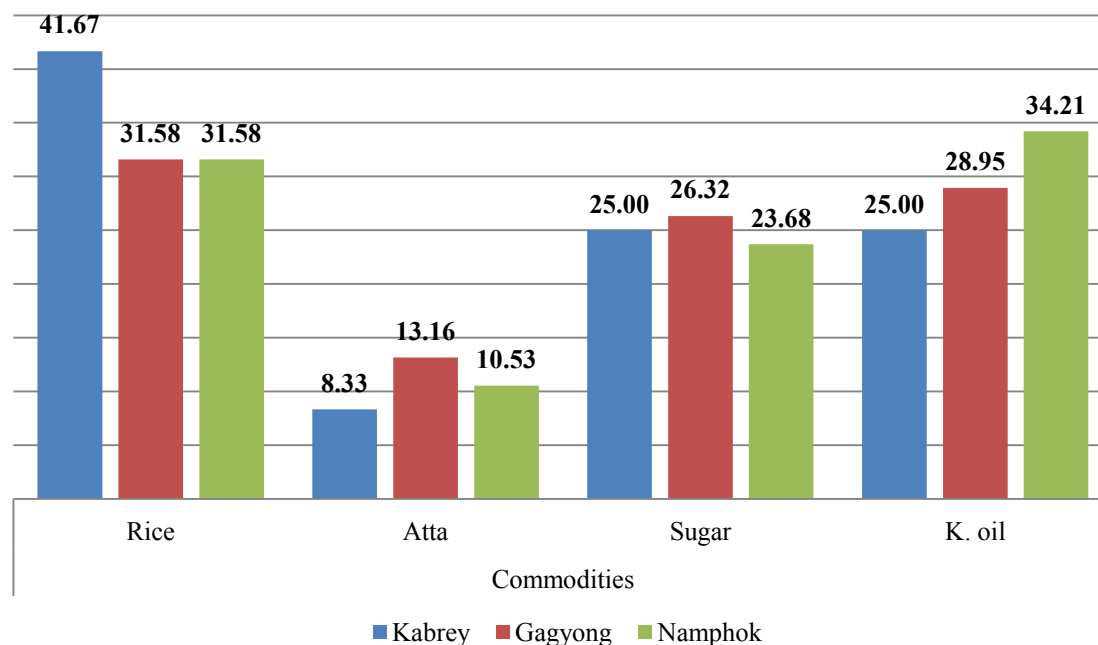
At time of arrival of PDS rations in FPS most of the people have enough money to purchase the ration. Gagyong is at the top for not taking credit followed by the villages Gagyong and Namphok. Similarly, there are respondent who takes credit for availing PDS rations. Some of the FPS also provides credit to the beneficiaries while purchasing rations and some of the respondents borrowed money from the neighbours.

In Kabrey, people save the money for buying subsidies rations from FPS. However due to late arrival of rations in FPS the money saved for rations is been utilized to buy from open market. Thus making them to go for private shops sometimes they buy rations from FPS at market rate where it sometimes provides rations in credit (see Figure 4.26).

Figure 4.27 highlights that the Rice is regularly purchased in Kabrey followed by Gagyong and Namphok, Atta though less frequently purchased and consumed it is most often consumed by the people of Gagyong. K.oil demand is high among the people of

Namphok, Gagyong and Kabrey as they utilize not only in cooking food but also for cooking feed for cattle and pig.

Figure 4.27. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.25 indicates that the APL beneficiaries belonging from the Gagyong village lifts the allocated rice quota compared to the other APL of Kabrey and Namphok. Most of the APL doesn't lift PDS atta as they prefer open market atta as the rate of margin is less and has superior quality. It is worth noting that most of the BPL and AAY doesn't lift Sugar and K.oil due to late arrival in FPS and unavailability in FPS.

Table 4.25. Monthly wise Lifting Details of Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of South District

Month	Commodities	Name of the three Villages								
		Kabrey			Gagyong			Namphok		
		APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY
November	Rice	4	11	4(1)	7	10	3	5	11	4
	Atta	N.A	3(8)	N.A	1(6)	9(1)	1(2)	3(2)	8(3)	4
	Sugar	N.A	7(4)	1(4)	N.L	7(4)	3	N.A	11	4
	K. oil	N.A	5(6)	2(3)	5(2)	4(6)	3	4(1)	9(2)	4

December	Rice	3(1)	10(1)	5	7	10	3	5	10(1)	4
	Atta	1(3)	N.A	N.ARR	1(6)	9(1)	1(2)	1(4)	5(6)	N.A
	Sugar	N.A	6(5)	1(4)	N.A	7(3)	3	N.A	11	N.A
	K. oil	2(2)	4(7)	3(2)	5(2)	10	3	5	11	1(3)
January	Rice	3(1)	9(2)	2(3)	7	10	2(1)	5	6(5)	2(2)
	Atta	N.A	N.L	N.A	1(6)	4(6)	3	N.A	2(9)	3(1)
	Sugar	N.A	4(7)	N.L	N.A	6(4)	3	N.L	8(3)	2(2)
	K. oil	2*2	2(9)	1(4)	5(2)	10	3	2(3)	1(10)	N.ARR

Note: parenthesis (), denotes number of person who didn't lift their allocated quota. N.A.- Not Available, N.Arr.- Not Arrived and N.L.- Not Lifted. Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.26 shows that the average monthly consumption of rice is highest among the APL category people of Kabrey with 53 kg followed by Gagyong and Namphok. Similarly, among BPL category consumption is highest with 76.5 kg in Namphok followed by Kabrey and Gagyong. In AAY category consumption of rice is highest with 63 kg followed by Kabrey and Gagyong.

Table 4.26. Average Monthly Consumption in the Villages of South District

Category	Commodities	Kabrey	Gagyong	Namphok
AAY	Rice	48	40	64
	Dal	3	5	2
	Sugar	3	4	3
	Oil	4	5	4
	Atta	2	3	4
	K.oil	4	4	2
	Meat items	4	4	5
BPL	Rice	65	58	76
	Dal	4	3	5
	Sugar	3	3	3
	Oil	4	4	6
	Atta	4	3	5
	K.oil	2	3	3
	Meat items	5	4	8
APL	Rice	53	45	43
	Dal	4	4	3
	Sugar	3	3	2
	Oil	5	4	3
	Atta	2	2	2
	K.oil	3	2	3
	Meat items	4.4	4.5	5.5

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

The importance of subsidies rations is in consuming nutritious food for the people of the study area. Especially in context of protein intake for BPL and AAY beneficiaries

it has helped them to buy meat and dal items. The average monthly intake of meat and dal is high among the BPL beneficiaries of Namphok with 8kg and 4kg followed by Gagyong and Kabrey around 4kg each.

The beneficiaries were able to save money for the items like edible oil and dal *mossorie* and *chana* as these items were one of the essential item. The *chana* dal and soyabean ball was important for respondents who were pure vegetarian for their daily protein diet.

Table 4.27 Average Monthly Expenditure in the Villages of South district

Category	Commodities	Namphok	Kabrey	Gagyong
AAY	Rice	477.75	228	238.33
	Dal	275.00	262.5	280.00
	Sugar	40.00	30	96.67
	Oil	635.00	548	306.67
	Atta	82.33	47.5	53.33
	K.oil	56.25	43	42.67
	Meat items	716.67	700	733.33
BPL	Rice	645.09	497.00	569.00
	Dal	311.50	262.00	302.00
	Sugar	90.00	100	80.00
	Oil	456.50	475.00	402.00
	Atta	51.78	35.00	50.71
	K.oil	52.22	61	43.00
	Meat items	755.00	850.00	752.22
APL	Rice	659.2	987.5	1119.71
	Dal	276	252.5	386.43
	Sugar	90	135	80.00
	Oil	312	515	601.43
	Atta	60	3	64.00
	K.oil	45	3.5	56.14
	Meat items	720	925	1057.14

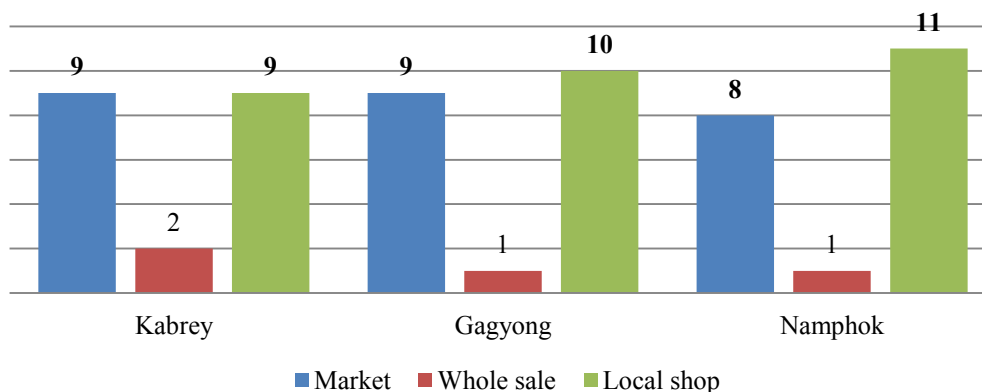
Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

In expenditure part, the APL has expenditure on meat and rice items with over Rs. 1000 which is the highest in the food items, followed by cooking oil and dal around Rs 500. For BPL and AAY category maximum expenditure is in meat items and dal with nearly Rs. 800 in the villages of Kabrey, Gagyong and Namphok (see Table 4.27).

The minimum monthly expenditure among AAY and BPL category is from with Rs. 244 and Rs. 308 in Gagyong village. Similarly, among APL category it is Rs. 302 in the village of Namphok. The above beneficiaries are basically living alone by themselves

as their daughter has been married, went to distant villages, some don't have children and those whose wife has passed away.

Figure 4.28. Source Apart from FPS in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.28 reveals that the local shop is the major source of buying rations for all the surveyed villages of south Sikkim. In which Namphok village depends highest in local shop followed by villages of Gagyong and Kabrey and most of the time local shop itself is FPS. The strict adherence to maximum retail price is not followed as they include transport and labour charge in these villages.

Closest market for the surveyed village of Kabrey is Namthang market. Similarly, for the villages of Gagyong and Namphok, it was Yangyang market. Less amount of people buy from whole sale shop as these areas lacks whole sale shop or shop which provides items at lower/discount rate.

Table 4.28. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS in the Villages of South District

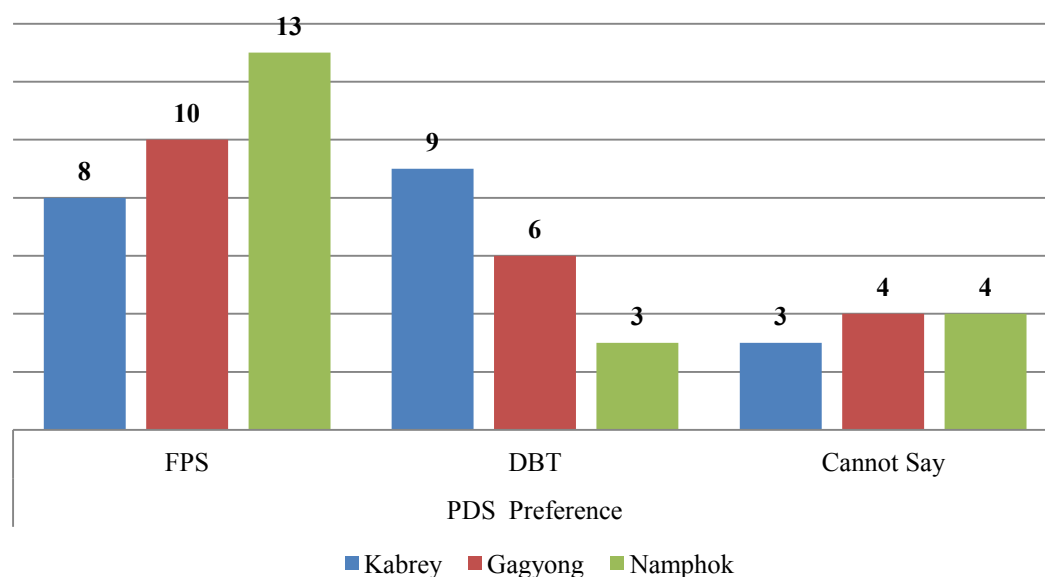
Name of Village	Agency					Grievances Redressed				
	FPS	Panchayat	Food Dept.	All	N.R	Yes	No	Average	No complain	N.R
Kabrey	7	5	3	4	1	4	6	2	5	3
Gagyong	8	3	4	5		5	2		9	4
Namphok	11	4	2	3		5	4	2	6	3

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Most of the people prefer to talk to FPS if rations quality and quantity is compromised. Inquiry with the FPS is highest among the respondent from the village of Namphok followed by Gagyong and Kabrey. The people of Gagyong also queries with the food dept. as the village is near to Yangyang making them accessible to food dept. and food godown compared to the villages of Namphok and Kabrey (see Table 4.28).

The people of Kabrey especially residing in lower hills were very disappointed with the agency as they were not heard by the respective agencies about the unavailability of rations. Most of the beneficiaries from Gagyong don't complain, had no response as they feared to talk in public and didn't want any trouble with the various agencies.

Figure 4.29. PDS Preference in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

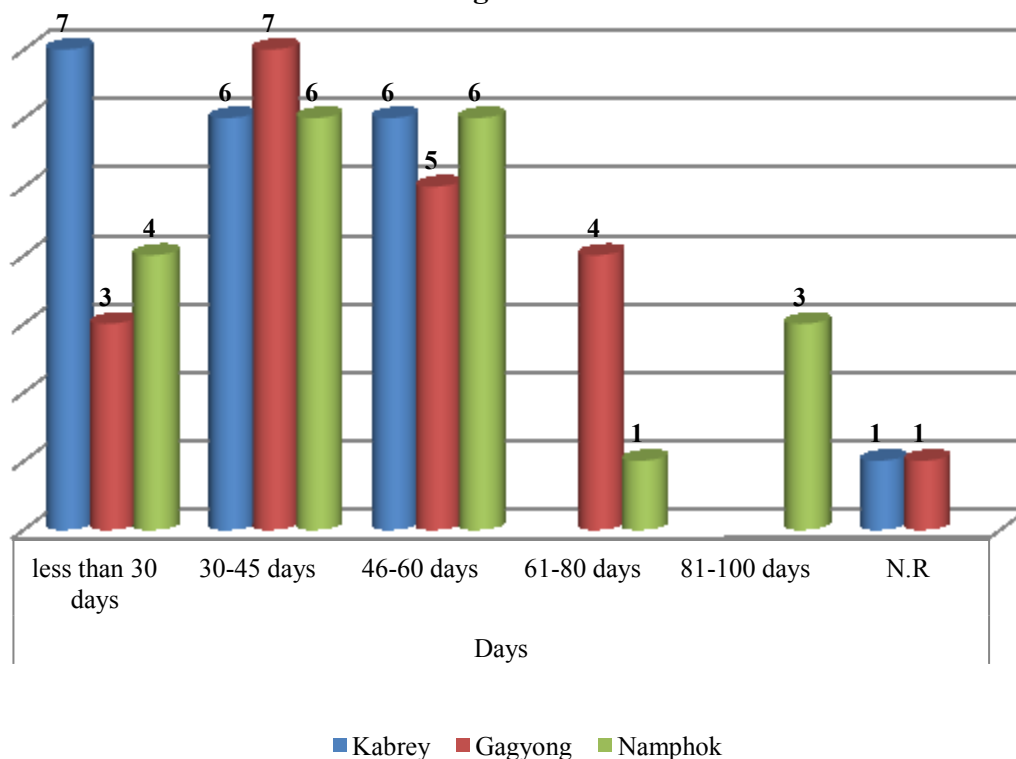
Figure 4.29 reveals that in PDS rations preference majority of people preferred FPS over Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) where the people. Among the three villages Namphok stood first followed by Gagyong who preferred FPS over DBT, as they were getting allocated quota at a subsidies rate. At the same time the respondents from the Kabrey village preferred DBT especially those beneficiaries who were living in the middle and lower Kabrey due to untimely arrival of rations and unavailability of rations. Similar dissatisfaction prevailed in some respondents of the village of Gagyong also.

The people who preferred DBT expressed that by providing DBT it would be save in bank and can on their will can fetch rations from the market according to their needs. At the same time few number of people of Gagyong, Namphok and Kabrey village responded with statement like they are happy in what they are getting and they will be happy in future also what way they will get as they believe that whatever government will do is for their benefit.

4.7.2. Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Villages of South District of Sikkim

Major work done under MGNREGA by the beneficiaries of the south district were connectivity (CC) footpath, plantation, water tank, spring shed, CMRHM etc. Less no of people completed 100 days of work due to unavailability of work. The average days of employment for all three villages stood to be 45 to 50 days (see Figure 4.30).

Figure 4.30. No. of Days Employed in MGNREGA in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

The people of Kabrey worked less than 30 days compared to other villages, at the same time at Gagyong most of them were employed for 40 days. Many of the beneficiaries couldn't estimate the days they were engaged so they didn't responded. This was also due to lack of education and their full faith in GRS and Panchayat.

Table 4.29. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay in the Villages of South District

Name of Village	Delay in payment					Payment done regularly in MGNREGA			
	1-2 month	2-3 month	3-4 month	above 5 month	NR	YES	NO	AVG	N.R
Manghshila. U	4	7	6	2	1	4	11	3	2
Lingthem	7	8	3	2		3	11	4	2
Singhik	1	12	6	1		4	11	4	1

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Delay in wage payment is unanimous among the respondent of the villages of Namphok, Gagyong and Kabrey. The delay in Namphok on average was 3 months, followed by Gagyong and Kabrey which ranged from 1-2 months. The delay in wage payment sometimes stretched to above five months which severely effected in their livelihood security (see Table 4.29).

Table 4.30. Keeping Records of Daily work in the Villages of South District

Name of Village	Keeping of personal record of daily work			Source of Recording		
	YES	NO	NR	Dairy noting	Calendar Marking	Other
Kabrey	8	11	1	4	3	1
Gagyong	7	10	3	1	4	2
Namphok	3	14	3	1	2	

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.30 indicates that the respondent doesn't kept personal record of their daily works as they are dependent on Panchayat, supervisor and GRS for their attendance and daily work records. Some of the respondents who kept their daily work records used various methods like in Kabrey village beneficiaries used note book for recording, whereas in Gagyong calendar was the major tool whereas some noted or marked in their mobile phone. But most of them didn't wish to keep as they belief in supervisor that all thing is updated in job card.

Table 4.31. Issue and Possession of Job card in the Villages of South District

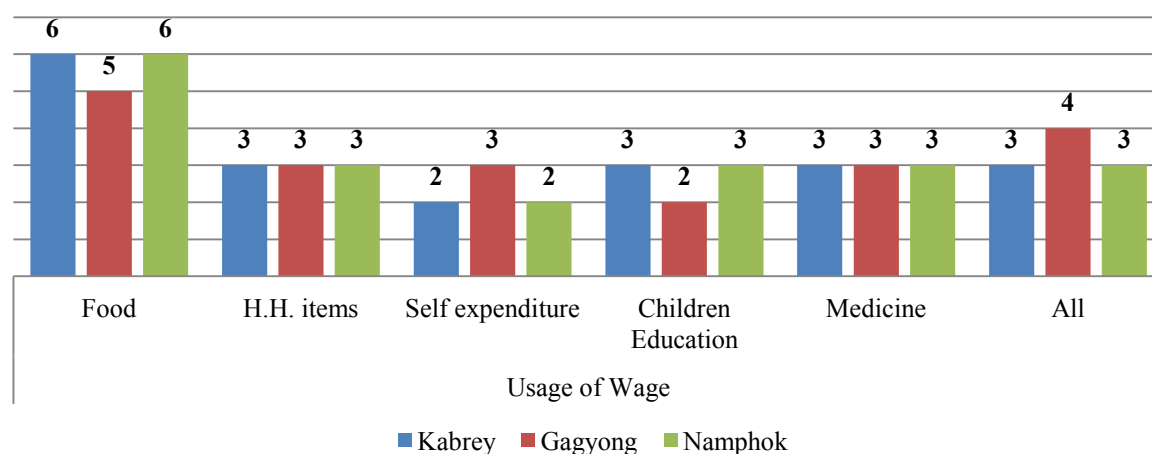
Name of Village	Method of obtaining job card							Custodian of Job card					
	Plain paper	Orally	Door to Door	Gram Sabah	Panchayat	Supervisor	N.R	Self	Panchayat	Supervisor	GRS	Other	N.R
Kabrey	8	3		4	4		1	10	9				1
Gagyong	10	1		6	3			12	3		2		3
Namphok	7	1		4	8			12	3	4		1	

Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Table. 4.31 highlights that the most of the job card in Gagyong was issued after writing application for demanding work followed by Kabrey. In Namphok village most of the job card was distributed by Panchayat. Gram Sabha were also a platform where job card were issued to the people of Gagyong, Namphok and Kabrey village.

Possessions of job card of the workers were with the Panchayat in Kabrey whereas in Namphok is with supervisor and in Gagyong is with GRS. Most of the job cards are taken to the respective agency for update but most of them are with the respective agency for more than a week or two.

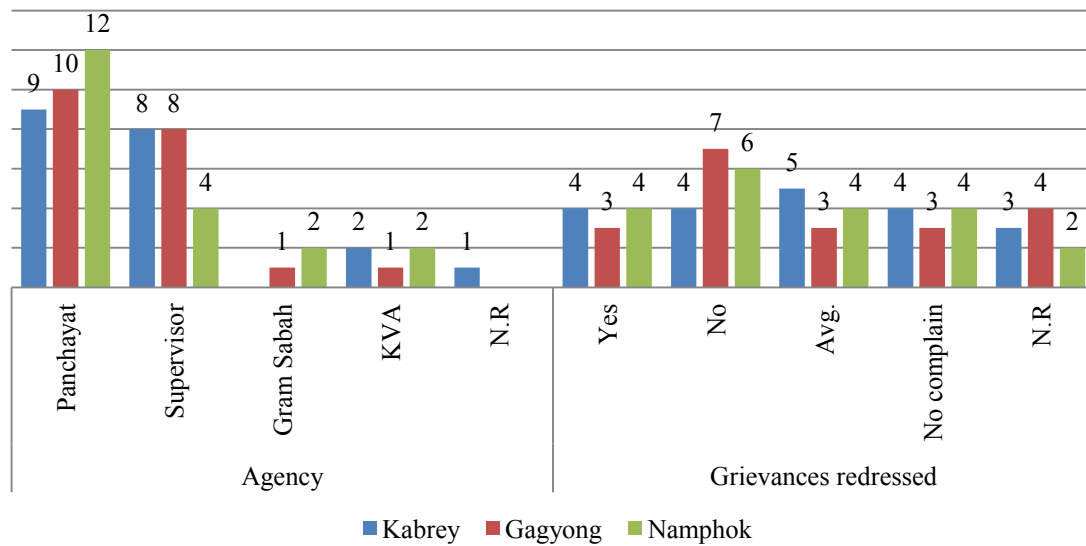
Figure 4.31. Usage of Wage in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Apart from using the wage in buying food items the average share of expenditure on buying household items and medicine are identical among the three villages of south district. There is less amount of saving of the wage in the bank among the beneficiaries from the study area (see Figure 4.31).

Figure 4.32. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA in the Villages of South District

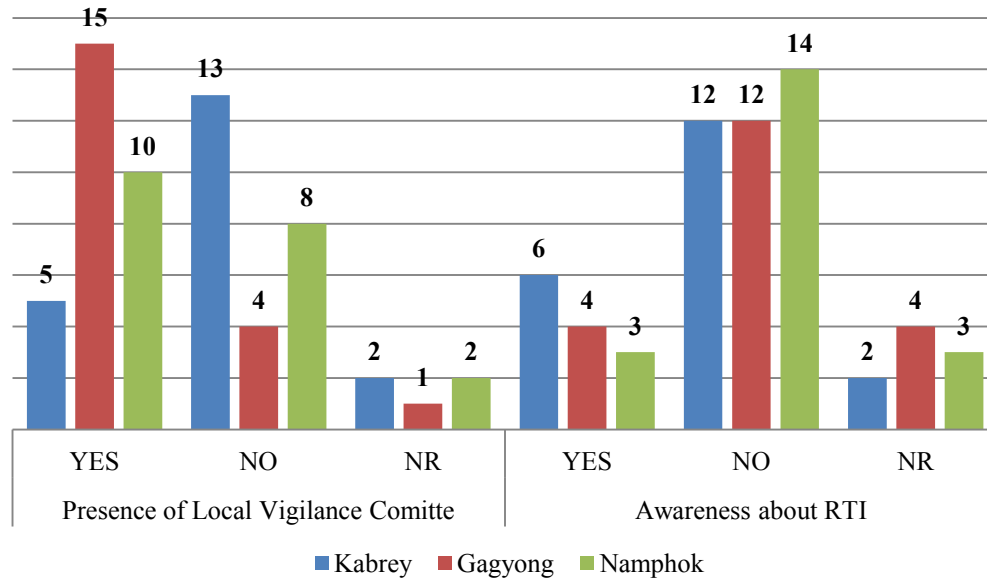


Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.32 reveals that if there is problem with the working of the scheme the villagers preferred to complaint or do query with Panchayat in which Namphok is highest followed by Gagyong and Kabrey. Second preference is supervisor. However in redressal of grievances the agencies are weak as the respective agency fails to provide the adequate solution.

The people of Gagyong are aware of the presence of Vigilance Committee in their village followed by Namphok. Whereas people of Kabrey are unaware about the presence of vigilance committee basically committee don't do their work for what they are made. Thus making them ineffective group in the one hand and also unknown to the villagers in the other.

Figure 4.33. Presence of Advocacy in the Villages of South District



Source: Field Survey, January, South Sikkim, 2015.

Most of the people of the villages of Namphok never heard about RTI followed by Gagyong and Kabrey. Some people from Kabrey working as pvt. contractor has used RTI for knowing the status of the projects and bill. There are few people who have heard about the RTI but were not fully aware about its rules and regulations. And some of them heard that it is used for black mailing corrupt officers whereas some said it is used to know the every rupee used in a work (see Figure 4.33).

Thus it is clear that in general the people of the study area have only heard about the RTI. They have not been fully aware about the Act and its significance, how it can be used positively as a tool for the benefit of the village and the society.

4.8. Status of PDMRE in Villages of East District of Sikkim

The East district geographically though small in size has the largest population composition. It has more towns compared to north, west and south district the major reason is it being the capital of the state. The presence of administrative headquarters, private investors etc. have made the district a place of opportunity and profit. The surveyed villages of East district comprises of Rizey, Pabyuik and Parkha.

Table 4.32. Gender and Age Composition of the Respondent in the Villages of East District

Name		Gender		Age of the Respondents						Total Respondent
District	Village	Male	Female	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	< 60	
East	Rizey	10	10	2	5	4	2	5	2	20
	Pabyuik	12	8	3	3	4	4	5	1	20
	Parkha	13	7	2	3	3	6	4	2	20
Total (3 villages)		35	25	7	11	11	12	14	5	60

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

The effort has been made to bring an equal ratio between the male and female respondents in order to know their perspectives in the working of the scheme. The average age of the respondent is between 40 years to 55 years in which most of them are women (see Table 4.32).

The ST population in Rizey comprises of Lepcha, Tamang, Limboo and Sherpa communities, whereas in Pabyuik it mostly comprises of Lepcha and Bhutia communities whereas in Parkha it was Bhutia community. Similarly, in SC it was Bishwakarma community from all the three villages of east district (see Table 4.33). In OBC it was Chettri, Pradhan, and Sharma communities in Rizey, In Pabyuik and Parkha the respondent belong to Chettri and Sharma community. In MBC it was Gurung in Parkha, Rai in Pabyuik and Rai, Gurung, Thapa in Rizey.

Table 4.33. Community and Religion Composition of the Respondents in the Villages of East District

Category	Name of Village				
		Rizey	Pabyuik	Parkha	Total
Community	ST	11	9	5	25
	SC	3	2		5
	OBC	3	4	3	10
	MBC	3	5	12	20
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60
Religion	Hindu	11	6	10	27
	Buddhist	7	9	5	21
	Christian	2	3	2	7
	Muslim				
	Others		2	3	5
Total Respondents		20	20	20	60

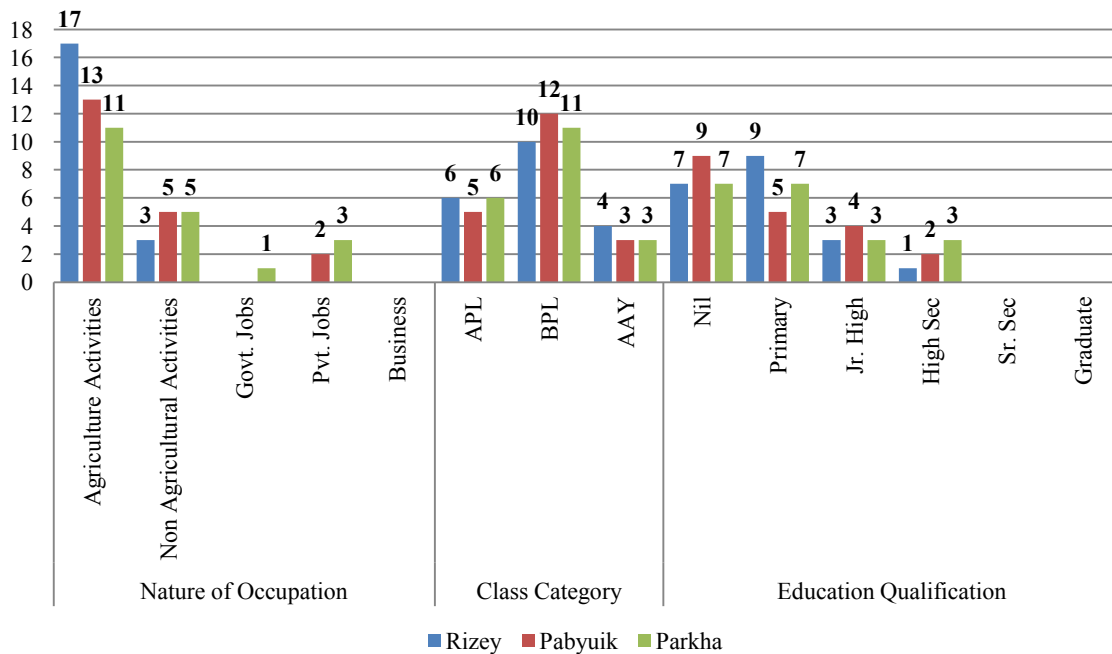
Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.33 reveals that the agriculture were the dominant activities in Rizey as most of the people were living in *Kuth* land of the Lepcha land owner. They were mostly engaged in growing potato, finger millet, maize and paddy. At the same time the people were also engaged in dairy farming providing milk and curd to nearby places of Syari, Deorali and Gangtok.

In Pabyuik apart from Lepcha and Bhutia community, Other communities were living in *Kuth* they provided rent to the land owner at the rate of 1000-1500 annually and looked after the land. Beneficiaries provided small amount of crops, vegetables etc. to the land owner in the form of *koosieley* once a year. The people mostly cultivated potato, cardamom, maize, finger millet, ginger and wheat.

In Parkha most of the lands belonged to the respondent themselves. The places were divided in communities specific area the roadside consisted of mostly Bhutia and Gurung, below road consisted of Gurung community, whereas above the road consisted of OBC committee and extreme left side were occupied by SC community. The people usually cultivated paddy, broom, ginger, pulses, maize, cardamom and potato.

Figure 4.34. Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents in Surveyed Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

All of the areas had school in the form of high secondary only Rizey didn't have because it had high school in nearby village Nandok which is within the radius of 1km. Most of the respondent had less educational qualification and in the higher studies they completed upto classes 8 and 10 (see Figure 4.34).

In total there are five FPS in the surveyed villages of the East district. There are 2 FPS in Rizey, 2 for Pabyuik and 1 Consumer Cooperative Society (CCS) and 1 FPS in Parkha. The ration on average usually arrives on third week followed by second week. In Parkha rations usually arrives in second week of the month. The arrival of PDS rations in the village of Rizey and Pabyuik is at the third week (see Table 4.34). This is may be due to the late off take by the beneficiaries or the unavailability cash from the shop owners to buy PDS items from various agencies.

4.8.1. Status of Public Distribution System (PDS) in the Villages of East District of Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS in the villages of the East District of Sikkim. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at village level.

Table 4.34. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of East District

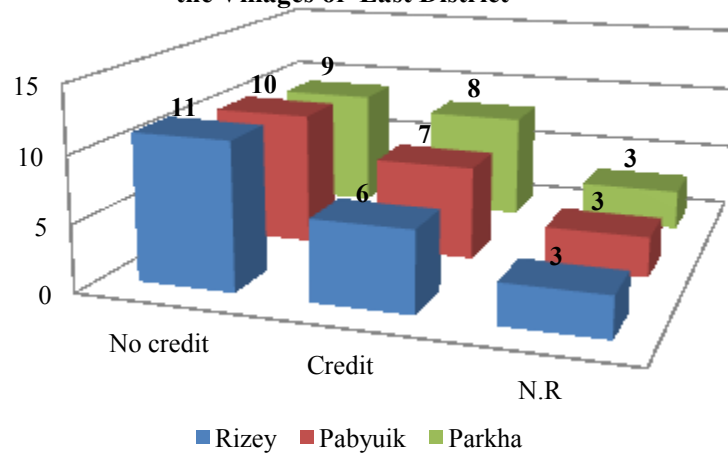
Name of Village	Week					Total Respondent
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	No Response	
Rizey	1	3	12		4	20
Pabyuik		9	10		1	20
Parkha	3	12	4		1	20
Total	4	24	26		6	60

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.35 highlights that in buying PDS items most of the respondent from the village of Rizey and Pabyuik didn't take credit especially for rice. However they had to take credit for commodities like k.oil, sugar which arrived late. Items usually arrived 8-9

days after the arrival of rice. In Parkha village two third of respondent took credit as they did not save for the PDS rations.

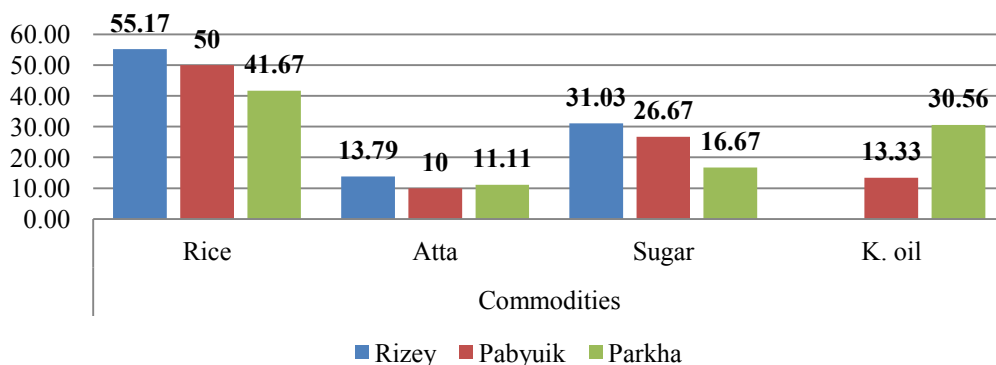
Figure 4.35 .Availability of Money while purchasing PDS Rations in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

The people of the surveyed villages have been highly dependent on PDS Rice. Thus they frequently purchased the item where Rizey village is at the top followed by Pabyuik and Parkha. Sugar has been the next item which is been frequently purchased followed by K.oil. It is worth mentioning here that villages of Rizey haven't received PDS K.oil for many years. When asked they said they don't have quota. However every FPS has been provided with Rice, K.oil, Sugar and Atta to be distributed to the beneficiaries (see Figure 4.36).

Figure 4.36. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.35 highlights the lifting details of respondent from Rizey show that apart from Rice there has been no lift off K.oil and occasional lifting of Sugar and Atta due to unavailability of the commodities. The lifting of APL quota is virtually nonexistent. Only in Parkha there was availability of PDS rations and some of the AAY and BPL had lifted their allocated rations.

It is very much surprising that Pabyuik and Parkha which is closes to capital and is within the distance of 5-10 km. It has not been able to lift off items from the respective agencies and deliver it to the beneficiaries within the 1st week or even 2nd week of the month. At the same time the beneficiaries of Pabyuik neither receives sugar nor Atta, when asked the items are either not arrived or not available as stock has finished.

Table 4.35. Monthly wise Lifting Details of Rations from Fair Price Shop in the Villages of East District

Month	Commodities	Name of the three Villages								
		Rizey			Parkha			Pabyuik		
		APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY	APL	BPL	AAY
November	Rice	3(3)	10	4	4(1)	12	3	3(3)	10(1)	2(1)
	Atta	N.A	5(5)	1(3)	1(4)	4(8)	1(2)	1(5)	1(10)	1(2)
	Sugar	N.A	3(7)	2(2)	N.A	8(4)	2(1)	N.A	N.A	N.A
	K. oil	N.A	N.A	N.A	2(3)	11(1)	2(1)	N.A	N.A	N.A
December	Rice	N.A	9(1)	3(1)	3(2)	11(1)	3	2(4)	10(1)	2(1)
	Atta	2(4)	6(4)	1(3)	N.A	4(8)	N.A	1(5)	1(10)	1(2)
	Sugar	N.A	5(5)	3(1)	N.A	9(3)	1(2)	N.A	N.A	N.A
	K. oil	N.A	N.A	N.A	2(3)	10(2)	2(1)	N.A	N.A	N.A
January	Rice	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.L	6(6)	1(2)	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR
	Atta	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.L	2(10)	N.A	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR
	Sugar	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.L	3(9)	N.A	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR
	K. oil	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.L	3(9)	1(2)	N.ARR	N.ARR	N.ARR

Note: parenthesis (), denotes number of person who didn't lift their allocated quota. N.A.- Not Available, N.ARR.- Not Arrived and N.L.- Not Lifted. Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

The average monthly consumption of Rice is highest among APL in Pabyuik with 66 kg followed by BPL in Rizey with 62 kg. and AAY with 61 kg. On average 2-3 kg of Dal is monthly consumed by the people of all the three villages. In meat items irrespective of the category villages of Rizey and Pabyuik consumes more on meat items. It also shows the support of the PDS ration making the beneficiaries to purchase the protein rich items.

Though Rizey doesn't get K.oil in their FPS quota but irrespective of the category utilizes highest k.oil compared to Pabyuik and Parkha. It could be due to utilisation in

cooking animal feed to goats, pigs, cattle etc. apart from utilisation of K.oil for household (see Table 4.36).

Table 4.36. Average Monthly Consumption in the Villages of East district

Category	Commodities	Rizey	Pabyuik	Parkha
AAY	Rice	61.25	48.33	53.33
	Dal	3.00	3.00	3.67
	Sugar	3.00	2.00	2.67
	Oil	5.00	4.67	4.33
	Atta	3.25	3.00	3.33
	K.oil	3.00	1.67	2.33
	Meat items	6.75	5.33	5.50
BPL	Rice	62.50	57.92	55.45
	Dal	3.60	3.73	3.25
	Sugar	4.50	2.92	3.00
	Oil	5.20	4.42	3.36
	Atta	5.43	3.83	2.57
	K.oil	3.00	2.57	2.40
	Meat items	7.00	6.92	4.10
APL	Rice	55.83	66.00	50.83
	Dal	2.67	3.20	2.50
	Sugar	2.67	3.60	2.17
	Oil	5.00	5.00	4.17
	Atta	2.00	3.20	3.67
	K.oil	2.60	2.33	1.83
	Meat items	5.17	3.20	4.33

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

The average monthly expenditure is highest for the APL category in rice, meat and cooking oil for the village of Pabyuik and Rizey, which averages between Rs. 800-900. In BPL and AAY category expenditure on meat is highest among the beneficiaries of Rizey and Pabyuik which crosses Rs. 1000.

The minimum average monthly expenditure for AAY category is Rs. 304 from Pabyuik, whereas in BPL category is Rs. 322 and APL category is Rs. 396. The latter is the lowest monthly expenditure expended by the APL beneficiary belonging from Parkha. Most of the people are basically living individually and some of the respondents are saving money to provide fee for their children going through diploma courses etc. (see Table 4.37).

Table. 4.37. Average Monthly Expenditure in the Villages of East district

Category	Commodities	Rizey	Pabyuik	Parkha
AAY	Rice	547.50	450.00	408.33
	Dal	260.00	260.00	213.33
	Sugar	160.00	93.33	66.67
	Oil	600.00	373.33	560.00
	Atta	66.67	48.00	82.00
	K.oil	90.00	62.50	36.67
	Meat items	1015.00	900.00	810.00
BPL	Rice	1075.50	858.33	630.00
	Dal	312.00	265.45	278.75
	Sugar	181.60	118.33	85.33
	Oil	732.00	525.00	431.82
	Atta	82.25	101.00	49.57
	K.oil	81.00	66.67	64.70
	Meat items	1058.00	995.45	775.00
APL	Rice	1175.83	1254.00	1178.33
	Dal	266.67	304.00	226.67
	Sugar	85.00	120.00	93.33
	Oil	620.00	520.00	480.00
	Atta	40.67	74.00	90.00
	K.oil	80.00	37.50	53.33
	Meat items	1111.67	835.00	703.33

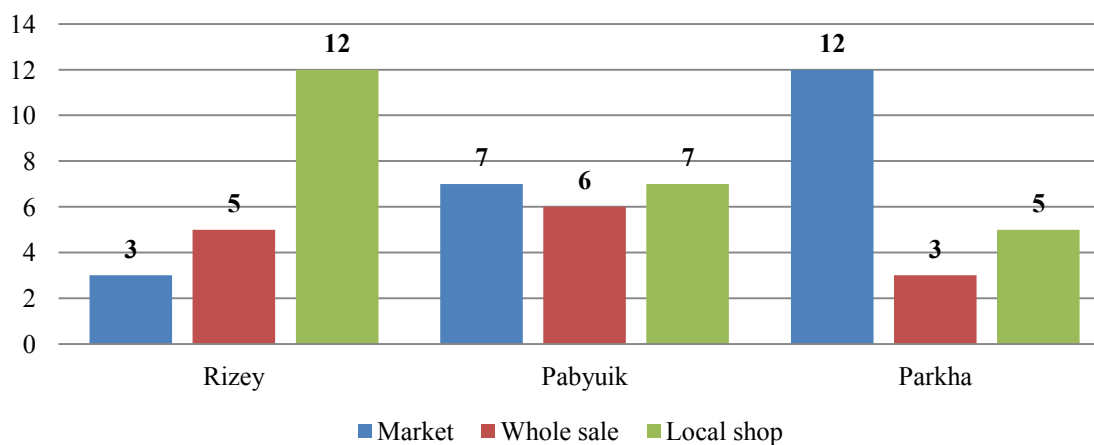
Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.37 indicates that due to geographical constrains and limitations in the form of not having metalled road and whole sale shop have made the beneficiary of Rizey to heavily depend on local shop of the village. Nearest market for Rizey is in the Deorali and Gangtok making them to buy rations from whole sale shop for their monthly necessities.

In Pabyuik due to availability of semi pucca road which is linked with Gangtok town. Most of the beneficiaries take rations from main market. On average they buy goods from the whole sale shop of Lal market and nearby areas.

Due to lack of multiple grocery stores in Parkha most of the people goes to Pakyong which is the closes town and market from the village. At the same time people goes to sell their agriculture product in these areas making easy access to buy food and non food items from shop which sells items in MRP rate.

Figure 4.37. Source Apart from FPS in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Panchayat and FPS are the important body of grievances in which respondent of Rizey, Pabyuik and Parkha depends on and on average they are satisfied with the response. However, most of the time respondent doesn't address their problem making the grievance agency unfunctionable. This was due to lack of information from the agency about the grievances process (see Table 4.38).

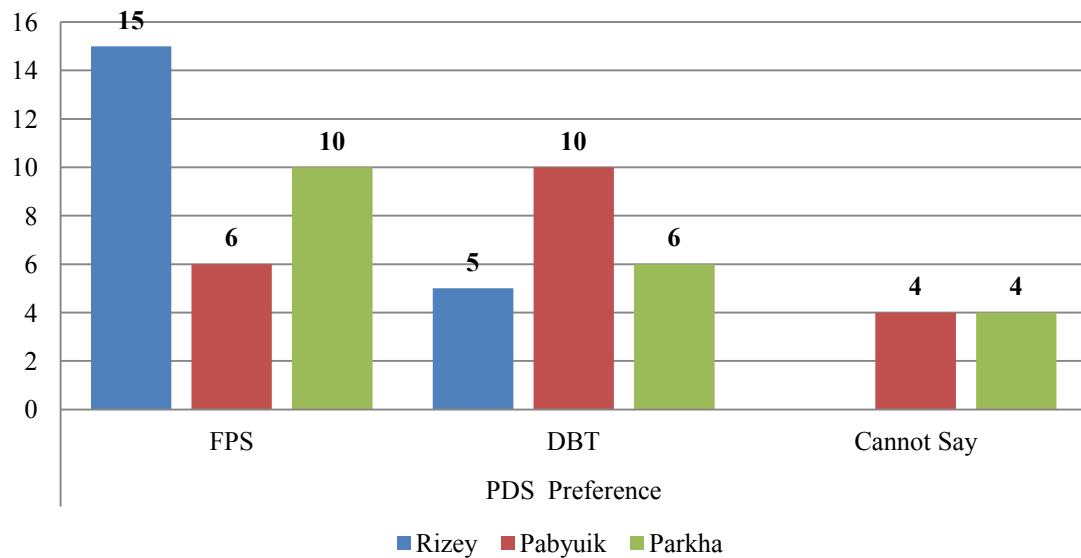
Table 4.38. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS in the Villages of East District

Name of Village	Agency					Grievances Redressed				
	FPS	Panchayat	Food Dept.	All	N.R.	Yes	No	Average	No complain	N.R.
Rizey	8	12				6	4	4	6	
Pabyuik	14	4		2		4	5	3	6	2
Parkha	7	6	1		6	6	4	3	6	1

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.38 shows the preferences of the beneficiaries in PDS that is in the form of ration or in the form of cash. The respondent of Rizey selected FPS due to non presence of bank in the village and distance of bank from the village. At the same time the FPS owner itself is Panchayat and also the land owner of the majority of the beneficiaries.

Figure 4.38. PDS Preference in the Villages of East District



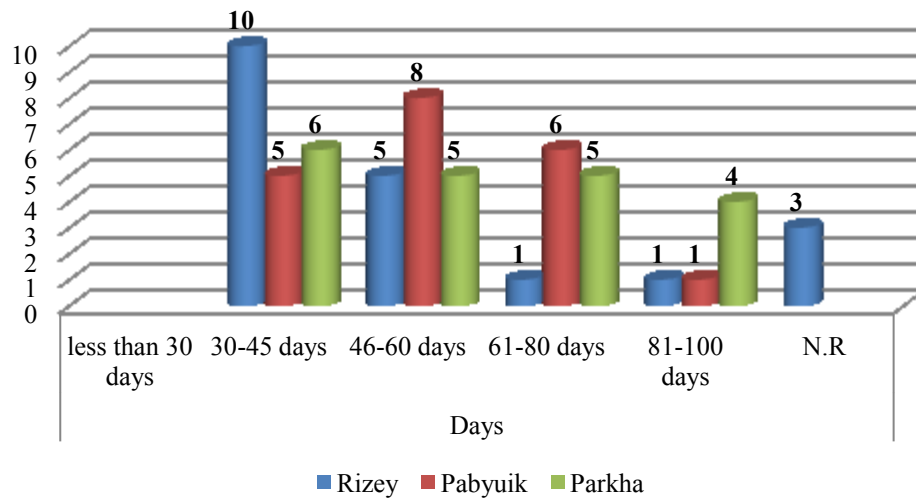
Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

In Pabyuik village the respondent favoured DBT over FPS due to irregularity in availability of PDS rations whereas some didn't know what will be good for them. In Parkha they prefer to get rations direct as they believed it is more convenient options compared to going to banks.

4.8.2. Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Villages of East District of Sikkim

Figure 4.39 reveal the major works done under MGNREGA in the surveyed villages of east district were cardamom plantation, cc footpath, drainage, ground leveling, CMRHM etc. On average the beneficiaries of Parkha village were employed more days compared to the other two villages of Pabyuik and Rizey. The most of the beneficiaries of Rizey and Pabyuik didn't complete their 100 days of work due to stoppage of work due to reasons like unavailability of work and delay due to lack of materials.

Figure 4.39. No. of Days Employed in MGNREGA in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

There was No Response from some of the respondent from the villages of Rizey as they were not aware of the number of days they were employed. As some of the respondents were aged and some of them didn't bother to reply it as they thought it was useless as the wages of previous work was yet to be received. Some of the respondent was ill so they were absent in between and in their behalf their spouses went however their spouses also got ill while doing work. Thus they didn't know the number of days they were employed.

The average delays in wages in three villages of east district were 4-5 months were people of Rizey faced the major brunt followed by Pabyuik and Parkha. One of the chief reasons was the department unable to deliver the wage in phase manner and delay in material which made the worker unemployed (see Table 4.39).

Table 4.39. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay in the Villages of West District

Name of Village	Delay in payment					Payment done regularly in MGNREGA			
	1-2 month	2-3 month	3-4 month	above 5 month	N.R	YES	NO	AVG.	N.R
Rizey	7	10	2	1		3	12	3	2
Pabyuik	9	9	2			3	10	5	2
Parkha	7	10	3			4	10	4	2

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

There has been a communication gap between the beneficiaries and the respective agencies especially in context of wage payment. After completion of work the beneficiaries doesn't get the wage instantly or within the stipulated time frame. The beneficiaries when queries about the wage the agency passes the buck. Thus there should be a clear communication flow about the wage between the beneficiaries and the agencies.

The material is one of the important elements in asset creation and majority of time there has been delay in the delivery of materials like cement and sand. However such problems were minimum when it came to plantation of tree sapling and cash crop plantation like plum, orange and cardamom plantation in the villages Pabyuik and Parkha.

Table 4.40. Keeping Records of Daily Work in the Villages of East District

Name of Village	Keeping of personal record of daily work			Source of Recording		
	YES	NO	N.R	Dairy noting	Calendar Marking	Other
Rizey	6	9	5	2	3	1
Pabyuik	8	9	3	3	4	1
Parkha	6	7	7	3	2	1

Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Table 4.40 shows that the people mostly depended on the job card entry as one of the important source of keeping records thus never bothered to keep record. Some of the beneficiaries of Pabyuik followed by Parkha and Rizey village kept record which was through calendar marking, note book and dairy records. Some of them noted with their family members basically between mother and wife as they were the ones who mostly went for 100 days work.

Respondent from Parkha got their job card through writing an application letter which was mostly written by same person. Some were written by the children of the family who were going to school. In Rizey it was distributed by their Panchayat and

Supervisor whereas in Pabyuik³ job card was distributed through different agencies like Panchayat and Gram Sabha by writing application or verbally.

Table 4.41 reveals the possessions of the job card are with individual itself in the village of Pabyuik and Parkha. However most of the job card of Rizey is with supervisor and Panchayat. Some job cards in Parkha are with supervisor and these job cards are with them beyond 2-3 weeks and sometimes above 1 month which is a matter of concern. As the MGNREGA rule doesn't provide such authorities for the agencies to keep the job card of the workers beyond the stipulated time.

The authority of the villages justify it by saying that they have kept job card for the update or to enter the days these could be easily done when they are in work itself. The significance of job card is like identity cards of the worker it should be brought to the work as it would validate their presence when there is external visit from the central or state government.

Table 4.41. Issue and Possession of Job card in the Villages of East District

Name of Village	Method of obtaining job card							Custodian of Job card					
	Plain paper	Orally	Door to Door	Gram Sabah	Panchayat	Supervisor	N.R	Self	Panchayat	Supervisor	GRS	Other	N.R
Rizey	1				10	6	3	4	6	9			1
Pabyuik	3	6		4	7			11	3	4		1	1
Parkha	14	1			3	2		11		8			1

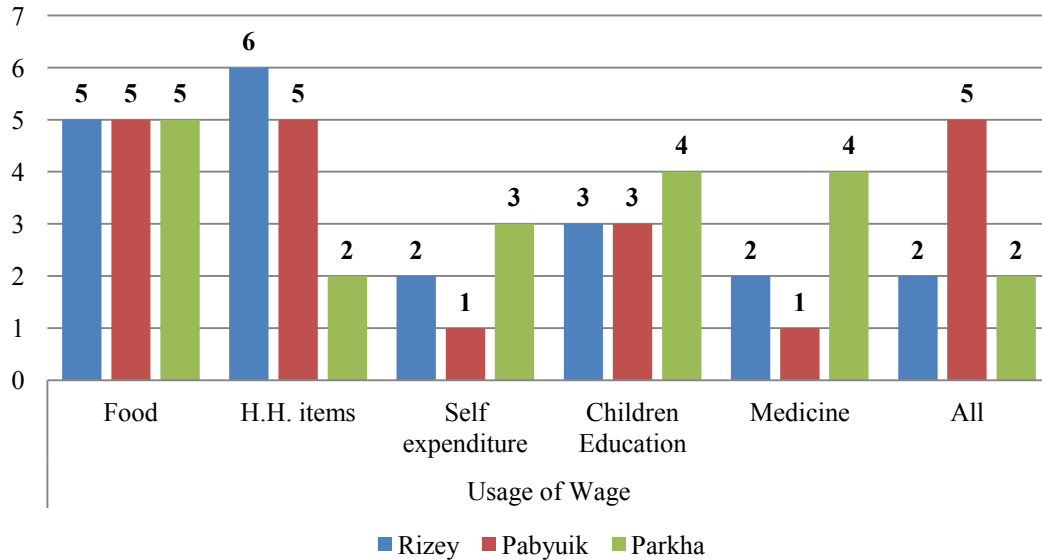
Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

The utilisation of wage is one of the important information which helps to know whether it is aiding in the livelihood security of the rural people. Utilisation in food, household items and children education are the important things in which the wage used by the beneficiaries of Rizey, Pabyuik and Parkha village (see Figure 4.40).

³ Pabyuik has the advantage of having Panchayat office in its village making them to be aware of the Gram Sabha and other village level development activities in Gram Panchayat Unit level.

The beneficiaries of Rizey saves the wage in times of need especially in health care if somebody in family gets sick. Self expenditure is low basically most of them are women, thus expending less on self and more on family especially child.

Fig. 4.40. Usage of Wage in the Villages of East District

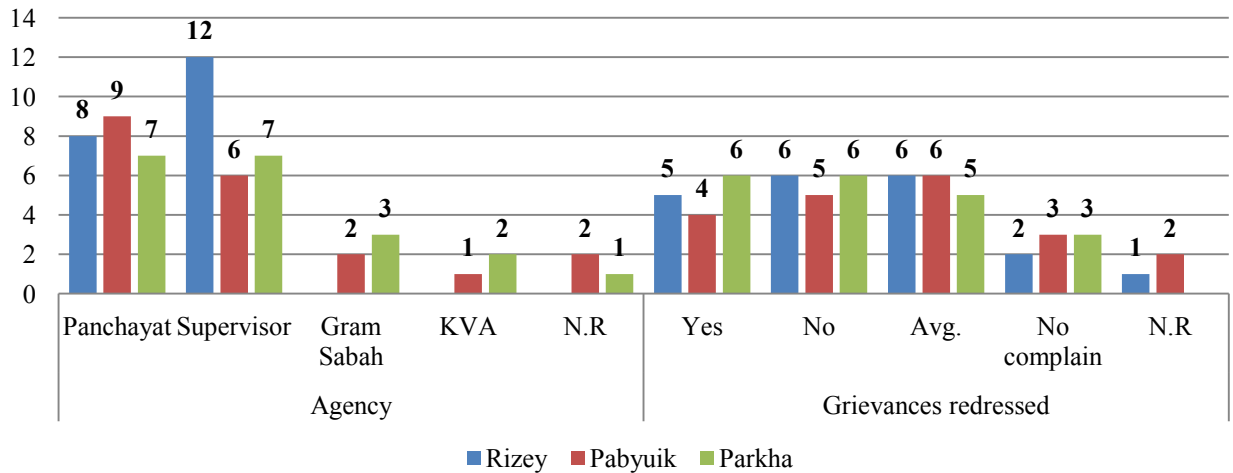


Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

It can be seen from Figure 4.41 that when it comes to inquiry in the form of information or complaint Supervisor is the important source in Rizey and Panchayat in Pabyuik village. If there is any doubt or query about the scheme the beneficiary first approach to Supervisor. If the doubt is not cleared or grievances are not heard they approach to Panchayat.

On grievances redressal system the authorities performance are low in the villages of Rizey and Pabyuik. At the same time on average the grievances redressal by the authorities from Parkha are much more positive compared to Rizey and Pabyuik. Thus the grievances redressal system in the three villages needs a significant improvement in order to make the redressal system more active, vibrant and friendly towards its people.

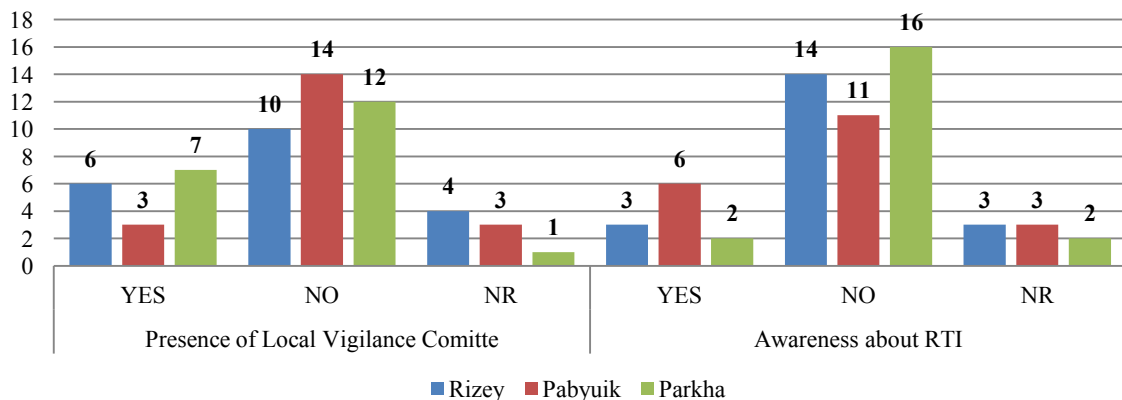
Figure 4.41. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Figure 4.42 highlights that the lack of awareness is the major hurdle for the people residing in the village of Pabyuik, Parkha and Rizey as they didn't know whether the Local Vigilance Committee existed at the village level. However some remained non responsive as they knew that there was presence of LVC but fail to function in practicality. Thus they didn't want to state there is a presence of LVC at local level.

Figure 4.42. Presence of Advocacy in the Villages of East District



Source: Field Survey, January-February, East Sikkim, 2015.

Awareness about RTI is virtually nil among the beneficiaries of the villages of Parkha, Rizey and Pabyuik. Though few people from each village knew about the act but failed to make aware to others as they shared their experience that if they tried to teach

something new or about the act they were looked as conspirator. Thus they got victimized from every sphere apart from getting debarred from the social welfare scheme.

4.9. Status of PDMRE at District Level of Sikkim

It is important to compare and contrast at the district level which would highlight ones district potential over another and also its weakness over the other. In which strong factor of one district could be highlighted and taken it as a model and try to use it in the district which is lacking on it, in which similarity in geography, culture, language, etc., are one of the plus point. It also helps to understand the impacts and challenges in successful working of PDMRE.

Such study would not only help to know the gaps of each district but also to come out with suggestion to fill up the gaps. Thus the present section would extensively deal with the study of PDMRE scheme in four district of Sikkim i.e, North, West, South and East.

4.9.1. Public Distribution System (PDS) at District Level of Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS at the district level. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at district level.

On district wise comparison on average majority of the PDS rations are available at 2nd and 3rd week of the month. In which North district most of the time receives the rations in between 8th to 14th of the month followed by the districts of West and South.

The availability of PDS rations at first week of the month is minimum and lot depends on the distance from the house and FPS. Those houses closes to the shop are aware about the availability of rations making them to lift off their allocated quotas. After lifting off the quota they start to inform about the availability of rations to their neighbours residing far away from the ration shop (see Table 4.42).

Table 4.42. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop at District Level

Name of District	Week					Total Respondent
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	No Response	
North	11	39	8	1	1	60
West	10	34	13	1	2	60

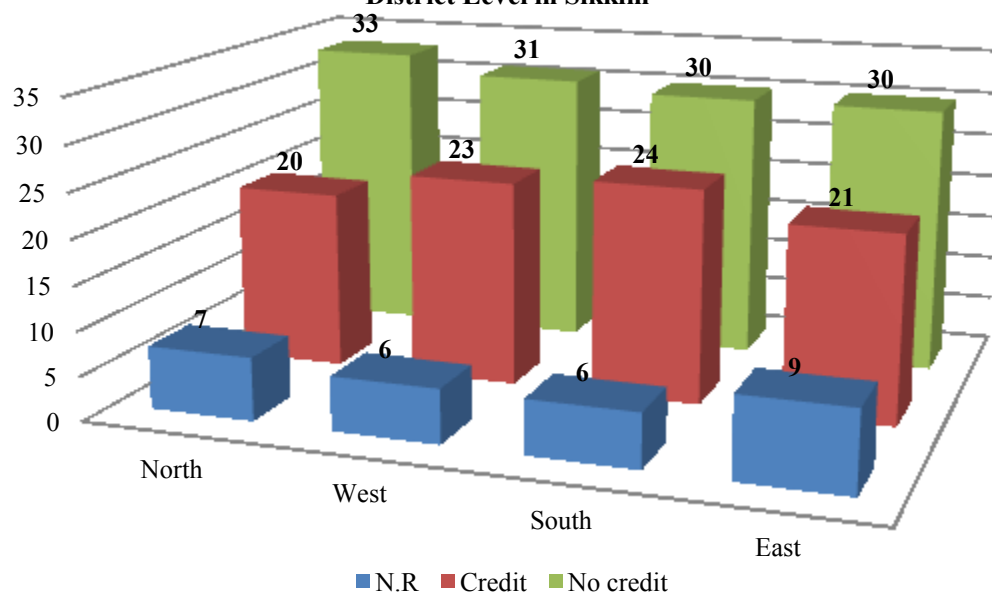
South	14	25	16	1	4	60
East	4	24	26		6	60
Total	39	122	63	3	13	240

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Due to the late arrival of PDS rations most of the people utilises the PDS rations money to buy rations from open market. Making them to take credit from neighbours and extended family or to take credit from the private shops where MRP is high where there is inclusion of additional rate. There is a pressure for taking credit thus leading to debt crisis.

Figure 4.43 reveals that above 20 per cent of the population mostly BPL and AAY category from each district are being in dual credit crisis. This dual credit crisis occurs in two ways first credit is from lifting from private where commodities rate are higher and the second is the FPS rations where they have to manage anyhow to lift off their allocated no matter what time it arrives in FPS or CCS.

Figure 4.43. Availability of Money while Purchasing PDS Rations at District Level in Sikkim



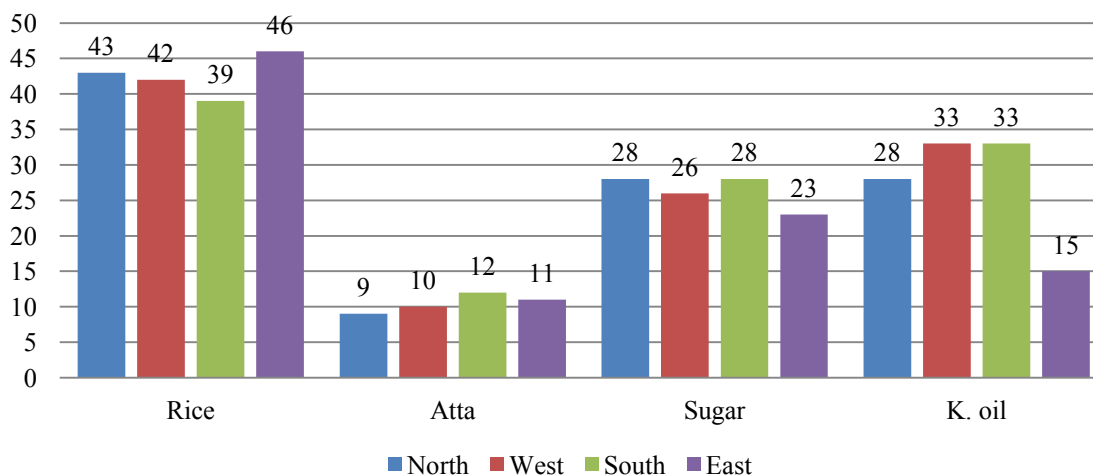
Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In credit crisis South district leads followed by West and East district in which population depend on credit to purchase subsidized rations. At the same time there are population who doesn't take credit for purchasing PDS rations for these there are some

assumption firstly they don't take credit as they save the money for subsidized rations and second is that they don't want to admit they take credit as by being household head affecting the self-esteem which are hard to analyse. The third due to availability of home grown rice and the easy access of whole sale shop.

In third group there are No Response group where they don't want to response to the question of taking credit for these there are three assumption firstly they are not aware as they often don't visit FPS to procure PDS rations second their companion either husband or wife has the control over budget and they are the sole one to purchase rations. Lastly credit which mostly deals with money which is more on personal level so often people don't want to discuss about it.

Fig. 4.44. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased at District Level in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, East Sikkim, 2014-15.

Purchase of PDS rice has been the major items followed by Kerosene oil and Sugar whereas Atta is least purchased. Off take of Rice from FPS is high in East district followed by North, West and South district. The consumption of rice is high among the BPL beneficiaries of South district and the AAY beneficiaries of East district (see Figure 4.44).

There has been equal purchase of K.oil from South and West district followed by North it has been basically due to utilisation in cooking food, cooking cattle feed and

preparation of home brewed alcohol made up of millet, rice, maize and wheat, drying of large cardamom etc., extensively used for “personal” use.

K.oil has once again become the prime source of fuel for the BPL and mostly AAY household. In Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) they faced problem with refillment, in addition to it with linkage to bank and increase in advance money and increase in transport cost has made K.oil the poor man’s best fuel. Thus there is no doubt that the demand of K.oil will further increase in future especially in rural areas belonging from BPL and AAY categories.

Table 4.43 highlights the average monthly consumption on food items gives a clear picture that rice being the staple diet of the state. Especially in context of east district where majority of the population resides and also on other districts has high consumption rate on rice. At the same time consumption of items like wheat, millet, potato, maize etc are high in South, West and North district compared to East district.

Table 4.43. Average monthly Consumption at District Level in Sikkim

Category	Commodities	North	West	South	East
AAY	Rice	52.72	42.92	50.58	54.31
	Dal	3.01	3.00	3.36	3.22
	Sugar	2.27	2.74	3.11	2.56
	Oil	3.98	3.92	4.14	4.67
	Atta	2.89	2.69	2.72	3.19
	K.oil	2.83	2.67	3.25	2.33
	Meat items	5.92	4.50	4.27	5.86
BPL	Rice	55.95	55.53	66.43	58.62
	Dal	3.38	3.04	3.94	3.53
	Sugar	2.62	3.05	2.97	3.47
	Oil	4.38	4.16	4.83	4.33
	Atta	3.54	2.98	4.21	3.94
	K.oil	2.49	2.30	2.57	2.66
	Meat items	7.46	5.62	5.79	6.01
APL	Rice	51.19	49.50	46.79	57.56
	Dal	3.03	2.93	3.45	2.79
	Sugar	2.40	2.96	2.69	2.81
	Oil	3.90	3.80	3.67	4.72
	Atta	3.08	3.86	2.13	2.96
	K.oil	2.74	4.36	2.64	2.26
	Meat items	7.71	4.80	4.62	4.23

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In consumption of meat items north district surpasses the other entire district in the entire three class category. East district has been second in list of consumption of meat items in the entire three categories. It also shows that the subsidized PDS rations affect the weaker category of BPL and AAY beneficiaries helping them to purchase protein items.

Table. 4.44. Average monthly Expenditure at District Level in Sikkim

Category	Commodities	North	West	South	East
AAY	Rice	529.3	382.4	314.7	468.6
	Dal	193.9	181.1	272.5	244.4
	Sugar	58.6	58.9	55.6	106.7
	Oil	463.1	440.0	496.6	511.1
	Atta	47.8	49.8	61.1	65.6
	K.oil	70.2	57.2	47.3	63.1
	Meat items	953.3	705.0	716.7	908.3
BPL	Rice	664.9	648.8	570.4	854.6
	Dal	233.5	254.9	291.8	285.4
	Sugar	89.9	109.5	90.0	128.4
	Oil	519.4	516.8	444.5	562.9
	Atta	71.0	61.7	45.8	77.6
	K.oil	62.9	67.0	52.1	70.8
	Meat items	1052.9	720.8	785.7	942.8
APL	Rice	1127.9	948.1	922.1	1202.7
	Dal	258.1	260.0	305.0	265.8
	Sugar	69.0	108.7	101.7	99.4
	Oil	537.3	463.5	476.1	540.0
	Atta	87.6	81.7	42.3	68.2
	K.oil	100.3	95.6	34.9	56.9
	Meat items	1114.3	732.5	900.7	883.3

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

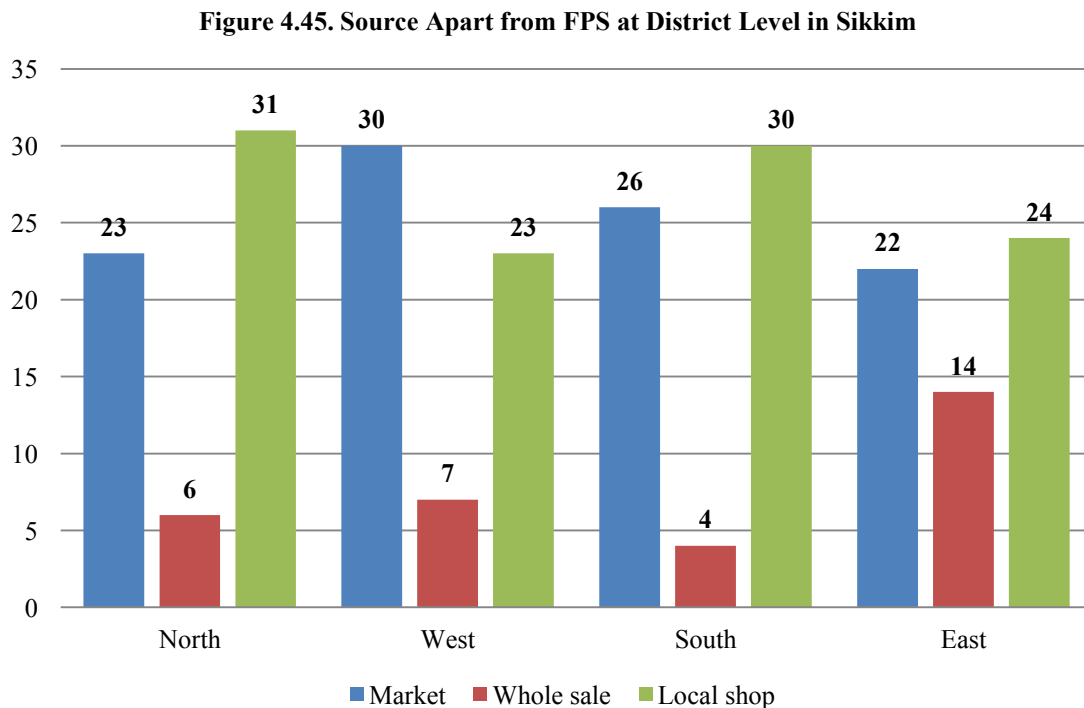
The expenditure is high in meat items for BPL and AAY beneficiaries of the entire four district in which an average people spends nearly Rs. 1000 per month for the meat. The cooking oil is next prominent item in which all the people of three classes spends somewhat equally.

Dal is another important item which is highly consumed by the people of south district with an expenditure of nearly Rs 300. Followed by East district which expends around Rs. 250 in the dal item. Thus the present expenditure not only captures the monthly expenditure of different class category and district but also tries to show the support the PDS rations are providing at the district level (see Table 4.44).

Dependence on local shop is no doubt relevant due to various constraints the village faces which have also been portrayed while analyzing at the village level study. Indeed apart from FPS most of the time beneficiaries at the district level are dependent on local shop and market.

Apart from local shop, market has been the second option for purchasing food and non food items the advantages of purchasing from market is that it has to provide with the MRP which are inclusive of all taxes. Still there is low availability of whole sale shop and grocery store which provides items at discount rate at the district level.

The East district having most of the wholesale shop has made the people to purchase more from whole sale shop when they visit market. Same couldn't be said towards the beneficiaries residing in West, North and South district. In West district most of the people buys from open market due to availability of small market in the form of Sombaria and Daramdin. In North district there is presence of small markets in form of Mangan market. Similarly, in South nearby small markets are Yangyang and Namthang (see Figure 4.45).



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In PDS preference at the district level we see that most of the people from each district have demanded FPS to provide PDS rations over cash. However it worth noting that there is also presence of beneficiaries from each district of North, West, South and East who mostly belonging to APL and BPL category preferred DBT instead of PDS rations coming to FPS.

Table 4.45. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS at District Level in Sikkim

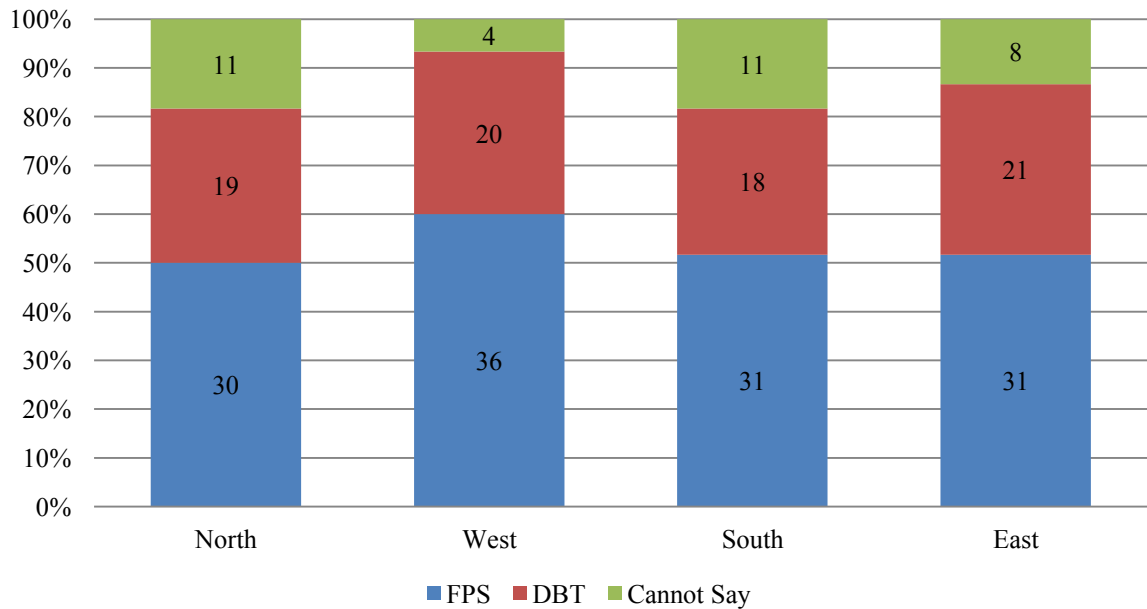
Name of District	Agency					Grievances Redressed				
	FPS	Panchayat	Food Dept.	All	N.R	Yes	No	Average	No complain	N.R
North	30	16	1	12	1	14	11	8	23	4
West	24	26	6	2	2	14	13	8	19	6
South	26	12	9	12	1	14	12	4	20	10
East	29	22	1	2	6	16	13	10	18	3

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.45 indicates that in terms of advocacy and accountability most of the people from the district prefer to visit the nearby agency in the form of FPS, Panchayat and local bodies. Fewer amounts of people address their grievances to the department due to remoteness and long distance from the village. Those people who had visited the department were not satisfied as their grievances were not heard. They were told to meet the respective Panchayat for their grievances and some official state to take action but all in vain.

Most of the time people prefer not to complain or query if there is problem regarding the functioning of PDS. In many cases people feel reluctant to query as they feel it's of no use as their previous grievances are not heard and more importantly they don't want to keep a sour relations with the FPS owner. As the FPS also provide rations in credit to the beneficiaries (see Figure 4.46).

Figure 4.46. PDS Preference at District Level in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

There are some respondent who are in the group “Cannot Say” from each district who are of the opinion like giving opportunity to the FPS over DBT, if PDS rations is delivered on time by the FPS. At the same time there are individuals who believe that government is right and they are there for the welfare of the people. There are people who don’t want to give opinion they want to remain silent and accept whatever is in their way.

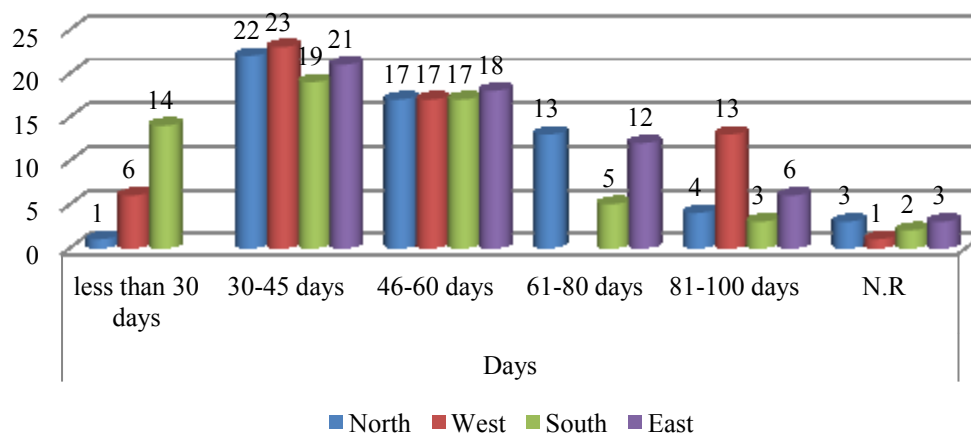
4.9.2. Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) at District Level of Sikkim.

There has been a significant job creation for the unskilled people of the rural areas where average days employed are from 30-60 days. In which West district has been highest followed by North, East and South district. The least number of days worked in the scheme by the beneficiaries was from the South district and highest no of days worked were form the West district (see Figure 4.47).

Most of the respondents were able to respond about the days engaged in the scheme. The works were done under phase wise manner which was divided into 15 days

making them to recall the day they had worked. It had also supported in buying essential food and non food items.

Figure 4.47. No. of Days Employed in MGNREGA at District Level in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.46 reveals that timely wage payment is one of important issue in successful implementation of the scheme. The delay in wages has been due to lack of timely release of wages from the concerned department.

The delay in wage payment varies from 2-4 months. East district has the highest delay in wage payment followed by South, West and North districts. In rare cases the delay in wages sometimes goes above 5months to 8months. The least delay in the payment of wage is for 30 days, there have been no instances where the wages has been delivered on time.

Table 4.46. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay at District Level in Sikkim

Name of District	Delay in payment					Payment done regularly in MGNREGA			
	1-2 month	2-3 month	3-4 month	above 5 month	N.R.	YES	NO	AVG.	N.R.
North	21	25	12	2		8	35	12	5
West	21	25	12	2	0	11	37	8	4
South	12	27	15	5	1	11	33	11	5
East	23	29	7	1		10	32	12	6

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.47 provides that in keeping of personal record of daily work in district level most of the people from North district didn't kept personal record apart from Supervisor and Panchayat. Some of the beneficiaries those who kept records were from west district followed by east and south district. Major reasons for not keeping personal records were they never thought of keeping such records of their daily work. Records were mostly kept through calendar marking.

Majority of the people in the west district kept records through calendar marking followed by other three district, calendar was the easy preference due to availability of calendars which was mostly party calendars provided by the Panchayat and other party supporters and it was also easy way to mark as it was accessible and visible to the all the family.

Dairy noting as a source of keeping personal record was also used by the most people of East district followed by West and South district. This was mostly done by the people belonging from the APL and the BPL category who were unable to write in English and Nepali.

Table 4.47. Keeping Records of Daily work at District Level in Sikkim

Name of District	Keeping of personal record of daily work			Source of Recording		
	YES	NO	N.R	Dairy noting	Calendar Marking	Other
North	15	40	5	2	9	4
West	22	29	9	7	10	3
South	18	35	7	6	9	3
East	20	25	15	8	9	3

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Issuance of job card through application in the form of formal letter has been the highest in North district and lowest in West district. The issuance of job card through Panchayat has been highest for East district and lowest in West district. In South district it is more issued through oral demand of job card. At the same time Gram Sabha and Oral approach in issuance of job card has been mostly in West district (see Table 4.48).

Apart from self possession of job card there has been significant amount of job card which has been in the custodian of authorities like Panchayat, Supervisor and GRS.

The possession of job card in the hands of Supervisor in East district is most followed by North district. Similarly, South district has more number of job cards in custody with Panchayat. Some of the beneficiaries didn't know about the possession of job card as they don't know which authority possessed their job card.

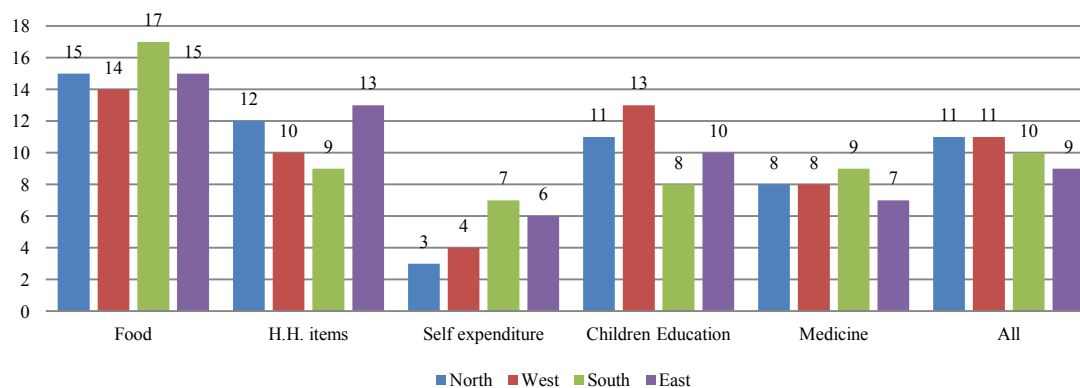
Table 4.48. Issue and Possession of Job card at District Level in Sikkim

Name of District	Method of obtaining job card							Custodian of Job card					
	Plain paper	Orally	Door to Door	Gram Sabah	Panchayat	Supervisor	N.R	Self	Panchayat	Supervisor	GRS	Other	N.R
North	14	19		6	15		6	34	7	15			4
West	12	20	4	14	7	1	2	35	7	9	2	2	5
South	25	5		14	15		1	34	15	4	2	1	4
East	18	7		4	20	8	3	26	9	21		1	3

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.48 reveals that in the utilisation of wage the food has been the major item followed by children education for the rural people. South district has been the highest to expend on Food items followed by North district. Similarly, West district expends highest on children education followed by North district. East utilises most of the wage on buying house hold in durable items. Thus availability of wage after one week of completion work will moreover help in procurement of rations, and its utilisation in various forms, also helping beneficiaries in saving for health and medicines.

Figure 4.48. Usage of Wage at District Level in Sikkim

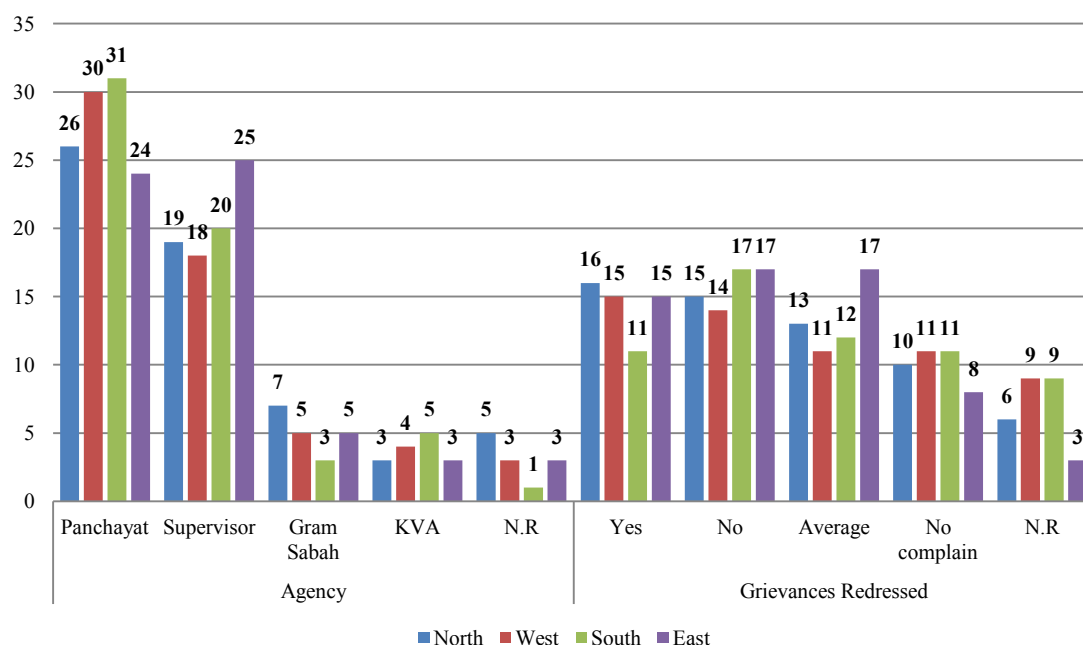


Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

The agency in the form of Panchayat and Supervisor are the most recommended by the people. South district is the highest where people complain or query to the Panchayat followed by West and East district. Likewise complaining or getting information from supervisor is highest in East district followed by South and North district. The respondents believe to inform the supervisor first as they are the ones who are directly related to MGNREGA works.

Few people utilised the forum such as Gram Sabha in order to state their problems or to garner information. Most of the times people through Gram Sabha contacts with KVA and express their grievances. Beneficiaries hesitate to go to the department in search of KVA for addressing their problems.

Figure 4.49. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA at District Level in Sikkim



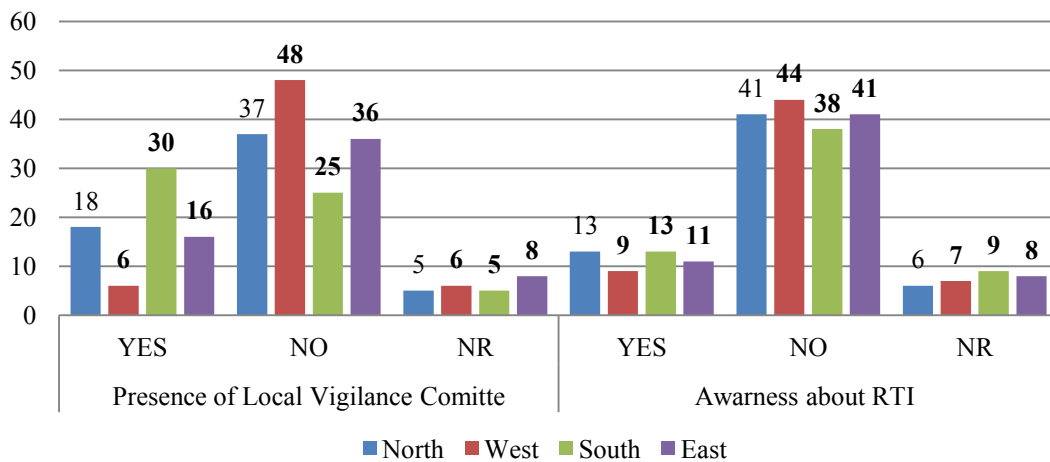
Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Successful redressal of grievances has been low as most of the respondent grievances have been either unheard or not looked properly. North district has the highest number of people who believed that their grievances have been heard followed by East district. East district has the highest no of respondent who believed that their grievances

are heard. On the average basis the issues are heard and there is few times where the problems are overlooked (see Figure 4.49).

There is section of the people from all four districts which believes not to complain. They state that all is working well and don't think some major changes will happen with their complain and most of them are tired of complaining. At the same time some didn't respond at all in the fear of suspicion that it might create strain relations with Panchayat, Supervisor and create negative image in front of the government.

Figure 4.50. Presence of Advocacy at District Level in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.50 show that there are very few people who are aware about the presence of Local Vigilance Committee. Most of the people are not aware of their presence as they don't know whether it functions. West district has the highest number of people who stated there is no presence of local vigilance committee followed by North and East district.

Similarly, most of the people from West district followed by East district are not aware about RTI act. Very few sections of people of North and South district are aware about RTI. Thus in both the cases whether lack of Local Vigilance Committee or awareness about RTI there has been significant no responses which signifies that there has been a major hurdle in transferring information at the grass root level from the respective agency effecting the true meaning of decentralization.

4.10. Status of PDMRE at State Level in Sikkim

The present section deals with the overall role of PDMRE in the state it impacts and its drawbacks in the effective implementation. The scheme whether being able to bring changes helping in strengthening livelihood security of the rural people.

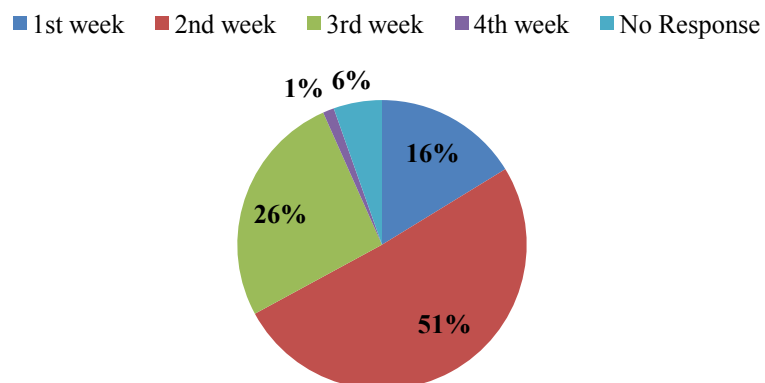
Thus the section would try to generalize the existing scenario of PDMRE in the state and what are the steps which could help to make the scheme more efficient in its effectiveness at the ground level.

4.10.1 Status of Public Distribution System (PDS) at State Level in Sikkim

The upcoming section will specifically deal with the existing status of PDS at the state level. It tries to analyse data on certain issue like availability, affordability, accessibility, applicability and local governance related with PDS at state level.

Timely availability of PDS rations is one of the important aspects in providing food security and overall providing livelihood security to the rural people. In majority of the cases the availability of PDS rations in FPS at first week of the month is very low making the beneficiaries to go for open market. The reasons of late arrival of rations provided by FPS are not available in food godown, petrol pump, etc., not enough budget to bring rations as the beneficiaries has lifted late or not lifted (see Figure 4.51).

Figure 4.51. Availability of PDS Rations from Fair Price Shop in Sikkim

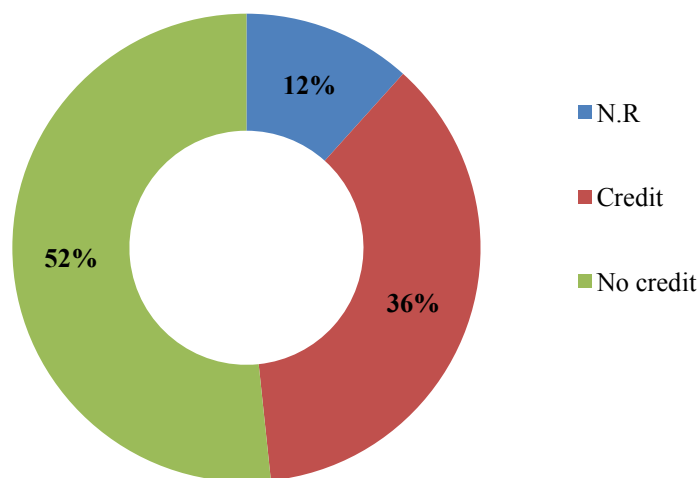


Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Most of the people don't depend on credit for purchasing the rations it is a positive sight, which means that either they have saved the money or they have enough capital to purchase the commodities. However there is certain no. of population depending on the credit for the rations, this instance has been created when the subsidies rations arrive late in FPS (see Figure 4.52).

Instances like arrival of rations at 2nd week of the month and above in the FPS shop forcing the beneficiaries to go private shops for the sake of the family members especially children whose hunger cannot be ignored. After purchase of rations from the open market there is arrival of PDS rations within the gap of 8-10 days in FPS. Putting the beneficiaries in dilemma whether to purchase rations or let it go as the rations are not added in next month quota.

Figure 4.52. Availability of Money while Purchasing PDS Rations in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

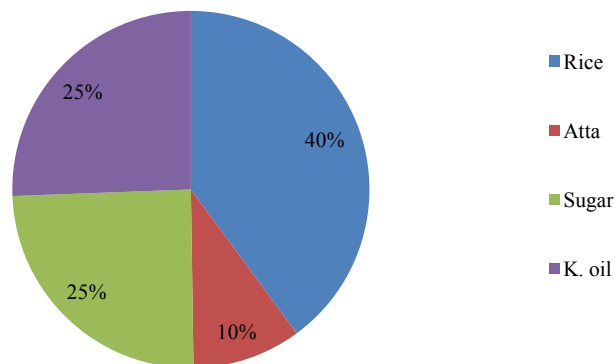
Major purchase from the four allotted items in PDS rations has been the rice which accounts for nearly half from the total allocation (see Figure 4.53). Next items are Sugar and K.oil which added together accounts fifty percent. The least item purchase at the state level is PDS Atta. The major reasons for availability and purchase of rice compared to the other commodities are due to its necessity for the people.

The rice item is high in demand compared to sugar and k.oil. and at the same time Chief Ministers in every public meeting time and again urging FPS and CCS to make the rice available for the public and licensed to be cancelled if found guilty. This

might be due to the scheme attachment with Chief Minister through scheme like Mukhya Mantri Khadya Surksha Abhyaan and Free of Cost rice scheme.

Thus, such strong steps if used for other commodities by the state government would might help in the increase in the percentage of the availability of the other PDS items.

Fig. 4.53. PDS Commodities Regularly Purchased in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.49 reveals that in most of the cases there has been balance consumption among the beneficiaries of different categories showing a better nutritional intake. The intake of rice has been 50 kg on average among the three categories. With the subsidies rations it has also helped the deprived categorizes to fetch meat and dal for protein and also to some extend help them to buy cooking oil.

Table 4.49. Average Monthly Consumption in Sikkim

Category	Commodities						
	Rice	Dal	Sugar	Oil	Atta	K. oil	Meat items
AAV	50.13	3.15	2.67	4.18	2.88	2.77	5.14
BPL	59.13	3.47	3.03	4.42	3.67	2.51	6.22
APL	51.26	3.05	2.71	4.02	3.01	3	5.34

Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Table 4.50 reveals the average monthly expenditure by the beneficiaries of different categories at the state level. The highest expenditure is on rice followed by meat and cooking oil items. Whereas BPL and AAY category expends according to their needs. BPL expends more on sugar compare to other categories as they utilize the sugar as one of the important item similar to the APL treats chocolate, ice cream and pudding.

Though BPL consume more on meat but expends less whereas APL consume less but expends more on meat compare to the BPL. This is due to the latter consumption on high rate meat items like Mutton, Pork and Chicken.

Table 4.50. Average Monthly Expenditure in Sikkim

Category	Expenditure						
	Rice	Dal	Sugar	Oil	Atta	K. oil	Meat items
AAV	423.73	222.99	69.93	477.69	56.07	59.44	820.83
BPL	684.66	266.41	104.45	510.93	64.03	63.18	875.56
APL	1050.22	272.22	94.69	504.24	69.96	71.93	907.70

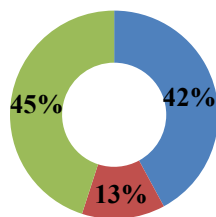
Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

When it comes to Purchasing of rations apart from FPS, there has been evenly matched between the Local shop and Market. Only handful of beneficiaries goes for whole sale shop which provides a little less than MRP. The reason for unavailability of wholes sale shop was due to remoteness of area and the villages surveyed and the nearby market didn't have whole sale shop (see Figure 4.54).

Thus many of the local shop or in other words private shop though provides various food and non food items but sells above MRP which is the violation according to norms. They charge by giving reasons like transport cost and labour charge.

Figure 4.54. Source Apart from FPS in Sikkim

■ Market ■ Whole sale ■ Local shop



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

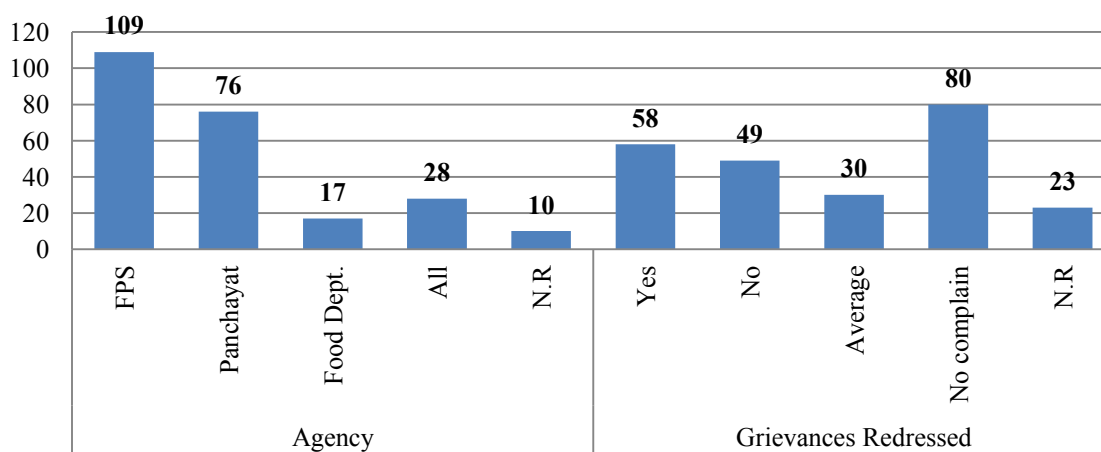
Figure 4.55 highlights that in times of any query or complain about the commodities majority of the people prefer FPS owner at first as they believe as it directly deals with the FPS. However if the first authority fails to assure or provide result they

visit Panchayat and inform about the situation. These two agencies are closest to the universe so they prefer to complain them and in return want an effective action.

Some people goes to department basically these are the people who are tired of complaining to the above two agencies and some of them don't have a good relations with Panchayat and some of them don't believe anything will happen because they think the concerned agency are incapable in providing the solution.

In most of the cases there is no complain against the authorities by the beneficiaries due to reasons like busy schedule, remoteness of area, geographical constraint, fear of victimization etc., which gives feedbacks like all is going well and there is no such problem in ground level to the higher authorities who makes welfare policy and secondly it makes the FPS to feel that nothing will happen thus it manipulate according to their own interest at ground level.

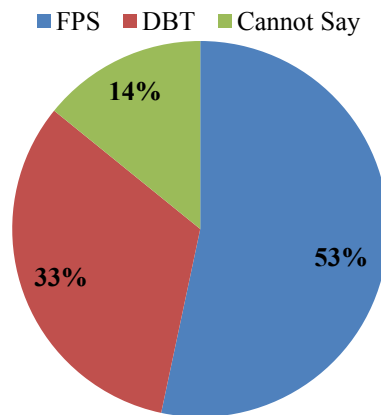
Figure 4.55. Advocacy and Accountability from the Authorities in PDS in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In order to know the preference of PDS rations most of the respondent chose direct rations to the village over direct cash transfer to the bank account. The reason chosen by the people on the direct rations to the village where like near to home and easily accessible, the FPS also provided additional rations and availability of K.oil quota at lump sum of two-three months (see Figure 4.56).

Figure 4.56. Preference of PDS in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In oppose to that bank are located in distant places making loss of valuable time at the same time have to bear travel cost excluding tea and snacks. If by chance beneficiaries reach bank there is every chances of link failure making the scenario more worst. Also the money meant for food may be used in different purpose.

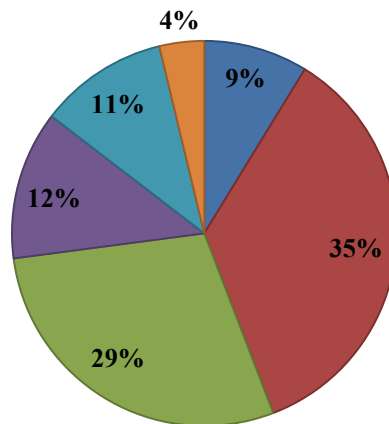
Similarly, those who preferred DBT gave reasons like in FPS there is no proper allocation neither there is timely arrival thus cash for rations would solve these problem. The money from DBT could be used to purchase rations from open market of their choice thus getting free of eating rotten rice and wet sugar and sour Atta. Also the DBT could be saved where interest could be earned and can be utilized in times of medical problem. Thus 33 per cent of the respondent supported DBT as it would help in saving in the bank rather than for buying food items on monthly basis.

4.10.2. Status of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) at State Level in Sikkim

One of the significant wage employment schemes for the livelihood security in the Independent India is through wage system. A targeted 100 days of employment for the rural empowerment which has impacted not only at the national level but also at the state level. Thus in order to understand the impact a case study is important to know the ground reality.

Figure 4.57. Number of Days Employed in MGNREGA in Sikkim

■ less than 30 days ■ 30-45 days ■ 46-60 days ■ 61-80 days ■ 81-100 days ■ N.R



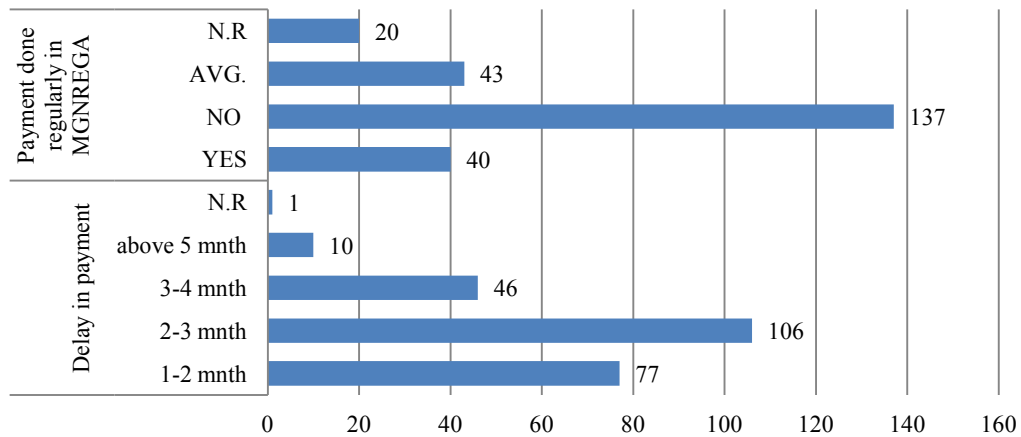
Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

In the state nearly 59 per cent of the population is employed for 30-45 days only and less than 25 per cent are employed for above 60 days thus there has not been a complete 100 per cent work of 100 days. The reasons for not completing 100 days work were unavailability of work, the beneficiaries had no body to look after the field and the house, low wage compared to the private labour work, coming of agricultural season and helping the one another neighbours in traditional agricultural practice in the form of *Parmu*, *Yalik* and *Sikiwaha*.

Apart from number of days employed it becomes important to know the timely availability of wages which is one of the important factor in helping to sustain or uplift the rural folks. Thus when it comes to the regularity of the wage more than 70 per cent of the beneficiaries stated that their wages has been irregular. Such instances makes the rural people to think twice before joining the scheme in advance as they know that they would not get payment instantly (see Figure 4.58).

The irregularity in wage payment when measured in months it extends from 1-4 month. Nearly half of the beneficiaries states that the wages they received takes minimum 2 months. Some of them had not got their wages for past 6-8 months. Whenever asked about the wage there has been passing of ball between the agencies.

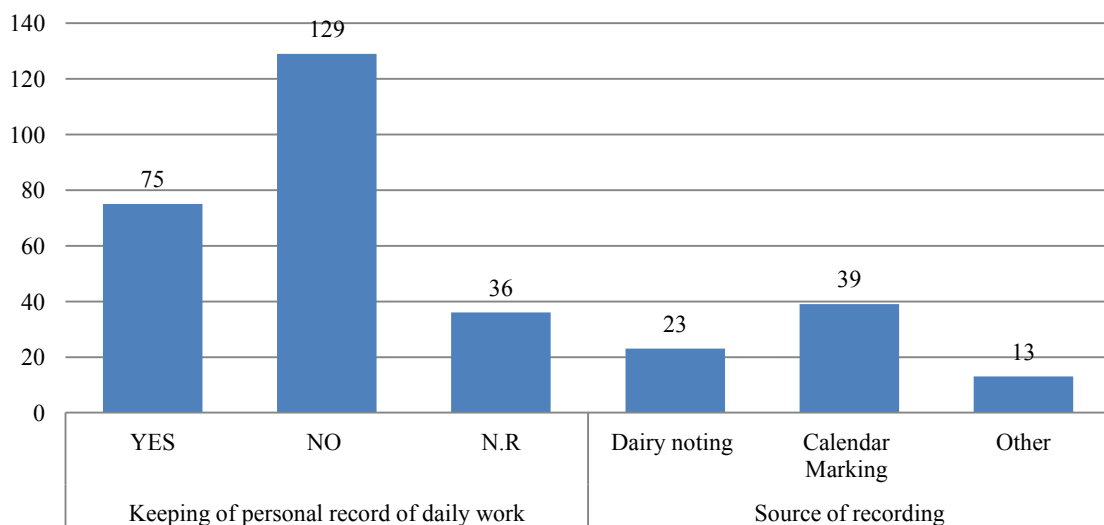
Figure 4.58. Frequency of Wage Payment and Delay in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Due to such scenario, majority of men in the rural areas has kept them out of the scheme and instead worked on other private work in the form of labour, carpenter, assistant mason etc. They only join the scheme when there is no other alternative to do job. Such instance of withdrawal of men from the scheme has opened the space for the women of the rural villages. It has made the women to actively participate in building the blocks through developing their villages. Thus both men and women of the family have earning some sort of capital providing economic leverage for the women folks.

Figure 4.59. Keeping Records of Daily work in Sikkim

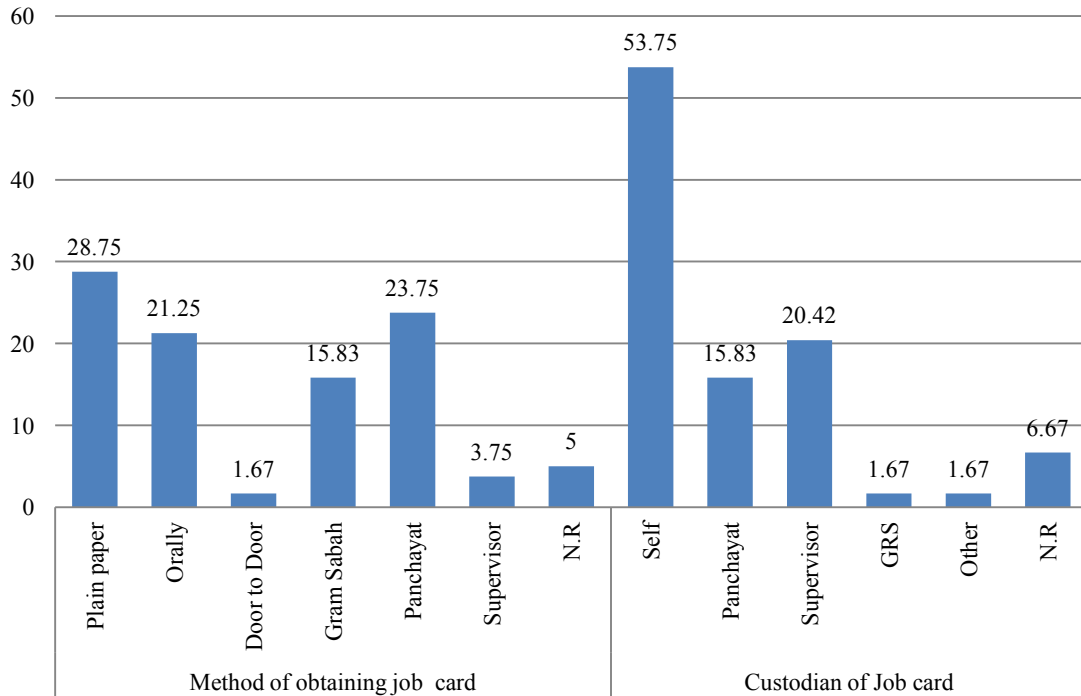


Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Most of the payment which has been done to the beneficiaries they don't manage to keep the exact amount. There has been lack of keeping records, keeping of records not only helps in to check the transparency about the number of days worked and the wage they have got but at the same time to be aware of the daily works where once is engaged. Thus helping the rural people to check or monitor similarly in other scheme also.

Those who happened to keep the records they mostly use calendar for marking and dairy for noting some of them memorize it as the works has been divided into the phase manner and some make their children to remember the days they went to the work (see Figure 4.59).

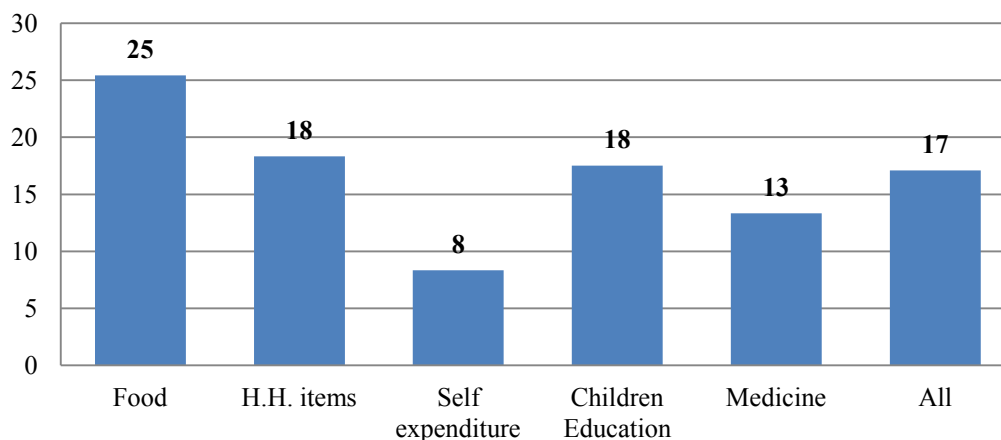
Figure 4.60. Issue and Possession of Job Card in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.60 reveals that the majority of the job card has been issued through plain paper and orally. The Panchayat and Gram Sabha have allotted the job card for the people to work under the scheme. Majority of the people has possession of job card but at the same time there are job card which are in possession with the authorities like Panchayat and supervisor for more than a month some of these job card are kept which is against the MGNREGA scheme.

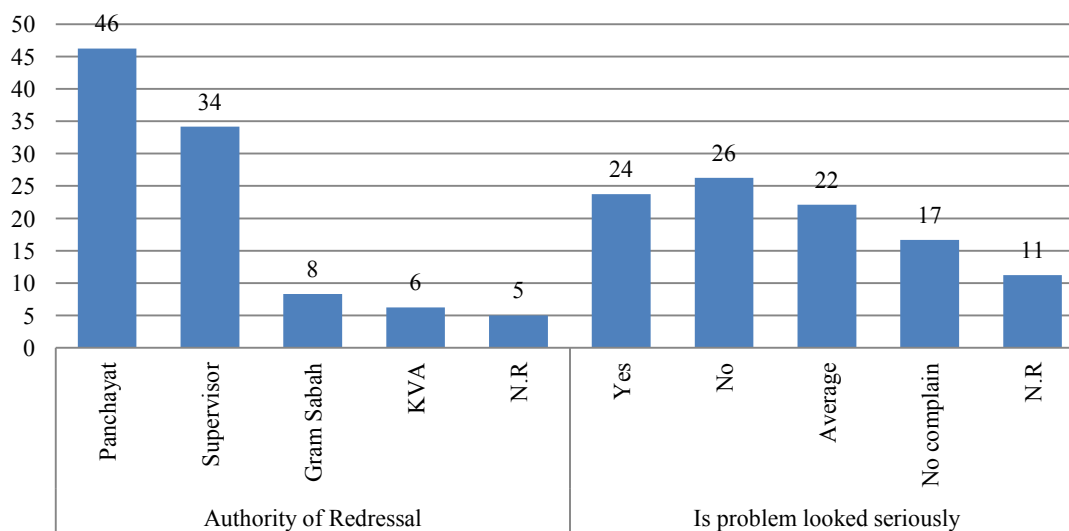
Figure 4.61. Usage of Wage in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

The majority of wage utilized were in food items and in children education as majority of the worker were women they utilizes it for their family especially children and their education (see Figure 4.61). Most of the beneficiaries have saved some amount of money for the medical problem. Thus the wages has proved to be enormous help for the rural people of APL, BPL and AAY categories and especially women of the underprivileged groups.

Figure 4.62. Accountability from the Authorities in MGNREGA in Sikkim

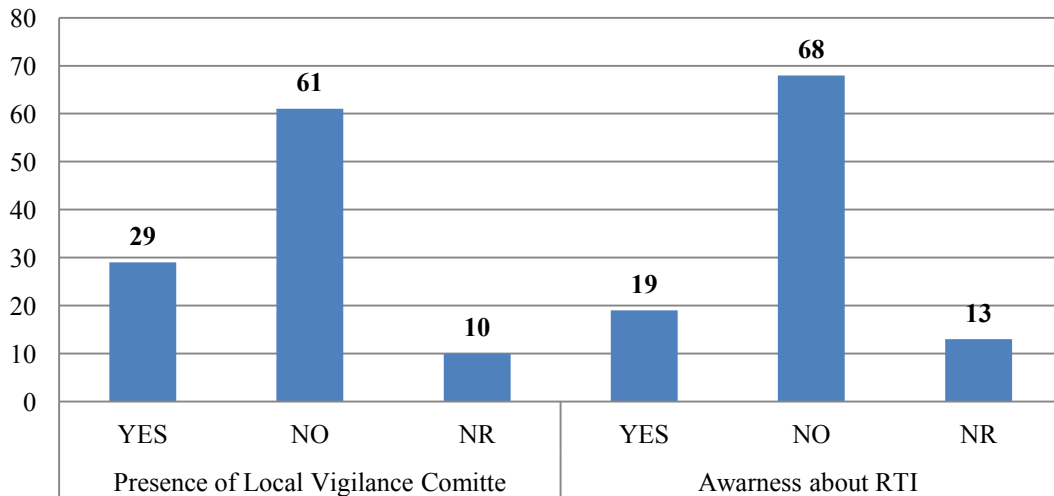


Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Figure 4.62 provides that the Panchayat and Supervisor have been the major agencies of grievances due to being closest and the beneficiaries believing it to be most effective. Institution like Gram Sabha is underutilized due to reason like low frequency of the Gram Sabha at the grassroot level especially at the village level and absence of KVA at village level itself.

Most of the people are not satisfied with the redressal mechanism. The problems like works are not opened on time, neither the wages are delivered after the completion of work and neither wages are kept in some sort of par with the private wage (see Figure 4.63).

Figure 4.63. Presence of Advocacy in Sikkim



Source: Field Survey, December-February, Sikkim, 2014-15.

Though there is presence of Local Vigilance Committee (LVC) at the village level for checking and monitoring the central and state schemes of PDMRE. The LVC committee at GPU level is not functioning well. Thus most of the rural people are unaware about the Local Vigilance Committee. At the same time majority of people are unaware about the RTI which is a significant tool to aware the people about the scheme, about it's working and benefits. Thus significant gap in the awareness level about the empowerment scheme has made most of the rural villages to fear to take step ahead and being victimized.

4.11. Few Observations from Field Study

- It is important here to notice that due to implementation of National Food Security Act 2013, by the state of Sikkim in January, 2016. The term APL and BPL is changed to NPH and PHH respectively for further details see Annexure IX and X.
- Majority of worker in the MGNREGA are women whose average age consists from 30-45 years. However in the job card most of the names were of the male members. Women through engaging in the scheme were able to form women social groups. Apart from being financially independent the scheme also made women group to divide in political ideology and supporting a particular political party and also influencing their family.
- Thus, scheme provided the platform of political awareness there constant interaction and togetherness made them to discuss and to support a certain political party which was prior under the decision of husband or the head of the family.
- They were innovative thinking to promote traditional skill of bamboo weaving in some of the surveyed villages. Two to three people who were MGNREGA worker were given daily wages under MGNREGA to make basket made of bamboo to carry sand, stones, saplings, cement etc. for the construction.
- In one of the surveyed site black tea were provided for the workers who were working under MGNREGA. The teas were provided two times i.e. one in morning time and other in evening time after finishing of work. In which one worker would bring tea and salt from its own pocket and for that particular day, the person would provide refreshment for the fellow workers and the wage of that particular day would be included.
- Dignity of labour is also one of the important aspects which have been prioritized, which is significant to make the scheme effective and joyful even though the wages are less they come daily, for the development of the village.
- Prior presence of Self Help Women Groups in the majority of the villages who are also the beneficiaries These women groups has great potential to form and distribute PDS rations by heading SHG's and CCS ration shop. The only thing

that they need is financial assistance and training which would help to check the price of commodities which are selling more than MRP.

- Thus, setting up of SHG's and Cooperatives in the form of grocery store are need of an hour, which especially targets the rural needs of the people which sales at MRP or provides commodities at discount rate. In this context govt. can play an important role in declaring the store as tax similar to that of Nayuma Women Cooperative Grocery Store.
- This store could also facilitate to be a transit point to deliver organic products from the villages to be sold at nearby markets within and outside state. Such store should be run by men and women of the villages incorporating both educated and uneducated person.
- The PDS rations like sugar are diverted to sell in open market and K.oil is diverted to tea stall. Sill Respondents are willing to provide chances for FPS to work better and deliver service on time rather than to go to DBT, as some of the areas are far from market and bank and closes to them is FPS.
- It was peculiar to find out that Chota Samdong most of the respondent when asked about the number of days employed in MGNREGA they state to have completed their full 100 days of work. However, construction of simple village connectivity path was lacking to join the road with villages which situated in the hill tops of Chota Samdong. It had been more than 8 years still there is no connectivity paths which connects the villages above the road.
- In Kabrey the work of MGNREGA was done for namesake only. In which nearly half kilometer of CC footpath construction was planned in which at the beginning and at the point they had built durable footpath and in between that is almost 80 per cent they didn't even put a stone they just did a mud leveling.
- It is worth mentioning here that majority of the facilities in Kabrey are at the road side where there is presence of school and dispensary. Whereas, lower hills are totally neglected. It nearly takes five to six hours (to and fro) reach the FPS shop from lower hills to top of the hills which adjoins the Namthang area.
- In PDS rations arrival at FPS many of the respondent doesn't want any animosity between the FPS so they prefer Not to Response or says we should say rations are

coming because by saying rations are not coming nothing will happen or change. If we say rations are not coming and by chance FPS comes to know then we will get in trouble.

- Monsoon is one of the critical times for the BPL and AAY beneficiaries who consume PDS rice and sugar. When asked about the quality of rations in which there was a unanimous response that in monsoon time the quality of rice are pathetic and sugar they get is wet and Atta gets spoil within a week as it gets hard and tied and smells salty and latter item straight away goes to pig and cattle feed. It is worth noticing that facial expression change drastically due to their experiences of consuming dirt rice and wet sugar because monsoon season was nearby.
- There has been a clash between the MGNREGA work and the agriculture season. Most of the villagers didn't found enough labour in times to sow seeds, weeding and in harvesting time due to simultaneous work going in MGNREGA. Thus it created dilemma for the worker whether to go for agriculture labour or to go do MGNREGA work if they fail to go later there was every chance of cutting their name from MGNREGA list. Villagers who were also working as MGNREGA workers wanted the work to be issued in off season where most of the villagers were unemployed.
- It is wise to open the work in off season which is basically dry season as this is the right time to create durable asset which the present central government of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) promotes to make the scheme as asset creating scheme.
- Panchayat is the apex body for submitting grievances by the respondents, as he is easily accessible and the selected leader whom the villagers believes and depends on. If he fails to address the problem than people gives up the hope and second hope is Gram Sabha which has the presence of galaxy of almost all eminent authorities which promises to solve the problems of the villagers and village so the people are encouraged to participate to interact and put up their plight they are facing or come up with suggestion.

- However the major drawback of such meeting is that it takes place once a while, it takes in far away villages debarring many villagers who are old, most of the time such meeting is monologue. If the meeting is fruitful the concerned dept authorities is transferred due to various reasons, thus demand which is been put up becomes hard to come in reality. At the same time person who talks to much becomes target or escape goat for many self interest people of the villages
- It was fascinating to come to know that in some of the villages that the PDS rations apart from rice didn't enter the village making the villagers to forcefully against their will "with no other alternatives" have to exchange the cannabis plant with that specific commodity. Basically these plants are grown by villagers in form of medicine to feed domestic animal when an animal fall sick mostly from diarrhea.
- They don't want to give at all but the situation prevail them, and they promised not give to others if PDS rations were available. It is to highlight the importance of PDS rations in the rural villages what kind of scenario it creates in its unavailability.
- In Lingthem, Singhik, Pabyuik and Rizey beef and pork meat are the major source of protein and it is in their daily diet. In order to keep the meat to last for longer period of time they slice it and hook it and keep just above their traditional fire stove making the smoke to dry it. They don't mind if there is no sugar, vegetable or dal but meat items mostly beef should be there in their food plate and food bowl in the form of *thukpa* and *gyathuk* which is made of maida which is the major food in winter times and sometimes in cold days.
- They say that consumption of meat has been blessed to our community so we don't hesitate to consume 10-20 kg in a month. Thus intake in the form of red meat which is one of the major source of protein, has been there from beginning, in which subsidized PDS rations in the form of rice, sugar, atta and k.oil has facilitate to buy meat items in order to be nutritiously secure.
- Due to lack of transparency and accountability from Panchayat and Supervisor there has been misuse of MGNREGA fund. For instance like in CMRHM the house is been allocated 4.5 lakh for which fifty thousand has been separated for

MGNRNEGA works in which only thirty to thirty five thousand were been utilized by exaggerating the number of worker.

- The fake enrollment done by the authority by including the name of close or extended family members in daily attendance register though that particular individual doesn't work but they get payment. Though some of the workers know about the ghost enrollment but they hesitate to complain as they fear that they might get in trouble in future not only in doing MGNREGA works but also in other village development works.
- Majority of the people also state that due to free flow of subsidized rice and free rice has made the villagers lazy which has effected in the agriculture pattern. Most of them has left agriculture field and left the field barren which has made them completely depend on the PDS rice and on the hands of the state government.
- Some of the farmers who have larger agriculture fields and don't go to MGNREGA work have criticized the government for intentionally opening the work in agriculture time which has created scarcity of labour and also impacted in agricultural wage.
- Person who were not working on MGNREGA works criticize the workers as they state that the working process is very much low. No doubt the works gets complete but it takes more than 1 month which had to be completed within a month. Apart from that many worker while building CC footpath they don't cut fit the stone properly making them to come out very easily.
- The state government policies of providing rice free of cost to the needed ones who are underprivileged who doesn't have lands, agricultural lands, who are destitute and handicaps are had to pay certain amount that consisted of transport charge making the scheme in effective as it virtually makes a person to pay money for the item. Some of the underprivileged person doesn't have money to purchase the rice making it to divert to open market.
- The participation of women groups has drastically increased in Gram Sabha not only through their present but also through active participation in the form of dialogue. This was made possible due to the coming of MGNREGA social audit

which made the women members to question and to defend their perspectives as they were the majority person working on the scheme.

- The durability of the asset created under the scheme is very much low as there is no scheme of rebuilding the damaged asset created under MGNREGA scheme. Most of the scheme created in the beginning of 2006-08 has been damaged and broken. Thus sustaining the asset created under the scheme is significant.
- In some parts of study area FPS are forced to take the advance ration of two months which includes the present monthly allocation in one hand and the ration of next month. In such a scenario due to shortage of money FPS are only able to lift two third of quota i.e. they lift full monthly quota but only lifts two third of advance quota.
- In most of the cases FPS are lifting their ration in Second week of the month the reasons they provide is the unavailability of PDS items from Food godown and kerosene oil dealers and second the unavailability of money as the beneficiaries were not lifting the allocated rations.
- FPS had to take extra burden in transport due to unavailability of the PDS item in 1st week of the month making them to lift rice in 2nd week, sugar in 3rd week and K.oil in 3rd to 4th week. Availability of the entire PDS item in 1st week of the month would make them to bring all rations together by hiring pvt. vehicles for a day, thus minimizing their transport cost and their time by not closing FPS.
- Most of the FPS is run by private owners, few PDS shops are run by Cooperative and SHG's and there is non presence of distribution of PDS rations by Panchayat in the villages. The major problem is that FPS are given in lease to those people who are from outside state who are indirectly exempted from paying taxes apart from renewing license and moreover the majority of license holder are engaged in govt. and pvt. job, engaged in contract works, house owners etc. Thus it becomes important to review and verify and provide the license to educated unemployed Youth/Women SHG's of the village.
- FPS are not allowed to weight each bag individually in scale of the allocated quota of PDS rice which has to be exactly 50 kg/bag. The godown in charge gives the reason like it has been already been measured so why waste time there are

others in FPS dealers in line. But when FPS weighs the rice bags in their measurement scale it varies from maximum 5 kg to minimum 2.5 kg. Thus such shortage makes difficult to provide the allocated quota for APL, BPL and AAY household in the villages.

- Majority of the godown incharge⁴ when questioned about the improvement needed in working of PDS in Sikkim they instantly replied with NFSA “a system to provide smooth working of PDS” in the state irrespective of its practical applicability⁵, with its e-machines to placed in the remote areas of the state.
- British Bureaucracy hangover: It was clear that “master servant mentality” has not yet gone from the bureaucracy which was derived from colonial legacy. When talked about the plight of the villagers living in the remote areas and river banks situated in the low hills in availing PDS rations from the FPS located in the middle and the top hills the official said “it is their problem they should use their common sense and shift their home in the roads close to FPS and other shops” by that argument it means everybody should settle in Gangtok, Delhi, Kolkata etc. which has the major facilities and where the policies are framed.

Lastly, as during the survey when we were interacting with the respondent, there was one lady who was frequently breaking the interview. She was very much eager and willing to talk about the various problems they were facing in the PDMRE scheme. She provided vital information about the working and its execution at the ground level, which was highly informative. However when we finished with her interview and were conducting interview with other respondent. Meanwhile, somebody phoned the FPS owner who also happened to be the Panchayat of that area, send his pupil to find out what was going on in the field.

Then suddenly the lady who had provided the vital information started to ask whether her name would be disclose to the Panchayat and the FPS owner and said that her name should not be flashed in anyway and later she said the scheme was working

⁴ Some of the incharge were working for last 15 years and even more in the same place.

⁵ Especially when it comes to installation and maintenance expenses state has to borne in one hand and the e-network and electricity availability in the other hand.

well! No need to entertain my response. We assured that nothing would be disclosed, as a researcher we have moral obligations in the form of ethics. Ethics is to protect the identity of the respondent if it harms his or her interest. We would not entertain her response if the respondent wishes. We are here to bridge the gap between the government and the people and provide suggestion to the policy makers.

So, it is clear that there is some lacuna between the primary and secondary stake holders which promotes suspicion and lack of trust in the environment. Thus, it becomes important to put such factors into our analyses which would not only help to cure the disease but also to understand the cause of the disease per se why is it prevalent and spreading. So, in order to address such kind of challenges, the next chapter comes up with certain management system at grassroot level which would indeed help to overcome such challenges and problems.

CHAPTER 5

Food Security Management at Grassroots Level

5.1. INTRODUCTION

An attempt has been made in this chapter to analyse the grass root scenario based on the experience from field study in the form of suggestion more precisely the solution and moreover for the efficient working of the development schemes in the rural level enriching rural development in general and food security in particular. Thus, objective is to come up with ideas and inputs which would provide base for good governance through accountability, transparency and advocacy at ministerial level, administrative level at department level and most important at the Panchayati Raj Institutions level.

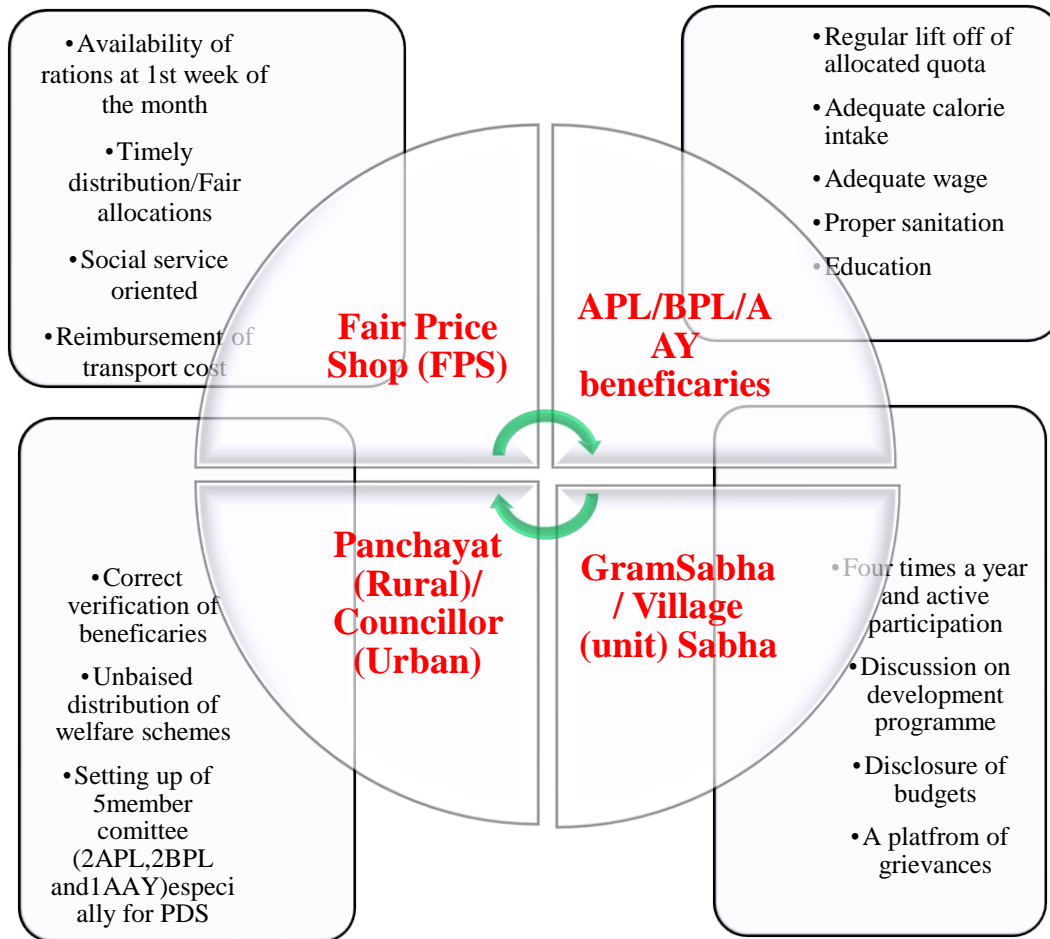
It becomes pertinent to test the food security at grassroots level in order to understand and explore the prevailing scenario which would help to generate inputs to promote food security at village (single) level in four districts of Sikkim.

The model as presented in Figure 5.1 is divided into four sections which deals with specific elements and its requirements to check or measure the food security level at the grass roots. The sections are highly related with each other for the better functioning of welfare scheme in form of PDMRE at the household level.

First section deals with the functioning of availability of PDS rations in Fair Price Shop (FPS). In FPS, most of the PDS rations delivered reached at 2nd to 3rd week of the month due to unavailability of PDS rations in godown, dealers and mills etc. which directly hampers the timely distributions from the FPS. It also provide opportunity for the FPS owners to involve in unfair means¹ such as not keeping the rations for the entire 30 days irrespective of the arrival of PDS in the shops and diverting it to open market.

¹ According to the rules of Food dept. the FPS/CCS has to keep the rations for full 30 days from the date the rations is available at FPS. However FPS bring or the ration is able in the mid week of the month for e.g. 12th of the month rice arrives it has to be kept till 10th of the next month if its 31st and 11th of the next month if its 30th.

Figure 5.1. Food Security at Grass root level



Source: Derived by the Author, 2015.

At the same time reimbursement of transport cost² borne by the Food Dept. is negligible as it provides merely 35 paise/ per kg of rice, wheat/atta, sugar and kerosene oil. Such scheme which was framed way back has become irrelevant in the present scenario with price rise affecting the transport cost and the living standards. It has made FPS to collect transport cost from APL, BPL and AAY and even worse to Free of Cost rice category for whom it should be free. Thus, serious intervention is required from the

² FCSD, Govt. of Sikkim circular on introducing inbuilt system and doing away with claim of carriage charge. Ref No. 1/FCS & CA, Dated 01/04/06.

state to provide half or even one-third of transport cost to FPS through inbuilt system where the deprived group don't have to pay more money than they are required to pay.

Second section which deals with the position of the beneficiary, most of the time they were able to purchase PDS rations but there are instances also where the allocated quota have not been lifted especially kerosene oil and atta. The minimum wage rate for private labour, agricultural labour stand between Rs. 200 to 300 per day and Rs. 155 for the worker working under MGNREGA.

It is important to notice here that most of the beneficiaries had *pucca* sanitation with some "in rare cases" household having *kutchaa* sanitation made up of bamboo. The *pucca* sanitation in every village was successful due to the state programme for building *pucca* toilet for every Sikkimese household at every village level. However there are instances where non-locals³ residing in the village, their sanitation were overlooked by the state government, this needs an immediate attention and action due to health issues, as the disease spreading agents doesn't differentiate between local and non-local. Thus, the non-local should also be provided with *pucca* sanitation through the utilisation of MGNREGA workers.

Most of the beneficiaries were illiterate and some had education till primary and secondary level. Lack of being educated proved to be major problem in being aware about the various scheme. However the brighter picture here was that many of these household children were enrolled in nearby village schools and some in the cities. In which role of Right to Education Act cannot be denied. In some instances their children are helping them to understand about the different development schemes meant for them and for their villages.

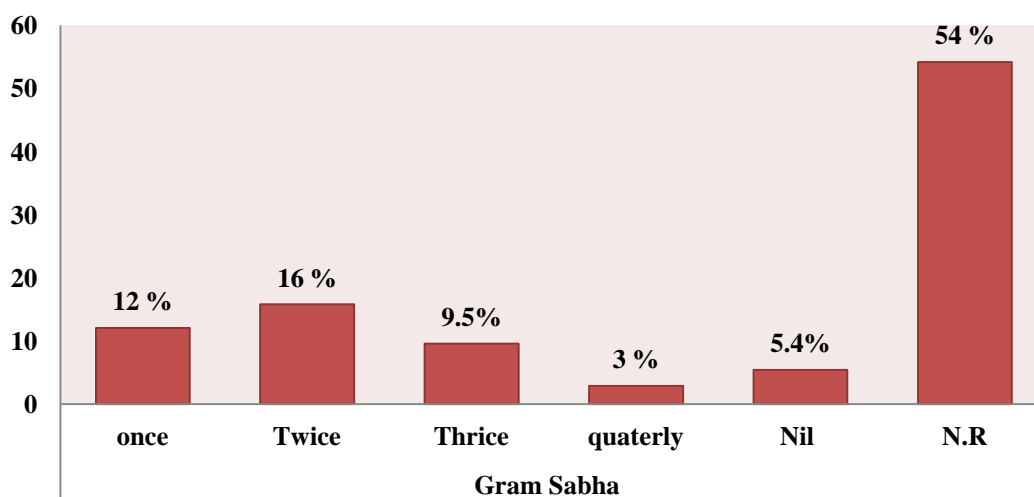
Third section deals with the agency working at the grassroot level the scenario was of worrisome as no village (unit) Sabha to take place. Gram Sabha in rarest cases took place more than thrice a year (see Figure 5.2.1). Few villages had Gram Sabha

³Those who are non-Sikkimese basically coming from outside Sikkim i.e. from parts of West Bengal, Nepal etc., living in rural areas in *Kuth* and *Adhyaa*.

quarterly in a year⁴. It is also to notice that due to MGNREGA social audit and Gram Sabha was organised, in which they had a dialogue especially when it came to its wage and its works.

There is negligible discussion⁵ on development programme that took place in the village/ward level. Most of the time policy, planning and decision were taken among few individuals. For formality the development agenda was put in Gram Sabha and whosoever tried to question or talked the development programme in detail they were tagged as *Bathe* or “over intelligent person”. Those people who had vested interest targeted *Bathe* as anti party and victimized him in every way. Thus, making him to think twice or thrice before speaking next time or making him never to speak again. Such instances create a barrier not only for an individual but for the entire village. Such environment doesn’t help in the mental growth which promotes villagers to be aware and a concerned citizen.

Figure 5.2. (1) Gram Sabha Meeting held in a year 2014



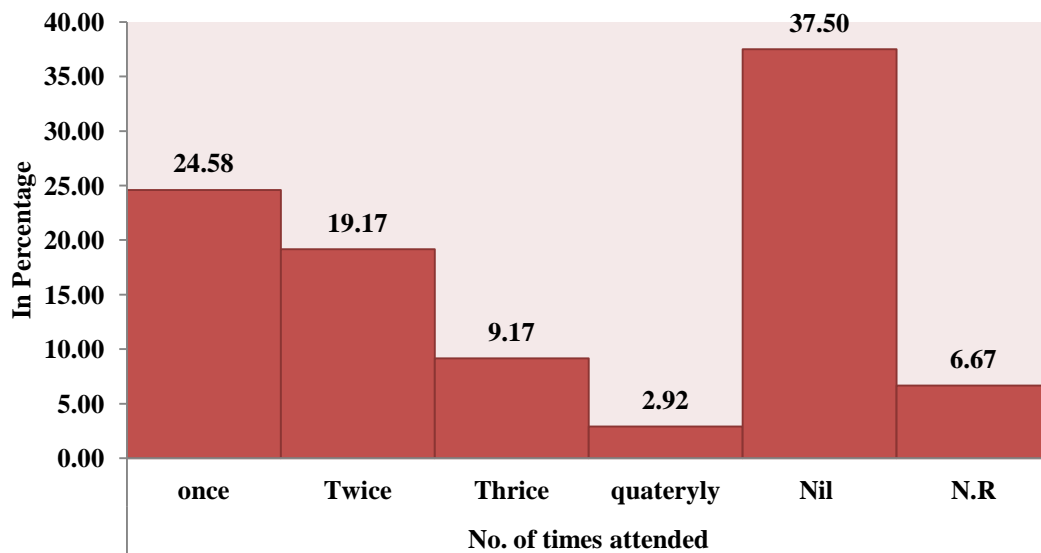
Source: Field Survey, December-February, 2014-15.

⁴ Many of the villagers and Panchayat were putting Gram Sabha equal with party meetings that took place last year as it was an election year where it had election campaign. Thus belief to have five or six Gram Sabha or some even said they had Gram Sabha 9-11 times.

⁵ A vibrant debate on the welfare of the village development in which primary stake holders i.e. the villagers with the secondary stake holders i.e. the Panchayat, govt officials *Gram Vikhas Adhikari*, etc. where village community playing a major role to decide what is best need of an hour. However, in reality most of the plan is already made at the top.

It is worth noticing that most of the people didn't attend Gram Sabha due to reasons like villagers engaged in rural livelihood activities, meeting taking place in different village, where some of the older person couldn't attend. Most of the villagers didn't had the information about the meeting and in some cases Panchayat only informed few people. Thus, lack of circulation of information and favoritism was also the causes making villagers unable to attend the Gram Sabha (Figure 5.2. 2).

Figure 5.2. (2) Gram Sabha Meeting Attended

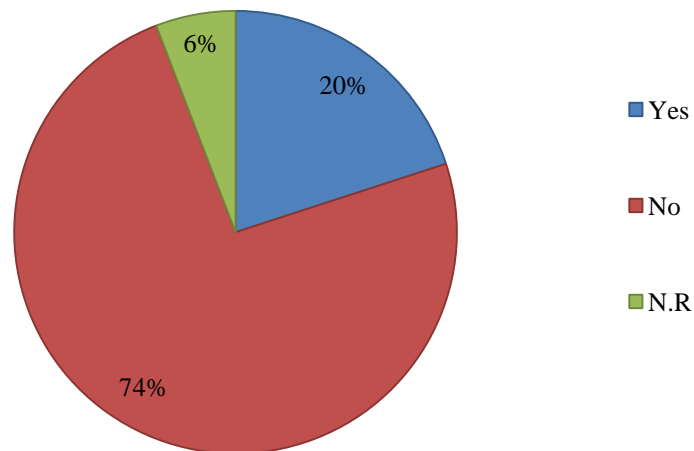


Source: Field Survey, December-February, 2014-15.

It would have been dream come true, if the local bodies disclose their budget about developmental activities in the village. For instance (a) What are the schemes they have been allotted by government (b) How much fund they have been allocated (c) For whom these schemes were focused (d) From which dept. or agency they would be getting benefits, and (e) At what time they would be getting benefits, etc.

Disclosure of budget in Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha level by the Panchayat is negligible. Most of the time it takes place in complete secrecy among few people. Thus, creating disparity and opaqueness where favoritism supersedes over eligibility.

Figure 5.3. Budget Disclosure by Panchayat in Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha



Source: Field Survey, December-February, 2014-15.

There is no doubt that the Gram Sabha has been a platform where the villagers submit their grievances which has proven to be a complaint centre at the lowest level. However, fact is also that it has only made villagers a petitioner of filing their complaint which doesn't have a hundred percent result or outcome. They get assurance from the officials not more than that and sometimes their voices are heard by continuously running around the official for several days or for week.

The fourth section deals with the agencies transparency and advocacy for enrolling and providing some sort of visibility in governance. The major dilemma in these processes is the verification done by Panchayat and party workers which make them to select almost all of the villagers leaving few people⁶ away from the welfare scheme. As they are aware of keeping the voters on their support by providing some favors.

In these situation, two things emerge a. firstly there is non-presence of equitability in the form of moral injustice as those who are non-eligible⁷ they are also been provided and b. secondly while incorporating the ineligible household it gives a signal that nobody

⁶ Basically non locals who don't have voters card who are from Nepal and Company site and secondly those who are rich and don't play role in grass root politics or support a certain ideology.

⁷ Those who have pucca house 2-3 storey building, husband or wife doing govt. job, having automobile etc.

is poor or everybody is rich effecting the real poor financial status but also effecting in their lifting date and purchasing power.

Distribution of welfare scheme depends on the type of assets bring disbursed in the public. Most of the time Panchayat and party workers family and their extended family are in the first list followed by villagers who have rallied for the party are in the second level and those villagers who directly demand for the benefit “privately” are at the fourth level and lastly those villagers for whom the schemes has been made they get but few in numbers. There are also villagers who don’t ask for the scheme as they feel ashamed to ask as they have opted for different party in election in rarest of the rare cases they get the welfare scheme.

In other context, there are few Panchayat who provide welfare schemes in the rotation basis to the villagers irrespective of party workers, families, eligible household and opposition households and they are ruling for more than 20 years some of them are ruling more than the present Chief Minister. The major rule followed by them is that it provides the welfare schemes to all the people, which shows an image of transparent Panchayat.

At the same, he also keeps some portion of welfare scheme while distributing the assistance. However there are cases where Panchayat are not fully aware about the various schemes which have been allotted at the village level through different departments. Thus, lack of information is also a major cause failing them to come with adequate planning from the grassroot level.

In most of the cases, Vigilance Committee are made just for name sake and there is no usage in the practical level. Some of the members are comprised of members living in five-six different villages which have to inspect the quality of work however due to remoteness, busy livelihood schedule, thus making vigilant members hard to come in one roof. The Panchayat or the supervisor goes to the Vigilance Committee member house to get clearance signature. The member doesn’t come to inspect or verify the asset it gives signature in the belief that the particular person has done the work.

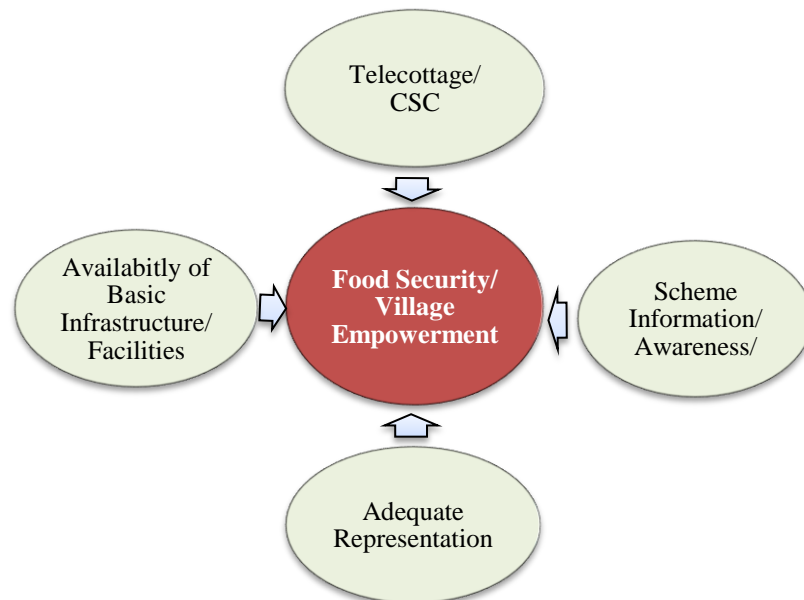
There is virtually non presence of Local Vigilance Committee (LVC) looking in the functioning of PDMRE scheme in the village level thus effecting in the

implementation and effectiveness of the scheme. It becomes important to form Vigilance Committee at every single village or ward level for the proper functioning and delivery of development scheme.

5.2. FOOD SECURITY AND VILLAGE EMPOWERMENT: FIELD STUDY EXPERIENCES

Major hindrance on the successful implementation of the development and welfare scheme at the village level has been the shortage and unavailability of basic requirements. In the form of education, active civil society, lack of scheme awareness, lack of adequate representation of the stakeholders at the decision making. Most importantly lack of basic infrastructure in the form of hospital at the constituency level, Minnie hospital at the Gram Panchayat level and the Primary Health centre at every single village/ward level, lack of telecottage at every single village/ward level for reducing centre-periphery gap, Citizen Service Centre (CSC) for effective flow of information, adequate representation of stakeholders through various groups, advisory bodies, civil societies etc.,

Figure 5.4. General Requirements for Food Security and Village Empowerment



Source: Prepared by the Author, 2015.

It is quite clear that a series of upgradation and additional mechanism has to be incorporated in existing system to strengthen the local governance in which one among many schemes like PDMRE can be effectively utilized by the people at the grassroots

level. For success of any scheme, it requires transparent mechanism which would clearly led to desired output. However if the mechanism is not functioning properly then it requires additional inputs in facilitating the role of higher education bodies, Information technology etc. Thus, the following section would deal with the management system and trying to bring some sort of transparency, accountability and advocacy so that the centre and state schemes which are meant for the masses could reach and led to the desired result as planned by the government.

5.3. Long Term Effective Measures (LTEM):

Following are the LTEM attempting to address the problems and challenges with suggestion and recommendation in the form of solutions. It tries to bring new rules and regulations within the existing system. It also advocates setting up of new institute in the form of asset especially in rural areas which would require additional resources and would take certain period of time.

5.3.1. Right to Review (RTR) at the administrative level (Department and Panchayat):

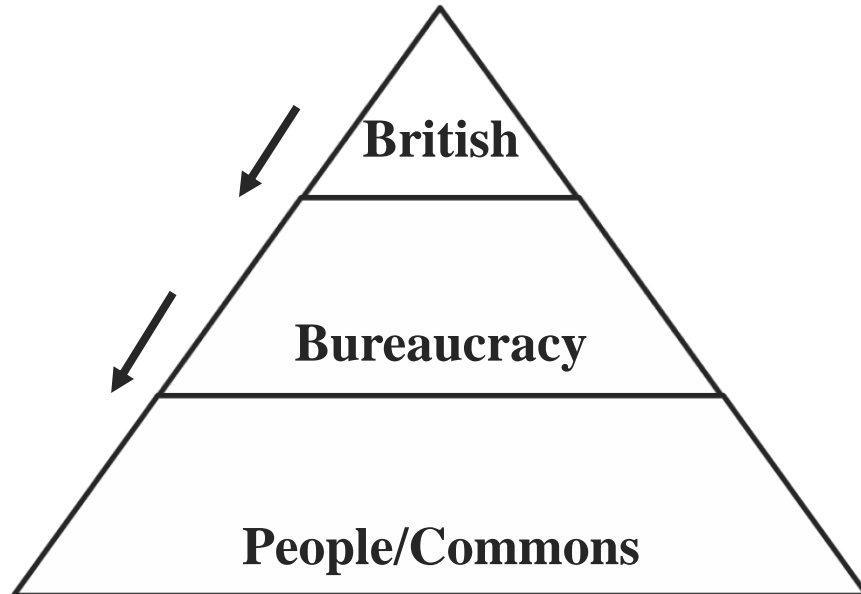
As in the British legacy the administrative structure were built in such a way that it would benefit the colonial empires where the Bureaucrats were accountable only to higher officials who were mostly British origin and few Indians who had totally undergone the western education and who were mostly coming from the elite Indian classes. The Higher officials were accountable only to the Queen of England. Thus, the very administrative structure was made on the imperialist notion of master and servant basically top to bottom approach i.e. what is said at top is to be adhered by the bottom irrespective whether it is right or wrong; whether it is feasible or not at the ground level.

In such a scenario there was no transparency and accountability. In oppose to that presence of strict adherence towards the British crown was the order of the day. No Indians were allowed to question the working of administrative system whether of Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 of biting the cartridges made from the pig and beef fat, Vernacular

Press Act of 1878 which control the Press⁸, Rowlatt Act of 1919 allowed certain political cases to be tried without trial or the Bengal Famine of 1943 failure of British administration to manage the famine, to provide the adequate measures to stop the migration to the cities in desperation which were already overburden, black hoardings of rice etc.

Thus, for the British Crown and their henchmen in the administrative the Indians (people/commons) were nothing than mere slaves, servants and second class people to feed the empire with raw materials, taxes, market, men in war to be butchered, cheap labour for other British colony etc.

Figure 5.5. Flow of Policy in British Colonial System towards Indian State



Source: Prepared by the Author, 2015.

The downfall of British rule and its withdrawal from the subcontinent which led to Independence of India in 1947. The newly formed state adopted representative form of democracy where the commons has the ultimate power to choose the rightful leader democratically in the form of election. Thus, Independence also leads to the Peoples “Common” rule in India. In which administrative system should also be accountable and

⁸ Act initiated by Viceroy Lytton which further upgraded Gagging Act of 1857. Under the act if something seditious found in which reflects anti British Raj then they would be fined or editor jailed by Magistrate or by Commissioner of Police belonging from British authorities.

transparent toward the general people. However in reality the system has remained unchanged only the top part has changed with the coming of the Elite classes i.e. business, political, royal and higher caste etc. controlling the economic, political and social system with their influence and utilizing to their wishes.

At present bureaucracy in administrative functions which was model by the British keeping complete secrecy, non transparency and non accountability towards the general population. They maintain master servant relation in the administrative system where the former doesn't feels responsible towards the public and only feels accountable to higher officials of the government. Ministers/MLA's/MP'S elected by the general public only visits their door step every five years for vote and remains out of sight or remains busy in official works for remaining years after the winning of election.

Such system has generated Political capitalism⁹ in one level and Bureaucratic capitalism (i.e. the civil servant utilizes its position to govern the funds which may take place at the group level or at the individual level) at the other. In which the influence of power makes the money allocated for the specific objective to be diverted and misutilized for the self interest rather than utilizing it to the development programme for the common people to whom it was to be met.

Such kinds of misuse of funds in the form of corruption are thriving making certain groups of people to make massive money. Majority of people are unaware and if also been aware of the incident less no. of culprits are brought to justice due to low amount of transparency. Right to Information (RTI) is one of the major tool to tackle such issues however it is only one arsenal for the common people to bring transparency and accountability in the govt. run administration.

In Right to Review (RTR) would provide administrative to be transparent and accountable to the people. It provides people to know the functioning of a public body involved in the development scheme. At first, the appointment of Centre and State scheme Awareness Information Person (CASSAIP) at each dept. level i.e. in the State

⁹ The concept introduce by Max Webber. The concept political capitalism refers to make illegal money by using power. Without doing any business, Ganey, V, University of Chicago, 1999 in Governance issues in India From Grassroots Perspective, Palanithurai, 2014, pg. 87.

level, District level, Block level and Gram Panchayat level, which will deal with documenting, storing and distribution of the information about the welfare and development scheme through electronic information, verbal and printed means should be set up. It would also provide the main authority involve in dealing with the scheme, the type of scheme, its targeted group, its objective, its fund allocations, its cost of utilizations, percent of utilisation meant for administrative and those involved in executing the scheme.

If people finds a particular line dept or the official who are authorized for the scheme execution is misusing the fund, the people has the right to review the official irrespective of its position. Official to write explanation for its malpractices in the form of defense which should be out in public domain and simultaneously handed to the judiciary.

The governed funds would be utilized for the security of the civil society, village or the individual who had reviewed the corrupt officials. Also 5 per cent of monthly income should be deducted for next two years and utilized in the development scheme in which the official governed. Also making him to sit in particular office for minimum 2 years and maximum 3 years, and transferred to other dept. and remaining there for two years again being transferred to other dept and so on¹⁰. At the same time a separate report has to be made by himself quarterly and by the dept. annually on his execution of works in the dept. henceforth.

It should be kept ready for declassification if civil society or the people want to review it for any malpractices. Even after the transfer and keeping of individual records of a person is found guilty of mal practices should be demoted to the lower level till Lower Division Clerk (LDC) post¹¹ after than it should be terminated.

RTR provides strict accountability towards the people and the civil society it helps to curtail bureaucratic capitalism rather being accountable to the higher officials, the central force would be the grassroot people. Such measures in the administrative

¹⁰ The official has to bear the office of all the dept. coming under and establish by the state government.

¹¹ If the public official shows the positive work should be promoted at the step wise level. Still then the documentation of individual report should be followed.

would look seriously towards the development of the grassroots, in such case economic justice and social justice would prevail. A significant step to reduce corruption and change the master servant relations.

5.3.2. Skill Training in Practice (STP) at ground level empowering women folks:

Women who have been an equal partner in the flourishing and advancement of human civilisation but most of the time have remained hidden from the limelight. In addition to it have been neglected and subjugated in the past and still being excluded. Time has come to give equal opportunity for them in the male dominated society especially in rural areas.

Factors like skill training, education and scheme awareness accompanied by adequate representation would play significant role in empowering women folks at the grassroot level. Such factors would promote them in social, political and economic sphere. For instance in MGNREGA it provides livelihood security for the rural people irrespective of gender, class and caste. In many of the cases there has been considerable amount of women participation. Thus, taking advantage of these works women can learn the skill of master mason, chief carpenter, assistant carpenter which are traditionally reserved for men and also has high wage rate compare to other unskilled labours.

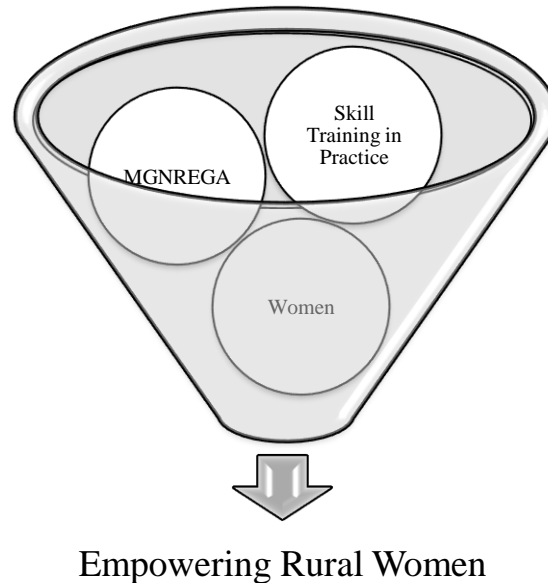
Sometimes MGNREGA works gets delayed due to delay in material supply, in some cases due to unavailability of the Master mason or the Chief carpenter, even though if there is presence of labours. In the latter case the STP could be useful helping to overcome the delay and the work to be on schedule.

As MGNREGA works place in phase wise manner, women who show interest in working such skill works could ask supervisor to enroll her in STP scheme. After that she can be given the work of assistant carpenter and assistant mason to learn the skill work and later utilize it in those assets created through the scheme in its inception which has been damaged over time.

Thus, it would not only help to maintain the durability of the asset it would also help to test the skill learned in training. Consequently after examination of work by Supervisor and Carpenter feels that work is executed well she could be enlisted in

assistant level from that to the chief or master level. Thus, Skill Training in Practice would be fulfilled helping to learn skills for the women folks.

Figure 5.6. Skill Enhancements through MGNREGA



Source: Prepared by the Author, 2015.

The main idea behind the Skill training in Practice is that it would provide women to learn the skill through the programme and earn a higher wage in one hand in MGNREGA or even work outside as a private worker getting higher wage and also to break the gender barrier in work place providing platform also for women to be master mason or the chief carpenter.

Thus, women could easily utilize these skills in their respective household rather being depended on the male carpenter in one hand and saving the money which could have been expend for hiring carpenter.

5.3.3. Awareness through Education Institution (AEI) by Converging the Ministry of HRDD and Institute like UGC and ICSSR for Aware Rural India:

It is matter of great concern that majority of people are unaware of the citizen friendly Act like RTI and Citizen Charter etc. and many central and state sponsored schemes which are aimed for welfare and development for the people especially those living in rural areas. Even though Govt. spends money for awareness which is inbuilt within the

scheme for the different line department undertaking the scheme and also to various institutions to periodically check the impact analysis of scheme, very negligible change has occurred in the awareness part. It clearly shows the failure to provide awareness to the general people to make the stakeholder empowered by providing the information in the era of digital globalisation.

Thus, it is high time for the Educational Institute through school, colleges and university where its elements i.e. student, teacher, lecturers, researcher etc., could play an important role in bringing awareness at the grassroots. In this context Ministry of Human Resource Development Dept. (MHRDD), University Grants Commission (UGC) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) has to converge on providing awareness of development scheme to the rural people.

So, in order to bring awareness about the scheme, it is important to utilize the existing institute at the grass root i.e schools, colleges, and university and research institute. At the school level convergence between Central and State HRDD for Introducing separate book on Local Governance and Empowerment on std. 9, 10¹²; 11 and 12¹³ which deals with RTI and Citizen Charter and also about the ongoing development/welfare schemes like National Food Security, MGNREGA, Jhan Dhan Yojana etc., aimed for the benefit of the stakeholders. Assigning in school curriculum activities and providing grades for their assignments and linking with Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)¹⁴.

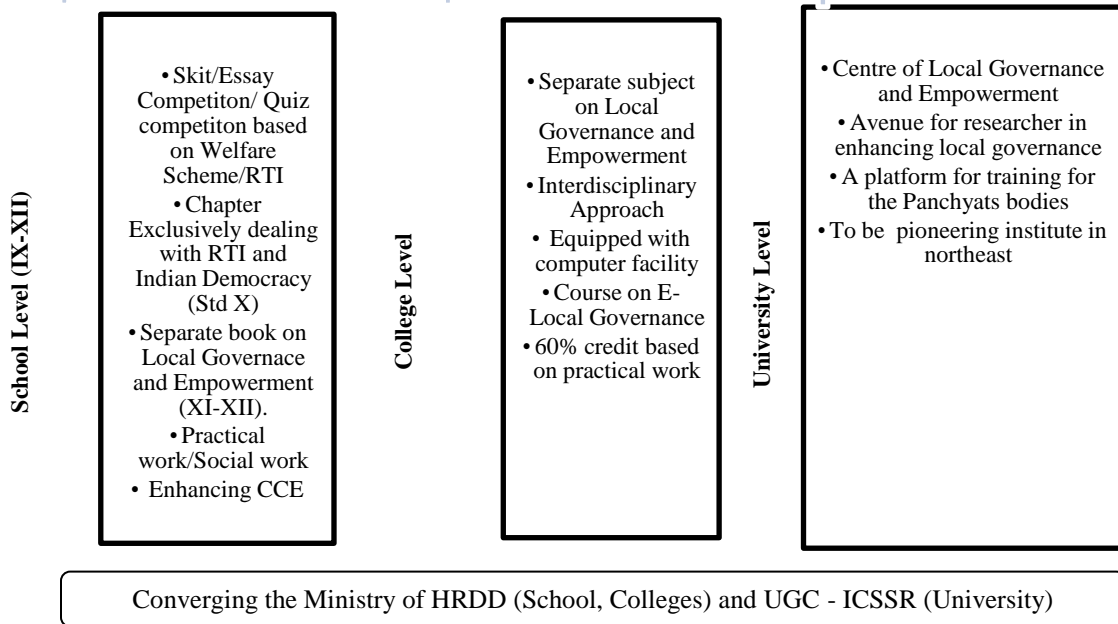
At college level separate subject within the School of Social Sciences aimed not only to make aware of the scheme to the stakeholders through case study method but also to link it with Constitution of India, Information Communication Technology etc. and interdisciplinary approach for its feasibility, and most important to make themselves aware about it usage and its practical use at the end the student at present are the future stakeholders in the form of citizens.

¹² Assigning in school curriculum activities and providing grades for their assignments

¹³To be introduced as a separate subject from 11 and 12, it would extensively deal with the Local Governance and Empowerment issue.

¹⁴ Is a process of assessment adopted in 2011 by state govt. and CBSE from std. 6-10. Students apart from academics are encouraged to involve in extra curriculum activities.

Figure 5.7. Awareness through Education Institution (AEI)



Source: Prepared by the Author, 2015.

At the University Level setting up of Centre of Local Governance and Empowerment exclusively and extensively dealing with 73rd and 74th Amendment Act, which would enroll the students who shows interest to work on further enhancing to bring reform at present Local governance and Empowerment in India in general and their state, village area in specific.

Further, enrollment of the local bodies related with the Panchayat i.e. Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat, Panchayat President etc., for training and enhancement informing about their Constitutional Rights. The effective usage of the Eleventh schedule, demand and budgeting for the finance and revenue, policy formulation and decision making at the grassroot level accompanied by advisors and village people and also further enhancement of personality¹⁵. It would pave way for providing a proper utilisation of the post for the development of the village and welfare of its people.

¹⁵ Development of Personality is must as it would remove the Psychological barrier of “inferiority” among bureaucrats whether it is central or state, ministers etc., inferiority provides hindrance for effective communication and due expression. Has to break the barrier built by the British legacy of “master-servant” relation. It is important to make them belief that Panchayat, Bureaucrats and Ministers are equal working for the benefit of the stakeholders.

Resource person from various background and institute working in local governance and empowerment like Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA), Self Employed Women Association (SEWA), Academy of Grassroots Studies and Research of India (AGRASRI), Gandhigram Rural Institute etc., could be called upon as a guest resource person for providing inputs and training in the form of conceptual clarity and practical work in various aspects to the researcher, Panchayat bodies and village groups.

Such initiative would provide an enormous platform for the local stakeholders at the ground level. The centre would also deal with the existing problems and challenges involved in the functioning of PRI's and the measures to overcome it. In addition, it would contain courses on e-governance dealing with verifying, collection, inclusion and storage of village data.

It is important here to notice that there might be race of coming in Top 10 universities in the country or in the world but at the same time we also have our prime duty to be No. 1 University for the grass root people. This are the people who mostly have low income, living in poverty, unaware about the scheme, lacking in education, geographical remoteness, deprived by caste, class and gender division etc. In which state has turn their back due to negligence in the form of political capitalism and bureaucratic capitalism, where political broker has grounded their root and monopolized the system,

Few universities in the world and the universities in Indian state in their premises work for the benefit of the grassroot people, in which development schemes plays an important role. It becomes important for university¹⁶ to study local governance helping to aware and empower the people and to make them realize of “value of self” as stakeholders in local governance. In process helping state to uplift their human development level further. Providing inputs for reform in the existing agency for better performance and also setting up of new agencies which are transparent and accountable towards the masses who are originally the primary stake holder of the Indian Union.

¹⁶Sikkim University has a significant chance to pioneer such initiative in the north east India which would especially deal with such issue by setting up a centre for the local governance and empowerment for its rural people of the state of Sikkim and north east India in one hand and providing valuable input for the rest of the India.

5.3.4. Healthy Village is Food Secure Village:

For any individual to be food secure one has to be health secure and vice versa. Individual to be food secure has to have a sound health in order to ensure livelihood through some sort of decent employment which would help in purchasing nutritious food. In turn Nutritious food helps an individual to be in better health conditions helping to live active and healthy life.

Many of the surveyed villages are deficient in health facilities¹⁷ impacting in their livelihood activities and effecting in their food security. Thus, the hour of need is to build Minnie Hospital at the constituency level and Organic Health Medication Centre (OHMC) or *Jeevik Swasth Upchaar Kendra* as explained in subheading Infrastructure for Local Governance accompanied by X-ray centre at every GPU level.

However, by mere setting up of centre would not solve the problem it requires adequate man power and resource. The present dilemma of state is that most of the person who have went outside to study health related disciplines and those who have acquired government scholarship to study the same, belong from urban areas and its nearby areas. Thus, when they finished their study and join the health institute they prefer the institute which is in the urban areas or nearby areas.

They restraint themselves to go to remotest part of the state due to environment¹⁸, even if they go instead of fulfilling their obligations they used “back channel” to re post or transfer themselves in urban areas/ nearby urban areas. Even that doesn’t happens they hardly come to their duties instance attends 3-4 days in a week and remains outside of institute by giving reasons of medical training and others use.

Such heath deteriorating scenario provides many of the villagers to go to nearby towns and cities for their medication which tolls a heavy cost in their livelihood expenditure. It also creates a scenario where the villagers see urban areas as Elysium “a near perfect place” thus paving way for migration from rural to urban areas.

¹⁷ Many of the villages and remote villages doesn’t have dispensary at the ward level in contradiction to it have liquor shop. A major reason for these is that no people in the village have gone training of pharmacist to run medical shop at the GPU level or at the ward level.

¹⁸ Environment which is totally opposite in which they have grown up as these are the areas which don t have basic facilities and entertainment.

Such problems could be addressed by promoting many children who are studying in government school in the government initiative of “Free Education”. Selecting students from class X and XII from government schools especially belonging from weaker sections of society, of the remotest villages and GPU. Students which shows promise in science and related subjects by getting good grades and further takes interest in studying health related disciplines¹⁹ and shows promises to work for the villages after finishing their medical studies and training. Students should be provided government scholarship which would help in the upliftment of health in the villages and remote villages.

Such move would reduce present dilemma of health insecurity in the state especially in remote rural areas, it will provide opportunity to the students of weaker groups of rural areas living in the remotest villages, to serve their village and also to be a part in the movement promoting sustainable village. Thus, centre government and state government should mutually address such movement which would develop the rural India “Land of Bharat” apart from smart cities it is also important to build sustainable villages equipped with basic facilities.

5.3.5. Infrastructure for Local Governance:

Setting up of basic infrastructure at the ground level becomes pertinent for the decentralisation process. As, it would provide avenues for the masses belonging from the lowest level to be part of vibrant grassroot democracy.

5.3.5 (1) Village Meeting Ground:

Provision to make 5 side ground (minimum) and 9 side ground (maximum) in every village level in which utilisation of MGNREGA workers to level the ground, building of protection wall and net fencing for protection. Utilisation of ground for the cultural activities, for yoga class and meditation, market and fairs, women and child development, sports activities including for special children, distribution of subsidized rations, encouragement in participation for village development programme, platform for awareness and dialogue about the recent developments etc.

¹⁹ Like MBBS, Nurse training, BDS, Physio therapy, radio therapy, medical practitioner etc.

Making of such infrastructure would help to control depression and drug abuse especially among youths. Creating an atmosphere of fitness and exuberance among all ages. Thus, giving prominence to the ethos of community and making self participation for the well being. Such asset would provide in supporting the Indian dream of *Swasth Bharat* or Healthy India.

5.3.5 (2) Organic Health Medication Centre (OHMC) or *Jeevik Swasth Upchaar Kendra*:

As many of the villages are deficient of PHC's and Minnie hospital at the Constituency and GPU level at the one hand and medical personal at the other. Many of these villages have individual who are practicing traditional way of medication for health related problems. OHMC accompanied by installation of X-ray machine at every GPU level would provide opportunity to the individual who are traditional healers²⁰. It would provide a new breath for traditional healers which are slowly dying out.

The OHMC would come under the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Panchayat department for fund allocation and its work accountability. Such centre could be created with the aid of MGNREGA workers where STP could also be practiced. It would also provide an opportunity for village educated unemployed youth to go for training of utilization of X-ray machine and be employed at their respective village. It will also provide a source of income for the traditional healers.

Such centre would be one of the significant assets for the rural people it would make their life lot more easy especially in health related issues. It would help to reduce their transport cost, remoteness of area, time and hard earned money.

5.3.5 (3) Panchayat Office: At every Ward Level/Single Village Level

In present scenario there is one Panchayat Office or *Karyalay* at the GPU level consisting of 3 or more ward/single village. The office is set up at one particular ward of the GPU, where there is presence of every member of Panchayat for their daily activities. However, in reality due to geographical constraint it becomes hard for other member of

²⁰ Practice involving medication through herbs, roots etc., for curing health related illness. For example to cure fractured bones, broken bones, snakes bite, wound healing, etc.

Panchayat living in distant villages to regularly come in the Office. It also becomes hard for villagers and especially old age person suffering from arthritis, disable, destitute, BPL households etc. to visit office for works, meetings, awareness and information program.

Setting up of Panchayat office at every ward level would provide an easy access for the villagers and especially old age person and disabled. It would also make Panchayat of every single village to be more accountable and transparent. Such system could be assured by providing information of recent development related to the village and its people verbally and also attaching it in the notice board. It would help in timely organization of ward Sabha at the one hand the institute would also provide the Panchayat member zeal to work more on the other. It would help in Deeping of democracy at the grassroot level due to attachment of the institute with CSC and Telecottage.

It should have a presence of Round table having the capacity to hold 20 people in minimum. Main idea behind it is for breaking hierarchy of class, caste and gender etc., especially while in decision making, confronting and resolving any issue. Such elements helps to promote dialogue rather than monologue between the Panchayat, Panchayat President, GVK, Student, Youth, women groups, village level groups, village advisory bodies, member of civil society and the stakeholders²¹. The structure could be created with the aid of MGNREGA workers who are basically from the respective village.

5.3.5 (4) Citizen Service Centre (CSC): At every Gram Panchayat level

The CSC comprising of every department accompanied by Information official in the form of Centre and State scheme Awareness Information Person (CASSAIP) adjoining with Panchayat Office which is electronically linked with Central ministry and state Ministry of Panchayati Raj. CASSAIP should be belonging from the same village, Centre would be providing employment to the village person and refraining from asking transfer to the towns and capitals. It would help to provide information about the government Act and policy at general and in-depth level. The CSC has to be well equipped with the latest communication, information and internet technology.

²¹ Representative from each section would be placed in round table as it would be insufficient to hold all the stakeholders.

5.3.5 (5) Telecottage for E-Empowerment: At Ward Level/Single Village Level

It would help the villagers to be well connected and to be updated with the latest development in technology and policy for local governance. Through it every village should be well connected with the digital India campaign.

CSC should be added with Telecottage as it would help to promote e-Panchayat network, e-civil society network, online RTI, etc., by being the member of national portal in one hand and also utilizing the existing apps like facebook, twitter, linekdin, etc., utilized in sharing of information and sharing of experiences.

In these Panchayat can demand the funds for the installation of Computers and laptop (minimum 5 no. and 10 no. maximum), with wifi, high speed internet, employment of Resource Person belonging from the same village who has undergone computer training on both software and hardware and having knowledge of computer operation with internet. This could be done on the basis of 29 subjects provided on the Eleventh Schedule of 73rd Amendment Act in incorporating Poverty Alleviation Programme, Technical training and vocation education to the village, e-libraries etc. It would no doubt help the State to support the Centre for its ongoing scheme of making digital India. The state of Sikkim would be first to respond it by connecting its remotest part with the state capital and also the national capital.

5.3.5 (6) Separate Wing in the Department of Rural Development Dept. or Separate Dept. of Panchayati Raj:

It would directly connect the Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat and Panchayat President with the Panchayat Minister, Civil Society groups, Village level groups without the bureaucratic complexities. The wing will collect all the information regarding the development projects given to the various line departments to execute at the Rural level by the Centre and by the State about the nature of scheme, amount of money allocated, major objective and the target group, etc, its division among the various villages. The line department has to provide details of the scheme through its CASSAIP employed to its department on daily basis to the Panchayat dept.

It would prove to be one stop solution which would have its agency at the very lowest level that is at the village level in the form of Citizen Service Centre. In which recruitment of person who had studied and did their practical work in awaring citizen about the citizen friendly Act and the development scheme. Plus been in the member of village group for full term in school and or did their graduation in Local Governance and Empowerment in college. Done research in the Centre of Local Governance and Empowerment, at University level would be given first priority in job selection.

This Special wing would directly come under the Panchayat Minister and the CSC would totally digitalize the Information helping to reduce political capitalism and bureaucratic capitalism. Thus, such kind of initiative will also help in Prime Minister dream to digitalize India from centre to periphery, making governing process easy and effective where centre and periphery gap will reduce through breaking of geographical, psychological and information barrier.

5.4. SHORT TERM IMMEDIATE MEASURES (STIM):

Following are the STIM attempting to address the problems and challenges with suggestion and recommendation in the form of solutions. It tries to bring reform and new initiatives within the existing resources which could be implemented and executed within a short period of time.

5.4.1. Transfer of functioning of Public Distribution System to the Village Panchayat and Local Bodies i.e. SHG's and CCS:

Under the Eleventh Schedule inserted by the 73rd Amendment Act²² of the Indian Constitution distributes powers between State Legislature and the Panchayat where 29

²² It came in force in 25th April 1993, a historic moment in the Indian Democracy which gave constitutional authority to the Panchayat over the 29 subjects i.e. agricultural activities; land improvements; minor irrigation; animal husbandry; fisheries; social forestry; minor forest; small scale industries; *khadi*; rural housing; drinking water; roads; rural electrification; fuel and fodder; poverty alleviation programme; libraries; cultural activities; non-conventional energy; health and sanitation including hospitals, PHC, dispensaries; family welfare; maintenance of community assets; welfare of weaker sections; technical training; adult and non-formal education; markets and fairs; women and child development; Public Distribution System through Local Government in the form of Panchayat Raj Institutions. For more details Constitution of India, 73rd Amendment Act, 11th schedule.

activities have been bestowed to the Local Government Panchayat. In which Public Distribution System is also included in which Panchayat has given authority to distribute the rations which is provided by the Central and State Dept.

In Sikkim majority of Fair Price Shop are run by private owners. Most of the licenses are given in lease to the second party who basically runs the FPS for profit rather than welfare. Also many of the FPS licenses are in the name of individuals and their family i.e. wife and children who are wealthy in the form ministers, contractors 1st and 2nd class, government officials, etc., who are well off. Compared to many lower and middle class educated unemployed youth especially women in rural Sikkim. Thus, it becomes pertinent to revise and update existing FPS licenses.

So, that new licenses could be provided to those youth who are unemployed and urge them to work in a group. In return helping to reduce unemployment and distress but at the same time strengthen the society as a whole.

Panchayat has the role to distribute by himself or nominate to the local Self Help Groups (SHG's) and Consumer Cooperative Society (CCS) for the distribution of the subsidized rations comprising essential items in the form of Rice (L.S., Mansoorie etc). Wheat in the form of Atta, Sugar and Kerosene Oil. Thus, such kind of initiative would help to curb the leakage and diversion to open market. It would provide employment to the unemployed youth of the village in one hand and also to stop privatization of govt. owned shop. It is important to provide a separate cell for the CASSAIP for the frequent flow of information to the Panchayat Dept and from there to different Panchayat at the village level.

5.4.2. Utilisation of MGNREGA workers to strengthen PDS:

As for the NFSA 2013 the Govt. of India instructed for the better functioning of PDS at the lowest level to create Village Godown or the buffer stock Centre at the village level which would tackle in case of natural disaster, road blocks, manmade conflict, etc. The goal to provide allocation in advance in order to avoid shortage and also to reduce the wastage of rice and wheat in central pool which are being rotten in open or damaged done by the various agents.

The utilisation of MGNREGA workers by the Panchayat to build the Village Godown would be an important aspect in these where it would not only provide the employment to its rural population but also help the women community belonging from weaker sections to enhance their skill in STP programme.

5.4.3. Panchayat Bi-Annual Accountability Report (PBAAR) to Gram Sabha and Village Sabha level trying to bring better governance and public action:

Till now, there is negligible amount of transparency and accountability towards the people living in a rural community. Distribution of majority of the development and welfare scheme has took place in complete secrecy or with few groups by the Panchayat due to various reasons, thus creating an environment of suspicion and mistrust among the people.

However with PBAAR it would help to make the local body accountable and to be transparent toward the general people where their mistrust and suspicion would be removed. In the first report which has to be in line with the beginning of the financial year were budget has been allocated to the respective Panchayat. In which Panchayat has to write a report on the various schemes which has come for the village development and the targeted individual welfare scheme, total amount of funds coming up with the scheme, the various departments attached with the scheme, its prospective date to be implemented, its objective and its desired results etc.

Second report at the end of the financial year which could also be presented at the beginning of the next financial year has to contain about the progress and the results of the previous financial year its impact analysis. It would contain the utilisation of the funds, whom the funds were allotted at what rate, whom were consulted in the development scheme, how much commission charge were taken by the consulting agency, its record of transaction with the support of bill, how many village people got benefit through the scheme through employment or by other means, etc.

Such reports has to be kept open in public domain in Village Sabha (single village) first and then to the Gram Sabha (more than one village). The report has to be thoroughly checked by Inspection and Assessment Group at village level.

The PBAAR should also contain the hardship if any face by the Panchayat on economic, political and social sphere which should be brought to the public domain where stakeholders, civil society, village level group and the official providing technical support from various department could notice the problem and try to solve it so that similar hurdle wouldn't arrive in next development programme.

Thus, it will provide a deterrent tool to indulge a person in corrupt practices and making the system transparent. It would also provide the Right to Review for the people if they believe that the report is tampered or false, even though it has been checked or inspected by the Inspection and Advisory group at the village level. It could be further assessed by advisory group in the form of civil society which could check the report with the help of CSC and telecottage i.e. through e-civil society networking etc.

If found of involving in malpractices the Panchayat has to provide explanation in his defense, repay the governed funds and has to provide quarterly reports on its execution of works. It should be made available in public domain and should be reported at Ward Sabha on quarterly basis. It should be checked by local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and the village level. If continuous involvement in malpractices is found the Panchayat would be ban for contesting election for next 10 years.

5.4.4. Planning and Advisory Committee (PAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme:

Member: Selection through Village Sabha (single village) accompanied by Panchayat as an observer.

Eligibility: Person belonging to same village and has been living for past five years²³. They could be retired Teachers, retired Govt. employees, Former Panchayat, Youth (unemployed) Old Age, Students i.e. from class 10 and above.

²³ The person would be well attached with the ground and would know the environment of the village very well. It is also to restrict any new comer to directly intervene in the village works but can be member of Village Sabha or even the member of civil society in the village.

Member Composition: 7 members (Min) and 9 members (Max) out of which 1 seat each should be allocated for SC/ST, physically disable and women. If non presence of SC population than 2 seats would be allotted to ST and vice versa.

Term: 2-3 years (maximum). The term could be either extended for 1year i.e. 2+1 year for good work. It can be also minimized or member can be replaced based on Right to Review.

Term Limitation: Person cannot get continuous term but can be allowed to be a member after 1 term gap. Basically done to provide rotation policy/opportunity to serve village and to break monopoly/nepotism and most importantly to promote involvement of people in local governance as stake holders rather than only being beneficiaries.

Objective: To prepare plan for the village development. Also to propose various developments works in the form of urgent requirement of the village. Also to critically analyse the development scheme provided from the top level its feasibility towards the village. It can propose alternate development scheme which is best suited for the village.

Remuneration: Honorary Certificate plus shawl to be presented at 25th April of every year²⁴ after the full completion of membership for engaging in Panchayat Raj Institution. The certificate should contain sign of Panchayat of the village, eldest person of the village and Minister, Dept. of Panchayati Raj (State) for showing their appreciation towards the individual contribution on social service towards the village and its people. Most importantly induction into the Village Hall of Fame for their priceless contribution towards the village empowerment and development.

5.4.5. Fund Assessment Committee (FAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme:

Member: Selection through Village Sabha (single village) accompanied by Panchayat as an observer.

Eligibility: Person belonging to same village for past five years. Retired Teachers, Retired Govt. employees, Former Panchayat, Youth (unemployed), Students i.e. from std. 10 and above.

²⁴ The day in which 73rd Amendment Act came in force and Panchayat Raj got constitutional recognition.

Member Composition: 7 members (Min) and 9 members (Max) out of which 1 seat each should be allocated for SC/ST, physically disable and women. If non presence of SC population than 2 seats would be allotted to ST and vice versa.

Term: 2-3 years (maximum). The term could be either extended for 1year i.e. 2+1 year for good work. It can be also minimized or member can be replaced based on Right to Review.

Term Limitation: Person cannot get continuous term but can be allowed to be a member after 1 term gap. Basically done to provide rotation policy/opportunity to serve village and to break monopoly/nepotism and most importantly to promote involvement of people in local governance as stake holders rather than only being beneficiaries.

Objective: To check the allocation of funds and its utilization. To disclose the utilization of fund at the Village Sabha and Gram Sabha.

Remuneration: Honorary Certificate plus shawl to be presented at 25th April of every year²⁵ after the full completion of membership for engaging in Panchayat Raj Institution. The certificate should contain sign of Panchayat of the village, eldest person of the village and Minister, Dept. of Panchayati Raj (State) for showing their appreciation towards the individual contribution on social service towards the village and its people. Most importantly induction into the Village Hall of Fame for their priceless contribution towards the village empowerment and development.

5.4.6. Ward Level Local Vigilance Committee (WLLVC) for PDMRE and other scheme: (Reform)

Member: Selection through Village Sabha (single village) accompanied by Panchayat as an observer.

Eligibility: Person belonging to same village for past five years. Retired Teachers, Retired Govt. employees, Former Panchayat, Youth (unemployed), Students i.e. from std. 10 and above.

²⁵ The day in which 73rd Amendment Act came in force and Panchayat Raj got constitutional recognition.

Member Composition: 7 members (Min) and 9 members (Max) out of which 1 seat each should be allocated for SC/ST, physically disable and women. If non presence of SC population than 2 seats would be allotted to ST and vice versa.

Term: 2-3 years (maximum). The term could be either extended for 1year i.e. 2+1 year for good work. It can be also minimized or member can be replaced based on Right to Review.

Term Limitation: Person cannot get continuous term but can be allowed to be a member after 1 term gap. Basically done to provide rotation policy/opportunity to serve village and to break monopoly/nepotism and most importantly to promote involvement of people in local governance as stake holders rather than only being beneficiaries.

Objective: To check the delivery of the welfare scheme its arrival and distribution at the ground level, to check the scheme progress at the ground, to verify the beneficiaries for its eligibility, to inspect whether the scheme has reached or not, to check the prevalence of “no change” in the village and nearby towns. Lastly to provide report in form of findings at the Village Sabha and Gram Sabha.

Remuneration: Honorary Certificate plus shawl to be presented at 25th April of every year²⁶ after the full completion of membership for engaging in Panchayat Raj Institution. The certificate should contain sign of Panchayat of the village, eldest person of the village and Minister, Dept. of Panchayati Raj (State) for showing their appreciation towards the individual contribution on social service towards the village and its people. Most importantly induction into the Village Hall of Fame for their priceless contribution towards the village empowerment and development.

²⁶ The day in which 73rd Amendment Act came in force and Panchayat Raj got constitutional recognition.

5.4.7. Local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (LTMEC) at Village/Ward Level for PDMRE and other scheme:

Member: Selection through Village Sabha (single village) accompanied by Panchayat as an observer.

Eligibility: Person belonging to same village for past five years. Minimum Education std. 12 and above. Retired. Teachers, Retired. Govt. employees, Former Panchayat, Youth (educated unemployed), Students i.e. from std. 12 and above.

Member Composition: 7 members (Min) and 9 members (Max) out of which 1 seat each should be allocated for SC/ST, physically disable and women. If non presence of SC population than 2 seats would be allotted to ST and vice versa.

Term: 3-4 years (maximum). The term could be either extended for 1 year i.e. 4+1 year for good work. It can be also minimized or member can be replaced based on Right to Review and further scrutiny at the Village Sabha.

Term Limitation: Person cannot get continuous term but can be allowed to be a member after 1 term gap. Basically done to provide rotation policy/opportunity to serve village and to break monopoly/nepotism and most importantly to promote involvement of people in local governance as stake holders rather than only being beneficiaries.

Objective: To gather the data of the village people, and store information in hard and soft copy at the village level. Also, to target the individual who are eligible for the state and central welfare scheme through Citizen Service Centre (CSC), to monitor the service provided to the eligible individuals in the form of reporting whether the scheme has been reached or not, to evaluate the progress whether the scheme has enriched and enhanced its livelihood.

It would help to store data of socio-economic status of the villagers and keep in track about the development and most importantly to get an equal opportunity for the development of every individual of the village without being discriminated. Thus, with such step it would try to make the individual welfare policy more efficient and in the later phase the villagers would be more concerned about the village development over individual development to make the village self sufficient.

The data gathered should be easily available at Panchayat Office, CSC and Tele cottage to provide information to the general public at the village, zilla, district and state level. To know the progress of the economically weak individuals selected under the centre and state welfare scheme. To make individual progress report annually of the individuals selected at the Village Sabha.

Remuneration: Honorary Certificate plus shawl to be presented at 25th April of every year²⁷ after the full completion of membership for engaging in Panchayat Raj Institution. The certificate should contain sign of Panchayat of the village, eldest person of the village and Minister, Dept. of Panchayati Raj (State) for showing their appreciation towards the individual contribution on social service towards the village and its people. Most importantly induction into the Village Hall of Fame for their priceless contribution towards the village empowerment and development.

5.4.8. Awareness through Media: Print and Electronic format: (Weekly/Monthly)

["A newspaper in a modern democratic system is the fundamental basis of good government. It is the one means of educating people" Dr. Babasahab Ambedkar Writitng & Speeches in S.S. Baudh, Dr. Ambedkar Speaks, 2011].

Newspaper to be published on monthly basis by the Department Of Panchayati Raj on English and the local language. Should be available at every Panchayat Office, Village Library, Telecottage, school etc., where the paper totally covers on functioning of PRI's at village level dealing with awareness about the scheme, frequently updated from Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Centre) and Dept of Panchayati Raj/Rural Development Dept. (State).

Sharing of experiences from the states where Panchayati Raj is been functioning well especially of the state of Kerala, West Bengal and Karnataka. The signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Dept. of Panchayati Raj at the interstate level Exchange of ideas and innovation from other states working extensively

²⁷ The day in which 73rd Amendment Act came in force and Panchayat Raj Institutions got constitutional recognition.

towards deepening of democracy and its implementation based on its feasibility and applicability.

Such initiative it would help to bring a proper management system which would to some extent bring transparency, accountability at one level and also with the aid of these initiatives it would help to bring more masses as a stake holders being more aware about the various initiative done by the Government.

It would also help to promote civil societies at the village level. The stake holders would among themselves would come out to be part of civil society for the benefit for themselves and the group. The village level group and its member are some of the examples after their completion of tenure they would be in advisory group also being a part of civil society.

The usage of initiatives would provide monitoring and evaluation tools for better transparency, adequate accountability and proper advocacy at the grassroots. It would prove to be effective in both immediate and long term goals resulting in ensuring food security and livelihood security. It would provide an environment to overcome obstacles in the form of unawareness about the scheme and illiteracy in one hand and incorporation of common people as stakeholders.

Lastly, the formation of civil society groups by the villagers would play an important role. It would help in working for the development of villages by being advisors to the village level groups. Group which act as bridge between the government and the people informing about the latest development affecting the village.

5.4.9. Enhancing Consumer Protection for Livelihood and Food Security: A Dilemma of “Keep the Change” and “No Change”

The western notion of “Keep the Change” in the developed world in providing tip to the service provider by a consumer to the various service agencies are taking toll in the form of “No Change” in the developing world especially to the economically deprived population and especially those living in the rural areas.

In recent time there is general trend adopted by the merchants, shopkeeper dealing with selling of various products to exploit consumers by not providing the required amount of

change to the customers. They provide goods in terms of change against the consumer wishes by stating there is “no change” despite having change. If customer resist then he is either symbolized as greedy or having no money especially when there is presence of women in the counter, psychologically impacting the male ego. However the sellers don't expect similar strategy from consumer while buying goods and providing same commodities. It is very much in contradiction to the Consumer Protection Act 1986.

Thus, such kind of exploitation might look to be miniscule in nature it has a great impact on the rural population and especially the population living in Below Poverty Line (BPL) affecting in their food and livelihood security. Where the goods are sold above maximum retail price (mrp) by giving reasons like transport and labour cost etc., The people of the rural areas especially the economically deprive or the “have not's” who laboriously undergo to earn a penny for sustaining livelihood for themselves and the family are exploited by the business class.

Thus, to protect the already exploited consumer of urban and rural areas and especially the economically weak class the intervention in Consumer Protection Act is essential. The state should intervene by prioritising the welfare of the Consumer by asking the sellers to adhere rules like as follows:

- i) To provide the required amount of change to the consumer,
- ii) To have adequate amount of change in the counter for their daily transaction i.e. minimum one thousand coins in the cash in a single month,
- iii) To have common consent prior to providing commodities in place of change,
- iv) Consumer could provide the same commodities in return if there is lack of change to the seller. Here the commodities should not be tampered,
- v) Setting up of Consumer Protection Vigilant Personnel on adhoc and voluntarily base, whose duty is to check whether the shop has adequate coins for change, to receive grievances from consumer of similar cases. The personnel could be replaced when fails to execute its duties, where there is overwhelming grievances on the change matter.

5.4.10. “I CARE MY SIKKIMESE” Initiative:

Many of the PDS quotas of Rice and Atta in the state especially in urban areas are not lifted by the APL beneficiaries due to reasons like some of them prefer to consume high grade rice, some due to health reasons as they suffer from diabetes, some don't even bother to lift due to miniscule quota of 2kg, some due to its poor quality and some due to unavailability. Such unlifted quota gets diverted to open market with double price.

Thus, it would be significant step if the government would start “I CARE MY SIKKIMESE” initiative²⁸ which would be bringing Sikkimese people to come together in similar track with “Give it Up²⁹” campaign accompanied with PAHAL or also known as Direct Benefit Transfer introduced by the Central Government.

But these would be on PDS Rice and Atta where the quota of volunteers would be given to Orphanage Home, Old Age Home, Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre, HIV and AIDS Centre and Mamtalaya in the one hand and to those individual who have more than five and plus family members with sole bread earner, destitute, individual who are involved in unskilled works who have children. Thus, it would be touching both at the institute level and the Individual level.

In order to bring transparency and accountability in such initiative and clear doubt to the volunteers who have been part of the “I CARE MY SIKKIMESE” initiative. Their name should be updated online and be made visible in the Food and Civil Supplies Department (FCSD) web page portal and also in the Facebook FCSD Group page and the Chief Minister web page portal. Displaying the names of the volunteers who have shown

²⁸ A mission which promises to help a Sikkimese by the fellow Sikkimese helping to build fraternity, brotherhood and unity in Sikkim.

²⁹“Give it Up” campaign initiated by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Govt. of India to encourage well to do household to give up the LPG for the benefit of the poor families by replacing fossil fuels in the form of charcoal, firewood, cow dung etc. It provides the volunteers with certain privileges after being part of the campaign these are i. LPG consumer who gives up LPGA subsidy will be informed about the details of the BPL consumer who gets a LPG connection in turn. ii. All LPG consumers who give up their subsidy will be sent appreciation letters iii. Consumers, once having given up their LPG subsidy, can rejoin and avail subsidy only after one year from the date of giving up the LPG subsidy source: www.giveitup-policy-csr.com, notification no.P-20019/25/2015-LPG, ministry of petroleum and natural gas, govt. of India, 12th May 2014.

care for their fellow Sikkimese and also providing the transaction of the allocated quota monthly in the web page in the one hand and through mobile message on the other.

Through such step it would make the department to be more accountable and transparent through frequent updating their portal and face book group page. It would connect the aid giver and aid receiver by their contact no. displayed in the department portal and facebook group page. It would strongly support the government motto of digitalize India in order to bring “Accountability and Transparency” in the one hand and to fight “Corruption” at the other hand.

Thus, such initiative would also provide platform for RTR through RTI to check if there are any loopholes or malpractices by the bureaucracy to bring more advocacies among the masses. Therefore, such policies would enable a humanist approach in the present materialistic world which would also support the agenda of positive peace in the form of “harmony” which is promoted by Galtung by being happy or joyful from the happiness of others.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

Post cold war the term Human Security came into prime notice at the global forum. The idea basically supported the idea of human face of development over state security, in which “Individual” was the centre of focus. Thus, in the new millennium human irrespective of citizenship, religion, gender, colour, creed, race etc. should be free from fear and want and to be able to live in dignity. Such could only be possible with the coming of all the countries of the world in one common platform, to make world a better place to live in. United Nations provided such a platform through its UNDP Report of 1994.

The Human Development Report promoted nontraditional security in the form of Human Security. A goal which every state should strive to achieve and these could be achieved systematically by framing policy toward seven dimension of Human Security in the form of Economic Security, Environmental Security, Food Security, Political Security, Community Security, Personal Security and Cultural Security by the member.

Out of the seven dimensions reduction of poverty and hunger was one of the prime millennium development goals. So, it made the Food security one of the significant security issue among Human Security in the 21st century. Poverty not only created income insecurity but also led to hunger and malnutrition.

Most food insecure states belonged to the developing and under developing countries esp. Africa and South Asia. India has a second largest population and shares about 17.5 percent of the world population in which more than 300 million populations are living below poverty line. Malnutrition exists in most of the Indian states, which occurs in both urban and rural areas, especially the latter which is living in the remote areas and distant from market with lack of basic facilities.

Though some respite was provided by the Green revolution of 1960's-80's, which made the Indian state self sufficient in foodgrain production. Its heat is slowly dying out due to over pressure in the land, over utilisation of water and fertilizers for the greater

output and encroachment of private and state funded projects in agricultural lands in one hand and unstable monsoon on the other has started to show its effect on the people engaged in agriculture. They have either being submerged in debt crisis leading to poverty and others have started to give up the agriculture by selling their land and moving towards urban areas.

Due to poverty and hunger many people residing in the rural areas are migrating towards the urban areas in order to secure better livelihood conditions. However, by doing such new slum areas has been created in nearby cities and inside cities, making condition worse for the people who have migrated.

In order to solve hunger, poverty and migration strengthening agriculture sector is must. Agriculture security is one of the bases of food security until and unless the policies that specifically prioritize the agriculture sector especially in its various aspects like the foodgrain production, farmer's protection, adequate minimum support price, its tactful management of foodgrain in central pool, state warehouses, district and villages.

At the same time inclusion of dried lands, building of agriculture related assets especially targeting the small and marginal landed farmers, health insurance scheme for farmers, revising of act which makes farming vulnerable and providing employment with decent wage in the rural areas especially for the farming community in the off season. Such initiative would not only strengthen the agriculture sector, it would also create psychological safety nets making farmers to engage in agriculture sector and it would also help the state in its welfare measures of PDMRE.

Indian Constitution through its Directive Principle of State Policy provides guidelines to the state to frame welfare policy which would help to bring up the living standard. In which Article 41 and 47 becomes prominent when it comes providing basic necessities in the form of food and work.

Though financial limits of the state might be the issue in executing such duties but it should not be the sole obstacle. So innovative policy and transparent administrative system is required for the welfare scheme to be implemented to ensure food and livelihood security.

Implementation of PDMRE in India and Sikkim has both ups and downs by being the largest welfare scheme in the world. It has yet to achieve its desired result due to Insufficient Agricultural Production, Unemployment specifically in rural areas and Poverty, are highly interrelated elements which affect the livelihood opportunities and specifically food security at the national and at state level.

Apart from flawed method of capturing poverty, corruption, lack of transparency, caste based discrimination, gender based discrimination, illiteracy, remoteness of area, unawareness about the basic right, unawareness about right to information act (RTI), religious based belief, political victimization, monopoly of privileged group etc. where the major problem in implementation of the PDMRE scheme which could not led to cent percent outcome.

In Sikkim similar problem arises in PDMRE: Firstly, in PDS it faces problems in implementation like delay of rations from godown and later from FPS, unavailability of rations, no inspection from food inspectors or the officials from concerned department leading to malpractices, FPS not abiding by the rules of displaying Name plate board, rate board.

By accident if rate board is displayed there is no update of recent PDS rate, Free of Cost Rice beneficiaries has to pay money in the form of transport cost, allocation of Atta to the beneficiaries is almost negligible, no distribution of salt takes place to the beneficiaries and FPS has to bear all the transport cost with negligible support from the department.

Secondly, in MGNREGA implementation it faces problems like implementation of contractors in MGNREGA i.e. to finish work on short period of time, utilisation of JCB in making roads with the consent of the MGNREGA workers of the village, delay in wage payment which takes 6 months and sometimes takes 1year, entering names of the family members and extended family members by Panchayat, GRS and Supervisor who doesn't work but gets paid. Sometimes this wage is divided between the individual and the person who has enrolled his name in register. Supply of low class materials has been also one of the major problems as it would effect in the quality and durability of the asset created.

Inspite of such constraints it also have a positive side of implementation of PDMRE both at national and state more population are enjoying some sort of subsidies rations and unskill wage employment. More people are involving themselves in the scheme either directly and indirectly. Women participation in this scheme has been quite positive.

The scheme has made new policy to be implemented like more demand of grain store houses, end to end computerisation, implementation of NFSA to solve problem of food insecurity, coming of new work to material ratio 51:49 percent which targets towards building rural assets. Thus, it directly brings new rules and regulations for institute development but at the same time indirectly makes the general population aware of their rights.

The government of Sikkim in order to make the PDMRE more feasible has converged it with the state scheme in the form Sikkim Organic Mission (SOM) Sikkim Jayvek Abhyaan, Chief Minister Food Security Mission (CMFSM) Mukhya Mantri Khadya Suraksha Abhyaan. Chief Minister Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) Mukhya Mantri Grameen Awaas Abhyaan (as explained in Chapter. 3). Thus, PDMRE scheme has been innovatively implemented for better utilisation which would support its people.

6.1. EFFECTIVENESS AND CHALLENGES OF PDMRE AT THE VILLAGE, DISTRICT AND STATE LEVEL

These findings are basically coming from the field study conducted among the 12 villages of 4 districts of Sikkim where a total sample size of 240 were collected. Data collected through stratified random sampling and interview schedule (explained in Chapter 4). Major objective of this section was to know the effectiveness of PDMRE scheme toward the beneficiaries and its major challenges.

Effectiveness:

- The PDMRE scheme was a significant part of village population as most of the population resided in rural remote areas.
- Compared to other central and state government scheme PDMRE was more visible to them as it provided the beneficiaries some sort of material i.e. edible

items and cash. In which they have to continuously visit outlets in the form of FPS and *Khand Vikas Karyalay*. It had to some extent made them aware about the scheme compared to other central and state scheme.

- PDMRE scheme has helped the beneficiaries to provide some sort of economic security and food security for its families.
- The scheme has helped the beneficiaries especially belonging to BPL and AAY category to consume high protein diet in the form of meat.
- The scheme has provided children of the beneficiaries to attend private tuitions and to buy school stationeries. Even though most of the beneficiaries are illiterate, the scheme has generated self belief among them to make their children well educated.
- It made the women group of the village more emancipate and empowered. It is providing the women to participate socially, economically and politically through Social audit in Gram Sabha about the works of the scheme, delay of wage, demand of the works, and untimely distribution of food grains. As in most cases women are involved in both scheme they go to fetch PDS rations, there is presence of women in majority of MGNREGA sites.
- It has made women to form Self Help Groups at the village level due to continuous interaction of the women groups at MGNREGA. Some sort of social bonds has been created at the village level, it has created a public sphere for women.
- The scheme is providing base in the form of being FPS owner, MGNREGA supervisor, GRS to the women. Now with continuous meeting with its village people there has been development in personality, communication skills creating positive vibe in the village. Such environment is creating the ambition among women to become Panchayat, Panchayat President, Zilla Adhakysha, Member of Legislative Assembly there is every possibility in the near future there will be women Chief Minister in the state of Sikkim.
- Compare to other scheme PDMRE scheme is quite unique because it binds the village in a group. For instance delay in PDS rations in FPS means a certain groups in the villages would not get rations on time. Similarly, delay in wage

would make village people not to get timely wage for their work which they have finished. Thus, in both the cases creating some sort of Awareness Communication at village level.

For instance recent impact of Awareness Communication especially in the wage employment is the role played by MGNREGA workers especially women groups to initiate action plan due to delay in wage payment which almost cross a year this was *Jung Khand Vikas Karyalay Ghearung* in Sombaria, West Sikkim and *Jung Zilla Karyalay Ghearung* in Mangan, North Sikkim.

It's no doubt to say that "money matters" especially when it is hard earned but also it gives some sense that it's providing a new approach in Deeping democracy at the grassroot level where people is demanding their right. Similar sort of more right demand should emerge from people to make them realize that they are the real master and the bureaucrats and politicians are mere service provider.

- The wage employment schemes provided innovative thinking to promote traditional skill of bamboo weaving for making basket to carry loads in the site and in some surveyed site black tea were provided for the workers who were working under MGNREGA. Person bought salt, sugar and tea leaves from their own money and the person by doing these work, they earned one day wage.

Especially in black tea making was done in rotation bases. It not only shows humanist approach of dignity of labour but also makes a joyful environment to work in the development of village in the form of *Afnu Goan Afai Banao*¹ through the scheme.

Challenges:

- The poor involvement of the Food and Civil Supplies Department and Rural Management Development Department in awareness and inspection. Thus, creating communication gap between the primary stake holders i.e. beneficiaries, the secondary stake holders i.e. FPS, Godown Incharge, Panchayat and Supervisor

¹A motto promoted by the honourable Chief Minister of Sikkim in order to develop the villages of rural areas.

and the tertiary stake holders i.e. KVA, District Civil Supplies Officer (DCSO), Food Inspector etc.

- In PDMRE scheme there is negligible official inspection at the grassroots level by the department personnel. Depends more on secondary stake holders for information in which primary state holders cannot put grievances due to various reasons like remoteness, victimization, lack of information about the department and the official to contact etc. Thus, lack of accountability from the side of the line departments, creating vacuum for malpractices.
- Delay in wage and subsidies rations in the remote villages has been one of the serious problems. As it makes villagers to slowly lose interest in the wage working in the one hand falling into credit crises.
- Above 20 per cent of the population mostly BPL and AAY category from each district are being in dual credit crisis. This dual credit crisis occurs in two ways first credit is from lifting from private where commodities rate are higher and the second is the FPS rations where they have to manage anyhow to lift off their allocated no matter what time it arrives in FPS or CCS.
- The unavailability of whole sale shop or shop which provides goods at discount rate at the village level, GPU level or even at the constituency level. In opposite to that the grocery store charges extra in the name of transport and labour cost. Thus, minimum wage earned through scheme is expended high in food items and less chances to save in banks or in piggy bank by the villagers.
- One common challenge faced in PDMRE scheme is in the monsoon time. Firstly, in PDS rations rice are pathetic and sugar they get is wet and Atta gets spoil within a week as it gets hard and tied and smells salty its straight away goes to pig and cattle feed.

Secondly, there has been a clash between the MGNREGA work and the agriculture season. Most of the villagers didn't found enough labour in times to sow seeds, weeding and in harvesting time due to simultaneous work going in MGNREGA. Thus, it created dilemma for the worker whether to go for agriculture labour or to go do MGNREGA work if they fail to go later there was every chance of cutting their name from scheme list.

- Though there is presence of member of Local Vigilance Committee at the village level for checking and monitoring the central and state schemes of PDMRE. The LVC committee set up at GPU level is not functioning well. Thus, most of the rural people are unaware about the Local Vigilance Committee.
- Most of people are unaware about the RTI which is a significant tool to aware the people about the PDMRE scheme, about its working and benefits. It makes service provider i.e. department, grassroot level agencies to be more Accountable and Transparent towards to whom the service is meant for i.e. the service owner.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOOD SECURITY AND VILLAGE EMPOWERMENT

At the grassroot level the scenario was of worrisome as no single village meeting or Ward Sabha took place. Gram Sabha in rarest cases took place more than thrice a year. Few villages had Gram Sabha quarterly in a year. It is also to notice that due to MGNREGA social audit and Gram Sabha was organised, in which they had a dialogue especially when it came to its wage and its works.

Most of the beneficiaries were illiterate and some had education till primary and secondary level. Lack of being educated proved to be major problem in being aware about the various scheme. There was negligible discussion on development programme that took place in the village/ward level. Most of the time policy, planning and decision were taken among few individuals. Disclosure of budget in Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha level by the Panchayat is negligible.

It becomes important to come up with solutions. So, the following section would contain steps in the form of Long Term/Effective Measures (LTEM) and Short Term/Immediate Measures (STIM). The former tries to bring new rules, regulations and institute in the form of asset² which would require additional resources and would take time and the latter tries to bring new rules and regulation within the existing resources which could be implemented and executed within a short period of time.

² Many of the assets in the form of rural infrastructure could be created with the aid of MGNREGS and its worker. It would also support the present central government initiative to promote on asset building for rural development.

LTEM and STIM would have an overarching effect to link social, economic and political dimension for providing rural transformation. It would focus on village empowerment at general and food security in particular at the grass root level.

Long Term Effective Measures:

- Right to Review (RTR) at the administrative level (Department and Panchayat).
- Skill Training in Practice (STP) at ground level empowering women folks.
- Awareness through Education Institution (AEI) by converging the Ministry of HRDD and Institute like UGC and ICSSR for Aware Rural India:
- Healthy Village is Food Secure Village.
- Infrastructure for Local Governance:
 - i) Village Meeting Ground.
 - ii) Setting up of Organic Health Medication Centre or Jeevik Swasth Upchaar Kendra.
 - iii) Establishing Panchayat Office at every ward/single village level.
 - iv) Setting up of Citizen Service Centre (CSC) at every Gram Panchayat level.
 - v) Setting up of Telecottage for E-Empowerment at Village Level.
- Setting up of Separate Wing in the Department of Rural Development Dep. or setting up of Separate Dept. of Panchayati Raj.

Short Term Immediate Measures:

- Transfer of functioning of Public Distribution System at the grassroot to the Village Panchayat:
- Utilisation of MGNREGA workers to strengthen PDS.
- Panchayat Bi-Annual Accountability Report (PBAAR) to Gram Sabha and Village Sabha level trying to bring better governance and public action.
- Planning and Advisory Committee (PAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme.
- Fund Assessment Committee (FAC) at Village Level for PDMRE and other scheme.

- Ward Level Local Vigilance Committee (WLLVC) for PDMRE and other scheme: (Reform)
- Local Targeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (LTMEC).
- Awareness through Media: Print and Electronic format: (Weekly/Monthly).
- Enhancing Consumer Protection for Livelihood and Food Security: A Dilemma of “Keep the Change” and “No Change”.
- “I Care My Sikkimese” initiative.

Thus, Long Term/Effective Measures (LTEM) and Short Term/Immediate Measures (STIM) focuses on bringing Transparency, Accountability and Advocacy through continuous monitoring and evaluation of the scheme and the service provider (further explained in Chapter 5). It also promises to bring Responsibility through Public action among the rural people at the grassroots level.

- Implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 would be an important opportunity to weed out the ghost cards, to solve inclusion and exclusion errors, to properly target those populations who are food insecure and the potential population who can be food insecure group’s especially pvt. labour, manual scavengers, traditional healers, rural farmers, the person sole bread earner who is working as an unskilled labour.

The scheme would also help to identify the AAY beneficiaries and to provide support through other central and state schemes targeted toward its welfare and upliftment. Thus, making the beneficiaries self reliant through skill enhancement, durable house and decent employment. Apart from it, it would also help to strengthen the destitute, old age person whose children have left them or no longer staying with them to provide monthly old age pension, disability pension etc. of the financial assistance fund from the centre and state.

- Manual Scavengers has been the most neglected group when it comes to food security. They need a fair treatment from both state governments and NGO’s. As these manual scavengers also indirectly helps in the growth of GDP by collecting waste in the form of plastic, bottles and metal from drainage, canals etc. They indirectly help to clean the surroundings and reduce the chances of spreading of

communicable diseases like malaria. It would prevent person to fall sick and effect in its services or on the pattern of consumption which is accountable in GDP. A state should provide a separate quota and build a system of purchasing of PDS rations for this group where they can easily access the rations.

- States in the form of Chhattisgarh has been able to bring accountability and transparency by coming up with smart initiative. In which de-privatisation of FPS, mobile alert messages are provided by Dept. of Food to Panchayat and the Opposition leader of the Panchayat where every detail of PDS rations leaving from distributor i.e. agency, FCI, to FPS, Cooperative are tracked. Similar lessons can be learned and utilized by the Sikkim government by interacting with official of Chhattisgarh government and technology sharing.

In Sikkim mobile alert message could be sent to village Panchayat and FPS at the one hand and to the member of Local Village Vigilance Group(as explained in Chapter 5 subheading 5.1.2 [F]) to bring better communication, transparency and accountability among the agency and primary stake holders.

- Scheme Awareness and Enhancing Consumer Protection Act (as explained in Chapter 5) should be the top most priority through different medium like Consumer Awareness Day, Gram Sabha, Social Audit, skit play about scheme and its benefits at important festive season where there is larger number of people presentation like Maghe Sankranti, village fun fair, organic festival, Independence day etc., converging with school, student volunteers helping in their grade through CCE. Establishment of separate grievances cells in Food Dept. in every district as well as online redressal system for PDS beneficiaries.
- There is negligible allocation of Atta to the FPS and similarly negligible liftoff by beneficiaries from FPS. So, allocated quota of wheat could be exchanged with rice of those states which consumes more wheat. Stopping import of wheat from FCI and used the concerned budget in aiding the beneficiary to get PDS rice for BPL and AAY in its actual rate and person availing free of cost rice don't have to pay a penny for the transport cost. The state could replace wheat by chana dal and provide it to Old age home, Orphan home and Destitute home and Mamtalay.

At the same time state can fully utilise Atta through “I CARE MY SIKKIMESE” initiative by providing it to the welfare homes as mentioned above or it could provide it to Government Hospitals, where through its kitchen staff could provide Atta Roti in summer and Atta *Kowriee* in winter or in both season to the patient.

- Inspection from the PDMRE officials i.e. Food and Civil Supplied Dept and Rural Management Development Dept.
 - a) Frequent checking of FPS and MGNREGA sites by Dept. officials.
 - b) Strict penalties against the FPS and Supervisor/GRS if found guilty.
 - c) Mandatory field visit of food inspector, KVA and their supporting officials to every FPS and MGNREGA site especially in mid week of the month .
 - d) Visiting people one to one in the form of field visit minimum four times in a year. Meeting people in Gram Sabha interacting just being an ordinary people rather than by being as officials.
 - e) Hot line no. to be set up by the PDMRE officials who are direct incharge of the scheme and the no. should be widely distributed through various avenues. One person should be kept incharge for the Hot line no. where he could enter the grievances and should provide anonymity to the beneficiaries if the person desires. It would be different from the Consumer Helpline as it would especially deal with the PDMRE scheme and it would allow the person to remain anonymous as the person wishes.
- Shuffling of District Civil Supplies Officer (DCSO), Depot Incharge, Godown incharge and its assistant staff working in godown every 2-3 years. In maximum they should be entitled for 3-4 tenures³ as a Godown in-charge in their entire service. They would be eligible to be DCSO, Godown in-charge and its assistant staff only after completion of five years of administrative work in Food department. They are eligible to continue only after successful completion of administrative work as mentioned above.

³ Each tenure consisting of 2 years in minimum and maximum 3 years.

It is basically done in order to curtail malpractices, post influence over FPS, CCS and more importantly to provide responsible and transparent secondary stake holders.

- Lack of awareness about Right to Information (RTI) Act, although the Act was passed in the year 2005. Almost 10 years has passed still 68 per cent of the population of the surveyed area being unaware about the RTI Act of 2005. It happens to be a significant tool provided by the Indian government apart from 73rd Amendment Act⁴, which provides a system for the masses to be empowered and to be an aware citizen. RTI help the people not only to be informed about the centre and state schemes but also to query of any unfair means or malpractices the service provider is involved in while providing service.

Thus, awareness through various forums should be provided at the lowest level like Ward Sabha, Gram Sabha, Consumer Awareness Day, Awareness programme etc., about the importance of the RTI and its utilisation by RTI specialist and teachers and Individuals who knows about RTI and who has applied it practically.

Lastly the major challenges in ensuring food security at the local level are Lack of PDMRE Scheme Awareness to demand full right according to the Act towards the service provider. Lack of knowledge about the RTI Act rules and regulations, it is a major tool to make service provider accountable for its duties. Panchayat and local bodies are unaware about 73rd Amendment Act as it provides not only to ensure food security at the village level but also many functions for the welfare and development of its rural people.

Illiteracy among the beneficiary is proving to be a major stumbling block but it shouldn't be a sole reason for not getting his rights. Remoteness of Area is one of the major concerns which is creating information and communication gap making a village unaware about the recent developments in the science, technology, health and service

⁴ The Act passed in 1992 promotes decentralization of powers at the grassroot level through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI's).

sector. Bureaucracy still is in la-la land of colonial set up where they still feel they are “master” and general people are the “servant”.

At the same time they believe that they are doing “favour” to the people which actually it is their “service” for which they are paid, from the public direct and indirect tax⁵. In which Sikkim stands at 8th position in paying indirect tax to Indian government. Lack of basic facilities especially in health and care services, the people living in rural remote areas see urban areas especially Gangtok and its surrounding areas as an “Elysium” a near perfect place to live in, creating an environment of migration among second generation of the rural farming communities, by giving up farming, horticulture and floriculture activities.

It would not only affect the agriculture, horticulture and floriculture sectors but it would also set a negative mentality of viewing rural area as backward and traditional and urban area as modern and civilised having all sorts of facilities by the rural population. Large amount of Multi National Companies (MNC’s) and Domestic Private Companies has set up their business in the state of Sikkim in the form of Sun Pharmaceutical, Chemical, Industrial & Pharmaceutical Laboratories (Cipla), National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC), Vodafone, Testa Urja, Yuksom Beverages and many more. Company’s role in Corporate Social Responsibility⁶ (CSR) in developing the human resource by creating assets in rural areas apart from giving tax to the state.

A thorough research is required in this area in knowing the role of companies in providing basic facilities to the people of rural Sikkim or to the rural place adjoining to its

⁵ Sikkim is among top 10 indirect tax paying states standing in 8th position above Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Compare Infobase Limited (An ISO 9001:2000 Certified Company) Copyright 2015, All rights reserved, <http://www.mapsofindia.com/top-ten/india-finance/indirect-taxes.html>

⁶ Ministry of Corporate Affairs has recently notified Section 135 and Schedule VII of the Companies Act as well as the provisions of the *Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014* (CRS Rules) which has come into effect from 1 April 2014. *Applicability*: Section 135 of the Companies Act provides the threshold limit for applicability of the CSR to a Company i.e. (a) net worth of the company to be Rs 500 crore or more; (b) turnover of the company to be Rs 1000 crore or more; (c) net profit of the company to be Rs 5 crore or more. Further as per the CSR Rules, the provisions of CSR are not only applicable to Indian companies, but also applicable to branch and project offices of a foreign company in India. *CSR Committee and Policy*: Every qualifying company requires spending of at least 2% of its average net profit for the immediately preceding 3-financial years on CSR activities. <http://www.mondaq.com/india/x/366528/Corporate+Governance/Corporate+Social+Responsibility+Indian+Companies+Act+2013>

facilities. It will not only make the state and private companies more transparent and accountable towards the citizens but also ensure food security, livelihood security and village development of the remotest rural area.

So, it becomes important that apart from converting urban areas into “smart cities” it is also important to make the rural area where the true Sikkim resides with its 73 percent of population a “sustainable village” of future. The dream of “sustainable village” can become true if we can address the problem rationally and by implementing LTEM and STIM approach which would not only help to overcome the challenges but also make people to become citizens. Thus, Ensuring food security and livelihood security at the lowest level which requires mutual cooperation between the State, NGO’s, Local bodies, Civil Society and Individuals.

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ANNEXURE I

Household Questionnaire/Interview Schedule

No-1/Yes-2

1. Name of the Village: _____.
2. Total no. of member in the household _____.
3. Caste Category: B/L _____; MBC _____; OBC _____; SC _____; ST _____.
4. Religion: Buddhism _____; Hinduism _____; Christianity _____; Muslim _____; Others _____.
5. Respondent details:

Gender	Age		Educational Qualification		Nature of occupation		Monthly Income	
	M	15-20		Nil		Agriculture activities		Below 3000
20-30			Primary		Non- Agri activities		3000-5000	
F	30-40		High Secondary		Govt. Job		5000-10000	
	40-50							
	50-60		Senior Secondary		Pvt. Job		10000-15000	
O	60 above		Graduate		Business		Above 15000	

6. Do you avail PDS rations from Fair Price Shop (FPS) (No=1/Yes=2) _____

If Yes. How far is the FPS from your home: i. below .5 km ____ ii. .5-1km ____ iii. 1-2 km ____ iv. 2-3 km ____ v. above 3km ____.

If No. what are its reasons: _____.

7. Frequency of visit to the FPS?

i. Once a month _____

ii) Twice a month _____

iii) Thrice a month _____

iv) above Thrice a month _____

8. Do FPS display the following;

- i. BPL & AAY list? (No=1/Yes=2)_____
- ii. Stock Position/Samples? (No=1/Yes=2)_____
- iii. Retail issue prices? (No=1/Yes=2)_____
- iv. Opening and closing timing of shop? (No=1/Yes=2)_____
- v. Display Notice for authority for redressal of grievances?
(No=1/Yes=2)_____

9. Do your FPS dealers inform you about the arrival of food stock? (No=1/Yes=2)_____

10. During which week of month is ration usually available in FPS?

- i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week _____

11. At the time of purchasing your rations do you have enough money to access the rations allotted for you? (No=1/Yes=2)_____

If No. What are its reasons:-

- i. _____
- ii. _____

12. What was the ration you received from FPS dealer:-

Item	Rate/kg/ltr	November	December	January
Rice				
Atta				
Sugar				
Kerosene Oil				

13. Which commodity is regularly purchased?

- i) Rice _____ ii) Atta _____ iii) Sugar _____ iv) Kerosene oil _____.

14. Are you satisfied with the quality of ration you receive? (No=1/Yes=2)_____ If 'No' which commodity._____

15. How many days does your food stock last?

- i) 10-14 days _____ ii) 15-20 days _____
- ii) 21-25 days _____ iv) 26-30 days _____

Is it insufficient _____ b) Is it sufficient _____.

16. Consumption and Expenditure pattern (Food purchased and Money used)

S.No	Item	Quantity Required	Qty. meet from PDS	Qty. Meet from market	Total Expenditure
1	Rice				
2	Pulses/Dal				
3	Sugar				
4	Oil				
5	Atta				
6	K.oil				
5	Meat items				
6	Others				

17. Apart from FPS where else do you purchase other food stocks?

i. Open Market _____ ii. Whole sale shop _____ iii. Other _____.

18. Do you own land? (No=1/Yes=2) _____

If Yes then

i. Less than 1 acre _____ ii. 1-2 acre _____ iii. 3-4 acre _____ iv. 4-5 acre _____
v. More than 5 acre _____.

19. What do you usually cultivate in your land?

Production in kg.

Sl. No	Summer Crop	Production	Winter Crop	Production
1				
2				
3				
4				

20. If you have any problem with quality and quantity of food items whom do you complain to?
 i)FPS _____ ii) Panchayat _____ iii) Food Dept. _____ iv) Others _____.
21. Have you ever met any official to complain about anything?
 (No=1/Yes=2) _____
 Do they look into the problem seriously (No=1/Yes=2) _____
22. Have you been working under MGNREGA scheme? (No=1/Yes=2) _____
23. Apart from working in the scheme what other jobs you do? _____.
24. What is the daily wage rate you are entitled _____.
25. Is the payment done regularly? (No=1/Yes=2) _____.
 If 'No' what is the delay time (months) i. 15-1 _____ ii. 1-2 _____ iii. 2-3 _____ iv. 3-4 _____ v. above 5 months _____.
 what _____ are _____ its reasons _____.
26. Do you personally keep account of the daily worked/employed?
 (No=1/Yes=2) _____.
 If Yes. Then in what way? i. Dairy noting _____ ii. Calendar Marking _____ iii. Other _____
27. Total No. of days worked/employed under the scheme. i. 50-65days _____ ii. 65-75 days _____ iii. 75-85days _____ iv. 85-95 days _____ v. 100 days _____.
28. What is the method for obtaining job card? i.Plain paper _____ ii. Orally _____ iii. Door to Door Survey _____ iv. Gram Sabah _____.
29. Custodian of Job card. i. Self _____ ii. Panchayat _____ iii. Supervisor _____ iv. GRS _____ v. Other _____.
30. No. of female workers engaged in the scheme. i. 10-15 _____ ii. 15-20 _____ iii. 20-30 _____ iv. Above 30 _____.
31. Role of female workers in the scheme i. Supervisor _____ ii. Carpenter _____ iii. Cheif Mason _____ iv. Worker _____.
32. No. of disable person working in the scheme esp. women i. One _____ ii. 2-3 _____ iii. 5-10 _____ iv. Above 10 _____.

33. Wage earned in MGNREGA is used in: i. Buying Food items ____ ii. Purchasing household items ____ iii. Personal Expenditure ____ iv. On children education ____ v. Other ____.
34. If you have any problem with the working of MGNREGA who do you complain to?
 i) Panchayat ____ ii) Supervisor ____ iii) Gram Sabah ____ iv) BDO/Khanda Vikas Adhikari ____ v. Other ____.
35. Have you ever met any official to complain about anything?
 (No=1/Yes=2)_____
 Do they look into the problem seriously (No=1/Yes=2) _____
36. How many times Gram Sabah take place in a year? i.Once ____ ii. Twice ____ iii. Thrice ____ iv. Quaterly____ v. Nil ____.
37. How many times you have attended it? i.1 ____ ii. 2 ____ iii. 3 ____ iv. 4 ____ v. Nil ____.
38. How many times Ward Sabah/ Village Meeting take place in a year? i.Once ____ ii. Twice ____ iii. Thrice ____ iv. Quaterly____ v. Nil ____.
39. How many times you have attended it? i.1 ____ ii. 2 ____ iii. 3 ____ iv. 4 ____ v. Nil ____.
40. Is Rogzar Diwas (Employment Gurantee Day) celebrated in your village? Yes ____ No ____.
 If Yes. How many times a year i. Once ____ ii. Twice ____ iii. Thrice ____ iv. Quarterly____.
41. Do Panchayat seek suggestion on development programme especially in context of MGNREGA?
 (No=1/Yes=2)_____
42. Do Panchayat disclose budgets on development programmes esp. MGNREGA?
 (No=1/Yes=2)_____.
43. Do you have Local Vigilance Committee for monitoring and awareness of PDS and MGNREGA? (No=1/Yes=2)_____.
44. Do you know about RTI (Right to Information Act 2005) Rule?
 (No=1/Yes=2)_____.

45. What do you prefer? i. PDS rations direct to FPS _____ OR ii. PDS rations money direct to Bank Account _____.

Why?

Questionnaire/Interview Schedule for Godown Incharge FCI

Rangpo and Jorethang.

No-1/Yes-2

District: _____ **Place:** _____ **Date:** _____

Name: _____.

1. No. of years working as a godown incharge: _____.

2. Do you know the name of the Food Minister of India? No-1/Yes-2 _____.

3. How many days' godown remains open in a month?

i) 20 days _____ ii) 25 days _____ iii) 30 days _____

4. Which day godown remains closed?

i) Sunday _____ ii) Saturday _____ iii) Both _____.

5. What is the timing of opening and closing of godown?

i) 10 a.m.–12 p.m. _____ ii) 12 p.m.-5 p.m. _____ iii) 10 a.m.–4 p.m
_____ iv. Other timing _____.

6. How many weighing bridges are set up?

i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____

7. How many its functioning?

i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____.

8. No. of black listed trucks till date. _____.

9. Arrival of PDS rice:

i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week
_____.

10. Usually what time of the week the state lifts their PDS rice?

i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week
_____.

11. Is there any provision for installment for state not able to buy rice in one go?

No-1/Yes-2 _____

12. Types/Category of Rice allotted for beneficiaries:

APL: _____, BPL _____, AAY _____.

13. Is rations are available in first week of the month from godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____

14. Do you get the allocated quota from the godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____

If No. _____

15. Is there any cases where rice of certain category been replaced by other category in context of unavailability? Yes. _____; No _____.

16. Is there was any above mentioned cases in month of Nov- Dec 2014 and Jan 2015?

No-1/Yes-2 _____

17. In what type of place do you store your food grains?

i) Kutcha _____ ii) Pucca _____ iii) Scientific storage _____.

18. To what extend food grain are damage?

i) 1-5% _____ ii) 5-10% _____ iii) more than 10% _____.

19. Transportation arrangements in lifting commodities are made by:

ii) Food dept _____ iii) FCI _____ iv) Jointly _____.

20. Are there any cases where your stocks have remained unlifted? No-1/Yes-2 _____

If No what are the majors taken up to sell such stocks? i) Adjust in next month _____

21. What do you think about the existing PDS?

It's Impact: No-1/Yes-2 _____

Needs Improvements: No-1/Yes-2 _____

ANNEXURE III

Questionnaire/Interview Schedule for District Godown Incharge

No-1/Yes-2

District: _____ **Place:** _____ **Date:** _____

Name: _____.

1. No. of years working as a godown incharge:
_____.
2. Do you know the name of the Food Minister i.e. FCSCA Dept. of Sikkim?
No-1/Yes-2 _____
3. How many days' godown remains open in a month?
i) 20 days _____ ii) 25 days _____ iii) 30 days _____
4. Which day godown remains closed?
i) Sunday _____ ii) Saturday _____ iii) Both _____.
5. What is the timing of opening and closing of godown?
i) 10 a.m.-12 p.m. _____ ii) 12 p.m.-5 p.m. _____ iii) 10 a.m.-4 p.m
_____ iv. Other timing _____.
6. How many weighing bridges are set up?
i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____
7. How many its functioning?
i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____.
8. No. of weighing scale?
i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____
9. How many its functioning?
i) 1 _____ ii) 2 _____ iii) 3 _____.
10. No. of black listed trucks/utilities till date. _____.
11. Arrival of PDS rations:
a) What time the PDS rice usually arrives?

i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week _____.

12. a) What time the PDS sugar usually arrives?

i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week _____.

13. Quality of Rations especially in times of Rainy Season/Monsoon:

i. Rice: Good _____, Average _____, Poor _____.

ii. Sugar: Good _____, Average _____, Poor _____.

14. Usually what time of the week the FPS lifts their rations?

i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week _____.

15. Is there any provision for installment for state/FPS who cannot buy ration in one go?

No-1/Yes-2 _____

16. Is rations are available in first week of the month from godown?

No-1/Yes-2 _____

17. Do you get the allocated quota from the FCI godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____

If No. _____.

18. In what type of place do you store your food grains?

i) Kutchha _____ ii) Pucca _____ iii) Scientific storage _____.

19. To what extend food grain are damage?

i) 1-5% _____ ii) 5-10% _____ iii) more than 10% _____.

20. Transportation arrangements in lifting commodities are made by:

i) FPS _____ ii) Food dept _____ iv) Jointly _____.

21. Transport are done through

i. Govt. trucks/utilities _____ ii. Pvt. truck/utilities _____.

22. Are there any cases where your stocks have remained undistributed?

No-1/Yes-2 _____

If No what are the majors taken up to sell such stocks?

i) Adjust in next month _____.

23. What do you think about the existing PDS in Sikkim?

It's Impact: No-1/Yes-2 _____

Needs Improvements: No-1/Yes-2 _____

ANNEXURE IV

Questionnaire/Interview Schedule for Fair Price Shop dealer

No-1/Yes-2

1. Occupation of dealer apart from being the owner of FPS?

2. Where do you leave?
i) In the same village _____ ii) neighbouring village _____ iii) nearby town _____
3. How many days' shops remain open in a month?
i) 15 days _____ ii) 25 days _____ iii) more than 25 days _____
4. What is the timing of opening and closing of shop?
i) Forenoon _____ ii) Evening _____ iii) Whole day _____.
5. Till what time of the month the stocks last?
i) 2nd week _____ ii) 3rd week _____ iii) 4th week _____.
6. Usually what time of the week the consumer lifts their rations?
i) 1st week _____ ii) 2nd week _____ iii) 3rd week _____ iv) 4th week _____.
7. Is there any provision for installment for consumers who cannot buy ration in one go? No-1/Yes-2 _____
8. Is ration are available in first week of the month from godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____
9. Do you get the allocated quota of your FPS from the godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____
If No then what are its differences?
i) 5 times _____ ii) 5-10 times _____ iii) more then 10 times _____.
10. Do you usually lift the commodities allocated by the godown? No-1/Yes-2 _____
If No what are its reasons
i) poor quality _____ ii) insufficient food stock _____ iii) shortage of money _____ iv) low demand _____.

11. In what type of place do you store your food grains?
 i) Kutchha _____ ii) Pucca _____ iii) Scientific house _____.
12. To what extent food grain are damaged?
 i) 1-5% _____ ii) 5-10% _____ iii) more than 10% _____.
13. Do you get reimbursement from government of transportation cost of food grain?
 No-1/Yes-2 _____
- 13 (a). If you bear all the cost of transport due you hike the prices while selling the rations?
 No-1/Yes-2 _____
14. Transportation arrangement in lifting commodities are made by:
 i) FPS _____ ii) Food dept _____ iii) FCI _____ iv) Jointly _____.
15. Are there any cases where your stocks have remained undistributed? No-1/Yes-2

- If No what are the majors taken up to sell such stocks?
 i) Adjust in next month _____ ii) Gave more to consumer _____
16. Various types of records maintained by FPS: (No-1/Yes-2)
- i) Price of stock detail _____
 - ii) Display of Stock _____
 - iii) Lifting details (commodity wise) _____
 - iv) Distribution details (commodity wise) _____
 - v) Ration card register _____.

ANNEXURE V

Questionnaire/Interview Schedule for Panchayat

Village:

Date: / /

No-1/Yes-2

1. Name of the Panchayat: _____.
2. Education Qualification: i. Primary _____ ii. Secondary _____ iii. Senior Secondary _____ iv. Graduate _____ v. Post Graduate _____.
3. Tenure as a Panchayat: i. 5 yrs _____ ii. 10 yrs _____ iii. 15 yrs _____ iv. 20 yrs _____ v. 25 yrs _____.
4. Total no. of Household in the village _____; Total no. of BPL household _____.
5. Major Occupation of the villagers: _____
6. Type of School in the village: i. Primary _____ ii. Junior High _____ iii. High Secondary _____ iv. Senior Secondary _____.
7. Distance from the Senior Secondary School: i. below .5 km _____ ii. 1-2 km _____ iii. 2-3 km _____ iv. 3-4 km _____ v. above 4 km _____.
8. Health facility available in Village: i. PHC's _____ ii. Mobile Health Van _____ iii. Private Clinic _____ iv. Other (Ayurvedic/Homopathy/Traditional Healers) _____.
9. Distance from District Hospitals i. below .5km _____ ii. 1-4 km _____ iii. 4-8 km _____ iv. 8-15 km _____ v. above 15 km _____.
10. Type of Road: i. Kuccha _____ ii. Semi Pucca _____ iii. Metalled road _____.
11. Condition of Road linking village with hospitals, market, education institutions etc. esp. four wheelers: i. Good _____ ii. Average _____ iii. Poor _____.
12. Total no. of FPS in the village: i. One _____ ii. Two _____ iii. Three _____ iv. Four _____.

13. FPS run by SHG's : i. One ____ ii. Two ____ iii. Three ____ iv. Four ____ v. Nil ____.
14. FPS run by women or women SHG's: i. One ____ ii. Two ____ iii. Three ____ iv. Four ____ v. Nil ____.
15. Types of work done under MGNREGA: i. Rain water harvesting ____ ii. Dhara Vikas/Springshed development ____ iii. CC footpath ____ iv. CMRHM ____ v. Plantation ____ vi. Other _____.
16. Present work done under MGNREGA: _____.
17. No. of female workers engaged in the scheme. i. 10-20 ____ ii. 20-30 ____ iii. 30-40 ____ iv. 40-50 ____ above 50 ____.
18. How many times Gram Sabah take place in a year? i. Once __ ii. Twice __ iii. Thrice __ iv. Quaterly __ v. Nil ____.
19. Is Rogzar Diwas (Employment Gurantee Day) celebrated in your village? No-1/Yes-2 _____.
20. If Yes. How many times a year i. Once ____ ii. Twice ____ iii. Thrice ____ iv. Quarterly ____.
21. Do you have Local Vigilance Committee for monitoring and awareness of government scheme eg. PDS and MGNREGA? (No=1/Yes=2) _____.
22. If Yes. Total no. of members: i. 3 ____ ii. 5 ____ iii 6 ____ iv. 8 ____.
23. Who are its members: i. Women ____; ____ ii. BPL ____; ____ iii. Teacher ____; ____ iv. Doctor ____; ____ v. Others ____; _____.
24. Do you know about RTI (Right to Information Act 2005)? (No=1/Yes=2) _____.
25. What do you prefer? i. PDS rations direct to FPS _____ OR ii. PDS rations money direct to Bank Account _____.
- Why?
_____.

ANNEXURE VI

Recommendation Letter from Supervisor for Data Collection and Field Study



DEPARTMENT OF PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES & MANAGEMENT
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
SIKKIM UNIVERSITY
[A Central University established by an Act of Parliament of India, 2007]

Dr. Nawal K. Paswan
Associate Professor & Head

Date: 19/05/2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr. Bitu Subba is a registered student under Ph.D. programme in the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim. He is engaged in doing research for his Ph.D. thesis on "Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" under my supervision.

He may please be helped in collecting the necessary information for the successful completion of his research work. Information collected by him shall be used for *academic purpose* and will be duly acknowledge the sources of information.


Head
Dept. of Peace & Conflict Studies & Management
School of Social Sciences
SIKKIM UNIVERSITY
6th Mile, Tadong 737102, Gangtok, Sikkim

6th Mile, Samdur, PO Tadong 737102, Gangtok, Sikkim, India.
Phone: + 91- 3592-251441 (O) Mobile: +91-97759-96279
Email: nkpaswan@gmail.com, www.sikkimuniversity.ac.in

ANNEXURE VII

Authorisation Letter from State Food Department



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
FOOD & CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
SECRETARIAT ANNEXE - I, SONAM TSHERING MARG
GANGTOK, SIKKIM-737101
Tel:Office 202708 (Fax) 202215
Email: foodepartment2skm@rediffmail.com

No: 14/ FCS&CA

Dated 4.06.2015

To

All Incharges of 27 Food godowns
Food, Civil Supplies & C.A. Department
Government of Sikkim

Sir,

I am directed to inform that Shri Bitu Subba, Research Scholar, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies & Management, School of Social Sciences, Sikkim University is pursuing studies on his Phd thesis titled " Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act". He requires logistic support in the form of information on the mode of operation of PDS system in the State, whereby interaction with FPS and consumers is part of his itinerary. All concerned 27 Godown Incharges are hereby directed to support and cooperate to his cause.

Yours sincerely,

04/06/2015
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PDS)



ANNEXURE VIII

Forwarded Permission Letter from FCI office Gangtok Branch

To,

Date: 19/05/15

The Area Manger
Food Corporation of India
District Office Gangtok
Happy Cottage, Development Area,
Gangtok, Sikkim (India)
737101

Subject: Application for the Authorization Letter and Annual Report 2014-15.

Respected Sir,

This is to kindly bring to your notice that I Bitu Subba Ph.D (Registered) Research Scholar, Id No. 10PDPC02 of Dept. of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management, School of Social Sciences, Sikkim University currently working on the thesis title "Food Security and Management in Sikkim: Role of Public Distribution System and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" would like to have secondary information from the concerned department.

- An authorization letter which would help me to visit the secondary stake holders in the form of Depot in charge of Rangpo and Jorethang.
- Annual Report 2014-15 and reports of lifting off or off take of PDS items i.e. Rice and Wheat 2014-15.

Thus, I would be highly grateful to you if you could kindly provide the above information. For authenticity the recommendation letter from Supervisor and Identity card are enclosed with the application.

Thanking You

Yours Sincerely,

Bitu Subba (Signature)
Ph.D (Regd.) Research Scholar
Dept. of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management
School of Social Sciences
Sikkim University.

*N(2), FSO, Dept. of Peace & Conflict Studies, Sikkim Univ.
They are requested to extend cooperation
for verbal interview only. No written
document (if required) be supplied as
it is not a RTI matter.
19/05/2015
Area Manager, Rangpo, Gangtok, Sikkim.*

ANNEXURE IX

To,

The Public Information Officer
Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department
Govt. of Sikkim
Secretariat Annex- I
Sonam Tshering Marg, Gangtok, Sikkim 737101

Date: 17/02/16

Sub: Application under Right To Information (RTI) Act 2005.

Sir/Madam,

Kindly provide information regarding the following:

1. Full form of OPH and NPH scheme introduced by the Food and Civil Supplies Dept.
2. Objective, Eligibility and Benefits of OPH scheme.
3. Objective, Eligibility and Benefits of NPH scheme.
4. Total no. of beneficiaries coming under AAY scheme in Sikkim under NFSA 2013.
5. District wise no. of beneficiaries coming under AAY scheme in Sikkim under NFSA 2013.
6. Total no. of beneficiaries coming under PHH scheme in Sikkim under NFSA 2013.
7. District wise no. of beneficiaries coming under PHH scheme in Sikkim under NFSA 2013.
8. Total no. of beneficiaries coming under OPH scheme in Sikkim.
9. District wise no. of beneficiaries coming under OPH scheme in Sikkim.
10. Total no. of beneficiaries coming under NPH scheme in Sikkim.
11. District wise no. of beneficiaries coming under NPH scheme in Sikkim.
12. Total no. of grievances filed in context of PDS scheme in Consumer Commission/Forum from 2010-2015.
13. Total no. of grievances redressed in context of PDS scheme by Consumer Commission/Forum from 2010-2015.

14. Total no. of RTI filed in context of PDS scheme from 2010-2015.
15. Total no. of RTI redressed in context of PDS scheme from 2010-2015.
16. Total no. of Consumer Awareness Programme done from 2010-2015.
17. Total no. of Consumer Awareness Programme done especially in context of PDS scheme from 2010-2015.

I am depositing the application fee (Rs. 10/-) separately if you feel that above requested information does not pertain to your department then please follow the provisions of Section 6(3) of the RTI Act. Also as per the provisions of the RTI Act, please provide the details (Name and Designation) of the first appellate authority w.r.t to your department with the reply to the above request, where I may if required to file my first appeal. Further, I also undertake to pay any additional fees/charges (if applicable) as prescribed under the RTI Act.

Kindly provide the information as soon as possible and within time frame as stipulated under RTI Act, 2005.

Yours Sincerely,

Bitu Subba (*MPhil*)

UGC/NET-SRF

PhD Research Scholar

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management


School of Social Sciences

Sikkim University, 6th Mile Tadong, Gangtok, Sikkim

Email id- bitusubba86@gmail.com; mobile no- 7872883686

ANNEXURE X

RTI Response from the Food Department


GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
FOOD & CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
SECRETARIAT ANNEXE - I, SONAM TSHERING MARG
GANGTOK, SIKKIM-737101

Ref.No: 130/RTI / FCS&CA Dated: 21/3/16

To,
Shri Bitu Subba
UGC/NET-SRF,
PhD Research Scholar,
Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management,
School of Social Science,
Sikkim University, 6th Mile, Tadong,
Gangtok, Sikkim

Subject: Supply of Information

With reference to your letter Dated: 22.02.2016, the information sought by you is as follows:

1. Full form of PHH is Priority Household and NPH is Non Priority Household.
2. a) Objective of OPH scheme: Genuine left out beneficiaries and inmates of institutions who cannot be accommodated in AAY and PHH falls under OPH.
b) Benefits of OPH scheme: 8.053 kg of rice per head from January 2016, 1.738 kg of atta per head from January 2016, 2.4 kg of sugar per household and 1 ltr (urban), 1.25 ltr (rural) of SK oil per individual.
c) Eligibility of OPH: same as sl no. 2 a.
3. a) Objective of NPH : To categorise the Government employees and economically sound households.
b) Eligibility: Government employees and those enlisted as such by gram panchayats.
c) Benefits: Sugar 2.4 kg per household SK oil 1 ltr (urban) 1.25 ltr (rural) of SK oil per individual.
4. Total number of AAY households are 16,500.
5. District wise number of beneficiaries under AAY:
East : 17,966
West : 16,162
North : 4,737
South : 14,988
6. Total number of PHH beneficiaries: 3,24,081.

7. District wise number of beneficiaries under PHH :

East : 1,31,497
West : 95,313
North : 19,011
South : 77,425

8. Total number of beneficiaries under OPH: 114,934

9. District wise number of beneficiaries under OPH:

East : 58,185
West : 22,948
North : 9,364
South : 26,523

10. Total number of beneficiaries under NPH: 1,02,940

11. District wise number of beneficiaries under NPH:

East : 60,271
West : 15,509
North : 5,880
South : 21,280

12. NIL

13. NIL

14. 47

15. 47

16. NIL

17. 11

The number of beneficiaries under the scheme PHH and OPHH (G) and (S) varies at the moment due to data-updation and removal of duplication and inclusion of left out beneficiaries. The exact figure will be handed over to you in the month of May, 2016. You are also requested to check the beneficiaries data online in our official website: www.pdsportal.nic.in.



STATE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER