

Local Governing Institutions in Nagaland with special reference to Village Council and

Village Development Board” (A Case Study of Dimapur)

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declared that the dissertation entitled “*Local Governing Institution In Nagaland with special reference to Village Council and Village Development board*” A case study of Dimapur district .An analytical study submitted for M.A political science degree is entirely my original work and all ideas and references have been duly acknowledge. It does not contain any work that has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma from any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

This to certify that Neikonuo Sekhose has completed her dissertation on *'Local Governing Institutions in Nagaland With special reference to Village Council and Village Development Board: A Case Study of Dimapur'*, under my guidance and supervision. To the best of my knowledge, the present work is result of her original investigation and study .No part of dissertation has been submitted for any other degree or diploma.

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LIST OF ACRONYM

ITEC-CHIEF TAXATIONS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

CDP-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

NES-NATIONAL EXTENSION SERVICE

VC-VILLAGE COUNCIL

VDB-VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

SC-SCHEDULED CASTE

ST-SCHEDULED TRIBE

OBC-OTHER BACKGROUND CLASS

PESA-PANCHAYAT EXTENSION TO THE SCHEDULED AREAS

TAC-TRIBE ADVISORY COUNCIL

GBs-GAON BURAS

BDO-BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

DPO-DISTRICT PROGRAMME OFFICER

DPB-DISTRICT PLANNING BOARDS

VCM-VILLAGE COUNCIL MEMBERS

IRDP-INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

JRY-JAWAHAR ROZGAR YOJANA

PMRGSY-PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA

PMRY-PRIME MINISTER ROZGAR YOJANA

CEO-CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DRDA-DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

NGOs-NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

SDO-SUB DIVISIONAL OFFICER

EAC-EXTRA ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

ADC-ADDITIONAL DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

IAY-INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA

FD-FIXED DEPOSIT

MCG-MATCHING CASH GRANT

MGNREGS-MANATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT
GUARANTEES SCHEMES

BRGF-BACKWARD REGION GRANT FUND

MF-MICRO FINANCE

NRLM-NATIONAL RURAL LIVELIHOOD MISSION

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

“The independence of India should mean the independence of the whole of India...Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic... It follows therefore that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs. In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending, circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom.” Mahatma Gandhi¹

According to B.K.Gokhale “Local Government is the Government of specific locality by the local people through the representatives elected by them”. “In the words of Hume’s and Martin “Local Government possesses most of the following attributes population ,a clearly defined area, the capacity to sue and be sued ,the ability to make contracts, a continuing organization, the authority to undertake and the power to conduct public activities and the right to collect revenue and determine a budget.”²

1.1EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

Local Self Government to use from the words of Sydney Webb is “as old as the hills”. The Indian Local Government is not a new concept in our country. During that time we find in the Vedic text that there were various communities of the assemblies present. And the Municipal Governments have also flourished in for a long period. But because of the rose and fall of the emperors rule village Panchayat was formed for the safety of the people to preserve and control their democratic tradition in the social, culture and economic and also the political life. The establishment of Local self government has lots of evidence as it was in existence from the ancient time. As for India Local self Government is a positive aspect because the formation of Local self Government is native to the Indian soil to prevent from political change.

¹ Retrieved from <http://arc.gov.in/6-1.pdf> as on Nov 6.16

² Retrieved from http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/4262/11/11_chapter%202.pdf as on Nov 8.16

Local Self Government under Muslim Rule

During the Mughal period village bodies were the pivot of administration. And during the time of Shah Jahan each villagers were governed by their own Panchayat. Each of the Panchayat consists of the village elders who looked after people interest and also enforce punishment to the people and the debtor. The head of the village act as the coordinator between the village Panchayat and the higher administrative ladder. Akbar also accepted this system and makes it an indispensable part of civil administration. So during this period each of the villages has its own Panchayat of elders and it was self-governing and exercises its own powers of local taxation, administrative control, justice and punishment. The Mughal also introduced the elaborate administrative machinery with a hierarchy of officials especially in the field of revenue. The Mughal administration lasted for centuries and it was only because of the fall of Mughal monopoly the British established its supremacy over India.

Local Governing Institutions during British Rule

Local Institution at the time British period was further involved in making of Government from where they obtained all the rights rather been a set of process of natural development. Basically the past of the Local self-Government in India during the British period can also be divided into four stage First stage-believed to have finished by 1882 when the well known declaration on the Local self Government was issued by Lord Rippon. Second stage-which began from the period 1882 to 1919 were powers were move from centre to the provinces and the provinces gain more powers. Third phase- which lasted up to 1935 during that the Indian taxations Enquiry Committee (1952) thought about the troubles of location with central and provincial investments. And Simon commission of 1930 completely changes the procedure of decentralization by suggesting firm control over local bodies and the State. And the Fourth stage-Up to 1947 and during that stage the fight for independence were extreme and with the creation of regional independence and the congress ministers regaining authority in many of the areas, and the local bodies mainly Village Panchayat receiving a huge response and also presence of action taken by local bodies was there.³

³ Ibid from <http://finance.mp.gov.in/rlb4ze.pdf> as on Nov 11.16

1.2 Local Self-Governing Institutions in India after Independence

The Congress Government made a great effort for promoting the Panchayat and makes them effective. Article 40 in constitution of the India stated “The State shall take steps to organize Village Panchayat and endow them with such powers and authority as maybe necessary to enable them to function as units of self-Government”. Its main goal was to involve all the people in the village in the participation of development effort and also lessen the trouble of the Administration on the states. And in the coming years after Independence none of such efforts were being made for bringing up the Panchayati Raj. The Community Development programme (CDP) was commences on October 1952 to make the people participate and also to get involved in the task of rural reconstruction .However this programme failed. So on January 1957 a team was set up for studying the community projects and National Extension Service (NES) led by Balwant Raj Mehta was selected. Balwant Mehta Committee recommended a three tier system namely Village, Block, districts which was known as Panchayati Raj. Panchayati Raj was considered as an object for achieving economic development and self governance at rural level.

The committee did not favor Panchayati Raj however it laid down five fundamental principles which are:

- 1) Firstly, it suggested the presence of three tier structure of local self governing bodies
- 2) Secondly power and responsibility ought to be truthfully passed on to their bodies.
- 3) Sufficient financial funds should be hand over to the bodies in order for helping them with their responsibility.
- 4) All welfare and development schemes programs at three levels should be linked through the involvement of these bodies only.
- 5) Lastly, in the near future the responsibility of these three tier system should make easy for further decentralization of power.

Thus the Panchayati Raj appear to be successful at first but later on it became to decline after 1969 due to lack of the political determination of the people. So, the Government of India on 1977 appointed Ashok Mehta Committee .It recommended on two –tier system of

Panchayati Raj viz Zila parishad and Mandal Panchayat over a group of villages. The Ashok Mehta committee vision was that the Panchayat should bring the people closer by handing executive powers in charge of Mandal Panchayat. The committee considered insufficiency of resources mainly accountable for the breakdown of Panchayati Raj. In regard to the recommendations made by the committee, Panchayati Raj Institutions were being formed almost in all the states and were considered as a tool for developing growth. In 1985 soon after Rajiv Gandhi became Prime minister, G.V.K Rao committee was formed. The committee was selected by the planning commission was recognized to evaluate the preparations for rural improvement and also poverty mitigation. It suggested renewal of the Zila Parishad with selection of District Development commissioner as the chief executive of Zila Parishad. The vision of Rajiv Gandhi became visible when the central government led by P.V Narishima Rao made it in passing the 73rd constitutional amendment bill.⁴

1.373rd Constitutional Amendment Act 1993 and its features

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act was approved on April 1993. The act was intended to grant constitutional sanction and also to set up “democracy at the grass root level and also at state level or countrywide level. It was mainly introduced in the parliament on September 1991 for intensification of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. And the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act placed in part IX into the Constitution and also extra new articles from 243 to 243 -0 which deals with the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The key features of the Amendment the act are as follow:

- 1) To build and strengthen democracy from grass root level.
- 2) To check and ensure benefits that to the rural people and enjoy through various schemes and program's.
- 3) To bring up new idea for Village Development with participation of the people.
- 4) To empower the rural people.⁵

The 73rd amendment act also includes compulsory and the voluntary provisions which includes;

⁴ Retrieved from http://iespnet.com/journals/Vol_1_No_1_June_2014/1.pdf as on Nov 12.16

⁵ Retrieved from http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/24807/8/08_chapter%203.pdf as on Nov 13.16

A. Compulsory provisions:

- 1) Association of the Gram Sabha in the village or a set of villages and establishment of villages at the village, intermediary and district levels.
- 2) And direct elections to all the seating in Panchayat at the village, intermediary and district levels and indirect elections to the post of chairperson of Panchayat at the intermediary and district levels.
- 3) Minimum 21 years of age to fight for the election of the Panchayat.
- 4) There should be reservations for both the SC and the ST in Panchayat at all three levels and also reservation for the women should be there at least 1/3rd (both the members as well as for the chairperson).
- 5) And the tenure is fixed for five years after which fresh elections to be conducted within six months of expiry.
- 6) And for the election of the Panchayat the State Election Commissioner is to be formed.
- 7) State election commission to be held after every five years to evaluate the financial position of the Panchayat.

B. Voluntary Provisions:

- 1) Giving representation to the members of parliament and the state elected representatives (both the houses) in the Panchayat at different levels.
- 2) Giving reservations of seats (both members and chairperson) for the OBC in Panchayat at all levels.
- 3) Surrendering powers and authority to the Panchayat.
- 4) Transfer of powers and responsibility on Panchayat for economic and social justice and also to execute some or all the 29 functions that are planned in the Eleventh Schedule of the constitution.

5) Lastly, giving financial powers to the Panchayat to impose, gather and correct jobs, tax and cost.⁶

1.4 Panchayat Extensions to the Schedule Areas Act and Its Features

The Village level democracy turn out to be a real vision for the Indian with the 73rd amendment act of the constitution but since its laws did not cover up the scheduled areas so the PESA act came into being mainly to enable Tribal Self Rule into these areas. So the parliament has formed the provisions of the Panchayat (Extension to the Schedule Areas) Act which was commonly termed as the PESA Act (1996).

PESA was a law which was formed by Government of India from securing self Governance through the traditional Gram Sabha for all the people residing in the Scheduled areas of India. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan etc comes under the scheduled areas.

Significant key features of the Act:

- 1) Gram Sabha at district, Taluka and at the Village level.
- 2) All the local cases/disputes to be deal by the Gram Sabha and to protect the customary, values, traditions of the tribal people.
- 3) In the case of land purchase the administration has to look for the consent from the Gram Sabha.
- 4) Gram Sabha have to guard and run common properties based on the traditional system of organization and safeguard.
- 5) Gram Sabha have the right of controlling the sanitization, ban and manufacture of Liquor.
- 6) Gram Sabha also have the right to organize over all the markets and melas taking place.
- 7) District Panchayat have similar rights and power of the districts Panchayat that are under the Sixth Schedule.
- 8) The Fifth Schedule recommended that the Government and Tribe Advisory Council (TAC) should also defend/encourage the welfare and improvement of the Scheduled Tribes.⁷

⁶ Retrieved from <https://iasexam2013.wordpress.com/2012/07/29/compulsory-and-voluntary-provisions-of-73rd-amendment-act/> as on Nov 14 .16

1.5 OVERVIEW OF NAGALAND

Nagaland is a state in North-East India. Nagaland is originally a tribal state covering an area of 16,579 Sq.km. The bordering states of Nagaland are Assam to the west, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam to the north, Myanmar to the east and Manipur to the South. The state of Nagaland act 1962 transformed Naga Hills Tuensang region into a separate state and the new state called Nagaland was inaugurated with a colorful function held in Kohima on December 1, 1963 and presided over by Dr.S.Radhakrishna. The state consists of 16 tribes and has total of 11 districts, 52 blocks covering 1286 villages. And Agriculture is believed to be the main source of source of revenue in Nagaland. Jhum and terrace cultivation were major practices across the state.⁸



⁷ Retrieved from http://visionias.in/home/resources/open_doc/current_affairs/imp_issues/PESA%20-%20Final.pdf as on Nov 14 .16

⁸ Retrieved from http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/26616/8/09_chapter%202.pdf as on Nov 15 .16

Table 1.1: Statistical figures of Nagaland

Area : 16,579 sq kilometers

State Capital : Kohima (1,444.12 m above sea level)

Population : 2.275 million(2011 census)

Density : 120 per sq km

Sex ratio : 909:1000 (Female: Male, 2011 census)

Literacy: 67.11% (Male: 71.77% Female: 61.92%)

No of villages : 1286 Census towns

Districts: 11

Official language : English

Average rainfall: 2500 mms

Forest cover: 13,345 sq kilometers (80.49%)

Source : Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Nagaland

1.6 Village Council:

The Government of Nagaland enacted the Village Council Act in 1967. And it is necessary to have a Village council for five years under the Nagaland Village Council Act 1990. The main aim of the Village Council is to take care of the developmental activities of the village..It ensures a district level relation to the grassroots through Village Development Boards (VDB) which has been formed mainly to look after the developmental activities. The VDB is a controlling board function which functions under the Village Council. Village Councils are believed to be significant element of the current governance system in Nagaland.

Village Council act as the highest authoritative body at the local level governance system of Nagaland.Though all Village Councils have the same set of functions, duties, roles prescribed

By the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act, 1978, it is fascinating fact to learn that the Village Council system differs from village to village, depending on the size, relationship and population in the Village. And as an introduction to the village council in Nagaland, it is important to understand the constitutional provision in regard to the Village Council and Village Development Board.

In the article of the Indian Constitution-Article 371(A)

No Act of Parliament in respect of-

- (i) Religious or social practices of the Nagas
- (ii) Naga Customary law and procedure
- (iii) Administration of criminal as well as social justice involving decisions according to Traditional laws of the Naga.

(iv) And the ownership regarding shift of land and its assets shall apply to the state of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution, so decides.

It can be seen that the above constitutional provisions clearly depict that no Act of the parliament is applicable in relation to the regional land and local customary laws of Nagaland. Therefore, through this context the village Council assumes its importance. The Village Council controls the overall administration in the village and for the purpose of Village administration the State Government had propagated the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act, 1978 (Act No. 1 of 1979). By the agreement of the Governor on the 9th March, 1979 and published in the Nagaland Gazette extraordinary dated the 13th March 1979, an Act called the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act came into existence. This Act seek main purpose was to improve laws linking to the Constitution of Village and Area Councils in Nagaland and also to control their duties as well the functions and for matters associated as per the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act, 1978 and extends to entire of Nagaland.

And each of the village whether they are big or small in size has a Village Council. And the number of the Village Council depends on the size of the Village. It is the sole political authority at the village level. While in most villages, the system of Universal Adult Franchise is practiced in the election of the VCM. Women representation as VCM is highly passive among the some Villages following its Patriarchy system.⁹

⁹ Retrieved from <https://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com/2013/04/06/village-councils-and-village-development-board-in-nagalandooverview/> as on Nov 17.16

Composition of the Village Council

Chairman:

(1) The Village Council also selects a member from amongst the council as the Chairman of the Council.

(2) A member of Council chosen by the Chairman shall play the role of the Chairman in matter of the absence of chairman in any meeting of the Village Council.

Secretary:

The Village Council may even appoint and select a Secretary whether the persons may or may not be from amongst the council. And the voting rights shall not be given if the secretary is not a member of the council.

The powers and duties of the Village Council are:

- 1) Providing Village development Schemes for the maintenance of water supply, roads, forest and also to carry out the development schemes.
- 2) And to support the Government agencies and work together for the development of the Villages.
- 3) To carry out the development projects on its own or the guidance of the government.
- 4) To also lend money from Government, banks or any other financial institutions for development and other wellbeing projects of the village.
- 5) Apply and receive donation and subsidies from Government agencies.
- 6) Providing safety for loans and payment relieves from the government.
- 7) To lend money to the deserving villages for their development and to obtain repayment without interest.

- 8) To go through into loan agreement with the financial institution or the village heads
- 9) To raise funds utility services within the villages.
- 10) To form Village Development Board and empower them certain Acts in the event of disease or transmittable infection in case of its outbreak.¹⁰

1.7 Village Development Board:

The concept of Village development board was evolved and VDB was established at every recognized village of Nagaland under the clause 12 of section 12 of Nagaland village and area council Act 1978 as a subsidiary of Village Council. The Village Council is known to be the main authority and the Village Development Board is just a statutory body that works under the VC. While village council being the local government has wide function concerned with the aspects of the village life on the other hand the VDB is concern only with the development aspect to the overall control of the village life. The VDB plays an important role for the functioning of the state .Its has been mainly established with the main aim to carry out the overall developmental activities in the village and to uplift the standard of the poor people.

The Village development board was first started in 1976 in Ketsaphomi village under Phek district. In 1980 it saw a great success of the Ketsaphomi village with the help of the central Government. Due to the victory of the Ketsaphomi village a group movement was launched in 1980 to increase the exposure of this unique institution throughout the state and initially five thousand rupees was been provided by the Government to the Village development board which was known as common fund and later came to be known as matching cash grant. Village development board were then asked to open accounts in India such as State Bank Of India (SBI) and other commercial banks to deposit funds the funds which was considered as the registration of development board. So due to its encouraging feedback the concept of VDB was generally established. The VDB are involved in all phases of development activities and also resources are present in the form of grant to all the 1083 villages

¹⁰Retrieved from

<https://www.nagaland.gov.in/Nagaland/UsefulLinks/The%20Nagaland%20Village%20and%20Area%20Councils%20Act,%201978.pdf> as on Nov 17.16

recognized villages through VDB. And it was only through the active participation of the VDB many schemes that are taken up has been successfully implemented. Due to the existence of Village Development board the state of Nagaland has also been accepted from the 1973 Amendment of the Indian constitution.

Organizational structure:

(1) STATE LEVEL: The Rural Development Department is known to be the main organization who takes in charge of all the VDBs programmes at the State level.

(2) DISTRICT LEVEL: Whereas in the District level there is presence of Deputy Commissioner who act as the chairman of DPB and those selected members and the members of DPB are also being incorporated.

3) BLOCK LEVEL: Block Development officer is also the person who is in charge of all the things at the Block level. His job is to support and lead the people of the village in planning out the village plan till its completion. And he also has to meet the people in the village in order to look after the works done by the villagers. Not only this he has to also submit Provisional Village plan, confirmation account and the conclusion account of the project to DPO chairman for his approval.

Special powers of the VDB:

The VDB has also special powers that are to preserve law and order and to govern justice within the village in regard with the prevailing customary laws and procedure established in Nagaland. Any if any disputes arise between the Villages maybe in case of two or more village than the Village Council will settle the disputes.

1) Preparation of the Village Development Schemes.

2) To take in charge of good preservation of water supply, roads, power, forest, education and other wellbeing activities.

3) Serving the Government organization in order to look after the development works in the village.

- 4) Power to receive grant-in –aid, contributions and funding from the Government or other agencies.
- 5) The VDB can also offer safety for refund of loan by any other permanent inhabitant of the village from the Government bank or financial organization.
- 6) Power to go into loan agreement with the Government, bank or financial organization or permanent inhabitant of the village.

All the resident of the village are members of the general body of the VDB. Two general bodies are held every year where the secretary of the board presents its reports which include previous month's funds and also asked questions with respect to the funds. And all the villagers who are also the member of the village development board are to inform about the date by the management committee meeting once in every month by deciding the date with the chairman and also the management committee conduct a meeting by deciding the date with the chairman of the village council and the chairman of the community.

Thus, The Village Council and the VDB played an important for all the development activities that are being carried out in the Village. They have played a great role for the upliftment of the village especially in the rural areas. The VC and The VDB took all the responsibility to look after the matters the village problem, schemes, proper health facilities, education and so on.¹¹

The role of Village Council is no exception to the literal analysis of power politics. The concept of local authority has absorbed the need to fulfill the local needs of the village by means of development. With the growing importance of the Village Development Board, the role of Village Council, which is known to be parent body to the VDB, sees its authority degrading as the VDBs functions at same level with the Village Council.

However, with the passage of time, cordial and friendly relationships are maintained with the neighboring villages which are a boon towards the national integration of the country.

¹¹ Ibid from http://wokha.nic.in/acts%20data/pdf_doc/NAGALAND%20VDB%20MODEL%20RULE.pdf as on Nov 18.16

1.8 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

1. **Kadekodi's Gopal (1992)** ¹² article "A model on the sustainable village development": The case of people participation says that there are various numbers of alternative sources of rural development that is focusing on poverty alleviations and unemployment of people in the rural areas. It also focuses on how the income generating from the private property of resources which include such as the land, cattle or any other household and cottage industry which depend on water, forest products and so on. Thus the development of the village will be possible only when the chairman of the development board cooperate with both the private and common product resource without hampering the environment and the human in the villages. He thus conclude by saying that it will be possible only with the help and support ,in terms of the employment and public work programme in creating a new system for the private sector in the rural areas.

2. **Bardhan Pranab and Mookherjee Dilip (2007)** ¹³ "Decentralization and Local Governance in the developing countries "analysis the decentralization and local governance that was initiated in the late twentieth century in the developing countries. This paper attempts to focus on the transfer of power from national to intermediate as opposed to the lowest levels of governance. It also points out about the different dimensions of decentralization which includes historical origins, design aspects and impact. Thus the study provides a glance earlier to decentralization and also the responsibilities and freedoms transfer to the local authorities and observe the outcome of the process.

¹² Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/29793624?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents as on Nov 22.16

¹³ Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/23266436?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents as on Nov 24.16

3. **Jamir Amba (2010)** ¹⁴ “Understanding Local Self Governance in Nagaland” In this article the author says that the State Nagaland is unique because as it is single state in Indian Union formed through the political accord. According to Amba (2010) Nagaland is much related to those of the other state in country. However what makes Nagaland different from those of the other states in the countries is its local governance system through the Village Council and the Subsequent authorities. In Nagaland the local governance systems of the Village Councils is base on the customary Naga way. It is stated in Article 371 of the Indian Constitution the State of Nagaland enjoys Constitutional Sanction in various ways. Nagaland known for its rich culture and traditions became the 16th Indian State after independence. The study describes that the traditional self governance of the Nagas in many ways is quite similar to that of Gandhi article on “Village Swaraj”. Each Naga village possesses and rules their own funds also prepare development actions in order to preserve rule, organize, in carrying out justice and secure protection. Through this study it analyses the role of the Village Council and VDB and the responsibility and power provided to them. Thus the Village Council and the VDB played an important role in the Village and through them various development projects are being carried out successfully in Nagaland. But on the other hand the writer concludes by saying that though the Village council has been given responsibility to hold so many activities but their institutional capacity especially in technical knowledge and power to legislate is very weak.

4. **K.Lotha Rikhyo and N.Lotha (2011)**¹⁵ “Role of Naga village administration” In this article the author talked about the Naga village administration. The Naga village chairman, village council members, Gaon Buras (GBs) Village Development board (VDB) and church leaders played an important role in building up the villages. They say that the village is like a kingdom having everything with the village chairman who acts as the ruler or administer help of the people in the villages. And the village must also constitute a board which includes even the women in carrying out the programme. He further says that the best achievement of the village must be rewarded because un-examined life is not worth living. The village chairman

¹⁴ Retrieved from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on Nov 26.16

¹⁵ Retrieved from <http://morungexpress.com/role-of-naga-village-administration/> as on Nov 19.16

and students organization of the village should organize various seminars and also take necessary conditions for the development of the village. Thus the author says that if the village administrations are ought to follow the rules and method of the village then it will not hinder the administration but instead it will help the village to function efficiently and fruitfully.

5. Shimray's Angkang Robert(2014) ¹⁶“Decentralization from below: A case study of Nagaland “In his study the author says that both decentralization and local governance are considered as the essential component of the self-governing authority as they offer an surroundings which help in bringing nearer to the people and also in helping the people of the rural areas. Decentralized form of Government main goal was to bring political as well as economic system and also in responding people’s necessity and inclination and also to bridge the space between the dealer and the users of goods and services. According to him decentralization are believed to be an key aspect of the participatory democratic system as it signify a sustainable decrease in the power of national governance over the financial policy. He says that the Naga people residing in the North-eastern part of India carries out their project through three institutional bodies namely-“Village council”, “Village development board and “Naga communalization scheme”. He further says that today in Nagaland each village has a village council and the village development board to take care of the development projects in the rural areas. Thus he concludes by saying that because of the effective decentralization and community participation in all the decisions it help the poor people and also in improving their life thereby reducing poverty.

6. Humtsoe John (2014) ¹⁷ “Village council and Village Development Board in Nagaland” In this article the author says that the Village Council are significant part of the contemporary governance system while VDB have been established for delivering rural development projects. He says that the village council is in charge of overall authority for the administration of justice in the village who are responsible for maintenance of the law and

¹⁶ Retrieved from <http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0314/ijsrp-p2712.pdf> as on Nov 18.16

¹⁷ Retrieved from <https://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com/2013/04/06/village-councils-and-village-development-board-in-nagalandoverview/> as on Nov 20.16

order and also to maintain the rule and order of the village while the VDB is a constitutional body which functions under the village council which involves only in improving the activities as part of their responsibilities such as allocation of funds, schemes, and other welfare activities and so on. So, through the involvement of the VDB several schemes has been implemented in Nagaland and the State of Nagaland are set to be free from purview of 73rd amendment of the constitution, due to the continuation of local self governing activities through the Village Council and VDBs.

7. **Sethy Harihar (2014)**¹⁸”Effectiveness of Panchayati Raj systems, Problems and National Declaration” studies about the local self governing institution and how government organization can also play an important part in regard to the procedure of political legitimization as it also increase a logic of involvement among people for political and social and the economic reliability of the local environments. It talks about the Panchayati Raj which has been set up in India mainly to associate people in the running at the grass-root level and the people has also been given an energetic role to prepare in order to carry out their plans. In this article the author also mentioned about the several problems that the Panchayati Raj system are facing in day to activities which includes insufficient financial resources to carry out the administration which he considered as a serious problem so the Government should take effective steps to solve it permanently. And the other problems also include the irreconcilable relations between the three tiers (Village, Block n District) and un-pleasant relations between officials and people and so on. Lastly, Sethy (2010) mentioned about the national declaration for self-governance conference which was held on April 2002 regarding Panchayati raj in New Delhi to solve the problems of the Panchayat so that the Panchayat could become self-sufficient both financially and functionally.

¹⁸ Retrieved from <http://odisha.gov.in/e-magazine/Orissareview/2010/feb-Mar/engpdf/17-19.pdf> as on Nov 20.16

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary and Secondary sources:

Primary sources include Survey methodology and Qualitative interviewing.

Survey methodology is a method of qualitative research .It gives quality and accuracy of responses. This will comprise of questioners.

Qualitative interviewing would comprise of interviewing people from all section of society i.e. from a home makers, youths, village people, and VDB n VC office holder.

Secondary sources from articles in newspaper or popular magazines, book or articles found in scholarly journals.

1.10 SCOPE OF STUDY

This paper has a significant scope because not much has been reported about the role of Village Council and VDB in Nagaland though various researches who studied about the working of the Village Council and the VDB in other parts of the country. So through this study we will come to know more about the role and functions of the Village council and the VDB in Nagaland from various ways and sources. In this paper we will also look into how the governing bodies are elected or appointed and also how they function. Although the VDBs and VC only function at the local level there is much scope in it as we see that a majority of disputes and officials are settled here and also this VDBs and VC lessen the burden of the district and state courts so there is scope in studying this paper to check whether the VDBs and VC are truly functional or just keepsake and to compare how its decision making affects today's issues from the earlier times.

1.11OBJECTIVES

- To study the organizational structure of the Village Council and the VDB.

- To study the functioning of the Village Council and the VDB.
- To evaluate the awareness of the Village people for preparation of Village plan.
- To find out its problems and challenges.
- To suggest possible measures for development of VDB and VC.

1.12 HYPOTHESIS

The organizational structure and infrastructural facilities in VDB and VC in Nagaland are satisfactory.

People in Nagaland are aware about the working of VC and VDB.

Village Development board are playing a significant role for the rural development.

VDB and VC are playing an active role in making people politically aware about Government initiatives.

Women of Nagaland are taking active part in the functioning of VDB and VC.

TIMELINE

CHAPTERS	TIME PERIOD
INTRODUCTION	20 DAYS OF NOV
CHAPTER 2	JANUARY AND FEBRUARY
COLLECTION OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS	MARCH AND APRIL
CONCLUSION	MAY

Chapter 2

Democratic Decentralization: Importance of local self governing institutions in India and role of Village Council and Village development board

Democratic decentralization is a system which covers a system of Governance where the citizens of any locality have the right to hold the public officials and responsibility through various democratic means.

Decentralization is the shift of power, duty, and liability from the central to local governments. Decentralization can also take a range of forms, generally described in Public administration terms as the deconcentration, transfer, and allocation.¹⁹

2.1 Democratic Decentralization in India: An overview

Democratic decentralization at the grassroots level is envisaged as the most significant strategy to make democracy meaningful and achieve greater goals of a responsive, corruption free, effective and transparent administration. Decentralization and development of local administration is widely known as an effective political instrument and means of realization of balanced and equitable development in Indian states. Decentralization of power aims at better and faster communication, involvement and commitment of the people in development, mobilization of support and utilization of resources in a greater manner for national development, reduction in delay in decision-making, greater equity in allocation of resources and investments as well as reduction in apathy of administration to client.²⁰

In India Panchayati Raj system is being recognized as the main tool of decentralization through which the democracy will be truthfully delegated and approachable. And after 73rd Constitutional Amendment, it is universally and acutely realized that the process of

¹⁹ Ibid from file:///C:/Users/LAPTOP/Documents/Democr_Decen.PDF as on March 1.0'17

²⁰ Ibid from https://knimbusstore.s3.amazonaws.com/journal_article/19_IJSSIR_VOL3_NO8_AUGUST2014.pdf as on March 1.0'17

democratic decentralization cannot be complete without devolution of sufficient and rightful financial and administrative powers to the grassroots institutions.

Today democratic decentralization is also universal trend. Decentralization even at the lowest level of administration should be seen as a theory of bring development, which need a variety of organization for uplifting the poorer sections of the society and also to empower them. In India the rural and urban areas have been extended at democratic decentralization through the 73rd and 74th Amendment Act. And through these Acts it has led to people's involvement through the Gram Sabha's and the ward agency. An important feature of these amendments is the coming out of a new age group in leadership at the local level from women and weaker sections of the society.²¹

2.2 Importance of Local self governing institutions in India:

The Decentralization of power depends largely on the achievement of democracy. And the Local Self Government is such a system where people can obtain their self-governing rights every individual can also get the chance to widen his/her behavior fully and properly. The Local Self Government is believed to the best centers for the people in delivering democratic thoughts and education. The Local Self Government also opens the doors for the people to enjoy democracy. And it is only through the Local Self Government all the problems of the local people are being solved successfully. And with this process, the heavy burden and responsibility that is shoulder upon the Central and the State Government is lessen. And since the Local self governments are local people they can solely understand the needs and the problems of the local people more than the State and the Central Government.

In local self government, the members have a tight and cordial relation with each other. And also due to this it results free from illegal activities and acts according to the social well being of the people. The local self-government institution has always remained helpful for the people in carrying out different economic planning in local as well as in regional levels far better than the state or central government. And it also motivates the people of the locality to actively participate in various governmental activities. The Local Self-government usually binds the people in unity and also inspires them to take part in its activities without any favoritism or fanaticism. And through this it builds up the political values and loyalty of

²¹ Ibid from <http://ncert.servloci.com/2012/01/unit-1-concept-evolution-and.html> as on March 1.0'17

common people and so it persuade the political activities and political culture of the people. And moreover both the central and the state governments do various administrative experiments through the local self-governments. Thus through it made the common people to get involve and take part and also make the people to contribute more lively even at the lowest level of administration. Through this Local Self Government is contributing towards the equality and liberty and also in fulfilling their needs and discrimination of the people at the local as well as district level.²²

And inaugurating the first Local Self-Government Ministers' Conference (India) in 1948, the former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru observed that "The basis system of democracy must be Local Self-Government.. He says that people usually have the habit of thinking of democracy at the top and not so much at the bottom. Democracy unless you build on the foundation from below it may not be a success at the top. "In the present states there is a great also importance of the local self-government because it lessened the work of the provincial and central government. These institutions help in imparting knowledge and training to the citizens also in managing the government. Through local self-institutions all the acts of jobs and tasks among the citizens is being imparted and their interest is aroused in the administration. Bryce says, "Whoever learns to be public spirited, active and upright in the affairs of the village, has learnt the first lesson of the duty on a citizen of a great country". Bryce further added that the local institutions it not only instructs and impart training to the citizens in public affairs, but they also train the people on how to work along with other people. These institutions have hammered the spirit of understanding, suitability, honesty and the social spirit which is necessary for the development of democracy.²³

2.3 Rural Local self governing institutions in Nagaland:

Rural development has assumed great significance in Nagaland during the last few years. Nagaland has the autonomy for extension of its traditional self –government institutions

²² Ibid from <http://pune.gen.in/india/importance-local-self-government-india/528/> as on march 10'17

²³ Ibid from <http://www.publishyourarticles.net/knowledge-hub/political-science/meaning-and-functions-of-local-governments/6010/> as on march 11'17

being the sixth scheduled of the Constitution. On the other hand, to make it more efficient and reinforce the conventional self-governing institutions, the Nagaland Government had approved an Act recognized as the Nagaland Village and Area and Regional Council Act in 1970. This Act was amended in 1973 and finally repealed in 1978 and brought in place with a new legislation recognized as Nagaland Village and Area Council Act 1978.

Institutions for local self-governance exist due to the strong community bonding inside the Naga traditional village. To enhance the institutions of local self-governance it came in combination with the government of Nagaland in the year 1966 with the introduction of Village Council Act.

Under the Nagaland Village Council Act of 1990 the region is needed to constitute a Village council for five years. The Village Council composed of the members that are chosen by the people of the rural areas for five years. The Village Council composed of the members that are selected by the rural people with respect to traditional practice and procedure, and the same being permitted by the State Government, provided that inherited Village Chiefs GBs and Angs will be the Ex-officio members of such council and they shall have the right to vote.²⁴

2.4 Role of Village Council and Village Development Board:

The role of Village Council and the VDB in the implementation of the programmes are not fully known to most of the people in many cases to the VC/VDB themselves.

Village Council:

The village being an independent democratic republic had its own governance systems and laws. Although the women did not have any role in the official functioning of traditional institutions and all the members of the community were considered equal in status to one another. And in order to give such functional customary systems are present in each Naga

²⁴ Ibid from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April 3 '17

village, the government have enacted the Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act 1978 to give it legitimacy and recognition as a local self governance institute.

Constitution:

Each of the village is needed to have a village council. Village includes an area acknowledged as a Village as such by the Government of Nagaland. An area in order to be a Village under this act shall carry out the following conditions which are:

(a) The land in those areas should either belong to the inhabitants of that area or it should be handed over to them by the Government of Nagaland.

(b) The Village is being formed according to the prevailing norms and traditions practices.

A Village Council may comprise of members, chosen either by the villagers or according to the traditional practice and norms, and the same are also being accepted by the State Government, provide that the inherited Village Chiefs GBs and Angs shall also be ex- officio members of such Council and they have the right to vote. ²⁵

Gaon Buras

Gaon Buras (GBs) meaning Village elders are the persons elected by the Village Council under the authority of the Government to work under the Deputy Commissioner for the Village administration. They are the person who is responsible for the well behavior of the society and also to ensure law and order in the villages as well as the representative to the society. The total number of Gaon Buras in a village is elected by the Village Council with respect to the total population of the locality.

Dobashis

“Dobasha” or “Dobashi” means ‘two languages’. The post of Dobashis was created by the British to act as translators between them and the local people. They were individuals who were appointed by the Government to work along with the officers in settlement of cases, the

²⁵ Ibid from

<https://www.nagaland.gov.in/Nagaland/UsefulLinks/The%20Nagaland%20Village%20and%20Area%20Councils%20Act,%201978.pdf> as on April 3'17

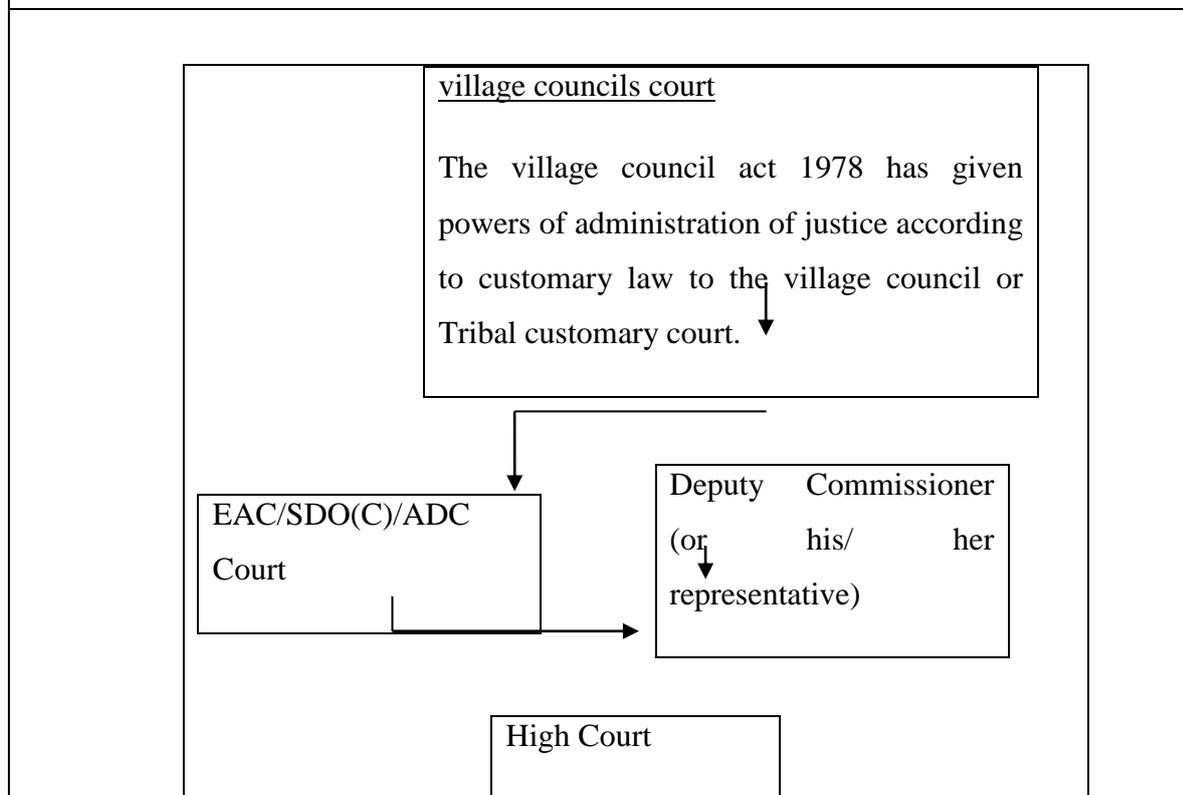
total number of Dobashi in Nagaland is around 2000 and they also acts as the backbone of the district administration. They played a very important role in providing justice to the Naga society and because of its usefulness the Dobashis institutions is continued even today.²⁶

Administration of Law and Justice

In the Naga society cases such as civil and criminal laws differ from village to village and every village has their own perspective laws and procedure in order to deal with it. In every village the village councils takes full responsibility in enforcing the customary laws and procedure .And according to the governance system and administrative functions, the Gaon are the people selected by the Village Council and chosen by the Government along with Village elders to give support to the Village Council, therefore the Village Councils acts as the Village courts to deal with the cases such as adoption, marriage ,divorce, rape, thief etc.In the district level the Deputy Commissioner has the authority to represent the Government and under him there are magistrate in the blocks and subdivision just like in other parts of India but what is different about Nagaland in maintaining the Village Council is that its role in operations is taken in a certain way or order by the Gaon Buras and Dobashis. So far, all matters that are concern within the members in the village are wisely carried out by the village council. In case of matters arising out of the conflicts between two or more villages, the VCM of the concerned villages is given charge. If the matter is not reduced at the Council level, it is then passed onto the concerned Dobashis or it is given in charge to the customary/district court for further judgment.

²⁶ Ibid from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April4'17

Table 1.2 Structure of Administration of justice in Nagaland



Village Administration

(1) The Village Council shall have the full authority to take charge of the inside administration of the village and shall also act as the supporter to the administration.

(a) Maintenance of rule and the order.

(b) In matter of cases that are serious the punishable person maybe detained and they are handed over to the nearby administrative officer or the police station.

(c) To inform to the nearby governmental officer in cases of any unnatural death or cases of severe accidents

(d) To notify to the Administrative officer or police station in cases of occurrence of strangers, beggar or suspects.

(e) To apply those orders passed by the capable person in power on the Village and as a whole;

(f) And in cases of occurrence of diseases it's their duty to inform to the nearby Administrative officer or medical officer.

(g) Lastly no shift of the permanent property will be affected without the approval of the Village Council. And printed record of it should be maintained by the Village Council.

Village Councils and their role in development

Village Councils had always taken the charge of their development and running of resources but in a very traditional way. The power given upon the Village Councils was to establish Village Development Boards in Nagaland which radically altered the role and viewpoint of Village Councils across the state. As generally rooted organizations Village Councils has also been the centre of the people in distributing mechanism which response efficiently to the wants of the public .And over the years, Village Councils along with the Village Development Boards have been playing an important role for the smooth progress of livelihood and economic growth of the community and the village as a whole. They have been the strength of the VDB to carry out all the development activities that are been carried out in the village.²⁷

Village Development board:

In Nagaland the Rural developed programme set up in 1971 with the common fund programme which was mainly based on the concept of “common belonging”. The term common belonging is usually common to that of the village people. The term Village Common fund has been later on change to VDB.

²⁷Retrieved from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April 6'17

The Village Development Board is an innovative institution in Nagaland and is a development branch of the branch of the village within the village council. Village Development board is the main group for the development in the village, which function under the village council. At the grassroots level the Village Development Board is acting as an instrument for the decentralization of planning and development. The Department of Rural Development has been involved in the activities towards bringing about development in the rural areas of Nagaland through the accomplishment of different programmes and schemes with the aim of developing the economic and also the social living standard of the rural poor through service making and infrastructural development programmes. All the behaviors of the Department are being implemented through the grass root level organization “The Village Development Board” which has been playing an active role since its foundation in 1980.

Composition and tenure:

As per the allocation of the powers to the Village Councils, under section 12(12) of the Act of 1978, it is in fact the duty of the Village Council to organize a VDB in every village by selecting its members as per the local customs. And the Village Council selects the members of the management committee. The term of the membership is for three years, unless decided if not by the Village Council through official declaration. The members may also comprise the members of the Village Council or those who are entitled to be chosen by virtue of their age, traditions and customs. The Deputy Commissioner is also the ex-officio chairman of all VDBs in the district. The number of Women Members to be incorporated in the Management Committee of the VDB should not be less than one fourth $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of members of the Management Committee of the VDB's. VDBs members may also select one person from amongst themselves as the Secretary of the board and he receives a monthly salary of Rs 1000 or above.²⁸

Objectives of the VDB are:

The philosophy behind the VDB, sometimes known as the “common fund committee” was built around the concept of “common belonging”. As far the objectives of VDBs are concerned, there is no objective between those of the objectives of the various experimental

²⁸ Ibid from http://wokha.nic.in/acts%20data/pdf_doc/NAGALAND%20VDB%20MODEL%20RULE.pdf as on April 6'17

programmes launched between 1920-1947. However to be more specific, the primary objective of the VDBs in Nagaland is as follows:

- a) Formulating the village development plans according to will of people, within the yearly household budget allotment and or any other funds raised from the villagers.
- b) To build up the self- dependent village with community fund on a firm foundation.
- c) Creation to promote development, and encourage better living condition with better facilities and above all.
- d) To slowly change the rural areas into the same level of semi-urban areas i so far as accessibility of the essential ordinary amenities is being concerned.²⁹

Activities of Village Development board:

VDBs at the grassroots level is accountable for accomplishment of all the programmes/schemes of both that are under State plan and Centrally Sponsored schemes under Rural Development Department. VDB in Nagaland execute the following activities:

Indira Awaas Yojaana (IAY)

Grant in Aid to VDBs

VDB Welfare Fund

Fixed Deposit (FD) and Matching Cash Grant (MCG)

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (MGNREGS)

Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)

Micro-Finance (MF)

National Rural livelihood Mission(NRLM).³⁰

²⁹Retrieved from <http://nagaeval.nic.in/download%20publication/Pub21.pdf> as on April 6'17

³⁰ Retrieved from <http://nagard.nic.in/docs/activities.pdf> as on 9'17

Main activities of Village Development Board:

Human Resource Development: The enhancement of the skill of the rural people is highly been encouraged with the help of Village Development board.

Productive physical infrastructure: Village council with the help of funds provides the money for the infrastructure development of rural areas.

Enterprise development: Village development Board also encourages rural citizen to go for new and effective ways of earning, which directly affects the economy of state and other development factors.

Linkage development: It also includes the development of the better roadways of the rural areas and other linkage facilities.

Empowerment and participation: The Village Development Board also encourages the empowerment in social status and participation on social work and activities in the village.

Effectiveness of the VDB:

Despite of the various limitations, VDB is functioning very smoothly. One of its main successes is the contribution of Rs 75,000 by the villagers to the VDBs. With this fund, household budget allocations are made every year and many rural development programmes are being conducted in the village. Some scholars who examine the functioning of the VDB in the recent years have also measured the effectiveness of the VDBs towards bringing a transformation in the village. According to them, the VDBs in Nagaland are performing well. The VDBs have also been undertaking special programmes such as IRDP, JRY, PMREGS, PMRY etc., and through this one can see that these programmes are properly implemented for the benefit of the villagers.³¹

³¹ Retrieved from <http://14.139.206.50:8080/jspui/bitstream/1/3260/1/Rural%20development%20in%20Nagaland.pdf> as on April 10'17

Village development board and their role in development

The Village Development Boards are believed to be the main grassroots authority through which decentralization of power, decentralized planning and development are to be put ahead. The Management committee of Village Development Board select, implement and supervise all the rural development schemes at community levels.. Funds from different state and central schemes 15 pooled are directly released and are deposited into individual Village Development Board accounts in the village.

The department of Rural Development has provide all the funds to Village Development Board on the base of household of each of the village through the distribution of funds of all state and centrally sponsored programmes that are implemented for rural development for the reduction of poverty alleviation of rural people. The Village Development Boards select the schemes through the General Body Village meeting and put forward the same to the Block Development Officer. The BDOs collect the block level shelf of schemes and also prepare the technical approximate of the selected schemes and submits the same to the Project Director.

Technically, the Project Directors with the consent of the CEO, DRDA & Chairman's of VDBs collect the schemes of all the VDBs in the district and table the same for consideration in the District Planning & Development Board meeting. The schemes are implemented by the VDB through the Block and District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA). And In order to ensure equal opportunities and to promote the involvement of women and youth, 25% and 15% of the total funds available to the VDB are reserved for them. All separate fund-flow and utilization is mandatorily monitored and checked upon by an independent committee appointed by the Village Council.

As one can see, the primary aim of the VDBs was to achieve decentralized planning through the active and direct involvement of the community. The funds provided to the VDBs are 'untied' funds but unfortunately the guidelines for the schemes themselves have become blockage. Schemes that are carry out by Village Development Boards sort from school buildings (including repairs), roads (including approach roads, culverts, bridges, footpaths

etc), community halls, way-side facilities, rest houses, wells, electrification of houses, rural housing, farming and wood development, plantations and fisheries, dairy and piggery units, marketing sheds , purchase of buses, trucks, even establishment of grocery shops and so on.

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Developmental Works Carry Out by VDB In Different Regions of Nagaland:

In Nagaland, Village Development Board receives financial aid under different schemes followed by the Government and these funds have been used to bring about the development of the village as a whole.

In Dimapur Block it is often seen that the VDB has used the given fund for the construction of resting shed on kheti road (under terraced cultivation , resting shed is necessary for the villagers because they often go up and down to cultivate their cultivable land which is below the level of village or hill top)

In Tseminyu and Medziphema blocks it is being used for construction of the community hall, water tank, construction of stone-path in the villages.

In Jalukie and Zunheboto blocks this area has used the given rural development funds for the development of village main street. Construction of fishery ponds and also piggery projects meant for the community.

Over and above, the development of keeping community deposits in the bank has developed distinctive features in Nagaland. In the absence of the bank village community funds have been greatly altered which had result in much disharmony in some well-known villages. In the identification of this concept Matching Cash Grant (MCG) was evolved which encouraged the villages to deposit their community funds in the bank which will be coordinated by the state Government. The village community fund deposit will remain as a security for the villages against which the bank advance loans to villages through the VDB for any activity in the village.³³

³²Retrieved from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April 10'17

³³ Retrieved from [file:///C:/Users/LAPTOP/Downloads/10%20chapter%205%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/LAPTOP/Downloads/10%20chapter%205%20(1).pdf) as on April 10'17

2.5 Challenges faced by the VDB and VC:

The institution of Village Councils in Nagaland are been build upon the good traditional values, practices and management systems of the Nagas there remain a number of challenges that will need to be overcome in order to ensure fair and participatory form of governance. The VDB and VC faced challenges such as corruption, political influence dominance of the few etc which encompasses the social, economic and political sphere.³⁴ The VDB and VC are entrusted with a amount of development activities and with heavy duties. And the responsibilities entrusted to the VDB require certain knowledge ,the degree of expertise and technological knowhow with clear visionary ideas is very much lacking ,as most of the members are illiterate and lack basic qualities except for some few literate and capable members are present in the village.VDB and VC sometimes fails to understand the magnitude of problems in the right perspective and even if the problems are known they do not know the most appropriate solutions to the problems.

The selfishness and narrow mindedness of the VDB members often creates confusion, disputes, misunderstanding and jealousy amongst the people and there is invariable clash between the VDB and VC members as the Village council member's feels that they were neglected and ignored in many decision making. One of the major challenges is that the VDB and VC also could not totally do away with the menace of corruption and exploitation. The public feels discontent and they complaint about the functioning of VDBs particularly by the non-beneficiaries. It is often alleged that the maximum benefits are enjoyed by the broad leaders and their relatives. In the present working system, the corruption and exploitation are alleged at the grassroots level. As a result the public fails to attend the VDBs and VC meetings and abstain from their activities.³⁵

Given the present day context however, Village Councils though they may be as good but they do not provide space for the women to participate in the process of decision making.

³⁴ Retrieved from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April 11'17

³⁵ Ibid from <http://14.139.206.50:8080/jspui/bitstream/1/3260/1/Rural%20development%20in%20Nagaland.pdf> as on April 12'17

Women are therefore, cannot aspire for roles or positions of leadership as they continue to be subjected and entry into such traditional Councils. Though the Village Councils have been given so many responsibilities and to carry out so many activities, their institutional capacity mainly in technical knowledge and power to legislate is still naturally weak.³⁶

The State of Nagaland has various villages and today each village has its own Village council and Village development board .No developmental activity takes place without the active participation of VC and VDB at the village level. Several major schemes have been implemented in Nagaland through the involvement of VDBs and VC. The Village Council and Village development board are collectively able to take initiatives for the improvement of the living and uplifting the standard of the village thereby reducing poverty. Today, in corporation with the State Government, village councils are an important part of the current governance system in Nagaland. Thus decentralization from the grass root level is necessary for the state as well as for the Nation.

³⁶ Retrieved from ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/res-55-030311-20.pdf as on April 12'17

Chapter 3

DATA COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION

Q1) Do you have any idea about the village council and Village Development board in Nagaland?

Table 1.3

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	107	7	6
Percentage	89.2%	5.8%	5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked if they have any idea about the Village Council and Village Development board in Nagaland and about 89.2percent said yes and 5.8 percent said no and 5 percent are unsure about it.

Q2) Is the VDB and VC beneficial for the people?

Table 1.4

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	102	3	15
Percentage	85%	2.5%	12.5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC is beneficial for the people and about 85 percent said yes and 2.5 percent said no and 12.5 percent are unsure about it.

Q3) Do you think that the VDB and VC are working effectively?

Table 1.5

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	64	17	39
Percentage	53%	14.2%	32.5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC are working effectively and about 53 percent said yes and 14.2 percent said no and 32.5 percent are unsure about it.

Q4) Should VDB and VC be entrusted with the task of monitoring the activities of the village at different levels?

Table 1.6

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	100	6	14
Percentage	83.3%	5%	11.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC be entrusted with the task of monitoring the activities of the village at different levels and about 83.3 percent said yes and 5 percent said no and 11.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q5) Does the VDB and VC play an active role in the village?

Table 1.7

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	87	7	26
Percentage	72.5%	5.8%	21.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC play an active role in the village and 72.5 percent said yes and 5.8percent said no and 21.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q6) Is there any improvement in the living standard of the village through the VDB and VC?

Table 1.8

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	78	9	33
Percentage	65%	7.5%	27.5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether there is any improvement in the living standard of the village through the VDB and VC and about 65 percent said yes and 7.5 percent said no and 27.5 percent are unsure about it.

Q7) Does the VDB and VC look after all the development activities in the village?

Table 1.9

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	54	22	44
Percentage	45%	18.3%	36.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC looks after all the development activities in the village and about 45 percent said yes and 18.3 percent said no and 36.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q8) Is the VDB and VC playing an active role to make people aware about Government initiatives?

Table 2.1

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	40	27	53
Percentage	33.3%	22.5%	44.2%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC play an active role to make people aware about Government initiatives and about 33.3 percent said yes and 22.5 percent said no and 44.2 percent are unsure about it.

Q9 Do you believe that VDB and VC are taking possible measures to bring about development in the village?

Table 2.2

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	62	15	43
Percentage	51.7%	12.5%	35.8%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether they believe that the VDB and VC are taking possible measures to bring about development in the village and about 51.7percent said yes and 12.5 percent said no and 35.8 percent are unsure about it.

Q10) Is the VDB working as an autonomous body?

Table 2.4

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	38	40	52
Percentage	31.7%	25%	43.3%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked if the VDB is working as an autonomous body and about 31.7 percent said yes and 25 percent said no and 43.3 percent are unsure about it.

Q11) Do women take active part in the functioning of the VDB and VC?

Table 2.5

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	44	40	36
Percentage	36.6%	33.3%	30%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the women take an active part in the functioning of VDB and VC and about 36.6 percent said yes and 33.3 percent said no and 30 percent are unsure about it.

Q12) Do you think that the VDB and VC are taking an effort to check the matter of education system in the villages?

Table 2.6

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	43	39	38
Percentage	35.8%	32.5%	31.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC are taking an effort to check the matter of education system in the villages and about 35.8 percent said yes and 32.5 percent said no and 31.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q13) Is the VDB and VC same as the Village Panchayat?

Table 2.7

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	51	36	33
Percentage	42.2%	30.3%	27.5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC were same as the village Panchayat and about 42.2 percent said yes and 30.3percent said no and 27.5 percent are unsure about it.

Q14) Should the NGOs/other civil society groups involved in capacity of building up the society?

Table 2.8

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	85	12	23
Percentage	70.8%	10%	19.2%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether NGOs or other civil society groups should involved in capacity of building up the society and about 70.8 percent said yes and 10 percent said no and 19.2 percent are unsure about it.

Q15) Do you think that there is need to have a continuous scheme of programmes and training for the VDB and VC?

Table 2.9

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	93	13	14
Percentage	77.5%	10.8%	11.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked if there is need to have a continuous scheme of programmes and training for the VDB and VC and about 77.5 percent said yes and 10.8 percent said no and 11.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q16 Do you think that VDB and VC properly utilized the funds given to them by the Government?

Table 3.1

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	25	43	52
Percentage	20.8%	35.8%	43.3%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC properly utilized the funds given to them by the Government and about 20.8 percent said yes and 35.8 percent said no and 43.3 percent are unsure about it.

Q17) Does the Government of Nagaland closely monitor the activities of VDB and VC?

Table 3.2

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	23	40	57
Percentage	19.2%	33.3%	47.5%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the Government of Nagaland closely monitors the activities of VDB and VC and about 19.2 percent said yes and 33.3 percent said no and 47.5 percent are unsure about it.

Q18) Does the Village Council and Village Development boards are function according to the will of the people?

Table 3.3

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	33	25	62
Percentage	27.5%	20.8%	51.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether Village Council and Village Development board function according to the will of the people and about 27.5 percent said yes and 20.8 percent said no and 51.7 percent are unsure about it.

Q19) Though women play an important part in the whole socio-economic life of these areas but tribal councils are dominated by male's. Do you agree?

Table 3.4

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	93	8	19
Percentage	77.5%	6.7%	15.8%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked that though women play an important part in the whole socio-economic life of these areas but tribal councils are dominated by male's and about 77.5 percent said yes and 6.7 percent said no and 15.8 percent are unsure about it.

Q20) Do you agree that the VDB and VC have a positive impact on the people?

Table 3.5

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	66	22	32
Percentage	55%	18.3%	26.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC have a positive impact on the people and about 55 percent said yes and 18.3 percent said no and 26.7percent are unsure about it.

Q21) Despite of all the development activities carried out in the village yet the state of Nagaland still lacks in matter of development .Do you agree?

Table 3.6

No. of Respondents	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
120	105	7	8
Percentage	87.5%	5.8%	6.7%

Explanation: there were 120 respondents who were asked that despite of all the development activities carried out in the village yet the state of Nagaland still lacks in matter of development and about 87.5 percent said yes and 5.8 percent said no and 6.7 percent are unsure about it.

Chapter 4

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis 1: The organizational structure and infrastructural facilities and the working of VDB and VC in Nagaland are satisfactory.

The data pertaining to table 1.5 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC are working effectively and about 53 percent said yes and 14.2 percent said no and 32.5 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 1.6 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC be entrusted with the task of monitoring the activities of the village at different levels and about 83.3 percent said yes and 5 percent said no and 11.7 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.4 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked if the VDB is working as an autonomous body and about 31.7 percent said yes and 25 percent said no and 43.3 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.7 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC were same as the village Panchayat and about 42.2 percent said yes and 30.3 percent said no and 27.5 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.8 revealed that there were there were 120 respondents who were asked whether NGOs or other civil society groups should involved in capacity of building up the society and about 70.8 percent said yes and 10 percent said no and 19.2 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.9 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked if there is need to have a continuous scheme of programmes and training for the VDB and VC and about 77.5 percent said yes and 10.8 percent said no and 11.7 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 3.1 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC properly utilized the funds given to them by the Government and about 20.8 percent said yes and 35.8 percent said no and 43.3 percent are unsure about it.

Conclusion: From the data pertained we can see that there were majority of the respondents who think that the organizational structure and infrastructural and working of VDB and VC in Nagaland are satisfactory .Hence the hypothesis has been proved correct.

Hypothesis 2: People in Nagaland are aware about the working of VC and VDB.

The data pertaining to table 1.3 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked if they have any idea about the Village Council and Village Development board in Nagaland and about 89.2percent said yes and 5.8 percent said no and 5 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.7 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC were same as the village Panchayat and about 42.2 percent said yes and 30.3percent said no and 27.5 percent are unsure about it.

Conclusion: From the data pertained we can see that there were majority of the respondents in Nagaland who are aware about the working of VC and VDB. Hence the hypothesis has been proved correct.

Hypothesis 3: Village Development Board and Village Council are playing a significant role for the rural development.

The data pertaining to table 1.7 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC play an active role in the village and 72.5 percent said yes and 5.8percent said no and 21.7 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 1.8 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether there is any improvement in the living standard of the village through the VDB and VC and about 65 percent said yes and 7.5 percent said no and 27.5 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 1.9 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the VDB and VC looks after all the development activities in the village and about 45 percent said yes and 18.3 percent said no and 36.7 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 2.2 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether they believe that the VDB and VC are taking possible measures to bring about development in the village and about 51.7percent said yes and 12.5 percent said no and 35.8 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 3.5 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC have a positive impact on the people and about 55 percent said yes and 18.3 percent said no and 26.7percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 3.6 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked that despite of all the development activities carried out in the village yet the state of Nagaland still lacks in matter of development and about 87.5 percent said yes and 5.8 percent said no and 6.7 percent are unsure about it.

Conclusion: From the data pertained we can see that there were majority of the respondents who agreed that the Village development and Village Council are playing a significant role in the village. Hence the hypothesis has been proved correct.

Hypothesis 4: VDB and VC are playing an active role in making people politically aware about Government initiatives.

The data pertaining to table 2.1 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked there were 120 respondents who were asked whether VDB and VC play an active role to make people aware about Government initiatives and about 33.3 percent said yes and 22.5 percent said no and 44.2 percent are unsure about it.

Conclusion: From the data pertained we can see that there were majority of the respondents who disagreed that the VDB and VC are playing an active role in making people politically aware about Government initiatives. Hence the hypothesis has been proved wrong.

Hypothesis 5: Women of Nagaland are taking active part in the functioning of VDB and VC.

The data pertaining to table 2.5 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked whether the women take an active part in the functioning of VDB and VC and about 36.6 percent said yes and 33.33 percent said no and 30 percent are unsure about it.

The data pertaining to table 3.4 revealed that there were 120 respondents who were asked that though women play an important part in the whole socio-economic life of these areas but tribal councils are dominated by male's and about 77.5 percent said yes and 6.7 percent said no and 15.8 percent are unsure about it.

Conclusion: From the data pertained we can see that there were only few respondents who have agreed that the women of Nagaland are taking active part in the functioning of VDB and ,majority of the respondents have agreed that though women play an important part in the whole socio-economic life of these areas but tribal councils are dominated by male. Hence the hypothesis has been proved neutral.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Local Governing Institutions in Nagaland are considered as the basic component of democracy as they give an atmosphere where decision making and service provision carried out brought the people closer especially to the rural people. Decentralized form of governance is for the development of socio economic and political structures that response thoroughly to the people's requirement and their needs at different levels.³⁷ The decentralized form of governance of local governance among the Naga people is based upon the Village Council and Village Development board which is a grassroots level institution has been mainly set up in order to develop the skills of the people living in rural areas. In the present scenario the VDB and VC are functioning properly and working effectively for the development and betterment of the village.

Nagaland is a small tribal state and the development works covered by the Government machinery is very wide. VDB and VC have been working for the development of the village and to fight against poverty, it recommends only the poorest of the poor in the villages who lives below the poverty line, and thus this institution as a model of change in transforming the society.

In the contemporary world, the VDB and VC are playing a major role in the Local self governance of the country. In fact VC and the VDB should also take enough initiatives to create awareness about the central and state sponsored schemes to the rural population. Also with the status of women gaining more importance, women have started to play an important role but they are still dominated by male in the rural areas so the women representation should be encouraged and should be treated equally so that the typical notion of patriarchy as a barrier towards women emancipation be broken.

³⁷Retrieved from <http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0314/ijsrp-p2712.pdf> as on April 15'17

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF VC AND VDBs IN NAGALAND:

- The VC and VDBs in Nagaland can perform its functions well if proper management and administrative discipline can be introduced at all levels. For this, constant supervision, encouragement and technical guidance from the government and non-governmental bodies are needed. To create technical manpower on a regular basis, the training of lower level functionaries is found to be absolutely necessary.
- The members of VDB and VC should also be literate, sincere, honest and impartial in performing their duties as VDB members. There should be a good understanding between VDB and VC and should work in full cooperation. Proper utilization of VDB funds and timely audit should be followed.
- They should also create public amenities and maintenance of cleanliness of the villages must be ensured, the VDB and VC should look into the matter of the poor and the needy persons and right benefits should be ensured to the right persons.
- It is necessary to create an infrastructural facility for the lower level functionaries' also at least one demonstration-cum-training centre or farm should be established in each block. Proper guidance, supervision and adequate technical know-how on various schemes should be provided and also should be taken up under various rural development programmes. Block development administration should be provided with adequate trained and committed extension workers.
- Training on planning of development works on long term basis may be imparted to rural leaders and progressive entrepreneurs. Moreover, proper co-ordinate between various development departments is felt very important for the success of the VDB and VC as an agency at grassroots level.
- There should be a creation of mass awareness on various rural development programmes and improved appropriate technologies especially in agriculture and rural industries and the rural people should know their roles in the functioning of VDB and VC.

APPENDIX

**PERCEPTION OF THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE ROLE OF VILLAGE COUNCIL
AND VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A CASE STUDY OF DIMAPUR DISTRICT, NAGALAND)**

NAME _____

AGE _____

SEX _____

OCCUPATION _____

LOCATION _____

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