

Chapter -5

Conclusion and Suggestions

Democracy is the most common form of the government in twenty first century. Most of the countries try to pretend themselves as a democratic country whether they are or not. In democracy people enjoy some basic rights like right to equality, right to liberty, right against exploitation, right to life, right to education and right to expression. A democratic government is responsible for the well-being of its citizens and this is what which makes a democratic government most popular in the world. For the successful working of the government it's very necessary that people should know, what the government is doing and how it is being done. Transparency and accountability in the government offices and policies is the pre-requisite for a democracy. Nothing can be perfect so as the case with democratic form of government. People from time to time raise voice for their rights in democratic countries also and Right to information is a result of people's demand in many countries of the world and India is no exception to it.

The right to information campaign in India began with Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangthan (MKSS) in Rajasthan. After a long struggle people of India got the right to information in 2005. This right has become a very important component and people's right. It is like oxygen for democracy. Because merely election after a regular interval does not make democracy successful but the level of participation of the people make it effective. Only an inclusive and strong democracy can better serve the need of the people. Government has introduced many means to make democracy inclusive like right to contest election, right to vote, reservation for women, SCs and STs etc. these means have some positive effects on democracy but the results are not up to the mark. To bring transparency and accountability and to make democracy more inclusive government gave right to information to its citizens. It is a mean to reshape democracy with positive features. This right is a weapon in the hands of those poor people who have been ignored from years.

But only giving this right is not enough. It is very necessary for the people to use this right at grassroots level to make democracy more inclusive and to bring accountability and transparency in the administration. The researcher conducted a

survey of Rewari Town to know the participation of people in Right to Information. On the basis of analysis of primary data in chapter 5, following conclusions and observations may be drawn:

Testing of Hypothesis

The first hypothesis of the study is 'RTI effectively promotes the inclusiveness in democracy'. To test this inclusiveness we take three parameters i.e. gender, developmental cleavage (rural, urban), caste (Gen, SC, BC). The findings regarding first parameter shows the level of participation of women in RTI government offices is normal. Though male participation is high, female also participated in RTI activism. The female percent is 15.9 (Table 4.53) which increased the overall participation of people in selected 23 offices.

The findings regarding second parameter shows almost equal of participation of people from rural background and from urban background in RTI. 55.5 of the selected RTI applicants are from rural area and 44.5 percent are from urban area (table 4.54). Generally we think that people from rural background are less aware than urban background because they are less educated. But the findings of the study shows that more than half of the percent of selected RTI applicants are having education only up-to intermediate/JBT. (Table 4.55).

The findings regarding third parameter of the study shows that 42.7 of the selected RTI applicants are from general category while 57.3 are from reserved category (Table 4.57). It shows the reserved categories are more participatory than general caste people.

Apart from the above three parameters, There are data based on responses of RTI applicants and PIO which proved the usage of RTI increased the inclusiveness of the democracy. According to the data a little less than three fourth of the selected RTI applicants are saying that RTI has made democracy more inclusive to some extent and 17.3% are saying RTI has made democracy fully inclusive (table 4.83).

Though the responses of PIOs are hundred percent but majority of the PIOs say that RTI has made democracy inclusive to some extent (table 4.52).

Therefore the first hypothesis of the study 'RTI effectively promotes the inclusiveness in democracy' stands proved.

The second hypothesis of the study was “The accountability and transparency of Govt. Officials is increased through RTI.” The findings of the study reveal that 62.3 percent of the selected RTI applicants got correspondence within stipulated time period (Table 4.62) 72.3 percent of the selected RTI applicants got information (Table 4.65). Out of these 72.3 percent applicant’s 57.7 percent applicant got the information within 1-45 days and 8.2 percent applicants got information within 46-60 days and 6.4 percent got the information after 60 days (Table 4.66). Another study shows that only 72.3 percent of the selected RTI applicants got information and are satisfied with the information. Irrespective of their own experience more than three fourth of the selected RTI applicants are saying that RTI has bring transparency and accountability in the administration to some extent and 17.7% are saying it has bring full transparency and accountability in the administration (table 4.82).94% of the selected public authorities admit that after the implementation of RTI act 2005 accountability and transparency has increased in the government offices (table 4.51) and 63.2% admit RTI has made democracy inclusive to some extent and 36.8% admit that RTI had made democracy fully inclusive (table 4.52)

Hence the second hypothesis of the study “The accountability and transparency of Govt. Officials is increased through RTI.” also stands proved.

Other findings of the study

- A little less than three fourth of the selected public authorities have competent staff to deal RTI related work (table 4.36).More than half of the selected public authority think RTI as an additional burden some time but 18.4% selected public authorities think RTI as an additional burden always (table 4.38), yet more than half of the public authorities say they provide assistance ^{*1}to the RTI applicant (table 4.37).
- Seventy percent of the selected public authorities admit that their office record is partially maintained and can facilitate RTI applicants and 23.7% admit that their record is fully maintained (table 4.39).

*1 Sub-section (1) of Section 6 of the RTI Act 2005 states that “ where such request cannot be made in writing Central Public Information officer or State Public Information officer as the case may be, shall render all possible assistance to the person making the request orally to reduce the same in writing.”

- Almost half of the selected RTI applicants are from the age group of 38-47 years (table 4.56)
- 97.4 percent of the selected public authorities said that they have official website (table 4.40) but 94.5 percent of the selected RTI applicants did visit the official website of the concerned public authority to get the information at first instance (table 4.61)
- 15.8 percent of selected public authorities submit their annual report and 18.4 percent public authorities don't know about the submission of the annual report about RTI (Table 4.48). Public authorities are not submitting annual report because they are not aware about it. 76.3 percent of the selected PIOs/APIOs have not read the complete RTI Act. So they have half knowledge about it. Only 15.8 percent of the selected PIOs/APIOs have read full RTI Act. (Table 4.33). Moreover 68.4 percent of the selected PIOs/APIOs have not attended any training About RTI. (Table 4.32).
- 69.5 percent of the selected RTI applicants did not face any problem to file an RTI application (table 4.59). Out of rest 30.5 percent applicants 21.8 percent did not ask for any kind of assistance to the concerned office (table 4.60). Total number of applicants who went for the first appeal was 52 out of those 23 applicants faced problem to file first appeal (Table 4.77). Out of 7 second appeal only 2 RTI applicants faced problem to file second appeal (table 4.78). The results of the study shows that a little less than three fourth percent of the selected RTI applicants did not face any problem to file, more than half of the total first appeal RTI applicants did not face any problem to file first appeal and almost three fourth percent of the second appeal RTI applicant did not face problem to file second appeal.
- 50.5 percent of the selected RTI applicants say that PIO/APIO's behavior was not encouraging (table 4.79). out of total first appeal RTI applicants 14 (26.9% of 52 first appeal applicants) are saying the behavior of first appellate authority was not encouraging (table 4.80) and out of 7 second appeal 3 applicants found second appellate authority behavior obstructionist (table 4.81)

Suggestions

- PIOs/APIOs should be given proper in service training to deal with RTI related work.
- PIOs/APIOs should read complete RTI Act 2005 at least once so that they can better deal with RTI related work
- Government should initiate awareness programme regarding RTI to people more aware about RTI as most of the people are not aware about all the sections of RTI.
- Topic of RTI should be included in the syllabus at school level as well as college level so that students get knowledge about it.
- Government should take firm step against the people who are misusing the RTI Act for their personal benefits.
- There should advertisement on RTI on electronic media/social media.
- Women should come ahead and make full use of RTI to get their work done.
- Official website of the public authorities should be written on the flex board in the concerned office from where people can get basic information on the concerned public authorities.
- All the public authorities should submit their Annual report regarding the progress of RTI to Central Information Commission or State Information Commission as the case may be.
- PIO in public offices should have discretionary power and be directly appointed by the central government so that he or she can work without any interference.
- Many times decision for first and second appeals take a long time and this process may affect the Justice and create discouraging atmosphere for the applicants which is negative to the very spirit of RTI Act. So the duration should be reduced.