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Administrative Challenges Faced by NGOs in India and Their Impact on Social Activities

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Abstract

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in addressing India's socio-economic challenges, working in major areas such as education, healthcare, women empowerment, environmental protection, rural development and poverty alleviation. They bridge the gaps released by government initiatives, providing essential services to the marginalized communities. However, NGOs face significant bureaucracy obstacles that limit their operational effectiveness. Major challenges include inconsistent funding, complex legal framework and state-level rules such as incompatible funding, Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) which causes resources to bend from social work to compliance with social work. Efficient administrative staff lacks shortage and efficiency, as limited funds make retention difficult. Additionally, technical deficit prohibits data management, outreach and program monitoring, while weakened internal regime leads to disability and poor decision making. This study examines these administrative challenges using a mixed-method approach, analyzing secondary data from NGO stakeholders and secondary data through government reports and research. Conclusions indicate that administrative disabilities directly reduce social impact, which reduces stalled projects, limited outreach and low community trusts. To address these issues, it recommends strengthening administrative capacity through paper training programs, simplifying legal framework, promoting donor flexibility for administrative costs, availing technology for better management and promoting NGO cooperation. It is important to strengthen administrative systems to ensure the stability of non-governmental organizations and their continuous contribution to India's development.

Keywords: NGOs, Administration, India, Social Activities, Challenges, Compliance, Governance, Funding, Outreach, Development

Introduction

There are more than 3 million NGOs in India, from the grassroots community group level down to the larger international development organization. They play a vital role in providing services to those underserved by mainstream development processes. NGOs in India are agents of change concentrating on areas such as child welfare, education, public health, sanitation, environment, women empowerment, and economic development. In areas where the Government is unable to reach, NGOs have become providers of these services and thus link these people with necessary services. His contribution in socio-economic development is important; However, NGOs often face adequate administrative challenges that endanger the effectiveness and stability of their work. The sound administration is the backbone of any organization, including strategic plan, resource management, legal compliance, financial accountability and efficient communication. In terms of NGOs, strong administrative systems enable the spontaneous implementation of projects, enhance transparency, enhance stakeholders and support long-term stability.

Nevertheless, despite the important role of administration, many NGOs in India struggle with internal management issues. These include shortage of professional administrative staff, insufficient infrastructure, poor financial plan and limited access to technology. In addition, navigating India's complex legal and regulatory environment seeks time and expertise which is a shortage of many NGOs. As a result, administrative disabilities often remove attention and resources from main social activities, leading to low outreach, stalled projects and compromise service distribution.

This letter examines these challenges in detail, demands to understand their root causes, the limit of their impact on NGO operations, and wide implications for social development in India. By highlighting these administrative obstacles, the purpose of the study is to provide information about how NGOs can strengthen their internal systems to increase their social impact, and policy maker and donor how to support this process.. The findings of this research are particularly relevant in the current socio-economic climate, where NGOs are called to address rapid emerging issues such as epidemic recovery, climate change adaptation and digital inclusion

Problem Statement

Despite its important role, NGOs in India face growing administrative challenges that reduce their ability to fulfil their mission. Until instability for instability and lack of employees, these issues reduce the scope, quality and access to social initiatives. There is a lack of comprehensive understanding about how these administrative disabilities directly affect the ability of NGOs to distribute social services.

Objectives

- To identify and investigate the major administrative challenges faced by Indian NGOs.
- Analysis of the relationship between administrative disabilities and low social activities.
- To assess to what extent these challenges affect project implementation and stability.
- To provide recommendations for improving administrative systems in NGOs for increased social impact..

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on small to moderate sized NGOs operated in both urban and rural areas of India. These NGOs are mainly engaged in areas of important national importance, ie health, education and women empowerment. Three major states-analyzing NGOs from Maharashtra, Delhi and Karnataka-catch a broad and diverse geographical representation, which provides insight from various socio-economic and cultural contexts. Maharashtra represents a mixture of urban centers such as Mumbai and Pune with rural districts, providing a balanced challenges facing NGOs in different environment. Delhi, being a national capital, is the home of many NGOs that are align with policy advocacy and work in densely populated urban settings. With cities such as Karnataka, Bangalore and important rural areas, it provides another sides to understand how administrative challenges vary in areas. This diverse selection helps ensure that the conclusions are not localized, but reflect national level trends and issues.

The scope extends to both region-level operational challenges and comprehensive organizational administration, including funding, legal compliance and governance. The purpose of the findings is to provide a well -round understanding of how administrative issues affect the ability of NGOs to effectively distribute services. The purpose of research is not only to benefit NGO management teams, but also policy makers, funding agencies and academic researchers by highlighting significant intervals and opportunities for improvement in NGO sector.

Limitations of the Study

- Limited to NGOs ready to participate in interviews and survey.
- Mainly focuses on administrative challenges, not other operations or external factors.
- Financial data and internal reports were partially accessible due to privacy concerns.
- The sample size, although the representative, cannot occupy the complete diversity of Indian NGOs.

Data Collection

Primary Data:

- Surveys conducted with 10 NGOs.
- Semi-composed interview with NGO administrators and field staff.

Secondary Data:

- Reports from NITI Aayog NGO DARPAN Portal.
- Journal articles and published case studies.
- Annual reports and internal reviews of selected NGOs.

Research Methodology

Type of Research:

Descriptive and analytical.

Sampling Method:

Purposive sampling to ensure inclusion of NGOs facing known administrative challenges.

Tools Used:

Questionnaires, interviews, document analysis.

Data Analysis:

- Thematic analysis for qualitative data.
- Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive data and correlation analysis.

Results & Discussion

Key Administrative Challenges:

1. **Funding Constraints (90% of NGOs):**
 - Dependency on irregular donor funding.
 - Limited access to Government grants.
 - High administrative costs not covered by project-specific funds.
2. **Legal and Compliance Burdens (75%):**
 - Complex procedures under FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act).
 - Time-consuming registration and audit requirements.
 - Frequent changes in regulatory frameworks.
3. **Human Resource Challenges (65%):**
 - Lack of trained administrative staff.
 - High employee turnover due to low salaries.
 - Absence of performance management systems.
4. **Technological Deficiency (60%):**
 - Limited use of project management software.
 - Poor data management and communication systems.
5. **Internal Governance Issues (50%):**
 - Lack of clear operational policies.
 - Poor accountability mechanisms.
 - Weak strategic planning.

Impact on Social Activities:

- **Reduced Outreach:** Fewer beneficiaries served due to resource limitations.

- **Project Delays:** Delayed implementation affects credibility.
- **Community Distrust:** Inability to deliver on promises reduces trust.
- **Scaling Challenges:** Successful programs cannot be expanded due to administrative constraints.

Discussion:

The study finds a significant relationship between poor administration and low social performance. NGOs with strong administrative systems were able to better navigate external challenges and maintain stable outreach. In contrast, people with weak systems often face project dissection and donor return.

Recommendations

1. **Capacity Building:**
 - Training Program in Financial Management, Legal Compliance and Strategic Plan.
2. **Policy Simplification:**
 - The government should streamline the procedures of administration and reduce bureaucracy obstacles.
3. **Funding Support:**
 - Donors should be allowed to allocate a portion of money for administrative expenses.
4. **Technology Integration:**
 - NGOs should adopt digital equipment for project tracking, reporting and communication.
5. **Collaborative Models:**
 - NGOs can form an alliance to share administrative resources and best practices.
6. **Governance Reforms:**
 - Install internal audit committees and transparent reporting structures.

By solving administrative challenges, NGOs in India can increase their ability to effectively serve society, ensuring that their social initiative reaches the desired beneficiaries and has a permanent impact.

Conclusion

Administrative challenges are a major obstacle to the success of NGOs in India. While passion and community engagement between these organizations remain strong, disabilities in administration obstruct their effectiveness. It is important to address NGOs to serve NGOs more effectively and continuously. To overcome these

challenges, government support, donor flexibility and internal capacity building are necessary.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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