

Chapter 11: Grassroots Democracy – Part 2 (Local Government in Rural Areas)

Case Study Based Questions — Set A

Name: _____ Class/Section: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each case study carefully and answer the three questions that follow in your own words.

Case Study 1: The Village of Lakshmanpur

Lakshmanpur is a small village in the foothills of the Himalayas. It has 200 houses and a population of about 700, most of whom are farmers. Some villagers have relatives serving in the armed forces, while a few younger villagers have migrated to the city in search of jobs. The village often faces issues such as the need for water for the fields, damage to the main road during heavy rains, and the upkeep of the village's primary school.

1.1 What kind of local needs does Lakshmanpur face, according to the passage?

1.2 Why can't villagers of Lakshmanpur run to the State or national capital for every such issue?

1.3 Which institution would be responsible for addressing Lakshmanpur's local issues?

Case Study 2: Dnyaneshwar Kamble, Sarpanch of Tarangfal

Dnyaneshwar Kamble is a transgender person who was elected Sarpanch of Tarangfal village in the Solapur district of Maharashtra in 2017. Kamble defeated six other candidates to win the election. Kamble's motto, 'lok seva, gram seva', means 'service to the village is service to the public.'

2.1 In which village and district was Dnyaneshwar Kamble elected Sarpanch?

2.2 What does Kamble's motto 'lok seva, gram seva' mean?

2.3 What does this case study show about who can become a Sarpanch in India?

Case Study 3: Vandana Bahadur Maida Breaks Barriers

Vandana Bahadur Maida, a member of the Bhil community from the village of Khankhandvi in Madhya Pradesh, defied patriarchal norms to become the first female Sarpanch of her village. She convinced women in the village to attend Sabha meetings and addressed critical issues like education and sanitation, earning recognition far and wide.

3.1 Which community does Vandana Bahadur Maida belong to, and which village does she represent?

3.2 What two issues did Vandana address as Sarpanch?

3.3 How did Vandana encourage greater participation of women in local governance?

Case Study 4: Hiware Bazar's Transformation

Hiware Bazar, a village in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, used to be affected by frequent droughts and poor agricultural yield. After Popatrao Baguji Pawar became its Sarpanch, he started applying Anna Hazare's model of rainwater harvesting, watershed conservation and massive tree planting, all of which contributed to the recharge of groundwater. With the collaboration of villagers, Hiware Bazar became a green and prosperous village within a few years. Popatrao Pawar was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020.

4.1 What problems did Hiware Bazar face before Popatrao Pawar became Sarpanch?

4.2 What three measures did Pawar apply to transform the village?

4.3 What honour did Popatrao Pawar receive, and in which year?

Case Study 5: A Gram Sabha Meeting

In a village, the main road connecting it to the nearest town has been damaged by heavy monsoon rains. Farmers are finding it difficult to transport their produce to the market, and children are struggling to reach their school safely. The Sarpanch calls a meeting of the Gram Sabha to discuss the issue and decide on the next steps.

5.1 Who is likely to attend the Gram Sabha meeting described here?

5.2 What kind of decisions might the Gram Sabha take regarding the damaged road?

5.3 Why is it useful for villagers to discuss such problems together in the Gram Sabha rather than individually?

ANSWER KEY — Set A

Case Study 1: The Village of Lakshmanpur

- 1.1 It faces needs such as water for irrigating fields, repair of the main road after rain damage, and maintenance of the village's primary school.
- 1.2 Because it would be impractical and time-consuming; local issues need quick decisions, which is why a local government body like the Panchayat exists.
- 1.3 The Gram Panchayat, elected by the Gram Sabha, would be responsible for addressing such local issues.

Case Study 2: Dnyaneshwar Kamble, Sarpanch of Tarangfal

- 2.1 Kamble was elected Sarpanch of Tarangfal village in the Solapur district of Maharashtra.
- 2.2 It means 'service to the village is service to the public.'
- 2.3 It shows that Panchayati Raj is inclusive, and people from diverse backgrounds, including transgender persons, can be elected as Sarpanch through the democratic process.

Case Study 3: Vandana Bahadur Maida Breaks Barriers

- 3.1 She belongs to the Bhil community and represents the village of Khankhandvi in Madhya Pradesh.
- 3.2 She addressed the issues of education and sanitation in her village.
- 3.3 She convinced women in the village to attend Sabha meetings, encouraging their active participation in decision-making.

Case Study 4: Hiware Bazar's Transformation

- 4.1 It faced frequent droughts and poor agricultural yield.
- 4.2 He applied rainwater harvesting, watershed conservation and massive tree planting.
- 4.3 He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020.

Case Study 5: A Gram Sabha Meeting

- 5.1 All adult members of the village who are enrolled as voters would be eligible to attend the Gram Sabha meeting.
- 5.2 It might decide to request funds or assistance for road repair through the Gram Panchayat and, if needed, the Panchayat Samiti, and plan how to carry out the repair work.
- 5.3 Discussing together ensures that decisions reflect the needs of the whole community, builds consensus, and allows resources and responsibilities to be organised collectively and fairly.

Chapter 11: Grassroots Democracy – Part 2 (Local Government in Rural Areas)

Case Study Based Questions — Set B

Name: _____ Class/Section: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each case study carefully and answer the three questions that follow in your own words.

Case Study 1: Sangkhu Radhu Khandu, a Child-Friendly Gram Panchayat

Sangkhu Radhu Khandu Gram Panchayat, in west Sikkim, has given a lot of importance to children's needs and rights. The Panchayat has built compound walls for schools to make them safer for children. To ensure that students get hygienically cooked midday meals, the Gram Panchayat has constructed kitchens in the schools. It is for these efforts that Sangkhu Radhu Khandu has been declared a child-friendly Gram Panchayat.

1.1 In which State is the Sangkhu Radhu Khandu Gram Panchayat located?

1.2 Name two steps taken by this Panchayat to support children.

1.3 Why do you think building compound walls and kitchens makes a Panchayat 'child-friendly'?

Case Study 2: The Children's Parliament of Rajasthan

The 'Children's Parliament', an offshoot of Bunker Roy's 'Barefoot College' initiative, empowered underprivileged children in Rajasthan's rural areas through education and democratic participation. Children aged 8 to 14 are engaged in governance processes, learning about democracy and social responsibility through night schools and parliament-like elections. The 'Parliament' followed formal procedures, including voter ID cards and campaigning. Elected representatives formed a 'Cabinet', overseeing school management and advocating for community needs. The initiative received the World's Children's Honorary Award in 2001.

2.1 Which initiative is the Children's Parliament an offshoot of, and who founded it?

2.2 What age group of children takes part in the Children's Parliament, and how do they learn about governance?

2.3 What did the elected 'Cabinet' of the Children's Parliament do?

Case Study 3: Funding Rural Roads

Several Gram Panchayats in a district submit their development plans, including requests for road construction, to the Panchayat Samiti. The Panchayat Samiti collects and compiles these plans and presents them at the District or State level. This helps in the allotment of funds for schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, which promotes the construction of all-weather roads in rural areas.

3.1 What role does the Panchayat Samiti play in this process?

3.2 Which government scheme is mentioned for building all-weather rural roads?

3.3 Why is it more effective for the Panchayat Samiti to present combined plans rather than each Gram Panchayat approaching the State separately?

Case Study 4: The Patwari and an Old Land Map

In a village, a dispute arises between two families over the boundary of a piece of farmland. The Patwari, who maintains the villagers' land records, produces an old map that has been kept for generations to help resolve the matter.

4.1 What is the role of the Patwari in this situation?

4.2 Why might old maps kept by the Patwari be useful even today?

4.3 Besides land records, what other administrative work does the Panchayat Secretary handle for the Gram Panchayat?

Case Study 5: A School Beside a Highway

A village school is located next to a busy highway. Students find it difficult and dangerous to cross the road when coming to school or leaving at the end of the day. Some parents have raised the issue with the Gram Panchayat, asking for a solution before an accident occurs.

5.1 Which institutions in the Panchayati Raj system could help solve this issue?

5.2 What can the students themselves do about this issue?

5.3 Why is it important for a Panchayat to listen to the concerns of parents and students in cases like this?

ANSWER KEY — Set B

Case Study 1: Sangkhu Radhu Khandu, a Child-Friendly Gram Panchayat

- 1.1 It is located in west Sikkim.
- 1.2 It built compound walls for schools to make them safer, and constructed kitchens for hygienically cooked midday meals.
- 1.3 These steps directly improve children's safety and health at school, showing that the Panchayat actively considers children's wellbeing in its decisions and spending.

Case Study 2: The Children's Parliament of Rajasthan

- 2.1 It is an offshoot of the 'Barefoot College' initiative, founded by Bunker Roy.
- 2.2 Children aged 8 to 14 take part, and they learn about governance through night schools and parliament-like elections.
- 2.3 The Cabinet oversaw school management and advocated for community needs, such as education, sanitation and social equality.

Case Study 3: Funding Rural Roads

- 3.1 It coordinates by collecting development plans from various Gram Panchayats and presenting them together at the District or State level.
- 3.2 The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- 3.3 A combined presentation makes it easier for higher authorities to review and allocate funds efficiently, avoids duplication of effort, and ensures fair coordination across the block.

Case Study 4: The Patwari and an Old Land Map

- 4.1 The Patwari maintains land records and provides the old map that helps in resolving the land boundary dispute.
- 4.2 They can help settle disputes by showing historical boundaries and also provide information about how land use has changed over time.
- 4.3 The Panchayat Secretary handles tasks such as calling meetings and maintaining Panchayat records.

Case Study 5: A School Beside a Highway

- 5.1 The Gram Panchayat could raise the issue, and depending on the scale of the solution needed (such as a pedestrian crossing or speed breakers), the Panchayat Samiti or Zila Parishad could also be involved in arranging funds or coordinating with road authorities.
- 5.2 Students could write to the Sarpanch or Panchayat explaining the problem, request a safety measure such as a zebra crossing or speed breaker, and raise awareness among peers about road safety.

5.3 Because local governance is meant to address the everyday problems of the community, and children's and parents' safety concerns directly affect the village's wellbeing.

Chapter 11: Grassroots Democracy – Part 2 (Local Government in Rural Areas)

Case Study Based Questions — Set C

Name: _____ Class/Section: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Read each case study carefully and answer the three questions that follow in your own words.

Case Study 1: Reservation for Women in Panchayats

In a district, the Zila Parishad ensures that one-third of the seats across all Panchayati Raj institutions are reserved for women. Over the years, this has led to a noticeable increase in the number of women Sarpanchs and Panchayat members, some of whom, like Vandana Bahadur Maida, have taken up leadership roles despite facing social barriers.

1.1 What fraction of seats is reserved for women in Panchayati Raj institutions?

1.2 At which levels of the Panchayati Raj system does this reservation apply?

1.3 How does reserving seats for women strengthen grassroots democracy?

Case Study 2: Kautilya's Ancient Administrative System

The Arthashastra, written by Kautilya (also known as Chanakya) about 2,300 years ago, describes how a state should be structured and run. It states that the king shall establish local headquarters for groups of villages of increasing size — smaller offices for clusters of about 10 villages, and larger offices as the number of villages covered increases up to about 800.

2.1 Who wrote the Arthashastra, and roughly how long ago?

2.2 What did the Arthashastra recommend for administering groups of villages?

2.3 What does this ancient system suggest about the history of local governance in India?

Case Study 3: A Bal Panchayat in Action

In a village, a group of children forms a Bal Panchayat to discuss local issues that affect them. They notice that some children in the village have stopped attending school to work in family businesses. The Bal Panchayat decides to speak with parents and other adults about the importance of education.

3.1 What is a Bal Panchayat?

3.2 What issue is the Bal Panchayat in this case trying to address?

3.3 How does this relate to similar efforts described in the chapter?

Case Study 4: Coordinating Development Across a Block

A block has ten Gram Panchayats, each with its own list of development priorities, such as water supply, school repairs and road construction. The Panchayat Samiti at the block level collects all these plans, combines them, and forwards them to the district and State authorities for approval and funding.

4.1 What is the role of the Panchayat Samiti in this scenario?

4.2 Name any two Gram Panchayat-level needs mentioned in the passage.

4.3 Why might it be more efficient to route these plans through the Panchayat Samiti rather than each Gram Panchayat directly approaching the State?

Case Study 5: Plastic Waste on the Village Road

Plastic bags and waste have been piling up along the roadside in a village, causing pollution and blocking drains during the rainy season. A group of students decides to write a letter to the Sarpanch, requesting that the Panchayat take action to clean up the waste and set up dustbins in the village.

5.1 Why do the students choose to write to the Sarpanch about this issue?

5.2 What solutions could the Gram Panchayat consider to solve this plastic waste problem?

5.3 What does this example show about the role of ordinary citizens, including students, in local governance?

ANSWER KEY — Set C

Case Study 1: Reservation for Women in Panchayats

- 1.1 One-third of the seats are reserved for women.
- 1.2 It applies at all three levels — the Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad.
- 1.3 It ensures fair representation for women, gives them a direct role in decision-making, and helps address issues that particularly affect women and children in the community.

Case Study 2: Kautilya's Ancient Administrative System

- 2.1 It was written by Kautilya, also known as Chanakya, about 2,300 years ago.
- 2.2 It recommended setting up headquarters of increasing size and authority for larger and larger groups of villages, from about 10 villages up to about 800 villages.
- 2.3 It suggests that the idea of organising administration in tiers, from smaller to larger units covering more villages, is thousands of years old in India, much like today's Panchayati Raj system.

Case Study 3: A Bal Panchayat in Action

- 3.1 A Bal Panchayat is a body formed by children to discuss and raise issues that concern their wellbeing, as part of the Child-Friendly Panchayat Initiative.
- 3.2 It is trying to address child labour, where children have stopped attending school to work.
- 3.3 It is similar to efforts by Bal Panchayats in Maharashtra, which worked to eliminate child labour and child marriage and bring children back to school.

Case Study 4: Coordinating Development Across a Block

- 4.1 It coordinates by collecting the development plans from all the Gram Panchayats in the block and presenting them together at the district or State level.
- 4.2 Water supply and school repairs (or road construction).
- 4.3 It avoids duplication, allows better coordination of resources across the block, and makes it easier for higher authorities to review combined, organised plans.

Case Study 5: Plastic Waste on the Village Road

- 5.1 The Sarpanch, as the elected head of the Gram Panchayat, is responsible for addressing local issues like waste management and can direct the Panchayat to take action.
- 5.2 It could set up dustbins, organise regular waste collection, run awareness campaigns against single-use plastic, and involve villagers in cleanliness drives.
- 5.3 It shows that citizens, including students, can actively participate in grassroots democracy by raising issues with elected representatives and encouraging community action.