

## ABSTRACT

**Title of the Thesis:** Professionalism and Employee Outcome: A Study of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

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**Periodicity of Research:** The study covers a period of 2013 to 2016.

### **Rationale of the Study:**

Even after two decades of gaining statehood, Arunachal Pradesh a state in the North Eastern part of India has still a long way to go as far as development is concerned as the basic livelihood problem in Arunachal Pradesh is reflected through high incidence of poverty that has remained more or less static during the last two decades (Department of Planning, GoAP, 2012-13). The cause to this circumstance may not be only due to improper implementation of Schemes in the State. Public Sector Organizations' of any country is considered as a transformational institution as it has a huge task of implementing the schemes and policies for the interest of the public (Agba, Ochimana & Abubakar, 2013). However, there is a general belief that majority of the public enterprises have been unsuccessful in delivering the services for which they were formed (Esu & Inyang, 2009). With almost 80 percentage population in Arunachal Pradesh being present in rural area, it is pertinent that Public Departments have a huge role to play in its road to development. On conducting a preliminary study to find out the reasons for slow development in Arunachal Pradesh, it was highlighted that the behavioral aspect of the employees requires attention. In this context professionalism of employees can be an important benchmark to judge employee behavior. Gebrekidan (2011) mentioned that professionalism is not only seen as a prerequisite for effectiveness of the civil service, but it is also considered as the required attribute for a successful system (Alagh, 2013). Although there are many studies that have tested professionalism and employee outcome separately only few of them have analyzed the relationship between these two phenomena. Also while the study on professionalism and employee

outcome on private sector is growing, research on public sector is a relatively less studied and almost negligible in Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, the body of knowledge available in this area is understandably scanty. Hence, it is a necessity to know much more in this area with an intention to bring in the much needed professionalism in public sector employees for better outcome.

### **Objectives of the Research:**

- i. To determine whether professionalism exists in the employees of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh;
- ii. To determine the employee outcome in the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh;
- iii. To find out the relationship between professionalism and employee outcome in the above mentioned department.

### **Scope and Limitation of the Study:**

**Scope:** The study focuses mainly on Employee Professionalism, its various aspects and its impact on Employee Outcome (Public Service Motivation, Commitment and Job Satisfaction). The study is carried out on the professionals/Officers (Group A and Group B) of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Besides these, a comparison of the responses is also done to find out whether there is any variation in the responses amongst the Officials, the Community Representatives and the Common People. The extent of the study is six districts of Arunachal Pradesh that are selected on the basis of their performance with regards to the achievement of the target set for implementation of schemes in the State in the financial year 2012-2013.

**Limitations:** Tangible work outcomes could not be taken up due to non availability of work related target or objective at the individual level. Thus, for employee outcome only few behavioural outcomes (non tangible variables) are considered, which are Public Service Motivation, Commitment and Job Satisfaction.

### **Research Methodology:**

This research is both exploratory and descriptive in nature. Halls Professionalism Scale (modified by Snizek) was used to measure the level of Professionalism which is a widely

used scale to measure professionalism (Blezek, 1987; Shafer, Park & Liao, 2002; Mat & Zabidi, 2010; Lasswell, 2010). Besides the five original dimensions of Hall's Professionalism one more dimension "Expertise" has been included in the scale as it is an important attribute for professionalism (Howell & Dorfman, 1986; Kolsaker, 2014). Thus, Professionalism in this study was measured through six dimensions viz. (a) Expertise (b) Professional Community Affiliation (c) Social Obligation (d) Belief in Self Regulation (e) Professional Dedication and (f) Autonomy. Employee Outcome in this study was determined by using three variables viz. (a) Public Service Motivation (b) Commitment and (c) Job Satisfaction. The first component of employee outcome for this study is Public Service Motivation (PSM) which was measured using Perry's instrument which was reduced to a 14-item PSM scale by Kim (2009). PSM is measured in four dimensions which are (1) Attraction to Policy (2) Dedication to Public Interest (3) Compassion and (4) Self- Sacrifice. The next variable for employee outcome is Commitment which was measured using the three component model used by Lee et al. (2001) as it has cross-cultural implications. It comprises of 15-items scale based on three components, which are (1) Affective Commitment (2) Continuous Commitment and (3) Normative Commitment. The third variable of the study which is Job Satisfaction was measured using the Job Descriptive Index developed by Smith, Kendal and Hustin (1969) which consist of six dimensions viz. (1) Work (2) Pay (3) Opportunity (4) Supervisor (5) Co-worker and (6) Job itself (Stanton et al., 2001). Multi-stage sampling was used for this study which comprised of Census and Judgmental Sampling. Data was collected from six districts of Arunachal Pradesh between the period of October 2014 to June 2015. The study is based on survey method, observation and focus group discussion. Structured questionnaire was administered to survey the employees of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh in order to assess the level of professionalism and employee outcome. Schedules were used to collect data from the community representatives as well as for conducting focus group discussions. An effort was made to find out whether there exist any variation in the opinion between the Officials, the People's Representatives and the Common People regarding various aspects of the Department. In order to determine the employee professionalism score and employee outcome score, mean for each respondent was calculated and then the overall mean for the entire sample was computed. The relationship between employee professionalism and employee outcome was arrived using Pearson Correlation.

**Findings:**

The summary of the findings of the study is given below.

It was found that the employees of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh practice moderate level of professionalism (3.78 Mean score) at their work. Tawang district had the highest professionalism score and East Kameng district scored the lowest. It was also seen that amongst all the sub-variables of professionalism, social obligation is the most prominent factor. The total mean score for employee outcome of the Department was found to be 3.60 indicating that the employee outcome is moderate in this particular Department. When we looked deeper into the three components of employee outcome it was found out that motivation scored the highest (4.10 mean score) followed by job satisfaction (3.49 mean score) and lastly commitment (3.31 mean score). An effort was also made to assess the employee professionalism score and the employee outcome score according to the performance of districts (from secondary data). It is found that the better performing districts have scored higher for both variables i.e. employee professionalism and employee outcome as compared to the low performing districts. Thus implying that, the higher performing districts practice higher professionalism at their work place and also have better employee outcome as compared to the low performing districts. The relationship between employee professionalism and employee outcome was also computed. Also relationships for professionalism and the subcomponents of employee outcome were found out. It could be seen that there is a high positive correlation between professionalism and motivation with a correlation coefficient of 0.772 and there is an average positive relation between professionalism and commitment. However no relation was visible between professionalism and job satisfaction. In case of the correlation for the sub variables of employee professionalism with employee outcome, all the sub-variables were correlated to employee outcome except for autonomy. Correlation was also established between all the sub-variables of professionalism and public service motivation as well as commitment. However, in case of sub-variables of professionalism and job satisfaction none of the sub-variables of employee professionalism is associated with job satisfaction except for dedication to the profession. From the comparison of responses across the three groups i.e. the officials, the community representatives and the common people, regarding their opinion on various factors linked to professionalism concerning the employees of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh

it is proved through ANOVA test that there is a significant difference in their opinion since all the hypotheses are rejected as the *p*-value is less than 0.01 significant level.

### **Suggestions:**

There are a number of suggestions that can be put forward for better service delivery of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. As it is found from the study that the Department practices only moderate level of employee professionalism, the foremost recommendation could be that, regular training on the behavioural aspect of the employees (such as the work culture training provided in 2007) should be provided to the employee of the Department as that will lead to the understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the Department and thus add to the increase in their level of professionalism. Higher autonomy should be provided to the employees to carry out their work as it was found that out of all the sub-variables of employee professionalism 'Autonomy' scored the least. Secondly, it would be very encouraging if the salary of employees is paid on time as it is a very important factor that can lead to higher job satisfaction. Besides these, focus should also be provided to administrative activities like better record keeping system, better e-governance activities and initiating a performance management system. Further, outcome of the employees can also be enhanced if there is a better coordination (a) between Officials and the Stakeholders, (b) within the Department and (c) between the Department and the Central Government.

### **Conclusion:**

Employee professionalism is regarded as one of the most important entity for an organisation because a well performing public service is based on its professionalism (Yi-Armstrong, 2000). Thus the primary aim of this study was to find out the level of professionalism in the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Further, the study tried to determine the association between professionalism and the employee outcome for the Department. It was found that there is only a moderate level of professionalism and employee outcome. It was also found that the employee professionalism score and the employee outcome scores were better for the better performing districts as compared to the low performing districts. Besides these, a positive relation could be established between these two variables in this study. Thus implying that, practice of professionalism in the Department has a relation with

employee outcome which may ultimately lead to better service delivery to the public. Besides professionalism, it was found that factors like infrastructure, salary and locomotive services play a very important role for the employees to perform efficiently. From the findings of the study few suggestions have been put forward separately for the Department, the Employees, the People's Representatives and the Common People.

**Contribution to the Body of Knowledge:**

This study is the first of its kind in the State, as there is no study on employee professionalism and employee outcome in a public service organisation (Department) and that too in a remote underdeveloped region of the country like Arunachal Pradesh. Most of the studies on professionalism have concentrated on the professionalization of the organization whereas this study is inclined towards the professionalism of the employees, and how it influences the employee outcome in the organization. The study also explored the relationship between professionalism and employee outcome that had not been touched upon earlier. In addition to that the study tried to compare the responses of the respondents who were divided into three categories (Officials, Community Representatives and the Common People). It helped in determining whether there is any difference in the opinion of the respondents regarding various factors linked to professionalism of the employees of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The study also presented a suggestive framework that can be used by the Department of Rural Development and also by other service delivery Departments in a rural setting to improve their delivery of services to the public and the society as a whole.

**Scope for further research:**

The present study tried to find an association between employee professionalism and employee outcome, where the outcome variables considered were Public Service Motivation, Commitment and Job Satisfaction for the Department of Rural Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Thus the future research could replicate the current study in different public service organizations and other similar regions. Further, the researchers may also incorporate other relevant employee outcome variables such as Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, turnover etc and try to find an association with employee professionalism.