

Relation Between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh: A Study

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36348/sjhss.2025.v10i12.013>

| Received: 18.10.2025 | Accepted: 20.12.2025 | Published: 31.12.2025

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Abstract

Traditional Institutions (TIs) represent tribal societies, where council decisions were made based on consensus through custom. Some tribal societies have formal political institutions called Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) (PRIs were created by the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act (CAA) of 1992). PRIs are a typical form of decentralised local government in India, based on the democratic decentralisation process, whereas TIs are historically based on trial and custom, while the PRIs are responsible for the governance of social development (such as the provision of basic necessities) and the governance of administrative functions (e.g. maintaining the rule of law) in tribal societies and are governed by TIs and PRIs because the two systems reflect legal pluralism (i.e. the recognition of more than one legal framework) and institutional hybridity (i.e. combination of different governing institutions). In conclusion, good governance in terms of both fulfilment of citizens' basic needs and expansion of economic opportunities at the grassroots level in Arunachal Pradesh requires integration of both systems and cooperation between the plans and the processes used to establish governance and ensure both accountability to democracy and cultural identity and the establishment of indigenous practices.

Keywords: Dual Governance, Decentralization, Indigenous Governance, Institutional Conflict.

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INTRODUCTION

Arunachal Pradesh is a unique example of local government whereby the traditional institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) exist, interrelate and even compete with one another. Many native tribal groups, with their own traditional systems of governance, conflict management and social control, populate the state. In Arunachal Pradesh, long before the arrival of modern democratic decentralization, the life of the community was controlled by tribal societies through village councils, clan elders, chiefs, and customary assemblies, which managed all the issues based on oral traditions and indigenous standards (Lollen, 2017). These institutions were firmly entrenched on kinship, consensus-building and customary law and they still maintain social legitimacy in much of the state.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 ushered in a new system of decentralized governance in India, particularly in the rural areas, with the introduction of Panchayati Raj Institutions. PRIs sought to institutionalize participatory development, elected local self-government, and accountability and representation of marginalized groups by reservations of women and

Scheduled Tribes. However, the introduction of PRIs in Arunachal Pradesh met a distinct socio-political situation since the traditional governance systems were already operating successfully in most of the villages (Ramya, 2014). Instead of ousting the old institutions, PRIs came into the picture where customary authorities were already present.

This overlap has brought about certain contradictions as well as complementarities. Contradictions arise on one side on the matters of legitimacy, authority, jurisdiction and control of resources. The traditional institutions base their authority on custom, age, lineage, and community-level and the PRIs base their authority on constitutional law, elections, and state legislation. Elected officials and traditional leaders might want to have the leadership of the same village issues like land distributions, welfare programmes, settlement of conflicts or making decisions on behalf of the people which may trigger conflicts (Rhomo & Hussain, 2025). Some instances also have the hereditary or elder-based forms of leadership which might not conform to the democratic and gender-inclusive values advanced by PRIs. Conversely, there is

no completely antagonistic relationship between TIs and PRIs. In practice, hybrid arrangements have been developed in many villages in Arunachal Pradesh with both institutions cooperating. Social disputes, customary law, marriage and community discipline is sometimes still done by traditional councils, whereas PRIs are concerned with development planning, government schemes, infrastructure, and liaison with administrative agencies. This coexistence is an indicator of an institutional adaptation, but not replacement. Research indicates that traditional institutions have maintained a high level of moral power and can increase local engagement when they collaborate with elective institutions (Gyese, n.d.). The relationship and contradiction between TIs and PRIs in Arunachal Pradesh is thus important in the study of the interaction of modern democracy and the indigenous systems of governance in the tribal societies. It poses more general questions of decentralization, legal pluralism, cultural autonomy, representation and grassroots development. The analysis of this interface clarifies the fact that states-oriented democratic institutions are compatible with traditional institutions or that dual power triggers governance conflicts. Regarding Arunachal Pradesh, the solution is not to select either system, but to comprehend the ways each system negotiates power, legitimacy, and the well-being of the community in this rapidly evolving society.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this research is:

1. To describe the characteristics and organization of the Traditional Institutions (TIs) in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To evaluate the function and roles of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh.
3. To investigate how TIs and PRIs differ with respect to jurisdiction, authority and governance.
4. To examine the interrelationships and coexistence of traditional and modern institutions.
5. To explore the effects of dual governance on rural administration and development.
6. To evaluate how custom and constitutionally guaranteed democratic institutions work together.
7. To determine the potential for the coordination and integration of TIs with PRIs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current study follows descriptive and analytical research design in order to understand the contradiction and correlation of Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh. It aims at explaining institutional structures in a systematic way and how they interact with each other within the context of dual governance.

Nature of the Study

The research is mostly qualitative in character, because it aims to comprehend the dynamics of

institution, governance practices and the socio-cultural aspects instead of basing it on numbers and statistics.

Data Sources

The research is anchored primarily on secondary data which is gathered through a broad selection of sources such as academic books, peer-reviewed journal publications, government reports, policy documents and official publications on Panchayati Raj as well as traditional systems of governance. These sources offer a detailed overview of theoretical and practical considerations of the subject.

Study Location

The geographical location of study is Arunachal Pradesh which is a state in India dominated by tribes and has established traditional institutions and Panchayati Raj Institutions. The research particularly focuses on rural regions where the interface between these two systems is best illustrated.

Data Collection Method

Data were gathered by conducting a comprehensive literature review and official documents. Legal frameworks, like the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1997 have also been looked at to know the formal foundation of PRIs.

Analytical Approach: The research uses a comparative and thematic approach to analysis. It makes comparisons between Traditional Institutions and PRIs on important dimensions including authority, leadership, decision making processes and functional roles. Moreover, thematic analysis will be employed to determine contradictory, coexistence, cooperation, and conflict patterns between the two systems.

Variables/Dimensions of Analysis

There are a number of key dimensions on which the analysis is conducted and these are the source of authority, leadership structure, decision-making processes, gender representation, control over development resources and accountability mechanisms. The variables are used to explain the similarities and differences between TIs and PRIs.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical concepts that guide the study include theoretical concepts of democratic decentralization, legal pluralism and institutional dualism. These frameworks assist in explaining how several governance systems co-exist, and how customary and statutory institutions interact.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Conceptual Background

The analysis of contradiction and relationship between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh has its foundations in the wider discussion of the issues of governance, decentralization, legal pluralism, and indigenous autonomy. Arunachal Pradesh presents a peculiar socio-political environment wherein the traditional tribal institutions are in coexistence with democratic local governments that are stipulated in the constitution. To comprehend this relationship, it is necessary to undertake a conceptual analysis of both systems as parallel systems of grassroots government and interconnected structures.

Traditional Institutions (TIs): Indigenous Government Systems

Traditional Institutions: These are the established political and social structures by indigenous peoples that have been formed by generations to govern the life of the village, to ensure order, to resolve conflicts and to ensure a sense of collective identity. Every tribal group in Arunachal Pradesh has its own institutional form like the *Kebang* of the *Adis*, *Buliang* of the *Apatanis*, *Nyedar Namlo* of the *Nyishis* and *Tsorgan* of the *Monpas*. These institutions operate on unwritten customary laws, consensus-based decision-making and moral authority of elders or heads of their lineage or respected members of their community (Lollen, 2017). In theory, TIs can be interpreted as communitarian types of governance, in which power is based on shared values, kinship, and common norms, and not legal-rational processes. They are legitimized through social acceptance and cultural continuity. They tend to focus on restorative justice, reconciliation, and maintenance of harmony as opposed to antagonistic legal processes. Governance in tribal societies is not an independent entity, thus; it is an extension of the community life.

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs): Democratic Decentralization

Panchayati Raj Institutions, however, are the new statutory bodies constituted by the 73rd amendment act of 1992 under the 73rd amendment act of the constitution of India, to bring decentralized democracy in rural India. They are founded on elections, representation, accountability, participation and developmental planning. In Arunachal Pradesh, PRIs were institutionalised by the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1997, establishing elected bodies at various levels of local government. Conceptually, PRIs are a form of decentralization of power in democracy whereby state authority is decentralized to the local elected bodies in order to increase participation and to better service delivery. In contrast to TIs, PRIs have their legitimacy based on constitutional law, electoral mandate, and administrative recognition. They also include inclusion principles by reserving women and

marginalised groups and they are tools of governance as well as social justice.

Contradiction theoretically based

The paradox of TIs and PRIs can be clarified by the notion of institutional dualism, in which two parallel systems assert control over similar social and political space. TIs and PRIs in Arunachal Pradesh work at the village level, and are frequently involved in leadership, conflict management, resource distribution and community development. This confusion can result in the jurisdictional uncertainty and legitimacy battles. The various sources of dissonance can be broken down into different dimensions:

1. Authority: Traditional Institutions (TIs) have their authority from traditional sources and customary norms; Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) derive their authority through constitutional law and through elections;

2. Leadership Style: Traditional Institutions (TIs) are based upon elder rule or hereditary systems of leadership whereas Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are based upon periodic elections;

3. Women's Representation: Many traditional institutions have excluded women from participation in their systems, whereas PRIs are mandated to have reservations for women;

4. Decision-Making Process: Traditional institutions (TIs) typically rely upon consensus and oral tradition in their decision-making processes, while panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) utilize formal rules, record keeping and bureaucratic processes for their decision-making activities; and

5. Development Control: Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have financial control over government programs and welfare schemes, which may lessen the authority of traditional institutions.

The contradictions identified above represent not just administrative disagreement; they are indicative of broader tension between traditions and modernity, between customs and laws, and between the autonomy of a community and the intervention of states in their workings.

Relation and Coexistence theoretically

Although there are contradictions, another characteristic of the relationships between TIs and PRIs is the cooperation and adaptation. This is explicable in terms of the legal pluralism and institutional hybridity in which different systems of norms interact and coexist within the same society. PRIs do not necessarily replace traditional institutions, but work alongside them. In reality, most of the villages in Arunachal Pradesh are not formally divided:

1. Traditional institutions deal with marriage disputes, inheritance, and customary land, and community disputes.
2. PRIs are concerned with roads, sanitation, welfare schemes, infrastructure, and contact with state agencies.
3. The members of the community usually address the two bodies based on the type of problem.

This shows that the governance in Arunachal Pradesh is more often hybrid with a mix of indigenous legitimacy and democratic legality.

Applicability to Arunachal Pradesh

The theoretical importance of this issue is that this is not a situation of an uncomplicated replacement of an old and a new institution in Arunachal Pradesh. Rather, it demonstrates how indigenous societies can bargain with the modern forms of states and at the same time maintain cultural identity. The relations between TIs and PRIs suggest the following questions:

1. Do democratic decentralization and non-recognition of customary authority go together?
2. About the traditional institutions: Can they reform themselves to be more inclusive and accountable?
3. How can state policy harmonize customary governance with constitutional values?
4. Does dual governance make participation stronger or confuse?

Therefore, the opposition and correlation between the TIs and PRIs in Arunachal Pradesh can neither be seen as a binary struggle but as a transforming institutional negotiation process. It represents the larger issue of reconciling the indigenous governance traditions with the contemporary democratic systems without violating cultural independence and at the same time promoting development in the rural areas.

Historical Background of Dual Ruling of Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayat Institutions (PRIs)

Dual governance in Arunachal Pradesh is a phenomenon of having two systems of local governance: customary law-based Traditional Institutions (TIs) and community norm-based Traditional Institutions (TIs), and modern constitutional and statutory-based Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). This duality was not created overnight but evolved historically as a result of the interplay of tribal self-governing traditions, colonial frontier administration, post-independence state-building and democratic decentralization. Learning this history is crucial to describe not only the contradictions but also collaborative relations between these institutions nowadays.

Pre-Colonial Foundations: Independent Tribal Government

Prior to the colonial rule, the tribes of the present-day Arunachal Pradesh used to self-govern using

localized customary institutions. It had no centralized state apparatus in the region; rather, each tribe developed its own leadership, dispute settlement, social control and resource management systems. The Kebang of the Adis, Buliang of the Apatanis, village councils of the Nyishis and Tsorgan of the Monpas were the main governing institutions of the village society. Their power was based on consensus, age, legal time and experience, kinship legitimacy and community trust as opposed to written law.

These ancient institutions carried out the functions that would be today connected with the local government: settling conflicts, distributing resources and land, organizing labour collectively, various rites and festivals, maintaining order, and relief during the crisis. In that regard, village councils were not just courts but the holistic structures of governance that were integrated into the daily social life.

Colonial Frontier Administration and Legal Recognition

Under British administration, the area was a frontier region that had minimal direct administration. The colonial state frequently had to depend upon indirect administration due to the challenging land features, scattered settlement, and the independence of tribal culture. Instead of destroying traditional institutions, it pragmatically accepted them and even accepted them as a means of local order. One of the largest examples was the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation, 1945, which recognised village authorities, and customary processes in the issues of justice and administration.

It is a time of historical importance due to its establishment of a framework between the state and the tribal government. Local legitimacy was retained by traditional institutions, and the supervisory authority was taken by the external state. Therefore, the foundations of dual governance are found in the colonial methods of governance that overlaid formal governance on the prevailing systems of customary governance and did not completely abolish the latter.

Post-Independence Era: NEFA and Administrative Growth

Following the independence of India the region was designated as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and later turned into Arunachal Pradesh. The Indian state slowly extended bureaucratic administration, development schemes, education, roads and welfare facilities to the rural regions. However, traditional institutions still performed their duties, as they were socially integrated and frequently were more convenient than remote state entities.

In most of the villages, the state relied on informal communication by relying on traditional

leaders in managing conflicts, mobilizing communities to do development works. This established a coexistence relationship as opposed to a direct confrontation. It was however also a source of emerging contradiction in that even as modern administration was focused on legality and bureaucracy customary institutions still drew their power out of unwritten norms and consensus within the community.

Democracy and Decentralization

A revolutionary change came with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, which accorded constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural India. This was aimed at fostering democratic decentralization, participation by the people, accountability and inclusive development. The implementation of this vision in Arunachal Pradesh was in the form of the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1997 that saw the creation of elected rural bodies with specific powers and responsibilities.

In contrast to the traditional councils, PRIs were founded on elections, term limits, representation, women and marginalized group reservations, budgeting processes, and state development departmental association. This was the introduction of a new source of legitimacy the constitutional mandate. Consequently, there existed two claimants to power in village governance: traditional leaders and elected officials.

Clusters of Contradiction

The conflict of TIs and PRIs was based on the fact that both systems usually worked within the same space in the city, yet they had different principles and procedures.

1. Legitimacy Conflict - Traditional institutions have legitimacy based on culture and continuity of history, but PRIs have legitimacy based on elections and law.
2. Jurisdictional Overlap Each can participate in local decision making, conflict resolution, development priorities and leadership.
3. Leadership Tension - Elders or hereditary leaders can control social power in spite of the formal office of elected representatives.
4. Gender and Inclusion - PRIs institutionalized the representation of women, but some traditional systems had historically limited participation.
5. Resources Control Resources Government funds and welfare schemes become more and more channeled through PRIs, with customary authorities losing their monopoly.

These strains are thus historical outputs of stratified systems of governance and not stand-alone modern conflict.

Historical Fundament of Relation and Cooperation

Although there are contradictions, there are also records of adaptation and cooperation in the history. In most regions communities have come up with an informal division of labour between the two systems. The traditional institutions still deal with marriage crises, will and testate issues, customary land cases and reconciliation of the community. PRIs are more inclined towards roads, drinking water, sanitation, welfare schemes, local planning and liaison with government departments.

Furthermore, customary leaders are commonly used to gain consensus and mobilize participation by the elected members of the PRI and the traditional councils may turn to the PRI representatives to get access to state resources. This proves that dual governance in Arunachal Pradesh is not merely a conflictual but also a negotiated and complementary one.

Contemporary Significance

Historically, Arunachal Pradesh did not transition to the modern form of governance in a linear way out of the traditional form of governance. Rather it amassed institutions in various political epochs—tribal self-government, colonial indirect rule, postcolonial bureaucracy and constitutional decentralization. The outcome is a complicated governance environment in which tradition and democracy are in a continuous interaction.

Thus, the dual system of government in Arunachal Pradesh must be seen as a historical process that is dynamic. Its contradictions are indications of conflicting claims to power and its relations point to the local adaptive persistence. The policy issue is not either to abolish one system and replace it with the other, but to design ways by which customary legitimacy and democratic accountability can coexist.

Contradiction Between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

The presence of the Traditional Institutions (TI) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh has brought about a complicated system of dual government. Although they both seek to control local activities and enhance community welfare, their foundation, legitimacy, and mechanisms of operation are founded on different ideas. Consequently, a number of contradictions in practice have been introduced. These contradictions are not just the administrative conflicts but deeper conflicts between traditional authority and constitutional democracy, oral traditions and formal law, indigenous autonomy and state-based decentralization.

1. Conflict of authority: There is conflict of authority in Source of Authority. Among the essential contradictions is the basis of authority. The traditional institutions are based on the legitimacy of the ancestral traditions, tribal

traditions, age, kinship, and community recognition. Their power is embedded and maintained in the society through customary acceptance. On the contrary, the PRIs are legitimized by the Constitution of India, statutory law and electoral mandate according to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment and the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1997. In this way, the inhabitants of the village can have conflicting leadership between the traditional elders and the elected leaders.

2. Contradiction in Leadership Structure: Many tribes have traditional institutions, which are headed by elders, heads of clans, hereditary chiefs or respected members of the community that are chosen by informal consensus. Experience, traditional knowledge and social status are often the basis of leadership. PRIs, on the other hand, are founded on the periodic elections in which every eligible citizen can challenge and be in office. This brings conflict with the younger elected leaders having formal powers and the older customary leaders having greater social power in the society.

3. Contradiction in Decision-Making Process: Conventionally, traditional institutions tend to focus on consensus-building, open discussion, reconciliation and collective agreement. Oral decisions are common and are modified to suit local situations. PRIs operate on the basis of written procedures, formal meetings, resolutions, budgets and rules that are bureaucratic. The procedural inflexibility of PRIs can seem like a foreign concept to the community that is used to making decisions in customary ways, and customary processes might be informal or have legal vagueness in the eyes of state actors.

Connection Between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

The Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh is not that cause and effect or conflict but a multifaceted pattern of coexistence, adaptation, cooperation, and negotiated authority. Both systems have their roots in dissimilar historical traditions: TIs in traditional tribal rule and PRIs in constitutional decentralized rule, yet they often interrelate to form the local government, conflict resolution, growth, and community involvement. Governance in most villages is affected by a utilitarian combination of the two institutions instead of supremacy of one institution over the other.

1. Coexistence Relationship in a Dual Governance System: Arunachal Pradesh is a typical example of dual governance in which traditional institutions and statutory institutions operate concomitantly. The traditional councils still possess social legitimacy among the tribes and PRIs have legal authority under the Constitution and the state law. Rather than fading away with the introduction of PRIs, customary institutions have not faded away as they are well embedded in the local

culture, kinship ties, and the day-to-day social life. Consequently, the two systems are simultaneously known by villagers.

2. TIs and PRIs are Functionally Complementary: An important feature of complementary relationship is functional complementarity. The two institutions carry out various and complementary functions in most of the places:

Traditional Institutions usually handle custom law, marriage conflict, inheritance, land demarcation, social discipline and reconciliation.

PRIs are usually concerned with development planning, welfare scheme implementation, roads, sanitation, drinking water, local budgeting and liaison with government departments.

This division of labour in groups informally minimizes institutional friction and enables communities to reap the benefits of both systems.

3. Relationship by Reciprocal Dependence: TIs and PRIs frequently rely on each other, in spite of their differences. PRI representatives can use the help of traditional elders to organize villagers, mediate in case of conflicts when implementing the project or creating the consensus on decisions of the population. In turn, traditional leaders can use PRI members as a means of tapping into state funding, networking with bureaucratic organizations, and acquiring developmental advantages to the village. This interdependence brings about a working relationship founded on practical need.

4. Relationship by Community Legitimacy, and Democratic Authority: The two institutions have different sources of legitimacy but the sources can be mutually reinforcing. The traditional institutions are culturally legitimate in that they have the values of indigenous, shared memory, and customary norms that are accepted. PRIs are democratically legitimate since they are elected institutions that are controlled by the law and regular elections. When the two types of legitimacy are upheld, local government is more robust since there is acceptance of decisions by the community and the support of the administration.

5. Relationship in Development Governance: PRIs have been at the center of grassroots planning and implementation with the growth of rural development programs. The key to successful development, however, usually lies in local trust and involvement, which the conventional institutions assist in creating. When community leaders work with elected Panchayati member, community labour, voluntary participation, identification of beneficiaries and collective monitoring are usually not so difficult. In this way, the PRIs in cooperation with the traditional institutions enhance the development outcomes.

6. Relationship through Conflict Mediation:

Traditional institutions are highly appreciated because of their rapid, low-priced, and culturally-familiar dispute resolution techniques. Although PRIs are in place, the customary forums might still be the most suitable when it comes to interpersonal conflicts among the villagers since it focuses on mediation and harmony restoration. In the event that these local conflicts are resolved amicably, PRIs may gain as elected institutions concentrate in developmental roles. Through this, TIs indirectly instigate local governance through keeping social peace.

7. Relationship via Institutional Adaptation: PRIs and TIs have also been interacting with each other to facilitate institutional change. There are certain traditional institutions that have been influenced by democratic norms and thus opened up to women participation and the voices of the younger generation. Meanwhile, PRIs tend to adjust their operations to the local norms, consensus, and tribal social facts. This shows that the relationship is not fixed but is dynamic: the interaction between the institutions makes the institutions evolve.

8. Relationship as Legal Pluralism: It is a manifestation of legal pluralism that TIs and PRIs co-exist in one society in which they have different systems of norms and authority. Instead of making use of either customary law or statutory governance, communities resort to institutions whereby different issues are concerned. A land dispute can be submitted to a traditional council whereas a road project can be submitted to Gram Panchayat. This open-ended application of institutions implies the adaptive political culture of Arunachal Pradesh.

9. Difficulties in the Relationship: The relationship is usually cooperative, but not tension free. Friction may be brought about by jurisdictional overlap, power struggles and differences in opinions as to how to represent or distribute resources. Nonetheless, these tensions also demonstrate that the two institutions are important to local people. The task is to create more distinct coordination mechanisms to ensure cooperation prevails over conflict.

Hence, the Traditional Institutions and Panchayati Raj Institutions in Arunachal Pradesh are in a coexistence, complementarity and negotiated relationship. TIs maintain traditional power, community unity and native identity whereas PRIs offer democratic representation, governance and constitutional responsibility. They create a hybrid system of governance that is befitting the tribal and cultural diversity of the state. Thus, it is not the elimination of one institution by another, but rather the enhancement of positive interaction between the two systems that the local governance of Arunachal Pradesh has a future.

Conflicts Between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

The presence of Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Arunachal Pradesh has created the dual authority system where two different authorities are working in the same local platform. Although these two institutions pursue similar interests in the community welfare and local order, their co-existence tends to create conflict of power, legitimacy, jurisdiction, representation and control of resources. Their presence leads to these conflicts since TIs have their roots in customary law and tribal traditions, but PRIs are based on constitutional democracy, elections, and statutory administration. The outcome is not one standard pattern of conflict, but several different types of institutional tensions that differ among tribes and districts.

1. Struggle of Legitimacy and Power: One of the most evident conflicts is the struggle of who has the right to be in control of the village matters. The traditional institutions base their power in elders, the heads of clans, traditional norms and the long-standing recognition of the community. PRIs on the other hand are elected or authorized by the Constitution and the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj. In most villages, the community might have customary leaders that are respected socially and legally obliged to obey elected leaders. It results in overlapping jurisdiction and ambiguity about who has the final decision-making authority.

2. Jurisdiction Dispute: There are also conflicts arising when the functional boundaries of the two institutions are unclear. Historically, the traditional councils were in charge of dispute settlement, land issues, social discipline, as well as community coordination. The PRIs were established to deal with the development planning, welfare schemes and the administration at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, these spheres usually intersect in practice. As an illustration, issues over land by communities may include the customary rights and development projects financed by panchayats which leads to a jurisdictional conflict between traditional leaders and the office-holders in PRIs.

3. Discord in Decision-Making Processes: Conventional bodies tend to follow the oral deliberation, consensus-building, reconciliation, and adaptable customary solutions. PRIs operate using formal meetings, written resolutions, budgeting rules, audits and bureaucratic processes. There may be tension when a traditional leader considers PRI processes as cumbersome or imposed by outsiders, whereas the authorities can perceive customary processes as being illuvinated or lack of transparency. In that way conflict is procedural as well as political.

4. Control of Development Funds and Resources:

PRIs are affiliated to the state departments, several government grants, welfare schemes and infrastructure funds are directed to the elected panchayats. This has the power to lessen the role of traditional institutions in local decisions of development. The possible competition might be in terms of the choice of beneficiaries, project site, contracting and the management of the state resources. Institutional rivalry is more likely to be high where there are considerable flows of resources.

5. Tension between Traditional Norms and Constitutional Values:

There are also conflicts that present discrepancies between the traditional practice and new constitutional values like equality, representation and rights-based governance. Some communities have been characterized by traditional institutions which are male dominated or hereditary. PRIs provided female reservations and increased electoral participation. Consequently, democratic inclusion can threaten established customary hierarchies, either leading to resistance or slow acculturation.

6. Tension created by Electoral Politics:

The traditional institutions typically focus on community agreement and social peace where PRI elections may bring in factional competition and clan rivalry, campaign expenditures and partisan orientation. It has been observed in commentaries to Arunachal Pradesh that the local elections in some cases have created regional boundaries between families or villages based on clan affiliation. Even the legitimacy of the democratic exercise of elections can be incompatible with older norms of collective unity and customary cooperation.

7. Administrative Capacity and Dependence Conflict:

The other conflict is based on unequal empowerment of PRIs. Even though the panchayats are supposed to be locally governed, in some occasions, the elected bodies in Arunachal Pradesh have been found to lack the necessary powers and funds or even autonomy and have been seen to be at the mercy of the higher political players and the bureaucracy. In these situations the traditional institutions may still be effective in solving problems by the village and thus may challenge the formal authority of PRIs and lead to institutional friction.

8. Cultural Identity vs. Cultural Identity:

Traditional institutions are not only governing bodies, but they are also custodians of tribal identity, traditional values and memory. Other communities are afraid that standardized organs of the state can slowly undermine the native governing practices. Thus, a conflict is not always real: the struggle is about the preservation of the culture and independence rather than administrative authority.

As such, the struggle between the Traditional Institutions and PRIs in Arunachal Pradesh can be traced to the co-existence of two systems of governance that

had different roots, systems and approaches to governance in addition to their claims of legitimacy. TIs represent traditional power, social solidarity, and cultural survival whereas PRIs are democratic involvement, legal responsibility and development governance. These conflicts cannot be considered as negative only; they also demonstrate a constant process of negotiation between the indigenous government and the modern decentralization. The long-term issue is to institute coordination systems that lessen the competition and merge the merits of both systems to achieve inclusive and culturally sensitive local governance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Research is primarily descriptive or conceptual while having minimal amount of empirical evidence to confirm conclusions reached.
2. Variations between different tribes and districts are likely not adequately represented because the inspector general's office has described institutions across all of these areas in vastly different ways.
3. Due to the heavy reliance upon the use of secondary sources, finding evidence of local realities may not be included.
4. The study does not include a quantitative impact analysis measuring the effects of dual governance.
5. Due to the varying nature of each institution, results may not be indicative of updates made to either public or private organizations from the date of the research until time of publication.
6. Insufficient consideration for gender-based perspectives in comparison to the voices of all deemed "marginalised" at any traditional on an inter-gender basis.
7. This study is limited to the interaction between Traditional Institutions and Panchayati Raj Institutions at the grassroots level in Arunachal Pradesh. It does not address the urban governance or any other institutional arrangement in other states.

CONCLUSION

In Arunachal Pradesh, there is a complex relationship between Traditional Institutions (TIs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). While PRIs were created through constitutional mandates to foster democratic decentralization and promote inclusive development, TIs continue to have legitimacy and social trust in the community. The result is that there are contradictions, particularly around issues of authority, decision making and lawful jurisdiction, when customary practices collide with formal administrative structures. However, these tensions are not only adversarial because in many instances, TIs and PRIs can function complementarily, where TIs support community participation and resolving conflict and PRIs help to access state resources and development programmes. Thus, rather than being viewed as competing systems, there should be a synergistic and context-specific integration of TIs and PRIs for the

effective governance of the grassroots, sustainability and cultural preservation of indigenous practices in Arunachal Pradesh.

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