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## EVALUATION OF LOK ADALATS IN RAJASTHAN: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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**ABSTRACT :** *'Lok Adalat' is one of the popular alternative dispute resolution systems in India for providing speedy and economical justice. The study examines the relationship between 'number of Lok Adalats' organized and 'solved cases' in Rajasthan state. The study is based on the data provided by Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority for a period of more than one decade i.e. 2001 to 2013. The major conclusion drawn from the study is that there is a positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved cases in the Rajasthan state. Pooled regression technique has been used for the purpose of testing of hypotheses. The results confirm that there is high degree of relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved cases.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Alternative dispute resolution, Lok Adalat, Civil, Family Cases, MACT Cases.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Lok Adalat is a system of dispute resolution which relies upon voluntary participation and accommodation, fairness and compromise and can deal with both commercial and non-commercial cases (Discussion Paper, 2013). It is not a new term in Indian history. It means 'Janta ki Adalat' (People's Court) and it is similar to the traditional 'Gram Panchayats' in villages. The Lok Adalat is based on 'Equal Access to Justice' principle. It came into existence after amended Civil Procedure Code, 1908 and Legal Services Authority Act, 1987. Lok Adalat is potential utility to the existing legal system which has been overburdened with pending litigations (Chowbe and Dhonokar, 2012). According to the Article 14 of Indian constitution "the state shall not deny to any person equality before law or the equal protection of law within the territory of India". Section (19) of the Legal Services Authority Act, 1987, gives responsibility to Central, State, and Taluk Legal Authority are power to organize Lok Adalats. The Lok Adalats are performing on equality and natural justice.

The state of Rajasthan is not unblemished with crimes and corruption. The state has registered 268376 criminal cases in 2013 which is 10.65 per cent higher than the year 2012. Out of these cases 196224 cases are registered under Indian Penal Code (IPC). In the year 2013, total 72155 cases are registered under special and local laws. Out of these cases, 25.15 per cent are immoral traffic (Prevention Act), 9.68 per cent are indecent representation of women (P) Act, 46.15 per cent are Dowry Prohibition Act etc. (Criminal Survey: Rajasthan 2013). 'Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)' is popular and appropriate resolution system in jurisprudence. The system of ADR is part of culture heritage in the form of Panchyat and Lok Adalat in India (Khanwilkar, 2005). ADR includes arbitration, conciliation, mediation, ombudsman, Lok Adalats, etc. It is a tool to reduce the backlog of cases in India (Raju, 2007).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the following pages an attempt has been made to make a thorough review of literature available in the field of Lok Adalats:

Salkute's (2013) research is based on ADR mechanism. He suggested the need of effective mechanism to have expert determination in land encroachment certain cases which are to be referred before Lok Adalat. He suggests that before considering the cases in Lok Adalat, should securitized of cases by experts. By this way panel of Lok Adalat and parties get ample of opportunity to find out the way to settle the dispute. Chowbe et al. (2011) threw deep insight into the Lok Adalat and its potential utility to the existing legal system. The study concluded that self-explanatory adaptations of Lok Adalats suit to the poor and needy people. Subrahmanyam and Raju (2004) stated in their research that the Lok Adalat is beneficial to provide justice to the poor, backward and illiterate people. It provides them substantive, procedural laws. It is easily approachable system to resolve their disputes.

Bisht (2004) focused on the behavior and act of the members during the Lok Adalats. The members of Lok Adalat must act as a neutral, experience, intelligent, objective and benevolent. The members must make the efforts to negotiate the settlement and should not to be irritated and frustrated in case of no settlement. Their role is to be gentle persuasion to convince the parties. The members must give factual guidance, advice, mutual give and take. They have to proceed to dispose the case and arrive at the compromise or settlement between the parties. Baxi (1976) suggested working efficiency and help in accelerating the speed of rendering justice to the needy people. He further stated that on the basis of nature of Lok Adalat, there are two types of functions which it must perform. One is manifest functions which may be specified i.e. conflict resolution, ombudsman, legal aid and services, legislative innovation, marital counseling, initiation of social changes etc. The second type of function is latent functions and dysfunctions.

### Objectives of the Study

The present study makes empirical evaluation of Lok Adalats in Rajasthan. The main objectives of the study are to determine whether there is any relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved cases in Rajasthan and to provide recommendations for effective functioning of Lok Adalats in the state.

### Scope of the study

Lok Adalats are working in parts of the country. The study is limited to Rajasthan State only because Rajasthan is one of the largest (Area wise) state in the India. The study examines number of Lok Adalats and solved cases between 2001 to 2013.

### Hypotheses:

For the purpose of the present research, the following hypotheses have been developed. It will help in verifying the research statement.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Solved Cases.

- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Awards.  
 H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and MACT Cases.  
 H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Family Cases.  
 H<sub>05</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Civil Cases.  
 H<sub>06</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Criminal.  
 H<sub>07</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Banking Cases.  
 H<sub>08</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Revenue Cases.  
 H<sub>09</sub>: There is no significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and Other Cases.

## METHODOLOGY

‘Lok Adalat in India is helping hand of the Indian courts, in solving pre-litigation and post litigated cases. For empirical study of Lok Adalat evaluations in Rajasthan state is based on secondary data which has been collected from Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority for the year 2001 to 2013. The analysis of data is based on Statistical Packages, namely, SPSS and Eviews and Statistical Technique: Pooled Regression. The researcher has taken all major 35 Cities/Districts of Rajasthan for the year 2001 to 2013. The variables are: No. of Lok Adalats organized, Total Solved Cases, Family cases Solved, MACT cases Solved, Banking cases Solved, Revenue cases Solved, Civil Solved, Criminal cases, Others Cases Solved, Award (Compensation). Our data is from 2001 to 2013. So total observations are  $35 \times 13 = 455$

## Data Analysis

**Table 1: Number of Lok Adalat and Solved Cases**

Dependent Variable: Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	10.97202	7.134	0.000
Intercept	987.599	1.159	0.2469
R-Sq	0.102011		
Adj R-sq	0.100007		
F-statistic	50.89265		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and solved cases. 1 unit increase in Lok Adalat resolve about 11 cases.</i>			
<i>NULL Hypothesis : Strongly Rejected</i>			

Table (1) shows the relationship between number of Lok Adalats conducted in Rajasthan at different levels and solved cases by the conducted Lok Adalats. It is found that the there is

positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved cases. The result shows that the one Lok Adalat solved average about 11 cases.

**Table 2: Number of Lok Adalats and Awards**

Dependent Variable: Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	16856	6.6428	0.000
Intercept	5838127	4.11218	0.000
R-Sq	0.091		
Adj R-sq	0.089824		
F-statistic	44.12698		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and approved awards. 1 unit of Lok Adalat passed 16856 Rs. NULL Hypothesis : Rejected</i>			

Table (2) indicates that relationship between conducted Lok Adalats between 2001 to 2013 and verdict of awards amount. (in Rupees). It is found that there is positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and awards. The result shows that the one Lok Adalat passed average 16856 INR award.

**Table 3: Number of Lok Adalats and MACT Cases**

Dependent Variable: Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.105164	6.166609	0.000
Intercept	77.68803	8.172772	0.000
R-Sq	0.079219		
Adj R-sq	0.077135		
F-statistic	38.02706		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and MACT Cases. 1 unit of Lok Adalat solved 0.10 cases NULL Hypothesis : Rejected</i>			

Table (3) shows relationship between number of Lok Adalats conducted during the year 2001 to 2013 and solved Motor Accident Claims. The research result shows that there is positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and MACT cases. It means number of Lok Adalats solving MACT cases successfully. On an average 1 Lok Adalat solved .10 MACT cases.

**Table 4: Number of Lok Adalats and Family Cases**

Dependent Variable: Family Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.106923	9.849005	0.000
Intercept	4.838972	0.804216	0.4217
R-Sq	0.178642		
Adj R-sq	0.1768		
F-statistic	97.0029		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and Family Cases. 1 unit of Lok Adalat solved 0.10 family cases</i>			
<i>NULL Hypothesis : Rejected</i>			

Table (4) shows positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved family cases in Rajasthan state. The result shows that increment in conducting Lok Adalats and solving of family cases are increasing in same direction.

**Table 5: Number of Lok Adalats and Civil Cases**

Dependent Variable: Civil Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.246268	3.697402	0.0003
Intercept	99.12013	2.188483	0.0297
R-Sq	0.061672		
Adj R-sq	0.05716		
F-statistic	13.67078		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and Civil Cases Cases. 1 unit of Lok Adalat solved 0.24 family cases</i>			
<i>NULL Hypothesis : Rejected</i>			

Table (5) shows the result of relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved civil nature cases during the year 2001 to 2013. The research result indicates that civil nature cases are also solved by Lok Adalats successfully. There is positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and civil cases. It means number of Lok Adalats and solved civil cases increase in same directions.

**Table 6: Number of Lok Adalats and Criminal Cases**

Dependent Variable: Criminal Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	7.325261	6.023641	0.000
Intercept	781.6412	0.945228	0.3456
R-Sq	0.148533		
Adj R-sq	0.144439		
F-statistic	36.28426		
Prob. (F-val)	0.000		
<i>There is a positive and significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and Criminal Cases. 1 unit of Lok Adalat solved 7.32 Criminal Cases NULL Hypothesis : Strongly Rejected</i>			

Table (6) shows the result of relationship between number of Lok Adalats and solved Criminal cases. The results show that criminal cases are strongly supported by Lok Adalats. There is positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and criminal cases.

**Table 7: Number of Lok Adalats and Banking Cases**

Dependent Variable: Banking Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.102743	0.448967	0.6539
Intercept	126.2338	0.80974	0.419
R-Sq	0.000973		
Adj R-sq	-0.003853		
F-statistic	0.201572		
Prob. (F-val)	0.653925		
<i>There is a negative and not significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and Banking Cases. NULL Hypothesis : Accepted</i>			

Table (7) shows negative and insignificant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and banking cases in Rajasthan state. The result shows that even after increasing number of Lok Adalats, banking cases are not handling properly.

**Table 8: Number of Lok Adalats and Revenue Cases**

Dependent Variable: Revenue Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.224229	1.157298	0.2479
Intercept	226.276	1.99355	0.0469
R-Sq	0.003512		
Adj R-sq	0.00089		
F-statistic	1.33934		
Prob. (F-val)	0.247877		
<i>There is a negative and not significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and Revenue Cases. NULL Hypothesis : Accepted</i>			

Table (8) indicates a negative and insignificant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and revenue cases in Rajasthan state. The result shows revenue related are not fit for Lok Adalats.

**Table 9: Number of Lok Adalats and Other Cases**

Dependent Variable: Other Cases			
Variable	Coefficient	t-Value	Prob.
Lok	0.50919	0.676387	0.4995
Intercept	827.8761	1.617238	0.1073
R-Sq	0.002195		
Adj R-sq	-0.002602		
F-statistic	0.4575		
Prob. (F-val)	0.499546		
<i>There is a negative and not significant relationship between No. of Lok Adalats and other Cases. NULL Hypothesis : Accepted</i>			

Table (9) shows the negative and insignificant relationship between number of Lok Adalats and other cases in Rajasthan.

## **FINDINGS**

The following are the major findings of the present study:

- It is found that Lok Adalat is effectively functioning, proving justice by successfully solving family, MACT, civil, criminal etc nature of cases.
- It is found that increase the number of Lok Adalats, the solved cases are also increase in same direction.
- It is found that except than finance related cases like Banking, Revenue and others cases people are less interested to solve through Lok Adalats. They don't want any compromise in these cases.
- It is found on average 1 Lok Adalat passed 16856 INR award. It is a positive sign. If we increase number of Lok Adalats the amount of award also be increase in same direction.
- It is found on average 1 Lok Adalat passed 0.10 cases. It is a positive sign. If we increase number of Lok Adalats the burden of MACT cases may be reduce of the different courts.
- Lok Adalat is helping in solving family cases. The research result shows that on average 1 Lok Adalat solve 0.10 family cases.
- It is found on average 1 Lok Adalat solved .24 civil nature case. If we increase number of Lok Adalats, the pendency of civil nature cases would be reduced.
- The criminal cases are strongly supported by Lok Adalats. The society is more interested to solve criminal cases through Lok Adalats. The result indicates that one Lok Adalat solve 7.32 criminal nature case.

## **SUGGESTION**

On the basis of the findings of the study, the researcher has given the following suggestions which will go a long way for bringing remarkable changes in the system of Lok Adalats not only in the state of Rajasthan but India as whole:

- The result of research shows that increasing of conducting Lok Adalat helps in solving cases. It is recommend that the frequency of conducting of Lok Adalats should increase, is indeed beneficial to the society as well as judiciary.
- Lok Adalats also successfully solving family disputes and giving quick justice. The authority should include more pending cases in Lok Adalats and give relief to the society. .
- The government should allocate separate budget for Lok Adalats, the authority should give focus to specific type of Lok Adalats.
- Parties related to Land and revenue disputes are less interested to solve cases by Lok Adalats. It may be happened due to less financial benefit (Compensation). It is suggest that these cases should give less weightage to solve in Lok Adalats.
- People of criminal cases are interested get quick justice; results are also showing the same. The authority should also be focus and include more and more criminal case in Lok Adalats.
- It is observed that including banking cases the burden of Lok adulate increase, instead of including banking cases, authority should give more focus on civil and criminal nature cases.

## CONCLUSION

This study is to evaluate effectiveness of Lok Adalats in Rajasthan state. It is found that there is positive and significant relationship between number of Lok Adalats organized and cases solved in Rajasthan State. The cases solved are particularly related to the issues arising from the family disputes, cases of civil nature, criminal cases, motor accident cases which found positive and significant relationship. However at the same time the results related to banking, land and revenue and other cases showed a negative relationship between number of Lok Adalats organized and cases. It is thus concluded that overall Lok Adalats are functioning effectively and towards positive direction in solving cases in the Rajasthan state.

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## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

- [www.legalserviceindia.com](http://www.legalserviceindia.com)
- [www.indiankanoon.org](http://www.indiankanoon.org)
- [www.shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in](http://www.shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in)

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