

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

AND

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION :

This chapter deals with, Introduction, brief sketch of Rural Development Programs in India and Review of Literature.

Rural development has acquired special significance in the third world nations. It is observed that more than half of the people in these nations live in the villages. In the pre-independence era of these countries, the rural areas were neglected by the colonists. The disproportionate development of the rural areas led to a variety of problems requiring prompt attention. The developing nations, after achieving independence, experimented with various concepts and methods or strategies to alleviate poverty in the rural areas.

Development has been described as a generic term meaning growth, evolution, stage of inducement or progress. Development in the new perspective has been referred to as an overall process of transforming men and societies leading to a social order in which every human being can achieve moral and material well being. Development has also been referred to as a whole; an integral, value-loaded cultural process encompassing the natural environment, social relations, education, production, consumption and well being. It is stated in the 'Study guide on Development of the Food and Agriculture Organization' that:

The ultimate purpose of development is to provide everyone with ever-increasing opportunities for a better life. It, therefore, acquires an equitable distribution of income and other social resources in order to promote justice and

efficient production, to raise levels of employment substantially, to expand and improve facilities for education, health, nutrition, housing and social and cultural well being. The qualitative and structural development thus imposes on society must go hand in hand with economic progress while racial, ethnic and social inequalities must be substantially reduced. These are decisive factors in hastening development and hence must be handled with dynamism. [Mehta, 1984: P. 1 to 5]

Components of Rural Development Policy:-

The first component of such a policy should be 'man' and his environment. It should aim creating skills and appropriate knowledge so that man can exploit his environment and can expand his resources for both the better quality of his life and the life of his community by improving his family kinship lifestyle.

The Second important conceptual focus has to be on the ecological settling since rural is in contrast to urban and its development should have proportionate or balanced approach to urban development.

The means of production and appropriate technology should constitute the third component of 'rural development'. Among the means of production the most important in the rural settling is land. The exploitation of land to its maximum capacity will depend upon the technical know how employed in terms of its production of different types of crops, water management resources, quality of seeds, application of the right type of fertilizers suitable to the soil conditions and other means like technology and labour force to irrigate and cultivate the land. The building of institutional infrastructure necessary for mobilizing economic resources and the organization and management of men, money and material

resources should be the fourth component of rural development. The fifth important component of rural development is 'self reliance' which needs to be brought in through local initiative, participation and mobilization of existing resources. The last, though not the least, dimension of rural development should focus on distributive justice in so far as the poor segments of the rural population are concerned.

In Short, in formulating the rural development policy the whole approach has to be fundamental and targeted towards alleviating the rural poverty. [Jain, 1997: P.24 to 30]

Rural Development Programs in India:

The decade of 1921 – 1930 was very fertile from the point of view of early pioneering efforts at rural developments in India. Sriniketan and Martar Dam emerged as centers of rural development as also Brayne's Gurgaon, experiment. Mahatma Gandhi started constructive programme of rural development first at Sevagram in 1920 and later at Wardha in 1938. Gandhian thinking had a significant influence on all the rural development programs that were subsequently developed.

Since independence Indian Government has made a number of strategies of development and implemented a series of anti-poverty programs in order to eradicate poverty in rural India. From the point of view of rural development, the period since independence can conveniently be divided in to three phases [First Phase – Community Development Programme; Second Phase – Green Revolution; & Third Phase – Integrated Rural Development Programme] we will begin with a

brief review of the major characteristics of these phases, with review of literature on it.

The first phase after independence saw the launching of the Community Development Programme [C. D. P.] through which the first five year plan sought to initiate a process of transformation of social and economic life of village India. By increasing agricultural production and by promoting transportation and communication, rural health and hygiene of rural people. The C. D. P. was launched on October 2, 1952, with 55 pilot projects on an experimental basis. The programme was implemented in units of blocks; each block covered an area of about 400 - 500 Km. with about 100 villages and population of about 1 Lakh. This period of C.D.P. was upto 1967. Then Green- Revolution emerged which lasted till 1978. The failure of C.D.P. has been identified by a number of Scholars [Dube – 1958, Epstein -1962, Dak– 1982] similarly “Panchayat Raj” institution were launched to promoted democratic decentralization. They however, failed to materialize. Then rural Co-operatives emerged as loaning agency of the government. It is observed that benefits of C. D. P. went to better off sections particularly big farmers and land owners. Similarly, the benefits of land-reforms went mainly to the intermediate classes, while the rural poor lost whatever little security they had under the old system.

Similarly Panchyat – Raj served more entrenched groups of rural area than the rural poor and the dispossessed. In much the same way rural Co-operatives were favorable to the better-off of sections. There are a number of studies which supported these points [All India Rural Credit Survey – 1954, Government of

India – 1965: 169, Report of all Indian Rural Credit Review Committee – 1969, National Commission on Agriculture -1971, Baviskar – 1980 : 109-110]

Under C.D.P. a number of special schemes were initiated which were: S.F.D.A. [Small Farmer Development Agency] M.F.A.L.A. [Marginal Farmer & Agricultural Labour Agency] T.A.D.P. [Tribal Area Development Programme] etc. But these schemes had unwholesome consequences such as the rise of factional politics, conflict, and corruption [A. Mehta -1978; Baviskar' 1980]. Being disappointed with the performance High Yielding Varieties Programme [H.Y.V.P.] leading to “Green – Revolution” which constitutes the second phase of the rural development starting from 1967 to 1978. As an ideology ‘Green-Revolution’ refer to the improvement in farm productivity as a key to rural development, because it would remove the problems of rural poverty and hunger. As a performance of green-revolution signify the use of high yielding varieties of seeds, extensive mechanization of farm operations, increasing well irrigation and high doses of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. For achieving a highest rate of growth of food-grains output in rural India.

A number of studies have reported mainly, its negative consequences such as greater instability in agriculture, [Rao at.al. 1988], socio – economic inequality [Bagchi – 1983, Dhanagare -1984, 1987] and no increase to the rate of growth of food-grain production over the period preceding it [Bhatia – 1988]. Several studies have attributed it to the pro-rich peasant’s base of development bureaucracy, which assumes that green revolution technology being capital intensive suit resourcefull rather than resource poor peasants [Mencher- 1978: 239-240; Deva -1980: 268].

Even the fallacy of this bias has been empirically expressed by Bhalla and Chadha [1983]. Whatever the performance of the 'green – revolution' it certainly has benefited largely the rich peasantry where as the socio – economic condition of the poor peasants lagging far behind.

In order to compensate the long lasting neglect of the interest of rural poor, a new policy thrust of rural development emerged in 1978, with the appearance of the Integrated Rural Development Programme [I.R.D.P.]. In fact I.R.D.P brought together various targets groups which came under a newly created organization called as "District Rural Development Agency [D.R.D.A.]". Under D.R.D.A. a number of anti poverty programmes were started such as,

Minimum Need Programme [M.N.P.], National Rural Employment Programme [N.R.E.P.], Drought Prone Area Programme [D.P.A.P], Small Farmers Development Agency [S.F.D.A.], Special Employment Scheme [S.E.S.], Operation Flood, etc. programmes were introduced.

All those starting on a modest scale during the fifth year plan. I.R.D.P. got into full swing in the sixth year plan, covering entire rural India. However there are two widely different assessments of I.R.D.P., one is quite critical and other is somewhat appreciative. The critical perspective focuses on two points,

- 1) Inefficiency and leakages in its implementation. *And*
- 2) It suspects economic viability.

Minoacha [1988: 904] has criticized I.R.D.P for its inefficiency and corruption and he characterized it as an "antidevelopment strategy". While some others have criticized it for its incapability to ever full the vast rural poor out of the

poverty trap given the continuation of the structure of socio-economic inequality [Dantwala161985]. Kurian viewed, it as a “Mixed-bag” having a potential to change the structural characteristic [1987-A; 173]

Similarly, Rao and Erappa¹⁷ [1987: a – 159] called it as an “Inefficient programmes”. There are some other scholars who have pointed out that the I.R.D.P. has produced some unintended and non-economic consequences which remained yet to be investigated [see Tripathi¹⁸-1987]. The non-economic consequences of I.R.D.P have brought attention of sociologists to study the impact of rural economic or socio-cultural consequences of I.R.D.P and other rural developed programmes, such as,

Decline of the number of attached labourers.

Enhancement of bargaining power of agricultural labourer.

Change in the traditional dependency relationship between poor peasants and rich peasants.

Dis - organisation of traditional Jajmani system;

Attenuation of the exploitative and oppressive power of land-lords;

and

Above all, rise in the self-esteem of the rural poor.

In the 1990s with the emergence of new economic policy a number of anti-poverty programmes i.e. [Jawahar Rojgar Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, and Old Age Pension etc.]. In spite of a series of anti- poverty programmes, the living conditions of a vast population including the poor peasants has not yet been considerably improved. [Suryanarayan M. H.- 2000]

Recently a new rural development programme called as, “Gram Vikas Yojana”, “Pradhanmantri Gramodaya Yojana” etc. has been started by the B.J.P. government. The impact of all these rural development programmes for the different back-ward classes, communities and peasants needs to be systematically studied.

Like Tripathi [1987] and Sharma [1989] has pointed out, unintended and non-economic consequences of I. R. D. P and other rural development programmes earlier. Thus there is a need of systematically study of these programmes effect on peasants.

Review of Literature

It is difficult to differentiate a peasant group from that of the rural. Consequently it becomes difficult to distinguish a rural study from that of a peasant. According to Redfield [1965] a peasant group lives close to nature and depends on nature for all its activities. But we come across villagers living equally close to nature and depending on nature for their food, occupation, religion etc. However, we have to keep one thing in mind that living close does not necessarily mean dependence on nature. Here we can name the landlords, teachers, businessmen, government servants, who may live in rural community but not necessarily depending much on nature and especially not in the manner the peasants do.

The studies on peasantry can be divided into – general, social, economic, religious and political. There are also studies on the lines of folk-urban continuum. Further, we can also include latest aspects such as city bound peasants and peasant revolutions and rebellions. Each of these can be again studied under three stages-

Formulative studies, recent and developed studies, studies during the independence struggle and post-independence studies.

During the colonial rule in India the British wanted to know the natives they ruled so as to administer them better. They concentrated on the customs, manners, laws and other general things of the natives so that they could avoid antagonizing the natives. Here studies by Maine (1870), Dey (1874), Baden Powell (1896) Grierson (1926), Wiser (1930) etc. throw good light on the subject matter. These were followed by studies by Indian Scholars like Ranade (1926), Mann (1927) etc.

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Then came the studies on economic life of peasants in order to understand their agricultural activity, land-holding pattern, labour groups, artisan castes, so that the colonial government could have an idea about the local resources and the manpower available in their colony. Studies by Jack (1916), Ranade (1926) and Wisner (1936) etc., deal with this aspect. Bryne (1927) and Strickland (1936) tried to understand these ills from Western point of view.

After Independence, as per the promise made to the rural masses by the national leaders, the new Indian government took up development activities in the rural Society. Indian villages being mainly agrarian several studies were made to understand the problems of the cultivators, labourers and artisans by Lewis (1956a), Moore (1958), Thorner (1953b) and Orenstein (1954). Many journals and weeklies such as Yojana, 'Khadi Gramodyog', Kurukshetra, Economic Weekly, Economic and Political Weekly etc. were started to publish the findings on peasants and artisans. These studies reveal the importance of land in the life of the peasants, their working patterns, ecological cycle, co-operative working groups, marketing, borrowing and lending among the peasants and their interrelation between artisan and farming castes.

Followed by this came the studies on rural development and directed change. The peasants who were settled to a way of life were reluctant to change. To bring about development in them it was essential to change their values of life and the way of life. So when most of the developmental plans brought for the well being of the peasants failed, the government of India asked Indian and Foreign Social Scientists to study this. Following this there came a number of studies on

the community life of the peasants and their attitude towards the change by Thorner [1953], Dube [1956], Srinivas [1955], Ishwaran [1966,1968 and 1970], Karve [1966], Lewis [1955,1958], Marriott [1955], Bailey [1955,1957,1963], Beals [1955,1962,1974], Mayer [1952,1961], Epistine [1962], Bateille [1969], Venkatrayappa [1973] and so on. Here the peasants' society and culture were analysed keeping in mind their acceptance and rejection of development programmes like the use of improved seeds, chemicals, mechanization of farming, acceptance of formal and modern schooling and modern medicines etc. When many of the programmes failed, again the government asked several social scientists to study the reason for this failure. As a result a series of studies came from all over India on the peasants.

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