

CHAPTER - II

NATURE, METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Nature, Conceptual Framework & Methodology

In this chapter an attempt has been made to present Conceptual Framework and Methodology of the present research work. For this purpose this chapter is divided in to three sections,

- i] Nature and Scope of the study;
- ii] Methodology of the study
- iii] Conceptual Framework;

i] Nature and Scope of the Study:-

The present study initiates a small contribution in this field. There have been planned development schemes and programmes, which were implemented since the first five year plan. However, several developmental schemes were exhibited, during the last 54 years could not remove poverty and unemployment in rural areas. It has been observed that only the upper strata of society, who take the benefits of developmental programmes. It is not just guess or politically motivated statement, that poor people becoming poorer and rich –richer. This has been shown by several studies, at all India level.

Our intention is to concentrate on the peasant families in the Kavathe village. We are interested not only in studying the Socio-economic condition of peasant families, but also impact of government agricultural development programmes on over-all socio-economic conditions of peasants in the Kavathe village.

With the broad outline of the nature of our study we shall turn to the Conceptual Framework and Methodology, used in the study, which will give a fair idea of this study.

Methodology of the Study

I] Selection of the Topic:-

Following are the main reasons behind choosing this subject for research :-

A] The first reason behind the selection of this topic is that agriculture is the back-bone of Indian economy. There have been a number of studies on peasants in India; most of the studies are based on survey, census, and other quantitative methods and techniques of research. In fact, a study of peasantry needs both qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques. In this study, the researcher has adopted 'case-study' method for the purpose.

B] The second reason behind choosing this subject is that, the researcher himself comes from small peasant family. He is aware of socio-economic problems of peasants. He is dweller of the study village so he will be an insider to study. ^{He wants to find out} the main causes of socio-economic problems of peasants in the KAVATHE village.

II] Objectives of the study:

The main objectives of this present study of peasants in the Kavathe

village are as follows [These all objectives are closely related to different caste categories in the village]:

- a] To understand the Educational Standard of Peasants in Kavathe village.
- b] To understand the economic conditions of peasants.
- c] To understand the indebtedness of peasants.
- d] To ascertain their attitude and awareness towards certain government agriculture development programmes.
- e] To study main problems of peasants in achieving benefits of certain programmes.
- f] To know the change in farming method and cropping pattern.
- g] To understand overall impact of these programmes on peasants.

III] Universe and Unit of the Study:

In this present study, “Solapur District” of Maharashtra state is selected as a universe of the study. For the purpose of a unit of the study, “Kavathe” village is selected. This village of Solapur district is located at North Solapur taluka.

IV] Sampling:

According to the record available in the grampanchayat office of Kavathe village, there are 432 households in the village. Among them 298

households are peasant households. These 298 peasant families cultivate their land for their own subsistence needs, as well as for their consumer goods. From these 298 peasant families we have selected 50 families by using purposive sampling technique. It means 16 % households were selected for the study. Among the selected 50 households, 20 households are beneficiaries of development programmes, and remaining 30 households are not beneficiaries.

V] Methods of Research:

For the purpose of the method of research, in this present study “case-study” method is used. Not only a “case-study” method but also comparative method of research is used by the researcher.

VI] Method of Data Collection:

It is a kind of an exploratory study. In order to make the study qualitative, as possible all the necessary data have been collected. There are two types of data used in this study.

A] Primary Data:

For the purpose of understanding present socio-economic condition of peasant families and for the evaluation of the impact of Government Agricultural Development Programmes on peasants, interview technique has been used with the help of interview schedule.

For getting accurate primary data, I interviewed the important officers, assistants and clerks in Grampanchyat, Panchyat Samiti and Agriculture Department by using interview schedule. For the purpose of getting more reliable data we took the help of participant observation.

B] Secondary Data:

While the secondary data were collected from various documentary sources of government offices, like as Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti, Agriculture Department, Grampanchayat etc., which was given supplemented by journals, books, news papers and pamphlets.

VII] Analyses and Interpretation:

After the collection of data, the data were manually processed. Then the processed data were decoded and tables were prepared which were interpreted with the help of statistical techniques.

VIII] Report Writing:

Report writing is an important and fundamental stage of research work. The present report is arranged in chapter scheme as noted below:

Chapter

I - INTRODUCTION & REVIEW OF LITERATURE

II - NATURE, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

III- KAVATHE : A VILLAGE PROFILE

IV- DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

a] Socio-economic condition of peasants in the Kavathe village.

b] Impact of Government Agricultural Development Programmes on peasants.

V- SUMMERY & FINDINGS

2. Conceptual Framework–

Concept of Peasant:

In the academic, the term ‘peasant’ has been confused among social scientists. From the beginning social anthropologists have defined peasants by their cultural attachment to tradition. Robert Redfield who identified his ideal type concept of ‘Folk Society’ with the primitive tribal and contrasted it with the peasant society on the one side and the urban society on the other side, following A.L. Kroeber he defined peasants as “part society and part culture”, to distinguish peasants from farmers who produce for the market and identified three characteristics of peasants as,

- i] Peasants as agriculture producers.
- ii] They retain effective control over the land.
- iii] They aim at substantive farming and not at profit with investment motive.

[Wolf -1955: 453-455]

While, R. Firth defines ‘peasants’ exclusively in terms of ‘mode of livelihood’ characteristics i.e. Subsistence farming, simply agricultural technology etc. Nevertheless Firth incorporates other social categories such as artisans, fishermen etc. into the fold of ‘peasantry.’ [Firth – 1951 : 86-88]

On the contrary, the Marxists like V.Lenin, Karl Kautsky, Mao – tse- Tung following Karl Marx and F. Engels as well as Neo-Marxists like A.V. Chayanov have identified peasants with social groups as diverse as feudal tenants, independent farmers and rural wage laborers and they have defined ‘peasantry’ in

terms of:

- i] Peasant family as the unit of production consumption,
- ii] The relationship of capitalist to non-capitalist agriculture
- iii] To use family labour in a rural setting
- iv] The exploitation of poor and relatively poor agricultural producers.

However, no precise and clear cut definition of peasantry has been produced yet. Thus the term, 'peasant' best be regarded as descriptive rather than heuristic usefulness. However, Theodore Shanin attempted to define peasantry by integrating different traditions of thought. To him, the peasantry consists of small agricultural producers, who with the help of simple equipment and the labour of their families, produce mainly for their own consumption and for the fulfillment of the obligation to the holders of political and economic power [Shanin- 1975: 240 - 245]

V. Xaxa, following a number of Indian Social scientists defined peasants as small producers. He identified the major components of peasants in India such as-

- A) Peasants are small producers who use simple equipments;
- B) They produce primarily for their own consumption. In saying so, the marginal production for market in order to pay tax to the state or by the essential commodities of life is not ruled out. But they are essentially different from those who produce primarily for the market making capital investments and realizing profits; They derive their livelihood primarily from land. However they can do their other part time job or seasonal works; They cultivate the land largely to the member of the family. However, occasionally or seasonal hired labour that

characterizes subsistence economy; They are attached to land in simple way. Hence our account of peasant will not be confined only to legally defined status with varying degrees of rights but will encompass all those social categories traditionally involved in the institute social arrangement of land and; They enjoy an inferior economic, political, social, cultural status in view of the domination by the town's people or landlords within landlord-tenant economy, the peasants constitute undergone class. [Karna -1989: 26-30]

Conceptual Framework of Development:

The concept of development was accepted as relevant during the 1950s and the 1960s when several of the so-called Third World nations attained political independence. Most of these Third World nations were faced with grave problems of widespread poverty. In this context, the idea of economic development was readily adopted by these nations to provide necessary support in the formulation of relevant economic policies and strategies. With diverse experiences in the adoption of development goals, the new nations found that unless supported by appropriate policies and strategies formulated in the context of specific needs and requirements of each of such nations, the true objectives of development would be far from being accomplished. Further, it was clear in the experience of these new nations that the true objectives of development transcended narrow economic gains, in the sense that it was futile unless accompanied by a wide-ranging process of social transformation that would help in overcoming the severe disparities and inequalities within the social order.

There is a vast literature on the subject of development that is presently, available, yet, there seems to be no clear unanimity regarding the meaning of development. However, it must be emphasized that the usage of the term development is legitimate when we consider development as a change process that is multidimensional and interdependent. The multidimensional character of this change process has been emphasized by many scholars. For instance, Michael P. Todaro (1985) writes that development

Is not purely an economic phenomenon. In an ultimate sense, it must encompass

more than the material and financial side of people's lives. Development should, therefore, be perceived as a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social systems. This idea of development is endorsed by Ozzie G. Simmons(1988) when he states:

Any brief (or unidisciplinary) formulation is likely to be of dubious value, because development is essentially a multi-dimensional process involving important changes in a society's economic, political and social sectors, as well as in cultural beliefs and practices.

Conceptual Framework of Rural Development

The World Bank defines rural development as, "A strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people- the rural poor. Rural Development involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek livelihood in rural area. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless."

Rural Development, as a concept, is deeply involved in the planning process in India leading to the formulation of appropriate policies and strategies. In this context, it is necessary to examine the connotation and implications of rural development as a concept. A conceptual understanding of rural development is warranted in view of the fact that this concept has come to signify a whole set of policies, programmes and strategies broadly covering the field of rural reconstruction. This concept has also found its usage in designating the process of social and economic transformation covered by the programmes of rural

reconstruction. The purpose of the present discussion is to examine the implications of the concept in relation to the process of rural reconstruction, rather than the specific policies and programmes that are supposed to be development oriented. It is necessary to examine the relevance of using the concept to designate the process underlying rural development. In this regard, the implications of the concept do not seem to have been used in the right perspective. It is not clear whether the concept has relevance in terms of specific objectives like alleviation of rural poverty, or whether it is supposed to imply a much more complex process of structural change. It is the contention of the researcher that the latter use of the concept is much more relevant than otherwise.

The rural community presents a complex system of structures as, for instance, the occupational structure, status structure, economic structure, elite and power structure and so forth. A reference to rural development without any concern for identifying the change process within any of the structures, or a change in their interrelationships would overlook the most strategic aspects of

The concept of rural development should take under its purview the diversities of community life and organization found in different regions of the nation. In fact, it is necessary to take cognition of the fact that there are vast structural differences distinguishing villages of one region from those of another. Under such conditions, it is difficult to visualize a uniform change process associated with development in the different regions of the nation. Therefore, the concept of rural development must be sufficiently flexible to be of relevance in identifying development change in different structural situations. It is a fallacy to

think that local structures and groups in all regions of a vast nation show homogeneity and simplicity. There is every need to have a precise understanding of the structures and groups at the village level in different regions in order to develop a proper perspective of the change process associated with development. It is necessary to note in this connection that there are development measures like the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme which seems to have no relevance to the occupational structure of the village community. It is necessary to point out here there is no change process involved here since the existing occupational structure has never experienced any change even in the presence of a so called development measure. Any development measure that fails to initiate a change process in any of the structures and groups of the rural community is bound to be sterile. In fact, such a measure may be rather counter productive. For instance, if the example of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme is considered, it is found that the possible outcome of this programme is the perpetuation of wage employment. There are development programmes which may lead only to the aggravation of existing problems. In this connection, it is pertinent to cite measures, underlying the so called Green Revolution, the consequences of which were extremely harmful to the community organization. Ozzie G. Simmons remarks (1988) :

...such measures as the Green Revolution and the injection of mechanization and capital-intensive technology, as well as the top-down management methods employed to implement rural development projects, have generally enhanced the interests of the rural elites of large farmers, merchants and

middlemen, rather than those of the mass of peasant farmers, landless labourers and migrant seasonal workers.

The different theoretical approaches to development and its conceptualization have been considered in the preceding sections of this chapter. Basically, these theoretical models have their focus on the modern industrial societies in which the rural-urban differences are gradually being narrowed down. On the other hand, in India, the rural-urban differential is quite pronounced. It can be said that the Indian villages are the victims of a prolonged period of neglect, a legacy which is continuing even into more recent times. Here, the views expressed by Michael Lipton (1977) about the urban bias in Indian planning are relevant. In this regard, Ozzie Simmons writes,

Urban bias in development perspectives and practice was essentially a reflection of the modernization model, an integral part of the dogma that industrialization was the engine of economic growth and that rural people had to be shifted out of agriculture, the 'traditional' sector, into industry, or 'modern' sector, as the principal path to progress.

In India, the planning process relating to rural development has been essentially a bureaucratic exercise, the bureaucratic machinery gradually moving further and further away from the realities of the rural situation. This is evident from the fact that over the years, the perception and understanding of rural development by the planners is characterized by constant shifts in emphasis depending on the dictates of other sectors of development.

Thus, the task of rural development is caught up in the exigencies of

establishing relative priorities in the allocation of resources.

It needs no emphasis that the fortunes of the development process rooted in the rural community are dependent on the proper formulation of a conceptual framework of rural development that is firmly based on the realities of the rural situations.