

CHAPTER -.IBACKGROUND

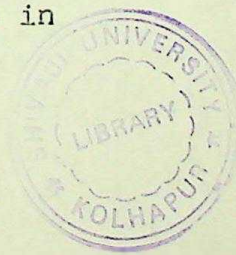
The word 'evaluation' itself clarifies the nature and scope of the research project. The evaluation now-a-days has attained a definite status in recent years. Formulation of evaluation criteria is the most fundamental and difficult task.¹ Efficient and effective plan implementation is possible only by evaluation method. A plan may be a programme of many activities, but it does not guarantee a successful and efficient completion of the activities. The First Five Year Plan document appropriately stated that, "with every important programme provision should always be made for achievement of results systematic evaluation should become a normal administrative practice in all branches of economic activity."² " Once the scheme or a plan for development is carried on for a country's development, it is necessary to evaluate the plan (or project) which is an important step in the assessment of the successful implementation.

Now-a-days the evaluation method is becoming very scientific. The collection of data does not remain as the main object of the evaluation, but it also covers the proper methods of improvements in the plan programme and in its implementation.

Darcie Byrn, Gladys Gallup and others, have stated that "evaluation" is "a systematic process of appraisal by which we determine the worth, value or meaning of some activity and of collecting information as a means for making decisions forming judgement and drawing conclusions."³ Evaluation techniques may raise a question about the working of various schemes or programmes. It is high time that we thought over those problems. The picture that we see in this matter is very sad. "Growth with social Justice" was the main slogan of Fourth Five Year Plan programmes, which have been formulated to help the weaker sections of the society which is not yet achieved.

Taylor has defined the evaluation in the following words :

"Evaluation at one pole of its function is mere census recording, after the fact. At the other pole it is fundamental research. The findings of even census takings, of course, have considerable programme guidance value. They show where progress, as measured by the facts reported, is or is not being made. But the blind spots can be lighted only by deeper research; not research for the sake of research, but research to discover what can and should be done to improve the programme operation."⁴ If we put this definition into the present day problem of evaluation of Antyodaya Movement in



Rajasthan, then we get a satisfactory idea to prove that working of Antyodaya was an ideal movement. The 'Movement' was first started in Rajasthan by 'Janata Government' on 2nd October 1977. It has completed four years on October 1980. At present its working is totally suspended (a letter from Secretary, Agriculture/Antyodaya Department, Gr.XI, Govt. of Rajasthan dated 31st August 1981 was received informing the suspension of the Scheme). The programme envisages upliftment of the "poorest of the poor" families in the state by providing them in each village means of livelihood in the form of various programmes of self-employment, wage employment and old age pension etc. The present project aims at a careful evaluation of the Antyodaya scheme with a view to pointing out factors leading to success and/or failure. Here the purpose is to assess the performance in terms of its objectives. The task is to know whether Antyodaya programme has succeeded in its fundamental objectives? Of course, the very suspension of this programme may be attributed to certain deficiencies in the implementation of the scheme. The question may also raise that to what extent this was proved by present government? That also should be assessed.

Immediately before completing a year of the programme, the programme Evaluation Organisation (P.E.O.) of Planning Commission was entrusted in August 1978 to undertake

a quick and current evaluation of the working of the programme. The study was conducted in five selected districts of the state.⁵ However, it must be noted that the evaluation⁶ done by P.E.O. cannot be accepted as a sufficient proof of the success or failure of the scheme, because it relates to first single years' performance. At the most this type of evaluation can come up with only some of the inherent drawbacks in the formulation of the scheme.

For the optimum of allocation, it is essential to know the cost-benefit structure of any development scheme. Introduction as well as continuation of any such scheme in planning process should always be determined by a scientific cost-benefit analysis. But this, however, is a difficult task to assess the cost-benefit of Antyodaya scheme. It may be analysed only for the perspective or long run plans, Antyodaya, though it was perspective, but was suspended within the required period for perspective planning. Thus, evaluation is generally the function of an independent outside organisation which is not directly responsible for the implementation of the programme.

Evaluation may be carried on in three stages.⁷ First stage is before the programme is started, so as to establish a "bench mark". Here the economic feasibility of the programme was being assessed. It is also called "pre-project" or "ex-ante" evaluation. Such kind of evaluation

survey was conducted by Government of Rajasthan, before devising the profile of benefit programme under Antyodaya. A pilot survey was conducted in the districts of Jodhpur, Kota, Chittorgarh, Jhunjhun and Jaipur. Five villages from each districts were selected. In those villages 'Gram sabha' meetings were held for identification of poorest families and the programmes of their upliftment was devised.

The second stage is when the programme is in operation and this is called 'concurrent evaluation'. This kind of evaluation was carried by Programme Evaluation Organisation, in the name of "Evaluation Study of the working of Antyodaya Programme." Which has identified the pitfalls in the initial implementation and suggested the remedial measures in brief.

The third stage of evaluation is to assess critically the completion of the scheme vis-a-vis the realization or otherwise of the ends with the scheme was initially launched. This is called "ex-post" or "end" evaluation. The present research project belongs to this kind of evaluation. This kind of "end" evaluation is a more useful and concurrent guide for initiating other schemes in which mistakes, miscalculations, over-estimation of objectives and resources as well as deficiencies in management can be avoided at a much earlier stage.

"Thus evaluation should be "objective" "systematic" and "comprehensive" as distinguished from other forms of assessment that do not satisfy these criteria".⁸

The evaluation of "Antyodaya Movement" in Rajasthan is "ex-post" or "end" evaluation type of study. which is brought under, after the scheme has been launched. Here comes the proper assessment of the planned programme and the ends achieved by the Antyodaya. The researcher may think and act on the proper time to assess the Antyodaya Movement. The subject matter of evaluation is concerned to measure its working, and its impact on rural poor. The causes of its failure might resulted into its suspension by present government. It, therefore, becomes the main objective of evaluation to precisely specify or review the causes which led to the failure of the scheme.

Thus while evaluating the scheme the following questions may come in the way of evaluation : whether the Antyodaya Movement has succeeded in its aims of uplifting the village poors above the poverty line? Had the scheme been successfully implemented? Has it worked as it should? How many families were benefitted through various programmes? Which caste specially benefitted most? Why? and How? The problem that arise in its working like administrative problems due to the fact that people have initiative, problems arising out of selection of the Antyodaya families.

It is also necessary to verify the criticism that, 'The present Antyodaya, a 'Adarsh Gram Yojana' is a sharp break from the past. It has rejected the conventional procedures and policy frame work, it never solved the problem of rural poverty.' The problem that the financing and other institutions which help subsidizing and in other ways helping the families? How Government provides the various facilities through this movement? Whether the people are anxious to gain from this? To what extent it has achieved its targets? What are the planning and administrative techniques undertaken for the development of rural area? And last but not least is to examine whether the change in the political set up has any thing to do with the suspension of the scheme? This type of evaluation would be superfluous. But the present need of the programme is to find out the facts of working of plan programme. All these questions are automatically be find out an alternative to original programme. This will help for future planning.

Upliftment of the poorest of the poor population can be considered as the first priority of planning for development. Every plan related to this priority objective must be subject to scientific evaluation, because from the success of such scheme depends the success of overall development planning, which can be meaningful to the poor



society. Antyodaya is in a sense a vital scheme of this nature and quite novel at that, these are the two considerations which induce the present researcher to undertake the evaluation of this scheme. Particularly, moreover, there was a nationwide appreciation of the scheme followed by the attempt of some third world countries to imitate it. Such appreciation and imitation should always be a sequel to a scientific evaluation and not the response to the initial mass appeal of the scheme.

The present evaluation study is also mainly centralised on a particular point of implementation of the programme at state and village level. The programme envisaged at the state level is very precise and clear. It only supervises over the programmes implemented in the districts and guide B.D.Os and its staff for proper working of the scheme. The significance of the state level authority is to frame various policies under Antyodaya. The implementation sequence in first phase of plan projection is well defined in a booklet published by Government of Rajasthan.

But the zist of the success only depend on the village level implementation. The plan is concerned on man to man basis in the village level. While implementing any plan, the problems may arise other than what was expected in the plan. So there arises the problem of theory and practice. These two always stood indifferent

to each other. The activities like management, supervision, and investigations were discussed in detail. The reaction of people about the scheme were significant in the process of plan implementation.

All such sequences and problems were tried to find out for better working and implementation of the plan. However, there are some limitation of the study to be proved in particular point of expression. For example the families were found very heterogeneous to give information about their economic position only because of unkind suspension of the scheme. secondly, with limited finance, it is impossible to cover all most all villages and to survey the whole Antyodaya families.

Thus, the present research project might definitely drove away the shortcomings of this nature. And will guide the planners, evaluators, and social workers etc. for further planning.

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