



Rural Development in India Problem and Prospectus

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Abstract: People in rural areas should have the same quality of life as is enjoyed by people living in sub urban and urban areas. Further there are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas on urban centres causing slums and consequential social and economic tensions manifesting in economic deprivation and urban poverty. Hence Rural Development which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs becomes essential. India is predominately an agricultural country and farming is their main occupation. In terms of methods of production, social organisation and political mobilization, rural sector is extremely backward and weak. Moreover, technical developments in field of agriculture have increased the gap between the rich and poor, as the better off farmers adopted modern farm technology to a greater extent than the smaller one's. The all India Rural Credit Review Committee in its report warned "If the fruits of development continue to be denied to the large sections of rural community, while prosperity accrues to some, the tensions social and economic may not only upset the process of orderly and peaceful change in the rural economy but even frustrate the national affords to set up agricultural production." It was therefore felt necessary to make arrangements for the distribution of fruits of development to the rural weak and backward section of society.

Introduction:

The term 'Rural' essentially means an area, which is characterised as non-urban style of life, occupational structure and settlement pattern. 'Development' in general refers to the process of a general improvement in levels of living together, decreasing inequality in incomes and the capacity to sustain continuous improvements overtime. Thus the term Rural Development is viewed as an activity of a series of activities or a process, which either improves the immediate living conditions-economic, social, political, cultural and environmental or increases the potential for future living or both of the rural people. Rural development traces back its history to the Seventeenth Century when voluntary efforts to serve the mankind were initiated. A religious society of people known as 'Friends' or 'Quakers' had emerged as a movement in this direction for the first time in England and then in other parts of the world in rapid strides. It aimed at providing service to mankind transcending bonds of religion, territory and culture. The Quaker was a kind of rebel. Agriculture specifically determines rural activity by the activities, which service it, like input suppliers and processing and marketing of output. The rural population in India accounts for around 627 million, which is exactly 74.3 percent of the total population. Government focus on seeds, fertilizers, credit and support facilities and policies and performance in land and water markets in the primary value chain. Also recent attempts at supporting diversification of agricultural incomes in the value chain to the buyer. Apart from agriculture in the Twenty First century, incomes can be created with the knowledge economy as a base and the linking of local economies in rural areas and small towns with the national and global economy.

Keyword: Sustainable Rural Development, Economic Growth, Agricultural Development.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know the concept and objectives of Rural Development in India.
2. To know the programs and strategies of Rural Development in India.
3. To know the problem and prospects of Rural Development in India.

Methodology:

The present study is conceptual survey with exploratory cum descriptive in nature. It is based on the analysis of secondary data. The secondary data is availed from various journals, internet, and books.

Concept of Rural Development:

The term is used to mean 'organizing things' so as to change existing conditions in favour of a better state. The concept was later extended to its wider meaning to embrace 'changes' of political, social, cultural, technological, economic and also the psychological frame of society. In its current meaning

‘development’ is used to express animated change for reaping utmost human potential. Technically, development is the name of a ‘Policy’ and its ‘Consequent programmes’, designed to bring about a desired change’ in social, economic, political, or technological spheres of life. It is concerned with the promotion of human capacities: Physical or mental, to attain the cherished social goals. Development is potential-related, and it can be attained to the extent of the existing development potential, which is measured by the un-exploited resources, talents, margin of sophistication and the ‘will power’ which implements development policy. Development is the conditioning of progress, and when efforts are laid towards the use of Growth potentials in rural economy and Society, it is rural development.

“Rural Development as a process in complex and involves the interaction of economic, social, political, technological and economic, social, political, technological and plans with the objective of improving the quality of life of the people in the villages”.

According to the view of World Bank “Rural Development as a strategy design to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – The rural (people) poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorer among those who seek a livelihood in rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless.”

Objectives:-

1. To improve the living standards by providing food, shelter, clothing, employment and education.
2. To Increase productivity in rural areas and reduce poverty.
3. To involve people in planning and development through their participation in decision making and through centralization of administration.
4. To ensure distributive Justice and equalization of opportunities in the society.

The role of agriculture in rural areas:-

Agriculture continues to play an important role in rural areas, and in some regions it also contributes to economic growth. Small and medium-sized companies are certainly of even greater relevance, but many of them are again closely linked with agriculture in both upstream and downstream processes.

Strategies in Rural Development:

A strategy consists of an ordering of various policy parameters to attain the desired goals. Different strategies emphasize and give importance to different mixes of agrarian relations,

techniques of production and state policies in order to achieve the goals of rural development. To illustrate some of the relevant issues, there are various types of rural development strategies.

Followings are various types of rural development strategies giving central importance to agrarian relations for purpose of classification:

1. A strategy based on collectivization of resources.
2. A strategy based on regulated capitalist perspective.
3. A strategy based on peasant agrarian perspective.
4. A strategy based on Laissez-Faire or un-regulated free market capitalist perspective.

These strategies do not constitute an exhaustive list and are simply illustrative.

PROGRAMMES LAUNCHED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

- **Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY):** Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development and has been in operation since 1985-86. The prime objective of IAY is to provide financial assistance to build dwelling units for SC/ST, free bonded labourers and also to non SC/ST rural poor below poverty line by providing them grants-in-aid. Though IAY is shared between the Centre and States in the ratio 75:25, however for the N E states the funding pattern is 90:10.
- **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):** The PMGSY launched in December, 2000 as a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme, aims at providing rural connectivity to unconnected habitations with population of 500 persons or more in the rural areas by the end of the Tenth Plan period. During the financial year 2012-13, a total amount of Rs. 1049 crore has been released to the N-E states. The expenditure during that period was Rs. 929.12 crore. The utilisation of funds of N-E states under PMGSY is shown in the Table: 5. Against the targeted length of 2660 kms, a total length of 1441 kms has been completed, which is 54% , and the total number of habitations covered 309 against the target of 340, which is 91%, during 2012-13.
- **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP):** The NSAP was launched with effect from 15th August, 1995 as a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme with the aim to provide social assistance benefit to poor households in the case of old age, death of primary breadwinner and maternity. At present NSAP comprises - (i) Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), (ii) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and (iii) Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) and (iv) Annapurna. NSAPs are implemented by Rural Development Department in the state of Assam and Meghalaya and by Social Welfare Department in the rest of the states. Some states also made monthly contribution to the schemes. Under IGNOAPS, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram contributed

Rs.50 per month, Nagaland contributed Rs.100 per month and Sikkim and Tripura contributed Rs.200 each per month. Under IGNWPS, Sikkim and Tripura contributed Rs.100 and Rs.200 respectively and under IGNDPS, Mizoram contributed Rs.50, Nagaland Rs.100, Sikkim Rs.100 and Tripura Rs.200 per month respectively. The number of beneficiaries under IGNOAPS was 295792, IGNWPS was 17880, IGNDPS was 6318, NFBS was 3722 and Annapurna was 33125 lakhs (excluding Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur). The fund utilised under NSAP is shown in Table:6. Again, an amount of Rs.704.33 lakhs, Rs.15613.07 lakhs and Rs.1044.22 lakhs have been released to Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur respectively during 2012-13.

Challenges and Prospectus:-

- **Infrastructure:** Poor infrastructure for receiving timely information on development opportunities, market demand and prices for agricultural commodities, new technologies, forward and backward linkages, credit facilities and development policies of the government.
- **Globalization:** Liberalized trade regimes as well as more integrated and consumer driven agricultural and food markets are globalising rapidly and driving innovations, forcing farmers to adapt or lose out. Poor farmers do not have the capacity face the cut throat competition and hence they are bound to perish.
- **Natural Resources:** Depleting natural resources, resulting in insecurity of food and employment, compelling about 40% of the rural population to live in poverty.
- **Education:** Poor access to education, resulting in low literacy and unemployment of the youth. While the average literacy rate in rural areas is around 50-65%, it is as low as 20-25% among women in backward areas. Education of girls was felt to be unnecessary in the past and this has seriously affected their quality of life. Illiteracy has also hindered their development due to lack of communication with the outside world. They are slow in adopting new practices, which are essential with the changing times. Low literacy rate, particularly among women having adverse effect on their skills development, employment productivity, family welfare and education of their children.
- The financial, manpower, managerial resources devoted to the implementation of rural development programmes are utterly inadequate.
- It has been observed that the objectives of one programme conflict with those of others, and there is no institutional mechanism for reconciling them. Consequently, many programmes have utterly failed in fulfilling their objectives.

- In many cases, instruments of rural development are not properly selected, and their levels are not consistent with the objectives they seek to achieve. This results in the wastage of valuable public resources, and unnecessary delays in achieving the objectives.
- The aspect of development, i.e., honesty, hard work, helping others, thrift and such other virtues indirectly help in the economic development and to which much attention has not been paid.
- Despite increased fund allocations to rural infrastructure, access to and the quality of infrastructure has been disappointing. Twenty per cent of rural households have none of the three basic services—safe drinking water, sanitation and electricity—and only 18 per cent have access to all three.

Conclusion:-

Rural transformation varies across regions in manner and pace and its impact on pre-existing caste-community-class configurations is also highly varied. Although agriculture contributes only 19% of India's GDP, it is the main source of income for 58% of the rural population.

Agriculture has significance on food security and prices of goods and therefore on money wages. Further, agriculture has a strong multiplier effect because of its impact on rural income, demand and its supply of raw materials to several industrial sectors. The inter link between agriculture and industrial sector is so strong that if there is a 1% fall in agricultural growth, it will pull back industrial growth and GDP by 0.52%. If sustainable economic development has to be achieved it is essential that rural development must be a priority. For rural development modernization of agriculture is the most important requisite. This will lead to improvement in the economic conditions of the rural masses.

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