

RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: A STUDY

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Abstract

The Rural Development in India is one of the most important factors for the growth of the Indian economy. India is primarily an agriculture-base country. Agriculture contributes nearly one-fifth of the gross domestic product in India. In order to increase the growth of agriculture, the Government has planned several programs pertaining to Rural Development in India. The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and acts pertaining to the development of the rural sector. Agriculture, handicrafts, fisheries, poultry and dairy are the primary contributors to the rural business and economy.

A single approach to Rural Development would not be effective. In fact, Rural Development is the product of interaction between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural, institutional and environmental factors. Indeed, the rural sector should experience the required change so that it can join the mainstream of national development and contribute its share for economic development. It has been rightly said, “In the end, however, Rural Development should not be seen as a package of specific needs but as a transformation of rural like and conditions.”

Key words: Rural Development, Government, Programmes, Gross Domestic Product

INTRODUCTION

„Rural Development“ is a process of improvement of rural structure, with the help of modern ideology and thought. The process is so designed that it can reduce or gradually eliminate the poverty with sustained increase of productivity and income of the rural poor. As per World Bank paper “Rural Development is a strategy to improve the economic life of a specific group of people the rural poor. It involves extending the benefit of development to the poorest among them who seek livelihood in rural areas. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless.” The Eight plan document also states, „Rural Development has been confined to a direct attract on poverty through special employment programmes, area development programmes and land reform. However, Rural Development is not understood as merely removal of poverty in the rural areas. Krishnamurty has also rightly observed, “Alleviation of poverty alone cannot define the overall Rural Development.” In real sense, Rural Development means all round development in both economical and non-economic sectors for better life style of the rural people. The Eight plans further reiterate that „It implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. Increased participation of people in the rural development process, decentralization of planning, better enforcement of land reform and greater access to credit and inputs go a long way in providing the rural people with better prospects for economic

development. Improvement in health, education, drinking water, energy supply, sanitation and housing coupled with attitudinal changes also facilitate their social development.”

Rural Development in India has witnessed several changes over the years in its emphasis, approaches, strategies and programmes. It has assumed a new dimension and perspectives consequently. Rural Development can be richer and more meaningful only through the participation of clienteles of development. Just as implementation is the touchstone for planning, people’s participation is the centerpiece in rural development. People’s participation is one of the foremost prerequisites of development process both from procedural and philosophical perspectives. For the development planners and administrators it is important to solicit the participation of different groups of rural people, to make the plans participatory.

Objective of Rural Development

The main objective of the Rural Development is improving the living standards of rural people by utilizing the easily available natural and human resources. The other objectives of rural development programmers are as follow:

1. Development of agriculture and allied activities.
2. Development of village and cottage industries and handicrafts.
3. Development of Socio-economic infrastructure that includes setting up of rural banks, co-operatives, schools etc.

4. Development of community services and facilities i.e. drinking water, electricity, rural roads, health services etc.
5. Development of Human resource mobilization.

Need and Importance of Rural Development

Rural Development is a national necessity and has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons:

- To develop rural area as whole in terms of culture, society, economy, technology and health.
- To develop living standard of rural mass.
- To develop rural youths, children and women.
- To develop and empower human resource of rural area in terms of their psychology, skill, knowledge, attitude and other abilities.
- To develop infrastructure facility of rural area.
- To provide minimum facility to rural mass in terms of drinking water, education, transport, electricity and communication.
- To develop rural institutions like panchayat, cooperatives, post, banking and credit.
- To provide financial assist to develop the artisans in the rural areas, farmers and agrarian unskilled labor, small and big rural entrepreneurs to improve their economy.
- To develop rural industries through the development of handicrafts, small-scaled industries, village industries, rural crafts, cottage industries and other related economic operations in the rural sector.

- To develop agriculture, animal husbandry and other agricultural related areas.
- To restore uncultivated land, provide irrigation facilities and motivate farmers to adopt improved seed, fertilizers, package of practices of crop cultivation and soil conservation methods.
- To develop entertainment and recreational facilities for rural mass.
- To develop leadership quality of rural area.
- To improve rural marketing facility.
- To minimize gap between the urban and rural in terms of facilities availed.
- To improve rural people's participation in the development of state and nation as whole.
- To improve scopes of employment for rural mass.
- For the sustainable development of rural area.
- To eliminate rural poverty.
- To solve the problems faced by the rural mass for their development.

Problems in Rural Development in India

The condition of the rural people has considered vulnerable since the Vedic period, even after we got independence the condition of rural people has not changed; they are in the same condition as they have used to be in pre-independence period. Even many programmes have implemented; they stand in the same position as they have used to be.

Now, let us look into the problem faced by the rural people because of whom the development of rural areas has stabilized its growth and the

programmes that have implemented for the rural development is not effective. The problems in rural development are as follows:

- The financial, manpower, managerial resources devoted to the implementation of rural development programmes are utterly inadequate.
- Better implementation of rural development programmes can be ensured only if those responsible for actual implementation are paid reasonably well, appropriately trained, and sufficiently motivated. However, this has not done yet.
- It has observed that the objectives of one programmes 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 have 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.
- Illiteracy is one of the major factors, which arrest the rural development in India.
- The party interests than by national interest guide the political parties who play a vital role in the development of rural areas more.

Therefore, removal of all these barriers can accelerate the process of rural development in India. The role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in this regard is, indeed, commendable. If we all work together, we can surely achieve success.

Essential Aspects of Rural Development

The essential aspects of rural development are as follows:

- Agricultural development constitutes the crucial aspect of rural development. Agricultural development is possible using better seeds, adequate fertilizers, manures and pesticides, adequate supply of water and effective implementation of land reform measures.
- By effecting changes in the socio-economic institutions, rural development seeks to change the socio-economic structure of the rural community.
- The effectiveness of the rural development programmes necessitates political non-interference. The persons associated with these programmes should be given adequate freedom to carry out their plans and programmes with undivided attention.
- The success of the rural development programmes depend on the co-operative orientation and attitude among the ruralities. The functioning of the co-operative societies goes a long way in improving the conditions of the vulnerable sections of the rural set-up.
- Rural development programmes demand the active participation of the ruralities. While formulating these programmes the opinions, attitudes, drives and interests of the rural people should been taken into account.

Further, dedicated and committed village leaders should come forward to guide the masses for bringing about rural development.

Strategies in Rural Development

A strategy is consisting 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. Three distinct strategies for rural development may identify:

1. Initially, in the 1950s, policy-makers stressed maximization of economic growth by stepping up the investment assuming that the benefits arising out of it would „trickle down“ and diffuse among all sectors of the rural society. But in the 1970s. It has realized that the benefits of agricultural growth did not percolate to the rural poor.
2. This gave birth to the second approach led by structural school, which suggested distribution of assets through land reforms, community development programmes and co-operative farming. However, this also did not work.
3. Then came the idea in the 1980s that suggested attack on poverty through rural development programmes, such as IRDP, TRYSEM, NREP and RLEGP which latter on merged in JRY programmes.

Any rural development strategy should focus in harnessing the innate capabilities of the poor to manifest the perfection in them and complement them with capacities such as information, knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can participate and contribute effectively in the

growing economy of the country. This is also necessary if we are to make the democracy truly representative and an inclusive one.

CONCLUSION

Rural Development gives us idea not only about different programmes of past but shows us the whole idea of changing and emerging concepts, approaches and strategies or its implementation. It becomes clear that the concept of Rural Development is interwoven in the heritage of Indian culture; it is as old as mankind.

What we need is to empower the rural people by providing them education and proper health care. They need to have infrastructure like electricity and water so that they are free from the cycle of droughts and floods. We need to give them self-employment so that they want to stay in villages instead of migrating in cities. There is a need to empower the villagers, and not just supporting them by food subsidies, loan waivers which end up crippling them. India will grow only when rural India marches hand in hand with cities in the twenty first century.

The government has already taken the initiative to improve the condition of the village; the only task has left for its better implementation. Together with the government, the people living in rural area are also need to contribute, without their contribution; the development is not at all possible. Both have to take the initiative, this initiative will surely make our country-developed country. An ideal approach may therefore, include the government, panchayats, village personals, researchers, industries, NGOs

and private companies to not only help in reducing this imbalance, but also to have a multiplier effect on the overall economy.

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