

E-Content for MSW – IIIrd Semester

Perspective on Rural Community Development

Approaches and Problems of Rural Development in India

In order to reach the aims and objectives of rural development, different approaches need to be followed. However, there is no single universally acceptable approach for rural development. We all know that development itself is a long term and a continuous process; strategies are evolved to solve the rural problems at different levels and of different types. The problems of rural people are vast in numbers and approaches for their solutions also vary according to situation as well as their magnitude.

Some Important approaches taken up in India for rural development:

i. Rural Development Projects and Programs: Rural development projects are micro level efforts to bring about desirable changes in rural areas. However, rural development programs involve a large number of projects and initiatives which are aligned to one another, so that; they affect various aspects of rural social and economic life. Rural development programs and policies attempt to bring about changes in a wider sense affecting a large number of people.

ii. Community Development Programme: The community development program initiated in 1952 made an attempt to increase involvement of rural people in the development process. The main objective of CDP was to build infrastructure in rural areas with the active involvement or participation of people through the organizational set up of National Extension Services.

iii. Package Approach: This approach was adopted in order to increase the capacity of agricultural production in the country. Widely known as a package program, emphasis was given on

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application of all improved practices, such as fertilizers, seeds, plant protection, irrigation, measures and use of improved agricultural initiatives or you can say improved agricultural implements. The program like Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP), Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP), High Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP), Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) are good examples of such approach.

iv. Area Approach: Some specific areas were focused for development initiatives in this approach. The areas which need specific attention for certain problems to tackle were selected in this approach. The Command Area Development Program (CADP), Drought Prone Area Program (DPAP), etc. are some of the major initiatives under this approach.

v. Target Approach: The unprivileged or vulnerable section of the society deprived of the benefits from the package program, were selected under target approach. Example- SFDA (Small Farmers Development Agency), MFAL (Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Laborers), Food for Work Programme, etc.

vi. Integrated Rural Development: There is a fair amount of disagreement among the rural development experts in defining the concept of Integrated Rural Development. The rural economy and social structure in most of the developing countries is characterized by poverty, ill health conditions, poor housing environment, illiteracy, inequality, exploitation, inequitable distribution of land and other assets and lack of rural infrastructure, marketing infrastructure, and public utility. So, there is a need for an approach having capability to resolve the problem that will take into account all these factors in devising a comprehensive strategy to foster and speed up the development process in rural areas and it is Integrated Rural Development Approach that fulfills the same.

vii. Grass Root Level Approach/ Local Level Participation in Rural Development:

Recently, changes occur in the approach used for rural development. The efforts are more people/public-centric and situation specific. It is because of the fact that the problem of the rural

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areas varies with the situation to situation and problems need to be solved locally using available resources on the particular area. So, there is a need of ensuring participation of people in all development programs for any rural development initiative/implementation process.

Hurdles/ Constraint / Problems in Rural Development:

There are various problems in the path of rural development or the development of rural society. These problems or hurdles have to be removed or reduced in order to increase the speed of development of rural people.

i. Illiteracy: Most people are illiterate in rural areas for such people extension teaching methods like traditional teaching, Demonstrations, online teaching, individual and group approaches, Training classes require a large number of extension educational workers.

ii. Inappropriate Communication Technology and their means: Inadequate communication channels, technologies and means especially Mass Media in rural areas.

iii. Lack of Funds: Limitation of Funds and staff for training the farmers and other people.

iv. Traditional way of Production: As a traditional society with old ways and practices does not want to take risk unless they see the higher results or better outputs.

v. Lack of Leadership: In an illiterate traditional society real leadership could not come forward. So it is also a big problem of rural development.

vi. Vast differences between needs of communities: Communities and individuals differ in their needs as their circumstances change.

vii. Organizational constraints.

viii. Rigid and narrow norms: Vaguely framed objectives of organization.

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Some major problems are as follows:

1. Poverty:

‘Poverty is the Worst form of Violence’- M.G. Gandhi

Poverty is the main root cause of every social and economic problem. As per Oxford Dictionary, Poverty is the state of being extremely poor; the state of being inferior in quality or insufficient amount; it is the deprivation of food, cloth, money, health, education and shelter etc. On the Basis of Nature Poverty is of two types: Absolute Poverty (No access or lack of access to basic amenities like Food, cloth and shelter etc.) and Relative Poverty (State of being poor in comparison to other people, groups or community). It is also categorized into Situational, Casual, Chronic/Generational, Rural and Urban Poverty, etc. Poverty is considered to be one of the major hurdles in the path of development. Poverty refers to a level of living so low that it prevents normal development of human personality-physical, mental and social. According to the World Bank (2005) the common International Poverty Line includes the person having \$1.25 per day. According to the Multi-dimensional Poverty index report of the United Nations estimates that 27.1 crore of the poor in India have come above the Poverty threshold or Below Poverty line category. As per the census 2011, nearly 22.0 percent of the population of India is poor, in 2019 it was assumed to be 19.0 percent. In fact, in 2005-06 this quantity is about 37.0 percent (as per the report of Richard Mahapatra published on downtoearth.org.in; 10 April 2019). According to the Planning Commission, 21.1 percent people (estimated) belonged to the BPL category in rural areas of our country in 2007. There are various indicators of poverty which include roads and communication facilities, housing facility, primary schools, health care facilities, fair price shops, drinking water facility, electrification, marketing facilities etc. Non-existence of any one of these indicates the extent of poverty in an area. Eradication of extreme poverty is also one of the sustainable development goals of the UN. Poverty leads to Illness, Hunger, Illiteracy, Homelessness, Unemployment, Lack of access to health care and education services, High

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Mortality and morbidity rate, High rate of migration, exploitation, crime, violence, Slavery, Underpaid Work, Human trafficking etc.

Measures of Poverty: 1. The Head Count Method, 2. The Poverty Gap Index, 3. The Poverty Severity (Squared Poverty Gap) Index

2. Illiteracy: Education is the master key of development; originated from the Latin word 'Educere' means 'to train' or 'to lead out' or 'to mold'. However, much has to be done to attain 100 percent literacy. The literacy rate of India is 74.04 percent as per Census 2011. According to the 2001 census, literacy rate in rural India is only 59.40 % That is increased from 59.4 percent to 67.8 percent as per census 2011. In line with the efforts of the United Nation, there is a need to ensure that by 2015, all children must have to receive full primary education.

3. Small Landholdings: With the increase of population, the land, one of the major factors of production, is becoming a scarce commodity. As per National Sample Survey (2002-03), the average land holding in India was 1.06 ha only and marginal holdings (of size 1 hectare or less) in 2002-03 constituted 70% of all operational holdings. The experts are of the opinion that use of agricultural technology in small landholdings is very difficult. Therefore, there is a need to evolve modalities for development of appropriate and updated technology suitable for small land holdings.

4. Malnutrition and Hunger: It is closely linked with the issue of extreme poverty as well as mass awareness. The infant mortality rate (under-1) was 54percent in 2007. The infant mortality Rate (IMR) of India in 2018 was 32.00 deaths per thousand live births declined 3.36 percent and comes on 30.924 deaths per 1000 live births in 2019 estimation. Moreover, in some areas of the country, due to several natural disasters, deaths out of starvation and malnutrition are still reported. Sometimes, due to lack of knowledge of a balanced diet, people suffer from various ailments.

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5. Ill-Health: Due to lack of proper health care facilities, non-availability of qualified medical personnel and education, people of the country are suffering from various diseases, now in the year 2020, not only India but also the whole world is suffering with the pandemic COVID-19. Child mortality and a greater number of maternal deaths are also creating major threats to development in the country.

6. Neglect and Lack of Scientific Temperament: The issue related to lack of updated scientific temperament is closely associated with proper education. There is a need to make people aware about scientific phenomena behind health and sanitary problems and also to fight against all kinds of taboos and evils spread in the society.

7. Caste System: Existence of the caste system also sometimes acts as a bottleneck in the process of development. Because of the traditional caste based occupation and the problems of the people belonging to lower caste need to be solved so as to bring them into the mainstream. Special provisions are made in the constitution of India to uplift them to higher positions.

8. Communication and Transportation: Communication means passing over of thoughts, ideas, things and objects from one person, place to another. Even after 72 years of independence, the communication and transport system of the country are not up to the mark especially in rural areas. However, these two are equally important to speed up agricultural development of rural areas. Though our country is marching ahead in modern information technology and communication network, many villages are yet to be connected by telephone booths, community radio, Jan suvidha kendra and even post offices. The conditions of the rural as well as urban roads are also deplorable which are very important for movement and products of goods for marketing from rural to urban areas and vice -versa. PMGSY, MGNREGA are the Government initiatives in this regard.

9. Exploitation and Violence by Vested Interest Groups: Poverty, Illiteracy somehow leads to more crime, exploitation and violence; especially of weaker and vulnerable sections by stronger

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sections of society. The very existence of the old Zamindari system is though not available/exist, rural people are still in the grip of money lenders, mahajans, middlemen and also local level politicians. Due to poverty, illiteracy, lack of awareness, education and some other socio-political issues, rural people are exploited by these so called dominant groups.

10. Gender Inequality, Gender as well as Generational Gap, Technology Gap, Regionalism, Communalism, Nepotism, Lack of Awareness regarding various programs and policies etc. are also the other but main barriers of rural development.

Keep Asking and Keep Learning..

All the Best..!

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