



RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Ramesha, N.G.

Department of Economics S.J.M.V College Haveri District Ranebennur-581115

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ABSTRACT

The concept of rural development is quite comprehensive and extensive. G. Shah defines rural development as “the development of rural areas, often rural development has meant the extension of irrigation facilities, expansion of electricity, improvement in the techniques of cultivation, construction of school building and provision of educational facilities, health care etc.” This is considered to be a lop-sided view of understanding rural development. Of late, rural development signifies a complex and long term process involving fundamental transformation of rural society both at social and economic levels. It represents planned programmers to improve the quality of the life-style of the ruralizes.

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INTRODUCTION

Components of rural development

- Rural development seeks to transform all the sectors of rural economy – the primary sector, the secondary sector and the tertiary sector.
- It is concerned with the improvement of the standard of living of the ruralites through the provision of health and medical facilities, employment opportunities including vocational training, educational facilities etc.
- It brings about significant improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, the landless agricultural labourers and the marginal and small fanners.

Essential aspects of rural development

- Agricultural development constitutes the crucial aspect of rural development. Agricultural development is possible through the use of better seeds, adequate fertilisers, 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 depends on the co-operative orientation and attitude among the ruralites. 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 ruralites. While formulating these programmes the opinions, attitudes, drives and interests of the rural people should be taken into account. Further, dedicated and committed village leaders should come forward to guide the masses for bringing about rural development.

Integrated rural development: It is claimed that the concept of Integrated Rural Development was originally propounded by the World Bank. In India the concept was put forward in the year 1976 at the All-India Science Congress by C. Subramanyam, the then Finance Minister of India. He viewed integrated rural development as “systematic, scientific and integrated use of all our natural resources and as a part of this

process enabling every person to engage himself in a productive and socially useful occupation and earn an income that would meet at least the basic needs.” He holds the view that the use of natural resources is possible only through the application of science and technology. Further, proper application of science and technology results in the fulfillment of basic social needs. G. Parthasarathy refers to four ‘routes’ in the context of integrated rural development: (i) the institutional route of Gunnar Myrdal, (ii) the ‘New Economics’ route, (iii) the Neo-Marxian route and (iv) the Gandhian route. V.K.R.V. Rao defines integrated rural development as “the optimum utilization of the natural and human resources of a given rural area for the enrichment of the quality of life of the population.” The concept of integrated rural development addresses itself to various rural problems like widespread poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, exploitation, inequitable distribution of land, poor health conditions etc. It signifies that various facets of rural development are integrally connected.

Conclusion

It is a holistic concept rather than a sequential one. K. Om Prakash and G. Satyanarayan rightly observe that integrated rural development embraces all the activities of enrichment and betterment of the overall quality of rural life through appropriate development of man power, resources, infrastructural facilities and provisions of minimum needs and livelihood. It has far-reaching socio-economic and political implications for the life of the ruralites.

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