INTRODUCTION

"Go to the villages and busy yourselves not as masters or benefactors, but as their humble servants. Let them know what to do and how to change the modes of living from your daily conduct and way of living".

- Mahatma Gandhi

India is a land of one million habitations. Fifty per cent of the villages are situated in different terrains characterised by poor socio economic conditions. Neglected and isolated, these villages have suffered several handicaps for long. With the dawn of Independence in 1947, some concerted efforts have been made to improve the conditions of rural masses (India, 1988).

However, the absolute number of persons living below the poverty line increased from 220 millions on the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), to nearly 290 millions on the eve of the Sixth Five Year Plan (1979-84), registering an increase of 32 per cent. According to the Seventh Five Year Plan document, 36.9 per cent of India's population are living below the poverty line. The planners propose to bring this number to 25.8 per cent by the end of the Seventh Plan (1984-89), that is, by the year 1990 (Manorama, 1987).

The rural poor are struggling against malnutrition, unemployment, lack of skills, non availability of facilities, poor leadership, indebtedness and the exploitation by the elite.
Since the inception of the Community Development Programme in 1952, the nation has been waging a war against these evils in the rural areas and urban slums. But lack of awareness, motivation, and commitment on the part of the functionaries, and the consequent evils have been impeding progress. The innocent and simple rural populations have not been empowered to avail the facilities created at the tax payers' expense for Better Family Living (BFL).

What is meant by Better Family Living (BFL)? BFL is an attitude towards a given mode of living and the scale of preferences. Proper utilisation of money, health, management of resources, motivation for a higher standard of life, development of appropriate resources and their distribution, receptiveness to new ways of living, responsibility towards communities and adoption of small family size are a few aspects of the concept of BFL (Asuri, 1973). Thus, conceived and implemented, BFL is not mere economic improvement only, but a full development of knowledge and application of all that comprise high quality of living, namely, nutrition, health, child care, values and culture (Avinashilingam, 1976).

The components of BFL include economic and social development along with health and hygiene (Ostanandha, 1985). Development is a historical and social process taking place as a continuation of past events, within parameters defined by the societal factors that actually exist (Giridhari, 1982).
and Myrdal, 1982). Development encompasses a wide range of interrelated issues like creating employment opportunities, increasing agricultural and industrial production, improving literacy, developing skills and the most important of all, raising the level of living of the masses (Jushara, 1983). Development is thus a process of building a nation to raise the levels of living of all segments of the society (Singh, 1985). However, development does not get actualised automatically. A great deal of motivation is necessary to let the rural and urban poor realise the need for development.

Motivation is an internal force which impels a human being to an activity which has definite goals, and which usually originates to fulfil some physiological needs of the body or psychological satisfaction (Ghorpade, 1977). Motivation is the process of arousing and sustaining action, and regulating its pattern. Therefore, motivation is an important dimension in any kind of programme initiated for the betterment of the people (Krishnaswamy, 1986). Motivation plays a vital role in the success of any enterprise, in which achievement is not easy (Mali, 1984).

In motivating the target groups and in helping them to utilise the services and subsidies meant for their well-being, voluntary organisations play a vital role. Their contribution towards the successful implementation of the programmes designed to eradicate poverty from the rural map of India is crucial. Voluntary organisations are closer to the
people at the grass roots, than the public administrative systems, because these organisations reflect the culture, values and sensitivities of the people (Kaul, 1982). Voluntary agencies play the role of catalysts, pulling themselves out of the community after developing the community's or target group's organisational competence and its ability to mobilise resources continuously for sustainable development (Gupta, 1987).

In order to achieve BFL families need to pay attention within themselves to the processes of setting up goals, decision making, planning and implementing, to improve the quality of living with fullest utilisation of all the available resources such as food, health facilities, housing, education, employment and community services. In this process, spiritual, social, cultural and economic aspects are integral parts of BFL and development (Devadas, 1973). The values related to BFL are: Survival through food, shelter, clothing and medical services and prestige value indicating the existence of social groups and their mores, values and interests (Reddy, 1987).

Voluntary agencies, dedicated to the uplift of the masses can bring about BFL and development. With this conviction, this study concentrated on mobilising, exposing to various infrastructures, and organising selected groups of the rural poor for economic development through enhancement of their skills, provision of employment, exposure to better marketing
and saving, initiating cooperative action, better social development by working through groups and organisations and enlightening the groups on the availability of various resources. All these were aimed to enable the selected rural poor have awareness on better food, health conditions, water management, clean surroundings, labour saving methods and devices, agricultural services, technology transfer, functional literacy through adult education, health and nutrition education, better health status through utilisation of the health services, immunisation and family welfare, moral and ethical development, participation in national functions, institutional services and social values.

Development means people. The preparation and activation of people are the cause of economic and social development. Development is as an overall process of transformation of people - women, men and societies, leading to a social order in which every human being can achieve moral and material well being (Laufer, 1986).

The Community Development Programme which was launched in 1952 in India aimed at bringing about overall development of rural life and society. "The most understood meaning of Community Development is to strive for the development of the community at all levels, economic, cultural and social" (Singh, 1985 and Reddy, 1987). Rural Development is the integrated self-sustaining process for the improvement in the living standards of the low income populations residing in the rural areas (Lele, 1985).
The Community Development Programme helped to set up a network of basic extension and development services in the villages, thereby creating an awareness among the rural communities about their potentials for development. The Village Level Workers namely, Rural Welfare Officers (Gram Sevak and Sevika) along with the Block Level team of specialists in various fields such as Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Education, Women's Welfare and Public Health performed at the grass root level their job charts. The functionaries and the infrastructure sought to stimulate a process of transformation from traditionally oriented rural cultures towards an acceptance of, and reliance on, modern science and technology (Ensminger, 1985, Rao, 1985 and Lamanan, 1987).

Integrated Rural Development is the latest manifestation, if not, the culmination, of a number of rural development programmes pursued in the past, such as Intensive Agriculture Development Programme (IADP, 1966-67), Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP, 1969-70), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP, 1970-71), Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP, 1971-72), Hill Area Development Programme (HADP, 1973), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP, 1977), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1978), Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS, 1979), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGp, 1983) and Training Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM, 1979) (Dewett and Varma, 1983). The Jawahar and Nehru Rozkar Yojana (JRY, NRY, 1989) have been operating
from 1989 with a greater emphasis now being laid on inter-sectoral linkages. Integrated Rural Development (IRD) today is an approach to planned changes in the rural areas. It is based on the assumption that economic and social progress are mutually reinforcing, requiring that all the natural, technical, economic, social and institutional inter-relationships are taken into account and combined in such a way as to serve the well-being of men and women synergistically. Social integration is the ultimate goal of Integrated Rural Development (FAO, 1985 and Hye, 1986). Thus, Integrated Rural Development means, integrated development of the areas and the people through optimum utilisation of the local resources for development — physical, biological and human — bringing about the necessary institutional and structural changes and delivering a package of services to encompass not only the economic field but also the social infrastructure, particularly, in the health, nutrition and family welfare sectors (Bhadouria, 1986 and Singh, 1986).

'Integrated Development' implies that the planning of the diverse aspects of development is not done in isolation through the project approach or even the programme approach, but is integrated to take account of the human linkages forward or backward, temporal or spatial, friendly or hostile, with a view to achieve total development (Rao, 1986 and Ghadoliya, 1987).
The Avinashilingam Education Trust Institutions, with a rich background of rural development activities work through the Sri Avinashilingam Rural Centre at Karamadai Panchayat Union in Coimbatore District. It has the able guidance and yeomen service of the Founder and Leader, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, who is a Philanthropist, Freedom Fighter, one of the foremost educationists in India and the first Minister of Education in Tamil Nadu soon after Independence. Among the many institutions he has founded, Sri Avinashilingam Rural Centre is located in the village of Vivekanandapuram in Karamadai Panchayat Union, Coimbatore District at a distance of 40 kms from the city of Coimbatore. The objective of this centre is to realise the goal of working for the rural families, to alleviate their poverty, ignorance, ill-health, illiteracy, unemployment and other associated social evils. This rural centre has the following infrastructures:

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (ICAR)

Lab to Land Programme (ICAR)

Training Institute for Water and Energy Management, Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology, Government of India (CAPART)

National Adult Education Programme (Department of Education, Government of India)

Industrial Training Institute (Government of Tamil Nadu) and

Social Forestry Scheme (Swedish International Development Agency)
One of the projects undertaken by Avinashilingam Rural Centre is "Mobilising infrastructure for Integrated Rural Development" sponsored by the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), Government of India. This study became a part of that project.

In tune with the objective of the parent institution, the investigator designed this project in 10 selected villages to uplift the rural families in the following steps:

1. Studying the socio-economic profile of the villages selected.

2. Locating the needs, aspirations, skills and demands of the rural poor families.

3. Analysing the factors which can motivate them.

4. Planning programmes for BFL.

5. Imparting training for upgradation of skills and adoption of appropriate technology for rural development.

6. Providing necessary infrastructure for conducting entrepreneurial development programmes for the selected groups drawn from SC/ST and other weaker sections below the poverty line.

7. Arranging for economic, social and educational inputs for BFL and enhancing their income by arranging financial assistance from various infrastructures and

8. Assessing the impact of the inputs as instruments of motivation for BFL.
Limitations of the Study:

1. The villages were in remote backward locations. Hence enormous time had to be spent on reaching them, establishing rapport, organising the women, and exposing them to the existing infrastructures, namely, IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, JRY and THADCD.

2. Three of the villages namely, Ansur, Mottampatti and Sullipalayam had no transport facilities at all. During the rains, Mottampatti village is cut off from the rest of the villages.

3. Economic programmes were handicapped by the usual delays in public sectors namely, non-availability of application forms at central points, cumbersome procedure of filling in applications and delay in sanctioning loans.

4. BFL being a holistic concept could not be brought about within three years of the project period. Only a beginning could be made.

The study has great scope in terms of uplifting the whole community above the poverty line, utilising fully the infrastructural facilities made available by the government and voluntary agencies to the maximum, declaring cent percent literacy and achieving 'Health and Nutrition for All' by 2000 AD. It is hoped that the findings of this study will help to promote further explorations and achievements towards BFL and development.