CHAPTER 2

POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND ISSUES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A survey of literature place an important role in establishing the backdrop for any research works in social sciences. It is felt that justification of present study can be made by reviewing the available literature on the subject. Therefore, an attempt has been made to review the literature on the subject so as to establish of the relevance of the present study. The alleviation of poverty has been a national objective all the time ever since India gained independence. Various development programmes have been undertaken for increasing the level of employment and income of the rural people. Agriculture being the core enterprise engaging rural masses, it was given the first priority in the planning. The allied sectors, which too have good potentials for additional income generation have been given attention by the policy makers.

The main objective of the programmes were to transfer the productive assets to build up an enlarges resource base of the poorest of the poor families in the rural areas. In view of the high hopes placed in the Integrated Rural Development (IRD) programmes, the researchers at the state and national level have undertaken much systematic and detailed study to examine level of employment, income, consumption pattern and formation of assets of the impact of poverty alleviation programmes on the rural poor. So, in Dakshina Kannada several studies were undertaken in the rural development. But no studies have so far been undertaken the several Rural Development programmes in the Dakshina Kannada of the state. So the present study in view the findings of the study of different ways.

Vital (1982) found that although the reaction of the officials towards the IRDP was positive there was lack of awareness among some officials with respect to details of the IRD programmes, specification and mechanics. Information concerning IRDP that was passed on to the beneficiaries was relevant to the actors but not complete.
Patel (1983) on the strength of the findings of his study on "Implementation of IRD Programmes" has raised the question whether an investment of Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 helps the family below the poverty line to cross the poverty line onward once for all. Gupta (1984) reported that rise in the per capita income is not sufficient to raise the rural families below poverty line above their present subsistence level. He suggested the need for linking the target group schemes with the area development programmes to enable the beneficiaries raise their income level further.

Ramakrishna (1985) in his study on "A recipe for Poverty Alleviation" while analyzing the Block level planning observed rigid budgetary pattern staff oriented programmes, unsuitable and unwilling staff, improper land utilization planning, neglect of basic problems at the grassroots level, poor infrastructural support, lack of review and rampant corruption multiplied the contribution of development process in villages, the author, therefore opined that for removal of poverty, all out efforts will have to be made to create large scale employment opportunities to increase the purchasing power of rural poor by producing goods of mass consumption economically.

Reddy (1985) in his study on "Structural change and Removal of Poverty in Rural India" opined that through a long term process, by bringing about structural change, viable rural community with approved dwelling, clean water and modern sanitation, dependable and conventional energy supply, adequate communication and transport facilities, vocational education and health measures, access to credit, regular employment opportunities have to be built up by developing or exploiting available infrastructure for solving appalling poverty prevalent in rural areas.

Parthasarathy (1985) observed that Rural Poverty is rooted in the system in which the poor are deprived of productive assets and do not gain adequately the support of employment in the organized sector. There is a persistence of its incidence as rural resources are diverted for consumption of elite classes and to meet the investment needs of the elites through market mechanism.

In the National Seminar on Poverty Alleviation Programmes held in February 1988 under the sponsorship of Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Rural Development), the following important recommendations were made they are:-
a) Redefining economic policy and growth objectives to such an extent that objective of equity, social justice and poverty alleviation reserved simultaneously with accelerated economic growth.

b) Investment in Agricultural and other production oriented sectors should serve the purpose of equity and removal of poverty.

c) Need to step up investment in rural areas in the field of education, health and other infrastructural facilities.

d) There is urgent need for institutional peoples participation, formation of cooperatives and implementation of land reforms measures.

e) Need to strengthen the District and Block functionaries.

f) Voluntary organizations and action groups needed to be encouraged for smooth functioning of the IRD programmes.

Sundaram (1988) in her study on “Poverty Alleviation Programmes” at very outset stated that if the causes of poverty were properly analyzed before planning for its alleviating, and poverty alleviation programme would be successful. In her opinion, the major cause of poverty is the lack of purchasing power in the poor.

Aziz (1990) in his novel work on “Poverty Alleviation in India” made a various aspects of poverty alleviation programmes undertaken in the country more particularly from the year 1979-80, the year of commencement of IRD programmes and suggested the following measures to be taken, they are:

a) Tenancy regulations and redistribution of land recovered through execution of land reforms with a view to respectively present exploitation of the tenants and endow the poor with land assets.

b) Improving the accessibility of the poor to social services like education, health etc, by implementing Minimum Needs Programme.

c) Provision of social security measures to the unemployable poor like old persons, widows and welfare assistance to the handicapped.

d) Special programme for weaker sections such as SCs/STs, the socially backward and oppressed classes and women to improve their socio-economic status. And also emphasized on provision of irrigation network for small marginal farmers belonging to STs STs house sites to the destitute under Indira Awas Yojana,a
housing scheme named after the late prime minister of India, and distribution of smokeless over and sanitary latrines.

Apart from these studies, another study was made by the Reserve Bank of India. According to them, it is estimated that the number of persons that have crossed the poverty line would not exceed 40% of those assisted, thought he individual studies after figures ranging from 17% in the case of the RBI study to 49.4% in the case of the Project Evaluation Organization (PEO) study.

Wage employment and self-employment were two kinds of programmes under the IRDP which formed two components of the poverty alleviation strategy. The actual mix between the transfer of assets and formation of skill approach and the employment approach and would have to be taken into account while preparing micro level plans.

There is also a suggestion for vesting the planning and implementation of all the development programmes including the anti-poverty programmes with the Panchayat Raj bodies. In that case the rural development activities will definitely be politicized. There is need for safeguards. Firstly, there is need for representation of the organizations of the poor on these bodies.

Secondly, the design of rural development programmes at the field level should provide a local base for such organizations, and Thirdly, the decisions, of Panchayat Raj institutions need to be within the framework which makes it obligatory to recognize their role in relation to poverty alleviation programmes and for monitoring of the programme.

There is undoubtedly a need for more allocations for anti-poverty programmes in the context of recent developments pertaining to labour absorption if the time-frame for poverty alleviation indicated in the plans is to be met. But the object of even such an expanded programmes could some useful purpose serve only if several conditions are met.

All these review of literature brings into light that though a studies undertaken on various aspects of rural development. But the significant studies has been made in the state of Karnataka also. And ofcourse several studies are introduced in D.K district. Such as Infrastructure for Rural Development-A Comparative Study in D.K district.
Basil Hans 2007) and Issues in Rural Development –by S.Giriappa (1993). In both studies they could explain several governmental programmes to rural development and to reduce poverty in rural areas. The present study gives more importance to the government programmes for eradicating the poverty in rural areas of the district.

In simple, rural development doesn’t mean urbanization of rural areas, ex:- converting hamlets and villages into towns and cities or fabrication of new culture to the rural society, but putting them on par with urban areas by creating all the facilities required for good life and progress in the villages itself. It is making growth bearable rather then comparable. In this sense the programme of providing urban amenities to Rural Areas (PURA) becomes meaningful in India.

Two other terms viz, ‘rural reconstruction’ and ‘rural transformation’ also have been used –although sparingly-to refer to rural development. The term ‘rural development is much broader and is widely used both as a means to economic development and as an end in itself. In this sense rural development means correcting underdevelopment and the structures for higher development snd by giving villagers better access to them.

When the crux of the issue, ex:- rural poverty is so closely linked with factors like education, land ownership pattern, money lending system, food production and distribution ,modernization of farming and non-farming activities, integrated approach has to be the only approach to the problem. For instance as Amartya Sen has shown the cause of famine and a large fraction of other hunger-related deaths. Sen concludes his “poverty and Famines with this famous observation: “the law stands between food availability and food entitlement. Starvation deaths can reflect legality with a vengeance”. Even the country- experiences in Asia and Africa reveal the fact that an integrated approach is indeed the sine qua non of any programme of planned economic development of the rural areas. Thus in India we have the IRDP from 1976 restructured in 1990 as Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarojgar Yojana.
2.2. ISSUES FOR RESEARCH

Rural development is much more than agriculture development. It establishes complementary links between the resources and commodities and services produces with them, and thus it encompasses development of farming and non-farming activities, including the socio-economic infrastructure. Rural development requires a vast infrastructure. Provision of this is not an easy task even for the government. Huge investment is called for the investment planning has to be preceded by adequate regional planning.

We argue that both area development and people development are urgent rural issues that have a lot in common, but are often treated separately. Balanced regional and economic development has to ensure optimum utilization of all resources. Rural poverty is a vicious circle with market imperfections too. To break the circle rural development must have a multipronged strategy. Since infrastructural facilities have both forward and backward linkages, areas will develop and people will be better off than before. In short there will be growth and welfare. India has a three pronged strategy for poverty eradication: economic growth and overall development; human development with emphasis on health, education and minimum needs, including protection of human rights and raising the social status of the weak and the poor; and directly targeted programmes for poverty alleviation through employment generation, training, and building up the poor’s asset endowment. This must continue with accentuation of efforts in terms of capacity-building awareness-creating and accessibility-improving.