CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

The State of Kerala came into being in 1956 following the reorganisation of the Indian States on linguistic basis. Kerala now comprises the erstwhile native states of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Kerala has a geographical area of 38,863 sq. km. and a population of 25,453,680 as per 1981 census. This accounts for 1.18 per cent of the area and 3.72 per cent of the country's population. With reference to population Kerala ranks twelfth among the states in India. The economy of the state is overwhelming agricultural and 81.26 per cent of the population live in rural areas.

The land mass of Kerala can be divided into three physiographic divisions; the highlands, the midlands and the lowlands each running almost parallel to each other from south to north. The highland zone generally consists of lands that have been brought
under cultivation in comparatively recent times. Plantation crops such as Tea, Coffee, Cardamom and Pepper are grown in the highlands. In some of the main peaks, pinching cold is experienced. The midlands have undulating terrain while the lowlands have near level topography. In the midlands, Arecanut, Cashew, Ginger, Turmeric, Rubber, Tapioca, Banana, etc. are grown. Paddy is the most important crop grown in low-lying fields of lowlands and on the terraced slopes and valleys of the midlands where water is abundant. The lowlands bordering the sea is densely covered with coconut gardens.

Diversity of crops and heterogeneity in cultivation are the keynotes of agriculture in the state. The state continues to be deficient in food and produces only 42 per cent of rice and 10 per cent of pulses it needs. Even then she is rich in her plantation and commercial crops. As a result of this food deficiency there is a tendency for prices of food products to be higher in Kerala. The inflow of gulf remittances adds to the price rise and owing to the centralised saving system through commercial banks, Kerala has not been able to get much of these remittances for productive investment.
The settlement pattern in the State is quite different from that in other states. Homesteads in Kerala are spread throughout the state; and as a result, a wide network of roads has been developed. Other types of communication facilities are also fairly well developed in the state. A Kerala village is unique in that it represents a continuous expanse of isolated houses covering the entire village. Unlike the villages in most other parts of India which have clusters of houses concentrated in a limited number of centres; in Kerala, each house is located at the centre of the garden plot and the houses are scattered more or less uniformly.

The Hindus, Christians and Muslims live in Kerala side by side each influencing and being influenced by the culture of the other. The Christians were the foremost in the area of commercial cultivation. To a lesser extent Ezhavas also followed the Christians. The Christians became an economic power and they acquired more area of land and land thus formed the most important asset. Other assets include buildings, durable household assets, livestock, etc.
As per 1981 census, Kerala has the highest literacy rate (70.42%) in the country as against an all-India rate of 36.03 per cent. This high trend has been maintained for decades inspite of the growing population which necessitates provision of additional schooling facilities for the younger generation. Female literacy is also the highest in Kerala - 65 per cent.

The population of Kerala rose from less than 16.5 million in 1961 to nearly 21.35 million in 1971 and 25.45 million in 1981. As a result the state is now one of the most densely populated parts of the world with about 655 persons per sq. km.

The attention given to the medical and public health services in the state in the latter half of the 19th century was commendable. The steps taken by the then rulers of the state in the field of medicine and health care were much ahead of times. Maharaja Marthandavarma (Uthram Thirunal) who ruled Travancore from 1849 to 1860 had an intense personal interest in western medicine and surgery. The role of Christian Missionary Institutions has also been an important one in the development of medical services in the state.
The spread of education and health services started by the earlier princely States was intensified during the plan era. As a result, the rate of literacy, level of education and health services are quite high in Kerala compared to the rest of the country. Because of the expansion of health facilities death rate of the state was reduced drastically. Expectation of life also went up. As per 1981 census the life expectancy of a Keralite is 62 years against the all-India average of 52 years. The intensive family planning drive brought down the birth rate. There has been considerable increase in the number of medical institutions and beds under all systems of medicine (See Table 5.26).

Development in the means of transport and communications have opened up the Kerala Village to outside influence. Kerala is better endowed than the rest of the country in the matter of roads. Kerala has a well developed mass communication system with more than 80 newspapers and a large number of periodicals, five Radio Stations and several Television Transmitting Centres. The traffic density in the roads in Kerala has been very high because the roads constitute the main mode of transport in the State.
Over the last 25 years village roads and motor vehicles have considerably increased. The number of registered vehicles in road increased from 13,457 in 1956-'57 to 78,168 in 1969-'70 and to 473,789 in 1987-'88. As could be seen from Table 1.1 the index of growth of Autorikshaw was the highest for the period 1969-'70 to 1987-'88.

The fisheries sector assumes particular importance in Kerala not only because of its employment and export-earning potential, but also because of its commercial linkage with the nutrition programmes in the State. Kerala is one of the leading fish producing States in India (See Table 1.2). Fish eating is popular in the State. About four-fifth of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. Being rich in proteins, fish can form a valuable supplement to tapioca, which is deficient in protein. In fact a combination of rice, tapioca and fish can form a well balanced diet.

## Table No.1.1  
**Growth of Vehicles in Kerala**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Goods Vehicle</th>
<th>Buses</th>
<th>Cars</th>
<th>Jeep</th>
<th>Auto Rickshaw</th>
<th>Scooter/Motor Cycle</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent Increase over the previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>13,162</td>
<td>6,563</td>
<td>33,294</td>
<td>4,828</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>15,117</td>
<td>12,208</td>
<td>86,234</td>
<td>10.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>13,584</td>
<td>6,840</td>
<td>36,531</td>
<td>5,133</td>
<td>1,219</td>
<td>16,957</td>
<td>13,443</td>
<td>93,709</td>
<td>8.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>14,164</td>
<td>7,176</td>
<td>48,559</td>
<td>NAS*</td>
<td>1,591</td>
<td>17,715</td>
<td>10,254</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>13,921</td>
<td>6,795</td>
<td>50,289</td>
<td>5,512</td>
<td>1,958</td>
<td>21,492</td>
<td>4,498</td>
<td>1,04,465</td>
<td>5.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>15,875</td>
<td>7,830</td>
<td>44,487</td>
<td>5,869</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>25,769</td>
<td>6,715</td>
<td>1,09,670</td>
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<td>1975-76</td>
<td>15,882</td>
<td>8,268</td>
<td>40,667</td>
<td>6,420</td>
<td>3,734</td>
<td>26,110</td>
<td>16,995</td>
<td>1,18,076</td>
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<td>1976-77</td>
<td>17,492</td>
<td>8,711</td>
<td>41,037</td>
<td>6,308</td>
<td>4,533</td>
<td>32,080</td>
<td>18,100</td>
<td>1,28,261</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
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<td>8,608</td>
<td>45,350</td>
<td>7,082</td>
<td>4,585</td>
<td>38,123</td>
<td>19,749</td>
<td>1,41,693</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>18,527</td>
<td>8,823</td>
<td>49,882</td>
<td>6,919</td>
<td>5,666</td>
<td>43,013</td>
<td>21,145</td>
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<td>1979-80</td>
<td>21,121</td>
<td>9,547</td>
<td>54,301</td>
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<td>7,937</td>
<td>50,943</td>
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<td>1980-81</td>
<td>24,682</td>
<td>10,200</td>
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<td>7,834</td>
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<td>59,531</td>
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<td>64,147</td>
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<td>15,045</td>
<td>81,838</td>
<td>31,978</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>33,350</td>
<td>13,647</td>
<td>68,511</td>
<td>11,839</td>
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<td>96,478</td>
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<td>1984-85</td>
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<td>15,234</td>
<td>75,731</td>
<td>12,971</td>
<td>24,383</td>
<td>1,11,629</td>
<td>38,442</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>45,325</td>
<td>16,149</td>
<td>82,222</td>
<td>14,721</td>
<td>30,537</td>
<td>1,30,992</td>
<td>41,671</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>51,284</td>
<td>16,704</td>
<td>89,023</td>
<td>17,012</td>
<td>35,838</td>
<td>1,59,863</td>
<td>44,586</td>
<td>4,14,310</td>
<td>14.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>57,368</td>
<td>18,121</td>
<td>1,01,731</td>
<td>19,893</td>
<td>44,116</td>
<td>1,85,349</td>
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<td>4,73,789</td>
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### Index of Growth  
(1969-70 to 1987-88)  

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Index of Growth</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>301.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>329.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>452.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>4552.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>1531.28</td>
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<td>1975-76</td>
<td>440.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>606.12</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Source  

* Not Separately Available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the State</th>
<th>Coastline in k.m.</th>
<th>Fish production in Tonnes 1982-'83</th>
<th>Fish production in Tonnes 1983-'84</th>
<th>Fish production in Tonnes 1984-'85</th>
<th>Value of Exports (Rs. in Lakhs) 1982-'83</th>
<th>Value of Exports (Rs. in Lakhs) 1983-'84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1,64,557</td>
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<td>Gujarat</td>
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<td>1,89,988</td>
<td>1,87,315</td>
<td>2,79,000</td>
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<td>4,26,600</td>
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<td>3,19,831</td>
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<td>5,775</td>
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<td>Orissa</td>
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<td>1,653</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>907</td>
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<td>2,44,360</td>
<td>2,83,000</td>
<td>3,351</td>
<td>4,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
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<td>39,000</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>4,334</td>
<td>4,412</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Goa</td>
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<td>48,464</td>
<td>50,878</td>
<td>53,711</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>955</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pondicherry</td>
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<td>13,886</td>
<td>15,843</td>
<td>20,435</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Andaman and Nicobar</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>3,879</td>
<td>3,868</td>
<td>6,226</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Laksha Dweep</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>4,201</td>
<td>4,301</td>
<td>5,331</td>
<td>..</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Question answered in Parliament on 15th April 1985 by the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development.
Kerala has several advantages which should contribute to a strong industrial base. It has abundant potential for hydro-electric power, river and internal navigation facilities, some of the world's rarest minerals like ilminite, monozite, a large part of India's fish landings, very rich forest resources and the most literate population. Provision of infrastructural facilities like roads, electricity, irrigation, etc. would definitely help to develop the rural backward areas. And the State is well ahead of the country in infrastructure for development.

During the quarter century from 1962-'87 agriculture in Kerala witnessed some major changes and retained some of its main characteristics. The increasing mechanisation of agriculture has also been accompanied by an impressive use of fertilizers. Inspite of having a low per capita income, the State has achieved tremendous progress in the matter of improving the quality of life of its population and in providing basic infrastructure facilities.
Statement of the Problem

Rural transformation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Though it is close to rural development, it is not synonymous with either rural development or growth. It involves not only growth but development with distributive justice. The rural transformation policies are mainly aimed at:

1. Economic growth with distributive justice and
2. Changing the property relations in the rural areas.

Rural transformation calls for:

i) transfer of labour force from low productivity areas to high productivity areas preferably non-farm activities
ii) curtailment of population growth and
iii) fuller utilization of locally available resources; land, manpower and capital.

Any study on rural transformation should have two dimensions, namely:

i) development across the study region and
ii) development across time.
Social and economic transformation in rural society is dependent upon interaction of several factors - technological, economic, social, demographic, etc. Such a rural transformation is universal but varying in degree depending on changes in the magnitude of factors.

Several developing nations appear to have found a democratic political system not suitable for bringing about the required socio-economic transformation which development calls for. A few countries like India have preferred the democratic political system for the process of social development and modernization. Since the Second World War and more particularly since 1950's States all over the world have taken upon themselves the responsibility of being active agents of change and of transformation.

Since independence, policy makers and planners in most of the developing Asian and Pacific nations have been emphasizing the need to transform rural areas where the overwhelming majority of their people are currently living. In each country several policy programmes and projects have been introduced to increase agricultural productivity, raise incomes
and living standards of the rural people, provide employment opportunities, facilitate participation of the people in local decision making and increased access of the rural poor to government facilities and programmes.

We hear of miracles achieved in the economic field in countries like Japan, West Germany and Russia. Nobody would hold that the Japanese soil is so much more fertile than our soil. The growth in Japanese economy has been truly impressive. Japan was able to transform herself rapidly from a poor agricultural nation into a rapidly growing industrial giant by the use of high yielding varieties, well planned irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides and mechanised farm operations. In Japan a significant part of resources was allocated to agricultural development resulting in rapid growth in that sector. Heavy investment in agricultural technology, extension services and infrastructure may indeed be the key to rapid development of many countries.\(^2\)

Planning for development in a country like India is essentially bringing about a transformation in the socio-economic conditions of the rural population. Because of this, development of the rural areas has been one of the abiding concerns of the successive five year plans.

Generally the rural transformation is inescapably linked with the development of the agricultural sector as majority of the rural population depend upon agriculture. The establishment and development of industries in rural areas is an important factor in rural transformation for which infrastructural facilities, requisite materials and services are also to be developed in the rural areas. No socio-economic development in India can take place unless we develop the nearly six lakh villages where around three-fourth of the Indian population reside. Economic development brings structural transformation in the productive resources of an economy. It transforms the economy from a dominantly agricultural one to one

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containing a large and growing urban industrial sector. For both agricultural and industrial development, motivation to social awareness and leadership are the catalytic agents in bringing out rural transformation.

Rural uplift is inescapably linked with the development of the agricultural sector. The problem of transformation of traditional agriculture is the problem of rationalisation of investment. This kind of investment not only proves profitable for the agricultural sector but also becomes a powerful vehicle of growth of the whole economy. Rationalisation of agriculture should aim at the transformation of the rural economic structure in which the units of operation, big or small, should be productive units with higher output per acre and per capita income for the community as a whole under the impact of suitable social organisation and effective local leadership. Rationalisation of agriculture means the creation of necessary arrangements for maximising production and for steady growth of income for all segments of the rural economy. In other words it should aim at transformation of the rural economic structure from a stagnant to a dynamic stage.\(^4\)

The urgency of the need for rural transformation was emphasized in the constitution. The concept of equality is the basis of social justice. This is envisaged in Article 14 of the Indian Constitution according to which the State would not deny any person equality before law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination at the hands of the state of any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. This particular clause has great significance in the context of India's multi-caste, multi-social and multi-religious set up.

For several decades, transformation of the rural communities has been the concern of the Government, voluntary organizations and the people. While voluntary endeavours to transform rural communities are claimed to be in vogue from historic past, more deliberate, systematic and organised attempts were made in the last decades of the 19th century. An active role in the field of rural transformation largely in the inaccessible parts of the country was played by religious missionaries since the middle of the 19th century, who aimed at an allround development of their followers.5

5 Pande, V.P. (1967) Village Community Projects in India, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, p.117.
Mahatma Gandhi initiated the process of transformation of socio-economic life in Sevagram around 1931 based on his ideology of truth and non-violence. A wide range of methods has been attempted to bring about transformation in the quality of rural life, which include community organisations, social action, extension, education and training.

Rural transformation encompasses intricate and varied problems that make it obligatory to combine all-India planning with grass roots programming. This is because a vast mass of community live in different parts of the country and are at different levels of socio-economic evolution. The pace of transformation can be accelerated and the paramount problems of rapid development can be faced only through citizens' participation in the political and administrative process of development.

The problems which the development functionaries have been facing in bringing about the desired transformations were quite many. Illiteracy,

lack of motivation, vulnerability to social convictions, superstitions and powerlessness are the major factors working against the rural poor.

Proneness of the poor to exploitative arrangement is a pervasive feature of rural India. The rural poor may more readily acquire the habit of approaching a doctor when sick than acquire the habit of sending their children to school; the former is akin to consumption activity while the latter is more in the nature of a long term investment with returns uncertain and accruing mostly to the next generation.⁷

Atleast since the days of planned economic development several organised attempts have been made to change the rural scene; community development programmes, land reform legislations, irrigation projects, rural electrification schemes, rural industrialisation, high yielding varieties programme, co-operatives and a host of other credit and support institutions have been among the many and varied efforts of the past to bring change in rural areas. Because of all these, India's countryside has gone a long way along development since

independence. Even in remote areas, as in the hilly and tribal tracts of Orissa social and economic changes have occurred. New techniques are noticeable practically everywhere, social relations are also changing under all sorts of circumstances.

The State of Kerala has gone through a pattern of economic development which is unique from the national point of view. Inspite of having a low per capita income, the State has achieved tremendous progress in the matter of improving the quality of life of its population and in providing basic infrastructure facilities.

The problem of rural transformation assumes great significance in Kerala when the government has an increasing social service role to play. Voluntary organisations with their uniqueness of the operational abilities have a crucial role to play in rural transformation. Land reforms - distribution of surplus land and abolition of tenancy - have to a great

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extent, contributed to a reduction in the inequality of landholdings. The rural sector in the State is demographically predominant having more than 80 per cent of population of rural origin.

The statistical fact that the majority of Indians, some 524 million (76.6%) of the total population of 684 million (according to 1981 census) live in the rural areas is well known. But much less is known about the socio-economic characteristics of this high mass of people.

Little effort has been made to document what had been happening in the rural areas and what is going on there now. Now that we have completed 40 years of independence, it is worthwhile considering where we stand, what the achievements of the government have been, where it has failed, and above all, how the people at large look upon the changes brought about and what their attitude is.

Developments in the rural economy of Kerala are bound to affect, in a considerable measure, national efforts at the removal of poverty and backwardness. The problem of Kerala's development has been
a major concern of policy makers, planners, administrators and intellectuals for quite some time. Changes in the economic and social life of rural areas are of interest from many stand points. A study of the nature of rural transformation in Kerala and its beneficiaries assumes great significance in this respect. This study tries to provide a better understanding of the rural area. The task of comprehending the dynamics of rural transformation is indeed a stupendous one, for it demands a thorough analysis of disaggregated level data on varied facets of rural economy. This study is an attempt to present an integrated picture of the economic changes that have taken place in the rural economy of Kerala. Its limited purpose is to draw the attention of researchers and policymakers to an important but neglected dimension in rural analysis and planning.
Review of Literature

An attempt is made in this section to survey a few important studies related to rural transformation under the following heads:

Studies on Agricultural Transformation

Schultz\(^{11}\) (1964) in examining means of transforming traditional agriculture found that when suppliers of modern (non-traditional) agricultural factors succeeded in producing and distributing such factors cheaply, investment in agriculture became profitable, and this then set the stage for farmers to accept modern factors and learn how best to use them. In that sense, the supplier of new factors of production holds the key to economic growth.

Arun Mukhopadhyay\(^{12}\) (1971) examined the problem of Agricultural Extension and found that the present farmer's backwardness in outlook or the static farming behaviour was mainly due to their century-long isolation from the changing world and the lack of organizing leadership forces inside the villages. Social and technical reforms, according to him, are the first two stages of what is known as rationalisation of agriculture.

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\(^{11}\) Schultz Theodore W., (1964), *Transforming Traditional Agriculture*, Yale University Press.

Rao (1974) went into the problem of poverty and landlessness in rural areas and stressed the need for basing agricultural development on small family holdings and reducing disparity in ownership of land. According to him, diversification of the rural economy has to be achieved so that the rural poor have alternative channels of employment.

Appu (1979) found that sufficient attention had not been paid to the question of enhancing labour absorption in agriculture. According to him, institutional factors play a large role in limiting labour absorption in agriculture. Appu's analysis pertinently links the prospects of economic growth to the eradication of poverty.

Dealing with employment and determinants in Indian Agriculture, Parikh (1980) stated that the demand for labour depended on the cropping pattern. He classified farm innovation agriculture into three categories viz., new methods, new machines and new materials.

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New methods include various agronomic practices such as crop rotation, improved cultural practices, use of proper doses of various farm inputs etc. New materials mean chemical and biological innovations such as the tractor, diesel engine, cane crusher, wheat thresher etc. In addition to technical change induced by seed-fertilizer technology and mechanisation one of the other important factors may be the change in the crop structure induced by irrigation and short duration of new varieties. He also found that small and large farmers differ in their access to credit facilities, with the former generally depending on the local money lenders and the latter on co-operative societies and banks. Obviously, small farmers pay a higher rate of interest than large ones.

Narayanan and Narayan Damodaran Nair16 (1983) made a study on Linking Irrigation with Development. This paper evaluated the influence of irrigation in increasing and stabilising paddy yields; and explored the possible causes hindering proper use of irrigation water.

in paddy cultivation. Disproportionately high investment in irrigation projects has been an important aspect of Kerala's planned efforts for agricultural development. The study disclosed that irrigation has some impact on stabilising and improving paddy yields during the autumn crop. This paper provided a critical assessment of the impact of irrigation in the State of Kerala. Its main finding is that even if the management of irrigation projects were made more efficient, unless and until it is accompanied by significant improvement in the management of agricultural land, irrigation projects cannot add anything substantial towards increasing agricultural production and productivity.

Mohammed Sabinuddin Butt's\textsuperscript{17} (1984) study uses the Cobb Douglas Production Function framework for analysing the 'worker effect' of different levels of formal education by introducing the education of farmers as an explicit input into the production function. It has been argued that secondary level of education by

broadening the information base of farmers, and thus inducing the greater use of yield-raising inputs, raises farm productivity more than does primary education. Farmers with more education, are likely to be more productive and adjust more rapidly to changing circumstances.

Venkateswaran (1984) made a survey in Quilon District during February 1981 to study the changing cropping pattern and food economy of Kerala. He found that the process of conversion of paddy fields into coconut orchards/garden lands, even though gradual, continues unabated in the study region. The farmers' knowledge and the inducement given to them by the neighbouring cultivators has helped to accelerate the process. Conversion of paddy fields requires adequate financial support and hence it is mostly undertaken by the well-to-do middle class farmers. The study further revealed that the cost of production of paddy in Kerala was much higher than in other States. Further, unlike other States there is stiff competition in Kerala between cash crops and seasonal ones, especially between coconut and paddy. He stressed the fact that the area under seasonal crops once converted is lost for ever.

According to Krongkaew\textsuperscript{19} (1985) in a dualistic economy where agriculture forms a large but backward sector while commerce and industry form a small but more progressive sector, the economic development is usually perceived as a transformation of the country from a predominantly agricultural economy to a predominantly industrial economy. For such a transformation to take place agriculture must have fulfilled several objectives; it must increase the provision of food for growing industrial sector, it must provide capital mainly in terms of expert earnings to the economic transformation. Modernisation of traditional agriculture is regarded as a precondition for transition growth.

Studies on Land Reforms and Agrarian Relations

Varghese\textsuperscript{20} (1970) has examined the overall agrarian change in Malabar during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Besides following the tenancy changes he has also examined the socio-economic developments affecting land relationships.


According to Varghese, government policies followed in the second half of the 19th century were helpful to the peasantry as well as for the overall agricultural development. According to him, although tenurial conditions in Cochin were more favourable than in Malabar, lack of transport facilities stood in the way of opening up new plantations and expansion of farming.

Oommen\(^2\) (1975) studied the achievements as well as the shortcomings of the land reform legislations in Kerala, both in terms of the laws and their implementation. He examined the implementation of Kerala Land Reforms Act under three heads: (i) abolition of intermediaries (ii) tenancy reforms and (iii) imposition of ceiling on holdings. He concluded that even though land reforms could not be expected to solve the major problems of development such as reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality, it could have helped significantly. But the contributions of land reforms in Kerala have been at best marginal in this respect.

Raj\(^2\) (1975) states that in our society where the whole apparatus of exploitation is an ownership of land, the case of redistribution of land cannot


be judged merely on the criterion of economic viability. Mobilisation of social and political forces on the basis of land distribution programmes is a necessary condition for the transformation of such societies.

Studying the changes in Agrarian Structure and Agrarian Relations in the States of India, Deshpande (1982) found that large holders under-utilised the available water resources whereas the small holders made full use of it. Water is a land-augmenting factor and provision of proportionately more water to the small holders may be considered a kind of compensation to them for their small sized farms. There are many factors which go into the shaping of the total agrarian structure. Land transfers might originate from a variety of sources such as inheritance, gifts, sales, partitions, mutual exchange, land reforms, mortgages etc. Tribal agrarian structure generally gets neglected inspite of the fact that the tribals constitute a non-negligible proportion of the total population.

Radhakrishnan\textsuperscript{24} (1983) Study of Land Reforms and Social Change in Kerala revealed that the implementation of the Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Act of 1969 has brought about drastic changes in the land system in Kerala Society, mainly as a result of the abolition of landlordism and tenancy and enforcement of ownership rights on the cultivating tenants of the lands leased in by them. The post-reform agrarian situation in the village is marked by the absence of share-cropping and tenancy, and in such a situation land has to be cultivated either with family labour or with hired labour or with both. In the post-reform period, most of the important life ceremonies are not performed by the Nambootiris with the same pomp and festivity as in the pre-reform period. Some members of the pre-reform aristocratic community which traditionally led a leisurely life have taken to manual occupations in the post-reform period.

Theodore\textsuperscript{25} (1984) in his study on Agrarian Reforms in India found that agrarian reforms is a part of social change and thus interlinked with


\textsuperscript{25} Theodore Bergman, (1984), \textit{Agrarian Reform in India}, Agricole Publishing Academy, Delhi.
economic development, technical modernisation and cultural progress. Agrarian reform is a partial process only in transformation of the whole economic and social structure. He is of the view that socio-economic barriers can be overcome and have been largely overcome in the two states of Kerala and West Bengal by the conjunction of peasant movements supported by the Communist parties legislation and administration. He found that successful reform of land tenure in densely populated agrarian states, as in Kerala and West Bengal, led to a slow change of rural social relations and power structure, but did not overcome other socio-economic problems like unemployment and underdevelopment.

Burton Stein\textsuperscript{26} (1985) has stated that South India has undergone several transformations which can only be grasped with reference to changes in agrarian relations. Agrarian property and productive relations were the most significant material relations of the South Indian socio-economic transformation.

\textsuperscript{26} Burton Stein, (1985), "Politics, Peasants and the Deconstruction of Feudalism in Medieval India", \textit{The Journal of Peasant Studies}, Vol. 12, Nos. 2 and 3, pp. 54-86.
Thimmaiah and Abdul Aziz\textsuperscript{27} (1985) made an attempt to evaluate the result of land reforms in Karnataka. The study suggests that government, bureaucracy, landed interest, tenants and landless labourers have played their 'self interest' roles through caste and class 'alignments' to frustrate formulation and implementation of radical land reforms. They are of the view that organised efforts should be made both by political parties and intellectuals to create a positive awakening among the weaker sections and organise them as an economic class to protect their interest.

Rural Studies

Dube\textsuperscript{28} (1958) examined some of the important human factors involved in externally-induced and State-directed programmes of economic development and culture change in a technologically underdeveloped society. He found that under the community development programme attention had been focussed on agricultural


extension while public health problems and education had been touched only superficially. According to him, very little was done for women and the younger people. The psychological resistance of the women can often effectively block the realization of many progressive aims of the development programme. Dube realized that receptivity to change was greater in the younger group and therefore energy and money should be invested in work with this group.

Daniel Thorner29 (1962) made a study of the rural economy of India for the period 1760 to 1960 emphasising the village economy. His study revealed that the outstanding feature of the economy of India before the advent of British Power was the self-subsisting and self-perpetuating character of its typical unit, the village. The village itself consumed most of the foodstuffs and other raw materials it produced. Its needs for handicrafts were satisfied by the families of craftsmen associated with the village. It was this tight union of agriculture and hand industry which made the village economically independent of the outside world except for a few necessities like salt and iron.

Pande\textsuperscript{30} (1967) made a study of Village Community Projects in India. He found that an active role in the field of rural transformation, largely in the inaccessible parts of the country, was played by the religious missionaries since the middle of the 19th century, who aimed at an all round development (secular and spiritual) of their followers.

Sundaram\textsuperscript{31} (1970) made a study on rural industrial development. He found that the prosperity of India (economic, social, cultural and therefore political) is increasingly interlinked with the revival and development of its rural economy and the provision of the basic essentials of a good life to the enormous population dependent on it. He is of the view that with improved means of communication, rural India cannot and will not remain isolated from the rapidly developing urban industrial India.

\textsuperscript{30} Pande, V.P., (1967), \textit{Village Community Projects in India}, Asia Publishing House, Bombay.

According to George\(^{32}\) (1972) an adequately planned, well-administered and properly executed programme of education can mould the outlook and behaviour patterns of the coming generations in desirable ways. This is very important when social transformation is monitored by Government where there is no built-in mechanism for weeding out incompetent people from the productive system.

Kurien\(^{33}\) (1978) made a study on Poverty, Planning and Social Transformation in India. He realised that all development efforts, within the existing property relations and with the prevailing kind of distribution of resources, can only ensure the growing affluence of the few and the continuing misery of the many. He asks, "can poverty and similar problems of society be eradicated by the decision that they will be eradicated?". In his opinion, poverty is not simply a matter of physical or material deprivation, but a much more complex social phenomenon, a dimension that can easily be lost sight of, if one does not have a conceptual frame which accommodates the social processes as well. He stressed that a process

\(^{32}\) George, E.I., (1972), "Psychological Barriers in Development of Kerala", P.K.B. Nair (ed.), Development of Kerala - Problems and Promises, Department of Sociology, University of Kerala, Trivandrum.

of economic development, without positive and effective policy to ensure an equitable distribution of the gains of development, inevitably benefits the richer classes much more than it does the poorer classes.

Neera Desai\textsuperscript{34} (1978) made a sociological study of the Gujarati Society as it existed prior to the British rule. She discusses the economic system of rural and urban Gujarat before and after the advent of the British and points out that the village economy showed positive signs of dissolution but the change was not revolutionary. Neera Desai also discusses how the emergence of the press and the printed word constituted a qualitative as well as quantitative change in the system of communication, and points out that this change was unprecedented in the history of Gujarat.

Madan\textsuperscript{35} (1979) states that economic progress will not be desired in a community where the people do not realize that progress is possible. The experimental or scientific attitude is one of the conditions of progress. The greatest progress will occur in those countries


\textsuperscript{35} Madan, G.R., (1979), \textit{India's Social Transformation}, Allied Publishers, Delhi.
where education is wide-spread and where it encourages an experimental outlook. According to him religious beliefs may also affect the initiative of people and in the accumulation of capital. Lack of interest in material things may be due to prevalence of another worldly philosophy which discourages material wants. Though many processes in modern factories do not require high skill or education on the part of workers, the low level of literacy in most under-developed countries is a great handicap to industrial growth.

Navin Chandra Joshi\textsuperscript{36} (1980) is of the view that, today, professional skill and political will have combined together to provide an urgent breakthrough for rural transformation. He deals with various issues like agriculture, industry, infrastructure, rural banking, employment, poverty and community development in India's rural economy. He says that in implementing the schemes for rural development, we should keep in mind the human factor and entrust the work to devoted workers who can carry out the object as enthusiastic missionaries and not as bureaucratic officers. He discusses the

\textsuperscript{36} Navin Chandra Joshi, (1980), "Indian Rural Economy", Young Deva Publications, New Delhi.
several inter-connected aspects of rural development in terms of the progress achieved, the deficiencies and the probable solutions.

Iyengar, Nanjappa and Sudharshan 37 (1981) made a study on Inter-district differentials in Karnataka's Development. In their view, development is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process, where progress along one dimension may in certain cases, preclude advances along others. For example, a growth in per capita income may be accompanied by a widening of the income disparities. The following dimensions are the most important: (1) Technical Development (2) Economic Development (3) Social Development and (4) Political Development. The variables included in this study are: (1) Per capita income at current prices, (ii) per capita cultivable land, (iii) percentage of gross area irrigated to gross area sown, (iv) Gross value of agricultural output per head of working population engaged in agriculture (v) Average yield of food grains per hectare, (vi) percentage of factory employment, (vii) number of towns and villages electrified, (viii) length of railway line (ix) length of roads, (x) number of hospital beds per

lakh of population, (xi) number of banks per lakh of population, (xii) number of post offices per lakh of population and (xiii) number of registered vehicles. According to their calculations, all districts of Karnataka registered development. The Hyderabad Karnataka region recorded an impressive development, Bidar district registering the maximum followed by Gulbarga and Raichur. One significant finding of their study is that the districts which were economically more advanced initially, experienced a lower pace of development. With the help of a composite measure of development, they have found that ranking of districts by income criterion alone is not sufficient; there are non-economic factors as well. They are of the view that in any index of development, it will be desirable to include changes in values like land and building, as well as changes in the level and distribution of consumption.

Kurien (1981) has studied the changes that have come about through major changes in the institutional structure of the economy of Tamil Nadu between the years 1950 and 1975; primarily in the ownership and

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distribution of land. He also tried to find out how these changes affect different sections of rural society, particularly the large and the small farmers and the non-farmers. His study revealed that over the past quarter of a century the rural areas of Tamil Nadu have experienced a new dynamism unknown in the days of the past - substantial increase in output, major changes in production techniques and in organisational patterns. Another aspect of the rural transformation in Tamil Nadu is that it has been substantially induced, primarily by the efforts of the State. The survey disclosed the role of science and technology in the rural transformation of Tamil Nadu. To him, rural transformation is essentially a social phenomenon.

Saradamoni (1981) studied living levels and opportunities of the population which fell within two panchayats, Venganur and Vizhinjam, twenty kilometres south of Trivandrum. To her the present insufficient development and limited opportunities keep the poor apart. Her conclusion is that it is predominantly economic and not social factors that keep a section of people deprived.

Dealing with agricultural change in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, Kurien (1982) stated that to understand the nature of the agricultural transformation, we need to know what has been happening to land distribution, commercialisation, industrial development and above all the State policy related to each of these. He found that the distribution of assets became more skewed in Tamil Nadu over the sixties. Kurien’s study revealed that the agrarian economy of Kerala is much more diversified than Tamil Nadu’s. One of the most visible aspects of agricultural change in Kerala has been in the cropping pattern namely the decline in the share of land under foodgrains in general and paddy in particular inspite of the absolute increase in area under these crops. Consequently there has been an increase in the share of the cash crops, particularly rubber, cashew, coffee and cardamom. The main feature of change in the agriculture of both the States has been increasing commercialisation. He concluded that for a proper development of agriculture the broad socio-economic milieu within which agrarian changes take place must receive greater attention than the physical and technological aspects.

Rekha Mehra and Saradamoni41 (1983) made an attempt to explain as to why government policies and programmes have failed to effect any significant improvement in the socio-economic life of women. Rekh Mehra shows that the combined home-extension-welfare programme for women operating through Mahila Mandals could not be a success. Few women were reached by the Community Development Programme, fewer still were benefitted from it and even less participated in their organising or running. The evaluation studies of the scheme blamed rural women (they were ignorant and inaccessible) and the implementation of the programme. She argues that any attempt to integrate women into development must mean their productive employment.

Saradamoni's study of changing land relations and women in the Palghat district of Kerala traces the various historical changes and legislations that upset the balance of the 'Marumakkathayam' (Matrilineal) system of social organisation prevailing there. Though these land reforms were progressive and tried to protect, the interests of tenants and poor cultivators

they did not consider the interests of women. Instead of enjoying ownership of land, women dominated as agricultural labourers and family helpers on farms. Women who entered industries also worked as unskilled workers or as typists and clerks. On the whole, the transformation of the society in Kerala brought women to a low position. The author points out that this transformation disproves Boserup's thesis that with development the role of women reduces. To Saradamoni, in our male-dominated society, the progressive concepts like 'modern values', 'disruptive justice', etc., also are defined in a biased fashion ignoring the interests of women. It seems that women's struggle is tougher than what is normally imagined.

Venkaiah\textsuperscript{42} (1983) is of view that proper integration and co-ordination between agriculture and industry ensures intensive and extensive development of agriculture thereby creating additional employment for the rural population. Integrated rural industrialisation through agro-based industries is a dynamic, interdepending and self-generating process. The growth of agro-industries depends upon the development of agriculture.

\textsuperscript{42} Venkaiah, V. (1983), \textit{Rural Industrialisation will go a long way"}, \textit{Kurukshetra}, Vol.XXXII No.1.
Ajit Kumar Singh\textsuperscript{43} (1984) made a study on the Dynamics of Rural Transformation in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) in two phases viz., 1950-'53 to 1963-'66 and 1963-'66 to 1976-'79. Regional variations, land reforms, growth of agricultural workers, regional pattern of growth, tenancy, poverty line, unemployment and underemployment were the major areas dealt within the study. To study the changes in the economic conditions of non-agricultural rural workers they have examined the trends in wages of masons and carpenters. The study revealed that the wages of skilled non-agricultural rural workers are almost double the wages received by agricultural labourers in all regions of U.P. To estimate the trends in population below the poverty line, both the minimum nutritional requirement approach and the minimum necessary expenditure approach were used. To find out the degree of concentration of land assets in U.P. as compared to the country as a whole and to ascertain the concentration of operational holding other than that of ownership holdings, Gini Co-efficient was used. This brief survey of different aspects of the rural economy of U.P. revealed unmistakably the signs of a major transformation since the beginning.

of planning in 1951. The typical village of U.P. no longer resembles the traditional picture of an unchanging isolated and sleepy village. Development in the means of transport and communications have opened up the villages to outside influence. The study came to the conclusion that there is, significant rise in output and productivity acceptance of modern technology, creation of a vast network of administration, credit and extension services, development of the means of irrigation, transport, power, etc.

Baker44 (1984) has tried to project India and her rural people in his work by tracing the history of the countryside in Tamil Nadu from 1880 to 1955 by examining "how labour was utilised on the land, how agrarian trade was organised, how internal and external trade were connected, how the market for capital functioned, what were the links between countryside and town and what was the role played by the State in rural society and economy". He stated that the new era of State management led to the growth of modern systems overlaid on old practices.

Gilbert Etienne\textsuperscript{45} (1984) made a study of India's changing rural scene. He found that a great number of villages are still dependent on bad water or, worse, have no water at all for several months. Still, India's countryside has come a long way since independence and, even in remote areas as in the hilly and tribal tracts of Orissa, social and economic changes have occurred. New techniques are noticeable practically everywhere, social relations are also changing under all sorts of circumstances and in certain areas, there are growing tensions which have often led to violence. Yet the overall process of growth and diversification of the economy has not gathered enough momentum to lead to an expansion wide enough to affect a large number of the poor. He suggested that our dieticians and nutritionists who sit in the cool of their urban offices must go out to the fields and then study the diets of the ordinary people over a one year cycle.

Ninan\textsuperscript{46} (1984) found that the education of farmers brings about a transformation in the outlook.

\textsuperscript{45} Gilbert Etienne, (1984), \textit{India's Changing Rural Scene - 1903-1979}, Oxford University Press, Delhi.

of the peasants and makes them receptive to new ideas and innovations. It makes them more alert to problems of allocation of resources, particularly in adjusting the levels and composition of their inputs and outputs to the prevailing prices. Further, through the acquisition of skill, it leads to improvements in the quality of the worker.

Oommen (1984) stated that one needs an inter-disciplinary perspective to observe and analyse social change or transformation. He has tried to focus his attention on the nature of the state intervention in tackling the special problems of the agrarian poor, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The author tends to endorse the view that the growth that was recorded did not percolate to the lower stratum of the rural society.

Somayajulu and Mahanath (1984) have made a study on Rural Transformation in two districts of Andhra Pradesh namely West Godavari and Nalgonda. They studied


the structural changes and cropping pattern movement: 1964-'65 to 1979-'80. Mechanisation of Agriculture, infrastructural facilities, financial institutions, industries, social services, commercial establishments, life styles, landlord labour relationships and awareness of various legislations in these two districts were also studied. They concluded that the traditional feudal or semi-feudal modes of production relations between the rich farmers and landless labourers, servants, etc. still persist in many pockets of villages. It was also found that irrigation facilities have positive effects on rural transformation.

Srivastava's 49 (1984) study has revealed that skewed distribution of assets and gross inequalities in the distribution of income can be seen everywhere in the country. The most alarming feature of income distribution is that the disparity between rural and urban incomes is not only wide but is also further widening. Srivastava has found that a major transformation has taken place in the Indian economy since 1956 and that the country is now in a position to produce a vast variety of industrial

goods, of which some are highly sophisticated. But it is a sad commentary on the country's planning process that this development has made little change in the fate of a large mass of people, which continues to be below the poverty line.

Charyulu 50 (1985) examined the role of voluntary organisations in Rural Transformation. His study revealed that a wide range of methods have been attempted to bring about transformation in the quality of rural life, which include community organisations, social action, extension education and training. He suggested that voluntary organisations could be involved in matters like smooth flow of credit from the financial institution and can also provide useful feedback to the implementing authority in monitoring and evaluation of I.R.D.P. "The voluntary organisations, with their uniqueness of the operational abilities have a crucial role to play in rural transformation", he added.

Gopalakrishna Asari\textsuperscript{51} (1985) conducted a study on the Impact of Technological Change in Rural Areas. The nature of technological change was studied in terms of the kind of tools, techniques and products diffused in different sectors of production and consumption. Its impact was studied in terms of the changes brought about on the traditional sectors of production and consumption as well as on the socio-economic conditions of the people engaged in these sectors. The data regarding the socio-economic characteristics of households and the kind of new production tools and techniques by them were collected from a survey of two villages viz., Amaravila and Vizhinjam. The study brought out that the technological change in the rural areas occurred mainly as a result of transfer of tools and techniques and products to different sectors of production and consumption. The study suggested that since structural inequalities existed at various levels, resources, skill, education and infrastructure needed adequate attention in the development programmes.

Madan and Tara Madan\textsuperscript{52} (1985) made a composite well-structured and significantly planned analysis of the problem of village development in India. It is a comparative study of the total development of two U.P. villages with a population of about 500 each. One village is designed as "progressive" and the other "backward" or less developed. The investigations for data collection were conducted in 1965-'66. The study found that the people were more favourably disposed to the need for adult education, family planning and modern methods of medical treatment and the eradication of such social customs as the dowry system. But the levels achieved in village development have not been fully evaluated in terms of gains trickling down to the lower rung of the ladder.

Mumtaz Thaha\textsuperscript{53} (1985) dealt with the role of environment in rural transformation. He emphasized the significance of village sanitation. The study


revealed that even in those villages where community latrines are provided, due to poor maintenance, unhygienic conditions prevail. Although a number of water-supply and electrification projects have been taken up in rural areas there has not been comparable work in the improvement of sanitary condition. Lack of sanitation may have a greater impact on health than in urban context because people in rural areas largely depend on surface water for drinking purpose. During rainy season, most of the roads function as drainage channels rendering them unserviceable after rains. In the rural areas, the buildings, in general, lack ventilation and rooms are not oriented to the wind direction. Cooking is done in a corner of the room and bathrooms and toilets are absent. A part of the residential building is used for rearing the cattle and sheep. In a corner of the house the cowdung is stored. The housing problem in rural areas is not only one of quality but also of quantity. Most of the beaches in the country are often polluted by the human excreta. This causes contamination of the fish and is a potential health hazard to the people. Mumtaz Taha is of opinion that all scientific analysis, planning, etc. of the rural environment becomes futile unless the common man is made environment conscious. He suggested the introduction of
environmental education in the school curriculum right from the primary level which would enable the students to become environment conscious.

To Srinivarty Thakur\(^\text{54}\) (1985) in India the spread effects of industrialisation from metropolitan cities and big towns are extremely poor with the result that a dual economy has come into being with the rural population untouched by the dynamic influence associated with modern economic development. The main problem of the rural poor is their little access to technology and services. To promote dynamic socio-economic change in rural areas, it would be vitally necessary to set up output-based industries like sugar and related industries. Such industries could help to transform the rural economy through powerful backward and forward linkage effects. The programme of rural industrialisation can hardly succeed unless it is backed by adequate outlays for rural electrification. Srinivarty Thakur is of view that to carry the message of dynamic socio-economic change to the country's rural interior, the focus of industrialisation

and urbanisation should be widely diffused and shifted towards suitable growth centres around villages. He concludes that rural industrialisation will pave the way for modernisation and socio-economic transformation by ensuring the integrated development of the rural areas through interaction between agriculture and industry.

Venkataraman, Prahladachar and Deshpande (1985) have endeavoured to present an interconnected picture of the rural transformation that took place in Karnataka in the period 1955-'56 to 1975-'76 through: (1) identifying changes in income, employment and population, (2) analysing the structural changes in land ownership and assets of the rural population, (3) examining infrastructural development, (4) analysing the change in agriculture, especially with reference to land use, cropping pattern, irrigation and new agricultural technology and (5) examining the changes in wages and consumption pattern and rural poverty. To them, though poverty levels continue to be high and agricultural growth rate has decelerated, rural transformation in Karnataka has taken place in the period covered by the study.

Chandha's study revealed that no part of Punjab State has remained untouched by its rapid agricultural growth; the whole State has made significant economic progress over the period 1960-'85. He examined the reasons that enabled Punjab to overcome the many institutional and social constraints which operate in India. He further examined the role played by the central and State Governments and the policies they introduced in particular land reforms, market mechanisms and the development of infrastructure such as irrigation, power, rural credit, rural roads, price controls and support. Chandha studied the impact of the new techniques in the production structure in terms of changes in land area patterns, cropping intensity and input structure. He also provided a detailed account of the changes that have occurred in the agrarian structure in general and asset distribution in particular. It is found that rapid agricultural growth had led to a perceptible decline in the incidence of rural poverty in Punjab. The role played by the Sikh religion, the social institutions and the people's enterprise in assisting a remarkable growth in Punjab have also been discussed. It was found

that in terms of the overall asset position of the
lower strata of land owners, the near landless are not
the worst placed; the worst placed are the categories
with a slightly higher land base. The near landless
make up for their lack of land in terms of non-land
assets - most strikingly live-stock - which assures
them a higher level of employment and income, compared
with the prospective gains of tilling their own tiny
piece of land. As a positive feature of the rural
economy of Punjab it is pointed out that the glaring
inequalities in the distribution of land are reduced
by a much less unequal distribution of other production
assets, most notably livestock.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:-

1. To identify changes in income, employment and
   population.

2. To analyse the structural change in land ownership
   and other assets of the rural population.

3. To analyse the changes in agriculture, especially
   with reference to land use and cropping pattern and
4. To examine the extend of rural indebtedness.
   These aspects are studied with reference to three
   Panchayats - Thazhava, Pananchery, Muttil - which
   are taken as case studies.

Data and Methodology

There are 1001 Panchayats in Kerala but
the scope of the present study is confined to three
Panchayats; one each from the erstwhile Travancore,
Cochin and Malabar, namely Thazhava, Pananchery and
Muttil. Muttil in Wynad district comes under high
land according to geographical classification. But
Thazhava of Quilon district is a low land whereas
Pananchery of Trichur district is mid land.

In Kerala 26 Panchayats were surveyed
in 1961-'62 by the Government of Kerala of which three
are resurveyed for this study. The entire geographi­
cal area surveyed in 1961-'62 are resurveyed in each
of the panchayats. The basic survey was conducted on
the following dates:
Thazhava - Between 10th and 30th April 1961
Pananchery - Between 13th January and 11th February 1962
Muttil - Between 8th and 29th May 1962.

All the three areas were resurveyed between January and December 1987.

A word or two about the panchayats selected for the study may not be out of place. Thazhava is an old settlement area going back to not less than 500 years. Screwpine called "Thazha" in Malayalam grows abundantly everywhere in this panchayat. The mats manufactured here are famous for their finish and softness and the industry plays a vital part in the economy of the panchayat. For the last so many years screwpine plant was the bread-winner for a large number of mat weavers. In Kerala, the worst economic ills are maximally felt on the sea coasts and Thazhava is a coastal area. Thazhava is selected to represent an old established low income area with dense population.

Generally the paddy fields in all parts of the Pananchery panchayat are very fertile and the area is irrigated with the help of Peechi canal water. Further this area has only slightly above 100 years of settlement history.
The most important purpose for which Muttil panchayat is selected for the study is to find out the social and economic changes that have taken place in the hilly areas of the Malabar region. Muttil is a typical area of the Travancore settlers and the changes that have taken place in recent years give a glimpse of the changes taking place in other Malabar villages occupied by them.

The data were collected from three panchayat areas totalling 703 households. Such a larger number is selected to incorporate greater variety of problems - physical and socio-economic - in the course of the study and to make the data more representative and reliable. Although statistical data were collected only relating to the households living in the surveyed area, an attempt is made to project the study to the whole panchayat in a general manner.

Methodically the study is a venture to combine the survey research technique with observation technique. The study consists essentially of empirical documentation and analysis of variety of aspects of the changes in the rural economy of Kerala during the quarter century 1962-'87. Using the printed questionnaire, the
data for the survey were collected from households by interviewing the head of the households or other competent persons in the households. The fixed survey recorded material traits like settlement pattern of the village, house types, landholdings, diet, dress, ornaments and footwear, furniture, common means of transport of goods and passengers. It also aimed at putting group questions with a view to sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, family planning, indebtedness, education, etc. The field survey also tried to examine the social and economic process set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and industrial changes. The detailed data and information regarding various aspects of rural life of the people collected through discussions and sometimes physical observation and recorded outside the technical frame of the questionnaire schedules have been used in the course of analysis.

The present study is both descriptive and analytical - descriptive in the sense that it traces the historical growth and present performance and analytical in the sense that it analyses and
interprets the data and also projects future trends. The focus of the study is the socio-economic position of the village economy.

Limitations of the Study

The entity to be studied is the rural society and society is too complex a factor to be handled. Three panchayats in Kerala (Viz., Thazhava, Pananchery and Muttil) were selected for the study. These panchayats were taken not as samples but as case studies. Therefore no generalisation or statistical inferences from the sample to the universe have been attempted.

Scheme of the Study

The study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides a brief introduction to the study. It also includes the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, method of data collection, limitations of the study and a brief review of literature.

The second chapter deals with people and their material equipments. It discusses about the house types, dress and ornaments, footwears, use of toilet and washing soaps, furniture and other accessories.
Economic resources, land and land utilisation, cropping pattern, animal wealth, main and subsidiary occupations, changes in traditional occupation - household expenditure and savings of the surveyed households constitute the core of the third chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with indebtedness. Sources and uses of credit in general and indebtedness of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in particular are dealt with in this chapter. It also includes the problems faced by the rural poor in availing credit.

Social and cultural life is discussed in the fifth chapter. Age and sex distribution, age at marriage, dowry, literacy, migration and its effects, family structure and attitude on family planning are also analysed.

Sixth chapter is the concluding chapter. This chapter presents the summary of the study and also highlights some of the policy implications emerging from the study.

List of tables and selected bibliography are given at the end.


Location of the Surveyed Area

Thazhava lies along the north eastern corner of Karunagappally Taluk in Quilon District. On the western side of Thazhava lies Kulasekharapuram panchayat and on the southern side Thodiyoor panchayat. The Trivandrum-Ernakulam Railway line passes through its western extremity. According to geographical classification this panchayat falls within the low land of Kerala, the Arabian sea being only six kilometres away.

In Thazhava Panchayat, nearly sixty nine (68.80) hectares in the northern side of the Puthiyakavu-Chakkuvally road were taken for intensive survey. A large number of households belonging to different communities engaged in screwpine mat-weaving are concentrated in this locality, 'Kuttipuram'. Years ago the surveyed area was an uninhabited waste land covered with shrubs from which it derived the name 'Kuttipuram'.

The Pananchery panchayat is located on the easternmost extremity of Trichur Taluk in Trichur district. Varandarappally panchayat is on the south and Ollukara panchayat on the west. Along the three
boundaries on the north, east and south there are mountain ranges. On the north they being called Vaniyampara hills, on the east, Palghat hills and on the south, Murungattukara and Peechi hills. From the centre of the panchayat there is only 10 kilometres to Trichur Town. The National Highway 47 passes through this panchayat. This panchayat forms part of the former Travancore State, and according to the geographical classification, Pananchery falls within the 'mid land of Kerala'.

Intensive survey in Pananchery panchayat was conducted in one sub-division known as 'Thekkumpadam' extending to 162.03 hectares. The surveyed area is situated two kilometres away from Pattikad, the shopping centre of Pananchery panchayat and half a kilometre south of the National Highway. The South-East corner of the surveyed area comes very close to Peechi dam site. A panchayat road connects the surveyed area with the main road, and within the surveyed area cart roads and footpath serves as the means of communication.

Muttil panchayat is almost at the centre of Vythiri Taluk in Wynad district, about 80 kilometres north-east of Calicut on the way to Sultan Battery.
National map of taluks
IN
TRICHUR DISTRICT

LEGEND

-- State boundary
--- District boundary
- Taluk boundary
-.- Panchayat boundary

Surveyed panchayat
Muttil is surrounded by Kaniambetta and Purakadi panchayats in the north, Meenangadi in the east, Muppainad and Kottapadi in the west. Muttil is only 32 kilometres west of Karnataka-Kerala border and is even nearer to Tamil Nadu-Kerala border on the side of Nilgiris district. Muttil falls within 'high land' of Kerala.

In Muttil panchayat, nearly 180 hectares in the south-eastern corner of the panchayat were taken up for the survey. A major portion of the surveyed area is known by the name 'Vazhavatta' and its eastern portion 'Malankara'. A pucca road branching from the Calicut-Mysore road at a locality called 'Kakkavayal' and proceeding to Karapuzha passes through the surveyed area.

**Physical Aspects**

**Thazhava**

With the exception of its eastern portion Thazhava Panchayat is a level land with small patches of paddy fields here and there. Along the south eastern corner of the panchayat there is a lake known as 'Vattakkayal' extending over 85 hectares. Except for
three small streams which practically dry up after
the monsoons, there are no rivers flowing through
the panchayat. Nearly two-thirds of the panchayat
on the western side is covered with sandy loam whereas
the rest of the panchayat has laterite soil. The fer-
tility of the soil is also not high.

Coconut is grown on a large scale in
the western parts where the soil conditions are best
suited for it. Plantains are also cultivated in
Thazhava. Jack, mango, cashew, anjili, punna, othalam
and tamarind grow as isolated trees in every part of
Thazhava. Pepper and tapioca are also cultivated
throughout the panchayat, though on a smaller scale.

Pananchery

Pananchery is rich in natural vegetation
especially on the eastern part which still remains
as reserve forest. The soil and climatic conditions
in the region are considered suitable for teak plan-
tations and the first teak plantations of the former
Cochin state were started here. The forest once had
wild animals like elephants, bison, tigers, monkeys,
wild bear and other such animals of the South Indian
Jungle. With the extension of habitation these animals
have gone into the deeper forests and many have been
destroyed by the cultivators who encroached on the forest area. Still, occasionally few wild pigs appear here and there.

The paddy fields in all parts of the Panchayat are very fertile. Coconut, arecanut, paddy, tapioca, jack, and plantain of different varieties are to be seen in all parts of the panchayat. Among the plantains, banana is most numerous and forms an important cash crop of Pananchery. Lemongrass has been introduced along the borders of the hills by the new settlers. But they are not common now. All types of vegetables, such as bitterguard, bhindi, cucumber, pumpkin, melons, tubers, colocasia and elephant-foot-yam are also cultivated. In several areas, along the fringes of the forest, rubber plantations has been raised. The dry wind which starts blowing by mid-November comes to a close only by the end of January. This dry wind scorches the vegetation and the animal life.

Muttil

The soil of Wynad region in general and Muttil in particular belongs to the red ferruginous series. It is of various shades of red and brown
owing to the presence of iron in the original rocks. It is believed that two centuries ago the natives used to extract gold from the area and there are definite records to show that from 1793 many European companies were registered in London for mining gold from this area. The first results were encouraging and as many as 53 English companies were floated for extensive mining in Wynad. During the boom of 1880 it appears that their shares were quoted even at 100 per cent premium. However, the results of later attempts for extraction of gold were thoroughly disappointing and the project was soon given up.\textsuperscript{10}

Wynad was a wild jungle till the beginning of this century with thick deciduous forest on the one side and rich evergreen forest on the slopes of the western Ghats on the other. Muttil Panchayat contained valuable trees such as teak, rosewood, anjili, venga, venteak, etc. But these forests were partly destroyed by the tribals who carried on shifting cultivation in the slopes and valleys of the mountains. The remaining jungle was cleared by the colonisers from Travancore.

and now there remains only a few representatives of the old species. Rosewood is the most numerous of these old generations that one come across in the area today.

The colonisers introduced mango, pepper, lemongrass, plantain, etc. Pepper and coffee are the most important crops cultivated now. There are small tea plantations in and around Muttil. But orange plantations are no longer seen in this region. Paddy and vegetables like melons and tubers like elephant-foot-yam are cultivated by the colonisers as well as by the tribals.