CHAPTER - I

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Development may be seen as a process of transformation that moves a society closer to conditions in which the basic needs of people are met. The concept and approach to development has gone through many changes. In the earlier period, development was primarily equated with economic growth. This was basically a criteria used by the development planners for the transformation of developing countries in the wake of independence from colonial rule. Development was believed to be achieved through mass production, capital investment and more savings.\(^1\) It was assumed that increased profit or growth would trickle down to the disadvantaged areas, sectors, and masses. But this assumption barely materialized in most developing countries, thereby increasing the gap between countries, regions within a country and also between the rich and the poor people.\(^2\) It was observed that economic growth, even when achieved did not seem to trickle down to the poorest section of the community leading to discontentment and redefinition of the concept of development. Various studies have documented these aspects and delineated three important problems which continue to persist i.e. poverty,

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inequality and unemployment. In some cases, these problems have even got aggravated in developing countries while pursuing economic growth strategy.

Rethinking and discussions on alternative development started taking place among scholars in several countries and also in inter-country conferences and in United Nations specialized agencies like United Nation Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) etc. As a result, the alternative strategy for development now sought to include issues of human development and equitable distribution of the benefits of growth as complementary to economic growth in development. Thus, development today is seen as an integrated process of change involving not only economic and human factors but also equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth. Development now is considered to be a process through which human and material resources are mobilized in order to address the issues of poverty, inequality and unemployment with the ultimate aim to improve the quality of life. Such process is especially significant for the people residing in rural areas which are characterized by poverty, inequality, unemployment etc. In such situation, rural development has become significant.

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Initially, due to the influence of the dominant paradigm of development that emphasized on economic growth, rural development was pursued as a part of the overall economic growth. It was assumed that rural development could be achieved by increasing agricultural output through adopting the technologies of the developed countries.\(^5\) However, this did not seem to address the main problems in rural areas like poverty, unemployment etc. The interdependence between agriculture and rural welfare came to be recognized and subsequently the issues of equitable distribution, accessibility to resources, poverty, unemployment etc. came to be incorporated in rural development.\(^6\)

Thus, the concept of rural development has been shifted from its perception as a process of economic growth to the process of distribution implying issues of equality and accessibility of resources to the rural poor. This paradigm shift seems to have evolved from various strategies or approaches adopted by developing countries in their attempt to develop the rural areas.

The technocratic rural development strategy that was followed by most developing countries in the wake of their independence from colonial rule emphasized on technological modernization, managerial efficiency and growth in gross national product.\(^7\) This approach mainly aims at increasing agricultural output and is based on the assumption that the concentration of income and wealth in certain advantaged areas

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\(^7\) K. Griffin, *ibid.*, p.182; Tom Gabriel, *ibid.*, p. 44.
would lead to capital formation which in turn will trickle down to the rural areas. Despite some success in certain areas like literacy, transportation, communication etc., this strategy has led to the increasing inequitable distribution of income, widening gap between rich and poor, regional inequalities and continuing rural underdevelopment. In other words, this strategy failed to bring about expected trickle-down effect to the poorer sections of rural community.

Against technocratic rural development approach, two major rural development approaches have emerged: the reformist and the radical approach. The reformist approach stresses the need of incorporating equitable distribution into an essentially growth model. It aims at redistributing income and increasing agricultural output. The radical approach emphasizes on equality of opportunities and collective ownership of the means of production. It aims to achieve rapid social change and redistribution of political power and income from the landed rich to the small farmers and the landless that constitute the bulk of the poor and therefore eliminate poverty. As a consequence, equitable distribution of income and poverty eradication came to be incorporated into a more comprehensive rural development strategy known as integrated rural development. Rural development came to be defined as a strategy, designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the

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poorest of the rural poor for their livelihood. In the same vein, Lele also defined rural development as a process of improving the living standard of low-income population residing in the rural areas and making the process of their development more sustaining.

Though the above mentioned definitions give new dimensions to rural development, yet according to Chambers, it reflects only the thinking and power structure of the core. Gender issue like political power equations between men and women in the state or society are completely ignored. Most of the dominant policy suggestions and approaches to rural development are also based on simple assumption that rural development can be brought about by external agencies like Government, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) or other sources. In this sense, development is induced or imposed and also gender biased. It did not only exclude the targeted groups or individuals from development decision making process but also failed to take into account the unbalanced power distribution between men and women in the society. Therefore, an alternative approach has emerged which emphasizes on grassroots level people’s participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development policies and programmes.

People’s participation is the process of involving people in the various stages of development programmes such as decision-making, implementation, evaluation and

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sharing of the benefits.\textsuperscript{15} It is a means to reach the rural poor; an instrument for mobilizing local resources and process of empowering them. It is regarded as an indispensable and reliable means of making the largest possible number of people in the community as masters of their own development.\textsuperscript{16} The ultimate aim of people’s participation is to empower people by providing opportunities of decision-making for their development without gender bias. This approach to rural development incorporates values and issues of quality of life and participation of the poor and women in decision making and development activities.\textsuperscript{17} Accordingly, Chambers averred that rural development is ‘a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of development. This group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless’.\textsuperscript{18} Therefore, processes of change in rural societies are to be set into motion towards the ultimate end of removing poverty in the rural areas. These processes may include increase in agricultural productivity; a change in the distribution of wealth and income, power equations, influence and participation; a change in the mobility of the rural population; a change in welfare indicators; a change in the

\textsuperscript{15} P.Oakley and D.Marsden, \textit{Approaches to Participation in Rural Development}, ILO, Geneva, 1984, p. 29.


\textsuperscript{18} Robert Chambers, \textit{ibid.}, p. 147.
values, beliefs and attitudes of the members of state agencies and the rural population.¹⁹ Processes of change in rural societies are especially significant for developing countries.

Developing countries are predominantly rural in character as about 60 per cent of the total population of the developing countries live in rural areas.²⁰ Due to the disparities in development between urban and rural areas, poverty is found to be more prominent in the rural areas and is manifested in various forms such as diseases, low life expectancy and literacy level etc.²¹ Poverty alleviation therefore becomes all the more important issues in the rural areas of developing countries. Poverty alleviation may be defined as any process which seeks to reduce the level of poverty in a community or amongst a group of people or countries with the ultimate end of completely eradicating poverty. For this, state as a custodian and dispenser of vast resources has a great role to play.

State intervention is considered as one of the most important forces in the processes of change for the rural areas.²² The logic of state intervention in rural development stems out of the need to direct the developmental initiatives towards the

most deserving groups and regions.\textsuperscript{23} As Pranab Bardhan puts it, ‘almost all states in developing countries, successful or otherwise, are interventionists, and the important question is not really about the extent but the quality of such intervention’.\textsuperscript{24} Rural development therefore, requires effective interventionist or developmental state with legitimacy, will and capacity to bring changes in the lives of the rural poor.\textsuperscript{25} Rural development issues thus falls within the purview of state activities involving a complex set of institutions and initiatives that encompass multiple and often contradictory interests.

The role of the state and its institutional machinery and the political elites is of paramount importance in the management of rural development policies and programmes. As it is primarily a state undertaking, governmental institutions have a stake in the process. In most developing countries, it is only government which has the power and the means to create a condition that is favourable for rural development. Although, there is increasing involvement of NGOs in rural development activities in many countries over the years, yet it is seen that government continues to remain the basic instrument for initiating, organising and implementing a host of developmental programmes in the rural areas.\textsuperscript{26} Even international organisations or NGOs which are engaged in rural development, work through government channels. The poor also

increasingly started participating in rural development in varying degrees. At the same time, unified interest groups or pressure groups are also formed to influence rural development programmes. Therefore, the process and progress of rural development largely depends on balancing the diverse and distinctive demands of different interests groups and the capacity of the state both to broker these demands and, where necessary, rise above them.27

The most critical issue in rural development is how resources are to be used and distributed among the contending needs and interests of the individuals and groups for development.28 Hence, ‘development for one social group may be negative development for others’.29 Every human society is characterized by diverse interests, preferences, values and ideas. Any attempt to sustain or achieve such characteristics involves direct or indirect resource utilization, distribution and manner of carrying them out. The processes which determine this whole activity and the site where these activities occur are referred to here as politics. In this study, politics refers to the activities of conflict, co-operation and negotiation involved in the use, distribution and control of resources at the local or State level.30 Accordingly, it is about power, about the force which influence and reflect its distribution and use, and about the effect on resource use and distribution.31

28 Resources here mean anything which individuals or groups can use or deploy to advance their interests - material or ideal. This means just land and capital are resources, as are freedom and opportunity.  
Politics pervades the policy formulation and implementation of rural development programmes. In most developing countries, state’s role in rural problem is made more meaningful by the fact that the country’s leadership uses the state machinery to affect the living conditions of the rural poor.\textsuperscript{32} Policy formulation for rural development has been carried out within the framework of political system at the national level and relies for implementation on the State government and its machinery, local leaders and ultimately on the co-operation of the people.

Implementation involves creation of policy delivery system in which specific means are designed and pursued in the expectation of arriving at particular ends by the state. Broad statement of goals and objectives are translated into action programmes that aim to achieve the end stated in the policy. A variety of programmes may be developed in response to the same policy goals. Study of a specific programme serves as partial measure of the success or failure of overall policy implementation. The process of implementation begins only when general goals and objectives have been specified and action programmes have been designed and funds have been allocated for the pursuit of the goals. A study of the process of implementation therefore necessarily involves investigating and analyzing of a concrete action programme that have been designed as a means of achieving broader policy goals.

Implementation is an area which defies easy and simple solution. It is in this process the conflict of different levels of State institutions becomes especially apparent.

The argument in this study is that implementation is one important aspect in rural development which is especially central to politics. This is because a wide variety of factors can and do frequently intervene between the statement of policy goals and their actual achievement in society. Such factors account for the often imperfect correspondence between policies adopted and services actually delivered. An attempt to explain this divergence i.e. between policies adopted and services actually delivered lead to the realization that implementation, even when successful doesn’t involve a mere translation of goals into routine procedures; it rather involves a complex process of distribution and utilization of resources. In this process, disputes, co-operations and negotiations tend to arise due to difference of interests among individuals, groups and the State agencies, influencing who gets what, when and how, thus bringing politics into it. It is believed that politics is inevitable in the process of implementation of rural development programmes i.e. identification of beneficiaries, approval of projects, funding etc. Thus, a study of the politics of rural development will have to examine issues like the role of State agencies, politicians, the poor themselves and the whole process of conflicts, disputes and negotiation among these players in the process of resource distribution and its utilization.

35 The phrase ‘who gets what, when and how’ is of Harold Lasswell’s and was cited by Merilee S. Grindle, ibid., p.3.
1.1. An overview of rural development and poverty alleviation programmes in India

In India, an overwhelming majority of its population i.e. 75 per cent lives in rural areas. The rural areas are characterized by conditions of malnutrition, ill-health, unsanitary conditions, illiteracy etc. which are manifestations of poverty. Attempts at creating employment opportunities, providing for better health, education and social services in order to alleviate poverty have occupied a permanent place in the public policy agenda of the Government of India (GOI). Therefore, government led rural development was recognized to be an immediate necessity by the political leaders and intellectuals of all shades soon after the dawn of India’s independence.\textsuperscript{36} A very significant step undertaken by the GOI in this regard is the process of planned development started from the beginning of the fifties.

Planning for rural development in India through various Five Year Plans was started in the 50’s focussing on a growth oriented strategy. Some of the programmes for achieving this goal were Community Development Programme (CDP), National Extension Services (NES), Integrated Agricultural District Programme (IADP), High Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP) etc. These programmes were taken up to indirectly mitigate poverty and develop the rural areas of India. The benefits from these programmes were expected to transmit widely throughout the society, including the lowest layer. Although a few five year plans at the beginning saw sustained high rate of growth, however, economic growth as the principal means to alleviate unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition and other manifestations of rural poverty did not bring the desired

According to estimates by the Planning Commission of India, after the first decade of planning, 50 to 60 percent of the rural population (approximately 211 million) people could not afford minimum level of consumption, calculated primarily in terms of calorie intake necessary to avoid the onset of malnutrition. The development experience of about fifteen years (1951-1967) brought in to serious doubt about the assumption of the planners that strategies of growth and productivity will suffice in resolving the problems of rural poverty. Instead, tensions and violence arose in some parts of rural areas. The problems that policies unconnected with distributive justice could generate began to be realized.

A search for reorienting development strategy towards more equitable growth gained attention in the late sixties and early seventies. The All India Credit Review Committee said that orderly and peaceful change in the rural economy will be upset and efforts to step up agricultural production will also be frustrated if the fruits of development is continued to be denied to large sections of the rural community. The World Bank (WB), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other leading organizations as well as academician, especially in the developing countries also came to questions the approach to rural development. They began to draw attention to the growing rural poverty. Further, they also advocate the need of redirecting development policy through increasing investment and capital formation among poorer sections,

40 Kuldeep Mathur, ibid., p. 182.
creation of employment opportunities and satisfaction of basic needs.\textsuperscript{41} This had strong impact on the strategies adopted to alleviate rural poverty in India from 1970 onward.

Also, this new perspective found wide acceptance because of the favorable political climate that prevailed in the country during the late 1960s. There was food shortage due to drought and low productivity. Kuldeep Mathur opined that the existing strength of the agriculturist in the Lok Sabha also contributed to the wide acceptance of poverty alleviation programmes. At the time of the fourth (1969-1974) and fifth (1974-79) five year plans when formalization for direct intervention to alleviate poverty took place, the Lok Sabha had around one-third of its members from agricultural occupation.\textsuperscript{42} They began making demands in the Centre for a greater role in matters which directly affects them. Since they based their power on land, they knew that land reform would mean a reduction in the power they wield. Accordingly, they tried to consolidate their vote banks by consolidating the power of the land owning class through opposing any effort to implement land reform on the one hand and welcoming special scheme to alleviate poverty on the other. This situation has been described as the fundamental paradox of India’s political economy i.e. commitment to radical change and yet an equal determination to avoid direct attack on the existing structure.\textsuperscript{43} It may be noted here that poverty alleviation scheme could also play political dividends for many political leaders whose constituencies were that of the rural poor, Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes.

\textsuperscript{41} A. Vaidyanathan, \textit{India’s Economic Reform and Development}, Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2003, p. 215.
The seriousness on poverty alleviation therefore becomes apparently more visible during the seventies. The slogan of ‘garibi hatao’, meaning ‘remove poverty’ also begun to gain a popular currency in the seventies. Thus, the late 60s and 70s set the stage for the direct onslaught on poverty through poverty alleviation programmes. Poverty alleviation programmes have been broadly classified into four groups:

i) Food security programmes

ii) Social security programmes

iii) Wage employment programmes

iv) Self-employment programmes

Food security programmes: - The main aim of food security programmes is to meet the basic needs of access to food by the rural poor. Under this programmes, the States are to identify households living below poverty line and provide them food grains at highly subsidized price through Public Distribution System (PDS) and Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

Social security programmes: - These programmes are meant for those who are at the bottom of BPL facing destitution and desertion. Under these programmes, National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), Annapurna, National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) are being taken up.

Wage employment programmes: - The main purpose of wage employment programmes is to provide a livelihood during the lean agricultural season as well as during drought and floods. Under these programmes, villagers worked to improve the village infrastructure such as constructing village schools, improving the rural roads etc. Some of the schemes under wage employment programmes are National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programmes (RLEGP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Food for Work Programme, Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Self-employment programmes: - Self-employment programmes aims to increase the source of income for small farmers and landless laborers. It was started from the late 70s in the rural areas of India with the name of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). Subsequently, Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) were introduced as sub-programmes of IRDP to take care of the specific needs of the rural population. A single agency, named District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) was also created to implement the centrally sponsored poverty alleviation programmes when IRDP was introduced.
After one and half decades into IRDP, different studies had pointed out limitations in the programme and its implementation such as faulty selection process of beneficiaries, lack of infrastructural support, weak and uncoordinated delivery systems, lack of bank credit etc.\textsuperscript{46} The sub-schemes were found to be implemented as ‘stand alone programmes’, an approach which considerably detracted from their effectiveness.\textsuperscript{47} The mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan had also indicated that poverty alleviation programmes presented a matrix of multiple programmes without desired linkages.\textsuperscript{48} Therefore, all these led to the constitution of S.R Hasim committee by the Planning Commission in 1997 to review self-employment programmes. This committee recommended the merger of all self-employment programmes for the poor and also a shift from individual to a group based approach. Therefore, on the basis of S.R Hasim committee’s recommendation, IRDP was merged with DWCRA, TRYSEM and a host of other programmes. It was restructured and renamed as Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) in April 1999.

The thrust of SGSY programme is on the generation of employment by establishing micro enterprises in the rural areas through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Its objective is to bring assisted families above the poverty line in three years; this means


that the assisted family earns a monthly income of Rs. 2000 in three years from income-
generating assets provided through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy.\textsuperscript{49} A
number of government agencies such as Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Line
Departments and District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) as well as Bank and
NGOs are expected to be involved in the various process of implementation such as
identification of beneficiaries and key activities, funding, monitoring etc. Therefore, the
SGSY programme is perceived as a scheme for greater equality and justice and a more
realistic measure for the upliftment of the rural poor.

Inspite of the existence of various poverty alleviation programmes, poverty in the
rural areas still pose a challenge in India. It may be mentioned here that though India
advocates one of the biggest democratic plan in the world, she still has the largest number
of poor and illiterate in a single country. As per the recent estimates by the World Bank
on global poverty, 456 million people (about 42 \% of the population) in India live below
the poverty line.\textsuperscript{50} This overwhelming persistence of poverty in India is a question which
eluded a concise answer for many years. Thus, poverty continues to be a very significant
problem needing urgent attention in India.

\textsuperscript{49} Ministry of Rural Development, \textit{Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana – Guidelines}, Govt. of India,
New Delhi, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{50} The Times of India, dated August 27, 2008, reported that according to the World Bank’s latest estimates
on global poverty based on international poverty line of $1.25 per day, India is home to roughly one-third
of all poor people in the world.
1.2. Statement of the problem

Manipur has 76.12 per cent of its people living in rural areas.\textsuperscript{51} Like the rest of the North-Eastern States, Manipur is also economically backward. Important reasons for economic backwardness that have been cited are rain fed agrarian economy (about 88% of the net cropped area depends on rainfall), difficult hilly terrain, lack of infrastructural development and inability to utilize the infrastructure built for economic development, lack of exploration of natural resources of the State, inadequate opportunities for self-employment and faulty implementation of development programmes.\textsuperscript{52} Although about 90 per cent of the State budget has been met by the Central government, there has hardly been any economic or industrial development in Manipur.\textsuperscript{53} The situation by 2004 had hardly improved and the State has been facing many problems in terms of wide disparity in the level of development, inter-district disparity and high rate of unemployment. Government record shows that the number of household living below poverty line has also increased from 39.3 per cent in 2004-05 to 47.4 per cent in 2009-2010 in the rural areas of Manipur.\textsuperscript{54}

To address the problems of rural areas and its poverty in Manipur, various rural development and poverty alleviation programmes have been introduced. Manipur’s march with rural development programmes began with the opening of Thoubal

\textsuperscript{53} Phanjoubam Tarapot, Bleeding Manipur, Har Anand Publication, New Delhi, 2003, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{54} Planning Commission of India, Press note on Poverty Estimates, 2009-2010, Govt.of India, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 6-7.
community development block in the year 1952-53 when CDP was introduced for the first time in 55 selected blocks in India. Under this programme, several other community development blocks were created in Manipur. Apart from creation of new blocks, various works relating to infrastructure for the newly created blocks such as construction of block office buildings and quarters as well as purchasing of vehicles, typewriters, duplicating machines were taken up.\(^55\) Creation of community assets for new blocks was also an important task taken up under CDP. Some of the work done for this purpose were construction of terrace field, irrigation channel, school buildings, poultry and piggery; supplying of various agricultural tools, industrial implements and sports goods to the people residing in block areas; improving facilities for drinking water.

Poverty alleviation programmes such as NREP, RLEG, JRY, IRDP, TRYSEM, DWCRA etc. were also implemented in the late seventies and eighties. The progress of implementation of NREP, RLEG and JRY was slow due to underutilization of funds, lack of infrastructure facilities, non-availability of inputs, lack of credit facilities, need for strengthening of block level structure, lack of people’s participation and co-ordination among the different departments who were responsible for its implementation.\(^56\) Under IRDP and its sub-schemes i.e. TRYSEM and DWCRA, works relating to irrigation, agriculture, animal husbandry, carpentry, shoe making, weaving etc. were taken up.\(^57\) Various studies on the implementation of IRDP and its sub-schemes revealed that the


\(^{57}\) Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, *ibid.*, p. 43.
whole process of implementation was beset with various problems.\textsuperscript{58} According to these studies, the main problems in the implementation of this programme were lack of credit facilities due to security problems, difficult hilly terrain, non-availability of inputs and lack of people’s participation. At present, centrally sponsored scheme for poverty alleviation in rural areas such as IAY, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Integrated wasteland Development Programme (Hariyali), SGRY, SGSY, MGNREGA etc. are being implemented by the DRDA from time to time.\textsuperscript{59} Poverty alleviation programmes therefore, continued to receive the much needed emphasis of the State government during the Tenth Five Year Plan period.

Within Manipur, the hill districts (Churachandpur, Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong and Chandel) are considered to be lagging behind the valley districts (Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal and Bishnupur) in aggregate levels of development (in industry, agriculture, economic infrastructure, transport and communications and in social services sector etc.).\textsuperscript{60} People in the hill areas have been facing a number of basic problems. Policy planners, academicians and social leaders have also identified the problem of development among the tribals. Some of them are absence or minimal presence of infrastructure and communication system like good roads, transport, postal service and

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mass media; uncertain land ownership system; unproductivity of tribal agriculture; lack of good educational facilities, power supply and marketing facilities; absence or minimal presence of social services like medical and health, water supply and housing; absence of well organized bodies for people’s participation in the developmental programmes.\textsuperscript{61} Dissatisfaction is also reflected in complex political agitations including insurgencies organized by different ethno-political groups. Further, poverty is considered to be much higher in the hill districts as compared to the valley districts. The aggregate poverty level of the five hill districts is 53.2 per cent whereas in the four valley districts, it is 40.93 per cent.\textsuperscript{62} Government statistics shows that about 46 per cent of households in Churachandpur district continued to live below the poverty line as on 2007.\textsuperscript{63} Thus, poverty alleviation in the hill areas of Manipur including Churachandpur district continues to be a very significant problem needing urgent attention.

Churachandpur district with population of 2, 28,707 is inhabited mostly by the Scheduled Tribes, consisting of Kuki-Chin-Mizo groups like the Paite, Hmars, Kukis, Zous, Vaipheis, Simtes, Gangtes, Lushais, Kom etc. Of these, the Paite and Hmars are the majority tribes. The population of Churachandpur district consists of about 9.6 per cent of the total population of Manipur. Distributions of population according to sub-divisions are shown in table 1.1.


\textsuperscript{63} \textit{List of voters and BPL according to households in Manipur}, Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka road, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 4-8.
Table 1.1. Sub-division wise population in Churachandpur district according to 2001 census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-divisions</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>66,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henglep</td>
<td>13,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singngat</td>
<td>9,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanlon</td>
<td>11,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipaimukh</td>
<td>13,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,14,74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Further, there are 546 villages according to 2001 census in Churachandpur District. For the purpose of administration, Churachandpur district at present is divided into five sub-divisions i.e. Churachandpur, Henglep, Tipaimukh, Thanlon and Singhat and are headed by one Sub-Divisional Officer each. Every sub-division, except for Churachandpur sub-division has one block. Churachandpur sub-division has four Blocks viz. Lamka, Samulamlan, Tuibuong and Saikot blocks. Churachandpur sub-division has the highest number of villages i.e. 284 and Tipaimukh sub-division has the least number of villages i.e. 55 villages. Churachandpur district was classified as a rural area based on demographic criteria according to 2001 census.

The main occupation of the tribals living in Churachandpur district is jhuming or shifting cultivation. About 85 per cent of the total population in Churachandpur district depends on shifting cultivation for their livelihood. This practice is old and primitive and also wholly manual and labor intensive. There has been no modernization in the method of cultivation. About 98 percent of the tribal villages in the hill areas of Manipur who practiced shifting cultivation reported that the government has not taken any steps to
introduce settled cultivation.\textsuperscript{64} Tribal agricultural practice in Churachandpur district totally depends on monsoon and there is no substitute once the crops fail. There has not been any major step to tackle such eventuality. Further, this type of cultivation already reached a critical stage. In earlier times, the land was sufficient for the villagers. Every household could cultivate any size of land and the yield was enough for them. But with rapid population growth, the situation has changed. Demand for land has increased and multiplied. There is scarcity of cultivable land in almost every village. Fertility of the land as well as its produce has decreased over the years, failing to sustain the rural population. There is also absence of viable alternative to shifting cultivation.

In terms of village administration, the tribal villagers in Churachandpur district have been responsible for their own administration for a long time. Each village is an autonomous unit even after the British conquest of Manipur in 1891.\textsuperscript{65} Their entire polity was woven around the Chiefs or Headman of the villages who were assisted by council of elders. Disputes were settled by them and their decisions were honored by the villagers. The Chiefs and his council of elders acted as judges, law makers as well as chief agencies for village administration.\textsuperscript{66} It may be mentioned here that the British and their missionaries were most probably the first to try and grapple the problems of administration among the tribals in Churachandpur district. The British missionaries entered Senvon village in 1910 which is located in the southern part of the district from

\textsuperscript{64} Department of Statistics, “A Note on Some Important Characteristics of Villages in Tribal Areas”, \textit{Sarvekshana}, Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation, Government of India, Volume XVIII, No. 1, p. 41.

\textsuperscript{65} Gangmumei Kamei, ‘Problems of Development in the Tribal Areas of Manipur,’ in M. Horam (ed.), \textit{The Rising Manipur (including other North-Eastern States)}, Manas Publication, Jaipur, 2000, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{66} M Horam, ‘Problems and Prospects of Development in the Hills of Manipur’ in M. Horam (ed.), \textit{ibid.}, p. 76.
Mizoram and started to evangelize the tribal inhabitants of Churachandpur district. The British missionaries also introduced education to the tribals and initiated all kinds of work for the betterment of their socio-economic and cultural life at the same time. The process of modernization, which was started by the British with the advent of Christianity and western education followed by massive developmental programmes by the government, is a continuing phenomenon in Churachandpur district.

Several programmes including SGSY have been introduced in Churachandpur district to address the issue of rural development and poverty alleviation. Most of these programmes fall under Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). The State government participates in such development activities by implementing it through various officials. Although there are many records of achievement of the rural development programmes in Manipur, there are also various allegations against the officials who are responsible for the implementation of rural development programmes colluding with politicians in emptying the state resources for their personal interest. At the same time, the implementing agencies also alleged that they are always under heavy pressure from various quarters, for which they are unable to implement the programmes effectively without fear or favour. It has also been claimed that the benefits of rural development and poverty alleviation programmes thus far have been appropriated by the privileged few who have a close proximity with the political leaders and the implementing officials,

68 Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment Programme (TRYSEM), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGSY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).
thus sidelining many of the poor masses. Developmental activity is said to have remained the prerogative of a privileged few both in the hills and valleys. Therefore, in this study the role of various implementing agencies, politicians, the response of villagers (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) as well as the politics involved in the implementation of Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) programme and how the conflict, co-operation and negotiation among the various players was responsible for the success or failure of the programme in Churachandpur district of Manipur has been examined.

1.3. Review of Literature

Attempt to study the concept of politics of rural development and poverty alleviation in general has been carried out by various scholars like Adrian Leftwitch, Shakoori Ali, David Lea and D.P Chaudhri, Merilee S. Grindle, and Gusztav Nemez. They mainly show that development issues especially in the rural areas and its poor inhabitants falls within the purview of the state involving a complex set of institutions and initiatives that encompass multiple and often contradictory interests.

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In the context of India, politics of rural development and poverty alleviation have been studied by various scholars. James Warner Bjorkman\textsuperscript{76} and Kuldeep Mathur\textsuperscript{77} argue that the explanation as to why the proportion of people living below poverty line in India has not declined substantially must be sought in the political and administrative environment in which the poverty alleviation programmes are formulated and implemented. Development programmes are best served by an objective combination of competent civil servants and active political leaders. Walter C. Neale\textsuperscript{78} argues that progress in rural India has created a new class in the countryside which is an effect of development and the cause of rural politics is in turn changing the direction of rural development programmes. Atul Kohli\textsuperscript{79} argues that there are regional differences in the performance of distributive policies like anti-poverty programmes due to varying regime characteristics in the States. Leadership, ideology and organizations influence the way policies programmes are implemented. He suggests that highly organized ideological parties are capable of facilitating reforms of distributive nature. John Echeverri Gent\textsuperscript{80} maintains that it is futile to insulate the implementation of development policies from politics. He states that politics does not inevitably render policy implementation ineffective rather it is feasible to shape the politics of development in subtle ways that create pressures on administrators to implement development policy more effectively.

C.N Ray also analyzes the role of local level institutions in mobilizing the rural poor for development and change through implementation of anti-poverty programme i.e. IRDP in West Bengal and Gujarat in comparative perspectives. The implementation situation in West Bengal is much better as compared to Gujarat in terms of people’s participation from Panchayats, political party units and beneficiaries. Further, in West Bengal, Panchayats and political party units are actively engaged in beneficiary selection, determining the type of benefits and other IRDP related activities whereas in Gujarat, there are no such active organizations and the beneficiaries themselves contact officials to get IRDP benefits and as such participating at different stages of implementation becomes a difficult task.

Further, rural development and poverty alleviation programmes and their implementation have been studied from different perspectives by various scholars. Scholars like M.L Narasaiah and Raju D.Raju, Sukhdev Singh, A.K Chaubey, Rao et al., Rao, Kurien, Jain et al., Subbarao and organizations like Programme

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Evaluation Organisation (PEO), National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) and Institute of Financial Management and Research (IFMR) studied IRDP and its allied activities like TRYSEM, DWCRA etc. There are both positive and negative conclusions about IRDP in these studies. Quantum of assistance, technical advice imparted, supports and services from staffs, improved conditions of beneficiaries were found to be inadequate by several beneficiaries. The negative aspect states that the programme has not been yielding the desired result. Studies by scholars like Desai, Balister, Kaur et al. and Manrai have also revealed that identification of beneficiaries is faulty due to political interferences, lack of will, lukewarm attitude of staff etc. The works of Dhillon and Sandhu, Lal, Ray and Rao also shows that the shortage of staffs with the DRDA, lack of special training, frequent transfer of officials especially project officers hampered the effective implementation of IRDP. Malyadri,

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Guhan,\textsuperscript{102} and Judge\textsuperscript{103} also show that corruption is deep rooted in the system and that the poor are not able to receive their rights without paying illegal gratification. Jose,\textsuperscript{104} Singh and Deb\textsuperscript{105} and Golahit’s\textsuperscript{106} studies on people’s participation perspectives in IRDP indicates that involvement of the real rural poor in the programme is minimal and well-off sections among the lower strata manage to take the benefits of rural development programmes. To address these limitations, a restructured programme known as SGSY came up in April 1999 by merging IRDP and its allied programmes such as DWCRA, TRYSEM and a host of other programmes.

With regard to SGSY programme, a number of studies have been conducted. Katar Singh,\textsuperscript{107} N.C. Saxena\textsuperscript{108} and Y. Gangi Reddy\textsuperscript{109} have attempted to identify major factors responsible for the underperformances of SGSY programme in general. Major factors identified are weakness in the delivery system, failure of credit to reach the poor, lack of public intervention to promote beneficiaries who can be credit worthy, overcrowding of lending in certain projects like dairy, weaving etc., poor targeting, rising

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{104} C. Dhingra, \textit{Rural Economics}, S. Chand and Co., New Delhi, 1986.
\end{footnotesize}
indebtedness and poor access to markets. H.S. Shylendra and Kishore Bhirdikar\textsuperscript{110} also argued that SGSY is implemented in a very deterministic and top down manner, ignoring the participatory approach that was envisaged in the programme guidelines. In the whole process of implementation starting from identification of participants to supporting them in developing a sustainable micro-enterprise, SGSY is beset with problems like faulty selection, improper identification of viable schemes, sidelining of capacity building and above all lack of integration among different agencies involved in implementation of the scheme. The paper concludes that ‘good governance’ for poverty alleviation programmes seems to be more of rhetoric than a reality. Nikita Sud\textsuperscript{111} highlights that what is mentioned in the guidelines of SGSY and the actual process of implementation on the ground are two different stories in Gujarat. This study also pointed out that under political pressure to form as many SHGs possible, village level policy functionaries and their administrative bosses in blocks and districts fail to bring process oriented policy practice. This ultimately results in village level workers adopting a target-oriented approach, completely ignoring the participatory process oriented approach as proposed in the SGSY design. Beneficiaries under SGSY are treated as mere targets and their opinions ignored because they are considered ‘blank pieces of paper’ by the state apparatus. Sanjeev K. Mahajan and Vinod Kumar\textsuperscript{112} show that SGSY programme was not performing well in Himachal Pradesh. In four years of implementation only 12.26 per


cent of BPL families have been covered and the available funds have not been fully utilized in the state. Only 50 per cent of SHGs were functioning as per the guidelines. The beneficiaries also faced difficulties in getting financial assistance under SGSY programme.

Although a number of studies on SGSY have been done, none of them have covered Manipur and for that matter the hill areas including Churachandpur district. However there have been a few studies on other rural development programmes in Manipur from scholars like Janatun Begum,\textsuperscript{113} Ksh. Malemleima Devi,\textsuperscript{114} H. Ibemchoubi Devi,\textsuperscript{115} Kh. Ibotombi Singh\textsuperscript{116} and B.K Roy Burman. Janatun Begum studied the problems of poverty and poverty alleviation programmes in the valley districts. She highlighted the profile of poverty and the impact of the poverty alleviation programmes at grassroot levels and made recommendation on the strategy for the removal of poverty in the State. Ksh. Malemleima Devi focused on the nature of rural development in Imphal East District. She highlighted the problems of implementation in the identification of beneficiaries and lack of infrastructure facilities which delay the implementation. H. Ibemchoubi Devi focused on the economic impact of IRDP to the beneficiaries and showed that though the programme was a success to a certain extent, there were instances of wrong identification of the beneficiaries at the village level. B.K Roy Burman

discusses the perspective in the 6th plan about Poverty Alleviation Programme, its implementation and performance in Manipur. He concludes that the masses in Manipur are not very enthusiastic as compared to their Nagaland counterpart.

The review of literature shows that there has not been much studies on poverty alleviation programmes in the hill areas of Manipur in general and Churachandpur district in particular. Even in the few studies taken up on Manipur as a whole, the role of the various State agencies involved in the implementation of rural development programmes do not find due emphasis. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this gap with the following objectives.

1.4. Objectives

i) To examine the working of the Self-Help Groups and to assess the extent to which the objectives of SGSY programme have been met or not.

ii) To examine the role of Village Authorities, Line departments, DRDA, Bank and NGOs in the implementation of SGSY programme.

iii) To make a comparative study of All Women SHGs (AWS) and Mixed SHGs (MS) in order to find out which group performs better on the various activities associated with SGSY programme and the reasons thereof.

iv) To examine whether development programmes like the SGSY is able to benefit the poor or not and the reasons thereof.
1.5. Methodology

Data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary data was collected through interview schedule from beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries and implementing agencies. Data collected from the beneficiaries used in this study pertained to 20 SHGs - 10 AWS and 10 MS who were drawn through stratified random sampling from SHGs formed during 2002-2004 as shown in table 1.2. The performance of the 20 SHGs from the inception of SGSY programme in Churachandpur district till 2008 was examined in this study. This period was chosen to examine whether the assisted families (beneficiaries) earned a monthly income of Rs. 2000 in three years from income-generating assets provided through bank credit and government subsidy as per the programme’s objective.

Table 1.2. Stages of stratified sampling

Stratified random sampling involves various stages. In the first stage, the total population of SHGs (208) was divided into two groups - AWS (113 SHGs, approx. 54%) and MS (95 SHGs, approx. 46%). From these two groups, 10 SHGs each was drawn
through simple random sampling and data was collected from 162 beneficiaries belonging to 20 SHGs. The purpose of dividing SHGs on the basis of gender composition i.e. AWS and MS is to comparatively study and examine which group performs better on the various activities associated with SGSY programme and the reasons thereof. The descriptive statistics of the sample SHGs is shown in table 1.3

**Table 1.3. Descriptive statistics of SHGs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Name of SHGs</th>
<th>Types of SHGs</th>
<th>No. of total members</th>
<th>No. of sample</th>
<th>Year of formation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Deborah SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Debra Jehovah Jire SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hintuilawm SHG</td>
<td>All women</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Naomi SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ngailut Sumlom SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NCM Teresa SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rengkai Women Development SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Saidan Women SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Saikot Women Development SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tabitha SHG</td>
<td>All Women</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Good Samaritan SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Khuga Meitei Christian Leikai SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Laizon SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lenchonghoi SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>NCM Nazarene SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Zomi Colony SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dumsau SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bright Golden Society SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Khuga Tampak SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Vengthlang SHG</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>243</strong></td>
<td><strong>162</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second group of respondents consisted of non-beneficiaries falling in the area of the identified 20 SHGs drawn through simple random sampling. Through this data, the politics of exclusion in the implementation of SGSY programme has been examined.
The third group of sample was drawn through purposive sampling from officials responsible for the implementation of SGSY programme. Table 1.4 shows the descriptive statistics of sample implementing agencies.

**Table 1.4. Descriptive statistics of implementing agencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no</th>
<th>Name of implementing Agencies</th>
<th>Designation and number of respondents from each implementing agencies</th>
<th>Total no. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Village authorities</td>
<td>Name of village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>i) Dorcas Veng</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Dumsau,</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Khawmawi</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>iv) Rengkai,</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v) Saidan,</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vi) Tuibuong</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vii) Saikot</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>viii) Tuinom</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total no.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>Field Officer of State Bank of India(SBI) -1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Line departments</td>
<td>District Industry Center (DIC) -1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District Agriculture Department -1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Veterinary Department – 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horticulture Department -1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>District Rural Development Agency</td>
<td>Assistant Project Officer -1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-Government Organizations (NGO)</td>
<td>Rural Women Upliftment Society (RWUS) -1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don Bosco Social Service (DSS) -1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total no.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This group includes Assistant Project Officer of DRDA, one official each from four line departments (Agriculture, District Industry Centre, Horticulture and Veterinary departments) who are specifically entrusted for the implementation of SGSY programme by their own department, Field Officer of SBI, members of VAs belonging to eight
villages falling in the area of identified SHGs. Data was collected from this group through interview schedule.

Primary data was also collected from financial management registers related to savings and repayment of members of SHGs as well as attendance registers of members, minutes of meetings and rules of conduct of SHGs. Primary data was also collected from reports and documents of DRDA (Churachandpur), SBI (Churachandpur branch), District Census Office (Churachandpur), Directorate of Economic and Statistics (Manipur), Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (Manipur), Planning Commission of India and Ministry of Rural Development (New Delhi).

Secondary data was collected from Journals, Books and Newspapers. The data collected from both primary and secondary sources formed the basis of analysis of the study. Data collected were quantified using simple statistical methods like percentage and average and interpreted in qualitative terms.

The findings based on this analysis are presented in the remaining chapters. Chapter II examines SGSY programme and assess the extent to which the objectives of the SGSY programme have been met and also the level of people’s participation through SHGs. The role of implementing agencies in the implementation of SGSY programme is examined in chapter III. The difference in the performance of the two types of SHGs i.e. AWS and MS found in Churachandpur district on the various activities and characteristics associated with SGSY programme is presented in chapter IV. Chapter V
discusses the politics involved in the implementation of SGSY programme in order to assess who benefits and who does not benefit from SGSY programme and why. A summary of the study is presented in chapter VI.