MAP OF MADHYA PRADESH SHOWING THE OUTLINE OF FOUR DISTRICTS UNDER STUDY.

INDEX

- JABALPUR
- SAGAR
- DAMOAH
- NARSIMH PUR

SCALE: 1 CM = 60 KM.
Impact of Community Development Programme
on the Rural Economy of
NORTHERN MAHAKOSHAL (M. P.)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION.

Importance of the Problem:

The Community Development Programme which was started on October 2, 1952 now covers the entire rural India. The programme was meant to remedy many of the ills prevailing in the rural society. It seeks to infuse the spirit of self-reliance in the rural people and help them better their lot with their own efforts and resources as far as possible with the assistance of the Government. The 70 per cent of our population engaged in agriculture and in other rural pursuits are, comparatively speaking, so poverty stricken, so much in need of better nutrition, of better housing, health and sanitation, education and collective organisation that any programme designed to meet these needs is likely to be called "Community Development."

The basic objective of Community Development Programme has been to develop the village people to become 'self-reliant' capable of and willing to participate effectively and with knowledge and understanding in the building of the new nation. With the passage of time the programme became more dynamic and horizons have widened appreciably. From the very beginning agriculture has been given more importance in the programme though other aspects have not been ignored. It is the greatest contribution of the programme that it has given birth to Panchayat Raj in the country. It was the report of Shri Balwant Rai Mehta, an eminent architect
of Panchayat Raj, Committee which laid the foundation for a countrywide network of self-governing institutions through which our cherished ideals of secular democracy could infuse the life of every citizen. Today Panchayat Raj stands implemented in all but three states.

The Programme has faced various criticism since its inception. It is said that subsequent to the ushering in of the scheme of Panchayat Raj, it was designed to be a people's programme with the Government assistance but unfortunately it has not yet become a people's programme and the programme in stead of making the people self reliant, has made them increasingly dependent on official assistance. Some critics argue that the very purpose of the programme has been defeated and it has failed to serve any useful purpose and the money spent on it is a mere waste. The charge is also sometimes levelled against the programme that despite a decade and a half of operation its lofty ideals to bring about revolutionary changes in the socio-economic structure, political and institutions and leadership, in human nature or personality to the extent it was shaped by values, attitudes and ideas in rural areas of India in a peaceful manner, remain unmaterialised. It has neither been able to take the people in its stride, nor has it been able to rouse the passion of beneficiaries to the pitch needed to hasten the process of rural development. Some even go to extent of crying a halt to the programme after its 15 years of implementation. Many critics have indulged themselves in the wholesale condemnation of the programme without knowing its philosophy and content. Naturally this surface touch approach of the critics against the programme which is gaining
ground day by day demands rethinking about the strategy and practices followed in Community Development and rural Extension work. The present work is step in this direction.

In view of the above criticism levelled against the programme it becomes quite important to see whether the programme is merely a wasteful agency or it has really made any impact on the rural areas and has given the people a new hope and new vision of the future. Has the programme created an awareness among the people and contributed towards increasing agricultural production? Has there been any change in the mental outlook of millions of our villagers? Have the villagers benefitted in the field of Social services and have social backwardness and caste restrictions among people disappeared or not? These are some of the vital questions which need a careful study and deep rethinking.

The present study attempts to answer the questions posed above. Without the scientific and factual study of Community Development, a new thinking of the approach and new policy of the programme is not possible. Various studies made during the past several years have indicated many important and hopeful suggestions which have given new dimensions to the programme. The criticism of the programme may give an idea that no favourable impact has been created on the rural economy but while measuring the impact many considerations are to be kept in mind. When viewed against the back drop of tremendous odds inherent in the socio-economic life of village India and lack of experience of our planners and executives concerned, one need not despair. On the contrary, changes already evident in the field, especially in the economic field angurs well for the future. There is not denying the fact that many handicaps
have hampered the progress of the programme. The village community in India has to be properly understood before any programme for community development can be thought of. The village community in India has been facing many ills: economic inequality, poverty, caste restrictions, lack of education and gross disparity among people. Therefore quite modest approach has to be adopted in measuring the impact of the programme. All these considerations have been borne in mind while studying the impact.

The study of the impact of the programme becomes all the more essential in the present context of changing policies under the programme and revitalisation of community development agency and Panchayat Raj institutions suiting to the needs for attainment of self sustaining economic growth and self sufficiency in food. Some points also need deep considerations. The view is expressed that the programme has been robbed of its basic purpose of changing the outlook and the life of rural people while others state that the programme has been drifting from its main objective so rapidly that now, in practice, the programme has become merely a programme for providing certain amenities to the village people. The most recent criticism against the programme is that it has failed to increase agricultural output hence all the efforts under the programme must be diverted towards agriculture. But it must be realised that the aim of the programme is not only to develop agriculture or education or health or communication but all of them together and in appropriate measures. The ultimate aim lies in the total development of human materials. It is not a compartmental development but a sum total and integrated development of the rural
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people. To this extent all programmes are interlinked. While we think of community development, we have to look to the various needs of the community. To say that the programme has failed to register the desired progress in the agriculture sector and now be completely merged with agricultural departments will be a retrograde step not even congenial to the development of agriculture and far less to that of community which is ultimate goal. It is the aim of the present study to measure the impact of the programme on economic and social advance of the rural economy of the area under study and to see how far the programme has been successful in shaping the approach to rural development - an integrated total approach based on local initiative and community actions and working through people's representative institutions.

In the field of Community Development many surveys have been conducted by both officials and non-officials to evaluate the working of the programme and there is quite rich literature in the subject. The most important contribution in this field has been that of Programme Evaluation Organisation, an independent organisation. The Balvant Rai Mehta Committe Report has added new dimension to the programme by suggesting the introduction Panchayat Raj in the country. Shri S.K. dey and B.Hukerjee, an eminent experts of India on the subject of Community Development have given thoughtful suggestions in this field through their publications. In addition to this the U.N. Evaluation Mission, Dr. Carl C. Taylor, Dr. Douglas Ensminger, The Govind Sahay Committee in U.P. and Nandlal Joshi report in Madhya Pradesh and other organisations have enriched the literature of Community Development Programme by giving valuable
suggestions and recommendations. These all reports have been described in details in the chapter of evaluation of the working of the community development programme. In addition to this there have also been conducted researches in the field of the programme in the different regions by the universities.

The present study is also an attempt in this direction. But it is different from other studies in the sense that it is not simply the description of the working of the programme as such but measuring the impact of it on the different aspects of the rural economy. The programme was launched before 15 years in this country with an earnest desire of improving the villages on all fronts. Now it is quite necessary to see what has been the impact of this programme which has received top priority in our Five Year Plans. It is with this view that the present study becomes of more importance as it has been the main purpose of the survey to measure the impact of the programme, avoiding simply the working of the programme.

One more point adds to the importance of the present study. In M.P. the abolition of the post of Block Development Officers from January 1966 has created a new problem in administration of the programme and a considerable discussion on the role of B.D.O. The study includes the administrative problems and serious thought has been given to the reactions of the Block-officials on the withdrawal of the post. This gives new thinking to the present position of the programme in the State.

Scope of the Study:

The present study covers the northern part of
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Mahakoshal in Madhya Pradesh. Under the region northern Mahakoshal four districts namely Jabalpur, Sagar, Damoh and Narsimhapur are included. Though a small part of Hoshangabad district also comes under the region, it has not been included in the survey keeping in view the vastness of the programme.

The study does not simply theorise the principle and philosophy of community development programme though a small part has been devoted to it. The main emphasis has been given to the measuring of impact of the various activities of the programme on the rural economy of the area under study. The villages have been selected as the main units of survey and for this purpose 12 Blocks have been selected out of 37 blocks in all the four districts. Only such blocks have been taken under study as were in stage II or post stage II where intensive activities have been carried on under the programme and impact could be visible in the rural life. Two villages were selected from each block and thus 24 villages have been surveyed belonging to 12 blocks. Further the villages have been broken into house holds and 10 per cent families were selected from each village.

Community Development Programme includes agriculture, animal husbandry, rural industries, health and medical facilities, general education, social education, co-operation, communication and democratic decentralisation including leadership. All these aspects have been included while measuring the impact. Though agriculture occupies the important place in the programme other aspects have also been given due importance. Though the different aspects of socio-economic life of people are inter-related, some are
at a given stage of development more important for further progress than others. This is the place occupied by agriculture in our economy today. With this end in view, more emphasis has been given to agriculture in the survey and all the items concerning to it such as distribution of seeds and fertilisers, the extent of adoption of improved practices and people's response to and reliance on the facilities provided for improvement of agriculture, have been taken into consideration.

It can not be denied that for the proper functioning of the programme, administration is of utmost importance. With this view an additional chapter has been added which studies the attitudes of extension workers towards the programme and other problems involved in the administration. The problems and suggestions of extension workers have also been discussed in the chapter. This chapter also includes the social change which has occurred as a result of social education in the programme and the attitudes of the villagers towards the programme.

The abolition of the post of Block Development Officers in M.P. has been an incident which has attracted the attention of critics and press alround. And since then B.D.O. has been the subject of considerable discussion. The present study also includes the reaction of extension officers towards the withdrawl of this official.

The study has been divided into two sections comprising of 13 chapters. First part includes 4 chapters while the second includes the remaining chapters. The first three chapters deal with the theoretical back ground of the programme i.e. place of
community development programme in the background of rural economy of India emphasising the need of economic progress and agricultural breakthrough and evolution of the theory of community development movement along with working of the programme in India. In chapter two measures of rural reconstruction prior to the inception of the programme have been described. The chapter III gives the genesis of Indian programme with its critical analysis and objectives. The chapter IV describes a critical study of main features of the programme and various stages of the blocks along with their functional administration and finance. The fifth chapter takes into consideration the evaluation of the programme including official and non-official studies on this programme. While evaluating the past studies on the programme their main recommendations have been emphasised and shortcomings too have been indicated. The reports of foreign Missions and experts have also been included along with their suggestions.

The first two chapters of part two deal with the general features of northern Mahakoshal and general conditions prevailing in agriculture and other allied field of the rural economy of the region prior to the inception of the programme. The other chapters deal with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected during survey. An attempt has been made to measure the impact of each programme under the community development. For measuring the impact the data of previous years were collected. In most of the cases the data of five years beginning from 1961-62 to 1965-66 have been collected and impact has been measured.

The chapter VIII deals with agricultural programme
in the blocks and particularly in villages intensively and covers all the activities of agriculture and response of the farmers. The chapter IX takes into consideration all the aspects of animal husbandry i.e. improving the breeds, disease control and fodder supply and indicates the progress in the field. In a separate chapter No. X, the impact of the working of programme on agriculture and animal husbandry in the area has been evaluated.

The eleventh chapter deals with rural industries and their importance in increasing employment opportunities in rural area. An attempt has been made in this chapter to record the physical achievement in this field and impact of rural industries on the rural economy and their problems.

The chapter XII deals with the physical achievement and the impact in the allied fields of the programme under certain sub-headings such as health, education, social education etc. Under health and medical facilities all the items of sanitation and problems of health have been included. For this purpose the Primary Health Centres were contacted in addition to the reports collected from the block records. In view of priority being given to family planning programme, much emphasis has been given to it and people's views have been recorded. In general education all attempts have been made to evaluate the facilities of primary education increased during block period and contribution of blocks in enhancing such facilities.

The central purpose of social education in the present survey has been to find out the impact of various activities included in it such as adult literacy and organisation of social
institutions on the rural people; on their ideas, attitudes and outlook. Social education in itself is not less important as even in a poor country social welfare is not wholly a matter of economic well being, social consciousness and social co-operation are themselves the elements of social good.

Then comes the study of co-operation under which various type of co-operative societies working in the area under study have been studies and their impact has been measured. The problems facing the co-operatives have been also dealt with and suggestions thrown in details. An attempt is made to evaluate the co-operative campaign keeping in view the objective of rural planning of covering every family in the village under co-operative society. Next, the improvements in communication facilities have been studied in the area keeping in view their contribution in developing marketing facilities.

In the last of this chapter the democratic decentralisation and leadership have been studied. Not much impact could be visible in the sphere of Panchayat Raj as the three tier structure has not been introduced in the State. Even then an study of Gram Panchayats has been conducted.

In the present survey the data have also been collected from the records of Block offices regarding physical achievement in all the fields in addition to the response and information gathered from the villagers in the personal interview with the people. An interview with the extension officers and Gram Sewaks into the various activities of the programme and their attitudes is also important aspects of the study.
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In the end of the survey analysis, the summary of all the chapters has been given with practical suggestions and long term policies regarding the programme keeping in view the impact measured during survey.

Concepts and Methodology Used:

The primary objective of the present study on the impact of community development programme is to present a co-ordinated view of all its aspects in order to assess the achievements in various fields. For the purpose of this general information on progress, method of working and problems experienced in the field work was collected from the records of Block offices and villagers were interviewed on all the aspects of the programme with a view to know their response and measure the impact of it.

The problem of a suitable definition of sample units deciding about their location and determining the size of the samples is the most important task and at the same time a basic one. The present enquiry was conducted at two levels- the block and the selected villages. First of all the blocks were selected from four districts under study. The selection of blocks for this study was confined to those blocks which were either in stage II or in post stage II because it was felt that in such blocks there was sufficient progress as a result of intensive developmental activities in initial stages to make the assessment fruitful of measuring the impact. At the time of survey there were 37 blocks in four districts viz. 13 in Jabalpur, 11 in Sagar, 7 in Damoh and 6 in Narsinghpur district. Out of these 10 were in stage II and 8 were in stage III or post stage II. Out of 37 blocks in all the four
districts, sample of 12 blocks was considered suitable to represent the whole area. Thus according to quota sampling 12 blocks were taken.

While making the selection of the blocks from each district, first preference was given to post stage II blocks. In Jabalpur district, there were 3 post stage II blocks, in Sagar also three, and in Damoh and Narsimhapur one in each. From Sagar district all the stage III blocks were selected for survey hence there was no question of sampling. From Jabalpur district 2 blocks of stage III were taken out of 3 at random and one block of stage II was taken for study due to special reason in spite of the existence of stage III block. This was Sehore block. Though there were 3 blocks of stage II in Jabalpur district but Sehore block was selected as it belonged to Applied Nutrition Programme. As there were no other blocks under A.N.P. in the region Sehore block was taken in order to measure the impact of this programme and know the method of working as the programme was intensively being carried on in the block. In Damoh district there were two blocks of stage II and one of stage III. Therefore all the three blocks were taken up for study without involving into the random sampling. In Narsimhapur district also like Damoh district there were 2 stage II and one stage III block at the time of survey. But stage III block was taken and all the two stage II blocks could not be taken and one stage I block was surveyed. The reason of not taking the stage II block was that at the time of survey the officer in charge of that block was at Kareli block for some days as he was also incharge of Kareli block. Thus keeping in view the difficulties of getting the records of block in the absence of officer incharge, that block had to be excluded. Then one block
was selected at random out of 3 blocks which belonged to stage I. Thus 12 blocks were selected which were not based on convenience and personal considerations.

In the second level the sampling design involved two stages. In the first stage the sampling unit was the village and in the second it was household. The villages were selected as primary units. Two villages from each block were selected which represented the area. Every village was taken from different village level worker circle. The advice of extension officers and VLWs was sought while making the selection of the villages. Thus two VLW circles were at random selected from every block. In order to measure the difference in the impact of the villages being located near the block headquarters and far from the headquarters one village was selected from a VLW circle which was within the radius of 8 kilometres and the next from a circle out of the above radius. Then from every circle one village was selected at random out of two villages mentioned by the VLW of that particular circle or extension officer in case VLW was not available. While making the selection it was kept in mind that village should be accessible and be of average performance.

After selecting the villages, the primary units, the recording units were selected i.e. families. From every village under study 10 per cent households were selected at random for the personal interview. As the programme is closely related with agriculture having much bearing on it, the households of farmers were taken for study but the programme is also meant for the landless people and village artisans having no land. Therefore from every village one or two such families were at random selected to know what
gains have accrued to them as a result of the programme.

While making a random selection of cultivators in the villages, all types of farmers - big land holders and small land holders have been interviewed in the present study. The information of the land holding was obtained either from the Gram Sevaks or village Patwaris or Patel who -so-ever was available at the time of enquiry. The selection of the units above has been carried out rationally so that the units could serve to represent the region.

As regards the period of survey, it was conducted during May and June in the year 1966 for all the days. As there was no question of seasonal change, no need of frequency of the survey was realised.

For extracting the information and the response of the villagers three types of questionnaire schedules were prepared. The first and most important was the schedule for villagers dealing with every aspect of the programme intensively and comprehensively and inviting the suggestions of the villagers. Personal interview method was adopted in the survey and schedule was pretested before final adoption. The head of the family was contacted personally and information was collected from him and schedule was filled in under proper headings. Each question was clearly explained to the head of the family and for clear understanding supplementary questions too were put. The other question schedule related to the Extension officers and village level workers and sought to obtain information on achievement in the field, methods of work, assistance received from the superiors, problems and personal difficulties if any, and their attitudes towards the programme in the back ground of their experience.

The information was recorded by the informants themselves under this
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schedule. The third schedule was meant for recording the physical achievements in the block. Under this, the information was sought on the different aspects of the programme at the time of inception and in consequent years. The schedule was filled with the help of Progress Assistants of block office and for various fields respective extension officers were contacted and information was gathered and filled in. All these schedules are given in the appendix in the end.

In addition to the information from Block office, the village information was also collected in the field of achievement of certain targets of the programme and other general information which was considered desirable, from the village level worker or Sarpanch of village Panchayat. The list of the villages under study is given in the end.

Limitation of the Study and the Difficulties Realised.-

In the present study it has been tried to be as objective as possible. The conclusions have been drawn and suggestions have been made on the basis of the analysis of the information gathered. In spite of all cautions and safeguards, however, it is not possible completely to eliminate bias from the enquiry. Therefore there are some limitations of the survey.

It may be admitted at the outset that the present study deals with all the aspects of programme hence the scope has become very wide. Therefore it has not been possible to deal with every aspect intensively and comprehensively. While making the present study the main emphasis has been on the measuring of impact of the programme on the rural economy. For this purpose conditions prevailing in various fields of rural economy at the time of inception of the programme and at the time of investigation have been compared.
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and impact has been measured. The physical achievements have been mainly taken into consideration. The criteria of cost and benefit could not be applicable for measuring the impact in the absence of scientific approach hence financial aspects involving expenditure on every aspect of the programme has not been included. Moreover, this type of approach was full of complexities without giving any fruitful results. In practice, benefit can not be measured on the basis of expenditure for example expenditure on social education may not give visible and immediate benefits but it can not be ignored as it is investment in human beings and brings the fruits in the long run. The main emphasis has been on the point whether there has been any improvement in a particular field after the working of the programme for a number of years.

Serious difficulty was realised in obtaining the data from the Block Offices due to the paucity and incompleteness of the records available in the blocks. More important data showing the state of things at the time when the blocks were started were generally not available. It has, therefore, not been possible except in a very few cases, to comment on the progress made since the development work was taken up. Such records could also not be available from other sources. Moreover, the records were also not systematically arranged and the blame of non-availability of records was thrown upon the predecessors. In some blocks there was reluctance on the part of Progress Assistants to show the records and even the Officer in charge could not exercise his power to make him willing to show the records. This sort of situation and absence of proper controlling authority was due to the abolition of the post of Block Development
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Officer. However, all efforts were made to make the records available. In some blocks where Progress Assistants were on leave, much difficulty was realised in obtaining the records. In some cases the data were quite vague and unreliable for which no proper explanation was given. Therefore, the data should be treated with necessary caution. The data regarding Public Health and Family Planning were collected from Primary Health Centres but such Centres which were not situated at the block head-quarters could not be contacted. It may be treated as the limitation of the survey.

The complete information in addition to the block reports could not be available in all the fields as all the Extension Officers could not interviewed. At the time of survey the relief work was going on with full force in the area and most of the Extension officers were engaged in disbursing the payment to the labourers. Therefore, the extension workers could not be contacted and their attitudes towards the programme and problems along with suggestions could not be known. Some of the extension officers who were available could not supply the complete information. Moreover, the extension officers did not take full interest in supplying the information and answering questions as they were uncertain and disappointed due to the abolition of the post of B.D.O. Some of the extension officers did not like to answer the questions and refused to take the questionnaire even. They were convinced after much persuasion but even then they did not answer some questions i.e. comments on the abolition of the post of B.D.O.

The details of some information was sought from the Gram Sewaks but some of them were not available at the time of
survey hence complete information regarding various activities of community development programme in a particular village was not available. Therefore other sources were sought such as village Patil or Patwari and dependence was made on them though data were not completely reliable.

Generally the villagers were not prepared to answer the questions and had to be persuaded much. While approaching the villagers, the company of gram sevak was not sought as in some cases where he accompanied, the respondents could not answer impartially and were biased. It was also noticed that in many cases they could not answer the question accurately in the absence of any records with them. When asked to narrate their agricultural problems many farmers told that unless the problems were solved their narration simply carried no meaning. Where quantitative figures were required the farmers could not supply them hence an estimation had to be made. On the issue of Gram Panchayats elections and functions the villagers were rather silent but when cross-examined they revealed the truth. In the same way they also hesitated while expressing their views on leadership in their villages and visit of extension officers. It was also noticed that due to the factions in villages, some of the people deliberately supplied incorrect information as they were against a certain party which appreciated the block activities hence they criticised the programme. It may also be the limitation of the programme that the figures relating to the increase in the attendance of students in primary schools could not be available as the schools were closed at the time of survey due to summer vacation. It was also the difficulty that most of the farmers were not available
at their residences hence they were contacted on their fields. They wanted immediate solutions of the problems of their villages. They were willing to answer the questions only when they got an assurance of carrying their difficulties to Government for immediate solution.