CHAPTER II
CHAPTER II
THE OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF STUDY

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Researcher's long association with the Voluntary Organisations in various capacities motivated him to undertake an action research project through the association and support of a Voluntary Organisation called Outreach International India located in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, the profile of which is presented in the subsequent chapter. The basic objectives of this action research project are:

I. To test and document the effectiveness of participatory method in:

(a) Motivating and mobilising the rural poor in identifying their own economic and social developmental needs;

(b) Changing their perceptions and attitudes about self-reliance and self-determination in the matters of their own welfare and development; and

(c) Improving their empowerment capabilities.

II. To identify and document the social, economic, cultural and political factors and problems involved in motivating and mobilising the people towards the goal of development.
III. To document the strategies and processes initiated by the researcher in neutralising the negative forces and harnessing the positive forces to achieve the developmental goals of the poor.

IV. To identify and document the strategies and processes required for the development of the poor on the self-reliant and sustainable basis.
UNIVERSE

As the present study is to test and document the efficacy of the participatory method, the researcher had chosen the depressed communities viz., Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as the universe of the study. The members of the Scheduled Castes (ex-untouchables) and Scheduled Tribes are the most backward and neglected sections of the Indian populace due to the malaise of the Indian stratification system. After India’s independence from the colonial rule, certain constitutional provisions were made, and several welfare and developmental programmes were launched to ameliorate the miseries of these sections. Yet, these efforts were not very successful. Such a failure now is attributed to the lack of PARTICIPATORY APPROACH. Hence, the universe of the present study is Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Communities and the Unit of Study is the habitat of these communities.
SAMPLE

To facilitate a manageable and meaningful action study by participatory approach, the action is limited to four habitats only, of which three are Scheduled Caste habitats and one was Scheduled Tribe habitat.

SAMPLE SELECTION

The selection of these habitats was based on multi-stage random sampling procedure, which involved

- Selection of the district
- Selection of the Revenue Mandal
- Selection of the habitats.

SELECTION OF THE DISTRICT

The researcher, being a Telugu speaking man, the study was carried out in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The state of Andhra Pradesh is broadly divided into three distinct geographical regions – viz., Rayalaseema, Telengana and Coastal Andhra and comprises 23 districts.
To select one of these districts, the following criteria were adopted. The district must represent

- fairly high concentration of Scheduled Caste population and also represent fair number of Scheduled Tribes.
- must have fairly high density of population
- favourable sex ratio
- favourable literacy percentage
- high percentage of rural population
- presence of erstwhile feudal lords, and
- large number of small and marginal operational land holdings

Accordingly, the East Godavari district in the Coastal Andhra region was selected. The district is a densely populated district. It has a population density of 420 persons per Sq.Km as against the state average of 242 persons per Sq.Km.

It has the highest concentration of Scheduled Caste population in terms of numbers. The Scheduled Caste population in this district was 8,26,057 persons in 1991 which constitutes 18.19 percent of its population while the percentage of Scheduled Caste population to the total population in A.P. state was 15.93 percent. Similarly, 1,76,083 Scheduled Tribe inhabit this district, constituting 3.88 percent to the total population.
The sex ratio is highly favourable with 998 females per thousand males as against 972 females per thousand males in the A.P. State. Similarly the literacy percentage of the district was 48.79 as against 44.09 in A.P. 76.20 percent of the district population lives in rural areas as against 73.11 percent in the state of A.P.

The district is a curious mix of prosperity and poverty, land concentration and large number of operational land holdings. Before the abolition of Zamindary system (feudal landlordism), the district boasted a few feudal lords, whose influence still continues, though in a subdued manner. This is evident from the fact that 4.3 percent of total number of operational landholders control 27.9 percent of total operational land area in the district as against 8.2 percent and 38.9 percent respectively in the state of Andhra Pradesh. More precisely, 86.8 percent of total number of operational landholders control only 49.2 percent of total operational land area.

At the second stage, the selection of Revenue Mandal was made. The Revenue Mandal was selected on the basis of following criteria:

- Mandal must not be too large or too small in geographical area and in the composition of number of villages.
- Must have cent percent rural population
- Must have fair representation of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population.
- At least fifty percent of the villages in the Mandal must have a population of less than 500 persons.

Accordingly, Prathipadu Revenue Mandal was selected from among the 57 Revenue Mandals of East Godavari district. The total geographical area of the Prathipadu Mandal is 227 Sq. Km and it comprises forty revenue villages. 21 villages in the Mandal have a population of less than 500 persons in each village, 17.8 percent of the total population are Scheduled Castes; and the entire Revenue Mandal is rural in nature i.e., it is devoid of urban settlements/centres.

In the third stage, the revenue villages were selected. For selection of the villages, the following criteria were adopted and 10% of the total number of revenue villages were thus selected:

- The village must be multi-caste village with the presence of either Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe population,
- The villages must not be too small or too large and are reasonably remote villages.
- Land must not be concentrated in few hands.
Accordingly, based on statistical profile of the villages, four (ten percent) villages from among the forty villages of Prathipadu Revenue Mandal were selected. They are:

- LAMPAKALOVA
- UTTARAKANCHI
- PEDDIPALEM, and
- METTUCHINTHA

The first three villages have habitations of Scheduled Caste people and the village Mettuchintha has Scheduled Tribe habitat. The profile of these is presented in the subsequent chapter.
THE METHOD OF STUDY

PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY

Since the core of the research study is to test the efficacy of the participatory methodology in achieving the development of rural poor on self-reliant and sustainable basis and in promoting empowerment among them, an effort is made here to explain the conceptual and operational aspects of the participatory methodology.

The participatory approaches and methods are based on different paradigm from that of the questionnaire survey. The basic purpose of this methodology is not to facilitate the collection of data by an outsider but it is more concerned with the people/community to sensitise themselves with their own situation for their own empowerment and development. Robert Chambers (1981); the earliest profounder and disseminator of participatory methodology, explains the core strengths of this methodology as “These usually entail: sitting down, listening, facilitating and learning; being open rather than closed; ... passing the initiative to the local people, enabling people in groups, cumulatively built up and cross-checked and taking forms such as maps, diagrams, matrices, listing and card sorting, counting, estimating, scoring and ranking; and making comparisons”. It is an alternative system of
enquiring which is democratic and pro-poor and more in line with the concept of alternative development. Neela Mukherjee (1997), explaining Participatory Rural Appraisal explains “it involves a set of principles, a process of communication and a menu of techniques for seeking villagers’ participation in putting forward their points of view about any issue and enabling them do their own analysis and offer their own contribution in different forms with a view to make use of such learning. It initiates a participatory process and sustains it. Its principles and the menu of techniques help in organising participation”. One of the major advantages of the participatory methodology is that “it seeks to understand human experiences as it is lived and perceived by the participants, the context of the experience and an interdisciplinary framework for analysis of the experience” (Ibid.).

In order to get full comprehension of participatory methodology, it may be helpful to know the related concepts namely, power and control, conscientisation, empowerment and self-reliance besides the dialogic and transactional communication.

There is a good deal of literature on participation. Deshler and Sock (1985) conducted critical review of literature and delineated two levels of participation namely, pseudo participation and genuine participation.
Pseudo participation was categorised as:

(a) Domestication - involves informing, therapy, and manipulation

(b) Assistancialism - includes placation and consultation

Genuine participation was categorised as:

(a) Co-operation - refers to partnership and delegation of power.

(b) Citizen control - means empowerment

Most of the government sponsored development programmes belong to the category of Pseudo participation as the level of participation of people is limited to listening to what is planned for them and what would be done to them. This is non-participatory. "When the development bureaucracy, the local elite and the people are working co-operatively throughout the decision making process and when the people are empowered to control the action to be taken, only then there be genuine participation."  
(Ibid.)
"The concept of generative power is consistent with the concept of participation. It implies that people, cognisant with their own human potential, inner life forces, and cultural identity, can generate their own source of power - whatever power necessary to accomplish the objectives they set for themselves and their community.... the development activists should hold to a centred belief that people are also intellectually capable and have the communication competitiveness to organise their lives in a more liberated manner.” (Shirley A White, 1994)

Liberation

This refers to the ability of the people to determine the course of their own lives. The sense of self-confidence they achieve is initially empowering. “.... Though empowerment is usually conceptualised as moving out of the condition of sense of deprivation or oppression, it can also be looked at as a positive, holistic outcome of the self-discovery, successful human interaction, and, the ability to dialogue with people different from one’s self. The confidence to engage in group processes is itself a liberating action” (Ibid.)
**Conscientisation**

This concept is developed and popularised by Paulo Freire (1970). Again, this concept is central to the theme of participation.

The critical awareness of the existential situation and dialogue communication is central to the concept of conscientisation. Freire's dialogic action unites the concept of action with the concept of reflection. He brought in the associate concept of 'Praxis' which is also a process which starts with reflection, continuing with action and returning to reflection in a spiralling, circular manner.

**SELF-RELIANCE**

Self-reliance is also conceived as both an outcome and also a process of participation. Self-reliance also is expected to relieve the productive forces of the local community resources including human resources. Shirley A. White (Ibid.) summarises the force of self-reliance as "when individuals become self-reliant, then behaviour will change - from apathy to action, from dependence to independence, from alienation to involvement, from intolerance to tolerance, from powerlessness to assertiveness, from defensiveness to supportiveness, from manipulatable to self-determined, from outer directed to inner directed, from ignorant to
knowledgeable. A community of self-reliant people will be capable of diagnosing its own problems, of developing innovative solutions and of fostering development diversity which is relevant, culturally sensitive, and ecologically sound and sustaining.”

Deepa Narayan (1996), based on the review of experience with the World Bank projects adopting participatory methodologies, identified the basic characteristics of participatory research as:

- Participatory research is a process of collaborative problem solving through the generation and use of knowledge.
- It is dynamic, demand-based and change-oriented.
- It seeks to raise people’s awareness and capacity by equipping them with new skills to analyse and solve problems.
- Data collection process itself can foster ownership and involvement in following up action.
- Two directional approach to data collection from the researcher to the subject and from the subject to the researcher.
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is the most popular participatory method among the agencies working for the development of rural communities.
PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL - CONCEPT

PRA is a package of methods, which constitute the following:

1. **Focus Group Meetings**

   It enables the people concerned, the stakeholders, to discuss freely without inhibitions in a democratic manner their situation, their experiences, their problems, their needs, their capabilities to solve their problems and their vision of development etc.

2. **Resource Mapping**

   The people of the local community will be participating in mapping the physical (environmental), economic, social and cultural resources of their families and village which will sensitise them through their own discovery, the potential of resources they have for their development.

3. **Social Mapping**

   It enables them to understand the nature of the pattern of the location in the households of different social and economic groups.
4. Wealth Ranking

The people using their own criteria rank the households according to the wealth status. This helps them to discover the causes of poverty.

5. Time-line Analysis

The focus of this exercise will be on the social and economic activity cycle of the community. This will enable them to identify the stress periods and the strategies to overcome the stress creating problems. The above exercises will be undertaken with the help of the facilitator (The researcher).
STEPS FOR THE SOCIAL MOBILISATION

Based on the experience of the several successful experiments in Asia including India, the following steps have been identified by the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty (1992) to achieve social mobilisation for the development. The steps involved are based on participatory methodology. The steps are:

1. The whole process should start with the generation of critical consciousness among the poor so that their creative initiatives get realised and they start reflecting about their existential situation and seek action. The process of continuous praxis is to be initiated.

2. They have to be organised into active subjects of the process of development.

3. They need to be made to investigate deep into the problematic reality so that they understand the totality of their life and make them seek solutions to their problems.

4. At this stage they will be capable of searching for alternative options for their development. One of the options they will be made to realise on evidence, is: to
organise themselves in groups an inevitable prerequisite to assert their right for productive resources to which they are entitled.

At this stage, a deepening and multiplying process will get revealed as the success of one action leads to the possibility of undertaking another and this process will continue.
EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY:

The participatory methodology, overall, is expected to promote empowerment among the disadvantaged. The empowerment process includes:

- Promotion of critical consciousness about the existential situation.

- Promotion of abilities and skills in social mobilisation and group organisation.

- Promotion of communication and leadership skills.

- Promotion of the abilities and skills in microplanning, PRA and other methods of situational analysis.

- Promotion of problem solving and conflict resolution abilities.

- Formulation and monitoring of the development micro plans at their own level.

- Promotion of ability for mobilisation and management of resources.
• Promotion of positive changes in the attitudes and behaviours and to catalyse social and cultural reforms.

From what has been described under this section of methodology, it is obvious that the attitudes and skills required on the part of researcher are significantly different from that of a conventional researcher.

The researcher followed the basic approaches and steps of participatory methodology described above and tried to work with the people of the identified community to facilitate them to improve their economic and social situation. In the process, the researcher has gone through a number of frustrations and faced a number of obstacles. However, he largely succeeded in overcoming them.

The structure of the thesis consists of the following chapters. The first chapter reviews the Frame of Reference touching upon Volgas & Development Context and the Statement of the Problem. Chapter two describes the objectives and Method of Study. It includes the Objectives of Study, Universe & sample, Sample Selection and Participatory Methodology. Chapter three reviews the Rise & Growth of Voluntary Organisations in India detailing the Early Traditions, the Post-independence Era, Vigyan Bhavan Action
Plan, Stages in the Growth of Volgas, Categories of Volgas and Social Mobilisation, and, Volgas & Government. Chapter four reviews the Setting touching upon the Profile of the District, Profile of the Mandal, Profile of the Study villages and Socio-political scenario of the field, and, Problem of the Volga. Chapter five deals with Participatory Social Action with emphasis on Non-Formal Education, Women's Empowerment, Land Reclamation, Housing for the Poor, Social Action, and, Participatory Process. Chapter six deals with Summary and Conclusions.
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