INTRODUCTION

India has been a land of villages and for the development of the Indian economy and society; rural development is urgent necessity at present and will continue in future. In fact, one segment of the society cannot develop ignoring the other one. In this sense, rural and urban areas are part of the same society and for balanced development it is necessary that rural as well as urban economies grow simultaneously with appropriate coordination between them. At present, the urban economy is comparatively more developed than the rural economy and this imbalance creates hurdles for the development of the economy as a whole. At this juncture, rural people and rural economy need special strategies, programmes and appropriate technologies to come out of the vicious circle of poverty, unemployment, diseases and alienation.

In this sense, rural development is the improvement in the living standards of the rural people and it is a process which leads to a continuous rise in the capacity of rural people to control their environment accompanied by a wider distribution of benefits resulting such from control. In its comprehensive sense, it relates to all round development of rural areas to achieve positive change both in quantitative as well as qualitative aspects of the society and economy. Rural development is the ultimate objective, which involves the provision of opportunities for the optimum utilization of the population residing in the rural area.

The present preoccupation of the rural development represents a search of new development strategies. The earlier growth strategies based on principles of efficiency not only failed to encompass the wider meaning of the word ‘development’ but also have not been able to reduce mass poverty, unemployment and income inequalities. To redress these inequalities, the rural development has now come to stand for a new set of development objectives, viz., growth, equalities, employment, participation, strategies, policies and planning.
techniques. Thus, the concept of rural development incorporates fundamentally different theoretical and ideological point of views. In spite of increasing concern to rural development, there still exists considerable disagreement over the appropriate approaches, planning methodologies, specific programme components and proper methods of their implementation and organization. It is natural to be deviations in these respects in different parts of the developing world with the variations in their physio-socio-economic situations. However, rural development planning requires a set of comprehensive and definite policies, and appropriate and adequate institutions capable of generating development processes in rural areas. The present attempt intends to illuminate this aspect of rural development planning, citing example of the Sagar-Damoh plateau of Madhya Pradesh.

Since the commencement of the First Five Year Plan in this country, interest and public concern about rural development have spurred the development polices and strategies. But these strategies could not fulfill desired results because of: (1) lack of participation of local people in plan formulation at grass-root; (2) sincere political will for improving the lots of rural poors; and (3) absence of adequate institutions and organizations for plant formulation, its implementation and its impact assessment, on inter-mediate level. In fact, government always tried to transmit techniques and innovations to rural areas, and lately to provide access to certain inputs, assuming no difference in the capabilities and capacities of the receivers, i.e. the ruralites and presuming that they will follow the instructions of the government without question. This transmission has, thus, been one way, i.e. from top to bottom, from the government to villages, but the other way channel was not opened. Consequently, feedback for further planning was not received, which made these plans and strategies as if they are being imposed on ruralites. Neither local resources, both natural and human, nor local problems could be seriously taken into account. Even the launched programmes suffered from the
inadequacy of appropriate institutions and organizations. The main objective of this project is to put forth these experiences of rural development of Sagar-Damoh plateau.

**OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Planning is the responsibility of both the central as well as the state Governments. Subjects of the national significance, such as defense, communication, railway etc. come under the scope of the central Government, power, education, health, social services, small industries, development of roads and transport fall in the scope of state Government. In most cases, the National Planning Commission formulates strategies; policies and even programmes and states are asked simply to implement them. The planning processes in the state are in no way different from that of national planning, except that the national plan deals with the conceptual and theoretical aspects, stresses the aggregate needs and possibilities, targets and approaches to achieve them, while states are responsible to carry-out plan on ground, and therefore, these are supposed to be physical in nature.

The National Planning Commission had sent detailed directive for preparing district level plans as early as in 1969 for Fourth Five Year Plan, and these were complied, to certain extent, in some states viz., Andra Pradesh, Maharashtra but in this state, planning process is essentially centralized. Up to Fifth plan, planning machinery was functioning at state level and the decision making power was concentrated at a single point. The state has a Planning Board, which is responsible for perspective planning and its formulation. It is proper to mention that even at the state level, there is a district planning cell statistical needs of the state Planning Boards. District proposals are said to be discussed by the members of the planning cell, which are formed of departmental heads of district administration and members of the Legislative Assembly and the Parliament. Such centralized planning process not only deprives the people of the privilege of
decision-making or participation in plan formulation but also fails to assess local resource potentialities of development. The consequence is ever increasing imbalances in the levels of development and also in developmental efforts. Consequently, the major thrust of the development efforts is directed towards culturally dominant regions, even ignoring the basic needs of other (Sharma, 1987). Two examples may illustrate these points. First is the per-capita development expenditure, which is much lower in backward districts than in advanced districts. Second is the voice of resentment in the form of demand for separate States, which are the needs and demands of these regions and the interpretation given to them by the state.

Doubts are often expressed in the selection of appropriate techniques for effective rural planning. The State plan is just a sectoral analysis of the economy. Even a look at the content of the plan reflects the absence of spatial de-segregation of sectoral activities. Recently a few deviations are seen on the name of target group or target area, but the techniques for the identification of target groups and target areas do not seem rational.

**THE PROBLEM OF RESEARCH**

These experiences of agricultural development programmes reveal that it is difficult to perceive rural problems in broader perspective. The overted symptoms of the causes are yet to be taken care of. In reality people think and treat planning and administration machinery alien to them. They could not accept these plans for their welfare. Therefore it is urgently needed to evolve public participation in plan formulation. It has been felt that instead of imposing a framework of development from outside, it should be evolved territorially, incorporating full employment of local, institutional and natural resources. It has also been realized that greater potential exists with decentralized structures where some key decisions can be taken by rural people themselves (Belshaw et al
This decentralization of the powers of decision-making requires precautions and stratified screening.

Policies, plans, projects and approaches, formulated without taking account of the culture attributes, economic status and personal outlook of the people, usually fail. No doubt, efforts have been made for the upliftment of tribes and tribal regions. Infrastructural facilities have been created on a large scale. Inputs and credit facilities have been made available. In spite of the implementation of Tribal Sub-Plan in the V Plan, majority of tribal blocks are still far behind in the race of development. They failed to avail the facilities of free education supported by scholarship, hostel facilities and fair prospects employment. It compels to think that there is some hitch in their traditional socio-economic structure. It is most often said that tribes do not send their children for schooling not because of the financial constraints but because they loose earning hands. Though it would be too early to conclude, however, it seems prerequisite to give deeper thoughts over their socioeconomic institutions and structures before stimulating them to assimilate measures of development.

Further, with the promulgation of strategies and programmes, appropriate institutions for their implementation and evaluation should be created. Particularly, there is a dire need of planning machinery at micro-level, so that dynamics of the rural development system can be analyzed systematically, and the performance of the processes could be evaluated and compared to the targets and utilized. The existing arrangement is insufficient. The Collector, the custodian of development planning, is highly preoccupied and hardly finds time to devote to these obligatory functions. At the same time, there is need to achieve horizontal coordination at the local level between specialized departments and development agencies in both plan formulation and its implementation.
Below the district level, there is a dearth of government, semi-
government and voluntary institutions. Diffusion of development
processes in rural areas therefore becomes difficult. The experience of
other States, especially of Punjab shows that such institutions play
vital role in rural development (Johl and Mudahar 1974). Development
planning is different from election planning. It is necessary to adopt
appropriate methods and techniques for plan formulation and
implementation through proper institutions and organization. The
results need to be evaluated from time to time to take corrective
measures before further polices are adopted.

With the view to initiate the process of rural development, the
major emphasis in the First Plan was given on an overall development
of rural communities in Madhya Pradesh. This was in the tune of the
national objective. Along with other States of the country, the
Community development Programmes (CDP) was launched, and
through the National extension Services, finance and technical known-
how to the ruralites. This has been called as multi-purpose approach
based on the principles of al sided development. But this approach its
multi-sectoral components, struggling with resource constrains, could
not make much headway and it gave way to the target sector approach.

The target sector approach was adopted during the third Five
Year Plan and emphasized the adoption of package programmes
relating to high yielding seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and credit in
selected areas with assured rainfall and irrigation. Resulting
programme is known Intensive Agriculture District Programme (IADP).
This ‘package’ approach brought the so-called ‘Green Revolution’. Soon
it was found that this target sector approach benefited relatively few
better-endowed areas and persons. This approach should be suitably
supplemented by other approaches, which are capable or raising
productivity of the rural areas. With this aim, rural development was
redefined in the Fourth Plan (1969-74), designed to improve the
economic and social life of the people. This may be called, target group
approach. This has led to the formulation of some special programmes, such as small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal farmers and Agricultural Labour Scheme, Crash Programme for Rural Employment and Tribal Development Plan.

The measure introduced during Fourth Plan continued during the Fifth Plan. The draft Fifth plan of the State that area development programmers would form the spearhead strategy for the reduction of intra-State imbalances. Activities, ancillary and subsidiary to agriculture, like poultry farming, piggery, cattle rearing and dairy farming would be promoted. The expansion of irrigation facilities is expected to reduce the regional imbalances and create extra employment by intensive farming. High priority has been accorded to rural electrification, improvement of roads and to provide facilities for education and health in backward regions. A new feature of this plan is ‘minimum needs’ programme. Appropriate institutions and organizations to transform them into realities rarely accompany these high hopes.

Rural development as a concept is not a new one. It had received the attention of people like Gandhi, Tagore and many other much before independence. Earlier it was taken to be synonymous with agriculture development, but the new concept recognizes that rural development is not only the same as agricultural development nor is it only a matter of rural welfare but in it includes agricultural growth, putting up to economic and social infrastructure, house sites for landless village planning, public health, education and functional literacy. It meant developing the necessary cottage and small industries and whole rural poor life. The concept of rural development incorporates fundamentally different theoretical and ideological point of view. Thus rural development means desired change in rural area. It is complete term, which integrates a variety of element of human life and activities. As Michael Todaro said – “Rural development encompasses (i) improvement in the level of living conditions including employment,
education, health and nutrition, housing and a variety of other social services, (ii) minimizing inequality in the distribution of rural incomes and to balance the rural-urban incomes and other economic opportunities and (iii) the capacity of the rural sector to sustain and accelerate the pace of such improvements (Reddy K.V., 1988, p.26).

Indian government always tried to achieve rural development. Government has declared many programmes through five year plans and separate, which help to increasing to rural development. Government tried to transmit techniques and innovations to rural areas and lately to provide access to certain inputs assuming no difference in the capabilities and capacities of the receivers, i.e. the ruralities and presuming that they will follow the instructions of the government without question. This transmission has, thus been one way, i.e. from top to bottom from the government to villages; but the other way channel was not opened. Consequently, feed-back for further planning were not received, which made these, plans and strategies as if they are being imposed on ruralities neither local resources, both natural and human, nor local problems could be seriously taken into account. Even the launched programmes suffered from the inadequacy of appropriate institution and organizations. The main objective of this project is to put forth these experiences of rural development of Sagar-Damoh plateau.

**OBJECTIVES**

The ultimate objective of the present study is to assess the overall impact of the rural development programmes on rural people of the Sagar-Damoh plateau. It is proposed to present an assessment of their success on failure and to make some suggestions for their effective implementation. Thus the principal objectives of the present project are:

1. To present scenario of rural economy and society.

2. To assess the suitability of the programmes in perspective of local needs and assess their impact on the economy and society.
3. To go through the mechanism of the implementation of the programme, review of the functioning of the institutions and persons responsible for implementation,

4. To see how the beneficiaries have utilized the funds, technical assistance and facilities provided to them, and to assess the system of feedback from beneficiaries to the institution responsible for implementation of the programme.

HYPOTHESIS

In order to fulfill the objectives of the present research following hypotheses have been framed -

1. Contents of the rural development programmes are not always in accordance to the need of the people.

2. People are not well versed with the contents of the programmes.

3. The mechanism of providing help in different forms is cumbersome and unfair.

4. Funds and facilities are not utilized for the functions for which they are provided.

5. Objectives of the programme are rarely fulfilled.

6. There is absence of institutions to watch the implementations and to assess the impact of the programme.

NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTION IN THE FIELD

Rural development has been accepted as the core of the national progress in India. Because of this fact, rural development has been discussed widely and enormous literature is available in economics, sociology and other social sciences along with geography. Such studies have been conducted on micro to national scale. Mohinder Singh and R. N. Sharma had collected more than 3600 references on this theme inform of rural development as early as 1978. Several review of the rural development are available which evaluate the effectiveness of these
plans and programmes on national level (Maheshwari 1985, Jain 1985, Chattopadhyay 1985, Maheshwari 1996). Jain directed a project a projected on rural development. They concluded that development delivery arrangements at the ground level point out that the quality and quantum of developments are far from satisfactory in substance or speed. They have not succeeded in generating development process. To present this situation he rightly has title his as ‘Grass without Roots: Rural Development under Government Auspices’.

Among geographers works of R.P. Misra and K.V. Sundaram are deserve special mention. As early as in 1976 and later in 1979 they discussed the perspectives and approaches of area rural development in India. In 1979, R. P. Misra surveyed the basic needs of the rural people and examined the concepts and programmes designed to meet them. Sundaram (1981) presented the experiences of area development in the country and suggested sum alternatives. Such and several other research papers are contained in the book edited by R.P Misra (1981) Misra edited four volumes on rural development in 1985.

National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad has sponsored several studies on themes of rural development. Among them, mention be made of Survey on rural growth centers (1971) and Reading on micro level planning (1972) by L. K. Sen and others. The erotic discussion on aspects has been produced by scholars (Belshaw 1977, 1980, Douglass 1979, 1980 Friedman and Douglas 1978, Sharma 1975-76).


Contrary to these broad theoretical studies, there are not much studies dealing with the impact assessment of the rural development programmes. Samuel (1977) has evaluated the rural development
programmes with the view to identity the reasons of their failures. Rastogi (1979) has called these programmes as experiment. In this respect most remarkable study was conducted by L.C. Jain and his team (1985). This study identifies the extent to which and the reason why rural extension organization its structure functions powers personals, procedures, styles of functioning, contact and relationship with community, is an impediment in the satisfactory and speedy delivery of the intended development benefits. They have selected certain programmes to observe their performance in relation to their stated objectives. The present intends to investigate, analyse and discuss the impact of selected rural development programmes on the lines followed by Jain. For this purpose Sagar-Damoh plateau has been selected for intensive survey.

THE STUDY REGION

For the evaluation of rural development programmes, Sagar-Damoh plateau has been selected as study area. This plateau comprises of two districts, viz. Sagar and Damoh of Madhya Pradesh. It spreads over 17,558 sq km, lying between 23°05’ and 24°25’ North Latitudes and 78°15’ to 79°55’ West Longitudes. Physiographically, this plateau is a high land composed of Deccan Lava. Lowlands are confined in the basins of the Sonar, Bewas and Dhasan rivers.

In 2001, there are 30,05,936 persons living in this plateau, giving an average density of 177 persons per sq km. Out of total population, three-fourths (23,10,678 persons or 74.4%) are living in 3076 villages of this plateau. There are 276 rural people per sq km of net sown area of this region. Thus the region is predominantly rural in character. Therefore, development of the entire region depends on the development of the rural people and rural area.
SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The study is based on secondary obtained from various government departments, which are concerned with the implementation the rural development programmes. Basic data about the personality of the study region were obtained from published and unpublished records of concerned department such as – Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Department of Agriculture, Commissioner Land Records & Settlement, Department of Irrigation, Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Industries, Department of Horticulture and Financial Institution.

Data collected from different sources have been transformed into rates and ratio and are presented in form of maps, diagrammes and tables. The main emphasis has been on the assessment of the temporal changes in different components of the rural economy and society caused by the rural development programmes and projects. Since the number of rural development programmes are very large and are in infancy stage, their targets and achievements are evaluated on the basis of information available with managing department. As far as possible, data have been collected on district, block and tahsil level. Tahsils have taken as the basic unit of this study. For analyzing and interpretation of data standard statistical methods and techniques have been used.

THE SCHEME OF THE STUDY

The interpretative study of evaluation of rural development programmes in Sagar-Damoh plateau has been divided into eight chapters. The first chapter depicts the physical basis of its geo-economic personality and examines the physiographic climatic, soils and natural resource framework of the study region. Topographically this region can be said to be the country of plateaux, hills, ridges and valleys, presenting considerable relief and drained by the Bina,
Dhasan, Bewas, Sonar, Bearma and Bamnar and their tributaries, which flow towards north and northeastern and eventually drain their waters into either Betwa in the north or in the Ken in the east. They function as lifeline for the rural people. Endowed with medium black soils and medium rainfall this area is predominantly rabi cropped area.

Man is the most active elements in the process of development. Therefore, spatio-temporal aspects of physical, social and economic attributes of population have been analyzed to provide perspectives of development have been discussed in the second chapter. In 2001, total population of the plateau is 31,05,936, which is 5.1 percent of total population of the state. This population is distributed over 17,558 sq km of area of this plateau. Out of the total population, 23,10,678 are living in rural areas, which constitute 74.4 percent of total population. Literacy is much lower in rural areas (54.6 percent) in comparison to the urban areas (82.1 percent). In respect of other social and economic characteristics of population rural population is lagging far behind of urban population of the region and from the average condition of the state.

The third chapter discusses the concept of rural development, its approaches and recent changes therein. It has been tried to put forth the comprehensive meaning of rural development and changing scenario of this concept in India. Programmes launched on the name of rural development in the state in general and in the study region in particular are summarized in the fourth chapter.

Nearly three-fourths (74.4 percent) of our population is rural. More than half (718 thousand people or 54.3 percent) of the workers are engaged in agricultural pursuits. Therefore fifth chapter is devoted to the programmes launched for agricultural development, which discusses the contemporary condition of agriculture and agricultural productivity and evaluates different programmes aiming
to provide inputs and technical know-how to raise productivity of cereals, pulses and oilseeds.

Perhaps none other than the problem of unemployment is so serious problem for the economic development than any other problem. Observation and performance of some important employment oriented programmes, namely Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana, Rojgar Ashwasan Yojana, Samporna Gramin Rojgar Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana, Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana are given in the sixth chapter.

The concept of development extends beyond the economic growth and quantitative measurements of income. It is the process of reorganization and reorientation of the entire socio-economic system for the welfare of human being. The seventh chapter deals with welfare programmes that have been formulated and executed in this region also along with other parts of the country. The important components of modern concept of human development are longevity, knowledge and decent life. Therefore welfare programmes encompass all three walks of life. Programmes related to knowledge and longevity are evaluated in this chapter.

Through programmes and projects, government created infrastructure facilities, provided inputs and finances and expertise services to villagers. By now, results of these developmental programmes are expected to come. With this expectations, impact of programmes and projects in spheres of agriculture, employment, health, education and population welfare have been analyzed in last eighth chapter. As a logical extension certain suggestions have been appended on the basis of the performance of these programmes.