CHAPTER XVII

EJ-Kj-ki

The present study was undertaken to evaluate the extent of success of Community Development Programme. The programme, in general, has failed to harness the vast human potentials. People's participation in the planning and execution of the programme is negligible as they are dictated from top to bottom. The response of the rurality shows that officials are not devoted servants of the nation as was conceived of in the community development programme. Faulty selection and defective training of extension personnel, hasty execution of the programmes and too much emphasize on the achievement of physical targets have failed to prepare grounds for inner democratization within the administration and fostering the spirit of cooperative team work among the officials.

Besides, administrative bottle-necks the programme faces certain pervasive problems in the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of the people who are expected to benefit from and participate in it. Customs and traditions laden with attitudes beliefs, prejudices, superstitions, unbalanced and unwieldy size of the programme and caste and class distances have also resulted in the slow pace of progress of the programmes. Moreover, most of the benefits have been occurred to the high caste farmers who own land of their own. Among them also it is the upper level of influential agriculturalists who reap most of the benefits. Consequently the have-not groups, that is, non-agriculturalists, non-land owners and small-holding farmers have drawn little benefits from it. That is why when their cooperation is sought they are antagonistic and withdraw from cooperation which seeks to benefit largely the high-caste and upper class people. Since
the former out-number the upper groups their withdrawal, therefore, seriously impair programme by non-participation.

A handful of high-caste and high class people are interested in maintaining and retaining the traditional status for obvious reasons. Any programme of change that aims at removing this social inequality and thus to create equalitarianism is vehemently opposed by them. This resistance has succeeded to great deal in denying the needed facilities to the majority of the rural people. The low caste and lower classes want their amelioration and the high castes and high-class people want to maintain their position. They, thus feel suspicious of the programme and the Government alienated the either groups.

The panchayats are dominated by local elites who usually are from high castes and belong to well-to-do groups. Since they wield a great influence in rural life, the external agents approach them and try to use them as key communication. But as they are self-interested and self-seekers, and most of the advantages have directly or indirectly gone to them, so under their leadership there is little hope of the achievement of democratic and equalitarian goals. Under the circumstances there is trial of strength between the rich and influential people, to maintain their traditional status, and the lower and backward classes with an urge to come up, better their lot and to be at par with the erstwhile privileged groups. A lot of factions have emerged in the rural communities on this account.

To expect community development in a democratic idiom, to succeed under these circumstances seems unrealistic. The present rural community system in India does not seem to be structured for democratic and equalitarian self-administration when status, privileges and power are restricted to the dominant groups. This has and will aggravate the problem of inequality and privileges.
Panchayats have also failed to deliver real goods to the people. There does not seem to exist mutual understanding, cooperation and coordination between external agents and panchayats. The institutional leaders are ignorant of their roles and they lack the proper understanding of the programmes.

The failure of the community development programmes as a process of social change in the areas, understudy and report, has been due to the interaction of a multitude of negative factors. However, the essence of the programme lies in education of the people with whom the work is done. In order to make it a programme of the people, by the people and for the people, the people have got to be mentally prepared and trained through education, to take up the responsibility of building up rural India. Emphasis on the achievement of physical targets might give a cosy picture, although its impact is transitory and ephemeral. A programme of change cannot be permanent if the people have not been educated either through conscious or unconscious efforts.

Every element of the rural family that is adult, women and children have to receive equal attention in the Community Development Programme. There are evidences to show that Community Development has failed as a process of social change because of apathy of female folks of the rural communities. Children of today are the makers of tomorrow. If they are properly and adequately prepared they will be better equipped to man and discharge their huge responsibilities devolving on them in future.

Primary education facilities which have been extended to people through the efforts of external agents of community development are not being fully utilized because of ignorance and lack of appreciation of education by the people. People feel that unless the general standard of
living is not raised they are not in a position to afford education for their children. Lack of facilities for post-primary education and poverty are hindrances and school as such is not becoming an effective media to change the outlook of the younger generations. Progress in the field of education has been achieved, though it is very slow and uneven. In the educational ladder the distance between higher castes on the one hand and the low castes on the other is still very wide though a new educated elites are in the process of formation among the hitherto illiterate castes.

Unless this gulf is not bridged, the disparities among different groups in the community will further widen. Consequently for acceleration of the tempo of economic progress embracing the majority of persons within each caste and community has to accompany efforts at expanding educational opportunities. Unless it is not achieved the purpose of democratization, social justice, mass social progress and social enhancement will not be possible.

The process of change through the monetary contribution of community development, however, has been set.

Persuasion and not coercion can induce desirable change in rural India. People by and large sticking to the old way of thinking and doing. The emergence of cash economy, independent wage earners, migration and decline of the power of high castes in the secular life, because of social legislation, political safeguards and greater intensity of cultural contacts has not accelerated the rate of progress which is still very slow. In addition people still suffer from hang over mentality, conservatism, suspiciousness and traditionalism of the past. They look to the administration for everything. Farm is family based and agriculture is still a way of life.

Perception of the external agents and of their programme among the people is very poor. It is only a few individuals of middle or upper class
farmers who exhibit knowledge of the programme. They represent its achievements. To the external agents the social enhancement and better economic position of those selected few is an indicator of social change. There exists enormous disparity in the distribution of rewards of the programme. Personal relations, political influence and affiliations and economic standing of the individual dominate the life of the masses. This disparity and favouritism is visible among individuals of the same village and among the village of the same block. Consequently people’s participation which was encouraging at the initial stage has deteriorated and the masses have lost all interests in the programme. It appears, as if, too little attention is given to the question of finding out if the programme is acquiring community bases.

Youth and women seem to be least affected by the programme and have the distorted perception of the external agents. Youth appreciate the idea but of clubs and other recreational activities with some improvement in its structure and function. The village tailoring schools organised under the programme have served no purpose. The women are not in a position to make use of the skill to add to the family income. There is a very limited market in the community, where the members of well-to-do families had one or at the most two garments. As a novelty of learning new skill seem to have worn off. Women who wanted to make the novelty a source of additional learning found that there is no market of their skill.

Little changes have occurred in the family life and household patterns of the community because of the introduction of Community Development. People, in rural communities, are still ill fed, ill clad and ill housed and lack both the stimulus and motivations for better life. Likewise, health and sanitation programmes have not made any headway in rural community.
How far Community Development Programme have provided motivations for leadership and how far they have been accepted is a question which requires intensive research. The present study has further shown that incentive was provided through organizing Gram Swayak Groups. But these young leaders either lacked the leadership qualities or were not properly guided for goal achievement. The result is that they are leaders on papers. Similarly, how far the external agents have made the people problem conscious, too, requires intensive death study. The present study shows that no efforts have been made in this regard. Observation of the community life and response of the people indicates that the village communities are still facing these very problems which they faced prior to the introduction of the programme.

Majority of the people have shown their lack of interest and zeal in utilizing the existing facilities and creating something more. This failure is probably due to the lack of educational preparation of the people for this type of change.

A gradual social change is, however, engulfing the community life. The factors responsible for this change are diffused throughout the village communities. Their impact, however, may vary. Land reforms, efforts to mechanise agriculture, provisions for electrification, medical facilities, programmes of large scale industrialisation, monetization of various sectors of economic life, Changes in trade, institutional and social relationships, unification of the country under one political government, and rapid development of means of transport and communication etc. are some of the positive factors of social change. Besides, natural and demographic factors, and the external agents who are working with the communities have also succeeded in effecting social change as it has been demonstrated in case of education and
certain environmental and hygienic improvements though they have not been maintained.

The social life of the village communities shows that caste is still a dominant factor which, along with other situational factors, determines the status of an individual. It is on rare occasions that existence of class structure in the community may be felt. One such occasion mentioned was when Panchayat elections were held.

There is, however, non-recognition of traditional obligations and privileges. The relations of the people are tending to be interest-oriented rather than obligatory. The extra privileges beyond one's labour are granted to the labourers and other non-agriculturalists. They, in turn, do not extend their cooperation to the landowners beyond the wages.

Family pattern of the village communities shows a deviation from the traditional pattern. There are signs of break up of the joint family system, under the impact of equalitarian family ideals conveyed via urbanization, industrialization, and other concomitants of improved rural urban transportation. It appears that prior to assuming the form of nuclear family, joint family passes through certain successive stages. There is a change in the interfamilial relations and individual members are gaining more and more independence. The impact of the social factors of social change are felt in the family life and parents, in the choice of occupational career, prefer to give independence to children. Women's status is enhanced comparatively and so is their role in the household matters.

There is also a change in neighbourly relations which are tending to be contractual in nature rather than obligatory ones. People feel it and yet there is no desire to revive the past. In intra-family relations, caste is a dominant factor and there is no free interaction.
people is determined by customs of the village. In the matters of the economic activities, however, caste barriers are ignored and there is frequent interaction.

Women are still caste bound in their interaction. Because of the state legislation of equality of castes there has developed mutual distrust and antagonism among the high caste and low caste women. In the inter-family relations there is, however, a change. Women press to be consulted and they interfere in the matters of males. But this change is not universal in nature and women still possess a subordinate status. Because of the reluctance and refusal of the low caste women to undertake traditional duties high caste women have to assume those duties. Males have to work more than they used to work in earlier times, in the economic pursuits, as such, the role of the women in the household duties has increased. Outside the house they lack initiative and independence. Their activities and movements are determined by males.

The occupational structure of the communities is undergoing a rapid change. Communities possess limited capacity to provide employment opportunities. The situation is further aggravated because of increase in population and shift toward nuclear family. Among the agriculturists, it is forcing rapid fragmentation of land-holdings. Successive fragmentation is reducing the capacity of agriculturists to employ labourers.

The soil of the fields has become exhausted through loss of humus and fertilizing elements due to prolonged periods of uncontrolled cultivations. Poor economic stability, persistent money lending and successive fragmentation create long range obstacles to agricultural progress.

Demographic factors, successive breaking up of the families, and limitation of the occupational structure has resulted in a series of changes in
Fragmentation of holdings has reduced the economic stability of the agriculturalists, and has reduced the chances of the employment of new agricultural techniques. It has further resulted in overwork on the part of the agriculturist because of his inability to employ labourers. It has deprived him of participating in the social life of the village and has resulted in his virtual detachment from the village life. It has also reduced the capacity of the farmers to give land on lease or on share cropping. The area given by the agriculturists for share-cropping over the period of ten years has decreased. The erstwhile neglected farmers of small holdings need to be adequately stimulated and motivated so that they derive maximum benefit from the Community Development Programme. A supplementary programme to aid specifically this section has to be undertaken so as to diffuse more generally the benefits of economic development.

Lack of employment opportunities and competition among the non-landowning groups and cultivators with small holdings to secure land on rent or share-cropping has led to certain advantages for the landowner. He declines to pay his share of seeds and other accessories necessary for cultivation. This has created mutual suspicion and antagonism among the people.

On the social frontiers it has resulted in antagonism and misunderstanding at two levels. Firstly, antagonism among non-landowning cultivators themselves on account of their competitive designs to throw away each other from the land-owning groups and secondly antagonism towards the landowners who prefer to give land on cultivation to land-owning share-croppers who compete with them for livelihood. The surplus man power has not only increased the unemployment and under-employment in the village but also affected the occupational structure in another way.

The job seeking outside the village reduces the chances of parti-
cipation of the people in the social life of the village and this is especially so if the labourers migrate from the village for some time and do not come back regularly. It, therefore, leads to their virtual detachment from the village life. The tendency of detachment has led to the creation of a heterogenous type of relations in a so-called homogenous social groups.

This situation incidently goes against the principles of community development which aims at creating a sense of solidarity, cohesion, mutual dependence and regard for each other in the countryside and at providing adequate means of livelihood to every person in the village. It also fails to arouse mass consciousness in the countryside so that the people could identify and solve their problems.

The dependence of the population upon agriculture is not reduced and avenues of employment are gradually dying out from the community. The manual class such as labourers, have started migrating from the village and their stay outside the village is increasing. On the one hand the ruralites are being engulfed by the larger society in which they must compete with people who are better prepared and who enjoy the benefits and leisure time of well-developed economy, while on the other hand they are bound by the limitations of a relatively inflexible land-based enterprise where they are still at the mercy of the natural forces; where they lack the capacity of organization, lack time for leisure, pursuits and broad-based value system to give them proper orientation.

The efforts of the government to utilize every inch of land for cultivation has led to utilization of pastoral land of the communities too. The people and especially the non-agriculturists are finding it difficult to keep animals for want of adequate grazing grounds for the cattle.

The existence of panchayats has been regarded as not conducive to community welfare and their acceptability is marked by a great variation.
Panchayats are group dominated and as such no contribution has been made by them either towards creating harmonious relations among the people or for leading the people towards the goal of democratic decentralization and of "Welfare State". Instead, it has led to the emergence of factions in rural communities.

Community power structure has undergone an appreciable change since the introduction of panchayats. The decrease in the role of caste in the secular life of the community and panchayat elections have given birth to institutional or formal leaders along with informal leaders. The exclusive recognition of formal leadership by the external agents and their insistence to contact the people through the institutional leaders have, however, reduced the importance of the informal leaders. This has also resulted in rivalry between the two types of leaders in the village which in turn, gives a dissipated or diffused picture of real leadership.

Leadership is still in the hands of a few high ups who are basically opposed to change, are desirous of retaining their traditional status and are very sceptical of capacity of the youth to shoulder the huge responsibility of rural welfare objectives. Differential treatment on the part of officials and benefits shared by the selected few, has led to differential distribution of rewards and facilities in the communities. It has led to the widening of gap between the rich and poor farmers of the community under report.

If the present trend of differential treatment is continued, the dynamics of the rural communities may be affected seriously. Furthermore it is against the democratic and equalitarian philosophy of the State. Presently, it results in control upon the political, social and cultural life of the community of a small upper class which uses the various insti-
tutions for its own ends. This hampers the all round development of the rural society which Community Development Programme aims at. This also decreases their voluntary participation of the common man. He regards it as "Begar": Compulsory service, which he is made to undertake under the instructions of the government officials and the rich upper class, the members of which assume supervisory role and thus, get the credit of the work.

The village communities in which the programme aimed at introducing an integrated social change by virtue of its defective implementation and role of the external agents seem to be in the process of disintegration. The result is that people even today are content with a self-perpetuating vicious circle of poverty, disease, hunger, ignorance and lack of technological skill and capital to improve their lot. There is no variation in division of labour. Forms are traditional and are characterized by functional diffusiveness, affectively, expressive consummatory and ascriptive. There is no correlation between the number of occupational status-roles available to reorganize the population count. The occurrence of migration, higher frequency of contacts with urban centres, break up of the traditional family system, slow introduction of education and individualism: changes in the relationship in human affairs and contractual orientation show that communities are tending to a more gesellschaft-like form. It is difficult to say that they are static as the nature of dynamicism are rather undifferentiated within the system. The knowledge held by each member, closely resembles the knowledge held by other members of the group. People still exercise a minimal control over the environment and their level of living is at the subsistence level. They are poorly equipped to absorb the new items of innovation and new institutional framework and as such, their introduction has the disintegrating influence upon the social system.