CHAPTER - VII

CONCLUSION,

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Rural Local Government: Problems and Prospects:

In the year 1952, drawing heavily the Etawah Project, a sort of additional dynamism of community development was set in. It had all essential imperatives working through the realization of the felt needs, to attain the ends which villagers themselves desired rather than what government thought to be good for them, to create a co-operative effort and to dissolve the age-old division between officials and villagers. This was made possible by the recruitment of less authoritarian village level workers, by creating a cadre with social work disposition. Long back, it could have had its impact on the community. The extension of district administration, the district officers were directly responsible for development work of the villages. It was implemented in the year 1954.

Though it was against the spirit and philosophy of Etawah Project, the autonomy of development organization and staff at the village level, the extension of district level involvement in decentralization was co-ordinative. A study team by Balwantrai Mehta suggested a plan for emergence of a new kind of leadership indicating a pragmatic attitude for welfare and local development. The realization of value of local institutions is possible only
by establishing an administrative link between villagers and districts. This was really a "democratic decentralization". The main responsibility for development was with the local representatives at the village level panchayats.

The panchayat samithies have to take over the development of agriculture, improvement of cattle, promotion of local industries, public health, welfare work, administration of primary schools and other functions. The administrative structure between block and village levels was streamlined and strengthened by instituting Block Development Officers as field administrative officers and village level workers as operational personal. The practical development of local institutions of administration was one of the primary influences in the emergence of grassroots of democracy. But it was a slight deviation from Gandhian concept of Panchayat Raj which was in terms of interlocking of villages. The democratic decentralization process has linked the villages with district administration.

In October 1960, catching up with the spirit, a few states, adopted the system of three tier structure consisting of panchayat at village, block and district level. Each of these three bodies is a statutory and corporate body which consists of mainly elected members. At District Development council, the proportion of official members is quite larger. The officers of development administration with this three tier structure, has been
reoriented. Thus the role of Panchayat Raj bodies in the development field may be summarized.

At the village level, the functions of panchayats are to formulate and implement the rural development programmes. They are also responsible for the execution of plans of panchayat samithies. At the samithi level, the functions are mainly the preparation of block plan on the basis of village plans, implementation of community development schemes of all blocks in the district.

The structure of such development administration has three different administrative personnel namely village level workers, it includes a team of trained personnel in various fields namely, agriculture, health, animal husbandry. It is under the operational control of a block development officer for operative interaction with the villagers. The team works directly or through the panchayat union on all powerful functionary with authority and co-ordination at the district level. The process of democratic decentralization, providing all level bodies of Panchayat Raj as institutional base for planning, formulation and implementation, and opportunity for peoples representatives to participate in development programmes, envisaged a team of officers for development programmes and expected the collector be the captain of these exercises. All the states have not provided uniform role for collectors in such a development administration at district level.
The role of collector is participatory, the collector of district is, in one way or the other, participating in development administration. Thus, the evaluation of development administration depends upon the role of collector at the district level in one form or the other. It has evolved an institutional framework of Panchayat Raj bodies namely panchayats, panchayat unions and Zilla panchayat and District Development councils for taking development to the doors of the citizens and making them to participate.

The introduction of panchayat Raj in the District Development Administration proclaims itself as a transfer of sovereignty from states to citizens. Thus, it envisages the emergence of a political and social order based on a new communication and grassroots approach. The process has not only delegated power to the citizens in villages, but also provided a training ground for leadership at the local level with freedom and democracy in place of traditional features. Such philosophical essence of panchayat raj in development administration may be seen as an evolution of development administration.

In this process, panchayat raj has authoritative jurisdiction over various departments at the district level. At these levels, elected bodies namely panchayat unions and district development councils have been established not only for policy making but also for keeping a watch over the administration. Thus, the administration for itself is a transfer of sovereignty from states to the citizens. It envisages the emergence of a political and
social order based on a new communication and grassroot approach. The process has not only delegated power to the citizens in villages, but also provided a training ground for leadership at the local level with freedom and democracy in place of traditional features.

In this process, panchayat raj has authoritative jurisdiction over various departments at the district level. The administration for development in the process of translating the ideological propositions has combined both democratic principles and bureaucratic administration by enabling the local population to participate in an established way.

The role of the collector has been decentralized, while development efforts have been diffused among panchayat bodies to secure popular mobilization and improve the capacity of the administration at the gross-root level. At this stage, new set-up of rural local self-government has been established to bring political parties, voluntary organizations and panchayat bodies together. Ultimately a system of forces of both formal and informal operation in development administration has been evolved where both administrative and para-administrative set-up are integrated. The combination of administrative and elective bodies is well within the fundamental idea of combining bureaucracy with democratic features of society.

This has established certain working principles of initiating local human resources for participation, working through the felt needs of
villagers and planning from below. This has resulted in two trends in development field at the district level, besides functional specialization and local government, citizen’s involvement also has been contemplated in evolution of district development administration.

The rural local self-institutions, have had incorporated philosophy of development administration, and brought the people together in the operation. There is an involvement of institutions citizens and political forces. The evolution of local self-government towards development has combined all these forces together in the evolution of development administration. The question is that, the process of development in local self-government as a process of evolution of development administration raises the following problems. How the process of development at the rural sector could best be obtained by establishing grass-root democracy and participatory democracy. The democratic decentralization and guided democracy can be sustained through the process of development of a community.

To cite an example, a brief theoretical discussion on local government system, its role in interest articulation and in interest aggregation in the context of developing nations by B.S. Bhargav will be relevant. He suggested that Almond’s model is suitable in studying local government system. He concluded that, panchayat raj has in present context, become a ‘power mechanism’ where local political elites have emerged. The local
political elites have sustained only when services are rendered. Otherwise services to people in the community as key factors for development became a responsibility of local elites. These services become reality only when they have a power mechanism. The power mechanism can be sustained only when the people are served.

This is an inextricable relationship between development and rural self-government, where one could see not only an evolution of development administration but also an emergence of a unique organizational model for development. The question of looking at the local self-government as an organization for development may apparently look like a fallacious assumption, as government and organization have distinctive features. The idea with which local self-government has been invested with greater participatory responsibilities may make local institution an organizational mechanism to govern and also for evolving plans for development. If it is really achieved, these rural local self-governments may also be seen as an organizational model, rather than a mere model of self-government.

Secondly, a debate has emerged the question of looking into form and content of rural local self-government. The principles of development from below holds key to fact that local needs vary with the difference in physical and social imperatives of the community to which local governments are responsible. So the formulation and establishment of a monolithic form of local self-government will be more of a “development from above” rather
than "development from below". The present leadership in local self-
government may be seen as a transition, from selective to elective and
hereditary to functional. So there is a sequence of relationship between form
of leadership and service, the maintenance of service and resources
mobilization and autonomy for local self-government.

Unlike the autonomy that is being talked about in the relationship
between center and the states in federal government, the question of
autonomy for local self-government is distinctly different from point of view
of the linkage between leadership and service mobilization. To state
explicitly, the needs of each village may distinctly different not due to the
type but from the point of view of the ways in which needs may have to be
met. Then, if such needs are not really met in manner in which people in
locality could realize the benefits, leaders in local self-government will be at
peril unlike that of the leaders in state and central government. In such a
contract, the leaders in local self-government should have an exclusive
power to have a taxation policy and to mobilize resources. If they do not
have such power, local self-government will be merely depending upon state
government. It is often said that the local self-government function like a
departmental wing of state government when one looks at the manner in
which the election to local government are conducted.

Looking into these considerations, problem of local self-government
is not the size, form and shape of local self-government will be effectively
functioning in greater autonomy with regard to taxation proposals, financial management and other related matters. S.R. Maheshwari, a political scientist, in his lucid evaluation of this idea of the formation of local self-government has stated that, "while inspiration from center has benefited the institution of local government by enabling its problems and issues to be examined periodically, it has, at the same time weakened the urge to experiment and introduce variation suited for local needs. India has so vast and diverse and local variations and so basic that no single model of local government can be uniformly effective. Indeed there should be a deliberate policy to encourage experimentation and to allow variation to suit local requirements so that local government develops its roots".

Further, the present day social life in rural India is increasingly bound by welfare programmes and also there is an increased dependency of local people upon the states as an agency for such utility. In this context, rural local self-government can be a perfect mechanism, because state government with its vast operational area becomes a victim of success of welfare. Hence, who really gets benefits of welfare and who is really contributing for welfare could not be visualized by state level bureaucracy. Rural local government with its limited area of operation may a successful unit of welfare mechanism and also to develop a participatory process in welfare exercise. Thus rural self-government can be an effective welfare
agency with a scope for effective functioning in collaboration with voluntary agencies.

The rural self-government can strong enough as a basic democracy to take over the responsibility of the state to citizens in the event of a breakdown of popular government at the state. Normally, in the event of failure of popular state government, the well entrenched bureaucracy steps in and maintains day to day affairs of the government. This kind of bureaucratic ascendancy in welfare has got its limitations. If rural local self-government with its unique organizational model of development can be made available enough to live up to the expectation of rural people to take care of their day to day affairs of social life, the bureaucratic ascendancy can be kept at a minimum level and it can rather be diffused in such a way that it are answerable to local self-government in the context of the failure of popular government at the state level.

This may be a sociological answer to the view so often held by political scientists that the bureaucratic ascendancy accounts in part for the ineffectiveness of representative democracy. Hence, rural local self-government will not only be an agency for social change through public participation but will also a co-partner of state government and may opt for a stand by arrangement in the event of a break down of popular government at the state level. The constitutional 73rd Amendment helped in the formulation of laws with basic structural framework by which external
interference could be curtailed and sufficient representation of weaker sections could be secured in panchayat raj institutions. Besides mandatory provisions, the state legislature has been empowered to have provisions of decentralization of powers and responsibilities to panchayats at the appropriate levels which will enable them to function as institutions of self-government.

Constitutional status accorded to panchayat bodies will definitely check the state to temper with the life of these institutions. This will enable them to function as instruments of vibrant and viable rural local self-government and acquire the capacity to learn, to respond to change and to mobilize better people’s participation in managing their own affairs. Making gram sabha, the soul of panchayats consisting of all adults to discuss and decide regarding their own problems will enhance peoples participation in development programmes in a democratic way. This will foster maximum accountability and transparency of administration and public awareness. Fixing the tenure of every panchayat for a period of five years will help build up confidence in panchayat raj institutions. The tendency for long supersession and dissolution of these bodies on some ground or other have been curbed.

Another important aspect of the Act is that the improvement in political conditions of women by providing one-third reservations of seats. Direct election of all members of panchayat at village level by people will
also contribute in accelerating the democratic process at the grassroots level. This will boost local people's initiation and enhance their involvement in the system through electoral process. It will create a feeling of oneness in the system and will open formal means of communication. The effective implementation of new panchayat raj will encounter numerous problems. However, the following are most common which have to be tackled on priority.

The Act provides for political empowerment of women by providing one-third reservation of seats. Similarly, the other disadvantaged group of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes will get opportunity to enter into system through reservation in these bodies. The lack of preprendness on the part of panchayat raj functionaries to shoulder new responsibility may result from lack of clarity about the concept and objectives of the panchayat raj system. It is therefore, necessary that a massive awareness programme is undertaken to overcome this problem. It will go a long way in creating a congenial and healthy environment for democratic decentralization.

The powers, authority and responsibility are, of course, left with legislatures of the state. The planning and implementing the programmes of economic development and social justice including the subjects provided in the Eleventh schedule which contains 29 items. If all items are entrusted to panchayat, it will be of an higher order and with enlarged service areas, it may emerge as a strong local government eventually. Panchayat raj bodies
could not become economically viable due to lack of financial resources. So, when the funds for meeting local requirements are not enough, then they lose interest in panchayat raj institutions activities.

Though the Act essentially seeks to steer panchayat raj institutions in the right direction, but one important aspect of panchayats is completely missing. This is the power to adjudicate on disputes which arise in village itself. Thus, idea of dispensing justice locally, cheaply and existing legislation on Nyaya panchayat at the village level to adjudicate disputes at village level was in practice earlier and was an inseparable part of social system. Therefore, it is essential to consider this aspect, while state government enact their legislation or make further amendments in it.

Decentralization through involvement of local level representative institutions in the formation of plans for development as well as implementation is being advocated in the interest of efficient utilization of resources and for ensuring more equitable sharing of benefits from development. The present concern for decentralization should be seen in the context of the slow rate of benefits following from infrastructure already built up as indicated by the slow growth of productivity and insufficient percolation of benefits to poor and the socially disadvantaged sections. It is despite proliferation of poverty alleviation programmes in recent period. So, improvement in productivity through speedy working of modern technology, better allocation and utilization of available resources and greater impact of
such productivity improvement in the living conditions of the weaker section of population are sought to be achieved through the decentralization process. The pre-requisites for decentralized development such as organizational capabilities are very well recognized now than in the early years. That was why performance of decentralized development has been dismal barring a few exceptions. It involves delegation of decision-making and execution powers to the sub-state levels with corresponding devolution of resources.

Rajni Kothari, has rightly observed that merely holding elections of panchayats and municipalities does not mean decentralization. They need to have significant powers and resources to work with and they need to be organized vertically through functional inter-relationship along with various tiers, reaching out to the states without first (or simultaneously) encoding the states themselves with significant powers and resources. There are two opposite temptations that the centre and the states must respectively avoid. One is the temptation for national leaders to engage in a direct appeal to lower levels without permitting intermediate structures to grow; the modern version of this is populism. The other danger is in the opposite direction, namely, the growth of regional overlords through the increased power of the states which is not shared further down. To steer clear of both these dangers, it is essential to agree that greater autonomy for the states is at once part of a larger process of decentralization and an essential prerequisite thereof.
During the last four decades moved heavily in the direction of centralization economically, technologically and politically, dispute federal democratic structure. Ghandhiji had warned us against these developments and advocated his model of decentralization which poses neither a fragmented view of the polity as found in the communitarian approach, nor a mere proliferation of centrally controlled structures at lower levels as implied in the pyramidal approach. Rather, decentralization is to be conceived as a step in direction of a more integrated policy, a better performing economy and a model of social reconstruction necessary for a properly functioning democracy and a genuinely socialist state.

The earlier concept grew out of failure of the community development administration in involving the people in development process. The Balwantrai Maheta Committee Report, Panchayat raj institutions were thought of as better instruments of development, instead of viewing development as an instrument of the people. This report was an essential step in the direction of debureaucrating development.

**Problems Of Rural Development In Karwar District:**

Rural development is a very difficult task especially in remote areas in Karwar district. The standard of living in Karwar district in especially in rural areas is very low. The agricultural technology in this district is primitive. Facilities like electrification, transport, road, communication,
health, irrigation and education which are all necessary infrastructure for
development are not developed. While new industrial enterprises do not
come up in sufficient numbers in rural areas, and traditional industries have
stagnate. Institutions like banking and marketing are very small in number.
The situation is often described of that of a vicious circles of poverty in rural
areas. Since the level of income is very low, savings are low and investment
is also low and the rate of capital formation is also very low.

In this district around 90 percent of the population is resident of rural
areas and agriculture is the main occupation. For agriculture production
water is most important input since uncertain rainfall not only provides a set
back to agricultural production but often leads to drought and famine.
Another problem is availability of fertilizer. Use of chemical fertilizer is a
part of modern agriculture. So farmers cannot make its use. For the supply
of all these inputs viz., seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides, the
whole net work of storage is required in rural areas. This has to accessible to
farmers community. Often the agriculturists do not have resources to buy
fertilizers and other input nor to adopt modern agriculture practices. But in
this district rural credit institutions are not available adequately and farmers
were mainly dependent on money-lenders who often charged higher rate of
interest. Sufficient agricultural credit institutions need to be set up especially
in rural areas. The middle man s harvests a huge profit by raising prices in
loan season. The profit is largely at the cost of producer and consumer.
The problem with organization is that they are not properly provided assistance to beneficiaries. The existing organizations are insufficient to meet out the demand of people of rural areas. For effective implementation of rural development programmes should be larger in number, presently there are Eleven blocks in Karwar district, it should be more than Fifteen blocks for effective implementation. The state government cannot afford to provide funds out of its own resources for all rural development programmes. Therefore, state government should approach the central government for grant. So, there should be more funds for proper implementation of rural development programmes.

Observation And Suggestions:

Rural development is a never ending process. The success of a set of programmes takes rural society upwards. This achievement itself engenders some problems. To resolve which new measures are devised and put into operation. Rural Development is thus continuous in its very conception, with only the contents being changed or the emphasis of the various ingredients being varied over a period of time. This is well illustrated by the experience with rural development. Started community Development Programme in 1952, and later – having implemented with varying measures of success, Intensive Agricultural District Programme, the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme, the small and Marginal Formers Agency
Programme have been engaged in the implementation of the integrated Rural Development Programme. The contents of rural development have been changed from time to time in the perception of local dynamics of rural society as well as the impulses and forces released by the success of earlier programmes.

To trace the policy implications from past experience, a look on the performance is necessary. Rural development in Karwar district revealed not so good impact on the rate of poverty line. In Karnataka too, like other states, the programmes were implementing since their inception, but no comprehensive study was undertaken to measure its effectiveness in the state. The present study, it is hoped will be helpful in this direction.

The hypothesis set in the first chapter is examined. The hypothesis is that, the Rural Development Programme have helped the poorer sections of rural society. This hypothesis is fully validated. It is fully true. The very basic purpose of Integrated Rural Development Programme of lifting the poorest of rural poor below the line of poverty. The benefit of this programme is directly flows to the poorest of the rural masses by giving the top priority to proper identification of beneficiaries. No doubt, Integrated Rural Development Programme is a best programme and has the potential to eradicate poverty from rural areas. Thus, the Rural Development Programmes have helped the poorer sections of rural society.
Thus study is undertaken in Karnataka with case study of Karwar district. Researcher discussed policies, planning, implementation and organization set up for rural development. The objectives of this study are as under: (a) to critically analyse policy of the rural development; (b) to study the planning process for the acceleration of rural development programmes; (c) to study the organizational structure of the rural development agencies; (d) to study critically the approaches to the implementation of the rural development programmes; (e) to suggest suitable measures for improving the programmes.

Field work for the study undertaken in all the eleven blocks of the Karwar district. The study covers 100 samples of various rural development programmes beneficiaries. The highest number of beneficiaries are 52 belongs to scheduled casts, followed by non-scheduled casts 39 and scheduled Tribes 9. The beneficiaries were selected on random basis in the blocks under study. The study has been attempted from past experience, during the development programme, poor people and areas lacking resources, tend to be left behind and intra-regional and inter-regional disparities in come are created. To ensure the balance growth of all sections of the society and all areas, special policy for rural poor and backward areas is needed.

In the agriculture sector the diffusion of new implements and machinery has decreased the occupational opportunities of the village
industrial service sector which has been supplying the traditional implements and machinery. The traditional implements and machinery have been replaced by new tools techniques. This has created surplus labour. Now they are becoming unemployed and becoming poorer due to the nonavailability of employment. There should be policy provision so that these persons who become unemployed due to the introduction of modern technology may be adjusted.

The integrated Rural Development Programme is to be implemented at the block level. Hence, the government is paying attention to the preparation of appropriate block plans. It is realized that the productive programmes at block level should be related to the local resources, needs as well as the goals of block plan, viz; eradication of poverty through enhancement of productive employment.

The study has focused that the very concept of local level planning has emerged from the need to prepare for the optimum utilization of local resources to meet the felt needs of the people, to provide employment and adequate sources of income to rural poor. The planning process, which is next step after policy formulation, require adequate information system that is reliable data, village wise information for different resources, etc. But it has found during survey that reliable data is not available because no such survey of the villages have been made. Consequently, in the absence of reliable data objective of the plan cannot be achieved in true sense. As per
the concept of local planning, trained and competent staff should be appointed to examine the local needs and available resources and infrastructure, as per the local felt-needs plan should be formulated.

It has also been found that there is a provision of district and block levels planning but no planning cell with competent and technical staff has been set up till now. Only existing staff of Block Development Officer's office in the office in district are being prepared plan. There should be planning cells in block as well as district levels consisting of trained, competent and technical staff. Plan formulation is a technical task and it should remain the responsibility of specialists only. But these plans have to be prepared keeping in view the beneficiaries choice of schemes.

Since District Rural Development societies activities are not linked with activities of other departments and other institutions which should be linked in future. The District Rural Development society is responsible body and can act as co-ordinating agency for all development works of different departments. It is also suggested that the attempts to follow a right approach in plan formulation and implementation within framework of multi-level planning concept should be made. Further, the District Rural Development society, Karwar which has exercise supervisory control on whole of district, has also not prepared five years perspective plan of the basis of guidelines issued by the government under villager cluster approach.
It is also added that the financial allocations are simply made equally among blocks without any consideration of resources endowments, available infrastructural facilities and rate of poverty etc, which is equally important to give proper representation to the blocks as per need. There is no proper arrangements of distribution of services among beneficiaries. Existing preparation of annual plan does not serve any meaningful purpose.

It requires five perspective planning system. Since poverty in rural areas even after around four decades of planning is so deep rooted, it cannot reduce without adopting proper methods and approach. It is, therefore, suggested that in future highest priority should be given to preparation of five year perspective plans. The perspective plan and annual plan need to be supplemented by a credit plan. But there is no such system available in Karwar District. The credit plan will consist of the credit requirements for implementation of these schemes institutions in the area in mobilizing credit for implementation of these plans. Since there is no perspective plan in Karwar district, the question of having a perspective credit plan does not arise.

Identification of Beneficiaries:

First step under the implementation process consists in identifying families of target group. It has been fund that many families have to be left out, and as a result quite a few of them constantly try to get themselves
included in programme. Researcher checked 100 cases out of which 92 percent cases were surveyed earlier which called unsystematic survey and 8 percent families are taken up after surveying them by gram panchayat. The study further indicated that poor and deserving people have been left out. It is, therefore, suggested that a survey committee consisting of Assistant Development Organisers, Extension officer, village patwar (savak) concerned, president of concerned gram panchayat and member of the village should be constituted and detailed survey be conducted. The responsibility should be fixed on the committee. After making complete survey one month notice should be given to the villagers to submit their grievances to authority. After one month a test check should be made by project officer of the concerned block to verify the correctness of identified list. After this process list of identified beneficiaries should be approved for further necessary action.

**Payment of Loan By Bank:**

It has also been noticed that the maximum numbers of applications are to be delayed by the bank authorities. It is stated by the beneficiaries that some had to visit bank twenty to twenty four times for receiving the payment of loan. It is stated by the beneficiaries that bank offices also demand for security. It is against the instructions and guidelines of Reserve Bank and injustice with the target group. This practice needs immediate
attention of the concerned authorities. There should be fixed limit to make the payment of loan in the bank not more than one week in any case.

It has further been observed that there are 165 branches of different banking institutions in Karwar District. But these branches are not sufficiently located in remote rural areas and are insufficient to meet out the demand of remote areas people. The sufficient banking institutions, therefore, need to be set up in backward and remote rural areas in this district.

Monitoring And Evaluation:

The programme guidelines envisage to introduce proper monitoring and evaluation of programmes, but nothing has been done in this regard. Thus there should be regular monitoring and evaluation of programmes. This task should be entrusted to some independent cell or agency so that it may opening and frankly come forward and find out its short comings and practical suggestions for the future improvement and increased effectiveness in working of rural development programmes.
Notes And References:


7. Singh Raj, Problems And Prospects Of New Panchayati Raj Institution, Kurukshetra, Vol No. 49, No.7., p.5

