CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The Rural community occupies a prominent place in India as the majority of the people are in the rural areas. The ancient culture of India has emerged on the banks of the rivers, as these places are most suitable for cultivations. Our ancestors were engaged mostly in agricultural activities. Different crops and methods of their cultivation mostly depended on the seasons and the geographical feature of the particular place. In ancient period our villages were the cultural centres and there were strong personal relations among the people in the villages. However, we cannot claim that our societies have upheld the principles of equality and there is complete peace and calmness in all sections of the society. The People in the grass root levels had shed their sweat for the growth of agriculture and for the survival of the entire society. Gradually the society was divided into the rich, the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized people. Later, these divisions grew mainly due to the social taboos and religious customs that prevailed in the society. Thus the level of poverty and unemployment had been increasing continuously in our rural community. The people in the rural sectors lacked the appropriate skills and techniques for the exploitation of the natural resources due to the growth of the cities. The skilled people moved on to urban areas for jobs, survival and luxurious life. Meanwhile the rich and the industrialists concentrated more on taking advantage of the cheap labour and natural resources in the rural areas. Basically, urban regions were not able to provide proper jobs and decent lives to all the people.

There is not a particular definition for the word ‘rural development’. Basically this word highlights the socio-economic development of the rural
community. Besides, transportation, infrastructure facilities, irrigations, decentralization, women empowerment, rural poverty eradication, overcoming the unemployment problem are the areas for the rural development. A holistic approach should be associated with this concept rather than increasing the Gross Domestic Product and economical progress for evaluating the rural development. In our country, from early period onwards individuals and groups were very seriously involved in the development of the oppressed, marginalized and the poor people in the rural sectors. The historical records reveal that the Kings who ruled our country had provided financial assistance to the poor and those suffering from various kinds of ailments. In the time of natural calamities, people and groups used to deliberately spend their time and money to rescue the people from these troubles. Individuals and groups were motivated by the religious faiths and principles which had done good work for the welfare of the poor people in the rural areas. Great contributions have been given by the Christian missionaries, who have come to our country mainly for giving education to the people belonging to the lower caste sections. The voluntary works done under the guidance of religious groups have contributed much to our rural community. Some of the rural development projects initiated by the voluntary agencies during twentieth and twenty first centuries are praiseworthy and attracted attention from all over the world. The examples are Sriniketan experiment, Marthandum experiment and Gurgaon experiment. Activities of the voluntary agencies had made possible not only the development of the economical areas but also activated the social dimension and depth of the society.

During the pre independence period, the foreign rulers in India had not given any attention to the progress of the people in the villages. During this period, small scale industries and grass root organizations had faced
severe threats and deterioration of its activities took place continuously. This caused the increase of poverty and unemployment in an alarming manner. The Process of industrialization had only increased the level of exploitation of the natural resources. But it did not help to generate more jobs to the rural community. This was the main criticism made by the Great Soul of India, Mahatma Gandhi. But after the Indian independence, policy makers and government agencies had included appropriate programmes in the Five Year Plans, especially for the rural community. Some of the rural development programmes were focused on target areas as well as for the special categories of the people. The Arrival of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian scenario during the year of 1915 from South Africa created great awakening in the social, political and economic areas of the country [Gandhi, M.K:1927:p45O]. Though he spent his life for the independence of India, his mind was fully dedicated for the service of the rural community. When he saw poverty, malnutrition, lack of food and shelter in our villages, he was motivated to work among these people. Gandhiji envisaged the ‘Constructive Programme’, mainly for the development of rural sectors. Eighteen items included in the constructive programme mainly concentrated on the socio-economic problems in the society. Very soon many voluntary agencies grew up in India and followed the footpaths of Gandhiji and worked among the rural community. Gandhiji formed some voluntary organizations such as Harijan Sevak Sangh and Kasturbha Memorial Trust. The Branches of these organizations started functioning in several parts of our country. The main aim of the Harijan Sevak Sangh was to work for the welfare of the Harijan Community and to abolish the practices of untouchability from our country. Meanwhile the activities of Sarva Sevak Sangh in the rural sector got great attention in the country.
Chapter 1

The Gandhi Smarak Nidhi is a famous organisation working among the rural community. Basically this was registered as a Trust by the initiative of the disciples of Gandhiji and other prominent persons. The demise of Mahatma Gandhi had caused sorrow in the minds of the Indians, especially the Gandhian followers. The prominent persons like Rajendra Prasad, Kripalani and Kumarappa decided to form a Trust to keep alive the memory of Mahatmaji in India. When this plan was announced people from all walks of life began to donate money and extended support for the purpose voluntarily. The organisation is known as the Gandhi Memorial Trust or the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi. The aim of this organisation is to fulfill Mahatma Gandhiji’s desire for the revamp of the Indian villages. This organisation’s role was great in the implementation of the ‘Constructive Programme’, land reform and peace promotion in India. Very soon prominent people decided to form various branches of this organization in many states of India. The Kerala Gandhi Smarak Nidhi had started to function in Kerala in the year 1957 under the guidances of Mr. Sivanpillai and Mr. Janardan Pillai. Subsequently many branches of this organisation were started in different districts of Kerala and was called as the Gandhi Smaraka Grama Seva Kendram(GSGSK). Great contributions had also been done by these sub centres of the GSGSK in the rural sectors of Kerala. The vision of the GSGSK is to make a casteless and classless society and try to create the sarvodaya society as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi. Other aims are the moral and economic well being of the individuals and societies. The mission of the GSGSK is to serve the poor and the marginalized villagers through the promotion and strengthening of the community based organizations in order to enhance opportunities for employment, income generation, education, health care and social status.
Introduction

Since Independence, the sub centre at Mararikulam of Alappuzha district was very much active in leprosy eradication and land reform activities. Soon after implementing the Panchayath Raj Act, the activities of this centre were extended in many parts of the rural sectors of the Alappuzha district. This sub centre formed the Self Help Groups (SHG) of women by uniting them and tried to generate more economic income generation activities among the rural people. Due to the formation of Self Help Groups and their activities, tremendous changes have been made in the socio-economic field of this district and to a certain extent the district was marching towards Gandhiji’s dream of self sufficient village. This centre has made certain changes according to the situations and needs of the present day society. Thousands of people are getting empowered and financial stability by the intervention of this organisation. They started various self employment programmes in different parts of this district. The study is an attempt to understand the changes that took place in the rural area of the district by the guidance and intervention of the sub centre of the GSGSK Mararikulam and how much the Gandhian principles had been incorporated in the development activities. Another attempt is to find the challenges faced by the organisation and make its function more effective in the coming days. The researcher is trying to analyse the rural development activities of the sub centres by the formation of the Self Help Groups. Whether the self employment programme started by the Self Help Group is an alternative to the development mentioned by Gandhi for the rural sector? Does the Self Help Groups in the capacity as an organisation support the Gandhian concepts of simplicity, swadeshi, village self sufficiency and income generation activities? From the Initial stage onwards, women took very active role in Self Help Groups but recently men are also showing interest in the activities of the organisation. In many places
self employment activities have been started based on the needs of the members and the availability of the resources. Quite interestingly a new era in the concept of rural development was opened with the starting of the SHG by the centre in this district. The Researcher is also focusing on the functions of the organisation, participation of people and income generating activities associated with the centre.

1.1. The Significance of the Study

Even after independence, the various governments are doing many things and allotting funds for the rural development programmes. But practically, this attempt has not even helped to tackle completely the problems like unemployment and poverty from the rural community. Every day hundreds of people are migrating to cities for acquiring jobs in towns and to lead luxurious life. These tendencies could only be changed by generating more employment opportunities in rural sectors. Villages should be self sufficient in all matters and this was the main criterion emphasized by Gandhiji. The government could not identify and provide adequate assistance to the people who are at the bottom levels of the society. In many places voluntary agencies took up the task and worked as mediators between the common people and the ruling government. The Gandhian voluntary agencies always stood for the development of rural community by upholding the Gandhian principles. The activities undertaken by the sub centre of the GSGSK in Alappuzha District is very relevant and it could generate more employment opportunities both for men and women. The Self Help Groups actually helped to strengthen the social relation among the people and also improve the income generation and saving habits, among the rural community. Today, the Gandhian organizations have to make appropriate
changes and interventions according to the needs of the society, especially among the rural community.

1.2. Methodology

The study is based on adequate theoretical support and empirical data. In the theoretical framework all the relevant literature available on the problem has been adopted. In the empirical section, the researcher has collected data from the relevant sources and analyzed with the help of statistical tools and techniques.

1.2.1. The Universe of the Study

The activities of the Kerala Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi in the state of Kerala are selected for the study purpose. The Universe of the study mainly depends on the entire places of the Alappuzha District. In this district more than fifteen sub centres of the GSGSK are working in different parts. Several Self Help Groups are working in association with the sub centres of the GSGSK. The researcher has collected data and informations from all the sub centres of the GSGSK Mararikulam. Besides, the researcher has visited several centres of GSGSK in the state and collected data and informations from prominent Gandhian activists.

1.2.1. Objectives

1. To explain the functions of the Kerala Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi through the G.S.G.S.K in Mararikulam

2. To find out the functions and contributions of the G.S.G.S.K towards rural development in Mararikulam.

3. To assess the impact of the various activities of the G.S.G.S.K among the rural folk in the context of Gandhian outlook.
4. To elaborate the concept of Self-Help Groups and its activities for the socio-economic development of the members involved in the groups of the G.S.G.S.K. in Mararikulam.

5. To analyse the improvement of women, participating in the Self Help Groups activities of the G.S.G.S.K in Mararikulam.

6. To study the impact of health development activities due to the intervention of the G.S.G.S.K. in Mararikulam.

1.2.3. Hypothesis

1. The role of the G.S.G.S.K contributes positively to the rural development in Mararikulam

2. The Formation of Self –Help Groups resulted in the participation of women who took more active roles in voluntary work and Micro-enterprise programmes of the G.S.G.S.K Mararikulam.

3. The Participation of people and contributions of the G.S.G.S.K are mutually related and the middle aged people contributed too much for the rural development programmes.

1.2.4. Sampling

The G.S.G.S.K. in Mararikulam is selected for the study mainly due to the higher rate of achievements and progress in the development activities shown by various records. The researcher has used systematic sampling methods for studying the activities of G.S.G.S.K. in Alappuzha district. Entire portion of the district has been divided into four sections for sampling. ‘Random sample method’ is applied to select the self help groups from the sub centre. The members who are having more than five years experience with group activities are selected as representatives for the study. The
Primary Sample is collected from more than 300 members of the groups in the GSGSK. 50% of the Sub Centres are identified as the source of data and respondents for the collection of empirical data. The data were collected at random from various sub centres. The Sample size actually came to 310 members but during the period of the field work 50 cases were not available due to absence or lock out. The final sample size came to 260. The Percentage of women groups are higher than the men. So out of 260 samples size 180 were collected from women and 80 from men group. Here total percentage of the men and women groups is given special consideration.

1.3. The Source of Data

1.3.1. Primary Data and Secondary Data

The Primary data were collected through questionnaire, group discussion and participatory observation by the researcher. The Data have been interpreted with appropriate statistical tools and techniques. Personal discussions with officials and related sources were also held for getting the appropriate data. Secondary data sources were collected through books, magazines, GSGSK brochures, annual reports, pamphlets.

1.3.2. Tools for Data Collection

Major tools of Data Collection were Questionnaire and Personal Interviews. In this study questionnaire is set in a very systematic manner for getting the right answers from the respondents. In certain cases five scale methods are applied for getting the answers from the respondents. Besides, opinions of the respondents are also added. Phone interviews were also being conducted with officials and members of the groups staying far away to get the reliable data.
1.3.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The collected data are classified and subjected to analysis for making use of all the technical formalities both descriptive and the statistical. Conclusions and findings are derived from the analysis carried out.

1.4. Chapter Division

The First Chapter mainly deals with Introduction, Significance of study, Research Methodology, Sampling Method and Review of literature. In order to concretize the study, the researcher has used both primary and secondary data.

The Second Chapter mainly focuses on the role of voluntary organizations in the development of rural sectors in India. Even before independence many groups, rulers, religious groups and sects had actively participated for the development of rural community. Besides, this chapter also mentions the contributions made by some of the famous voluntary activities like Sriniketan, Marthandom, Guragon, Baroda, Firka scheme, Eatwah project, Nilokheri and Bombay experiments. This chapter has also incorporated the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the impact of Gandhian ideology in rural sectors.

The Third Chapter deals with the different features of Gandhian concepts on Rural Development. The first portion focuses on the relevance of Gandhian concept known as Swadeshi, Bread Labour, Ideal Village, Grama Swaraj, Restriction of Industrialisation, Panchayati Raj, and its implementation in rural sector. The second part mainly demonstrates the relation between the Constructive Programme and Rural Development.

In the Fourth Chapter, a short history of Kerala Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi is given. This chapter has incorporated the various aspects of rural
activities under taken by the ‘Kerala Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi’ (KGSN) during the post independence period. Besides, some case studies have also been added in this chapter.

The Fifth Chapter highlights the Rural Development activities at various levels as initiated by the Gandhi Smaraka Kendram in Mararikulam. The first part deals with the different stages of development of this organization. Formation of Self Help Groups of both men and women by this organization could help to start various kinds of self employment programmes in many parts of Alappuzha district. In the final part the role of implementation of Gandhian ideologies in practical field is explained.

The Sixth Chapter focuses on the socio-economic aspects as well as the advancement of health indicators achieved by the members after participating with the Microenterprise programme started by the G.S.G.S.K Mararikulam. The Tables are arranged in such a way to project the development activities done by members of group after joining and participating with the organization. Finally findings and suggestions arrived as a result of the research is also included.

1.5. Definition of Rural Development

There is no universally accepted definition of the concept known as Rural Development because people use the word in different contexts and ways. [Urga Moha Jha and Naresh Jha:2008:p1]. However the operational goal of rural development is to improve productivity ensuring the basics needs of life such as food, shelter, education and health care.
Katar Singh defines the Rural Development:

‘As a phenomenon, it is the result of interactions between various physical, economical, socio-cultural, and institutional factors. As a strategy, it is designed to improve the economic and social well being of the specific group of people- the rural poor’. [Katar Singh:2005].

This could be fulfilled only by proper planning with the co-operation of private, government agencies as well as the participation of voluntary agencies in the society. So the revitalizations of Panchayat Raj institutions are very essential for the success and the proper functions of the programme. The main attempt is to organize the people living in the grass root level in order to participate with development programme in many ways.

Ugra Moha Jha remarks:

“Rural development is the process of developing and utilizing natural and human resources, technologies, infrastructural facilities, institutions and organizations, and government policies and programmes to encourage and speed up economic growth in rural areas, to provide jobs and to improve the quality of rural life. This process typically involves changes in popular attitudes, and in many cases even in customs and beliefs. The process of rural development must represent the entire gamut of change by which a social system moves away from a state of life perceived as ‘unsatisfactory’ towards a materially and spiritually better condition of life.”[Ugra Moha Jha and Naresh Jha: 2008:p1]

Some of the developed countries focus more on industrialisations and give least consideration for the rural development activities. But at the same time majority of the third world countries generate income more from the rural areas.
1.6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

M.K. Gandhi (1941), ‘Constructive Programme’ very clearly mentions the socio-economic and political problems which are deep rooted in Indian villages. According to Gandhiji before planning the development process for the rural community first thing is to abolish the age old bad practices such as untouchability, social taboos etc. from rural communities. He dreamt that Indian village people should be free from mal-nutrition, poverty and unemployment in near future. The principles of nonviolence could be upheld in the present society through the village economy as well as the sufficient marketing methods. Khadi and other industries are included in the ‘Constructive Programme’, mainly for creating more employment opportunities and income generation activities among the rural societies in India. The Author highlights the importance of proper health habits and promotion of hygienic conditions especially in the rural society so that the percentage of mortality could be reduced. Preference should be given to academic curriculum, not only for alphabet learning but also for skills to find jobs. The ‘Constructive Programme’ emphasizes the need for the rebuilding of Indian villages and its developmental features, in all dimensions.

Shriman Narayan (1960) very clearly and analytically explains the Gandhian planning to the society and its implementation. He presents some arguments for proving the authenticity of Gandhiji’s view on rural development approach. He argues that even those countries which follow a wide level of industrialisations are struggling very much to provide jobs to the people. He believes that the majority of people may not get any benefit from the mechanization process. Gandhiji has supported decentralised based village industrialisation for the survival of the rural masses. But the author appreciates the village industrial practices in Japan and at the same time
criticises the capital based management existing in that country. He uses the example from China to prove the credibility of co-operative management role either in the production or management sector. He also stresses the importance of decentralised based economic as well as governing systems for the growth of the villages. The Gandhian planning basically promotes more employment opportunities and proper utilization of the resources for the rural communities. He uses some calculations through tables for proving the employment opportunities which existed in the small and great industrial concerns in the country in the last few decades. He has made some comments for proving the supremacy of small scale industries over the heavy industries in the country. At the same time he never imagines that the traditional villages systems are free from all kinds of evils which are practiced in the society. However, these village republics could overcome the threats and challenges that came from abroad on several occasions. He uses several quotations from Gandhiji for strengthening his arguments in favour of rural people and the rural development planning. He desires to see a viable as well as systematic change with the land reform procedures which were introduced in the country by the initiative of Government as well as non-government sectors. He says that before making the planning for rural areas, experts should collect opinions from the people living in these sectors which will be more beneficial and sustainable in coming days.

Huge Tinker (1970) discusses the development of villages and its activities in Indian society in the last few centuries. He strongly believes that all the activities of the government towards the rural society were based on persuasion rather than the compulsion attitude. People strongly support and admit Gandhiji’s vision of Panchayat Raj and non-violence based society. He has mentioned the existence of village republic in ancient period and
continues its function in their area. At the same time author never believes that villages existed in all places of India. He thinks that in India most of the people have strong affiliation and deep rooted relationships within their own native villages. The British had half-hearted attitude towards the function and development of Panchayat systems in India. The foreign higher authorities in India never supported or gave proper care for the works done by the districts officials for the rural people. In his opinion in the last few centuries some individuals got undue influence over the community and this created several challenges and problems in the village system. In his viewpoint even Panchayat system that existed in India witnessed several kinds of factional fights and dominations in the society. The author views that participation of people and voluntary work is very essential for the success of the entire community. The Government had appointed Block Development Officers and Grama Sevak people for helping the rural people through the Community Development Programme. He also highlights the views of the prominent people such as the Balvanrai Mehta and Jayaprakash Narayan in regard to the ‘self-sufficient Indian village’.

S.N. Jha (1970) thinks that the Gandhian economic thought is essential for giving solutions to the social, economic problems faced by the common people in the rural community. He feels that the Gandhian view on food, education, village industries and sanitation for the welfare of the poor people are inevitable for the society. Gandhi ascertains that lack of proper sanitation is the main cause for the spread of various diseases in the villages. He thinks that the Gandhian Education stood for the total development of the human personality and the calibre of individuals. He has also made some suggestions for the improvements of the village workers actively involved in the development process. Finally the author expects that, the Government’s
participation will be more in the coming days for the success of the village industries. He says that the fearful attitude will never help to attain any level of progress and creativity in the life of the individuals.

Sugath Dasgupta (1973) in his ‘Voluntary Organisations in Rural Development’ provides a detailed description about the voluntary agencies role in the rural development process. During the initial periods voluntary agencies had done great work in the rural sector and expected the Government to follow their path in future. The Gandhian method of rural development always focuses on the poor and marginalized people in the grass root levels. In this method, preference is not given for the growth of gross national product (GDP) or per capita income but for the welfare of the weaker sections in the society. The author divides the entire voluntary agencies in two categories based on the working areas which are macro-institutions and micro institutions. Here the first kinds of organizations working zones are bigger than the second category. In the same way some of the voluntary agencies concentrate their activities in a particular area or group but others activities are more or less based on a generic manner. In India, before independence period the rural development programme focused mainly on health, literacy, irrigation, infrastructure development and such allied things. After the independence the main areas of rural development interventions are land distribution, employment generation, eradication of poverty and other things. The author also raises the questions about the role of voluntary agencies in the present development programme. Should they assist the government or work in an independent manner in their own way?

Shriman Narayan(1976) the former President of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi gives a detail description of the activities of this organisation throughout India in various fields. The Gandhi Smarak Nidhi has provided
support and financial assistance to many co-organizations which are working in the remote and rural areas of the country. These activities of these organizations were more concentrated on the development of socio-economic and health conditions of the rural mass. The author has also focused on the functions and strategies of the various sub centres of the organisation and its contributions to the common people. Basically their work was more or less based on the ‘Constructive Programme’ envisaged by Gandhiji.

K. Arunachalam (1981) a famous Gandhian Scholar is trying to give solution to the rural problems through the Gandhian perspectives and ideologies. He thinks that the Western development concepts are based on individuals and money oriented but the East is more man oriented and group centered. He trusts that making more employment opportunities in villages would prompt people to migrate back to their own native places. He also has taken devoted certain sections for highlighting the relevance of ‘constructive programme’ in the society. He upholds the importance of the co-ordination between different organizations working in the grassroots levels. Gandhiji’s aim of ‘constructive programme’ is to make transformation among the people and lead them to attain non-violence and truth based society. The author specifically mentions the alarming problem now being faced by the present society which is known as population explosion. Gandhiji advised the people to practice the self control method for controlling the population problem. Then he sees that in many places people do not have the appropriate skills for exploiting the natural resources even in their own areas. This fact has been proved by the author by making comparisons between the villages in different countries in the world. The author believes that social action can either promote transformation or destruction in the society. He
laments that even now people are not giving proper care and seriousness while using the public property in many places. In this essay the author explains some of the main components of Gandhian planning, named as simplicity, village self-sufficiency and decentralizations.

Sheo Kumar Lal (1981) in ‘Gandhi and Village’ critically analyses the problems confronted by the rural villages in India. At the outset he says that starting small scale industries will improve the socio-economic development of the villages and that they could generate more employment opportunities. The people migrating from villages to towns have to face several problems like finding jobs and live in unhygienic conditions. In certain countries people are migrating back to their native villages for finding jobs and peaceful life as they experienced in the past. Gandhiji always supported the industrialization which promotes more jobs and income generation activities among the rural community. Yet heavy industrialization processes used to exploit man power, natural resources, of the rural society. The author says “Man is a complex being and he has to be taken as an integral whole. Money is not the essential thing in life. But intellectual, moral, social, aesthetic and religious interests of man are also very important.” [p :51].

Ghanshyam Shah and H.R. Chaturvedi (1983) focus on the relevance of Gandhian principles in the rural development programmes of India. The Authors say “The ideal Gandhian rural community is a non-exploitative and non-exploited... self sufficient and self reliant community. The cardinal principles of Gandhian ideology are non-violence, harmony and participation of people. It is opposed to both centralism and capitalism. It aims at restructuring the present society into an ideal one, by working from the bottom on the basis of local and decentralised planning”. [p:123]. Many
voluntary organizations existed from pre independence era and their area of intervention is mainly in the socio-economic fields. The voluntary agencies which are more concerned with the secular attitude, really involved more in the rural development activities. However, many religious organizations also participated and initiated the rural development programmes and strategies but their interest was mainly based on religious dogmas and principles.

S.C. Jain (1985) scholarly discusses that various components are associated with Rural Development regions. One part of his essay has been devoted mainly for dealing about Gandhiji’s vision on rural communities in India. He also mentions Gandhi’s concept on ideal village. In the development aspect Gandhiji’s views are included not only in economic progress but also in the moral and social advancement of the individual and society. Gandhiji has started many social organizations for the implementation of ‘Constructive Programme’ among the rural community. In his opinion, Gandhiji’s role in social transformation process is highly appreciable in communal harmony and eradication of untouchability. The cream of Gandhiji’s education is character building and the development of personality. The author says that Gandhiji never supported wide level industrialisation. Instead Industrial equipments should be supplied to the rural mass for producing various items by them. The author also supports the social reformation process before starting the development programmes of the rural community. He found that Gandhiji would never support centralization process in any field because it would not help to attain the non-violent society at any level. He firmly stands for the promotion of social justice and environmental conservation in the development activities. He also laments that government is spending thousands of rupees for scientific
researches and at the same time paying no attention to many important areas of the development concerns.

K.D. Gangrade (1989) is making an analysis about the concept of development based on Gandhian approach. Generally, the developments of the nations are assessed based on the economic stabilities and performances of the countries. The author opines that economic and social components are very much integrated and interdependent for measuring the development achieved in the particular territory. Gandhiji perceives development in a holistic manner which includes the social, economic and moral dimensions. The author feels that Gandhiji never supported the affluent life and greedy attitude. His motto was ‘each according to his need’. Besides, Gandhiji’s intention is to overcome the poverty and mal-nutrition in the village sectors by upholding the principles of Truth and Non-violence. In his work he also focuses on the relevance of participatory democracy in the present society. He thinks that Gandhiji stood for the silent method of social transformation based on the concept of Trusteeship. He also mentions the role of Gandhian organizations and voluntary agencies in the field of rural development in the Post Gandhian era. He believes now that the social workers and the Gandhian activists can also work together in many fields even though there may be slight difference in the approaches on the issues confronted by the society.

Radha Raman Singh (1989) analytically discusses per capita income, poverty, lack of employment opportunities in India after the independence. In his perception, poverty and unemployment are interrelated and these factors determine the levels of the poverty in the country such as low productivity and low wages. In his observation levels of poverty and unemployment are higher in the rural sectors than in the urban areas. According to him even now our villages are facing lack of infrastructure
facilities and also lack of knowledge for proper exploitation of natural resources. At the same time he criticizes the policy makers’ attitude and describes that they had followed defective planning and unsystematic methods. He feels that these plannings are more or less based on centralized system. Finally he suggests some steps for improving the development of rural sectors in India. Besides he emphasizes the importance of micro-level planning for the welfare of rural community.

S.N. Chaturvedi (1990) in his short article gives a total reflection about Gandhiji’s concept of Rural Development. In the initial part he mentions, some of the Rural Development projects of the Government and its impact on the society. The author says that some of major programmes such as land reforms, rural electrification and new technologies did not even reach the large sections of people belonging to the weaker sections of the society. As per his understanding the Gandhian concept of bread labour has given more preference to the agricultural activities. At present other kinds of works can also be included in the category of bread labour. Gandhi in his writings very clearly emphasizes the need of cooperative farming in the agricultural fields. At the same time Gandhiji has never tried to exclude the zamindars from his concept of ideal society. According to the author, Gandhiji believes that rural sectors would witness revival and development with the growth of cottage and village Industries. He recommends that people should show more interest to buy products from the rural areas and that will definitely improve the economy of the poor masses. Besides, the author also gives some suggestions for the growth of cottage industries in the country. He thinks that the Gandhian concept of Trusteeship could be an alternative to overcome the poverty and inequality from the society to certain levels. He emphasizes that the Gandhian education includes literary training
as well as skill acquiring training for the success of the individuals. The nature oriented life and the diet system are very much essential to the people in our country. Gandhi had strictly followed this in his personal life. Gandhi strongly advocated health and sanitation at village level specifically because these are the main problems faced by the people in the rural society. The village workers should not be bookworms but rather act as a representative among the common people by using appropriate tools like spinning wheel, looms, spade etc., According to the author, “In power structure, Gandhi does not favour ‘state capitalism’ but ruralisation of democracy with decentralization of production as well as wealth.” [p :213]. He gives special consideration for Gandhi’s motto known as ‘planning from bottom level’.

Gobinda C. Mandal (1992) makes an analytical study about rural development aspects in India and abroad. He also highlights the comparisons between the views of Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindra Nath Tagore in certain areas of rural development process. Tagore was more concerned for the social reformations than political mobilization of Indian community. Both of them stood for the rural reformation programmes in India. Tagore never accepted the relevance of the charka in the rural society but supported the modern farming practice in a very strong manner. The author believes that Gandhi had given more preference for self-satisfaction, creativity and human labour management than capital accumulation. He says “The practical Gandhian ideology of national, regional and village-self sufficiency was the natural outcome of acute poverty resulting from the dependence on a foreign country for the satisfaction for primary needs. It aimed at the prevention of wastage of manpower and channeling it into the production of simple goods and not towards luxurious abundance but harmonious and peaceful self-
satisfaction.” (p:23). The author admits that the use of modern technologies and methods had helped the growth of agriculture in India. He also supported as well as encouraged the co-operative farming which had been implemented by the countries like Israel and China.

J.C. Kumarappa and V.L. Mehta (1992) experts in rural fields are trying to project the different aspects of Gandhiji’s vision on the economic development. In one chapter the authors have pointed out Gandhiji’s perspectives on rural development which are different from others. The Initial part of this section had added Gandhiji’s vision on ‘ideal village’ which got attention all over the world. They emphasize the relevance of Sarvodaya concept in development which includes the benefit for everything in nature. They recognise that Gandhiji has insisted the voluntary cooperation between the landlords and the working class. This is visible in the concept of Trusteeship. Gandhiji strongly condemns the industrialisation which destroys the human resources and environment. According to the authors “Rural development would be effective only if the exploitation of the rural producer is stopped.” [p:61]. They opined that some of the cardinal principles which are associated with the Gandhian concept of Rural Development are voluntarism, self help, total development of man, minimum dependence on Government and use of small machines, which are more concerned with the poor people. They advise that if any of the ideas mentioned by Gandhiji is outdated, it should be altered according to the present situation. Looking back on the effect of the earlier rural development projects they argued more on group oriented action than individual based self employment programmes. They suggested the active role of voluntary organizations in the rural sectors, especially for the development of poor and
marginalized people. They also request for the continuous assistance which is very essential for the people who once crossed the poverty line.

K.K. Puri (1992) critically analyses the problems and challenges faced by the Rural Development Programme, started by the Government of India. He understood that even now people were not realizing the importance of participation in rural sectors and they think that the Government would help them on each and every occasion. He points out that the lack of trust and mutual understanding between the politicians and bureaucrats are working as stumbling blocks against the proper implementation of rural development projects. According to him, the Government has been implementing the same projects continuously only by changing the name without having ultimate goals and achievements. In many cases officials appointed by the Government as rural development agents do not have sufficient knowledge about rural sentiments and approach. Ultimately these facts also very seriously affect the rural development programmes in our country. At the same time the author appreciates the presence of the voluntary agencies in rural development process and he says “the cooperation of voluntary agencies in the implementation of rural programmes will also help to bring a change in the operational structure and help in popular participation” [p:141]. He thinks that in the near future population explosion will have negative effects in the rural development programmes of India.

S.N. Mishra (1992) scholarly discusses the importance of participation of people in rural development processes in India. The People have responsibilities to know the benefit of the development project envisaged by the Government. He focuses on some of the components attached with the participation of people for the decision-making, implementation, monitoring,
evaluation and benefit sharing. In his observation the centralized systems existing at the higher and lower levels never allow the multitudes of people to receive the benefits on appropriate occasions. According to him, people working in a collective manner are more eligible to receive loans and financial aids from banks and other institutions. He also highlights some of the main benefits which could be achieved by the effects of the participation of people. Various business enterprises can be started in many places by the formation of people’s group and its activities. For supporting this argument the author says “The several small groups in a village or an area, therefore, may be federated into an association which can occasionally meet and discuss the common problems of the members and groups. Such associations can also undertake, on behalf of their member groups, joint marketing of their products and procurement of inputs with a view to take advantage of the economy of sale in production.” [p:133].

Awadhesh Prasad (1995) tries to explain the impact of poverty eradication programme [IRDP] in the two panchayats of the District of Sahibganj in Bihar. The Government has introduced this rural project all over India for the wellbeing of rural people by providing self-employment opportunities. In his study he has selected the people belonging to tribals and other backward areas. Analytical study reveals that selections of the people in the project are based more or less in a casual manner. The author says that on many occasions poor people were excluded from the benefits of the project. Resources and financial assistances were supplied to the beneficiaries associated with the project. He felt that the real beneficiaries and the representatives of the Panchayats were deliberately avoided from the purchase committee. These facts reveal the depth of corruptions and nepotisms widely prevalent in the rural projects. Another criticism raised
against this project is the nominal amount of subsidy and the negative approach of banks towards this programme. In his opinion some resources such as livestock, supplied through this project was of inferior quality and hence perished soon. Many beneficiaries were struggling to find fodder for the cattle. The aim of this project was to raise the amount of income of poor and encourage them to cross the poverty line. However, beneficiaries could gain very less amount of income from the project. He recognised that people could not repay the loan in the period given for repayment. This study prompts the author to make some suggestions for improving the socio-economic conditions of the rural people in the country.

Bibhuti Nath Jha (1995) states that in India more than eighty percentage of people are living in the rural areas. Since independence the governments have done many things for the rural development programme. According to him “Rural development is a comprehensive programme of activities which includes agricultural growth, development of economic and social infra-structure, village planning, public health, education, functional literacy and communications, etc.” [p:81]. He also mentions Gandhiji’s role in the rural development activities in India. He says various social organizations have played great roles in the advancement of rural areas especially even before the Independence. The Government’s rural project such as Community Development Programme and National Extension Scheme had helped to improve the administrative set-up at the grass root levels of the rural community. He says that on many occasions people are struggling to repay the old debts. So they are compelled to sell their resources received from the IRDP or other rural development project. He criticises these programmes as it could not overcome the problems such as
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poverty and unemployment which are deeply rooted in our rural society even today.

R.P Singh (1995) focused on the importance of area based planning for the economically backward regions in India. His study basically concentrated on eastern regions of the country such as West Bengal, Bihar and Eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh. According to him economic developments are assessed by the criterion such as per capita income, expenditure on food, clothes, household items and nature of occupation, infrastructure facilities and such other things. He thinks Gandhiji has given more concern for the local level planning and indigenous development programmes. The author says “The idea of local level planning was a craze of Gandhian concept of decentralised way of rural development which was forcefully favoured by Gandhian thinkers.” [p:130] In his observation the real intentions of the Bhoodan Movement initiated by Vinoba Bhave lost its relevance in India after some period. He thinks that the need is area planning in the programme. It should give more importance to some particular areas rather than all areas. There are ways for identifying the areas belonging to these categories. He highlights that “Area planning must evolve its own strategy considering indigenous features, need perceptions, existing occupation pattern, attitude and value systems of the people”. [p:131]. This planning mainly emphasizes that the man power is utilized for income generation activities. He insists that unit of area planning should not be greater than a district but not smaller than a village. At the same time he makes some suggestions for improving the area planning development process especially for villages in the backward sections.

V.M. Rao (1995) gives a detailed description about the growth of Rural Development Programme in India before and after the Independence
period. He mentions the name of some of the rural development experiments initiated by the voluntary agencies in India in the early period. According to him the main focus of the rural development programme is the alleviation of poverty and creation of employment opportunities in rural sectors. The British had no interest for the growth of rural people as well as farmers. They are of the opinion that the rural masses should attain development on their own. The author says that the Community Development Programme had helped the growth of grass root level democratic institutions. He believes this caused to witness a revolutionary change in the social and economic fields. Basically the Government had taken interest to start several employment generation activities in India after obtaining the independence. But practically this has provided benefit only to a few sections of the people in the society. In his opinion the development of farming system is related with many other components such as social, cultural, political, availabilities of resources and cultivations of various crops. Some people were able to overcome the level of poverty by the introduction of the Integrated Rural Development Programme initiated by the Government. “People below poverty line are identified through Gramasabhas and given assistance for acquisition of productive assets and appropriate skills for self-employment.” (p:69). He asserts that the participation of people is very essential for each and every developmental programme for the rural community.

P.R. Dubhashi (1996) very clearly and explicitly points out the various situations and problems faced by the rural people in India. He says that Jawaharlal Nehru the prominent member in the policy makers group had visited Soviet Union for studying the economic structure of that country. Our policy makers showed interest to adopt the ‘mixed economy’ so that public, private and co-operative sectors can work together in our country. Most of
the people in the rural areas had been following traditional methods of cultivation and this caused to reduce the productions in agriculture. He says that communication process in the rural areas is not as developed as in the urban areas. These factors created negative impact in the development activities of the rural communities. The Green revolution had helped to improve the level of productions in the agricultural fields but marketing of the products had been one of the great problems faced by the people in the rural sectors. In the initial period many developing countries had adopted the economic policy of the developed countries. They are concerned with bulk production and wealth oriented attitudes. He criticizes the Government implemented rural development programmes like IRDP, Community Development Programme because of the corruptions, mal-practices and lack of knowledge about ground realities involved in the process. He also emphasizes the importance of the participation of local institutions and common people. He laments that the real aim of Panchayats had failed because of the factional fights and internal rivalry. He says that the concept of decentralization was seen in the Gandhian philosophy of development. Economic field has been formulated more in a decentralized manner but in the practice monopolistic and oligarchic forces are increasing day by day. In his opinion starting of small scale industries would reduce the migration of people from rural sectors to urban areas of the country. He emphasises that “Mahatma Gandhi made a hectic effort to revive village and cottage industries. It was he who discovered the charkha and made it popular as part of the constructive programmes which in turn was a part of struggle for Swaraj”. [p:200].He also insists that and planning should be started from the bottom level to top level for the welfare of the villagers.
Hans Nagpaul’s (1996) study focuses on the sad plight of the people living in urban sectors of the country. Transformation to the modernization and urbanization create several social problems in society which is accompanied with age old social issues and dilemmas. The statistical data reveal that urbanization leads to create socio-economic problems in India as well as abroad at an alarming rate. The author is interested to analyse the depth of some of the major social problems and its effects on the urban areas of the country. He supports the technological improvement for betterment of the rural infrastructure facilities so that this would bring more advantages to the rural people. In his opinion people in the rural areas should enjoy the same benefits as enjoyed by the people of the urban sectors. He is longing to see the integrations between urban and rural areas in many fields in the coming days. Further he suggests the curtailment of migration from rural to urban areas by providing better living conditions in rural areas.

S.K. Srivastava and Jai Prakash (1996) gave detailed explanations about the problems faced by the rural people and the Government’s assistance for solving their problems. They also include some of the comments of the experts on rural development. According to Engineer, “rural development seeks to involve a process of transformation from traditionally oriented rural cultures towards an acceptance and reliance on science and technology.” [p:144] They feel shame that even now the literacy rate is very low in many places in India. They think that technological advancement can make great improvements in economic condition and standard of living of the rural people. He advises that the rural masses can start various small scale industries in the absence of agricultural work especially in lean seasons. The authors have included some of the Government sponsored rural development programmes (IRDP, IADP, Community Development Programme etc.) and its
effect on the rural community. He says that the Rural Development will be more effective by the participation of common people and with the exploitation of available natural resources. A small part in their study is devoted for explaining the rural development activities in the Five Year Plans. Finally the author comments that the nationalization of banks in 1969 had made a great impact in the rural sectors of the country. These Nationalized Banks were providing loans to the agricultural farmers and small scale industrialists in a lukewarm manner.

Gopal Lal Jain (1997) provides a historical sketch regarding the rural people in India before and after Independence. The British prompted the Indian masses to cultivate cash crops rather than agricultural farming. The exportation in their period was mainly to their own country. In certain places people had to provide huge amount of revenue to the British authorities. It was more than the whole amount earned by them. This was an additional burden to the rural community. The domestic markets were not showing progressive growth in our country but just survived. Continuous famines had also created small and great difficult situations among the rural societies. The author admits the relevance of the Gandhian concepts of rural development and highlights its importance in the present society. He says “Mahatma Gandhi started ‘Constructive Programme’ of rural development first at Sevagram in 1920 and later at Wardha in 1938. The Gandhian thinking had a significant influence on all the rural development programmes that were subsequently developed, including the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)”. (p:25). According to the author, the Gandhian ideologies are always self supporting and have a holistic development approach towards the individuals and society. Later on many rural development programmes such as Community Development Programme
have emerged from the influence of the Gandhian Philosophy. The Panchayat Act also more or less supported the Gandhian concept of decentralization. He believes that the policymakers had introduced Five Year Plans, aiming at the progress of India especially among the rural community. The growth of Agriculture is very important for the sustenance of Indian economy especially for the growth of small scale industries and non-farming areas. He asserts that the use of modern technologies could improve the agricultural productivity in India in recent times. He also introduces several non-farming production activities and its relevance among the rural communities. He believes that the agricultural productivity has to play a major role in the Indian economy in the present time and in the future.

J.S.Mathur (1999) in his article describes the alternative development programmes envisaged by Gandhiji for the Indian society. He comments that the development process could be possible only after the eradication of unemployment and hunger among the millions of people in India. Presently cities are exploiting rural communities in many ways by exploring natural resources and cheap labour in abundant levels. He also quotes the famous words of Gandhiji, “people who eat food without working should be considered as thieves in the society”. He also upholds the importance of the Gandhian principles of Swadeshi for the participation of the people in the rural communities. In his perception natural resources are plenty in the rural areas and that it should be used properly with skills and materials taken from the towns. He believes that the Gandhian ‘constructive programme’ can make economic equality and development in the rural communities. He also supported the efficacy of Khadi and Village Industries for creating the self employment opportunities among the rural communities. People in the rural areas have to utilize the idle hours by involving in various activities which is
appropriate with the situations. He strongly criticises the tendencies such as the brain drain from rural society to urban sections. In the concluding part he gives answers to the criticisms raised by experts in connection with Gandhiji’s views on village development and sustainability.

Rajesh Tandon (2001) had made a very creative and in depth probe about the origin and development of Non-profit sectors in India. He divides the Non-profit sector into two categories such as indigenous and western influenced sources. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, the religions of Indian origin have been included in the indigenous sections as they worked very actively in the voluntary fields even in the period of B.C. He testifies that the arrival of Christian missionaries had made great contributions in the social and economic fields of the country. However, their works had created disturbances as well as awakenings in Indian society. He admires the Christian missionaries’ work in the areas of health and education for the marginalized sections of the society. The social organizations which emerged in India had strongly worked against the social evils and bad customs. The author has devoted a particular section for mentioning Gandhiji’s role and contributions in the voluntary sector. Gandhiji has supported the growth of khadi and village industries for the progress of rural community. He also very wisely discusses the functions as well as challenges faced by the non-profit sectors in India after the Independence. Non-profit sections work in collaboration with government and foreign agencies by receiving funds and suggestions. Besides, the author points out the approach and stand taken by the Government towards non-profit sectors on various occasions.

R. Soorayamoorthy and K.D. Gangrade (2001) mainly focus on the activities of NGO’s in India and it includes the presence of NGO’s in various countries in the world. The authors have made some comments and critical
analysis of the NGO’s role in the development activities, in both the developed and the undeveloped countries. Often the NGO’s are prompted to act as an agent of donor agencies and forget the identity of the beneficiaries. Their studies reveal that common people are very much disturbed to see that the attitude of bureaucrats who interfere with the NGO’s day to day activities. At the same time some of the countries resisted the presence of NGO’s in their land because of their link with international agencies. In India the role of voluntary agencies had made great progress in the social, political and economic fields. They admire Gandhiji’s role in the voluntary work and accept the benefits of ‘Constructive Programme’ among the rural community. In Kerala both the Government and the NGO’s worked together for the success of the literacy programme in a very efficient manner. They strongly argue for the accountability from the part of the NGO’s for its proper function and credibility in the coming days. They have also combined the activities of the famous NGO’s which stood for the advancement of women in the unorganized sectors and the destitute scattered all over the country. They cite illustration to show that there is decline in the activities of the NGO’s due to the political inclinations and vested interests that creep inside the administrative structure in recent times. So the NGO’s should very urgently keep the code of ethics for their sake and survival in the present society.

Suhas Chatopadhyaya (2001) pinpoints the government’s attempt in rural development in India in the post Independence period. The Central and the State Governments have provided financial assistance and strategies for starting infrastructure facilities such as roads, irrigations and other facilities. The author asserts that the alternate Governments had given more preference for social and economic development but little consideration for agriculture. Basically land reformation had given least benefits to the landless people. So
the people belonging to the feudal sect were transformed as dominant classes in the society. He says that even the left democratic Government could not make radical reformations in the states where they had political supremacy. He supports the left front strategies such as ceiling of excess land as well as supply of land to the landless with the help of Panchayat bodies in Kerala.

Yatish Misra’s (2002) attempt is to study the effect of decentralization in Panchayati Raj Institutions in the state of Bihar. He also mentions the impact and drawback of rural development programme initiated in India during the pre and post Independence period. He imagines that the agricultural growth is the main element associated in the rural development programme. The available data show that, the growth ratio in agricultural production is very negligible when compared to the industrial growth in India. He appreciates the role of the NGO’s in the rural development activities in India during the last few decades. These organizations are very helpful in organising the people in the grass root levels. He felt that the NGO’s presence will accelerate the decentralization process in the rural areas of the country. The author admires the NGO’s activities especially in the areas of planning, rural sanitation, literacy campaign and women upliftment programme. He recommends large level of infrastructure facilities in rural sectors so that migration to the urban areas would be minimized in the coming days. In his opinion certain number of these migrated people would end up in the slums areas of the cities. His argument strongly supports the decentralised based social and economic systems for the rural development activities in the country.

S.K. Pant and Janak Pandey (2004) examine the rate of social development achieved by the people in the two districts of Uttar Pradesh. Their studies mainly focus on the rural development programmes initiated by
the Government of India. Independence has caused the growth of the economic income but in the social areas many states are showing lack of improvement even today. The social development components such as literacy, health, water supply are very weak in many parts of the country. The people in the cities are more advanced in the social aspects than their counterparts in the remote areas. In many places the Government organisations working at the grass root levels had not been able to identity or help the real beneficiaries included in the rural development programmes. The authors are also trying to evaluate the unemployment and poverty factors based on the policies and programmes initiated by the Governments in India. They assert that the NGO’s can act as a mediator and catalyst in between the Government organizations and the common people. In future, in the absence of non government organizations, the government organizations will have to be strengthened more. They emphasize that “The limited success attained in the social sector could largely be attributed to the fact that it dealt primarily with the set of indigenous factors and values and their acceptance by the people.” (P:32) In the present society people are more interested to participate with the development activities of the nongovernmental organizations.

S. N. Pawar, J. B. Ambedkar and D. Shrikant (2004) analyse the role of the NGO’s in the social development activities in India, before and after independence period. The activities of the non government organisation are more and more vibrant and people friendly in the bottom levels. The voluntary agencies acted as a catalyst for making social reformation in India especially in the pre independence period. The Indian society should give special considerations and privileges for the role undertaken by the Christian missionaries and Hindu charitable organisations for the welfare activities among the rural community. The Gandhian organisations such as Harijan
Sevak Sangh, All India Village Industries have involved more in the rural development activities and constructive programme as envisaged by Gandhiji. The Indian government had shown great interest to provide financial aid and assistance to the non government organizations especially after the seventh Five Year Plan. In the rural sector the voluntary agencies have designed development programmes as per the needs and interests of the common people. The authors say ‘The voluntary agencies in the process of development transaction secure co-operation of the people and build confidence among the participants of development.’ However, the participation of people is very essential for each and every development programme initiated either by Government or Non-Government Organizations.

Asha Patel (2005) throws light on the challenges faced by the rural industries in India. She strongly believes that by following the Gandhian economical principles definitely our country can rejuvenate these industries. In fact the Government has taken steps for the progress of the small scale industries in the last few decades but the result was very negligible. Even now in many parts of the country people are getting only unhygienic water for drinking and for other essential purposes. The author explains that in many places people are not showing any interest to buy the products of the village industries in a wide manner. These types of attitudes are really the stumbling blocks for the functions and growth of the rural industries in the country. She emphasizes that the growth of village industries could provide jobs to thousands of people in the rural areas. She describes the functions of villages industries in various countries. She also highlights the various village industrial products and its benefits to the present society. Besides, the author upholds Gandhiji’s several prominent quotations and phrases for supporting her ideas of growth of rural industries in our country.
Christopher Collier’s (2005) attempt was to give a clear report about the role of Non Government Organizations for the development of poor, living in the third world countries. The Government is implementing Neo-liberal economic policies and at the same time withdrawing from the public expenditures, gradually. The author thinks that these processes have created a venue for the private and non-government organizations to act as a mediator between the common people and the government agencies. However, in several cases the NGO’s were prompted to give accountability to the donor agencies than the welfare of the common people. So naturally people think that the NGO’s will solve all the problems faced by them. The author emphasizes that the NGO’s can never act as a substitute for the Government agencies. In his opinion, people are more interested to work with the NGO’s than with the government agencies. The NGO’s have less responsibilities for providing feedback to the Government on each and every development activity. He fears whether the Government agencies can continue the development activities started by the NGO’s, when they cease to exist later. He realizes that even now also many third world countries are facing acute poverty, illiteracy and health problems.

According to Katar Singh (2005) basic elements of rural development are the self respect, freedom and the basic necessities of life. The resources should be used in a proper way in the rural development process. The author has taken particular interest to evaluate the rural development programmes and the policies introduced by the Indian Government after the Independence period. The rural development policies introduced should be given priority not only to the agricultural development but also to the small scale industries so that more people would get jobs in the rural areas. The rural development has been included by various factors both visible and invisible. Basically the
income generation and employment generation have to be increased simultaneously in the rural sectors in the coming days. According to him “As a phenomenon, rural development is the end result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio cultural and institutional factors” [P: 20]. The author asserts that the rural development process should be given more preference in India in future because vast numbers of people are staying in rural sectors. After independence the voluntary agencies have very actively involved in various development programmes initiated by the Government in the rural community. The common people have received more benefit by their activities. An agency like CAPART has made a unification work between government officials and the common people in many places. Self Help Groups formed by the Non-Government organizations with the help of the NABARD have also created great awakening and empowerment in the rural community. At the same time professionally qualified people in the rural sectors may be incorporated in the rural development programmes. They have the receptive mind to understand the feelings, problems and issues faced by the common people in the villages.

L.Manivannan’s (2005) study is on the impact of Self Help Groups in the rural development activities in the state of Tamil Nadu. In his observation women in the rural sectors are facing poverty, unemployment and marginalization in a wide manner than men. The formations of Self-Help Groups are helping the women to participate more in the employment opportunities and development activities. The author finds that the Self Help Groups started by the NGO’s are more dynamic and vibrant in many places of the country. He believes that among the Self Help Groups, a certain percentage could only start the self employment programmes in different
fields. Even though the money generated by the Self-Help Group is very little, it helped to manage the personal and family affairs of women group on a high level. He says that the women are working more in the agricultural fields of the country. He also very elaborately describes various stages and problems faced by the women in the family and society. In his opinion women as the head of the family are high in percentage in the state of Tamil Nadu. Statistics show that various benefits are received by the women after joining with the Self Help Group. The author also pinpoints some of the main problems confronted by the Self Help Groups of women. Several challenges had to be faced in the formation of Self Help Groups in the initial stages. He feels that many groups had no interest in making changes in the leadership because of the lack of interest of the members for coming to the leadership level. Some groups are giving the responsibilities of book keeping, computation works and other things to the people outside by giving proper remunerations to them. Finally, he advises that the Government should give proper care and interventions in the growth of the Self Help Groups in the rural sectors. The SHG’s should be free from the influence of vested interests.

V.Divya Thejo Murthy (2005) very elaborately explains the role undertaken by the voluntary organizations in the rural development process. In his opinion development not only means the economic progress but also the social transformations. He feels that people could recognise the relevance of the Non-Government Organizations in the present society. The author asserts that the Government machineries and administrative systems really failed to address, identify and co-operate with vulnerable and marginalized people living in the remote areas. He says that at present hundred’s of Non-Governmental Organizations are very actively working in many areas. Some
are receiving funds from government agencies or foreign sources. He also explains that before the independence period, Gandhian organizations and some social and religious organizations have actively worked. However, in the post-independence period the Governments have shown great interest to cooperate and extend help to nongovernmental organizations in the rural development programme. Here the author also mentions some rural development programme implemented by government with the participation of non-government organizations. According to the author “The growth or development of social and economic conditions of people depends upon working conditions, occupations, education, literacy and health care which are important components of human resource development.” [p:138]. He very specifically highlights some steps for revealing the characteristic features and levels of interventions of NGO’s in the development process. In his advices political affiliations should not come in between the development programmes initiated by the Government or other agencies for the rural community. Political intervention would create more problems rather than settle the issues in an amicable manner. Finally he concludes, the co-operation between Government and NGO’s will be more beneficial to the common people in many ways in the society.

K.D. Gangrade (2005) provides detailed overview regarding the role of NGO’s in the development of the country. His observation reveals the voluntary agencies had been very actively involved in the social activities even before the Independence. He asserts that these agencies had deeply involved in social and religious areas. Most of the voluntary agencies abroad were against the wrong strategies adopted by the government. The voluntary agencies made great changes and gave contributions in the social and economic fields. According to him some of the organizations had stood
against the social evils and bad practices. According to the author none can forget the contributions made by Gandhiji in the area of voluntary activities. Sarva Sevak Sangh was working as a co-ordination force for the success of the Gandhian constructive work. In his opinion functions of the Gandhian voluntary agencies are visible even after the independence in many fields. He felt that later on Government has been motivated to frame several rules and regulations for the proper functions of the NGO’s and to cooperate with these organizations. He laments that the Government agencies could not come upto the level of voluntary agencies in the areas of people’s participation and mobilization of the natural resources.

Ashoka Mehta (2007) in ‘Rural Development and Rural Poor’ showcases the sad situation faced by the poor people in the rural sectors. British had given less attention for the growth of agriculture and small scale industries in India. They adopted various methods for collecting taxes from the poor rural farmers. Social problems such as untouchability and poverty were highly intolerable and it caused divisions in the society. After independence the Government of India has adopted the Soviet method of development in India. Many rural development programmes implemented by the Government had helped only the rich and the landlords but the poor and the landless people were denied the benefits. This was mainly due to the limitations of the land reform programme. However, the policy makers were prompted to implement new techniques and methods for the growth of agriculture. “In 1950 Community Development Programme was started in India in association with local institutions and rural self help organizations.” [p:324]. The Green revolution has created a new awakening in the rural sectors especially in agricultural fields with large scale investments and new technological methods. Later on the Government had focused more on the target groups for
the rural development programmes. ‘The enlargement of the scope of agriculture to embrace allied activities opens up opportunities for drawing the weaker sections into the development process.’ [p:329]. He advocates the participation of people at the grass root levels is very essential for the development in the coming days. He criticises the ‘overlapping of programmes and the agencies emerged just when the new thrust of development demanded more effective co-ordination in administration at the ground level.’

M.S.A. Rao (2007) analyses the Rural Development programme based on the sociological perspective background. He says, in India even before the Independence higher castes used to control the socio-economic zones of the country. Since Independence these people had been controlling the major portion of the economic conditions of the country. Lower castes were denied their rights, privileges and equal status in social and economic areas. He believes that the Government implemented rural development programmes had helped more or less the rich and dominant classes than the poor people in the society. The rich people got the privilege to control even the grass root organizations in association with the government bureaucracy. This caused the alienation of poor people from the socio-economic and political areas. Social tensions existed between the rich and the poor in the society. In his opinion Community Development Programme had made great changes in all aspects of the rural areas. In the author’s perception, “the traditional co-operation is based on hierarchy whereas modern co-operation demands equality. They could not go along with the new demands of self help and co-operative action that the programme wants to inculcate. It is seen that they are channelized into the traditional means without the spirit of the modern outlook.” (p:138)
K.Radhika’s (2008) study focuses on the women’s role in the Agricultural development of the rural areas. Basically this study is concentrated in the district of Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh. In her opinion the role of women were practically discarded in the economic progress of the country. But in the agricultural field women were the main source of the successes. The author appreciates women’s role in the agricultural activities because they are involved both in household works and outside activities. She recommends that land owners should provide day care or crèche facilities to the children while their mothers are working in the agricultural fields. She also supports the use of modern technology for increasing production and supply cattle to the needy people for additional income.

S.Gregory (2008) has made an attempt to study the benefits received by the marginalized people living in the district of Kannur by the intervention of State Government development programmes. His study reveals that decentralised development implemented by the Government of Kerala has not provided good results in many areas. In many places poor people were alienated and were not able to receive the benefits. He asserts that participation of people is the primary element for any development programme. He feels that the upper class people are grabbing the benefits of the needy people. At the same time he admires the activities of the Self Help Groups scattered around the state as this could make empowerment among the women community and reduce the level of poverty. He has made some suggestions for improving the development programmes of the Government.

Pradeep Kumar (2009) focuses on the relevant issues faced by the people in the rural communities in India. In his study the author includes the topics such as agricultural development, land reforms, rural marketing and decentralisation in a very good and efficient manner. In his opinion people will
not be interested to continue the agriculture cultivation if they get only little profit. He is not at all happy with the land reforms and decentralisation implemented in our country. This study also includes the purchasing abilities of the people in the rural society.

S.L. Doshi and P.C. Jain (2009) focus on some of the major problems faced by the rural people. This study mainly depends on sociological perspective and deep investigation process for finding facts related with the subject. They admit that the effect of the caste system in the present society is declining and at the same time a class consciousness has emerged among the people recently. The authors evaluate the merits and demerits of the rural development programme envisaged by the Government and the NGO’s before the independence period. They believe that government programmes ultimately benefited the rich and the dominant class and the poor became poorer. So a kind of gulf has emerged in the society. They divide the beneficiaries into two categories. They are individual and community based. The authors affirm that development programmes imparted by Gandhiji in Seva Gram Ashram has really benefited the weaker sections of the villages. “The development programmes for the villages at Wardha include sanitation, adult education, promotion of village industries and potable water”. [pp:270-271]. In this book the authors had included the topics such as panchayati raj, environmental protection, women empowerment and village co-operative societies in a very good and elaborative manner.

Sarat. C. Joshi (2009) elegantly focuses on the role of Gandhiji in remoulding the village economy of India. He realises that Gandhiji has motivated the people to produce and buy the items belonging to villages because that would give more income to the common people. Here the author uses Gandhiji’s statement, for strengthening his argument, which says “Village
upliftment is possible only when we rejuvenate village life as a whole, revive all village industries and make the entire village industrious.” [p:222]. Gandhiji has asked the people to maintain cleanliness in personal life and in the village that could improve the social and economic status of the people. In his opinion villages should not be considered as a venue for supplying all necessary things to the people living in the cities. The writer believes that the present view of global village supports only the technological advancement. It is not an alternative for Gandhiji’s view on village self-sufficiency. He also appreciates Gandhiji’s views on the social evil, the practice of untouchability. He says that Gandhiji has resisted the use of heavy machines in rural areas because this would reduce the scope of human labour which is abundant in our society. He feels that the growth of industrialisation would invite problems such as environmental destruction and global warming. At the same time he supports the regional planning process that could promote decision making from the grass root levels to proper utilization of resources.

Tanuja Trivedi’s (2009) attempt is to highlight the welfare of rural women by linking panchayats, leadership, self help groups, food security, and tribal groups in the country. According to the author the age old patriarchal system and male domination always curtailed the rights and privilege of the women. The formation of self help groups has really improved the social and economic status of the women by starting various self employment programmes in their own regions. She thinks that the industrialisation has given benefit more to the men than women in the employment sector. She strongly criticises the practice of infanticide of girls which is widely prevalent both in the rural and the urban areas. The author points out various existing social customs and practices mainly to highlight the depth of gender discrimination in the society.
According to C. Venkataiah (2009) the role of the Non Government Organisations (NGO’s) in the rural development in India is vital and important. The rural development programmes implemented by our Government did not make appropriate results at the grass root level. So the Government is interested in the participation of the NGO’s in the development programme. However, in many places the NGO’s had attained good rapport with people even in the remote areas. Success of the development programmes depend on the participation of people in the areas concerned. Even in the pre-independence period, the voluntary agencies had involved very seriously in the social and economic development of our country. Lack of efficiency in the administration of the Government had also caused great impediment for the implementation of rural development programmes more in successive levels. Rural development should not be evaluated based on the social and economic development of a particular area rather a holistic development approach has to be included in these areas. The Self Help Groups are formed with the guidance of the NGO’s and they have created development as well as empowerment in the rural areas. Presently the Government is withdrawing from many areas and giving responsibilities to the social and voluntary agencies in the development process so that more result can be expected.

B. Malleswari’s (2010) study is based on the Self Help Groups movement in the district of Chittoor of Andhra Pradesh. She has made some arguments for substantiating the social economic status of women in that district after the formation of the Self Help Groups. In her opinion existing patriarchal system in the state has never allowed the women to enjoy freedom and protect their rights. However, due to the emergence of industrialisation great changes have occurred in the life of women in and around the world. She has also incorporated some of the programmes which have been implemented
by the alternate Governments for improving the status of the women in India after the independence. She asserts that the results of these attempts were very little and negligible. The statistical data reveal that the formation of Self Help Groups has helped to improve the social economic status of women throughout the country. The author has also included some valuable suggestions for improving the activities of Self Help Groups in the country in the days to come.

Ashutosh Pandey and Gautam Vir (2010) have provided a detailed description about the gender discrimination faced by the women in India. They reveal that women are facing subjugation from the time of birth and their position is lower in social, political and educational fields. They have also given some arguments for proving their logical stand in this study. In the present society a great number of women are working in agricultural fields. At the same time men are involved more with heavy machineries and other industrial activities. The current trends show women’s position is below men especially in the areas of literacy, sex ratio, administration, leadership and formal job sectors of the country. Parents are showing more interest to get a son than a girl both in the rural and the urban areas. Our constitution provides lot of rules and regulations for the protection of the rights of the women, but in practice they are all in vain. Here the authors are raising their voice for the development of women in our society by projecting some calculations in a very systematic level. They advocate that Gandhiji strongly argued for the female upcoming and voting rights even before the independence.

Various views of different authors indicated above have been strictly followed and they have been fully examined in this study with respect to the primary source of data and other evidences.