

CHAPTER -VIII

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

- (a) Evaluation of the Programme
- (b) The need for Evaluation and Appraisal
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Since the introduction of the community development programme in India various enquiry, evaluation and survey have been made by local, national and international agencies. Reports concerning these studies have unearthed many shortcomings in the implementation of the development programmes. These surveys have brought out the truth that the basic spirit of the community development movement has been defeated because of the failure of the programme to increase farm output, which was the basic motivating factor for a farmer to involve himself in programme activities.¹ In addition to it, the programme failed to meet the needs of the severe economic and social disparities in the social structure of the Indian villages. Henceforth, a flexible programme to meet the needs and inspirations of the people is of great demand as it has been suggested by Prof. Dube - "What we need then is a dynamic and variable concept of community development, a concept that is sensitive and flexible to social needs and not rigidly bound to its own conceptual orthodoxy and operational routine."²

The village social hierarchy is dominated by caste system. Further a marked difference in the land holdings in different sections of people is another notable point. The community development programme while trying to foster a new outlook cannot ignore these realities of the social and economic life of the people. Besides the economic and social aspects of rural life its emotional and mental aspects too must be taken into consideration because these

1. Iyengar, S.K., "Fifteen Years of Democratic Planning" (Vol a), 1965, p. 504.

2. Dube, S.C., "Kurukshetra" , October 2, 1961, p.44.

together constitute the cultural fabric of the village. The success of the development programme is very much dependent on these factors of village life.

The community development programme has gradually emerged from its small beginnings into a countrywide movement for national rejuvenation. Today the programme covers almost the entire rural population. The process of development has naturally brought many problems of complex nature with its flow but the determined efforts to change peacefully and gradually the social and economic order of rural life, still continues. In order to make the programme a success in its true spirit, continuous and intermitant evaluation and surveys are necessary. Various efforts in this regard have already been made. Early in 1966, various aspects of community development were closely examined by a committee of experts and a new approach was recommended with a view to bring improvements in the working of the programmes. This was also helpful in putting the programme in tune with the pace of development and shift in current priorities at the state and national levels.¹

It is hoped that with the adoption of an integrated approach and after removing the shortcomings of the working of the programme serious efforts can be made to achieve the aims and objectives in the Sixth Five Year Plan period.

Evaluation of the Programme

A programme is organised to attain certain objective (or objectives) more efficiently than can be achieved otherwise. The

primary purpose in evaluating it is to find out to what extent it is doing well and what are the reasons for its success or failure? To do this job, the evaluation must have a clear conception of the objective of the programme and some idea of the means and methods appropriate to its achievements. An evolution of method of study and investigation is further a matter of necessity and henceforth a brief discussion in this regard has been presented in the present context in the following manner.

The community development programme in our country is an organised effort to raise the people's level of living in the countryside with their consent, participation and if possible even with their initiative. Therefore it is absolutely essential in a programme affecting millions of human beings and their attitudes that it should have an efficient independent and objective system of continuous assessment and appraisal of the work done, methods adopted and the result obtained on account of it. It would be fatal to this programme if it becomes the victim of some rigid or fixed ideas or dogmas. It is essential for maintaining the existence and the vitality of the programme that it should be dynamic and it should remain continuously in the process of self-evaluation. Simultaneously it is equally necessary for all the workers engaged in this programme to be always prepared for some introspection and self-criticism. It is no matter of shame to confess that there have been failures. Actually through these failures only we can ensure success and make it more solid and long lasting. It is impossible to be perfect in dealing with large numbers of human beings with so many having their own different and varied ideas, needs, problems, environments and psychology. Here

one should also note that it is also impossible to adopt a similar process everywhere or for every aspect of development. Further at the same time it is impossible to achieve the same degree of success in all the areas. Therefore, a localistic and particularistic frame of reference is necessary for evaluating the programme in different areas and in assessing its impact on different sub-sections of rural society. The present thesis is a humble attempt in this regard and focuses its attention on evaluating the achievements of the C.D. Programme in district Pratapgarh. In addition to it, the present study also concentrates on assessing the impact of the programme in bringing out political and socio-cultural changes in the social setting and life of the people, living in the areas selected for the present investigation.

The Need for Evaluation and Appraisal

The intangible nature of the "human" objectives and the unpredictability of the results in regard to them make evaluation of the programme so necessary not only to see where successes are being achieved and mistakes committed so that the former can be multiplied and the latter avoided, but also to observe the long term trends developing or failing to develop as a result of the programme, and the reasons for the same. Evaluation, therefore, is not merely the assessment of the accomplishment in the substantive fields of the programme such as agriculture, animal husbandry, health, education and so on, but goes further to find out what impact the programme activities in these substantive fields is having on the minds of the men and on the state of the community, judged

in terms of "human" objectives of the programme.¹

In community development programme the emphasis is on the objectives and on processes that have to be followed for the achievement of the objectives. The processes flow from the objectives. The programme of activities is the means for achieving the objectives and grows out of the objectives and the processes. There is such close inter-relationship between ends and means that one cannot be separated from the other either in implementation of the programme or in its evaluation. Thus evaluation at one pole of its functions is mere census recording after the fact. At the other pole it is fundamental research. The findings of even census taking of course have considerable programme guidance value.² In other words, the field of evaluation is substantially wider. But it does not evaluate basic ends like Democracy or Social Justice which are accepted as ends of our policy and endeavour. In terms of such basic ends only the means are evaluated. In this way of looking at the matter, what is evaluated is always the means in terms of its own objectives or ends. But to fully serve the needs of a community development programme the process of evaluation has to be complete in the sense that the achievements or failures in any field evaluated are seen ultimately in the context of the real objectives of community development.

Assessment of the Impact

In addition to evaluation in assessing the programme, one can start with the end product, viz. its impact upon the rural economy

1. Mukerji, B., Op.cit., pp.282-85.

2. Taylor, Carl, op.cit.,

and the rural society. One can then work backward, examining step by step the content, the technique, and the organisation of the programme. This seems to be the proper procedure, for in the ultimate analysis, the programme will be judged by its impact on the people and their resources. Moreover, the procedure enables the evaluator to track down the responsibility of the different elements of the programme for what is happening. Of course, one can begin at the other end, and evaluate the organisation, the method and the technique in terms of general principles assuming that if the means are appropriate, the final result must be good too. But such evaluation would be intermediate, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the best recipe is not a substitute for the judgment of the palate.

Areas of Assessment

So far the areas for assessment are concerned, they can be divided into various sub-categories as (1) Economic, (2) Social, and (3) in other time ordered indices. A brief description in this regard may be stated in the following manner :

(1) The Economic Impact

The impact of C.D. Programme can be economic and non-economic in nature. It may be understood that such division is rough and that these two categories are not quite independent of each other. The economic impact of the programme is indicated by its effect on rural income and employment. The questions to ask are Is the income of the rural people increasing as a result of the programme? Is it getting less and less unstable? Is the existing

inequality in distribution being reduced? Is employment of rural workers increasing? Henceforth in this respect, an attempt to measure the economic benefits of the programme against the costs incurred is treated as the assessment of the economic impact.

The economic test is not the final test but it is a useful means to check the unbridled enthusiasm and if a programme involves large expenditure of limited resources, but does not pass the economic test, it has to have a really strong non-economic justification.

(ii) The Social Impact

There is no simple, agreed measure of social progress. However, one can consider growth of community feeling and of forward outlook among the rural people as good indices of social advance in the countryside. In this regard some important questions may be: Is the feeling of belonging together growing among villagers? Do they show greater interest than formerly in problems of common concern and greater readiness to work together for their solution? Are they becoming conscious of the fact that the circumstances of today call for some revision of attitude, behaviour, modes, customs, and values of yesterday? Are they more receptive to new ideas, techniques, values, etc. and less reluctant to adopt them and make the necessary changes in human relations? If the answers to these and similar question could be found, one can be able to estimate the social impact of the programme.

(iii) The Mediating Impact

However, it is not always practicable or convenient to measure the impact of the programme in terms of the ultimate criteria.

intermediating indices are also to be satisfied. For example, one has to look back on changes in the quantities of seeds, fertilizers used rather than in the gross output of the farm or the net real income of the farmer as measures of the economic impact of the programme. Thus one has to rely on various indirect evidences of the growth of community spirit and of forward outlook among villagers, e.g., their contribution to projects of common benefit, the creation and the working of institutions which require cooperative effort etc. In other words, the intermediate indices are of great importance for true assessment.

The Contents for Enquiry

Having assessed the final impact of the programme another essential step is to examine the content, the technique and the organisation of the programme, for the extent and quality of the impact depend on these as much as on the objective. Some of the questions which are important in relation to the content of the programme are : Are the sponsored or recommended innovations technically sound? Are they appropriate to the conditions of areas, where they are being propagated? Are they feasible in terms of resources, unaided or aided, of the local people? Are the different measures taken under the programmes integrated? Does it include the minimum core of the complementary measures necessary for integrated and smooth development of the rural society? Are there any contradictory measures? These are some important questions because the effectiveness of an enhanced effort in one field may be reduced or enhanced by other efforts in the same field or other fields.

The Communication Process

Another mediating area of assessment, which needs a specific attention and status is of communication, which is commonly referred to extension. The techniques of extension used in the programme are also focus of study. It is to be examined in the manner in which the programme is trying to put new ideas or new practices across the people, ascertain the extent to which the people are taking them over, note the problems they are facing and study the role of the programme in solving them.

The Organisational Implications

The organisational set up of the programme machinery is another significant dimension of evaluation. It can be evaluated under the headings of personal and material resources.

The Bureaucratic Set-up

Men and women are brought together to operate the programme. Here the evaluation would involve ascertaining the personnel's efficiency and competence for the assigned volume and kind of work. Whatever the technical competence of a civil servant may be his effectiveness as a functionary is increased by some dose of public spirit. This is true of all civil servants. But while for most civil servants a degree of missionary zeal is a valuable complement to technical efficiency, for the public servant in the C.D. Programme it is a necessary pre-condition for effective working. Therefore evaluation should aim to find out whether personnel of the programme possess this quality in a reasonable degree or not? Are they sincerely concerned with the people's welfare? Do they have in addition to

technical competence the sympathy, the understanding and the readiness to put in the extra effort which are required to win people's confidence in the programme and its workers? What are the methods of their working? Do they work for the people or with the people and in such a manner that some day - not in the distant future - the people may do without them? These are some of the major dimensions in evaluating the organisational implications in the community development programme.

(b) Coordination in Administration

The administration in the community development programme should be properly coordinated. For a programme integrated in respect of its content can only be carried out efficiently by a coordinated administration. In fact—this is the chief justification for the creation of the community development programme—it has been organised to achieve something more than what the uncoordinated efforts of technical departments concerned with rural problems could accomplish. Henceforth important questions in this regard may reveal : Are the different jobs to be done under the programme adequately defined and the division of responsibility sufficiently clear to reduce friction and conflict? Do the specialists and others who are brought together at different levels have sufficient understanding of the meaning and purpose of one another's job? Is the line of discipline clearly chalked out to ensure smooth and prompt execution of decisions? Does the administrative head have the status, the qualification and the personal qualities appropriate to be the leader of a group? Do the members work as a team to achieve a common purpose? Finally, has the programme created conditions, evolved

procedures and established traditions which encourage workers at the lower echelons to bring their experience to the notice of persons at higher levels? It would almost seem as if the workers in the community development programme in a block have to become a true community themselves if they are to be efficacious as instruments for the development of the rural community.

(c) Resources and Local Planning

By and large, the community development programme is today one of technical assistance : It is an attempt by the government to reach to the rural people, through technically qualified persons, new ideas, new skills and new practices. These would some day increase the people's own resources. But in the short run, the people may not possess or have the capacity or the facility to buy the extra resources required for experimenting with new ideas and new techniques and one of the major responsibilities of the programme is to make them available to the people. Therefore, another area which receives attention for evaluation is to find out whether this responsibility is being discharged efficiently at workers' level in the community development programme. Is the supply of the necessary resources adequate? Are they of the right quality? Are they available in time and at convenient places? Are the administrative operations involved in the process of supply prompt and smooth? If prices are charged, are they reasonable in term of the buyer's capacity to pay and his expectation of higher return from the use of the resources?

(d) Institutional Role

Obviously, the ultimate aim of the programme is to improve the villager and make him enterprising and self-reliant. Therefore, evaluation should not be content with evaluating only the technical efficiency of the organisation for supply. It should also find out the degree in which the programme is using the opportunity to build up people's own organisations for example cooperatives, Panchayats etc. as channels for the supply of resources. An evaluation of the role of these institutions in term of both their technical efficiency and their contribution to the development of the villager is essential for drawing a complete picture of the impact of the community development programme on rural people and community.

In brief, the above discussion on the strategy of assessment and evaluation in the present context narrates that the primary purpose in evaluating the community development programme is to measure its achievement in terms of its objectives. This may be done by getting answers to relevant questions that bear upon the impact, the operation and the organisation of the programme. The present scheme of evaluation of the organisation and working of community development programme in district Pratapgarh may further be illustrated through a chart in an integrated manner :

(A) - Assessment of the Impact

Area of Assessment	Corresponding Variable
(1) Economic	(1) Increase in per capita income (2) Increase in production
(2) Social	(1) Cooperation (2) People's participation
(3) Political	(1) Democratic decentralisation (2) Development of Panchayati Raj

(B) - Organisational Evaluation

(1) Bureaucratic set up	- Decision Making
(2) Coordination	- Management of affairs
(3) Resources	- Local planning
(4) Institutions	- Work appraisal

The Economic Impact

(Increase in per capita income & production)

So far as an assessment of the economic impact of the programme is concerned, it has already been exhaustively discussed earlier in Chapter VI under the heading "The Implementation of the Programme". Therefore, in order to avoid repetition, the discussion regarding the economic impact is here avoided.

The Social Impact

Cooperation and People's Participation : People's cooperation is sinequanon for successful working of the community development programme. People's participation in programmes is an indication of the extent to which they have identified themselves with the objectives of the community projects. The field observations reveal that traditional work patterns influence and determine people's participation, for example when there is a 'Shramdan Drive' the people belonging to upper caste take up supervisory work and hard labour is left to the lower caste groups. As such the upper caste people only cooperate and do not participate in the programme. It was further noticed that in sanitary and repair works people failed to modify their habits and were unable to adjust themselves for participation in the work. Since social backwardness and taboos are stumbling block in the path of voluntary participation the need to cultivate new habits and to formulate attitude for cooperation and willing participation in the work is foremost in community development.

From field enquiries it was also revealed that through village Panchayat and school people's participation was generally channelised. It was observed that non-statutory village development councils such as Gram Vikas Mandals, Gram Mangal Samitis and Gram Sevak Sanghs etc. were to an extent successful for gaining people's cooperation. But Panchayats generally proved only rubber stamps. Another factor which came in light during the study was that the caste of the Gram Sevak largely determined his acceptance by the villagers. If he happened to belong to a low caste he had to face many difficulties socially

as well as an extension worker. Age was another factor which determined the cooperation and people's participation. An aged and well-behaved worker often got a better response from the people. Projects started and guided by a younger Gram Sevak were not taken seriously by the community. Sometimes people cooperated only to maintain or enhance the prestige of the village irrespective of felt needs. Almost all the workers interviewed during the study admitted the fact that when individuals who were regarded as leaders of organised kin groups and castes, persons who held high position in community on account of their learning and character and institutions like village Panchayat and cooperatives offered their unstinted cooperation and support the implementation of the programme was successful.

It was found that people do not cooperate when any programme touches the sensitive area of belief of the villagers. This is the reason that programmes connected with rural health and hygiene, maternity and child care do not become popular as traditional practices rooted in beliefs offer resistance. People do not cooperate because they expect everything to be done by the government agency and the plans are like the other activities of the government. In discussion with field workers the informant was told that weaker sections and landless labourers who got little direct benefit of the programme did not like to extend their whole-hearted cooperation to the programme.

The Political Impact

Demoractic Decentralisation and Panchayati Raj : For practical purposes the country side is still ruled by officials. The triple process of devolution, delegation and democratisation of powers should

be earnestly taken up to make the people feel that they are masters of their destiny. To achieve the objective Balvantray Mehta Study Team in its report observed, "Development cannot progress without responsibility and power. Community development can be real only when the community understands its problems, realises its responsibilities exercises the necessary powers through its chosen representatives and maintains a constant and intelligent vigilance on local administration."¹

During the course of field study it was found that Panchayati Raj structure had provided a forum where not only local grievances were aired but caste loyalties were also cut through on account of interest groups. Although structurally the Panchayat appears to be democratic and egalitarian the old bossism and authoritarianism of the village elite still lingers. The elections, therefore, are not generally free and fair and the seats are filled by the privileged section of the village. As a result the voice of the well-to-do families prevails in the Panchayat and its meetings are held to suit their convenience and decisions are taken mostly by consensus without caring for the quorum in the meeting. Absentee members generally sign the register later on to complete the quorum. Lady members seldom take part in meetings. The President of the Panchayat treats the Panchayat affairs as his personal affair and keeps the Panchayat money with him to use it for his own work and seldom deposits it in treasury or bank. The study revealed that the new political set up did not function properly since villagers were mostly illiterate and were used to a sort of authoritarian rule.

1. Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, August 1978, p.3.

The political leaders and representatives of the people in Legislature had a lukewarm attitude towards strengthening of the democratic process at the grass roots. There was also lack of conceptual clarity about Panchayati Raj "Some would treat it just as an administrative agency, others as an extension of democracy at the grass roots level and still others as a charter of rural local development."¹

However the system of democratic decentralisation has politicized the traditional society without affecting too much the social structure of the villages. The villages are now linked with wider political system and people have become politically articulated. It has helped rural people to cultivate a developmental psyche and has bridged the gulf between the bureaucratic elite and the people.

The analysis attempted so far helps to conclude that the Panchayati Raj is both an end and a means. As an end it envisages to take and extend democracy to the grass roots. It intends to develop a system of political linkages from bottom upwards through the state to national levels and wants to build the accountability of the representatives to the people.

Evaluation of the Implementation Machinery

Bureaucratic Set Up - Decision Making : In a planned economy public administration can do a great deal to help or hinder, to promote or frustrate the various activities that are carried out in

1. Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institution, Government of India, August 1979, p.6.

development programme. From the enquiries made from villagers and extension officers it was found that administration was not generally prompt in dealing with the grievances of the public or solving the difficulties of the field workers. Delay in giving decision or sanction concerning needs of the people often led to bitterness and frustration among them. Delay also led to corruption and other evils. More than 80 per cent of the extension officers held the view that higher authorities cared little to see that timely supply of money or material was maintained. As a result the projects either suffered or were completed haphazardly. It was also found in enquiry that the administration lacked sensitivity and concern for the problems and hardships of the people in normal times. This attitude eroded the trust between the villagers and administration. In spite of the repeated complaints people did not get continued supply of electricity or water supply from tubewells or canals or timely supply of seeds and fertilizers. Most of the villagers being illiterate did not receive courtesy and consideration due to them from public authorities. People felt that those who had influence and pull got anything done and those who were poor neglected.

So far as the meetings for decision and policy making are concerned, it was observed that they were not held regularly to acquaint the people with the problems. Sometimes more than half the time of a meeting is devoted to non-agenda items. Standing or sub-committees of Panchayat remain dormant until some urgent business is placed before them by the officials. It is noteworthy that time devoted to local plans and review of progress is surprisingly small and nearly half of the total time of Zila Parishad and Panchayat

Samiti is taken in disposing routine items in which members have mostly a listening role. So a sense of business-like disposal of matters with an eye on the main objective is found to be absent in these bodies. The coopted members representing women and backward sections are mostly inactive and their membership is only a matter of prestige to the committee.

Coordination - Management of Affairs : Coordination has been defined as "the orderly arrangement of group effort, to provide unity of action in the pursuit of a common purpose".¹ In other words, coordination is very necessary to obviate conflicts, to prevent overlapping and to make fuller use of limited manpower, skills and resources at various levels of government, between departments and other functionaries and between local bodies and people's agencies.

The study reveals that even though the Panchayat Samities and Block Development Committees have a right to require the attendance of District Level Officers by requisition, but reports of indifference and non-involvement on the part of such officers have been noticed by the investigator. It has also come to notice that sometimes extension officers have found it to their advantage to play the officials and non-officials against each other. In such cases blocks become hot-beds of bickerings and intrigues.

On account of lack of proper coordination supply was found to be irregular. It is not unusual to find that often seeds of certain varieties in demand are reported to be short in supply after a vigorous

1. Dwight Waldo (ed) Ideas and Issues in Public Administration, p.46.

campaign to stimulate their use. So is the case of supply of implements. In some blocks the quantity of fertilizers and chemicals was found short of the declared weight but the concerned extension officer did nothing to make up the loss because the supplying agency did not cooperate to remove the complaint. In some cases unrealistic assessment of local needs and late indenting also caused difficulties in procuring supplies in time.

Resources : Local Planning - For preparation of village production plan the Union Ministry has laid down in detail the procedure for preparing such a plan and instructions have been issued to the State Governments in this behalf.¹ The basic data required for drawing the plan is furnished by village officials and the Saniti must communicate the availability of resources, such as seed fertilizers, credit etc. well in advance. The tentative draft plan is prepared by the Agricultural Production Committee with the help of village and block officials. Then the plan goes before Gram Sabha for approval. The V.L.W. helps the Committee in executing the plan by discussing problems with the individual agriculturists and approaching the extension officers for making supplies, services and credit available to the farmers in time. Every year the Panchayat also prepares a village plan with the help of the V.L.W.

Thus, the V.L.W. supplies most of the drive and initiative for the work. The success of local planning depends upon the vigour with which the APC works, the extent to which Gram Sabha is involved and the administration makes available the needed supplies in time.

1. Circular No.1 (23) 61- Agr. Ministry of C.D.&C. (Department of C.D.)

But it was observed that the low percentage of attendance at the Gram Sabha meeting and lethargy of members of the APC was a sufficient proof that most of the villagers were not involved in the decisions. The study also reveals that the laid down procedure is seldom adhered to and the plans are prepared by the officials at various levels in the name of the people and respective Samitis stamp the plans. Few exceptions are also noticeable. Educated and young Pradhans and Block Pramukhs show more interest in planning work and help in taking right decisions as compared to uneducated and illiterate Pradhans and Block Pramukhs.

Institutions-Work Appraisal : Institutions like cooperative societies have an important role to play in the economic and social reconstruction of the village community. But the present study reveals that the picture of cooperative movement in villages is not as rosy as it has been claimed by the government. It was found during the study that most of the cooperative societies were only paper entities because their activities ceased when the formalities for granting loans were completed and the loan money was distributed. Societies remained defunct, if the loan or supply of expected scarce goods was not forthcoming or the society had sustained losses in the past. It was further observed that societies could not run themselves without the help of officials because they had not self-reliance in maintaining accounts, handling transactions and conducting group discussions. It was noticed that in a large number of cases the loan money had not been used for the purpose for which it was sanctioned. Garden and irrigation loans were generally misapplied.

Cash loans were also misused. Loans given by Khadi Board have larger overdues than cooperative loans. The recovery of loans has become a formidable problem. Even the members of the managing committee were found to be the defaulters. The postponement of recovery on one pretext or other continues and the loanees carry on the business of investing the loan money at a higher rate of interest. It was also found that the profits of cooperative marketing societies were very poor and there was dearth of competent managers to run the societies. Enquiries also showed that most of the societies registered as cooperative farming societies were fake bodies.

The study revealed that although credit societies were formed for providing finance for agricultural purposes but farmers hesitated to take loans because inflated figures of loan were entered against their names and deposited amounts were not acknowledged by the supervisor-cum-accountant. When on account of mismanagement credit cooperatives failed service cooperatives were introduced to supply seeds, fertilizers, equipment etc. to farmers. But during the study it was found that such societies existed only in name and their main function was to provide credit. They seldom provide the storage facility or the facility of marketing of output or joint use of production facilities. It was further noticed that unscrupulous persons had entered the cooperative sector to carry on joint stock business. Too much of government subsidy has further undermined the self-reliance of the members.

The above discussion related with the major findings of the present study visualises a very grim picture of the community

development in Pratapgarh district. In order to ensure the success of future programme of village development and rural reconstruction, some suggestions for improvement and guidance based on the conclusions of the study have been presented in the forthcoming chapter.