

DESIGN AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: AN INTERFACE RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY WITH THE EXISTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES – A CASE STUDY OF A RURAL HABITAT

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ABSTRACT

The poverty alleviation programmes in India are designed to target rural poverty alleviation as the prevalence of the poverty is high in rural areas, because of rural unemployment in the present context. Also rural out migration of the poor is challenging in the present context to hold them back in the villages, also many rural development programmes and rural poverty alleviation programmes are effectively serving the purpose in rural areas due to various geographic and infrastructure limitations. The five year plans immediately after independence tried to focus on poverty alleviation through sectoral programmes. The first five year plan focused on agricultural production as a way of addressing poverty while second and third plans focused on massive state led investments for employment generation in public sector, whereas, these policies did not have changed in its structure and will have no enough strength to make a sweeping effect with the existing financial strength of Indian economy. The existing rural development programmes are grouped into 1) Wage employment programmes, 2) Self-employment programmes, 3) Food security programmes, 4) Social security programmes; in all these programmes the scope of women empowerment is minimal and required to be introduced; the paper has explored many such options to be encouraged through rural development programmes and schemes.

Key Words: Poverty Alleviation; Rural Out Migration; Rural Development Programmes; Self-Employment and Women Empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a social phenomenon in which a section of society is unable to fulfil even its basic requirements. The third world countries exhibit the existence of mass poverty, although poverty also exists even in the developed countries in Europe and America. The concept of poverty is associated with deprivation of a minimum requirement of living or consumption that is minimum requirements for food, clothing, housing, health, etc [1]. The poor can be classified into two sub groups - those who are poor over an extended duration or chronically poor and those who are transiently poor. India has been ranked at 96th place among 119 developing countries. This Index revealed that India did fairly well in combating hunger between 1997 to 2003 and even in further. [2]. India accounts for one-sixth of the global population and is growing at a faster rate than shortly it will become the most populous nation in the world. The pressure on land is increasing day by day, while agricultural productivity is not keeping pace with the population growth. Presently, 72 per cent of India's population and 75 per cent of the country's poor are in rural areas. Nearly two-third of the Indian population still depends on agriculture for its livelihood [3]. The agriculture rural area is largely depending on rain fall; but rain is not showering to support the crop needs, either it showers to create flood or to create drought. Similarly, the market price also dynamically varies to