



Role of Youth Clubs in Rural Development

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Villages are the backbone of our country. According to 2011 census rural population of India is 83.3 crores. 68.84 % of them are living in rural areas. (Census of India 2011). Since the population of rural area is lesser when compared to urban areas there is high degree of relationship, harmony among the people in rural areas. Majority of the rural people are highly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, and that is the reason why agriculture plays pivotal role in measuring the rural economy. Rural people have strong bond with the nature, and they (rural people) play crucial role in uplifting the values existing in family. The focus of rural development on the social changes occurring in rural society is vast. The changes occurring in economic, social, cultural, religious and political fields plays significant role in understanding the society. We can term rural development as multi-faceted. Majority of rural people rely on agriculture, hence we can come to an opinion that agriculture plays pivotal role in influencing the economic situations of rural places. In rural place if people develop a attitude of mutual co-operation, brotherhood, communal harmony and urge for learning new aspects that place will gradually develop contributing for the overall development of the country.

Rural development is more concerned with the growth and development of basic amenities of that place. Formation of roads in rural place, establishment of schools and hospitals, facilitating the source of drinking water, and other related social facilities is in general termed as rural development. Together with this, rural development also focuses on banking, small scale industries, increasing literacy, providing nutritional food etc in rural areas. Therefore we can say that rural development is combination of economical progress and social progress in rural areas.

Government cannot single handedly focus on rural development. The role of Youth Clubs (YuvakaMandals) is also important. YuvakaMandals are community based organisations. Youths having similar aims and

objectives come together and form YuvakaMandals. YuvakaMandals function in a certain rural place by keeping in mind demands of local people, resources available in that place. YuvakaMandals focus on development by uplifting the social values and they work on the principle of service. In Indian context YuvakaMandals are not new. From ancient times for the societal development YuvakaMandals have been giving their own contributions such as volunteering in social ceremonies like marriage, festivals, fair, funeral and also helping the needy during natural calamities. YuvakaMandals strive for the growth and development of the youth and overall development of the society. YuvakaMandals believe that youth can help themselves for their overall growth and development. YuvakaMandals think in different spheres about how to develop a particular rural place where they have been functioning. Majority of times they have succeeded while they have failed in few circumstances. YuvakaMandals choose a small rural area as their place of functioning. Based on the socio economic conditions of that place, YuvakaMandals design their objectives about rural development. Nehru Yuva Kendra is playing significant role in monitoring the works of YuvakaMandals throughout the country. There are more than 2.5 lakhs YuvakaMandals registered under Nehru Yuva Kendra in rural India.

Rural development is not only development in basic facilities of the village, but also it is concerned with communal harmony, mutual cooperation which are the ingredients of societal peace.

There are various reasons for the success of YuvakaMandals and in the meantime there are also various reasons for its failure. We can list few of the reasons for failure of effective functioning of YuvakaMandals they are not forming the subcommittee, internal conflict, selfish attitude of the members, lack of coordination with local authorities, failure in resource utilisation and mobilisation, non-democratic election process, political interference, organising programmes for



popularity, not including local people in decision making process. If there is high degree of cooperation among rural people, harmony, brotherhood, urge for learning new things then there will be development in that particular rural area and ultimately it will contribute in nation's progress. If the nation has to undergo progress then there should be rapid increase in the empowerment of rural people, effective growth in rural economy, high literacy rate, reduction in unemployment rate. Along with the above mentioned things rural people should adapt to changes and implement them by preserving the originality of the rural area. This results in favourable climate for the nation's progress.

For a country to maintain equilibrium in its progress there should be sustainable development in rural areas. If we should label change as progress, then the people of that particular place should witness overall development in them which in turn contributes for their empowerment. If rural people are empowered, and if there is rapid changes in them then we can discuss that nation is moving in the direction of development. If rural places are neglected, then there will be downfall in the nations progress. If the rural places to be developed then only Government cannot play the role. Efforts of Yuvaka Mandalas, Self Help groups, NGO's will also play a major role. If the rural areas have to be developed then those who are initiating the development process should think about that place in various angles. They should make a proper planning like, which are the programmes that will help the concerned? How much resources have to be utilised? Etc. In other words strength, weakness, opportunities, threat have to be analysed (SWOT Analysis).

Mac Laglin and **Milbrey W** have conducted a study titled "Community Counts: How Youth Organisations Matter For Youth Development". In this study they have studied 120 Youth Organisations of 34 cities in America. Community organisations play significant role in bringing effective changes in the skill development, personality and experience of youths. Without the support and cooperation of community people Community Based Organisations fail to work effectively.

Ogbonna O.I. and **Agbotti I.O** of Agriculture University of Nigeria have conducted a study about "Role of Youth Organisations in Rural Development" in Igboni State of Nigeria. Through multistage sampling they had interviewed 60 people who were the members of Youth organisations. Among the interviewees 60% were males with average age group of 24 years, 89.50% of them were

members of 'Aphikpo', a youth organisation. 86.4% of them have said that their youth organisation has built town halls, 81.4% of them have contributed in the development of local schools, and 74.6% of them have constructed markets. Here researcher has pointed out that there are various obstacles in the participation of youth in rural development. Among them are lack of skill development programmes for youth, limited knowledge about economic aspects. These gaps can be bridged by giving adequate training to youth about skill development programmes. The above study is published in "Journal of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development"- February 2015. The main lacking in this study is that researcher has not considered more number of youth organisations. This has made the study very narrow by not knowing about how actually youth organisations can play role in rural development.

M.A. Brennan, Rosemary A. Barnett and **IboniBaug** have conducted a study on "Participation of Youth in Rural Development". If local authorities, policy makers clearly understand the role of youth in rural development, then this facilitates the youth to actively participate in the above process. If Government policies are designed by keeping youth in mind, it may result in overall growth of youth and development of society. This study has been conducted in Florida.

Chethan Chauhan had written an article in Hindustan Times (10-4-2011), researcher said that more than half of the Yuvaka Mandals in India are having existence only in papers. They have lost their existence in society by their inactive nature. Crores of rupees sanctioned by the then Central Government for the purpose of rural development is remaining untouched. What are the reasons for the inactiveness of Yuvaka Mandals? Whether ineffective evaluation is lacking? These things are not clearly focused in the above study. Due to inactive Yuvaka Mandals Government schemes are not reaching at the grass root level.

In the book written by **S.N. Tripathi** "Cooperatives For Rural Development" (1998) researcher has chosen Madhurai district in Tamil Nadu and focused about the role of Arivali Mahaliriyakkam in rural development. In making rural people to be equipped with employment skills non-governmental organisations play major role than Government. Here researcher has focused that for rural development making the rural people to develop skills necessary for earning their daily bread is more important. What role do Yuvaka Mandals play in making rural people to be beneficiaries of rural development programmes



designed by Government? In what way do YuvakaMandals establish coordination with local authorities? These things need to be more clear.

Mahendra Narayan Karna in his book "Social Movements in North East India" (1998) he has conducted a study 'role of youth organisations in bringing social change in Hailakandy district'. During 1990s series of activities were organised by BarackValley All Round Development Students Association aiming to develop socio economical conditions of the district. Many youth organisations in Hailakandy have collaborated with Central Government, Social Welfare Department, Nehru Yuva Kendra and Shrinikethan with respect to growth and development of that place through various activities like literacy drives, awareness on human rights. In the same way in Karimganj district Social Development Association was started in 1988 which is working for adult literacy, environment protection and rural development through several activities. From seeing the above things we can analyse how yuvakamandals coordinate effectively with local authorities. To what extent yuvakamandals have been effective in establishing collaboration with Government? Have they been effective in gaining the support of local people? These things needs more focus.

Rajasen Nayar V. in his study "Human Resource Development of Rural Youth The Role of Nehru Yuva Kendra" (2003) has pointed out that rural youth (15-35 years) comprise 73% of the country's population. In this study 41.5% of them have said that female membership in their YuvakaMandals is very less (less than 10%). From this we can opine that in present context it has become a challenge for the yuvakamandals to give proper representation for females. In rural development contribution of females is also important and in this context what is the role played by yuvakamandals in minimising gender discrimination? What steps are taken to make females to join yuvakamandals? These things needs to be addressed.**Raja L.** in his study "The participation of The Youth in Village Development in Dindigul District" 300 respondents belonging to various yuvakamandals were interviewed. 73.3% of them have participated and collaborated in rain water harvesting program organised by the Government, 80.1% of them have collaborated in construction of drainages. Study has focused that if Government give adequate training for members of yuvakamandals then they will give their maximum contribution for the society. This also results in effective utilisation of resources.**Ruiz and Gregoria A.** in their study "The Youth in Contemporary Goan

Society: A Study in Sociology of Youth" they have focused that among 1000 yuvakamandals registered under Nehru Yuva Kendra in South Goa only 300 of them are active. Male respondents have said that due to lack of time they cannot affiliate themselves in yuvakamandals, whereas female respondents have said that lack of cooperation in home have forced them not to join yuvakamandals. In this study only 21% of youth are members of yuvakamandals. This has prevented the study from understanding about the effectiveness of yuvakamandals.

Jacob K.C. in his study "Role of Non Governmental Organisations in The Economic and Community Development of Kerala: A Case Study of Peermade Development Society" effectiveness of Peermade Development Society is being analysed. During 2003-04 this society has given insurance facilities to about 2642 poor families residing in Peermade taluk. With the collaboration of Government and Non Governmental organisations various capacity building programmes about employment have been organised. From 1997-98 to 2004-05 total 1092 of them have made use of these programs. These things have also made rapid changes among the rural people. From this we can come to a conclusion that if rural people are kept in centre and effective collaboration is established between yuvakamandals and government then the social transformation can take place enriching the life of the rural people.

Nangklavand Sita in their study "Politics of Pressure Groups in Meghalaya with Special Reference To Students And Youth Organisations", in this study about yuvakamandal "Federation of Khasi-Jaintiya and Garo People" is made. This yuvakamandal was started in 1-11-1989, worked for upliftment of tribal people by making tribals to get united and focus on their socio-economic wellbeing. This yuvakamandal through series of programmes made tribals aware about their political rights. This yuvakamandal is also keeping an eye on the functioning of Government in order to see that there is no favouritism, corruption. From the above study it is clear that yuvakamandals after winning the support from local people can also keep an eye on Governments way of functioning.

In the study done during 1966 by **Community Welfare Department** of Government of India with collaboration of the then **Mysore Government**, 11 states were selected for the purpose of study. Study points out that majority of yuvakamandals in their beginning years of functioning become inactive due to the shortage of resources. Study also highlighted yuvakamandals in Orissa (Chittaranjan Yuvaka Mandal in Gonda



village in Sambhalpur district which started in 1959) and Mysore (Yuvakamandal of Kothanahalli which started in 1962) have been effectively functioning since their formation. Among the 11 yuvakamandals with respect to achievements 5 yuvakamandal's performance is not upto the mark. From the above study we can say that effective utilisation of resources, effective collaboration with local authorities and giving more importance to local people makes yuvakamandals to function in a effective way.

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