

DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS, REALIZATIONS AND PEOPLES' PERCEPTION: CASE STUDY OF A TRIBAL VILLAGE IN CENTRAL HIMALAYA

Y.S. Topal, Rekha Pant and P.K. Samal

G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development, Kosi-Katarmal, Almora 263 643, India

The tribal population which constitute about 8.01% of the total population and signify the cultural diversity of Indian Republic, have experienced various efforts by the State after independence to improve their socio-economic condition, on a sustainable pattern. These efforts may be categorized into six major categories *viz*;

- Economic, including agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and small scale industries,
- Educational,
- Health,
- Communication and Housing,
- Socio-cultural
- Political.

A number of studies on development of tribal communities has been carried out by researchers from various discipline. However, the term development has been defined in different manners. For Todaro (1979), 'Development is both a physical reality and a state of mind in which, society has through some combination of social, economic and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life, whatever the specific component of this better life, development in all society must have at least the following objectives:

- to increase the ability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods.
- to raise the level of living, and
- to expand the range of economic and social choice to individual and nation.

According to Bottomore (1971), " in most sociological writings, the term 'development' has been used in quite a different way, first to differentiate two broad type of societies, on one side the prosperous industrial society and on other side rural society which is predominately rural, agricultural and poor, and secondly, to describe the process of industrialization and modernization". Laufer (1967), states that the term 'development' means dams and factories, roads and canals, bush clearing, universities, electrification, land improvement, secondary schools, primary schools, sanitation, research and multitudes of other activities and achievements. But again he argues that all the above development means people, the perpetration and activation of people is the cause of economic and social development. David Apter (1968), provides four characteristics in his definition of development and they are:

- Differentiation (*i.e.*, increasing specialization of their role and integration),
- Stability (*i.e.*, capacity to make decision, that solves the problems without major disruption),
- Choice (*i.e.*, increasing capacity to innovate & to be flexible), and
- Emulation (*i.e.*, imitation of foreign models, especially industrial society).

Mehta (1984), has identified the indicators of development at different level,

- Individual level: possession of material objects by the individual, families, public laboratories, construction of new houses *etc.*
- Community level: mobility of group or individual in social hierarchy, standard of living of people and increased employment opportunities,
- Societal level: economic growth, industrialization, urbanization, literacy rate, status and health status.

There may be some variations as well as contradictions among the scholars in defining the term 'Development', but the common feature which appears in almost all the writings is that the word development should not be understood as mere an economic activity and material growth. The major cause behind this may be the dominant economic concern underlying development paradigm, development planning strategies and measures of development performance (Sharma, 1986). The term 'Development' refer to the upward movement of the entire social system, which encompasses both growth and change (Pandey, 1985).

Thus the above narration reveal that the term 'development' includes various dimensions, and the process should be perceived as an involvement of reorganization and reorientation of not only the entire economic system, but the whole structural and functional social system too. Bhotia tribe which resides in the high altitude villages of UP hills are usually known as traders and pastoralist. It was observed that their agricultural practices has been largely affected by comparatively more emphasis on trade and pastoralism (Das, 1982). But in case of Tomik, it was noticed that agriculture has been the prime pursuit traditionally

followed by the villagers and they had never been engaged with trade or pastoralism. In this article an attempt has been made to assess the degree of realization of development interventions (particularly IRDP, IAY, ITDP & JRY) and people's perception of development by Bhotia tribal community residing in a high altitude village - Tomik in Pithoragarh district of Central Himalaya.

THE VILLAGE

Village Tomik, which falls under the Development Block Munsyari of district Pithoragarh, is located between North longitude 30° 31' 57" and East latitude 80° 27' 24" at an altitude of 2200 msl and 20 km from road head. The village comprising of 94 households with a total population of 568, is inhabited by agriculturist sect of Bhotia tribe locally known as 'Harkotia' and the scheduled caste. The total geographical area of the village is 711.56 ha. and percentage of cultivable land is about 16.87, while the forests constitute about 26.27 % of the total reported area. The percentage of SC population to the total population is 18.49, the rest are being Bhotias. The sex ratio in the village is 803. A primary school is available within the village, while the middle school is about 3 km. and secondary school is about 20 km. away from the village. Literacy rate in the village is 42.08 % out of which 54.93 % are male and 37.50 % are female. The per capita availability of cultivated land is about 0.21 hectares and livestock is about 4.39. The main crops of the village are Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), Paddy (*Oryza sativa*), Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), Maize (*Zea mays*), Mandua (*Eleusine coracana*), Ramdana (*Amaranthus paniculatus*), Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*).

METHODOLOGY

The selection of village was purposive. At first, secondary data were collected from various concerned departments viz., Block Development Office, Revenue Department, Office of ITDP and Public Health Center etc., and then an indepth empirical study was carried out by a group of researchers drawn from Sociology, Geography and Anthropology, stretching over a period of one month in the village. Household schedule and Knowledge, Attitude & Perception (KAP) questionnaire were developed and made use of in the primary data collection. In addition to schedule and questionnaire, group discussions, participant observations and canvassing interviews have also been carried out simultaneously, during the collection of primary data.

FINDINGS

IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme)

Integrated Rural Development Programme was initiated in 1981-82 in Munsyari development block. Since inception of the program, 109 persons were benefited in Tomik under this program up to the financial year 1993-94. Under different sectors/schemes the number of beneficiaries with respect to their community is shown in table 1. Table shows that out of these 109 persons, 49 (45.0 %) received subsidized grants for sheep/goat rearing under primary sector, which is the highest frequency followed by woolen industries (24.8 %) under secondary sector.

Tomik is one of the most sustainable villages of Johar valley since it is surrounded by precious natural resources like dense forest with diverse species of fuel wood, timber and fodder trees from one side and large pastures on the other side. Per cattle availability of pasture land in Tomik was about 0.08 hectare. In this sense greater emphasis on herd rearing under primary sector seems to be well congruent to the existing resource availability and local needs. Secondary data obtained from veterinary centre at block head quarter also shows that in Gram Sabha (village council) Tomik extraction of wool per season is about 750 kg while availability of meat per month was recorded about 500 kg. Under tertiary sector, 15 persons received financial assistance for retail shops. During observations we found only 3 retail shops in the village including one attached with PDS shop.

Table 1 : Distribution of Beneficiaries by sector/scheme & community

| Sector/scheme | STs | SCs | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Primary Sector</i> | | | |
| Milch animal | 4 (5.2) | 3 (9.4) | 7 (6.4) |
| Sheep/goat rearing | 31 (40.3) | 18 (56.3) | 49 (45.0) |
| <i>Secondary Sector</i> | | | |
| Woolen industry | 27 (35.1) | - | 27 (24.8) |
| Iron work | 1 (1.3) | 8 (25.0) | 9 (8.3) |
| Carpentry | 1 (1.3) | - | 1 (0.9) |
| Tailoring unit | - | 1 (3.1) | 1 (0.9) |
| <i>Tertiary Sector</i> | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Retail shop | 13 (16.8) | 2 (6.2) | 15 (13.7) |
| All sectors | 77 (100) | 32 (100) | 109 (100) |

Source: Office of the BDO, Munsyari, District Pithoragarh, (UP)

The nearest market centre (Madkote) is situated at a distance of about 20 km. from the village, which is not approachable frequently to sell the milk and milk products. However, a few villagers visits Madkote to sell their milk products hardly once or twice in a month.

IAY (Indira Aawas Yojana)

Indira Aawas Yojana was first introduced in 1985 as a sub scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) in Munsyari Development Block. The primary objective of IAY is to provide free accommodation to the homeless including SCs, STs, Freed Bonded Labors, and the families living below poverty line. The upper limit of per unit cost in hill areas is Rs. 15000, which include Rs. 1500 for sanitation & smokeless stove and Rs. 3500 for other basic and general facilities. However in cluster approach the amount for these basic facilities may be included with per unit construction cost of the house. Since inception of the program, three families have been provided benefit under IAY, including two SC and one ST.

ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project)

In June, 1967 five communities in UP namely the Jaunsari, the Bhotia, the Tharu, the Boxa and the Raji were declared as Scheduled Tribes and were concerned under Integrated Tribal Development Project initiated in the same year, with a primary objective of providing them benefits and essential infrastructural facilities for making them economically self dependent. For their economic development and to raise them above poverty line, ITDP provide them with loan with 50 % subsidy for various choice of schemes viz., Milch animal, Angora rabbit, Mule, Sheep/Goat rearing, Bee keeping, Agricultural development, Vegetable/food production, Ironwork (Black smith) and Carpentry etc. In Tomik, 17 families have been assisted under ITDP, since 1986-87 to 1988-89, out of which ten families received loans for purchasing milch animals, five families for growing orchards and one each for carpentry and wool bank.

JRY (Jawahar Rojgar Yojana)

Jawahar Rojgar Yojana was introduced in 1989 with the primary objective of providing additional employment to unemployed and under employed youths in rural area, which are living below poverty line. The other latent aims of JRY are:

- to create sufficient employment by making the rural economic structure strong,
- to create the community and public assets, specially for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes,
- to provide them continuous and direct benefits, and
- to improve the overall quality of rural life.

Since initiation of the programme, year wise financial outlay and mandays created in Gram Sabha Tomik is shown in table 2 which shows that, since inception of the JRY in study area a total amount of rupees 4,34,253 were released up to the financial year 1993-94, through which 16,255 mandays created as an additional employment to the villagers.

Table 2 : Year wise financial outlay & mandays created under JRY

| Financial Year | Total Outlay (Rs.) | Mandays |
|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1989-90 | 32374 | 1440 |
| 1990-91 | 67780 | 2730 |
| 1991-92 | 67857 | 2465 |
| 1992-93 | 55582 | 2072 |
| 1993-94 | 210660 | 7548 |
| Total | 434253 | 16255 |

Source: Office of the BDO, Munsyari, District Pithoragarh, (UP)

Simultaneously, the village has experienced a few infrastructural facilities also. In addition, the village Panchayat building was also constructed under this scheme. One beneficiary has also established a flour mill in the village.

Other Developments

Health status of the people of any community in general and of tribal community in particular plays an important role in development. Increasing population is one of the major cause that invalidates measures to remove problems of unemployment, malnutrition, poverty, low living standard *etc.*, in tribal communities. Our primary data reveal that in village Tomik, 31 persons had undergone the sterilization, out of which only 22.6 % are male, while 77.4 % are females.

People's Perception towards development

This being the state of planned interventions and level of realization by the villagers, an effort was also made to know the perception of the villagers on the concept of development. As many as 123 persons were interviewed constituting 63 males and 60 females, whose response were as follows;

- All the respondents argued that the village should be connected by road on first priority, so that transportation will become easier, if their village is connected by road.
- 70.59 % male and 83.33 % female respondents expressed that road network is a necessary infrastructure, which would assure economic development, facilitate education and will thus help in social development.
- 29.4 % males and 37.3 % females wanted to cultivate High Yield Variety (HYV) of potato, stressing that it promises assured economic development.
- 70.6 % male and 50 % female respondents desired that, government should provide them infrastructure at first, while 5.9 % males and 16.7 % females preferred economic backup for their development. Rest of the respondents paid equal importance to both.
- Regarding the input from the government to improve farm activities, HYV seeds was found most preferred, followed by fertilizers.
- 34.8 % of respondents told that the production of cash crops, particularly potato, has the greater potentiality for the additional income generation. However, the establishment of cottage industries was preferred by 21.7 % of the respondents.

To the question that why these potential areas of income generation were not developed so far, 21.7% of respondents answered that it has been ignored by the government, while 34.8% replied that other factors like lack of awareness *etc.* hindered these areas. Rest of the respondents had no response to this question. All the respondents argued that villagers can not develop these areas without the help and encouragement from the government. Only 34.8 % of respondents were found satisfied with government introducing programmes under ITDP & JRY while 13 % and 4 % per cent of respondents were satisfied particularly with ITDP and JRY, respectively. Those who found satisfied with IRDP constitute only 49.5 % of the total beneficiaries and most of them argued that the inadequate financial assistance is the most important problem causing in poor performance of the programme.

The respondents were further asked for their suggestions to make changes in above programs. It was noticed that 30.4 % of them replied for no change while, only 4.3 % suggested to increase peoples' participation and check the corruption among the implementing machinery. But they did not have specific suggestions how to check corruption and assure peoples' participation.

CONCLUSION

In brief, the villagers of Tomik have experienced a number of programmes for rural development but the expected outcome is yet to be achieved. 109 beneficiaries received benefits in terms of different assets under IRDP while 17 families were benefited under ITDP. Some the scheme like milch animal and retail shop do not seem appropriate and potential measures of income generation in accordance with specific needs of the study village. On the other hand, a few household projects which could be more effective and gainful i.e., herd rearing and woolen industries, needs further supporting services like training programs, advance technical know-how and implements, development of cooperatives and marketing facilities *etc.*

The survey also indicated that the economy of Tomik is mainly determined by cultivation which contributes about 57 per cent to the entire economic structure of the village, though the input in agricultural activities was found too meager. Use of HYV seeds, fertilizers and pesticides which is substantially low in the village should be encouraged so that the maximum yield could be obtained. This has also reflected in the perception of the villagers. Livestock and cash crops recorded poor performance in income generation against potentiality. Non availability of infrastructure has also laid adverse impact on education which is one of the important factor encouraging socio-economic upliftment. The focus on developing transportation in term of road network by the villagers has also reflected assumed means to back up the process of further development. No doubt, the inhospitable geo-climatic condition of Tomik demands for

developing such infrastructure as the very first effort, but the unanticipated consequences of these efforts should be kept in mind because the development so far in Indian Himalaya has often involved conflicts between man and nature.

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