

Rural housing and importance of agriculture-A study of Palakkad district

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Abstract

Housing is essential for the well-being and social security of rural population. Comparing to urban areas and other sectors, rural people suffer from deprivation, lower incomes, seasonal unemployment etc so many households find it difficult to gain ownership of homes. Agriculture development is a necessary pre condition for the rural development especially to housing development in rural areas. Rural development in general is used to denote the actions and initiatives taken by the government to improve the standard of living in rural areas. Housing is essential for the well-being and social security of rural people. For the social sustainability of rural population, housing facility is very important to them. Rural housing should contribute substantial improvements in the quality of life, personality of the rural family, improvements in basic amenities, family's health and efficiency, women's and children's economic and social well being.

Key words: 1.Rural housing, 2.rural development, 3.agricultural development, 4.standard of living.

Introduction

Modern states are proud of being called welfare states, which means that it is the primary responsibility of every country to ensure the health and prosperity of its people. The health and prosperity of the nation depends on the availability of education, employment opportunities and better housing facilities. Better employment will increase the productivity of the human resource of the country and GDP. Along with food and clothes, housing or a shelter is one of the most important requirements of human being. If the total population of about 1310 million populations is divided by 4, the average number of members in a family, the country requires housing for 327.5 million families. The rural development is the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Rural development aims at finding the ways to improve the rural lives with participation of the rural people themselves so as to meet the required need of the rural area. The rural development as a concept has been highly associated with the promotion of standards of living and as a precondition for reducing rural poverty. Rural housing includes supporting and assisting individuals with low income who are looking to own a home by providing them with subsidized loans. Housing is essential for the well-being and social security of rural population.

Statement of the problem

In India around 33percent of people are either houseless or live in thatched houses made of wood, bamboo and mud houses. There is a shortage of 19.12 million houses in the country. The situation is worse in rural areas than in urban areas. So rural housing is an important factor which provides a base for rural development. A quality in standard of living will enhance the earning capacity due to mental and physical happiness. Comparing to urban areas and other sectors, rural sector suffer from deprivation, lower incomes, seasonal unemployment etc so that many households find it difficult to gain ownership of homes. For the social sustainability of rural people housing facility is very important to them. In Palakkad district housing status is very poor compared to other district of Kerala.

What is rural development?

Rural development is the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. That means rural development aims at finding the ways to improve the rural lives with participation of the rural people themselves so as to meet the required need of the rural area. Rural development in general is used to denote the actions and initiatives taken by the government to improve the standard of living in rural areas. Since independence rural development as a concept has been highly associated with the promotion of standards of living in rural areas.

Rural housing

Rural housing includes supporting and assisting individuals with low income who are looking to own a home by providing them with subsidized loans. Housing is essential for the well-being and social security of the rural people. Compared to urban areas rural people suffer more from the concentration of deprivation. Because of low income and seasonal unemployment, many households find it difficult to gain ownership of homes.

Agriculture development

Agriculture development is a necessary pre condition for the rural development and economic growth. Agriculture development brings golden path for the industrial and service sector development. Agriculture development contributes, Enhancing food security, providing a conducive environment for agricultural production and economic returns, reducing poverty through rural development, reducing the environmental impact of agricultural production, improving access to international agricultural markets, provide base for industrial and service sector development and enhances the standard of living of the poor.

The important role of agriculture in poverty alleviation of rural areas are the increasing income and own consumption level of small farmers. It leads in the reduction of food prices, raising employment and wages of the unskilled workers and improving living standards through better education and directly or indirectly enhances the socio economic status of the rural poor.

Objectives of study

1. to know housing status of rural population in the study areas.

Methodology

The study completely used secondary data only. The data are exclusively drawn from District Economic and Statistical Department, District Planning Department, and from various government official publications. Besides that the author conducted discussion with experts and agricultural labourers to know the extent of problem in real sense.

Review of literature

Bikramjit Sinha and Indranil Biswas(2015) decent place for living is the third most basic need of a person after the needs of food and clothing. Owning a house ensures certain degree of economic as well as social security to a citizen. It also determines the intellectual growth and has a bearing on the overall development of a nation. Providing a just sufficient shelter remains one of the most serious challenges India is facing today. The problem of inadequate housing is more acute in the rural areas where bulk of the BPL population lives.

Bijoy Basak (2013) housing problems in India (introduction, causes and solution) examined Along with food and clothes, housing or a shelter is one of the three most important requirements of Human Being. If the total population of about 1200 million populations is divided by 5, the average number of members in a family, the country requires housing for 240 million families. Of this, 2.4 million around 30percent are either house-less or live in thatched or houses made of wood, bamboo and mud houses.

D.Gangopadhyay,A.K.Mukhopadhyay and Pushpasingh (2008) in their paper indicated the rural development has great significance for a country like India where majority of the population of around 65 percent of the people live in rural areas. This article overviews the role and function of government and its programmes for rural development in India.

Data analysis

The study used only secondary data which are illustrated from various tables from the census abstract of Palakkad district for the year 2011. The investigator view points are added with simple interpretations.

Table 1: Population Census of Palakkad

	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
Population	2809934	2133124	676810
Male	1359478	1031466	328012
Female	1450456	1101658	348798
Literacy	88.49	78.70	82.82
Male	92.27	91.27	95.41
Female	84.99	83.49	89.70
Birth rate	14.70	15	14
Death rate	6.90	7	6.60
IMR	7.5	7.9	7.1
MMR	36	38	34
Poverty	21.86	22.73	21
No of Villages	156	130	26

Source : Census of India, 2011

Total number of villages in Palakkad district is 156.Among them 130 belongs to rural area and remaining 26 in urban areas .The concept of rural development is more admissible to Palakkad because if 130 villages of rural area is developed the 83percent of development process will be completed. While considering the development indicators it is clear that the status of rural Palakkad is less than the Urban Palakkad. Poverty in the rural area is 22.73 but it is only 21percent in urban area. Likewise literacy rate is also less in rural areas. Comparing to urban area female literacy rate of the rural area is far below, i.e. only 83.49percent. The 70percentof the rural population directly or indirectly depends on agriculture. The incidence of poverty is more in rural area than in urban. The socio economic conditions of rural populations are also not satisfactory. The agricultural development will improve the standard of living of rural poor and will bring the rural development.

Housing facility in Palakkad

The poor lack in all basic facilities. For them food is the most Important need. The rural poor pay greatest attention to satisfying hunger and clothing needs. Unable to bear the cost of building materials they remain houseless or live in congested house. The poor people also lack other facilities such as drinking water. They are the people who need special assistance for house construction. They can certainly provide labour services but they cannot arrange for construction materials. They also need to be informed about alternative construction

technologies that can be cost effective. The following table shows number of rooms available to people in houses in Palakkad district.

Table 2 : Rooms in house(Rural)

No exclusive rooms	One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	Three plus
7768	49849	154054	145178	119469

Data Source:-Census of India, 2011

Regarding housing status, number of rooms in a house is an important indicator of housing standard. It is to be noted there are 7768 houses which have no separate rooms for family members, it is a pathetic situation faced by households it will adversely affect the social and economic well being of the households. Around 50000 houses have only one separate room in a house. Other categories of houses with room numbers two, three or three plus shows the level of improvement in housing facilities.

Table 3: status of houses (Rural)

The following table shows the people engaged in different houses in the district.

Status	No. of people	% of people
Permanent	323940	68
Semi permanent	129,958	28
Temporary	19,726	4
Total		100

Data Source:-Census of India, 2011

The above table shows the status of rural houses .The total number of houses in rural Palakkad is 476318. While considering the Percentage distribution of households living in permanent, semi permanent and temporary houses, we can understand that 68.01 percent live in permanent houses, 27.28percent in semi permanent and 4.1percent in temporary houses. Permanent houses refer to those houses whose walls and roofs are made of pucca materials, i.e. where burnt bricks, G.I. Sheets or other metal sheets, stone, cement, concrete is used for wall and tiles, slate, shingle, corrugated iron, zinc or other metal sheets, asbestos sheets, bricks, lime and stone and RBC/RCC concrete are used for roof. Semi permanent houses refer to those houses made of other types of materials. Temporary houses refer to those houses having wall and roofs made of Kutcha materials, i.e. grass, leaves, reeds, bamboo, mud and un burnt bricks, wood etc

Housing facilities of rural palakkad

There are many reasons behind inadequate housing facility and low quality of houses in rural population of Palakkad district. The major factors are Poverty, low income, Population growth, unemployment etc. The poor lack in all basic facilities. For them food is the most important need. The rural poor pay greatest attention to satisfying hunger and then clothing needs. Unable to bear the cost of building materials they remain houseless or live in inadequate and congested houses. The poor people also lack in other facilities such as drinking water and sanitation. They are the people who need special assistance for house construction.

House hold status of rural population in palakkad

1.(Households by Ownership Status and by Number of Dwelling rooms occupied in the District, 2011)

No exclusive room	One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	Three plus rooms
7768	49849	154054	145178	119469

2. Percentage distribution of Households living in Permanent ,Semi permanent and Temporary Houses , 2011

PERMANENT	SEMIPERMANENT	TEMPORARY
323940(68.1)	129958(27.28)	19726(4.14)

3. Number and Percentage of Households by main source of Drinking water, 2011

Tap water from treated source	Tap water from untreated source	Covered well	Un-covered well	Handpump Other Source	Tubewell/borehole	Spring River/ canal Tank/ pond/ lake	Other source
134,291 (28.19%)	52,259 (10.97%)	34,165 (7.17%)	209,166 (43.91%)	1,696 (0.36%)	26,595 (5.58%)	9996(2.47%)	8150(1.71%)

4. Number and Percentage of Households by main source of Lighting, 2011.

Electricity	Kerosene	solar	Other oil	Any other	No.lighting
440,142 (92.41%)	34,565 (7.26%)	752 (0.16%)	419 (0.09%)	154 (0.03%)	286 (0.06%)

5. Number and Percentage of Households by type of Latrine facility, 2011

Piped sewer System	Septic tank	Other system	With slab/Ventilated improved pit	Without slab/open pit	Public Latrine	Open
36,913 (7.75%)	185,921 (39.03%)	12,420 (2.61%)	182,382 (38.29%)	1,725 (0.36%)	3,916 (0.82%)	52,440 (11.01%)

6. Number and Percentage of Households by type of fuel used for Cooking, 2011

Firewood	Crop residue	Cowdung cake	Coal/ lignite/ charcoal	LPG/ PNG	Electricity	Kerosene	Bio-gas	No cooking
366,691 (76.98%)	4,573 (0.96%)	341 (0.07%)	278 (0.06%)	99,934 (20.98%)	232 (0.05%)	1,952 (0.41%)	115 (0.02%)	925 (0.19%)

7. Number and Percentage of Households availing Banking services	354,268 (74.38%)
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Data Source:-Census of India, 2011, HH- series Tables on Houses, Household amenities and assets.

The above table shows the facilities available in the rural houses .The total number of houses in rural Palakkad is 476318. While considering the Percentage distribution of households living in Permanent, Semi permanent and Temporary Houses, we can understand that 68.01percent of people live in permanent houses, 27.28 percent in semi permanent 4.14percent in temporary houses.

The major sources of drinking water for rural population are uncovered well (43.91percent) and tap water from treated source (28.19percent). 92.41percent of the rural households use electricity for lighting, 7.26percent uses kerosine. 286 households (.06percent) has no lightning facilities. Good latrine facility protects the people from many diseases. Still 11.01percent of the rural agricultural labourers has no latrine facility. This indicates the severity of poverty .7.75percent has piped sewer system.39.03 has septic tank facility. Drainage facilities of the rural area are so poor. 63.53percent has no drainage facility and 27.63 percent has open drainage. Only 8.85percent has closed drainage system which is necessary indicator for health. Likewise the kitchen facilities are also not satisfactory. 91.24 percent of household cook inside the house with kitchen facility. But 76.98 percent uses firewood for cooking.LPG is available only to 21percent. 25 percent of households lacks banking Services. More over 10 percent does not hold any amenities like Radio/ Transistor, Television, Computer/ laptop-With Internet, Computer/ laptop-Without Internet, Land line Telephone, Mobile Telephone Bicycle Scooter/ Motor Cycle/ Moped Car/ Jeep/ Van.

Conclusion

The growth in agriculture has been a leading source of poverty reduction in most developing countries, especially in the case of extreme rural poverty. Agriculture contributes to poverty reduction because it provides employment to the poor, who have also generally low skills and education, as well as supporting the growth of non-agricultural employment in rural areas. Growth in agriculture also contributes to a greater supply of food and to lower food prices, and benefits both rural and urban poor. It is true that, as an economy grow, demand for non-agricultural products and services grows faster than agricultural products, and the shares of agriculture in GDP and employment decline over time, the full potential of the agriculture sector for poverty reduction has not yet been realised in most developing countries. If a country achieved full potential growth in agriculture the process of development will be much smoother. Agricultural development can be an engine of growth and poverty reduction in rural areas of Palakkad. For agriculture development good physical and mental health of people especially in rural area is a necessary .This can be achieved only through the better housing facilities. The central government, state government and the local self governments should give much importance for rural housing in future planning and policy makings.

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