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Kinetics of rural transformation in Marathwada and Khandesh region of Maharashtra and the rhythmic factors affecting it

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ABSTRACT

The rural development in India has been overlooked as an approach to increase the financial status of the villages. Whereas, the actual sustainably developed villages have adopted a very unique and significant approach. These villages have approached towards strengthening of the resources a village has and generating the resources village need, especially natural resources. This research is an effort to state the role of various rhythmic factor which affects rural development. The study was conducted in 165 villages from Marathwada and Khandesh Region from Maharashtra, India. The selected villages were almost in the drought-prone area with very low rainfall and improper auxiliary systems for development and transformation

Keywords: Rural Development, Factors affecting Rural Development, Natural Resources, Marathwada & Khandesh Villages, Rural India

1. INTRODUCTION

Bharatratna Shri Vinoba Bhave in his articles of 'Swaraj in every village' stated that,

"In ancient times, India was an Independent Nation of Independent Villages.

Then during Mughal rule, she became a Dependent Nation of Independent Villages.

Then during British rule, she became a Dependent Nation of Dependent Villages.

And after Independence in 1947, she became an Independent Nation of Dependent Villages.

Now we have to again transform her into an Independent Nation of Independent Villages."

On the eve of independence in 1947 when Gandhiji stated that the struggle now is 'Azadee se Swaraj' (from independence to self-governance), many people thought that he was repeating what he had said during the struggle for independence. It was then interpreted as one of the objectives under planned economic development. The country went through a mammoth exercise of development via the planning process for over 50 years, more as a centralized planning, with emphasis on large-scale urban industrialization than on small-scale rural industries. It was much later in the 1970s, when

decentralization became a planning alternative that the realization has come about that self-reliance (swawlamban) ought to have begun at the peoples' level. However, the global pressure of structural adjustment as a result of globalization, liberalization and privatization was manifested first when Panchayati Raj institutions started taking roots in the early '90s.

Are either of these centralized planning and globalization processes meant for nation building? This question is not raised in any of the present-day intellectual debates. What was Gandhiji's idea of Swaraj when he was referring to nation building? It was a state in which every citizen of the country could live with security, dignity, equality, justice and peace. All these, however, were thought to be achieved automatically under the planning process as long as the stomach is full at the end of the day. Under the disguise of planning and development, it was termed, as 'meeting basic needs'. Under the thrust of different models of development (such as planning, marketization, or a mixed economy), they all claim to attend to national interest on a priority basis. Under the Five-Year Plans, attempts were made to devise methods for the redistribution of income. Under the fully centralized planning system, however, these issues were attended to by direct subsidy and rationing. Under the marketisation mode, the much-touted 'trickle down' theory was supposed eventually to cater to all. In all these approaches, the economic instrument has been financial and physical investments both in the planning and marketization processes (e.g., public and private investments). It is the investment planning strategy (either under planned or under the marketized economy). This was the driving force for so-called development.)

What is this rural development paradigm? Why is it emerging and what makes it new? Any critical discussion of these issues must begin with the acknowledgement that, as yet, we have no comprehensive definition of rural development (Clark et al. 1997; Nooy 1997). Moreover, at the moment, it would not be possible to construct any comprehensive and generally accepted definition. The notion of rural development has emerged through socio-political struggle and debate. Once it becomes an established part of the current discussions that surround agriculture and the countryside, it can be expected to trigger new controversies. A recent study amongst some of the main players in significant arenas has shown that while some

see it as a process that will end with the final expropriation of farmers, others regard it as a force that will revitalize agriculture (Van Broekhuizen et al. 1997b). To some observers rural development is no more than an addition to the existing pattern of agriculture and rural life; others, however, anticipate that both will undergo major reconstruction [3]

2. RURAL TRANSFORMATION

Rural Transformation is a holistic approach, in which the 'question of filling the stomach at the end of the day' is addressed separately from the basic issues of nation building, involving security, dignity of life, equity and peace. That is what rural transformation is all about.

Safety and security also imply freedom from social evils of class, caste and religious wars. Dignity implies values that bring men and women, people of all ages and people of all castes together. Equity has to be addressed not only as economic inequality between the 'haves and have-nots', but also between generations and gender. This provides a wider concept for sustainable development. Nature bequeaths its gift to the entire population and hence it is our duty to sustain and use natural resources in the most equitable manner. Peace essentially concerns the human mind, requiring social, spiritual and economic harmony for which the village setting provides a unique opportunity.

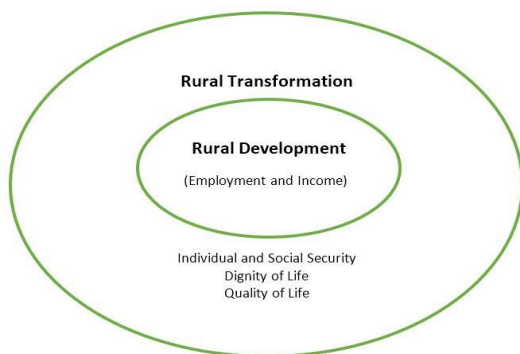


Fig. 1: Rural Development is a subset of Rural Transformation

Can we build such ideal village economies all over the country, with over 6.27 lakh villages? This is the central question behind this model of rural transformation.

The process of rural transformation has demonstrated the power of collective wisdom from among the young and old alike from the villages. There is a unique lesson from these villages need to be noted. They can enable the transformation agents (people who are working for rural transformation) of rural development programmes to think on a more practical basis.

3. METHODOLOGY

The Study was conducted in 165 various villages from Marathwada and Khandesh Region of Maharashtra, India. Our study also revealed that achievement of rural development success depends on the level of technology advancement in the region and on harmonization of efforts at various levels of governments. We also discovered that sustainable rural development projects require an evaluation of (i) ecological characteristics of the rural area; (ii) types and characteristics of technologies currently being used in the region; (iii) how the technologies were developed; and (iv) the problems associated with the use of those technologies in the rural area [1]

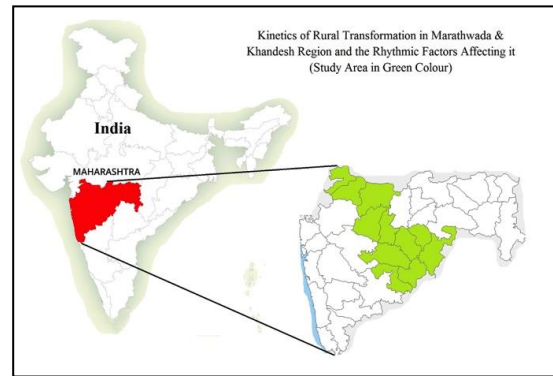


Fig. 2: Map of Study Area

Models of planning and decision-making are closely related, and typically include such activities (for some 'phases') as situation analysis, problem identification, goal formulation, selection of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, implementation and evaluation. In essence, these models propose that change comes about (or should come about) through these kinds of activities. Even if 'blueprint planning has been abandoned by many, this has not rendered the models obsolete. Process planning may have changed the rhythm and order of planning activities but has not fundamentally altered the model itself. The way participatory methodologies are described and used, and the participatory discourse at large still reflect this mode of thinking in various ways.[2]

During the research, the villages were divided into three groups according to their current status of Transformation viz., Uday Village, Prabhat Village and Kiran Village.

3.1 Uday Village

- Uday village are those which have shown a significant transformation approach.
- They have built a strong management system of their natural resources.
- They have a strong community bond and village development mechanism.
- All the decisions are taken considering each and every rhythmic factor of village transformation.

3.2 Prabhat Village

- Prabhat villages have moderate transformation approach.
- They have known to all the required parameters of transformation.
- Started working on development of community bonding.
- No resource management system exists.
- No proper decision system.

3.3 Kiran Village

- Kiran villages are just becoming aware of self-reliability
- They are starting to get knowledge of transformation system
- No Proper community bonding.
- No resource management system exists.
- No proper decision system.

I am not disclosing for which villages I have selected the Uday, Prabhat & Kiran Statuses, as this point will be covered in future research and publication works.

3.4 Study Area

The study has been conducted in 165 villages across Marathwada and Khandesh region of Maharashtra State in India. These villages have been chosen from a wide list of over 500 villages considering the development-theological approach, past activities, present status, population dynamics,

study purpose and people collaboration. The selected villages were almost in the drought prone area with very low rainfall and improper auxiliary systems for development and transformation. Also the spiritual and psychological status of the village was at the lowest levels for a certain period of time. Making them the perfect choice for study.

Table 1: List of Villages where study has been conducted

S no.	Village	District
1	Aurala	Aurangabad
2	Aurali	Aurangabad
3	Bhagur	Aurangabad
4	Chimanpurwadi	Aurangabad
5	Chinchkheda	Aurangabad
6	Chor Waghgaon	Aurangabad
7	Galle Borgaon	Aurangabad
8	Ganori	Aurangabad
9	Jaipur	Aurangabad
10	Jarul	Aurangabad
11	Jatwada	Aurangabad
12	Jawakheda	Aurangabad
13	Jawali	Aurangabad
14	Jehur	Aurangabad
15	Karmad	Aurangabad
16	Kharanj	Aurangabad
17	Manoor	Aurangabad
18	Mohandri	Aurangabad
19	Naigaon (Fulambri)	Aurangabad
20	Nipani	Aurangabad
21	Pangari	Aurangabad
22	Parsoda	Aurangabad
23	Patoda	Aurangabad
24	Pishor	Aurangabad
25	Potul	Aurangabad
26	Sawandgaon	Aurangabad
27	Shirodi	Aurangabad
28	Sobalgaon	Aurangabad
29	Takali Shimpi	Aurangabad
30	Takali Vaidya	Aurangabad
31	Vita	Aurangabad
32	Wakod	Aurangabad
33	Waregaon	Aurangabad
34	Wasadi	Aurangabad
35	Zalta	Aurangabad
36	Bangali Pimpla	Beed
37	Dipewadgaon	Beed
38	Georai	Beed
39	Ghalatwadi	Beed
40	Kitti Adgaon	Beed
41	Majalgaon	Beed
42	Pondul-1	Beed
43	Pondul-2	Beed
44	Pondul-3	Beed
45	Akkalkos	Dhule
46	Amrale	Dhule
47	Anjanvihire	Dhule
48	Bamhane	Dhule
49	Baripada	Dhule
50	Bramhanwel	Dhule
51	Chilane	Dhule
52	Chimthane	Dhule
53	Chimthawal	Dhule
54	Dangurne	Dhule
55	Degaon	Dhule

56	Dhamane	Dhule
57	Divi	Dhule
58	Domkani	Dhule
59	Fagane	Dhule
60	Jakhane	Dhule
61	Jogshelu	Dhule
62	June Kolde	Dhule
63	Kalwade	Dhule
64	Karle	Dhule
65	Kharde	Dhule
66	Khudane	Dhule
67	Langhane	Dhule
68	Lohgaon	Dhule
69	Mahupada	Dhule
70	Malpur	Dhule
71	Mandal	Dhule
72	Methi	Dhule
73	Nave Kolde	Dhule
74	Nizampur	Dhule
75	Parsode	Dhule
76	Pathare	Dhule
77	Pimpri	Dhule
78	Rami	Dhule
79	Rewadi	Dhule
80	Satare	Dhule
81	Sawai Mukti	Dhule
82	Shevade	Dhule
83	Sondle	Dhule
84	Suray	Dhule
85	Tamthare	Dhule
86	Varzadi	Dhule
87	Vasmane	Dhule
88	Vikhran	Dhule
89	Virdel	Dhule
90	Wadi	Dhule
91	Balapur	Hingoli
92	Kalamnuri	Hingoli
93	Pawanmari	Hingoli
94	Sengaon	Hingoli
95	Shivni	Hingoli
96	Bamrud	Jalgaon
97	Banshendra	Jalgaon
98	Bhone	Jalgaon
99	Chinchkhed Pr Lo	Jalgaon
100	Chinchkhed Seem	Jalgaon
101	Gude	Jalgaon
102	Jaitane	Jalgaon
103	Junone	Jalgaon
104	Kankraj	Jalgaon
105	Lone	Jalgaon
106	Mahankale	Jalgaon
107	Mengaon	Jalgaon
108	Shelvad	Jalgaon
109	Shevage	Jalgaon
110	Wade	Jalgaon
111	Bhokardan	Jalna
112	Daithna	Jalna
113	Mantha	Jalna
114	Sawangi	Jalna
115	Watur	Jalna
116	Wayal Sawargaon	Jalna
117	Anandwadi (Gaur)	Latur
118	Bramhawadi	Latur
119	Ganeshwadi	Latur

120	Mahadeowadi	Latur
121	Ramwadi	Latur
122	Dagadgaon	Nanded
123	Dapshed	Nanded
124	Darsangavi	Nanded
125	Dongargaon	Nanded
126	Dongargaon	Nanded
127	Hadgaon	Nanded
128	Islapur	Nanded
129	Lathi Khurd	Nanded
130	Mohada Tanda	Nanded
131	Salgara	Nanded
132	Samrala	Nanded
133	Bilgavhan	Nandurbar
134	Bilipada	Nandurbar
135	Chedapada	Nandurbar
136	Dahindule	Nandurbar
137	Daliamba	Nandurbar
138	Sawarat	Nandurbar
139	Suli	Nandurbar
140	Taloda	Nandurbar
141	Talve	Nandurbar
142	Vavadi	Nandurbar
143	Bolthan	Nashik
144	Aarli	Osmanabad
145	Bembli	Osmanabad
146	Bhum	Osmanabad
147	Gugalgaon	Osmanabad
148	Hasegaon	Osmanabad
149	Jawla Khurd	Osmanabad
150	Karanjkalla	Osmanabad
151	Khed	Osmanabad
152	Mangrul	Osmanabad
153	Naigaon	Osmanabad
154	Omerga	Osmanabad
155	Palaswadi	Osmanabad
156	Pimpalgaon Dola	Osmanabad
157	Pimpri	Osmanabad
158	Sawargaon	Osmanabad
159	Shiradhon	Osmanabad
160	Takali Bembli	Osmanabad
161	Walgud	Osmanabad
162	Bhosi	Parbhani
163	Golegaon	Parbhani
164	Jintur	Parbhani
165	Likha Pimpalgaon	Parbhani

4. OBSERVATIONS – RHYTHMIC FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL TRANSFORMATION

The observations of transformations of these villages have given into various rhythmic factors that affect the rural transformation process. These Rhythmic Factors are as follows:

- Seven Key Resources
- Five Village Power Centers
- Four Transformative Influencers

4.1 Seven Key Resources

The seven key resources influencing rural transformation include

- Water
- Forest
- Land
- Energy

- Biodiversity
- Cattle
- People

These resources may be interdependent or not, case to case, but these all are definitely influencing the village development/transformation process drastically. The first 6 resources affect the 7th, as the result and observative power goes to the people resource.

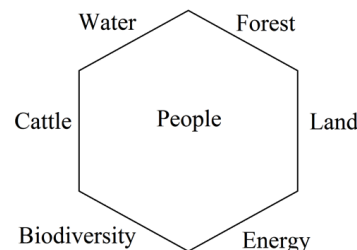


Fig. 3: Seven Key Resources (Rhythmic Factors of Village Transformation)

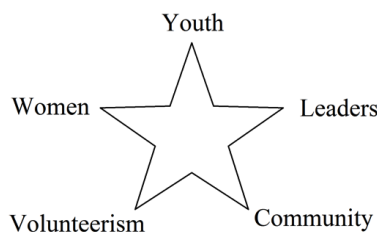


Fig. 4: Five Village Power Centers

Figure 3 Five Village Power Centers (Rhythmic Factors of Village Transformation)

The five village power centers are,

- Youth
- Women
- Leaders
- Community
- Volunteerism

4.3 Four Transformative Influencers

The Four Transformative Influencers are

- Sustainability
- Education
- Livelihood
- Bonding

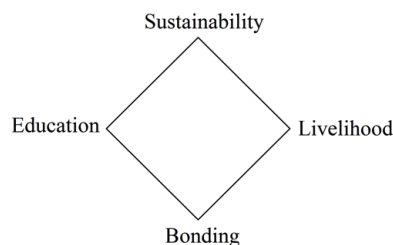


Fig. 5: Four Transformative Influencers (Rhythmic Factors of Village Transformation)

5. SUCCESS STORIES

5.1 Baripada, Dist. Dhule

Towards the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, illegal felling of teak and other plants was done mainly by outsiders. Villagers noticed that the hill near the village, which had always been green, was turning into a barren and dry sand pile.

This began to worry the villagers. In addition, Chaitram Pawar, a youth in the village, was noticing some other harmful effects.

The supply of fuelwood had become irregular. A third of the 35 wells in the village had gone dry. Forest degradation was leading to a number of other social problems. In the absence of other livelihood options, women had turned to liquor production as a source of secondary income. Liquor consumption led to social disquiet in the village.

Pawar felt the need to do something about the situation in his village. Gajanan Pathak, who was then associated with a local NGO Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, extended his support. Subsequently the Forest Department (FD) also started helping Pawar in his initiatives. The forest department extended their Joint Forest Management (JFM) scheme to the village in 1998. JFM has subsequently been also extended to other villages in the vicinity. Thus a large contiguous patch of forest is currently under protection by different villages.

Pawar mobilised the villagers and urged them to take action. He pointed out that if deforestation continued, their access to dry wood, fruits and other minor forest produce would get affected. In a village gathering on 23 May 1993, a local informal Forest Protection Committee (FPC) was set up to protect the forest. Initially some villagers were sceptical about this initiative. They were then roped in as important position holders in the FPC. Pawar was elected the chairman of the FPC.

It was decided that the FPC would not have any permanent members. The idea was that each family would have the chance to send a representative to the committee in turn. Thus all the families in the village had a stake in the entire process.

The people of Baripada have initiated a plant diversity register process in October 2004 to monitor the plants found in their forests. They have identified 14 different sites from the forest and initiated vegetation mapping through a 100 sq m quadrant.

5.2 Rules and Regulations

The rules and regulations for forest use were announced in the weekly markets and in all neighbouring villages. The rules included:

- Anyone found destroying or taking anything from the forest would be punished as per the rules framed for regulating human and cattle activity in the area.
- Only the inhabitants of the village were eligible for extracting resources from the forest, if at all. Two elderly people in the village would work as watchmen and report to the FPC. The watchmen would be paid Rs 100 per month and would be changed every year.
- Each family would pay Rs 3 in cash or 7 kg of grain to generate funds required to pay the watchmen.
- Any person found removing any plant or animal material without permission would be penalised Rs 151 per headload and Rs 751 if taken out of the forest in any other manner. For cattle grazing in the forest the fine would be Rs 1000.
- If someone other than the watchmen caught the culprit, then an award of Rs 501 would be given to the person.
- Farmers whose lands lay next to the protected community forest would have the moral responsibility to report any theft they may encounter.

- Nobody from within or outside the village would be allowed to enter the forest with a bullock cart for any reason.

Subsequently, there have been some changes in the rules and regulations. For example:

- The neighbouring villagers are now allowed to extract some resources for social and religious purposes but only if the permission had been sought in advance from Baripada village.
- For 30 days in a year 50 acres of forestland is given for grazing. The area allocated for grazing is changed every year. Grazing for sheep and goats is not allowed.
- Villagers are allowed to remove dead/dried wood on social occasions or community gatherings (deaths, weddings, etc). In addition one month during winter (February/March) is a free time again, when only villagers are allowed to remove fuelwood.

The Indian government recognised the effort of the village by awarding it Rs 1,00,000. This amount was used in starting a village level jaggery-making unit. This unit now employs 25 young men from the village.

Inspired by Jan Seva Foundation, environment education camps for local school children are organised in community protected forests. In these programmes the schoolchildren get acquainted with local plants, including medicinal plants, birds and animals. In 2003, Pawar helped the village women start a fish-farming cooperative using the common village pond. Jan Seva Andolan helped in the process. The women are now pleased as they can give up making liquor. Since alternatives are now available, the women have taken a strong stand on drinking alcohol. Men are now afraid of coming home drunk. Villagers have also undertaken cultivation of a common forest nursery as part of joint watershed development activities.

5.3 Patoda, Dist. Aurangabad

Patoda is an open defecation-free village. All 238 households have individual latrines. This means every single human being is spared the humiliation of having to defecate in the open. For its achievement, Patoda was awarded the Nirmal Gram Puraskar (NGP) in 2007. The prize was envisaged as a recognition and incentive scheme as part of the Government of India's sanitation coverage plan. It is aimed at felicitating select villages that have done exemplary work in the area of public sanitation. NGP is awarded by the President of India each year and includes a cash prize (the amount is in proportion to the size of the village population). This award put Patoda on the map and set the ball rolling for neighbouring villages to follow suit. Functional sanitation facilities and drinking water are also available in all two schools and Anganwadis (pre-school childcare centers) in the gram panchayat. The village council also runs a solid waste management project. Another feature that sets Patoda apart from other villages is a sight that meets the eyes every 200 metres: a hand-wash terminal on the side of the road that essentially consists of a wash basin with a plastic faucet and an outlet pipe, running water and a liquid soap dispenser. Wash basins in public spaces or individual homes are a rare sight in most villages in India due to water scarcity, lack of infrastructure, poverty and the lack of basic awareness about personal hygiene. But not in Patoda. "It is all due to the efforts of one man Bhaskar Pere," says Tulsibai Nalavade, a mother of three. Pere, who is popularly called Pere Patil, belongs to the "open" category (a term generally used to refer to the "upper"

castes). He says he couldn't have done it without the full cooperation and participation of the entire village community. Pere had served as the Sarpanch of Patoda from 2000 to 2005. He has remained active in community life long after his term ended and today plays advisor to the present-day gram sabha. It was in 2010 that Pere, out of personal interest, had attended a water, sanitation and hygiene programme organised by the Zilla Parishad (ZP). 'The ZP was trying to promote the practice of washing hands in the rural division and had come up with the idea of celebrating what it called "Handwash Day" under the Global Hand Washing Day programme facilitated by UNICEF Maharashtra at the state-level. The concept fascinated me and I asked "Why can't every day be Handwash day?" Pere decided to install wash basins around the village and was able to successfully implement the project with the backing of the Zilla Parishad and the gram panchayat.

But getting the entire community on board was not easy. 'In every village, there will always be a section of people who resist change and refuse to participate. Here in Patoda, 30% of the population at first refused to use the wash stands. But we, the gram sabha, didn't give up. We engaged with them and explained the benefits of the practice and spelt out how it would help improve the overall quality of each individual's life,' recalls Pere, who belongs to the majority caste.^[7]

6. CONCLUSION

From the study and observations, I have done, also after reviewing various case studies of transformed villages, I would like to propose a 'Model of Rural Transformation' which includes all the rhythmic factors I have mentioned in the article. Also, the interdependency of these factors, like how they affect each other for development and transformation purposes.

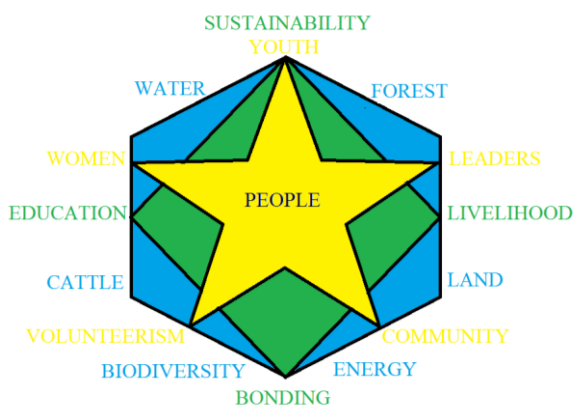


Fig. 5: Model of Rural Transformation

The most important rhythmic factor is 'Bonding'. Bonding between the villagers is the for all the transformation practices proposed in the village. Community, Volunteerism, Leaders and Women are the pillars which will support and become catalysts for the transformation process.

Education will benefit to Livelihood and Bonding will make sure the Sustainability of the work. Also, the Natural Resources like Water, Forest, Cattle, Land, Biodiversity and Energy will play a key role in the resource generation and development. More the secured resources of the village, lesser the chances of threats to transformation.

$$\text{Secured Resources} \propto \frac{1}{\text{Threats to Transformation}}$$

All the rhythmic factors will affect the people. Hence people being in the center of this model, will have the responsibility to take in charge of the transformation and to sustain the transformation happened. This is called as 'People Contribution' in terms of management. A tremendous amount of money, manpower, machine and mechanism has been invested for the Rural Development in India. But, no significant change is seen in Indian villages. Only because the base and center of the transformation model, which are people and bonding, collapses each and every time for any minor or major project undertaken by government or NGOs. Both the case studies discussed here are the best example of the strong base and center of the Rural Transformation Model. Hence, we should conclude that Bonding between people and the People themselves are the two most influencing phenomenon for the Transformation of Villages. This is similar to what Sant

Tukdoji Maharaj had stated in previous century,
 Vani, teerthi phiron aala | Aapala gaav naahi sudharala |
 To kaisaa mhanaavaa mahaabhalaa | Ekataachi? ||
 Santanche aisechi vachan | Apan tarla te navhe udharan|
 Lokas lavi sanmaargapurna | Tochi tarla purnapane ||
 People connives at the deterioration of his village and has come visiting many holy places and through the woods for his own self-upliftment, how can he be considered as the wise? ||

In fact all the saints had unanimously stated ' One who leads and directs people on to the right and virtuous path can only gets his own upliftment and salvation' (Aapana tarala te navhe nawala, kula uddhareela sakalaanche - means, it is not surprising if somebody seeks his self-redemption. If he redempts the family of all, then it is a wonder)

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