It is true that individuals, government and non-government agencies have conducted many studies to evaluate the performance of different types of co-operatives. Some of the studies were at macro level while some others focused on specific areas of co-operative performance. The following is an account of the review of literature made for the purpose of this research work.

In a study of the productivity and profitability of a railway co-operative society Dandapani (1971), made an attempt to examine the growth in membership, number of borrowers and the amount of different types of deposits collected by the society. On the basis of time series data pertaining to the above stated variables, the author pointed out that the society had made remarkable success. The study observed that as a result of professionalisation and socialisation attempted by the society, it was in a position to diversify its business operations beyond the frontiers of thrift and credit.
Rajan (1980), made a study of the performance of Sarkarpathi Hill Tribes Co-operative Labour Contract Society in Coimbatore. The society started functioning in 1960 with 460 tribal members. It undertook both business and welfare activities for the benefit of the tribals. Before the establishment of the society, the tribals were under severe exploitation by private landlords. The tribals were paid only very nominal amount of wages and they were under starvation for many days. The study revealed that the society through its diversified activities could make remarkable progress in changing the attitude of the tribal members. The author stressed the point that the tribal members were proud of being members of the society, which was a clear evidence of the much needed member participation for the success of a co-operative institution.

Jain and Sarawgi (1982), made a comparative study into the impact of farm credit provided by the co-operatives and commercial banks in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh. The study was confined to five villages - Palki, Barcha, Khoka, Murki and Dhamangaon. The Central Co-operative Bank adopted three villages and the State Bank of India adopted the remaining two villages for cent percent financing through the primary co-operative societies in the villages. The
researchers obtained the list of borrower and non-borrower farmers in the selected five villages. On the basis of the size of land holding, the farmers were further classified into three – small farmers, medium farmers and large farmers. Sixty borrower and non-borrower farmers, both in equal number were selected for intensive study.

The study revealed that the relative performance of co-operatives in increasing the cropping intensity of small and medium farmers was higher as compared to the commercial bank. The researchers reached the conclusion that the co-operative credit institution performed better in case of small farmers as against the large farmers and the commercial banks performance was more satisfactory in case of large farmers as against the small farmers.

Aruna Rao and Ramachandra Bhatta (1985), made an evaluation of the distribution of rural credit by the Primary Agricultural Credit Co-operative Societies in Karnataka state. Based on a tabular analysis of growth rates of variables such as purpose wise distribution of loans, Kendall’s coefficient of concordance and cluster analysis, the study concluded that the flow of agricultural credit had not changed even with considerable changes in the structure of agriculture. The study also
suggested that there was an urgent need for the reorganisation of the credit policy to cater to the needs of market-oriented production.

Bose (1986), in his study made a general observation of the working of the LAMPS in West Bengal. The study did not make a comprehensive and critical evaluation of the functioning of LAMPS; instead it was confined to making certain general remarks about the benefits of LAMPS in West Bengal. The study also pointed out some of the hindrances in the functioning of LAMP societies. The author remarked that strategically, the LAMPS were the suitable agency to satisfy the needs of the tribals in the rural areas.

Swarnkar and Dube (1987), conducted a study to know the impact of co-operative credit on tribal development. The study covered 500 farmers selected from Kondagaon Block of Bastar district in Madhya Pradesh. On the basis of primary data on the socio-economic conditions collected from the 500 farmers, the study concluded that co-operative credit could not produce significant impact on the life of the tribals in the Bastar district. The study suggested that there was good potential for developing poultry farming and animal husbandry by organizing
co-operative ventures or linking them to the existing Primary Co-operative Societies.

Mahalingam (1987), conducted a performance appraisal of the LAMP Societies in the Tribal Areas of Tamil Nadu. Based on the performance data of thirteen LAMP Societies in Tamilnadu, he came to the conclusion that the co-operative movement was the only means for the development of tribal economy. He suggested some practical measures for strengthening the LAMP societies functioning in the tribal areas of Tamilnadu. The study also stressed the necessity of focussing all efforts on strengthening the co-operative structure in the tribal regions. The study was based on the official data collected from the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies at Chennai.

Nambiar (1989), studied the shortcomings of the co-operatives in India and concluded that if co-operatives were to function successfully in the modern competitive environment, they should inevitably change their management system and styles. It was suggested that the attitude of the state towards co-operative movement should be such as to make the movement autonomous, self-reliant, democratic and free from excessive control and external interference. One major drawback of the
co-operatives in India as identified in the study was that most of the co-operatives were established as an executive programme of the co-operative department without any serious effort to educate and motivate the people to try for self-reliance.

Purushotham (1989), conducted a study of the performance of Cuddapah District Scheduled Castes Co-operative Society. It was an empirical study based on both primary and secondary data. A survey was also conducted through administering a questionnaire and interviews with ninety scheduled caste respondents who were involved in anyone of the schemes projected by the society and another hundred respondents who were not involved in any of the schemes of the society. The study brought out the weaknesses in the working of the society and suggested appropriate measures for overcoming the weak spots. The most optimistic result of the study was that nearly 95 per cent of the respondents expressed their faith and willingness towards the society.

Satheesh Babu and Ranjit Kumar (1990), in their micro level analysis of staff productivity in the Trichur District Co-operative Bank in Kerala attempted a comparison of staff productivity pattern between profit earning and loss incurring branches of the bank. The profitability
and productivity analysis revealed that staff productivity exercised direct influence in determining the level of branch profitability. The study pointed out that the loss making branches employed staff disproportionate to their volume of business. The study suggested two important measures for improving staff productivity. The first one was fixing up individual targets in deposit mobilisation and resource deployment for employees so that they could contribute more to the volume of business of their branches. The second measure suggested in the study was redeployment of excess staff from loss incurring branches to branches having proportionately higher volume of business to be transacted. The study was based only on the secondary data collected from the head office of the bank. The views of the employees and customers were not considered.

In a study of the role of LAMP Co-operatives in Tamilnadu Mahalingam (1990), made a micro level analysis of the performance of tribal co-operatives in Salem district. Based on the data collected from the LAMPS and the two hundred tribal households in the study area, it was concluded that the integrated services rendered by the LAMPS were positively related to tribal development. The researcher identified significant positive correlation between the services rendered by tribal
co-operatives and development of the tribal economy. The study also made some useful suggestions for improving the efficiency and popularity of tribal co-operatives.

Himachalam (1991), examined in detail the performance of seventeen consumer co-operatives in Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh. The main objectives of the research study were to make an indepth study of the various problems confronted by the consumer co-operatives and to suggest measures to overcome the problems. On the basis of a comprehensive collection and analysis of the responses obtained from the managements, two hundred and four members of the seventeen primary consumer co-operative stores in Chittoor District and fifty one non-members from the same district, the researcher identified the problems faced by the consumer co-operatives and suggested practical solutions to overcome the problems and thereby improve the overall efficiency and profitability of the consumer co-operatives. The study concluded with the hope that the consumer co-operative movement in India would come out successful in future.

Kandasami and Shanmugan (1991), made an attempt to evaluate the performance of Dairy Co-operatives in Periyar district of Tamilnadu.
The study covered a sample of 17 societies and 170 member producers, chosen at random. The performance was measured by taking parameters such as milk collection per member, earning per share and growth in membership. The study also identified the factors influencing performance. It was concluded that cropping intensity of areas covered by the societies, opinion about the staff, satisfaction of members, identification of members and leadership status in the societies were having significant relationship with performance.

Mohandas and Praveen Kumar (1992), studied the impact of co-operativisation on the working conditions of the workers in the Beedi industry in Kerala. The study considered three major systems of work prevailed in the Beedi manufacturing industry in Kerala. The three sectors were:

1. Workers’ Co-operative under the factory based system.
2. Contract system under the factory based sector, and
3. The home based system.

The study examined the effect of co-operativisation on wage rates, real wages, non-wage benefits and the working environment. Primary data were collected from forty beedi workers in the Kerala
Dinesh Beedi Workers Co-operative Society (KDBWCS), thirty workers each in the contract system and the home based system. The data analysis revealed that there was appreciation in real wages in all the three sectors of the Beedi industry. Nevertheless, the co-operative sector had a demonstration effect in pushing up the real wages in other sectors and the workers in other sectors gained relatively more during the period covered by the study. The presence of the Beedi workers’ Co-operatives also resulted in improving the benefits of contract workers in the Beedi industry.

Bapuji (1993), made an attempt to examine the functioning of the Girijan Co-operative Corporation in the district of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The Corporation was formed as a Co-operative Federation with a three-tier structure – the Federation at the state level, the Divisional Offices at regional level and the Primary Societies at grass root level. The study identified the strengths and weaknesses in the working of the primary societies and finally concluded that the Girijan Co-operative Corporation could reduce the role of private traders considerably in the tribal economy and prevent the ruthless exploitation of the tribals by private traders and merchants. However, the study also pointed out that inspite of the working of the Corporation in the tribal
economy of Visakhapatnam, the private traders continued to exist in the tribal market and exploit the tribals. The defective administrative structure, lack of sound personnel system, absence of training facilities, and practices among the field functionaries and lack of faith in the corporation on the part of the tribals were the important weaknesses identified by the study.

Indra Sena Reddy (1994), conducted a case study of the financial performance of a Co-operative Rural Bank. The study examined the efficiency of the bank in mobilisation of funds and their utilisation. It also analysed the financial position of the bank in relation to liquidity, solvency, profitability and working capital management. Based on secondary data and with the help of accounting tools such as funds flow analysis, cash flow analysis and accounting ratios, the author concluded that the overall financial position and performance of the bank were quite satisfactory.

However profitability and other financial indicators like solvency ratio, disclose only one aspect of co-operative performance. In one sense, the more important aspect of co-operative performance is the impact created on the economic and social life of its members.
Balasundaram (1994), made a case study of LAMPS in Bero Block of Ranchi district in Bihar. The study was based largely on the data collected from the LAMPS for a period of 5 years – 1978-79 to 1983-84. As part of the study a socio-economic survey of 30 members of the LAMPS was also conducted. The study revealed some of the major weaknesses of the LAMPS in Ranchi Block and also suggested remedial measures such as formation of an action group in each village in order to guide the committee of management in the LAMPS. It was pointed out that formation of action group in each village would ensure active participation of the tribals in the working of LAMPS. The study suggested that member education should be popularised so that a sense of belongingness, which was the basic requirement of a co-operative organisation could be promoted.

In a study of the services rendered by the Yercaud Hill Tribes Large Sized Multipurpose society in Tamilnadu, Subramanian (1994), found that the society had been doing yeoman service on the cause of uplifting the socio-economic conditions of tribals in the area in all the possible ways. The study was mainly based on the secondary data obtained from the society. The author put forward certain suggestions
including the bifurcation of the Yercaud Hill Tribe LAMP society for more effective functioning.

Mahalingam (1994), studied the poverty reducing potential of tribal co-operatives in North-East India. He focused his analysis on the total performance of two tribal co-operatives – Tawang LAMPS in Arunachal Pradesh and Mullunmgthu Co-operative Collective Farming Society in Mizoram. His analysis revealed that co-operative societies were powerful instruments for eradication of poverty and development of tribal economy. By undertaking multifarious functions the two tribal co-operative societies could achieve success in increasing the income and standard of living of the tribal members in the area. However, the success of the two co-operative societies is an exception because member participation and professional management which are the two pre-requisites for successful co-operatives are still absent in majority of the tribal co-operatives in the north-eastern states.

Paranjothi and Ranjitkumar (1994), made a study to test whether any relationship existed between democratic management and economic performance of co-operatives. Based on the performance of three Primary Agricultural Credit Societies in Trichur district, the study
concluded that there existed no relationship between economic performance and democratic management of Co-operatives. However, the authors admitted that since the study was confined to the performance of only three societies for ten years, the result of the study could not be generalised.

In a study of Karkala LAMP society in Karnataka State Vagganavar (1994), made a critical examination of the economic performance of the society. The study was mainly based on the data collected from the society. It was found that the membership of the society showed an increase of twelve times during the period between 1977-78 and 1991-92. But 87 per cent of the total share capital was contributed by the Government. The society could not achieve success in granting adequate credit to the members. However, the non-credit business made by the society during the period between 1980-81 and 1991-92 showed a progressive trend. The study highlighted the limitations in the working of the society. It also suggested necessary remedial measures. Like many other studies, this study also focussed only on the economic benefits of co-operation.
Mishra (1994), made a study of the social impact of handloom co-operatives on weavers in Western Orissa. It was an empirical study based on both primary and secondary data. The study attempted a comparison of the socio economic condition of member households (construed as experimental group) and non-member households (construed as control group), and based on some socio economic variables it was concluded that the member households did not gain anything specific with respect to exposure to mass media and participation in religious and political organisations. However, the study revealed that the member weavers were more interested in educating their children than non-member weavers. So, membership in co-operative had a partial impact on the consciousness of the weavers.

Kansal (1996), attempted to study the major functions and business achievements of Teleghar Adivasi Multi purpose Co-operative Society in Pune District of Maharashtra State. The author also evaluated the role played by the Maharashtra state Co-operative Tribal Development Corporation in providing assistance to tribals for obtaining better prices for Minor Forest Produce (MFP). On the basis of an analysis of the time series data relating to the procurement of MFP and agricultural produce, membership in the society, crop and consumption
loans granted by the society and the reserves of the society, the study concluded that the society was helping the tribals in improving the quality of their life through its various activities. The author pointed out the problems faced by the society along with necessary remedial measures for improving its performance.

Sharachchandra Lele and Jagannath Rao (1996), made a case study of the performance of 19 LAMPS in Karnataka. Secondary data were collected from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Bangalore. The views of the Secretaries, Board Members, Presidents, ordinary members and local non-governmental organisations were also collected.

The study identified that the only income generating and truly co-operative activity undertaken by the tribal societies was MFP collection. The performance of the societies in this respect was analysed from three different perspectives; economic, social and ecological. The framework of the analysis consisted of the following:

the objective of co-operation,

the incentive to co-operate,

the ability to co-operate,

the design of the co-operative,
the control of the co-operative, 
the ownership of the product itself.

The study revealed that the LAMPS were financially unsustainable, economically inefficient and non-participatory and unable to ensure the sustainability of their physical resource base.

Mohanti, Mohanty and Dash (1997), jointly examined the role of Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation of Orissa, in the socio-economic development of tribal communities. The Corporation was established in 1973 as an apex co-operative organisation to protect the interests of tribal people in the field of procuring and marketing their Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP) and Minor Forest Produce (MFP). On the basis of an analysis of the capital structure and activities of the Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation of Orissa, the study concluded that inspite of the development intervention of the Corporation, the middlemen and exploiters could not be eliminated totally from tribal markets. The authors suggested that co-operation which was very much a part and parcel of the tribal ethos was to be sensitised through vital social institutions which were not extant over time. The tribals should be made aware of the structure and functions of
co-operative set up. Co-operativisation of the tribal sector could be successful through participatory development approach.

Guha (1997), made an analysis of the character and pattern of the functional societies in the state of Orissa. The study attempted to identify the operational and other structural problems of functional societies. The study also offered creative suggestions to improve the operational efficiency of the functional co-operative societies in Orissa.

The major weaknesses of the functional societies as identified in the study were:

1. The subsidiary status of functional societies.
2. Lack of initiative on the part of policy makers.
3. Lack of prompt financial support from commercial and co-operative credit institutions.

The study offered the following suggestions for the effective functioning of the societies.

1. Restructuring the operational set up and identifying viability parameters.
2. Better support from higher level agencies; and
3. Develop functional societies as co-ordinators of self help groups.

In a study titled “Marketing through Co-operatives – A study of working of LAMPS in Orissa” Sahoo (1998), analysed the working results of the LAMPS in Orissa. The study was mainly based on secondary data collected from the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Orissa and the Orissa state Co-operative Union.

On the basis of an analysis of the performance results of the LAMPS in Orissa for a period of ten years (1985-86 to 1994-95) the study highlighted the erratic functioning of the LAMPS. The factors responsible for the poor performance of the LAMPS were also identified in the study. Finally, certain suggestions for improving the performance of LAMPS were also given in the study. However, the study did not pay the required attention to the views of the members.

The Institute of Co-operative Management, Thiruvananthapuram (1999), conducted a study of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Co-operative Societies in Kerala. The study was sponsored by the Government of Kerala. The study was based on the secondary data only. Data relating to Membership, Share Capital, Reserves, Profit,
Loss, Grants, Working Capital and Fixed Assets were collected from 47 societies functioning in 9 districts of Kerala.

The study pointed out some of the weaknesses of the societies like poor accounting system and lack of member participation of the societies. The study also suggested some measures for revamping the SC/ST societies in Kerala.

The study was a macro level one without considering the opinion of the members. The study gave only a one sided view of the performance of SC/ST societies.

Devadas (1999), in his evaluative study of the Primary Service Co-operative Banks (PSCBs) in Northern Kerala identified inter district imbalances in performance among PSCBs in the northern region of Kerala. The study evaluated the performance of 34 PSCBs with the help of ratios such as Equalisation Multiplier, Income Multiplier, Income Expense, Marginal Efficiency of Capital, Funded debt to Working Capital and Owned Funds to Borrowed Funds. Activity ratios such as cost of management to gross profit, net profit and working capital were also used for the evaluation.
The study concluded that inter bank variations in performance existed among the banks covered in the study. The study made some suggestions for improving the performance of the banks.

Tripathy (2000), made a study of the performance of LAMPS in Orissa. The study was based on the secondary data relating to the performance of LAMPS in Orissa collected from the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Orissa. Based on the data relating to the performance of LAMPS in Orissa for 6 years, the author reached the conclusion that even though the LAMPS had played a vital role in the advancement of credit cum marketing of products, they failed to procure the entire surplus agricultural produce of tribals. The study also pointed out the necessity of bringing the tribals into the co-operative fold.

Bala Komaraiah (2000), studied the impact of institutional finance on tribal economy. The study which adopted purposive multistage sampling was confined to Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh. Both primary and secondary data were made use of in the study. The impact of financial institutions consisting of Co-operatives, Commercial banks, Regional Rural Banks and Girijan Primary Co-operative Marketing
Societies was judged by parameters such as improvement in employment, production, income and overall standard of living. The study observed that the credit provided by the financial institutions helped the tribals to improve their living conditions. However, the tribals could not be released totally from the clutches of private money-lenders. Their influence was still predominant in the study area. The study suggested measures to improve the functioning of financial institutions in Andhra Pradesh.

Jose (2002), made an analytical study of the performance, problems and prospects of Coir Vyavasaya Co-operative Societies (CVCS) in Kerala. On the basis of the data collected from 45 coir societies and 275 coir worker households and the subsequent analysis using statistical tools like Averages, Percentages and Ratio Analysis, the study concluded that the operating efficiency of CVCS was extremely poor. The CVS could not achieve their basic objective of bringing the entire coir workers in to the co-operative fold.

Shashi Rajagopalan (2002), under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation, made a situation analysis of Tribal Co-operatives in India. Ten primary Co-operatives, two in each of the
five states of Gujarat, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh were selected for detailed examination. Case study method was adopted in analysing the performance and problems of the tribal co-operatives. Finally, on the basis of secondary data and discussions made with various stakeholders in the co-operatives, the study concluded that the tribal co-operatives were effective and successful when they were formed, designed and managed by their members.

In a study of the Women Industrial Co-operatives in Kannur district, Padmini (2003), made an attempt to identify the factors responsible for inter and intra unit differences in the overall performance of women industrial co-operatives in Kannur district. On the basis of an analysis of variables such as financial structure, productivity, profitability, size of employment and wages earned, the study concluded that the inter group differences in financial structure favoured those women industrial co-operatives which maintained political linkage.

Pralhad Kale (2003), examined the role of Maharashtra State Co-operative Tribal Development Corporation in tribal marketing. On the basis of a study of the trend in procurement of agricultural and minor forest produce and also with the help of ratios like gross profit to sales,
the researcher concluded that the Tribal Development Corporation could not achieve success in the procurement of agricultural and minor forest produce. The study also pointed out some of the limitations in the functioning of the Tribal Development Corporation such as absence of scientific storage system.

The literature reviewed reveals that the performance and problems of different types of Scheduled Tribe Co-operatives functioning in Wayanad District (which has 37 per cent of the state tribal population) in Kerala have not been subjected to micro level research study so far. Hence, the present study is an earnest attempt in this direction.