CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM

This is an age of democracy. The democratic form of government has been accepted in most countries of the world even totalitarian, military and communist rulers have also practiced and accepted the representative democracy. Local self-government has always been associated with democracy and development. Panchayati Raj is becoming a social foundation of rural democracy in the world and a powerful instrument not only in the political but also in the social and economic field.

Almost three-fourth of the world population still resides in villages. There is immense poverty and backwardness in rural areas of the developing countries. The problem faced by every developing nation is to have such measures as would eradicate backwardness in every spectrum of life. The present status of rural India is too well-known, three-fourths of our rural population does not have access to proper sanitation, one-half is illiterate, one-third does not have access to clean drinking water. Very few villages are connected with roads. The power position is ever critical. The most important problem of India in general and Himachal Pradesh in particular is that of improving the social and economic conditions of rural masses particularly, who are living below poverty line. The social, economic and political transformation is inconceivable without the participation of the people in government and development administration process. Our President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has often emphasized that our country has potential to become a developed country by the year 2020. He has rural transformation in his dream by providing urban
facilities in rural areas (PURA) through four connectivities viz., physical, electronic, economic and spiritual, to be brought about in a most creative and cost-effective manner. Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has gone a step further, he want the country to move from green revolution to ever-green revolution. He has a roadmap for a hunger-free India by 2007. According to Dr. Manmohan Singh, “Our Challenge today is to institutionalize this system of local self-governance to make India not only the world's largest democracy, but also to make it the world’s most representative and participatory democracy.” Panchayati Raj reflects these concerns and is manifested in special programmes for the weaker sections of the rural community, and backward areas.

The system of centralized planning is under attack in the new era of liberalization, globalization and restructuring of the Indian economy. The role of the government is being reviewed in the new perspective and efforts are being made to reduce its direct involvement in development activities. In the Eighth Five-Year-Plan efforts were made by the government to play the role of a facilitator by creating the right type of institutional infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. It seeks to strengthen the panchayat institutions and expand the role of voluntary agencies in social tasks and social mobilization. In the perspective of re-orienting the role of the government and reducing its direct involvement in social and economic activities, the panchayati raj institutions were considered proper agencies to carry out this task. The fortunes of panchayati raj have possibly suffered because of the partial and instrumental way that they have been perceived by the national policymakers. To Gandhiji, a "network of such rural organizations (Panchayats) functioning in the
villages without any connection with the government will be true foundation of civil revolt." Local government may be said to involve the conception of a territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organization to regulate its own affairs. This in turn presupposes the existence of a local authority with power to act independently of external control as well as the participation of the local community in the administration of its own affairs. It is likewise obviously impossible for all the citizens to participate at all times in the acts of the local authority.

Local government may be loosely defined as a public organization authorized to decide and administer a limited range of public polices within a relatively small territory which is a sub division of a regional or national government. Local government is at the bottom of a pyramid of governmental institutions, with the national government at the top and intermediate governments (state, regions, provinces) occupying the middle range. Local government is the part of administration of a state which deals with such matters as concern the inhabitants of a particular place, including those functions which the central government consider it desirable to be so administered. By panchayati raj is meant a network of civic institutions at village, block and district level to which responsibility for development is decentralized by the state government, accompanied by appropriate resources and delegation of powers.

The word “Panchayat” is very old, and it is deeply ingrained into Indian tradition and culture. The notion of panch-parmeshwar connotes belief in the institution of decision making by a selected group of people called panch. “Panchayat” implies discourse on a particular issue relating...
to a community. The discourse could be organized by the community leaders on their own or on a demand or request made by the concerned groups and families. Disputes settled by the panchayat were acceptable to the conflicting groups and families. Today panchayati raj institutions are basically concerned with overall development of village community and empowerment of the rural people as a whole rather than decision taken by a selected group of people. India is the land of villages, more than seventy five per cent population still lives in the villages. The village is an important unit in the organization of India social life. Panchayati Raj in India has always been considered as a means to good governance. Participation, legitimacy, transparency, accountability, competence, sustainable development and respect for law and human rights are the key element of 'good governance'.

The concern of the government for the life, liberty and prosperity of the village people, soon after independence, was reflected in various measures adopted by it to better their lot. As a matter of fact, the prominent leaders of freedom struggle such as M.K. Gandhi, Pt. J.L. Nehru and J.P. Narayan had already indicated that the major task of independent India would be to take democracy at the grass roots level and to involve the rural people in the task of national reconstruction. These leaders advocated that the "true democracy could not be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village". They had envisaged the vision of self-sustained and self-sufficient village republics capable of managing their own affairs.

Gandhi ji rightly said that the village government will be conducted by the panchayat of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers,
male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. The panchayat will be the legislative, executive and judicial powers to operate for its year of office. My purpose is to present an outline of village government a perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is an architect of his own government. He wanted to reorient village life through the institution of panchayat. He considered the view that villages are the backbone of India. “If the village perishes India will perish too. It will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost.”

According to him, the real meaning of swaraj was an opportunity to shape India’s rural development in accordance with her own traditions, culture and need. India could attain ‘RAM RAJYA’ only by going back to certain golden traditions of ancient India as well as by revising the indigenous institutions that well suits the Indian culture. “To serve our villages is to establish real swaraj.”

Ranbinder Nath Tagore said in 1962, we have started in India, in connection with our Visva Bharti, the work of village reconstruction. Its mission is to halt the progress of racial suicide. We believe that the problem of unhappiness, rather than of poverty, is the greatest problem. If we save even one village from the shackles of helplessness and ignorance, an ideal for the whole of India would be established. Let the few villages be rebuilt in this way, that is the way to discover the true India.

He has further said that, there is power which can awaken you from outside. The awakening can come only from within you through own united strength: The task of eliminating ignorance, disease, distress and
discord cannot be accomplished by making one section of society but by both working jointly in mutual support.  

The realization of the ultimate goal to wipe every tear from every eye will depend on whether men of character are elected to these bodies.

B.R. Ambedkar said that if things go wrong that will not be on account of the Constitution but "because man is vile." It is therefore necessary to have a system and develop safeguards which will help to bring men of character, honesty and integrity to serve on these bodies as servants of people rather than as their masters. In the words of Pt. J.L. Nehru, "The panchayati raj is the most revolutionary thing happening in India, because behind it is hidden all the forces which when realized will change the structure of the whole country." He wanted the involvement of the villagers in the governance of local government.

Late P.M. Rajiv Gandhi while introducing the Constitution (64th Amendment) Bill on PR in the Lok Sabha on May 15, 1989 stated that, "In driving the powerbrokers out of the powerhouses, in rendering the Panchayats to the people, we lay upon the people's representatives the solemn responsibility of turning their attention, first and foremost, to the needs of the poorest, the most deprived and the most in need. Each plan for economic development will be accompanied by a plan for social justice. No plan for economic development will merit attention until its social justice component is clear. This is a charter not merely for our villages to become prosperous but also for our villages to become just."

Late Prime Minster P.V. Narasimha Rao, wrote to the Sarpanchs of GPs in the country about the need of effective implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992. He wrote: "The main objective
of enacting this Constitution Amendment Act is to improve the participation of the people in the process of their development. It was felt that involvement of people was lacking and they were not having opportunity to decide the matter which directly effects their life. Once the provisions of the Constitution Amendment Act are incorporated in the Acts of the States and institutions are established at different levels, the quality of implementation of programmes will be substantially improved. State Governments will develop adequate functions, finances and powers to ensure better implementation of various developmental programmes.22

The development in all its possible dimensions of the national institutions is the major goal of all the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Irrespective of ideologies preferred and strategies adopted all of them have to evolve methods and procedures for building up institutions. In our country, panchayati raj is a mile stone in the journey of political institution building, at the grass roots level.23 Panchayats or rural governments have been in existence in India from time immemorial. Interestingly if finds mention in Manusamriti, Veda and also Arthshastra of Kautilya in 400 B.C.24 Not only they are mentioned in the Rig Veda, which dates from approximately 1200 B.C., there is also definite evidence available of the existence of village ‘Sabha’s (assemblies) and ‘Gramins” (senior persons of the village) until about 600 B.C. These village bodies were the lines of contact with higher authorities on matters affecting the villages. In course of time, these rural bodies took the form of panchayats (an assembly of five persons) which looked after the affairs of the village. They had both police and judicial powers. Sir Charles
Metcalfe, the provisional governor general of India (1835-36), had called the Indian village communities “the little republics.”

**Leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions**

Leadership plays an important role in shaping social, economic and political life of rural communities. Leadership however is an extremely complex social phenomenon. In many developing societies where the process of modernization of economic structure is going on at a rapid place, the study of existing and emerging leadership has crucial importance.

Panchayati raj is regarded as the heart and soul of Indian democracy. The strength and sound health of Indian democracy depends on its efficient functioning. It is an agency of social change, economic prosperity and political development. PRIs acts as the catchments areas for the discovery of new leaders.

Leadership in PRIs cannot be studied in isolation, as it is embedded in the prevailing socio-economic and cultural context. No one can rise to a position of leadership unless he has the support of a sizeable section of the community. Power structure in PR is characterized by groupism which provides the local political system. Pt. J.L. Nehru had firm faith in PRIs, but Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, did not have the same faith in the ability of the common people to regulate themselves. He formed this opinion after studying the working of panchayats in Uttar Pradesh. The leaders has a difficult task in the rural areas. He has to see that the villages are motivated to work for their own betterment and that of the community and to attain the material and higher goals of the
individual and his fellowmen. All this depends entirely upon the quality of leadership.27

Earlier the panchayats were the monopoly of higher starta of the society. The impact of modernization and political development has changed the traditional leadership pattern. Although these institutions, from time immemorial playing vital role in rural life, yet the change of scenario with the impact of education lot of awakening has come in the rural society. The nature of leadership emerging after the 73:rd constitutional amendment is also different. Gone are the days where the villages were governed by the elites of the society. The policy of reservation to the weaker sections of the society and women has completely changed the nature of leadership in the villages. More than one-third of village panchayats throughout the country are now headed by the persons of weaker sections and women including SCs, STs and OBCs. This is a kind of silent social revolution taking place in the entire country including the hilly state like Himachal Pradesh.28 The ultimate result of modernization and this salient social revolution through PR has changed the pattern of rural leadership. Although different social scientists define the concept of leadership in different way.

It is said that a leader is one who knows the way, shows the way and goes the way. “One who leads is a leader” is the general definition of a leader. Linderman describes the leader as “an individual whose rationalization, judgment and feelings are accepted by the group as base of belief and action.” Any person who is more than ordinarily efficient in carrying psychological attitude to others and is thus effective in coordinating collective responses may be called a leader.29
Leadership is the process of mutual stimulation which by the successful interplay of relevant individual differences, control human energy in the process of common cause. Rural leadership means the people or rural elite who are active in the functioning of PRIs or elected representatives of PRIs. Leadership its basis, theories and detailed clarification about concept is given in the 4th chapter of the present study.

Democratic Decentralization

Decentralization denotes a process or situation in which powers and responsibilities are transferred from a central authority to other, usually more local organs. The term can be employed in relation to the political decision making process, to the distribution of powers between elected authorities and to the organization of the bureaucracy. Most federal systems of government (USA, Australia, Germany and India), exhibit a considerable degree of decentralization. India is a federal state, there is division of powers between the centre and the states. Three lists have been kept in the constitution which enumerated the division of powers between centre and states. It divide all the subjects in three parts: (i) Union subjects 97, over which union government legislates, (ii) State subjects 66, over which each state governments legislates and (iii) concurrent subjects 47, over which the union and states can make laws provided that the law passed by the states is not violative of the law passed by the centre. In India democratic decentralization has been achieved through panchayati raj institutions.

The real case for decentralization rests not on the claims of territorial rights of judicial entities, or political parties, but on the comprehension, based on experience, that in a country like India, a
centralized polity is incapable of dealing with an unjust social order, that is inimical to the democratic political process, and that is inherently unstable.\textsuperscript{33}

J.P. Narayan said that, "It is matter of great satisfaction that in our country a beginning has already been made in laying the foundation of participating democracy in the shape of panchayati raj or what was called at first. "Democratic Decentralization."\textsuperscript{34}

He further expressed that "with the village panchayats as the base, the political structure would rise storey by storey to the national level. The village assembly at the lowest level would under this arrangement be organically linked to the national assembly through a system of indirect elections held by means of consensus among the electors".\textsuperscript{35}

Gandhiji's view on panchayati raj is based on the principle of democratic decentralization. The Gandhi's decentralization envision and uphold the cultural and spiritual ideal of simple living and high thinking. Without it, it is not possible to ensure individual liberty and mental growth of man. Similarly, it is equally essential for the realization of the ideal of democracy for the rule of people, which it stands for is not possible without adequate opportunities to individuals to participate in the management of their own affairs.\textsuperscript{36}

Democratic decentralization in true sense begins with the Balwantrai Mehta committee report in 1958, which recommended three tier panchayati raj system in India i.e. Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the block level and Zila Parishad at the district level. In fact democracy is a twin process, at the political level, the dispersal of powers takes place from state to district, district to block and
73rd amendment in the period of P.V. Narsimha Rao, usher a new era in the field of local self-government.

**Synoptic Perusal of Literature**

In view of the importance emerging leadership in Himachal Pradesh after 73rd Constitutional Amendment has been a subject of serious study. There are number of studies on Panchayati Raj and Rural Development by eminent social scientists. Thus, it is essential to mention here some of these studies relating to this field. Efforts have been made to provide a synoptic perusal of existing literature on this theme and other related aspects.

**Books**

H.D. Malaviya’s (1956) *Village Panchayats in India*, is a comprehensive study on panchayati raj. The book is mainly divided into three parts containing forty eight chapters. Malaviya has explained fully the historical and ideological background of the gram panchayats in India from time immemorial. He has explained at length as to how the village panchayats in this country developed into a sound system of democracy in accordance with our indigenous traditions and cultures. He has also described that the village panchayats are not the relics of tribalism or feudalism but are the results of mature thinking through the ages. Recent trends in the west also indicates that the system of democratic decentralization, is regarded more conducive to the development of human personality as well as the progress of society. Even authoritarian countries are finding it necessary to decentralize their administration. Village panchayats in India can really succeed in bringing about decentralization of economic and political powers. Author advocates that
the attempts should be made to establish gram panchayats powerful and substantial powers should be given to those panchayats which has brought about redistribution of land and established co-operatives and have dissolved local factions and groups. There is also a chapter on Himachal Pradesh Panchayat system. It is an old study but very useful as far as the historical perspective of panchayati raj are concerned.42

R.L. Khana (1956) in Panchayati Raj in India, has dealt with the structure, machinery and working of the PRIs in India in a historical perspective. He examined the PRIs at all levels extensively focussing on its functions, compositions, working, finances, etc. He also discussed the advisory bodies, role of Collector and the control of state and centre on the PRIs. He described the panchayati raj has been suffering from a number of problems, like inadequate financial resources, mass illiteracy, ignorance, class consciousness, party strife's, limited financial and administrative autonomy and lack of confidence in grass roots democracy. But inspite of all these defects and deficiencies, the institution of panchayati raj has added a new dimension to the rural development and has brought socio-economic democracy to the door-steps of the common man in Indian village. Thus the author suggests that the basic need for panchayati raj is to improve its structure and working. Therefore, the PRIs can work as an organ of the civic and socio-economic democracy and instrument of rural development.43

S.K. Dey's (1961) Panchayat-i-Raj A synthesis, is a book divided into two parts. Part one "The Genesis" reflects India and the world today derived from yesterday. The entire part dealt with the complex issues that the world as a whole is in a troubled and complex transition. Author has
explained the crisis that we face in panchayats, cooperatives of our democracy at home and abroad. According to him, if we want to proceed further, we must find answers to the problems and the answers must be worked out in practice. Part two "The Thesis" offers a way out of the crisis based on experience and experiments since our independence. He said that we have had glimpses as to how the community development programme has grown as a synthesis of all ideas concerning basic reconstruction of man and his society, both in India and abroad. He has also discussed the three basic institutions at the village, namely the panchayat, the cooperative and the village school, on which the future of our culture and democracy rests.

Ralph H. Retzlaff (1962), in his book *village Government in India*, has explained the historical and ideological background of village government in India. His work is related to the structural and functional aspects of Gaon Panchayat. From the time immemorial, the village panchayats in the ancient time developed into a sound system of democracy. The author also discussed functioning of the first gram panchayat and election of the second gram panchayat. According to him, the village panchayat in India can really succeed in bringing about decentralization of economic and political power if we take early steps to create conditions for greater social and economic equality in our countryside. He has also discussed panchayati raj during British period. His study is useful in giving direction for historical and functional aspects.

Maheshwari (1963) *Studies in Panchayati Raj*, is an attempt in the direction of promotion and understanding the panchayati raj. It is
coordinated collection of papers on various aspects of the system. There is a chapter on the emerging patterns of grass roots democracy in Nepal and Pakistan. The study reveals that majority of people of the country lives in scattered villages and are largely illiterate. They have little knowledge and narrow comprehension of the broader political purpose of the basic democracy.¹⁶

M.V. Mathur, Iqbal Narain, V.M. Sinha and Associates (1966) in their book, Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan, have made an empirical study of the working of PRIs in the state. They have tried to examine panchayati raj from the point of view of emerging institutional leadership, behaviour pattern and the interest of its members; its functioning in the specific context of “planning from below” and implementation of development programmes. Authors felt that the villagers admire it as a concept but they are disappointed and, some times, disgusted with the operational aspects of PRIs.¹⁷

N.R. Inamdar’s, Functioning of Village Panchayats, (1970) consists of 365 pages which have been divided into five main parts. First part of the book deals with Dilli Village Panchayat and the second part of the book deals with Rahatwara Village Panchayat. The third and fourth parts of the book deal with Khadakwalsa and Dhami Village Panchayats. In the last part of this book the conclusions and findings have been discussed. The author has dealt the various aspects of panchayati raj elections, personnel, function and finances at gram sabha and their leadership. All the aspects have been studied empirically, so the book is relevant for the study of PRIs.⁴⁸
Iqbal Narain, Sushil Kumar, P.C. Mathur and associates (1970) in their study on *Panchayati Raj Administration – Old Controls and New Challenges*, examined how far the old philosophy and media of control are suitable for meeting the tasks and new challenges of development administration in the specific context of panchayati raj. The authors have correctly emphasized that reorientation of the basic philosophy of controls in administration is necessary if administration is really to become an instrument of change in a traditional and developing society like that of India. The study is also important from the point of view of comparative Indian administration. It is a intra-country comparative study, which is important in a vast country like India where we have a rich variety of political and administrative diversity. An efforts has been made to study the comparative pattern of supervision and control over PRIs in the states of Madaras, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The study reveals to effectuate a substantial increase in the autonomy of the PRIs and remove the obstructive media of control and supervision with regard to PRIs. The study also reveals policy orientation and suggests ways and means to tide over the crisis areas in PRIs.49

Mats Kihlberg (1970) *The Panchayati Raj in India*, is a study which presents a picture of debate in a developing country about current social problem that of local self-government in India. It is an attempt to reflect ideas and ways of thinking in India and to provide some kind of counter balance to many western descriptions and analysis of the problems faced by the developing countries. The Indian experiment with local self-government and the debate on panchayati raj are interesting in many ways. Panchayati Raj provides an example of how modern and traditional
elements are merged in nation building, how the new institutions are marked by Indian culture and tradition.50

S.R. Mehta (1972) *Emerging Pattern of Rural Leadership* is a significant study of leadership pattern of three villages of Ropar district of Punjab. Author describes the factional polices of the village and pattern of interaction between the leaders and their outlook. He suggests that the emerging leadership depends on the social structure of the community. The traditional social structure would have a traditional pattern whereas, changing social order to modernity would, need to have modern oriented leadership. The village social structure and leadership are traditional in terms of age, male dominated, caste and occupational hierarchy but they are modern to the extent the village society is changing by emancipation of men, recognition of persons who were young and educated and have acquired a new status in the hierarchy.51

O. Ram Reddy and K. Seshadri (1972) in their book *The Voters and Panchayati Raj: A Study of the Electoral Behaviour During Panchayati Raj Election in Warangal District of Andhra Pradesh*, has made an attempt to assess the image of PRIs in the minds of people, work, achievements and failure and also to examine the factors that influence voters behaviour. The major result of the study are that politics has steeped down to panchayat level. Parties and groups take active part in the elections of grass roots institutions. Although the party symbols were not allotted to the candidates yet voters were full aware of the party affiliation. The main support behind contestants come from his relative party group. The major factor influencing voting behaviour are caste and money during elections of PRIs.52
Bhatnagar (1974) in his book *Panchayati Raj in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh* has attempted to study the attitude of new leaders. He has explained the performance of PRIs, besides analysis of involvement of the people in the working of the panchayati raj. He has tried to examine the socio-economic background of the leaders, their attitudes towards problems and the working of whole system and its relationship with the official wing. The chief merit of this study is that it intensively describes and critically examines the process of decision making and the extent to which the development targets have been achieved.53

Kaal Narain, K.C. Pande & Mohan Lal (1976) *Rural Elite and Elections in a Indian State*, is a study of panchayati raj leadership in the context of Rajasthan. The Study is based on post election survey in 1967. The analysis showed that panchayati raj leaders can be termed influential in the sense of “Vote bank”. So caste, villages leaders, parties and the personality of candidate are the main support base for the mobilization of voters. The study concludes that pre-independence leadership talked of ancient glory, great civilization, nationalism, development and so on but present leadership is just concentration on modernization.54

G. Ram Reddy, 1977), *Patterns of Panchayati Raj in India*, (ed.) in his book author elaborates the patterns of panchayati raj adopted in various states after the recommendations of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee. The report was welcomed. However, there was lack of uniformity in its implementation as different states adopted different patterns in respect of structure of this institutions. This study mainly deals with the different patterns adopted by different states. There were
six main patterns of PRls. In some states the lowest tier was more important and in some states only two-tier system has been adopted.55

B.S. Bhargava, in his book, (1979) Grass roots Leadership, described about the three papers namely (i) Grass roots leadership, (ii) Structural Aspects of Panchayati Raj System in Rajasthan and (iii) Leadership in Panchayati Raj System as an empirical study. Author analysed the importance of leadership in PRls in the first paper. In the second paper he discussed analytically only structural aspect of the system as prevailing in the state of Rajasthan. In the last paper, he has made a modest attempt to examine leadership in panchayati raj system in one district of Rajasthan comprising study of traditional leadership specially in the background of rural Rajasthan.56

Arjun Rao, Y. Darshankar, (1979) in his book Leadership in Panchayati Raj, explains that the introduction of panchayati raj in the country has witnessed a “Revolution of Expectations” of the common people. Obviously the success of PRls depends largely on the quality of leadership, available at the grass roots level. The writer also attempted to make a thorough study of the interaction between caste and politics, role of money, education and social rank in the working of the PRls in Marathwada region of Maharashtra. There is a hope that with the emergence of vigilant and committed leadership, these institutions will function for the betterment of the villages.57

government. Chapter third presents the institutional setting for theoretical construct. Chapter four to ten covers the major components of the study and highlights the various organs of local government. Its various dimensions are such as size of councils, personnel finance and restructuring of relationship between government and local government. The study concludes with a brief essay on philosophy of local self-government, where decentralized development provides a bridge between the extreme approaches of local bodies and government relationship on emphasizing efficiency, and other democratic values.58

U. Gurumurthy (1987) *Panchayati Raj and the weaker sections*, is an empirical study centres on one aspect – relevance of panchayati raj to the weaker sections in the state of Karnataka. The main objectives of the study are: (a) the weaker section’s awareness of panchayati raj, (b) their image in PRIs, (c) their participation in panchayati raj and (d) the extent to which they are benefitted in different areas of operation of PRIs. The very concept of panchayati raj is based on the idea of self-help and self-dependence. These institutions, can render significant service to villages in general and the weaker sections in particular only if they are capable of building up effective leadership inspired by public spirit, devotion, sacrifice and being capable of mobilizing local labour and resources for effective community services. PRIs only requires genuine will and sympathy on the part of state government to make them effective instruments for the upliftment of rural community.59

P. Manikyamba (1989) in his book *Women in the Panchayati Raj Structures*, has highlighted the women’s participation in PRIs in India. He deals with the women’s role in PRIs, particularly in Andhra Pradesh. The
structural, functional, attitudinal and environmental constraints for active involvement of rural women in general social process and political process are also discussed. The study is also concerned with the role of women president in PRIs. He also focused on women’s political participation, which he observed to be much less than their work participation.  

S. Satyanarayna (1990) in his book *Towards New Panchayati Raj: Critical Perspective on the Reorganization of Rural Local Government,* deals with PRIs in India. In this book, eminent scholars have contributed different articles. He has included important extracts from reports of various committees on PRIs i.e. Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, Ashok Mehta committees, G.V.K. Rao committee and Singhvi committee. He also highlights the variety of reasons for the failure of PRIs including the failure to hold regular elections, inadequate representation to the SCs, STs and women, lack of financial sources and lack of political will.

O.C. Sud (1992) in his book *Administrative Problems of Rural Development in India,* has explained the brief historical, political, social and economic profile of Himachal Pradesh with reference to PRIs in the state. The work is the comparative study of Kangra and Shimla districts regarding problems and working of PRIs. The book is divided into seven chapters. All chapter are concerned with the different aspects of PRIs i.e. rural leadership, development administration, policy and planning and various problems in administration of rural development schemes.

S.K. Singh (1992) *Role of Panchayati Raj in India,* the book consists of 143 pages, divided into seven chapters, provides an in-depth analysis of issues pertaining to involvement of PRIs in the implementation and
management of national rural employment programme in two states Bihar and West Bengal.63

Gracious Thomas (1992) People Participation in Community Development. This is comparative study of the participatory and partially participatory approaches of voluntary agencies to community development. An attempt has been made to investigate certain elements of participation like the attitudes and factors that influence the ordinary villagers to participate in the state of Madhya Pradesh. It was found that in participatory approach, the voluntary agency rarely intervened in the development programme chalked out the people through their village development association, while in partially participatory approach, the voluntary agency was frequently used to intervene in the programmes chalked out by the people. This shows that the voluntary agencies in the participatory approach have faith and confidence in the ability of the rural masses in decision making.64

S.N. Mishra & S.S. Singh (1993) Roads to Model Panchayati Raj (Review of Panchayati Raj Act in context of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act) is the book divided into 7 chapters containing 279 pages. The first chapter deals with the problem itself. Second chapter gives a comparative analysis of two Constitutional Amendment Bill. i.e. 64th and 74th, chapter third deals with the review of existing PR Acts of eight states namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Chapter four gives an account of officials perceptions of the PR in the respective states. Field diary and method of observation has been analyzed in the chapter fifth and as usual chapter six dealt with the conclusions and
recommendations. In the study it was observed by the author that the founding fathers of the constitution gave only lip service to the democratically decentralized institutions by providing a place in Article 40 of the constitution. But after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act the PRIs have got constitutional legitimacy. However this does not mean that it will prove to be a panacea to all the ills, as future challenges are still ahead. But it will help the people in realizing the importance and utility of these grass roots institutions. Gram Sabha is an institution which provides opportunities to all the people. But unfortunately throughout the country GS meet only on papers. Even after constitutional recognition to PRIs, the success of these institutions will largely depend on political will of the state government.

Shakuntala Sharma (1994) in her book on Grass root Politics and Panchayati Raj, has discussed the working of PRIs at the grass roots level. The book is divided into seven chapters containing 319 pages. In the first chapter introduction has been given and she also described different concept such as democratic decentralization, caste, class, power structure, problems and issues of panchayati raj. Second chapter deals with historical perspective of panchayati raj. Third chapter is devoted to the study of PRIs in post independence era. Chapter fourth deals with the historical, political and social profile of Himachal Pradesh. Chapter five concentrates on panchayat election and voting behaviour. Chapter sixth deals with the leadership profile and rural power structure and last chapter includes findings and conclusions. It is an analytical study of three village panchayats, namely Bangarh, Kiari and Nichar in three
different districts, i.e. Una, Shimla and Kinnaur of H.P. The book is useful for further research.\textsuperscript{60}

B.M. Verma (1994) \textit{Rural Leadership in a Welfare Society}, is a book consisting of 241 pages divided into eleven chapters. 6\textsuperscript{th}, 8\textsuperscript{th} & 9\textsuperscript{th} chapters are directly related with the leadership. In these chapters, analysis have been made to highlight the importance of socio-economic background of leaders as a factor in conditioning their decision making role in the panchayati raj bodies. An attempt has been made to examine, compare and contrast the different behavioural patterns of leadership role resulting from the various combinations of personal-economic status of the leaders and their acquired powers and position in PRIs.\textsuperscript{67}

S.R. Maheshwari (1995) in his book \textit{Rural Development in India: A Public Policy Approach}, describes an authentic up-to-date treaties on rural development in India. The chapter on historical evolution of rural development broadens the interest range of the work, making it of relevance to all the three offshoots of the raj - India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. There is also a chapter on panchayati raj in which author explains that today local government (including both PRIs and urban bodies) has become the third layer of the governmental systems so far as the constitutional status is concerned. Panchayati Raj, as a result of constitutional amendment of 1992, is a four tiered structural arrangement comprising of gram sabha.

Other chapters deals with various schemes concerning rural development. Author concludes that the rural development in India covers a vast canvas and the importance of its role has never been underestimated. The Sixth Five-Year-Plan rightly observes: “Development of
rural areas has been one of the abiding concerns of the successive five year plans”. Author suggests that the Gandhian model of rural development needs to be given more serious attention, and the country’s leadership must show courage and foresight to adopt it.68

George Mathew (1995) in his book entitled, *Status of Panchayati Raj in the States of India* 1994 (ed), consisting 232 pages. In this book first chapter deals with the introduction of the subject and different eminent political scientist of India who have worked on Panchayati Raj Act of 25 States. There is a chapter on Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act by Prof. R.D. Sharma. In this chapter Prof. Sharma concentrate basically on three issues (i) Traditional Structure of Panchayati Raj Act, and (ii) Status of PRIs in Himachal Pradesh after the Independence of India. In nutshell this study deals with the adoption of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1992 the Parliament and subsequently ratified by the states. After the Amendment, panchayati raj has attained statutory status and almost all the 25 states have enacted legislation in conformity with the amendment.

The book also highlights the most important aspects of panchayati raj i.e. reservation for women and deprived section of society at each level. The book consists of maps, detailed data about district and socio-economic profile of each state.69

U.K. Shama Bhat (1995) in his book *New Panchayati Raj System*, has dealt with the basic units of new panchayati raj system i.e. Gram Sabha, Mandal Panchayat and Zila Parishad. The author presented systematically and authoritatively clear picture of the new panchayati raj installed in Karnataka under the Janta Raj. He provides an interesting analysis of the new scheme.70
Raj Singh (1996) *Panchayati Raj Manual: A Social Historical-cum-Legal Perspective*, is a socio-historical and legal work on panchayati raj. The author has been given a detailed framework on Haryana Panchayati Raj Act 1994 and people’s participation perspective.71

A.K. Majumdar and Bhanwar Singh (1997) in their work, *Historical and Conceptual Development of Panchayati Raj*, have highlighted the critical and comprehensive study of historical evolution and conceptual development of PRIs from ancient times to present day. It is the book on theoretical development and practical implementation of PRIs in Indian society i.e. concept and historical background constitutional status of panchayati raj. nature and role of services under panchayati raj, etc.72

K.Q. Vidya (1997) in her book *Political Empowerment of Women at the Grassroots* has examined the role of women members in the PRIs empirically. Since the rural women for the first time were given an opportunity to enter the local political institutions. The intervention of the reservation policy introduced by the states of Karnataka, which was followed by other states such as Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The study was carried out by selecting one ZP and eight Mandal Panchayats, representing all the eight talukas of the Banglore rural district of Karnataka. The study indicated that the male members had accepted the women members as equal partners in the political process. The officials also expressed that women could definitely lay a positive role in these institutions. The people had benefited by the various schemes and they felt that reservation were necessary for women and with better education and training they could play an effective role under the PRIs.73
M.R. Biju (1998) *Dynamics of New Panchayati Raj System* Reflections and Retrospections. This book is divided into ten chapters consisting 368 pages. The first chapter is an introductory one. The second depicts the historical growth of PRIs in India right from its inception to the present day. The third chapter intends to focus attention to the position of PR in Kerala. The fourth chapter is devoted to analyze the structure, powers, functions and authorities of the PR bodies in Kerala. Fifth chapter is on bureaucracy and its relation to PR. Financial organization of PR system and the role of people and their participation in PRIs is given in sixth and seventh chapter.

The author has given a special treatment to analyse the two most important problems, the role of PRIs in checking pollution and significance of rural development and weaker sections in PRIs in chapter eight and nine. The last concluding chapter presents the major findings of the study. In this research a modest attempt is made not only to survey historically the growth and decay of ancient panchayats but also to discuss analytically the present structure, functions, powers, personnel, problems, financial management and people's participation.

The writer has also paid special attention to discuss the role of PR bodies in connection with pollution problem and weaker sections, both are new areas of concern now a days. Author feels that financial resources are not adequate even to take up the present developmental activities as assigned to them. The benefits of the development have not reached to the weaker sections of the society. In concluding remarks the author agrees fully with Dr. Iqbal Narain to whom the PR is a matter of faith. Sometimes, one may feel that the prevailing political atmosphere at higher
levels is not conducive for PRIs. Therefore this study has given new dimensions to the hither to traditional studies of PRIs in Indian literature.

Ratna Ghosh and Alok Kumar Pramanik (1999) in Panchayat System in India is a edited volume collecting contributions from various renowned authors covering almost all the aspects of PRIs prevailing in India. The Constitution (73rd) Amendment Act, endowing PRIs with constitutional status, constitute a significant landmark in the evolution of grass roots democratic institutions in India. It ensures full freedom to plan according to the local need and local potentials. The comprehensive framework provided now, will truly transform the rural economy and give a practical shape to people's participation in the process of economic development with social justice.

G. Palanithurai (1999) New Panchayati Raj System at Work An Evaluation, is a study to find out some contemporary/current questions, which has been undertaken in the Rajeev Gandhi chair from Panchayati Raj Studies in the Gandhi Gram Rural Institute. It is a case analysis of gram panchayats (twelve) of Tamil Nadu. It centred around the functioning of the local bodies and as to what extent the local bodies are functioning in line with the spirit of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. PRIs have been made as agencies to implement the schemes and programmes of the federal and state governments. Contract system has to be removed and instead people involved implementation has to be initiated. Women, though new to the office, have to be empowered to act independently like wise the dalits have to exercise their options as they like, to administer development and social justice. Author concludes that
without people's participation development cannot be achieved, weaker section of our society is always at the receiving end, and are hardly ready to participate. The middle class has not received and support from the government, but suffered a lot due to corruption misutilisation of reservation policy and uncontrolled price hikes of essential commodities. The higher class enjoys the fruits of development by identifying itself with the power. There must be link between three tiers. The new role of panchayat as a vehicle of economic development is not yet reflected. Periodical training to the leaders and official have to be arranged. A number of cottage and small scale industries have to be encouraged and cultural activities should be the part of the panchayats.\textsuperscript{76}

Raj Singh's (2000), \textit{New Panchayati Raj A functional Analysis} is an edited book on different aspects of panchayat raj written by different eminent Indian political scientists. There are twenty four chapters concerning various issues, concepts, trends and actual functioning of PRIs. Perspective on decentralization by Rajni Kothari; Will reservation ensure participation? by George Mathew; Gandhi and panchayati raj by Janardhan Pandey; Emerging pattern of rural women leadership through panchayati raj institutions in Haryana by Subhadra Yadav and Sheela Nagar; Husband Raj in Panchayats by Raj Kumar Bhardwaj and Minakshi Sharma, etc. These are most significant and emerging issues relating functioning of new panchayati raj system and its leadership, which has been described intensively and analytically. The whole study reveals that centralized power and planning, which our country has followed for the last four and half decades have defeated the concept of decentralization and local autonomy. Besides this, inadequate devolution of powers,
finance, bureaucratic control and lack of other facilities have not allowed the PRIs to function according to the spirits of the Act. About 98 per cent women representatives are not aware of their rights and duties and in most of the cases, male relatives accompany her in official meetings. Interestingly husbands of women Pradhan introduce themselves as defacto Pradhan.77

George Mathew, (2001), Status of Panchayati Raj in the States and Union Territories of India 2000, (ed.), is a comprehensive study on Panchayati Raj consisting of 516 pages. In the first phase of the book, there are three special articles on Panchayati Raj (i) Panchayati Raj in India-An Overview by the editor himself, (ii) Panchayats in Scheduled Areas by S.K. Singh, and (iii) Panchayats and Women by Nirmala Buch. Then there is a detailed discussion on the Panchayati Raj Acts of 25 states and 7 union territories of India by different scholars, i.e. on Himachal Pradesh by R.D. Sharma and on Haryana by Ranbir Singh. In the book the chapter on H.P. is more relevant as far as our study is concerned. Prof. Sharma has made an attempt to review the socio-economic profile, traditional structure of panchayati raj and after independence, specially post 73rd amendment developments. This in an attempt to cover the status of PRIs of the states and union territories of India. Every chapter devoted to the detailed discussion on socio-economic profile, structure of PRIs, inclusion of maps of the concerned state, study of Panchayat elections of 1994, and panchayati raj system to the fifth scheduled areas in states in conformity with the central law of 1996. So, this is a very relevant and useful study as far as the study of PRIs is concerned.78
G. Palanithurai (2001) in his book *Capacity Building For Local Body Leaders*, has explained the need of capacity of the leaders be enhanced through training programmes. After the enactment of the 73rd amendment, several steps have been taken to put the institutions in proper tract in proper form to get the maximum output from the grassroots level institutions. Yet the institutions are struggling, as conflicting perceptions are persisting among the functionaries and leaders about the role of new PR in society. Hence, it is imperative that capacity building exercise is offered to all sections from top level bureaucracy to the bottom level leaders. It was argued that the new system can function effectively only when the basic objectives of the amendment are known to all concerned. Thus in Tamil Nadu, the Rajeev Gandhi Chair has conducted the training programme for women leaders of GPs also. There are many agencies to support this kind of activities apart from the government. Training programmes are being conducted at different levels. This kind of exercises would build the capacity of the leaders to meet the challenges of this century and further to improve the methods and material of training.

G.S. Mehta (2002), *Participation of women in the Panchayati Raj System* is a book containing 205 pages divided into eight chapters. The study is an attempt to examine various issues related to the implementation pattern of reservation policy and its awareness among rural women, nature of socio-economic status of elected women, extract of participation of women representatives in all levels (District, Block & Panchayat) of PRIs during the implementation of development programmes and welfare activities. The introduction of reservation policy
for favour of women in PRIs has been an important government intervention for maximizing the participation of women in different activities at all levels and as a result to improve their socio-economic status. The study has also visualized that there were other related fundamental elements and factors which equally determine the scope of bringing changes in the status of women.80

Mukesh Sharma’s (2002) Panchayati Raj and Empowerment, is a book based on an analysis and review of panchayati raj in Rajasthan. It has been found that the panchayati raj has created as a whole a positive impact though not uniformly on different section of society. It revealed that panchayati raj has increased the pace of political consciousness both among the leaders and people in the rural areas of India. It has also offered an opportunity to the rural people to choose their own rulers at the local level.81

Articles

Surat Singh (1987) in his article on “Functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Himachal Pradesh,” has discussed the structure and the function of the panchayati raj in all the three levels of H.P. He has studied the development activities of panchayats and discussed that no system of local government can function successfully unless it is provided with adequate finance. He has concluded that panchayati raj institutions have brought an awakening among the rural masses. He also has pointed out that these institutions are facing the problem of postponement of elections. In the end, he discussed that for the success of the PRIs, a systematic review of the working of these institutions is required.82
Rameshwar Thakur (1993) in his article on "Rajeev Gandhi and Panchayati Raj", has discussed panchayati raj system under Rajeev Gandhi's view in which a short span of his political life has left a permanent and indelible mark on political, economic and social life of India. He has given the main characteristics of the 73rd constitutional amendment act and concluded Rajeev's view that it was a revolution which brings development to lakhs of our villages and will open the door of opportunity to millions of SCs, STs and the women of India.83

P.M. Bora (1996) in his article on "Panchayati Raj and Democratic Aspirations of the People", has traced the growth of Pachayati Raj Institutions as units of democratic local Government, it was expected that the emerging new leaders would be more enlightened, democratic and would take care of the aspirations of the people and channelise their initiative and energies in the process of development. Effective participation required people who can understand their own problems and needs plan for their own development and run their institutions.84

Debabar Banerji (1995) on "Contours of a Health Policy in Panchayati Raj", presents that panchayati raj institutions will be involved in promoting and implementing health services to the people with many other developmental activities. Using the changes engendered by the panchayati raj movement to more substantially implement the community health volunteer scheme of entrusting people's health in peoples hand. This is complemented by promotion of home remedies, locally available indigenous system of medicine and family welfare to promote great community self-reliance. District Chief Medical Officer
must have control over all the health service programmes in the district and will report directly to the chairman of Zila Parishad. The suggestive contours of health policy in panchayati raj starts from the people-strengthening their capacity to cope with the health problems faced by them. The process of decentralization will be assumed to be associated with radical changes in health services system.  

Meena Galliara (1995), in “Panchayati Raj: Challenges to be met”, examines the issues and challenges which the PRIs are going to face in future. This article also makes an attempt to design few strategies to operationalise the PRIs functioning in the states. The 73rd constitutional amendment has brought a structural change in PRIs. To make this functional there is a need to strengthen various aspects or grass roots institutions. To a large extent it will depend upon whether we are able to provide the right human resources for the purpose or not. Mere rules and regulations would not facilitate empowerment of the people. A healthy respect and sound will for the process of democratic decentralization amongst the political leaders and bureaucrats is essential. There are various social, cultural and political challenges and impediments in the way of PRIs. The involvement of MPs and MLAs in the functioning of grass roots institutions can create conflict between them and PRIs leaders. The involvement of these leaders will definitely influence local leadership in their favour. This will happen in the states where panchayat election are to take place on party basis. It will also not help to cure the ills of money power, muscle power, casteism, regionalism and communalism which hold in these elections. Only the depth of commitment and conviction will determine the future of PRIs.

Rajender Singh (1998) Panchayati Raj in Himachal Pradesh: A Comparative Study of Kangra and Shimla districts, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. It is a detailed study on PRIs in H.P. He has divided the thesis into seven chapters. The first chapter deals with the problem itself. The second chapter deals with the profile of H.P. The chapter third described the historical perspective of PRIs and the fourth chapter deals with the panchayati raj in H.P. The fifth and sixth chapters are mainly concerned with the trends of leadership in both districts of H.P. after 73rd constitutional amendment act. Finally with the conclusions and some recommendations regarding various problems concerned with PRIs. So it is also a useful work as far as our study is concerned.

Kumud Sharma (1998) in “Transformative Politics: Dimensions of Women’s participation in Panchayati Raj”, discusses a new meaning and dimension to the political empowerment of women. The 73rd amendment has to be viewed in a larger context as opening some doors for women at the grass roots level to participate in the democratic process. In this article there is the debate on reservation to women,
women’s participation in panchayats and women’s experiences after 73rd amendment, etc. Author has given an example of SUTRA, an NGO in Himachal Pradesh, which actively campaigned amongst the members of Mahila Mandals to contest panchayat elections. The elections were fought hotly and closely. People elected “mild and soft” women. Mahila Mandals were seen as pressure groups to safeguard the interest of women. The PRIs are viewed as nurseries of political leadership. The area of political socialization of women and men needs serious exploration. The author concludes that on the one hand there is the decline in the accountability and credibility of the institutions of governance in the polity at the present juncture has led to cynicism, on other hand, there is a strong feeling that a large participation of women in PRIs can reverse the process of deterioration in public life. Building on this fragile foundation is the real challenge for women.

Jagnath Pathy (1998) “Panchayati Raj in the Schedule Area and Management of Forest Resources”, focuses his attention on those provisions which have direct bearing on the management of forest resources according panchayati raj act 1996. According him an estimated 75 million hectares of land in India is recorded as forest. Bulk of the tribals, at least 15 million, are dependent on forests.

Pt. J.L. Nehru had assured (1959) that the tribal rights in forests should be respected. The National Forest Policy (1988) insists that the tribals should be closely associated in the production, regeneration and development of forests so as to provide them gainful employment. With the so-called globalization, the Internationally Recognized Patents (IRP), the tribal customary knowledge system on biodiversity herbal medicine,
agriculture and forest management stand to be eroded at a great cost to the tribals for the benefit of Trans National Corporation (TNC). According to Bhuria Committee Report Indian Parliament extended the 73rd Amendment Act to scheduled area on 1996 by legislating the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Area) Act. According to Act, the Gram Sabha has entrusted with safeguarding and preserving the community resources and endorsing Nistar rights—customary rights on natural resources other than reserved forests. It also has the right to plan and manage minor forest resources and regulate shifting cultivation.  

A. Fernandes and P. Mukhopadhyaya (1999), in “Re-designing Panchayat Finances and attitudes: A case study of Goa”, has attempted an analytical study of panchayat revenue and expenditure in Goa. Ancient settlers of village, called Gaunkars, organized themselves into communidades (Communities) in Goa, which functioned as autonomous units of village administration. The second form of local government in Goa, introduced by the Portuguese (Afonso de Albuquerque, 1511 A.D.), were the municipalities (Senado De Goa). With the passage of 73rd constitutional amendment, Goa Panchayati Raj Act (1994), established two tier structure at the village (Panchayat) and district level (Zila Parishad. There is lack of political mobilization among the people and the responsiveness of policy makers to respond to popular demands. Planning in the state continues to be top heavy and totally centralized. There is neither village or block plans nor district planning boards and financial resources of the panchayats have not improved. In the tourist-rich areas along coastal belt, the panchayats can consider putting up guest houses of their own as permanent assets of the
panchayats. It could be a larger revenue source for the panchayats of Goa.91

Poornima Vyasula and Vinod Vyasula's (1999) "Women in Panchayati Raj Grassroot Democracy in Malgudi", is an attempt to discuss the structure of panchayat raj in Karnataka and the experiences of women in it. India has passed laws that make mandatory for local governments to include women. This reservation of seats, in 1993-94 elections has brought in about 8,00000 women into the political process. Women in Karnataka have gained valuable political experience. In 1983, the progressive step of reserving 25 per cent of the seats for women had been taken. As may be expected, the experience of women in panchayati raj has been varied. Many are surrogates for husbands and father who could not contest because of reservation. The field level experience of Malgudi expressed that corruption is a matter of routine, where payment of a bribe is at best seen. The rural remote areas reality is complex. Women has to decide if attending panchayati raj meetings is sometimes worth missing their daily wage and who have to worry about crying babies and hungry husbands. For fundamental change in society much more than PRIs are required; but that does not mean PRIs are not important. Much more will be needed if gender justice is to become the norm and it will take time.

Mahi Pal (1999) “Making Decentralised Governance More Effective”, deals with new panchayati raj system. Here author has tried to explain that more than six year have been lapsed since the beginning of new panchayati raj system in India after the enactment of 73rd amendment to the constitution, the assessment of the working of the
panchayats shows that the panchayats have not entirely fulfilled the people's aspirations in terms of becoming participators in decision making. Vital issues effecting local government have still been either in the domain of the state government or central government. If functional, administrative and financial autonomy is ensured for the panchayats by amending certain provisions of the central act as well as some other parts of the constitution is suggested in this article. It may provide a sound base for sustainable democracy and participatory planning at the grass roots level.\textsuperscript{93}

*Kurukshetra* (1999) Annual issue there are thirteen articles by different eminent scholars on Gram Sabha. The whole issue is devoted to Gram Sabha i.e. Towards direct democracy: the legal empowerment of gram sabha, role of gram sabha in village development, gram sabha and social audit, women's role in gram sabha, gram sabha and different states, etc. Therefore, the issue is very much relevant and useful as far as gram sabha is concerned.\textsuperscript{94}

Mahi Pal (2000) "**Panchayats in Fifth Schedule Areas**", deals with new panchayati raj the extension act 1996. The extension act, 1996 is an important piece of legislation, extending the provisions of grass roots self governance of the 73\textsuperscript{rd} constitutional amendment to the fifth scheduled areas. Yet most of the concerned states have been indifferent to the enactment of the extension act and devolution of powers and authority to the gram sabha and panchayats. Author has been studied panchayats act of seven states, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Orissa.\textsuperscript{95}
Prabhat Datta and Panchali Bhattacharyya Sen (2000), in their article, "Participatory Rural Governance in India", traces the participatory rural Governance in India through the institution of Gram Sabha. They examined its nature, structure and evolution. Imparting focus on West Bengal’s Gram Sansad, they make a comprehensive assessment on its efficacy vis a vis Gram Sabha’s in other states. Concentrating on enhancing people's participation by giving some weightage to West Bengal experience and concluded by prescribing certain measures which need to be implemented to obtain the desired advantage of people's participation.

Oommen John (2000) in his article, “Strengthening of panchayati raj finances in Kerala-A new phase”, shows how introduction of people's participation in the planning process has helped in bringing about marked improvement in the financial position of PRIs. Art 243 (H), refers to empowerment of panchayats by the state to levy taxes, duties, tolls, etc. Kerala government also passed three tier panchahyati raj system in 1995 and it has given maximum powers including financials. The government initiated the people’s campaign for decentralized planning in 1996. There has been a marked improvement in financial position of the panchayats after the launch of the people’s planning process. The panchayats on their part should came out of the stupor by utilizing the money for the plans formulated and implemented through people's participation. He concludes that through undertaking implementation of projects catering to the felt needs of people, these bodies have acquired financial, administrative and functional autonomy to mark a new phase.
Fakir Mohan Pradhan and Ajit Kumar Mishra (2001), "Local Administration in Orissa: Case Study of a Panchayat Samiti". This article is an attempt to make a study of Kesinga Panchayat Samiti of Kalahandi district in the state of Orissa, which comprises of 19 gram panchayats consisting of 102 revenue villages with a geographical areas of 149 sq. miles. The study reveals that the development cannot be achieved with out the involvement of the people for whom it is envisaged and targeted. The success and the failure stories under different schemes indicate that where there is people's participation and involvement, identification of appropriate beneficiary with his active initiative and timely monitoring at the appropriate level, the scheme or the programme have been good result.98

Siby K. Joseph and M.S. John (2001) in their article, "The Gram Sabha Experience of Tamil Nadu: The Difficult Road Ahead," concentrate on two year experience of Gram Sabha in a village panchayat in Tamil Nadu. The experience of Chettiapatti Village Panchayat shows that participation in the gram sabha meeting is very low. Most of the people do not know about the existence of the sabha and tend to confuse it with the Gram Panchayat. Even those who attended are not able to distinguish it from other meetings. However, it serves a useful function as a forum for the periodic expression of the needs of the people. The sabha is unable to perform its statutory functions relating to training approvals to plans selecting beneficiaries. Authors concluded by calling for an intermediary institution between the sabha and the panchayat to perform its statutory functions.99
Mahi Pal (2002), in "Role of Panchayats in Rural Reconstruction", examines that rural reconstruction can be achieved through changing the mind of the rural people, particularly the deprived sections. After the independence of India various experiments on rural reconstruction were carried out. The term rural reconstruction means rebuilding of all aspects of rural society. It is alleged that unfriendly attitude of the state leadership and bureaucracy towards panchayats is responsible for their plight as they have not shown any strong will to devolve adequate powers upon panchayats. The main base of rural reconstruction is self help, without out side intervention. Gram Sabha provides a platform to all disadvantaged people, it will go a long way in removing caste, class and gender barriers that stumble the process of rural reconstruction. People should consider themselves as the cornerstone of the governing system, it could only happen when they became the participators in decentralized governance, development and planning.

Mohinder Singh (2003) "Transparency in Functions: Vital for Gram Panchayats". This article focuses on the need and significance of transparency in the functioning of GPs. Author indicated that GPs has suffered mainly due to misutilisation of funds placed at their disposal, corruption, unwanted delay, and poor quality of goods and services. It has been observed that secrecy and lack of openness in transactions are among the root of corruption. In some cases, bogus signatures of voters are obtained to meet the minimum requirement of quorum. There is a general complaint that as and when some new scheme is started, the sarpanches and their associates do not tell others and try to give benefits
only to those who had voted in their favour. At the time of identification of
beneficiaries, undue favour is shown to such persons who do not really
belong to the category of person living below the poverty line. Nexus
between the rural bureaucracy and the heads of GPs leads towards
manipulation of funds left at their disposal. To ensure transparency,
author suggested measures include convening of regular meetings of GSs,
generating of awareness, provision of equal opportunities, prior approval
of development works, circulation of proceedings wide publicity of
programmes, involvement of reputed NGOs and imbibing of democratic
and moral values, etc. This will create a new work culture that is only
answer to keep the GPs on the right track.  

H.M. Hemalatha's (2003) "A Hand that cradles can also handle
the Panchayat", is an attempt to analyse the extent to which women
panchayat members have been upholding the values and principles of
democracy. The study is conducted in Mysory Taluk of Mysore district. An
attempt was made to find out the problems faced by the women in the
family, in panchayat, in village, with office staff or with the other
members. The study revels that women members of gram panchayat are
yet to be politically empowered. They also have to be conscious of their
duties as representatives of women folk. However, they proved to be
capable of showing their representation but they need time, resources
support, training and freedom from men. If given these, they definitely will
make the 73rd and 74th amendment of our constitution meaningful. The
study also focused on three issues i.e. decriminalization in politics,
linking formal politics with informal politics and building feminist
consciousness among women members.  

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P.M. Mathew (2004) in his article, "Panchayati Raj and Rural Governance: Who Cares for Economies?" Concentrate on the role of PRIs in local economic development. He argued that local economic development is a new term in the terminology of development literature in the advanced countries. However, it has caught up significantly during the last half a decade, mostly to reap the advantages of globalization in a local context. Active labour market interventions, meant for reaching youth unemployment, promotion of enterprise clusters at the local level, pro-active role of local government in local economic development, are essential ingredients of public policy in these countries. Unfortunately, even after years of experience in PR public policy in India still too unclear on local economic development. It is this anomaly of policy perception that still keeps PRIs as an appendix to governance structure in the country. He has suggested that PR will become relevant to the lives of our people only if it can contribute significantly to the economic life of the masses in our country. Such meaning fullness can be assured only if economic policy making in the country is clear on the spatial aspects of economic life. Distributing a few chickens or seedlings among the poor farmers is not economic policy.

Ranbir Singh (2004) in his article, "Why the Panchayati Raj Institutions have not been empowered so far?" focuses his attention on the experience of the working of the PRIs in various states during the last decade. This experience shows that very few states have transferred all the powers given in the 11th schedule to the PRIs. Even the powers that have been transferred, in reality, continue to be exercise by the functionaries under the control of state governments. The
recommendation of the State Finance Commission have also not been fully implemented in most of the states. The PRIs have also been found reluctant to raise the resources of their own. In this context, it is generally argued that this has happened because of loopholes in the provisions of the constitution where the word "may" has been given instead of "shall" in the Article 243 G. Therefore it is argued that the word "may" should be replaced by "shall" by amending the constitution. In addition to the union, state and concurrent lists, a local list on the powers of PRIs should be inserted in the constitution. There has been a general tendency to blame the political leader and bureaucracy for the lack of empowerment of the PRIs. They have certainly been responsible for it to some extent for this dismal situation. But the rural masses and their elected representatives are equally responsible for this state of affairs. Author argued that rural masses had at no stage demanded the establishment of PRIs. Therefore author suggested that PRIs will be genuinely empowered only after the rural masses and their elected leaders themselves put strong pressure on the central & state governments for this purpose. So, they will have to unite, organize and struggle. Neither the political parties nor the NGOs nor the media can ensure the real empowerment of the PRIs unless the rural masses and the elected leaders in the PRIs have the strong will for it.  

From the above review of existing literature, it is clear that there is a great body of works on grass roots institutions at all levels in India. After the passage of 73rd constitutional amendment which confer constitutional status to panchayati raj institutions has rendered most of studies out dated as number of changes have occurred in these
institutions. Although there is a number of studies on panchayati raj leadership trends, yet no study is directly related to the district Mandi so far. Moreover, beside S. Bhatnagar, Shakutla Sharma and Rajender Singh’s studies are related to other districts of Himachal Pradesh. So the present study is an attempt to find out various emerging leadership trends in PRIs of the district Mandi of Himachal Pradesh.

**Significance and Relevance of Study**

Various factors prompt us to take up this field for research. First of all panchayati raj has been hailed and applauded by many as a mighty experiment in democratic process and a revolutionary step in the direction of national development and reconstruction. The objective of panchayati raj is to make democracy real. It imparts political education to the people and gives a valuable ground for leadership. It provides an outlet for competent and public spirited persons of the locality to render social service to the community. Further the PRIs aims at the creation of new conditions for the work of local administration and new form of cooperation between the administration and the people of the rural areas. The grass roots democracy is essential to ensure mass participation and involvement. Majority of people still lives in the villages, their destiny is to be moulded and guided to a great extent by PRIs. This, in fact, makes PRIs and its leadership very important field of research.

The study of panchayti raj in Himachal Pradesh with special reference to the study of emerging leadership in the district Mandi after 73rd constitutional amendment act, is socially, politically relevant and academically significant. The problems of rural India recently has been highlighted through the panchayati raj leadership. Particularly in
Himachal Pradesh the problem becomes more interesting and relevant to investigate. The present study concentrated on Zila Parishad Mandi and three Panchayat Samitis, in which six Gram Panchayats from each.

The study in itself is exceptional. Whereas other researchers have concentrated studies on national, state and international level. The area which I have selected is a maiden attempt. In this respect it is different, unique and relevant problem to investigate. Since no noteworthy work is available on emerging leadership in the PRIs of Himachal Pradesh except S. Bhatnagar, O.C. Sud and Shakuntala Sharma's study. But they have taken different aspects of PRIs in different circumstances, place and time. It is thus, hoped that this is an humble and modest attempt to add to the existing literature in this field. It is expected that it will be helpful in attracting social scientists towards a more intensive and micro study on PRIs of Himachal Pradesh and this excavation will also be useful for academic, administrative and practical purposes. Since it is a district level study, so it will also bring to light the facts and realities which influence the political forces of change in the district and might help the panchayat leaders in evolving policies suitable to the achievement of goals of real rural development. It would be helpful to locate rural leaders, influential persons and political activists, which influence the political participation of the rural masses in the democratic process. In brief this study may help to know the emerging leadership trends in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh.

**Objectives of Study**

The present study is an attempt to findout the pattern of leadership emerging in the panchayati raj institutions. After the passage of Himachal
Panchayati Raj (HPPR) Act 1994 various provisions with regard to the representation to the different sections of the society were incorporated. Prior to the 73rd constitutional amendment, the fate of panchayati raj was in the hand of state government and the ruling party. But after the passage of 73rd constitutional amendment it has been made mandatory for all the states to hold election after every five years. The main characteristics of the Act were 33 per cent reservation to the women and reservation to SCs, STs and OBCs in proportion to their population. Moreover, the seats of chairpersons were kept reserved for SCs, STs and to one-third for women by rotation, which resulted in different kinds of leadership in comparison to the earlier leadership in PRIs.

So, the present study is an attempt to investigate the emerging leadership in the PRIs of Himachal Pradesh. Particularly representation to the women and reserved categories has changed the scenario of the rural leadership. This study is based upon the analysis of data of this district. The analysis provides insight into the working of PRIs in the state. Therefore the focus of the study is on the following issues/objectives and the specific objective of the study are to seek answers for the following research questions.

1. To find out the emerging leadership after 73rd constitutional amendment in grass roots institutions in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To know about the socio-economic and political background of elected representatives of PRIs, under which the new leadership is emerging.
3. To find out that the impact of caste, class, age, sub-region on emerging leadership.
4. Awareness of local leaders with regard to organizational set-up of panchayati raj bodies.

5. Awareness of respondents with regard to various problems of PRIs.

6. Extent of women's role in decision making process of the PRIs.

7. Extent of participation and involvement of the general masses in the PRIs.

8. Respondents views on various types of reservation and rotation system.

9. To know the attitude of state government with regard to PRIs, whether state government is willing to improve its powers and position.

10. To investigate the support basis of present elected representatives of PRIs.

11. Views of respondents with regard to Gram Sabha and Up-Gram Sabha.

12. Opinion of the respondents about two-child norm.

13. Whether PRIs can play effective role in the implementation of rural development programmes?

14. Whether independent bureaucracy is necessary for the proper working of panchayati raj?

15. Whether the reservation for SCs, STs, OBCs and Women has improved the functioning of PRIs?

16. Whether the elections in the PRIs has encouraged factionalism in rural areas?

17. Idea's about party based election of PRIs and extent of political parties involvement.
18. Whether financial paucity is a great hindrance in the working of grass roots institutions.

19. To know the role of money and liquor during the elections of PRIs.

20. To know about the existing election system of the chairpersons of zila parishad and panchayat samiti.

**Universe of the Study**

The scope of present research covers the PRIs of Himachal Pradesh. At first I have delimited the area of my study from twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh to one district, namely district Mandi. The district is selected for research basically for the following reasons:

1. District Mandi is situated in the centre of Himachal Pradesh and it comprises hilly terrain and lush green valleys.

2. Mandi remained Indian Princely States during British regime and on 15th April 1948, it was made one of the four districts of this state.

3. Mandi is the divisional headquarters of Mandi, Kullu, Bilaspur, Hamirpur and Lahaul-Spiti Districts.

4. Mandi district is more developed than some other districts of the state.

5. The district is second largest in population among twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh.

6. Literacy rate in the district is comparatively higher than that of some other districts of Himachal Pradesh.

7. The district has mixed population of people from different religion mainly Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Boddh.
8. Mandi is the second largest parliamentary constituency (area-wise) in India including Mandi, Kullu, Lahaul-Spiti districts and Bharmour of Chamba and Rampur of Shimla districts.

9. Female voters outnumber the male voters in the district.

10. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry are the major occupation of the people. Production of foodgrains and cash crops (Apple, Potato, Peas, etc.) are the main source of its economy.

11. Political participation in the district is higher than many other district.

12. District Mandi has second largest elected representative of PRIs out of twelve districts in Himachal Pradesh.

Further I have delimited the area to three PSs namely Sadar, Karsog and Sundarnagar out of ten blocks. Lastly, I have delimited the area of study to eighteen panchayats, six GPs each from three PSs namely Nagwain, Talyar, Kotli, Gharan, Sai and Kotadhar in Sadar Block, Dhawal, Upper Baihli, Kapahi, Slapar, Mahadev and Chamukha in Sundernagar Block and Karsog, Mashog, Kalashan, Mahog, Churag and Bhanthal in Karsog Block.

Before taking up the aspects of the sample and sampling procedure, it is relevant to add some more information through maps and statistical figure given here in the study. It shows the location of study areas and their various developmental indicators of the district, blocks and Gram Panchayats.
## Statistical Profile of District Mandi H.P.

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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>No. of Commercial Banks</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 95% Government Aided College

Sources:
1. Block Indicator, District Statistical Office Mandi, H.P., 2004
2. Census 2001, Himachal Pradesh Series 3, Final
4. Deputy Director Education, Mandi, H.P., 2004
Sample and Sampling Procedure

As already explained out of ten PSs in district Mandi three PSs were taken up for detailed study on the basis of development ranking and wider coverage of various sections of the society. The Sadar PS is relatively more developed than Sundarnagar and Karsog blocks. Further six GPs were chosen on the basis of stratified random method from each PSs. A due emphasis was given to ensure the representation of varied sections of the society in the light of reservation envisaged in the HPPR Act 1994. Figure 1.1 represents the sampling procedure.
A well structured questionnaire was framed covering all the aspects regarding PRIs. The personal interview method was used to recorded the information from all the 36 member of ZP Mandi, 84 members of PSs of the three selected blocks and 194 members of all the eighteen selected GPs. So as far as the sample of the study was concerned, it consists of chairman, vice-chairman and members of ZP and PSs, Pradhan, UP-Pradhan and Members of eighteen GPs. Thus total sample consists of 314
respondents who were elected representatives of PRLs in the elections of 2000. The categorization of the respondents is presented in the following table.

**Table 1.1**

*Categorization of the Respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Area</th>
<th>Chairman</th>
<th>V-Chairman</th>
<th>Pradhan</th>
<th>UP-Pradhan</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZP-MANDI</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS-SADAR</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS-SUNDERNAGAR</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS-KARSOG</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAM PANCHAYAT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL = 314</strong></td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above figure 1.1 and Table 1.2 make clear picture about the sampling procedure.

**Methodology**

The present study is the empirical and analytical. The sources of data collection can be broadly divided into two parts primary and secondary. The study is based upon both the methods, primary as well as on secondary.

**Primary Sources**

The primary data for the present study has been collected through the questionnaire. Field study was conducted through the methods of questionnaire cum interview schedule, discussion, dialogue and observation. The very objectives of adopting this technique was to know the perceptions and opinion of panchayat raj leaders. The other sources of
this study are Government Reports, Acts, documents of different committees constituted for the purpose of various aspects of panchayati raj.

**Tools of Primacy data**

Questionnaire, Interview, Dialogue, Discussion and observation.

The questionnaire which was prepared for conducting personal interview was divided into six parts.

- Part first deals with the personal/family background of the respondent, such as age, sex marital status, caste, income, occupation, religion education, economic background, party affiliation of the respondent, etc.

- Part II mainly deals with the question relating elections of PRIs and party polities.

- Part III deals with the various issues like structural arrangement, devolution of powers to PRIs, participation of people in Gram Sabha, two-child norm, reservation on rotation basis, etc.

- Part IV deals with financial aspects of PRI.

- Part V deals with government supervision and control over PRIs. It also deals with bureaucratic control over grass roots institutions.

- Part VI of the questionnaire deals with the planning development and democratic training. This part also includes the suggestive opinion of respondents for the improvement of grass roots democracy and leadership. It mostly contained closed ended questions and though some open ended questions.

Although the questionnaire was made in English language but I have put the questions to the respondents in Hindi or local dialects.
Whenever the respondents found any question difficult and confusing to understand, it was explained to them time and again and the questions were explained in informal talks with the respondents.

**Interview**

Personal interviews (contact) were conducted with the respondents. Most of the respondents were illiterate or less educated who were not prepared to speak openly and hesitate to give correct information particularly regarding party affiliation, etc. Some time the respondents were reluctant to disclose their personal belongings and secrets. In most of the cases the respondents were not aware of the exact position of the PRIs. They were found reluctant to disclose the various malpractices during the implementation of rural development schemes. In spite of all above mentioned difficulties, I was able to collect correct information by participating dialogue-discussions and observations. Some of the observation helped in cross checking the information collected through interview schedule.

**Secondary Sources**

The secondary data was collected from published and unpublished sources. It includes various books pertaining to panchayati raj, articles, reports, seminars, etc. Various articles in the subject in different journals, magazines and newspapers were one of the important sources of secondary data. The various acts passed by the central government as well as state governments with regards to the PRIs are an important data in the present study. Various reports of the department of election, department of economics and statistics and directorate of panchayati raj were also the sources of data. An extensive use of secondary sources has
been made in chapter 1 (Review of existing literature) and in 2, 3, but chapter 4 & 5 are based on primary data.

**Tools of Data Analysis**

There are many methods of analyzing the data. In the present study the processing of data and the preparation of the tables for analysis and interpretation has been done manually. In general most common method is computerization of data and other techniques of data analysis are content analysis, scaling techniques, frequency distribution, etc.

**Limitation of Study**

The area of present study was limited to only one district out of twelve districts of H.P. Out of this district zila parishad, three panchayat samitis and eighteen gram panchayats were selected. In each panchayat samiti, six gram panchayats were further selected on the basis of stratified random sampling. But the limitation of our research is that it is confined to only elected representatives (Leaders) in all three tiers of the PRIs in district Mandi of H.P.

**Scheme of Chapterization**

1. Introduction : The Problem
2. Profile of Himachal Pradesh: Historical, Political and Economic.
3. Historical Background and Legal Framework of Panchayati Raj.
4. Leadership Profile.
5. Perceptions of Leaders About PRIs.
6. Conclusions and Suggestions.
Notes and References


18. Ibid., p. 61.


42. H.D. Malaviya, Village Panchayats in India, Economic and Political Research Department, All India Congress Committee, New Delhi, 1956.


45. Ralph H. Retzlaff, op.cit.


57. Arjun Rao, Y. Darshankar, op.cit.


63. S.K. Singh, op.cit.


66. Shakuntla Sharma, *op.cit.*


70. U.K. Shama Bhat, *op.cit.*

71. Raj Singh, *op.cit.*


74. M.R. Biju, *op.cit.*


77. Raj Singh, *op.cit.*

78. George Mathew, *op.cit.*


96. Prabhat Dutta and Panchali Bhattacharyya Sen, op. cit.


