CHAPTER - II

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of studies have been conducted by several social scientists related to our problem. To what extent we have accessible to approach them, some of them are mentioned here in accordance of requirement of this research. This review of selected literature is divided into three parts. The first part reveals the term scheduled caste, second explain to panchayati raj and third present studies on leadership.

2.1 Scheduled Castes: An Overview

Scheduled castes signify a group of castes, through recognized now constitutionally, but have a legacy in the caste system in India. The origin of caste system dates back to the age of Rigveda. It is an institution of great complexity having its roots deep in history and even today it governs the lives of few hundred millions Hindus in several important spheres of social life. There is a reference to the word ‘Varna’ in the Rigveda. Sociologists like M.N. Srinivas (1969) have tried to understand the division of society into five fold hierarchy with Brahmans at the head, followed in order by Kshatriyas, Vaisyas or traders, Sudras or servants and labourers and lastly, the untouchables. The first three groups (castes) are called ‘Twice Born’ (Dvija) as they alone are entitled to undergo the ceremony of ‘upnayana’ which contributes its spiritual rebirth. Only the ‘twice born’ castes are entitled to study the ‘Vedas’ and the performance of Vedic rituals on certain
occasions. Caste in this sense is referred to as Varna and has an all India application. The idea of caste as the five fold division of society represents a gross over simplification of society. The real unit of caste is not one of the five Varnas but 'Jati', which is a very small endogamous group practising a traditional occupation and enjoying a certain amount of cultural, ritual and juridical autonomy. The attempt of fit the 'Jatis' of any region into the five fold hierarchy is a very difficult affair. But it is possible everywhere to say who are the Brahmins and who are untouchables of course there is a great confusion in the middle region. Thus the present scheduled castes historically have been identified in all regions of India in the caste system as untouchables.

The concept of pollution governs relations between the different castes. Every type of inter-caste relation is governed by the concept of pollution. Higher groups like Brahmins are considered to be polluted by contact of any kind, touching, dinning, sex and other relations with the untouchables which are structurally distant. On the other hand the untouchable caste could not feel polluted if in any above contact with other higher groups (castes), but rather higher castes will feel polluted. Thus a distance was prescribed between the persons of different castes. The castes were identifiable by their various habits of living, ritual performance, worship patterns, dinning, occupations, life style etc. Their cultural traits would also contribute to their hierarchical distance between the castes. The distinction is also referred to by racial features and colour. Thus the differences between castes were considered both racial and cultural.
There is also a story of its origin 'the Purusa Sukta', a part of Rigveda, stating that the Brahmans, Rajanyas, Vaisyas and Sudras are born from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the God. Later on these became Varnas (castes). There was interchange of duties and also interclass marriage in ancient times. The ban on eating food cooked by Sudras did not exist. The later Vedic period consists of 'Samhitas'—Atharva, Yajurva and Bram Vedas and Siv-Sauras. In this period the notion of sacrifice gained prominence. The upper castes could sacrifice but the lower castes were not allowed to do so. The upper castes could marry into the lower castes but marriage with the sudras was not approved. The idea of pollution by touch found expression in this period. Inter-dinning was still allowed but caste system became rigid. In the Smriti period 'dharma' or 'a code of duties' for the harmonious functioning of the various divisions of society became an accepted procedure. Dharma Shastra or Smriti laid down rules for every caste and vocation, for every relation in society, king and subject, husband and wife, teacher and pupils. However, from the period of 'empiria' Guptas, the castes and sub castes were rigidly separated. Inter-caste relations were defined in terms of dinning, marriage, touch and ritual observances. The category of out castes had emerged in this period. Probably this signifies the origin of untouchables. The caste became inflexible and birth became the basis of caste, rank in this period.

In the medieval period's early phase (class) and occupational distinction got crystalized. The Turkis rulers who entered as invaders, had a preference for luxurious life and they also forced conversions.
The lower classes of Muslims were mainly consisted of converts from Hindus and they retained a Hindu identity even after conversion to Islam. Some of these converts were Sudras and untouchables. In social matters they were treated as inferior by the ruling groups. Later in the Mughal period the socio-cultural aspects of the caste system were not much adversely affected. The Brahmins used to looked after the temples, directed religious ceremonies, worked as teachers, and administered the Hindu personal laws. Kshatriyas continued to be warrior like people. They were recognised as workers and at times these spiritual and cultural traits were manifested used. The Vaishyas were quite prosperous in this period as they were engaged in business, trade, commerce, banking, transport and crafts. The Sudras continued to be at the lower bottom in the hierarchy of castes. Thus in this period the present scheduled castes were placed at the bottom in the social hierarchy of castes in Hindu social system.

The various views on castes were based either on impressionistic understanding or on the (scriptual) texts during the British period. The British Raj encouraged the continuity of the caste system by favouring some caste groups with higher status. To such groups and to individuals of such castes, they granted titles and lands so as to continue their superior status. This system was basically inequalitarian and the Britishers never discouraged caste based inequalities, injustices and discriminations in the social life of Hindus in India. On the contrary, the British administrators and ethnographers described the caste system in terms of its functionalities to maintain
solidarity through interdependence of the society and culture in Indian (e.g. Wiser: 1936). They emphasised intercaste and intercaste harmony and discipline with the implicit objective of keeping divided into castes and sub-castes so that the castes as social groups could not have united together against British colonial rule.

Beteille (1978: 273-94) considers that division of society into number of castes constitutes one of the fundamental features of its social structure. In Hindu society, caste divisions play an important part both in actual social interactions and in the ideal scheme of values. Members of different castes are, up to certain a point, expected to behave differently and to have different values and ideals. These differences are sanctioned by Hindu religion. The individual's position in the caste structure is fixed by birth and is, to this extent, immutable. Formerly, as Andre Beteille noted (1978: 273), birth in a particular caste fixed not only by one's ritual status, but by and large, also by one's economic and political positions. Going with this situational statement the untouchables were not only placed at the lower ritual status by birth but their lower economic and political positions were also entailed.

Beteille (1978: 274) defines caste as a small and named group of persons characterised by endogamy, hereditary membership and a specific style of life which sometimes includes the pursuits by tradition of a particular occupation and is usually associated with more or less ritual status in a hierarchical system based on the concepts of purity and pollution. In South India, the territorial divisions of the villages
are clear and social values are attached to them. The habitation of non-Brahmin untouchables is earmarked in which no Brahmin should enter. The concept of pollution is attached not only to groups and individuals but also to places where particular caste - individuals reside. The untouchables, Adidravidas, not only live in different parts of the village, but also in some measures regard themselves as having separate identities. Historically they have occupied different position in the economic and Adidravidas as agricultural labourers. Different sections occupy different positions in ritual hierarchy, the Brahmins at the top, and the Adi-dravidas at the bottom; the former are regarded as ritually the purest while the later are considered as being in a permanent state of pollution. Politically there is some identification between these sections and the ideologies of certain parties. In some ways the most striking difference between the Brahmins on the one hand and the Adidravidas on the other, is in their physical appearance. This difference is summed up in various popular saying e.g. 'dark Brahmins and light Paraiyas are not proper'. This saying also goes on in some parts of north India. In the popular image the Brahmin is regarded not only a fair complexion but shape-nosed and as possessing, in general, more refined features. Among Adidravidas fair skin colour is so conspicuous by its absence that normally a Brahmin would be mistaken for such a Paraiya. The difference are of significance because fair skin colour and features of certain types have a high social value not only in Tamil Society, but indeed in the whole of India. Refinement of a particular kind, both in appearance
and behaviours, has a high social value. In dress patterns the difference has also been observable. Among the Brahmins, men are required by tradition to wear the eight-cubit piece of cloth or Vesiti after initiation. Addravidas do not wear there Vesiti in this way. Differences are carried further in the matter of women’s dress. Among the orthodox married Tamil Brahmin women wear the Fodavai (upsewen cloth) eighteen cubits in length and is worn with Kachcham, the ends being tucked in various ways. Among the generality of Addravida women the ‘Podavai’ is considerably smaller in size and reaches just below the knee, leaving the legs uncovered. Thus wearing clothes in specific ways symbolises a particular culture or style of life. All these distinctions indicate a different and lower status of the Addravidas in South India.

Ram Saran Sharma (1983) has tried to explore the origin of lower social order of Indian society. He appears to suggest the formation of survival class which has been reduced to the present status of scheduled castes. He has clarified the nature of Indian Society as alien meaning thereby of different nature. There had been, as he observes, and there would remain a double standard of socio-political and economic structures for the ruling class, and the ruled over masses, say for alien scheduled castes. There have been some deliberate efforts and clear cut indications to keep them separate in all walks of life. The voices of the caste subordination were carried to a more destructive height among the Hindus, than among the people of any other religion. There appears to be a firm conviction that the caste
system in India is not too much old. The social stigmas have been established by a very peculiar kind of force to maintain their superiority. There is no description of any castes, like we have a list of scheduled castes, in any of the Vedas. R.S. Sharma quoting inscriptions speaks of a mixed caste called 'maitra', may be identified with maitra caste of Vallabhi who appears in the inscription of 5th Century A.D., although they may have existed earlier. In his epigraphic examination of some of the other contexts he would place the existence of these groups in the 5th Century A.D. or later.

Kamble (1982) gives an account of various types of scheduled castes in different states and Union territories, working force participation in politics and roots of their exploitation, untouchability and removal of untouchability and anti-untouchability measures in India. He points out that the sudras were the results of struggle between Brahmans and Kshatriyas for supremacy. The Sudras were rebellious kshatriyas who were defeated by the Brahmans and were given an inferior socio-economic and religious status. Discriminatory laws were made to prevent Sudras from revolting against the system. The system lateron was treated as 'divine' in nature and it was glorified by the priestly classes.

The Varna system and the supremacy of Brahmans and Vedas, later on, were challenged by 'Lord Budha' and 'Mahavira'. However 'Mahavira' accepted the supremacy of Brahmans as the priest and educated people, whereas Budha did not do so. As a result of this descent, they were involved in clashes with the Brahmans, the Brahmin
Varna. All Varnas were not treated equal before the law as the Varnas occupied different status. Different punishments were prescribed for people of different varnas e.g. if the Sudras used strong words against Brahmins, Kshatriyas or Vaisyas, he was to be given corporal punishment. On the contrary if Sudra was killed by a person of the upper Varna, the offender was to be fined 10 cows which were given to the Brahmin. Such was the discriminatory socio-justice prevailing in the society and had an approval of the people in the Varna system.

The status of the Sudras was exaggerated, though at times and places only, the scheduled castes have been in power, (e.g. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh of Punjab was a Sansi by caste and was a ruler in 18th Century). Sansi have been included among the scheduled castes in Haryana and Punjab. Despite all such facts of history the scheduled castes (Sudras) have been labelled to have the worst kind of lives even below the level of a domestic dog. Their lives are still miserable by being boycotted socially and continuing the legacy of the past. They have been denied all human rights even in the recent times; continuing the legacy of past in the name of traditions.

The scheduled castes constituted the largest segment of the working force in comparison to the other higher social groups. They did not possess any other source of livelihood than merely selling their labour. They were considered the lowest category of workers in all walks of work. They were given the menial jobs like scavengers, messengers, coolies etc. Thus they remained submissive to the higher non scheduled castes. They did not allow to open their mouth and to
highlight their misery of life. Even then there are higher and lower groups among them.

Briggs (1920) identified various types of Chamar (leather workers). According to him, there were 1156 types of Chamar castes. They have been divided on the basis of skin and hiding of the animals they used to work upon. Their stratification level depended upon the types of animals they skin. e.g., those Chamars who were engaged in camel and horse hidings were considered of the lowest status and those who worked with buffalos and cows were considered as the superior. This was a wonderful planning of dividing human beings. Though all kinds of leather occupations were full of foul smelling yet the superiority of the strata was attached to it and thus stratified the people of this lower category also.

V.S. Shastry (1992), in his work on the scheduled castes, has discussed the philosophical basis of the term Sudras who could perform Vedic rituals on the basis of writings of some Russian writers. He argues that the Sudras were not slaves. Sudras were originally Kshatriyas. This thesis has also been established by Dr. Ambedkar in his work who were the Sudras (1946) but on this thesis, R.S. Sharma (1965) comments that Dr. Ambedkar entirely depended upon translations and such source material that is only such where he could prove his purpose of establishing the origin of Sudras from the higher ranks of the society.

In the recent times in 20th century the 'test of untouchability'
was accepted as a criteria to classify the untouchable castes as 'depressed classes' in the census of India (1911). Those who were untouchables and who are denied access to the interior of ordinary Hindu temples, cause pollution by touch, within a certain distance were included in the term 'depressed classes'. The 1921 census does not specify any criteria for classifying the depressed classes. Lateron, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar found the need for substituting the term 'depressed classes' (out of pale of four Varnas), until a better term was coined. In his note of descent in the 'Report of the Indian Franchise Committee. He observed 'This designation has many advantages. It defines exactly the position of untouchables who are within the Hindu religion but outside the Hindu society and distinguishes it from those Hindus who are economically and educationally depressed but who are born within the pale of Hindu religion and Hindu society' (The Indian Franchise Committee Vol. 1, 1932: 211). Dr. Ambedkar's suggestions found expressions in 1931 census. The reason for substituting the term 'Exterior' for outcaste was given by the census commissioner for India, thus, outcastes, correctly interpreted, seems to mean no more than one who is outside the caste system and is therefore not admitted to the Hindu society, but since in practice the 'Exterior Castes' also contained those who had been caste out from the Hindu social body for some branch of caste rules "Outcaste" where in some cases synonymous and the derogatory implications of obliquity attaching to the latter term have unjustly coloured the former, a taint which is not conveyed by the substitution of the word 'Exterior', which may connote
exclusion but extrusion. (Census Report 1931, Vol. 1, Part 1, Appendix

It may not be out of point to recall that the Census Commissioner for India, Sir. Hutton, in 1931 suggested certain conditions and tests for identifying communities and castes to/known as Depressed Classes on the basis of the following factors:

1. Whether the caste or class in question can be served by clean Brahmins or not.
2. Whether the caste or class in question can be served by the barbers, water carriers, tailors etc., who serve the caste Hindus.
3. Whether the caste in question pollutes a caste Hindu by contact or by proximity.
4. Whether the caste or class in question is one from whose hands a caste Hindu can take water.
5. Whether the caste or class in question is debarred from using public conveniences such as roads, ferries, wells or schools.
6. Whether the caste or class in question is debarred from the use of Hindu temples.
7. Whether in the ordinary social inter-course a well-educated member of the caste or class in question will be treated as an equal by high caste men of the same educational qualifications.
8. Whether the caste or class in question is merely depressed on account of its own ignorance, illiteracy or poverty and but for that would be subject to no social disability.
9. Whether it is depressed on account of the occupation followed
and whether but for that occupation it would be subject to no social disability.

Though Dr. Hutton suggested these tests more than half a century ago, many of these deciding factors are still applicable today to identifying the castes, communities races or groups to be called depressed or scheduled castes.

Thus, the term 'Exterior Castes' was suggested as the satisfactory substitute for connoting the depressed classes. 'Untouchability' was the chief test for classifying depressed castes. Socio-religious disabilities thrust on certain sections of society, as a consequence of which they suffered social exclusiveness and separateness, were given prime importance in any classification of depressed classes.

The term 'Scheduled Castes' to connote depressed classes was coined by the Government of India Act, 1935. The term was defined as follows: "The 'Scheduled Castes' means such castes, races and tribes, corresponding to the classes of persons formerly known as 'the depressed classes' as His Majesty in council may specify."

The Indian Independence Act of 1947, defined the term as, "The 'Scheduled Castes' means such castes, races and tribes or parts or groups within castes, races tribes, parts or groups which appear to the Governor General to correspond to the classes of persons formerly known as the 'depressed classes' as the Governor General may by order specify."
After independence, the term 'Scheduled Castes' is used in the Constitution of India to specify the untouchables. Article 341 (1) reads:

1. The President may with respect to any state or Union Territory, and where it is a state, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification specify the castes, races or tribes or parts of for groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purposes of this constitution to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.

2. Parliament may, by law include 'in' or 'exclude' from the list of scheduled castes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any caste, race or tribe or part of or group within any caste, race or tribe, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

The term 'Scheduled Castes' is defined in Article 366 (24) as follows:

"Scheduled Castes means such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under article 341 to be scheduled castes for the purpose of this constitution."

The criterion for specifying 'Scheduled Castes' is precise and simple. The stigma of untouchability is the declared criterion for classifying scheduled castes.

Socio-religious disabilities associated with the caste system have been made the basis for classifying scheduled castes. Accordingly, the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1951, the
as minorities are concerned, there are many minorities which in fact
cannot be called as such. For instance, take the case of Harijans.
They are in fact Hindus, they are not a minority like the Muslims or
the Christians."

When the Constitution of India was being framed, the
representatives of these communities strongly pleaded their case in
the Constitutional Assembly for the recognition of this community as
a separate entity like those of other minorities. The arguments were
put forward like, "The untouchables are a minority community, because
their social, political and educational advancement is in a very low
State."

So the problem of minorities in general and that of the scheduled
castes in particular, was one of the most important and controversial
issues before the framers of the constitution of India. An agreed formula
for its solution could be arrived at only after holding series of meetings
of the Constituent Assembly at different levels that is from the
assembly of general house to a number of sub-committee proceedings.
The framers of the Indian Constitution were fully alive to the magnitude
and delicacy of the problems of minorities and of the scheduled castes.
Hence they made constitutional safeguards for these castes.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the leader of the scheduled castes,
submitted an exhaustive note which was primarily concerned with the
'political and social safeguards for the scheduled castes', should have
a minimum representation according to their population ratio in the
legislature. The representative were to be elected through separate
communal electorate. Similarly the note suggested that is the executive the representatives of the scheduled castes the equal to the ratio of their population to the total population. He also suggested that the scheduled castes should have a minimum share of the posts in the various public services according to the proportion of the population and on every Public Service Commission and other selection committees the scheduled castes were to have at least one representation. On the social side he was specially concerned with what is called social boycott of the scheduled castes. He suggested that promoting or instigating a social boycott shall be declared to be an offence.

He further made it clear that for the purpose of interpretation the scheduled castes as defined in the Government of India Scheduled Castes, order(2U1 1936, issued under the Government of India Act, 1935, shall be deemed to be a minority.

The first question that was tackled by the committee was about the scheme of election. It was decided that all elections to the control and province legislatures will be held on the basis of joint electorates with reservation of seats for certain specified minorities in their population ratio. This reservation shall be for a period of ten years, at the end of which the position is to be considered. There shall be no weightage. But members of the minority communities for whom seats are reserved shall have the right to contest the general seats.

Furthermore, the constitution stipulated under Article 300 to
appoint a Commission to report on the administration of the scheduled areas and the welfare of the scheduled tribes and Article 301, appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of Backward Classes.

Before partition, the Constituent Assembly had adopted the resolution, "All elections to the central and provincial legislatures will be held on the basis of joint electorates, provided that as a general role, there shall be reservation of seats for the minorities." But after the partition of the country on communal lines, the minorities themselves gave notice for an amendment to the effect that in view of the conditions having vastly changed, since the Advisory Committee made their recommendations in 1947, it was appropriate that the reservations for minorities should be done away with. Accordingly, the report of the Advisory Committee on minorities, Fundamental Rights etc., came was for reconsideration on December 38, 1948. The Advisory Committee considering the whole situation came to the conclusion that the time has come when the vast majority of the minority communities have themselves realised after great reflection that evil effects in the past of such reservation on the minorities themselves and the reservations should be dropped. Consequently, Dr. B.C. Mookherjee moved in the Constituent Assembly on 11 May, 1949 for the dropping of the clause on communal reservation of seats in the legislative on population basis. Muniswami Pillai moved an amendment in favour of continuing the reservation benefits to scheduled castes for a period of 10 years. It was conceded that due
to the peculiar position of the scheduled castes, the provision of reservation for them as was originally decided, should remain unchanged. So the Advisory Committee passed the resolution with one dissenting voice, in the following form "That the system of reservation for minorities other than scheduled castes in legislature be abolished." And moved to the assembly that the following be added to the said resolution, "the provision for reservation of seats and nominations will last for a period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution." The motion as amended, was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on May 26, 1949.

After discussing the procedural development of the safeguards for the minorities in the making of the constitution, we now proceed to examine the relevant provisions, as they stand in the final shape today. Article 15(4): "Nothing in this Article or in clause (2) of Article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes."

Article 16(4): Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the States, is not adequately represented in the services under the State."

Article 17: "Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law."
**Article 46:** "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular, of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."

The 'Backward Classes' comprise three sections of Indian society: the Scheduled Castes, The Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward classes. The framers of the Indian Constitution tried to solve the centuries old problems of these classes through legislations. The Backward Classes are guaranteed not only their fundamental rights along with other communities but are also entitled to some special concessions and privileges so that they can attain equality with the rest of the society. Part XVI of the constitution specifically deals with special provisions of political and economic interests relating to these classes. But the context and focus of our study provides us to deal with the provisions relating specifically to the scheduled castes only.

**Article 330 States:**

1. Seats shall be reserved in the House of the people for (a) The Scheduled Castes, (b) The Scheduled Tribes except the Scheduled Tribal in the tribal areas of Assam and (c) The Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam.

2. The number of seats reserved in any state or Union Territory for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes under clause (1) shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats allotted to that State or Union Territory in the House of the People as the population of the Scheduled Castes
in the State or Union Territory or of the scheduled tribes in the State or part of the State or Union Territory, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so reserved, bears to the total population of the State or Union Territory.

**Article 332 lays down:**

(1) Seats shall be reserved for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, except the scheduled tribes in the tribal areas of Assam, in the legislative assembly of every state.

(2) Seats shall be reserved also for the autonomous districts in the Legislative Assembly of the State or Assam.

(3) The number of seats reserved for the scheduled castes or scheduled tribes in the Legislative Assembly of any State under clause (1) shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats in the assembly as the population of the scheduled castes in the State or the scheduled tribes in the State or part of the State, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so reserved, bears in the total population of the State.

**Article 334 reads:** Reservation of seats and special representation to cease after 20 years - Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this part, the provisions of this constitution relating to the reservation of seats for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in the house of people and in the legislative assembly of the States etc. shall cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of 20 years from the commencement of this Constitution.
The Constitution (8th Amendment) Act, 1959 increased the period from 10 years to 20 years for the reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Lok Sabha passed the Constitution amendment bill to extend reservation to 10 years and the Act of 1980 further extends the period for another 10 years i.e. upto January 25, 1990.

**Article 335 ensures:** The claims of the members of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in the making of appointment to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.

**Article 338 ensures:**

1. There shall be a special offices for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes to be appointed by the President.

2. There shall be the duty of the special officer the investigate all matters relating to the safe-guards provided for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under this Constitution and report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President make direct and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament.

3. In this article, references to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes shall be constructed as including references to such other backward classes as the President may, on receipt of the report of a Commission appointed under Clause (1) of Article 340 by order specify and also be the Anglo-Indian Community.
**Article 340 States:** The President may be order appoint be commission consisting of such persons as the thanks (1) The investigate the conditions of socially and educational backward classes within the territory of India and the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by the Union or any State to remove such difficulties and the improve their conditions and as to the grant that should be made for the purpose by the Union or any State and the conditions subject to which such grants should be made, and the order appointing such commission shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission.

(2) A commission so appointed shall investigate the matters referred to them and present to the President a report setting out the facts as found by them and making such recommendations as they think proper.

(3) The President shall cause a copy of report so presented together with a memorandum explaining the action taken thereon to be laid before each House of Parliament.

**Article 341 Provides:**

(1) The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be scheduled castes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.
(2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of scheduled castes specified in a notification issued under clause  
(1) any caste, race or tribe or part of or group within any caste, race or tribe, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

Clause (1): Public notification- The Constitution (scheduled castes) order 1950 was made by the President in exercise of his power Article 341.

Thus special treatment is provided for the scheduled castes in the Constitution. But in practical application, the concepts of 'equality' and 'special treatment' have created a tense situation. The non-backward classes feel discriminated against by the special treatment policy. But it could be said in favour of constitutional provisions for backward classes that they are both justifiable and inevitable. The social conditions in India are such that they necessitate the incorporation of special treatment for backward classes. A look into our historical past, a society based on the authoritarian principle of castes, which stood in the way of social and educational advancement of lower social orders, would justify the special treatment of these sections. To create equality, special facilities for backward classes are necessary. Moreover, special safeguard guaranteed under Article 330 and 332 are of a temporary nature. Though Article 335 makes provisions for reservation in services, emphasis has been laid on 'efficiency' Articles 15(4) and 29(2) are not mandatory but only enabling provisions of the constitution. The satisfactory solution for
the juxtaposition of 'equality and special preference' has to continue as Myron Weiner suggests. If the Indian people are to accept democratic institutions, some of the community associations demands must be met. It will require considerable skill to satisfy these differing demands without destroying the merit systems.

After an experience of four decades the concerns of the public arise. The enormous national funds which have been utilised for the welfare of these people are required to be put to proper scrutiny and rigorous tests. Its physical evaluation is needed seriously to reach to the conclusion regarding their efficiency of working and actual accomplishment of targets. Therefore, spot inspections of their performance in regard to physical achievements on the ground as well as justification of the expenditure for the purpose is essential.

In practice, the opportunities means for the scheduled castes get more than often misused for their interests (community as a whole), as the needy and deserving people of the scheduled castes are deprived of the advantages and consequently they continue to lag behind for ever. As a result, the gulf between the rich and the poor becomes wider. The poor become poorer and the reach Harijans richer. Thus the fundamental purpose for which the policy was laid down got defeated. A large proportion of the benefits are eaten away by the shark among the scheduled castes.

Now it is thought that the policy needs serious consideration for immediate revision in the light of experience gained during last four decades. It is also felt that reservation as such is not the proper
remedy but ameliorate their condition in the present constitutional set-up. Facilities and concessions make them idle and retard their initiative for hard labour and so they go further back than where they stand. The time has changed, it is not conducive to national well-being to squander national resources on scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under the garb of improvement and development of these sections. The question of welfare of the nation and economic development of the country, primarily, engages attention not only for certain community but for all. The feeling of separation, communalism and regionalism has increased among scheduled castes inspite of providing, liberal facilities and other concessions to these people in every state of life. Manifestation of this ever growing divisive mentality does not augur well for the health of the nation as a whole. It is the initial stage for drifting away and it contains deadly virus that may lead to disintegration. The pressing demand of the hour is to improve and to develop the weaker sections alongwith their other brethren.

Reservation of posts in the services, educational scholarship, policy to give concession in every sphere of government organisations, grants and subsidies for housing and agricultural purposes can neither prove helpful nor beneficial for the Harijans prosperity. This view point has also been supported by Sh. Jagjivan Ram stating that, "concessions are not to be considered life-long which would have to be given up at any time."

At the nationall level the debate is going on that, the cateories
of 'haves' and 'havenotes' are common to all communities. The criterion of backwardness should be devoted on the basis of actual economic condition. The people who are backward economically deserve special attention irrespective of any caste and tribe. This can be done by providing them gainful employment, by raising their income through specially laid down plans and projects. On the basis of experience gained by providing concessions and other facilities or reservations to all sections of the scheduled castes, it is visualised that the said policy has classified the Hindu society into two diametrically opposite camps and it may lead to disintegration of the compact social structure. It, further, multiplies the greed and hatred among different sections of the society. Classification of the society on the ground of caste and greed is absolutely undesirable and is direct negation of anthropological approach. To retain the mutual sweetness between the communities of the said society, backwardness should be categorised on economic basis or parameters. This viewpoint appears difficult to materialize but will prove useful for the betterment of the nation as a whole and to get rid of the narrow vision. This view also highlights that we cannot continue with parasitic tendencies.

In fact, narrow political ends should be eschewed and the entire issued should be viewed in a wider perspective. The time has once for a re-thinking on the issues of reservation and special privileges. Why members of a particular caste or castes alone be given favoured treatment when members of other castes are facing similar or more
severe poverty. Birth is accidental and wretched Brahmin too deserves as much pity as a wretched member of the schedule castes because both are what they are because of factors beyond their reach. Let it be clear to all policy-makers that uplifting a caste of society does not mean pushing down another caste to that level. It is said that caste Hindus have to alone for the since of their forefathers, if so the world of tomorrow will have to witness many more atonements. Such an irrational arguments shows nothing but the bankruptcy of thinking. The truth is that man is man and that all considerations of caste and creed are meaningless. The only rational base on which welfare programme can be launched is the basis of comparative poverty. If the number of the poor among caste Hindus is almost as much as among the Harijans there is no reason why the poor among the caste Hindus should not get special privileges.

But the conditions of majority of scheduled castes people still remain of under privileged and deprived. Thereby the safeguards for these sections continue as the political system of governance continues to be a welfare state. On the contrary the reservation for 'Other Backward Classes' have also been clearly earmarked. Special components for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in the plans continue as they have still been considered necessary by the governing elites. The experiences of success of there sections have been noted on the educational, social and political parameters but these remain still exceptional, examplary only. Thus the rationale for continuity of provisions have been justified.
2.2 Evolution of Panchayati Raj

Ancient and Medieval Period:

During Ancient period about which some information is available in Rigvedas (1200 B.C.) and a few later sources self-government functioned in self-sufficient village spread in several kingdoms and principalities in the Indian sub-continent. The self-government set up comprised a village assembly and in course of time its standing committee, the Panchayat. The village elders belonging to various households constituted the assembly and some among them chosen by consensus comprised the panchavat. This village government took decisions and actions based upon religious precepts and customs and traditional conventions with respect to various matters. Village defence and law and order, maintenance and utilization of commercial assets and certain amenities, inter-personal or inter-household disputes and allied matters. It was also responsible for collection of tax or financial levy and payment to the central government of the kingdom or principality and also performance of any duty assigned sometime by the latter. This general pattern of self-government underwent adaptation over different places and times. However, the basic functional and administrative autonomy continued to be its distinctive characteristic.

Beside the village self-government set-up there were caste panchayat which promoted and regulated social life and activity among people belonging to particular caste; castesm and feudalistic tendencies also began to have distorting influence upon village self-
government at certain places in course of time, particularly in the following medieval period.

During the medieval period of Muslim and especially of Mughal rule in India a feudalistic system of government began to function in various parts of the country. Under in the central governments began to have major responsibility for maintenance of law and order, local defence, higher judicial functions and tax administration. A new class of feudal chiefs and revenue collectors (Zamindars) emerged between the rulers and the village people. The tendency to cause erosion in self-government in villages. Its stagnation and decline began to take place with the decline and end of Mughal rule during the course of eighteenth century.

**British Period:**

After seizing an administrative foothold in Bengal during 1765 as the result of victory over combined forces of the Mughal Emperor and Nawab of Bengal, the East India Company started on territorial conquest in various parts of India. By about the mid-forties of the next century it had become the ruling power all over the country. A highly centralized bureaucratic system of administration was built up in the country. The descendant traditional panchayats along with several other native institutions began to fade out in the context of political administrative changes in the country. New institutions began to be set up. One of these was municipal bodies.

In 1858 the East India ceased to be the ruling power in India.
The British government took its place formally.

The government of Governor General may pass a resolution and mentioned a need for developing local-self government, particularly municipal institution. This resolution also mentioned a provision to gradual formation of statutory rural board with official and nominated member to perform certain civic function.

Twelve year later a liberal minded Governor General Lord Ripon in council passed another resolution. It declared the primary aim of local-self government set up as political education of people. For rural areas the resolution recommended that district and sub-district boards with two-third elected members and non-official chairpersons should be set up to perform basic civic functions. Control of government over these bodies should be from outside rather than in side.

The provinces were asked to implement the resolution in context of prevailing conditions there. Fresh laws were passed in provinces in terms of this resolution. However, there were variations in their contents as in same provinces official chairman and majority of non-elected members continued. Election to sub-district board membership was on the basis of very narrow franchises and to district boards on an indirect basis. Government control over the board was quite strong and comprehensive. Franchises and power of boards were very limited. However, the revoution does constitute a landmark in the history of rural self-government in the country. Madras and Bombay provinces had actively functioning boards.
In 1907 Royal Commission inquired into to structure and working of local self government. As regarded rural local-self government in particular, it recommended revemping of sub-district and district boards and also setting up of a network of village panchayats with informally elected members and with village headman as its chairperson. The panchayat was to be empowered not only to provide elementary civic service but also to perform minor judicial function. The commission thus recommended a three-tier rural bodies system by addition of village panchayat to the sub-district and district board already in existence in most of the rural areas in provinces.

So, British government was interested in panchayati raj, but these panchayati raj bodies or so-called rural local-self government not actively and appropriately performed their duties. Leaders used to these bodies in their own interests. Village elite domination captured to these bodies and depressed class remain depressed from political participation in rural politics.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, thus opposed to panchayati raj, because of upper caste person will captured to panchayat leadership and exploitation of lower caste persons will increase.

Post-independence period:

During the first decade in Independent India, Union Government adopt certain legislative and administrative measures with a view to expanding and developing rural local-self government. In this connection three main influence tended to make an impact upon policymakers. These were—
I. View point of Mahatma Gandhi:

A very significant influence over the and public leaders in regard to development of rural local self-government has been of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation. In his writings and statements he drew attention of the people and government to the urgent need of rebuilding the village as self-sufficient and self-reliant entities with the village panchayat playing the central role in encouraging and supporting productive and creative activities among the people. According to him “greater the power of the panchayat the better for the people” as true democracy “has to be worked from below by the people every village.”

II. Provision of Constitution:

The constitution of India promulgated in January 1950 for setting up a democratic and semi-federal political system, includes a provision of relating to the panchayats. Though the draft constitution did not include and mention about panchayats, some prominent members of the Constituent Assembly, unblued with Gandhian philosophy regarding self-governing village, succeeded in getting it included in the final draft. The Artical 40 in the chapter, on Directive Principles of State Policy states that “The state should take steps to organise village panchayat and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.” This constitutional directive has tended to motivate the Union Government and State Governments, to think about adoption of measures for
development of the panchayats in the country. During first decade in independent India fresh laws were passed in many states to democratise the structure, develop more powers and expand the spatial coverage of the panchayat.

III. Five year Plans:

The era of planned development started in the decade of fifties with launching of the First Five Year Plan in 1951-52. Since them Development Plans have been growing in domination/scop/diversity and complexity. This includes also strengthening of local-self government to play a role in local developmental processes. People’s participation through representative local bodies is envisaged to energise these processes and also make these more relevant and responsive to people’s needs and expectations.

So, these influences make a strong plan for organizing local-self governing bodies at the village level. Various state governments followed the directive of union constitution and build network of local-self governments in rural areas, by local persons take participation in their development.

Community Development Programme (1952):

As a part of planned development initiated in the country, the first national rural development programme, named Community Development Programme (CDP), was launched by the State Governments at some places in 1952 and later began to be extended to many parts of the country in a phased manner.
The basic premise on which CDP rests is to motivate the rural people to undertake self-reliant community based approach to improvement of economic and social conditions of their life and environment. The Government is to provide general guidance and technical-cum-financial assistance for reinforcing the community promoted programmes of activities, as need be. A few years later a development programme with limited scope and funding named as National Extension Service (NES) was introduced as a prelude to the launching of (CDP) in the remaining rural areas of the country.

At the village level panchayats began to be given responsibility for motivating rural people for community-based developmental activities and also for implementation of minor developmental schemes under these programmes.


**Mehta Team Recomendation:**

The Community Development Programme began to get increasingly bureaucratised and elite dominated and excessively politicised. Corruption, malpractices, favouritism and wastages of funds began mar its efficacy and its public image.

So, the National Development Council appointed a committee on Plan Projects to look into this problem. This committee appointed a study Team in 1956 under the chairmanship of a senior legislator, Balwant Rai Mehta, to review critically community Development Project and National Extension Service and suggest for effecting economy
and improving efficiency in their implementation.

The team was also asked to examine: "the extent to which Community Development Movement has succeeded in utilising local initiatives and in creating institutions to ensure community in the process of improving economic and social conditions in rural areas."

The Planning Commission had already been advocating that village panchayats should be strengthened and linked with democratic organizations at higher levels and that this new democratic set-up should gradually be given responsibility for taking over development, administration and even some aspects of general administration within a district.

The team found that "one of the least successful attempts of the Community Development and National Extension Service work is its attempt to evoke popular initiative."

The Mehta team suggested that:

(a) the concept of democratic decentralization should form basis for planning and implementation of the Community Development Programme.

(b) National Extension Service should be merged.

(c) A three-tier rural local bodies should be organised at the Village level, Block level and District level, i.e. called village panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. The new three-tiered rural local bodies system was named as Panchayati Raj on the suggestion of the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.
(d) Composition of the Panchayati Raj bodies should be suitably representative of all sections of the society, by and large. For getting optimum results from the Panchayati Raj its three bodies should be in operation simultaneously. District collector/Deputy commissioner being the chairman of Zila Parishad.

In 1958, the standing committee of the National Council agreed broadly with recommendation of the Team. It however recognised that since conditions varied in different parts of the country, the State Government concerned should be free to decide about the exact application of the concept of Democratic Decentralisation and its institutional set-up.

**Growth of Panchayti Raj (1959-60-1964-65):**

Since the end of 1959 a network of Panchayati Raj Institutions began to be built by most of the State Governments guided and supported by the Union Government as well as motivated by the Planning commission. The three-tiered Panchayati Raj system with powers largely devolved upon the **Panchayat Samiti** (the intermediate level body) with some adjustment become popular, by and large, with many State Governments.

Most of the states did not accept the Mehta Team recommendation about Deputy commissioner/District Collector being the chairman of Zila Parishad. By 1964-65 the Panchayati Raj began to function in rural areas of 12 out of 15 states mainly in India. Hardly any headway was made in then existing Union territories, except in one (Himachal Pradesh).
Thus till mid-sixties three-tiered panchayati raj system became matured in all over India except one state and 6 Union Territories.

**All India Panchayat Parishad:**

In 1958, All India Panchayat Parishad was set-up as a non-official and non-party organization by Balwant Rai Mehta and others. It began to establish state level Panchayat Parishad as well. The Parishad has provided a forum to members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions to meet together for discussions of issues of common interest and exchange of their experiences. It has also sponsored non-official research studies in regard to organization and working of Panchayati Raj. It has organised a number of seminars to focus attention on problems and achievements to Panchayati Raj and the need to improve the working of the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions.

However, it began to be realised by the Government and the Panchayati Raj leadership that certain internal factors and environmental factors were constraining qualitative standards and tempo of the Panchayati Raj in the lagally in egalitarian and semi-traditional rural society. Cooperation between Panchayati Raj Institutions, District Administration, Municipal Institution, Cooperative and Voluntary Agencies concerned with local development processes, was not yet appropriately strong. In short, the results achieved during the period of five years were on the whole modest in most of the states and poor in other states. Only in few states, as Gujarat, Maharashtra, these were very satisfactory.
Stagnation and Decline Period of Panchayati Raj (1965-85):

During the next two decades, Panchayati Raj began to stagnate in the first few years (1965-70) and then started declining in efficacy of its role for promotion and management of development processes in the rural areas in various states except a few. This trend continued till 1985. Its public image and credibility began to suffer a set back. Its powers and functions were reduced by executive orders of State Governments on ground of inefficiency, corruption, political factionalism prevailing within it in many states.

During this period, neither in the sectoral development programmes nor in the new special anti-poverty programmes the Panchayati Raj Institutions were given any substantial participation. Very many state Governments began to postpone elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions and some even dissolved or superseded a large number of these Institutions.

Another factor for this decline was growing resentment among common people against rural elite domination of Panchayati Raj, by and large, benefits accruing from its working. As political awareness began to grow among these people, an account of democratic processes at work over the years, they began to perceive this domination and touted to be apathetic towards these Institutions. Thus Panchayati Raj was getting alienated from majority of rural people in many states. Even in Maharashtra and Gujrat in which Panchayati Raj had built a good image and credibility, it started losing ground to some extent.
Ashok Mehta Committee Report (1977-78):

A committee headed by an eminent leader was appointed by Janta Party led Union Government in 1977 to inquire into working of Panchayati Raj Institutions and suggest measures to strengthen them, "so as to enable a decentralised system of planning and development to be effective."

The committee submitted its report next year. It mentioned that Panchayati Raj had been weakened due to adverse factors. Its structure was inadequate and Government support meagre to enable it to perform developmental role effectively in a changing socio-economic environment. In Maharashtra and Gujrat however Panchayati Raj Institutions were found to be performing their role well on account of structural adequacy and appropriate State Government support. Elsewhere, political factionalism, oligarchic domination, corruption, inefficiency, parochial legalities, power misuse and governmental indifferences and administrative apathy had weaken its performance efficacy and ethics and public credibility.

The committee made recommendations for reform and revitalisation of Panchayati Raj based upon the main premise of "linking institutions of democratic decentralization with socially motivated economic development." The Panchayat Raj structure, power and functions and also its relationship with the Government as well as with various relevant local institutions should be reviewed periodically and revised to enable it to perform its role effectively in improving social and economic conditions. The committee's m...
Recommendations for the present were as follows:

(i) Panchayati Raj should be viewed as local government and general and effective devolution of powers to it should take place;

(ii) Primary unit in Panchayati Raj system should be Zila Parishad and not the Panchayat Samiti, as the Parishad had better leadership and resources (administrative and financial) to play a substantial development role;

(iii) The Mandal Panchayat with appropriate powers and resources and covering a smaller area than development block and larger one than that of village Panchayat, should replace the Panchayat Samiti and the Panchayat as it would be more effective in management of civic services and development schemes;

(iv) Administrative using of Zila Parishad in particular and also that of the Mandal Panchayat should be suitably staffed and appropriately headed by well qualified civil servants;

(v) Below the Mandal Panchayat there should be village committee, including substantially weak section of people, to perform function allocated to it by the Mandal Panchayat;

(vi) There should be direct election of members of the Zila Parishad and the Mandal Panchayat with provisions for reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population as well as reservation of two seats for women;

(vii) In order to provide appropriate coordination between rural development and urban development, municipal bodies should have representation in the Zila Parishad and the Mandal Panchayat;
(viii) In order to provide appropriate coordination between rural development and urban development, municipal bodies should have representation in the Zila Parishad and the Mandal Panchayat;

(ix) Political parties should be free to take part in the elections to Panchayati Raj and participation in its working would energise it and make its working cognise and coherent.

(x) For improving capabilities and rearing up attitudes of people's representatives and of bureaucracy within Panchayati Raj a massive programme of education and training should be set up in place of existing limited one.

Though the recommendations of the committee were not accepted by the Union Government due to change again of the ruling party within it, some of these did exercise varying influence upon the Panchayati Raj in a few states. For instance, some years later (1983-85) Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh remodelled their respective Panchayati Raj system under these influence.

In West Bengal too after 1978 its viewpoint about participation of political parties in the Panchayati Raj was followed by the State Government.

Panchayati Raj Status, 1991-92:

Panchayati Raj system was statutorily provided fully or partially in 4 out of 25 states and in 6 out of 7 union territories. In three states and one union Territory there are traditional tribal councils.
Only in 15 states and in one U.P., it was a three-tiered system. Two-tiered Panchayat system existed in states like Kerala, Haryana, Manipur and Sikkim. In the states of Goa, Jammu and Kashmir and in Tripura there was only village Panchayat in existence.

There were 217,300 village Panchayats in all these 21 states and five union Territories, covering about 95 to 96 percent of rural population in about 575 hundred thousand villages. The Panchayat Samitis or intermediate level Panchayats functioned in seventeen states and numbered 4256. The Zia Parishads were provided statutorily in fourteen states and one Union Territory.

Composition and average population coverage of the Panchayats varied across the states. There was an increase in reservation of Panchayat membership for the socially weak/section of people (Women, SC and STs) in very many states. In some states there was also reservation for other background classes (O.B.Cs) as well.

The Panchayat system did not exist in tribal majority states of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland and also in certain tribal and scheduled are in other states. Tribal councils functioned in these states.

The Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 on the Panchayats:

The constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, was passed for the purpose of providing constitutional status to Panchayats, by the
Parliament of India in December 1992 and has come into force since April 1993. For the first time a national framework for the Panchayat system has been stipulated in the Indian Constitution.

The act enshrines in the new part IX of the Indian constitution certain basic feature of the Panchayat system "to immortify, certainly, continuity and strength to them." A list of specified subject matters for which the panchayats may be empowered forms the new Eleventh Schedule of the constitution. The main provisions of the act are summarised here:

(i) The Gram Sabha (Village Assembly) shall be set up in every state, comprising persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to the village lying within the area of the village panchayat. It shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as the state legislature legally provides.

(ii) A three-tier panchayat system shall be constituted in every state. It shall comprise panchayats at the village, intermediate and district levels; however a state with population not exceeding twenty laks may not have the intermediate level panchayat.

(iii) Membership seats in the panchayats at all levels shall be filled by direct election from territorial constituency.

(iv) The state legislative may provide for representation of chairperson of village panchayat in membership of the intermediate panchayat and of chairperson of intermediate panchayat in membership of district level panchayat.

(v) The state legislative may provide for inclusion of membership of
parliament (MPs) and members of state legislature (MLAs/MLCs) in the membership of the intermediate and district level panchayats.

(vi) In all panchayats directly elected membership seats shall be reserved for: (i) Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in proportion to their respective population in total population in a panchayat area; one-third of these reserved membership shall be for SC and ST women; (ii) Women not less than one-third of such seats, including the seats reserved for SC and ST women.

(vii) Office of chairperson of panchayats at all level shall be reserved for SCs and STs in proportion to their respective population in a state; not less than one-third of the chairperson office shall be reserved for women.

(viii) The state legislative may provide for reservation of membership seat and chairperson offices in the panchayats for backward class citizens.

(ix) The normal term of every panchayat shall be five years; if dissolved earlier, fresh election shall be complete within six months of the expiry date of dissolution.

(x) A person disqualified under any law for election to the legislature of state or under any law of the state shall be disqualified for being chosen as a member of panchayat.

(xi) A state election commission shall be appointed by the state governor and shall be vested with authority for supervising,
directly and controlling preparation of electoral roles and conduct of all elections.

(xii) The state legislature may legally endow the panchayats with such powers an authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government; legal devolution of powers and responsibilities upon panchayats at the appropriate level by the legislature may enable panchayats to prepare plans for economic development and social justice as well as implement schemes concerning these plans as entrusted to them, including matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule.

(xiii) The state legislature may authorise a panchayat to levy and collect taxes, duties, tolls and fees as well as may assign to a panchayat taxes, duties, tolls and fees devies by the state government and also provide for grants-in-aid from the state government to the panchayat.

(xiv) The state governor shall appoint a finance commission within one year of the commencement of the constitution seventy-third Amendment Act and then after every five years to review financial position of the panchayats and make recommendation for its improvement and for principles which would grow, distribution between the state and the panchayat taxes, etc. levies by the state and for grants-in-aid to the panchayats and determination of taxes, etc. which the panchayats be authorised to levy and collect.

The Amendment Act applies to All Union Territories (UTs). The
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The population covered by the different levels of panchayats varies within a state and more so across the states. An average population covered by the Gram Panchayat is between 700 to 21601. Average population covered by Panchayat Samiti is 2800 to 2.9 million.

Composition of Panchayats:

A candidate to be elected is to be of minimum age of 21 years. He should not have been disqualified under law. A few states have imposed also a condition that he should not have more than two children: A.P. Haryana, Rajasthan.

Direct election of Panchayat members is obligatory, constitutional discretion has been used in most of the states to include ex-offices and indirectly elected members.

As regards chairperson while 73rd Amendment Act has allowed discretion for choosing the alternative of direct or indirect election in the Gram Panchayat, it has stipulated their indirect election only in the Panchayat Samiti and the Zila Panchayat.

Reservation for Scheduled Castes:

For the these castes of people reservation quotas in states and Union Territories are in proportion to respective population in total population of Panchayat area in case of directly elected membership and in proportion to their population to total population of state or U.T. in case of Chairman office. One-third of the seats reserved for them is meant for women. Since the population of SCs varies across the states, the minimum quota for these classes of people differs.
2.3 Panchayati Raj in Uttar Pradesh:

Panchayati Raj System:

U.P. Panchayati Raj Act 1947 was signed by Governor General on 7th December 1947 and Panchayat established from 15 August 1947. In the constitution of the independent India suitable provisions were made for Panchayati Raj in the article 40. For the first time 35000 panchayats representing 5.40 crores people started functioning in U.P. on August 15, 1949 and about 8000 Panchayat Adalats were formed which were later (1955) known as Nyaya Panchayats.

The year 1960-61 was a prominent year for the progress of Panchayats. In this year as per directive of the government of India, the U.P. Kshetra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act, 1961 was enforced and Gaon Sabhas, Kshetra Samitis and Zila Parishad were tied as single unit. Election procedure of election of the chief of Gram Sabha and Nyaya Panchayats was changed a secret voting method was decided for the Pradhan. According to the 73rd amendment Act 1992 of the Indian constitution, U.P. Panchayat Law (Amendment) Bill 1994 was passed. According to the constitutional amendment three tier panchayats i.e. Gram Panchayat, Kshetra Panchayats and Zila Panchayats were accorded statutory status.

Structure of Panchayati Raj System in the State:

According to the three tiers Panchayati Raj System, Panchayats are constituted at the district level, block level and village level. At the village level three types of institutions are presented namely -
Gaon Sabha, Gram Panchayat, Nyaya Panchayat.

Gaon Sabha:

According to Panchayati Raj Act, Article-3 for each of the village or village community (which minimum population is 250) a Gaon Sabha should be established. All the adults and permanent inhabitants are members of the particular Gaon Sabha.

Gram Panchayat:

According to Article-12 of Panchayati Raj Act, there is a working committee in each of the village which is called Gram Panchayat. In each of the village except Pradhan and Up-pradhan 7 to 15 members elects on the basis of population. According to Article 11 Pradhan and Up-pradhan of a Gram Panchayat are elect by secret balloting and they are also be the president and vice-president of Gaon Sabha.

In U.P. there is a provision of reservation of seats of pradhan and members of the panchayats for SC/ST and OBC and Women’s which is determined on the basis of population of caste in the area.

According to the Article-14, the pradhan and up-pradhan can be detached by no-confidence motion passed by two third majority of members, of Gram Panchayat.

According to Article-38, organise the meeting of panchayat members is necessary once in a month.

Function of the Panchayats:

According to Article-15, 16 function of panchayats are as follows:
• Making roads, maintenance, lighting, registration of death birth and marriage, assistance in agricultural development, village level punishment and justice, market, plantation, library and reading rooms and other developments and defense related works.

• In the act there is a provision of constitute three types of committee on the village level.
  (a) According to Article-26, land organising committee.
  (b) According to Article-29, panchayat can be constitute a committee for their other planned works.
  (c) According to Article-30, a committee can be constitute for any major work of one or more villages.

Taxation:

There is a right for taxation to panchayat in Article-34, of Panchayati Raj Act.

Nyaya Panchayat:

According to Article 42 of Panchayat Raj Act, Nyaya Panchayats are organised in various parts of the state, which includes five to fifteen villages. Nyaya Panchayats solved local distress and some other matters. But since last some time these bodies are not functioning properly and now government has made an effort to reconstruct these bodies with some more power.

Kshetra Panchayat:

This is the midpole of three tier Panchayati Raj System. A development block includes 10 or more Nyaya Panchayats. Each block
have a Chair person of Kshetra Samiti which is called Pramukh and 2 Deputy Chairperson called Up-pramukh. All the members of Block Development Committee (B.D.C.) elect to pramukh and up-pramukh by the secret ballotting. Pramukh and Up-pramukh can be detected by no confidence motion, passed by two third majority of B.D.C. members. According to U.P. Kshetra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act 1961, Article 87 (1) each of kshetra Samiti includes following committees.

(a) Working Committee
(b) Production Committee
(c) Welfare Committee

Functions of Block Development Committee:

Each of the Block Development Committee have following function to perform:

Work for agricultural development, assistance in cooperative movement, canals for irrigation, cooperate to the veterinary hospital, progress in cottage industry, arrangement of drinking water, plans for Scheduled Caste's development, roads, bridges, building constructions planning.

Block Development Committee have not the right of taxation in any form. The budget of Development Block is the budget of Kshetra Samiti. The main source of income of the Kshetra Samiti is the aid received from government.

Zila Parishad:

According to U.P. Kshetra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act-1961,
Article-17, in every district of the state a District Board is established and that whole rural area which is under the kshetra samiti is the working area of the district board. Article-17, of the act provides the provisions of election of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the District Board. The election of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson will be on the basis of secret balloting, by the members of Zila Parishad.

**Works:**

Major works of the District Board are following:

1. Control on Markets and fairs.
2. Family Planning Programmes.
3. Arrangements of post-primary and higher education.
4. Development of means of communication, construction of roads, bridges etc.
5. Plantation on the sides of roads.
6. Drafting of districts planning.
7. Equal distributions of aids given by government and all India or state boards and commissions.
8. Make a plan for district.
9. Work of sale and licensing to Board’s Ghats.
10. Auction of bones and leather of dead animals.

**Taxation:**

(a) License Tax
(b) Tax on markets and shops
(c) Auction of boat Ghats
(d) Taxation on Kazi Haush
(e) Tax on exhibition and cinema.

There are five types of sub committee of Zila Parishad:

(a) Working Committee
(b) Finance Committee
(c) Educational Committee
(d) Public Work Committee
(e) Public Health Committee.

As per the U.P. panchayat law amendment Act-1994 a total number of 52125 Gram Sabhas in plain districts and 6495 in Uttara Khand - 58620 in all have been reconstituted. As per seventy third constitution amended to ensure participation of all the sections of society, 12458 posts of village chiefs are reserved for SC/ST, 15827 for backward classes and 19345 for women of all sections.

Program and Achievements:

(1) Rural Sanitation Program:

Central Rural Sanitation Program is under implementation in the state since 1990-91 to improve rural environment and maintain the dignity of women. The important features of this program are as follows:

- Toilets costing Rs. 2500 including roof and door are constructed for the families consisting below the poverty line. The families belonging to the general category are given a grant of Rs. 2250
and those belonging to the Scheduled Castes/Tribes Rs. 2375. Remaining portion of the cost is borne by the beneficiaries themselves.

- The villages are selected by Kshetra Panchayats.
- The Gram Sabha have been made responsible for the selection of beneficiaries in the village selected by Kshetra Panchayats.
- Wide publicity of the programme is made in the selected villages, prior to selection of beneficiaries.
- So far 8,90,000 individual toilets, 465 community toilets and 4250 women complexes have been constructed in the state.

**Women Toilets Complexes:**

- 35 percent cost of women toilets is born by central Government, 35 percent by the state government and 30 percent by the concerning Gram Panchayats or beneficiary himself.
- During the year 1996-97 as many as 745 women toilet complexes were constructed in the selected Ambedkar villages.

**Rural Sanitation Centers:**

Rural Sanitation Service Centre is a sale depot to selling sanitary items at reasonable rates. The centers are set up with the help of UNICEF. At present 68 rural sanitation centers are functioning in the state.

**Kharanja/Drain Construction in Ambedkar Villages:**

- Brick-paved roads and drain are constructed in Ambedkar villages by the Panchayati Raj department. Under the scheme a maximum
amount of Rs. 60,000 is made available for construction of 500 meter long brick paved road and drain to the Gram Sabha. Of this amount Rs. 54000 is given in the shape of the government grant.

- Rs. 6000 is borne by the concerning Gram Sabha. During the year brick paved roads and drain were constructed in 3990 Ambedkar Villages.

**Construction of Panchayat Bhavan:**

- The scheme of constructing Panchayat Bhavans is being implemented by the Panchayati Raj Department through Gram Panchayats. Under the scheme a panchayat bhavan is constructed at a costs of Rs. 80,000 out of which Rs. 45,000 is made available by Panchayati Raj Department by way of grant, Rs. 27,000 is given by the concerning Gram Sabha under the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana and Rs. 8,000 is cash or in shape of labour by the Gram Sabha itself.

- During the year (1996), 2047 Panchayat Bhavan were constructed. Of them, 1474 were constructed in Ambedkar Village 67 in Gandhi Grams and 526 in other villages.

**Gram Panchayat Industries:**

The scheme is under implementations with the view to improving the economy of the gram panchayat and equip them with additional income generating sources. This scheme was started in 1961 with the setting up of Chinhat Panchayat Industry in Lucknow. At present
914 panchayat industries are functioning in the state. Besides, 50 printing presses are also run by these industries.

These industries manufacture chair, tables, almohad, bookcases, towel stand, planqes, desks, cots, chakla-bells, window frames, cotlegs, sofa-sets, boats, bullock-carts, newar of well, body of dunlop-carts, toilet seats, hum-pipes, Hand-pumps, wash-basins, cement blocks, axes and other form implements, bucklets, power-threshers, grain-biles, water-tanks, tubs etc. They also manufacture blankets, thulmas, bags, durrels, tat-patties, packing sets, flour-mill, baskets, herbal items, mats, slates, woolen sweaters, oils-crushers, shoes, buggis, soap, file-covers, wooden toys, furnishing item for basic schools, handloom clothes, etc.
2.4 Studies on Leadership

India have been completed a half of century of democracy. Good leadership is a pre-requisite of a democratic state's development, development in the sense of social, economic and political processes. When leadership become a key of social development, then some questions arise in the minds of some social scientists, that 'who are the decision makers?' 'What are the processes and influencing factors in recruitment of these decision makers?', and 'how these decision makers are performing for the development?' These question, in a democratic state, become more pertinent, in the context of lower section of society as scheduled castes in India.

Above questions have also been raised in the context of various countries, the developed and the developing, to bring out the social composition of the decision making, their requirements and their role performance or functions of leadership. A brief and illustrative review of a few studies illustrates how the political elites in democratic countries at the national level were related to the social background of the decision makers. For example United States is one of the oldest democratic nation in the world. There were several studies dealing with the political elite at different levels. C. Wright Mills (1959) did a most illuminative work in this field. He studied the powerful persons of America and findout that the power elites include persons who had access to the posts of major institutions. He argued that in all societies power elite exists but its form and social visibility would be in different from nation to nation for historical reasons. The analysis of
American power elite included their social origins, psychological affinities and the actual decisions of political directorate. The study in this sense provides a framework for the study of decision makers at any level in the democratic structures.

R. Mathews (1972) conducted a study of senators in America and found that father's occupation, race and ethnic origins, religion, family reputation, education and occupation and compared to the figures of total American population. At the national level he found, there were no non-white Senator. Many of them were from families of the substantial local reputation, based on political prominence. This study also indicates the relevance of the social background of decision makers in one of the oldest democratic country of the world. Such studies have also been conducted in other countries like France, Germany, South Wales. Such studies follow two types of models of analysis- 'static' and 'dynamic'. The static study includes recruitment pattern at a particular period of time, while dynamic model deals with the change in the social origins of political elites over two clearly defined time period and they attempted to see how the socio-economic changes in the society reflected in the changing patterns of recruitment of the decision makers. It was found in such studies that all legislatures-members were recruited from restricted sections of the population. A high positive co-relation was observed between socio-economic status and political status. Individuals belonging to privileged groups could manage to enter into the key privileged groups and manage to enter into the key positions of power structures
more easily. The lower sections of population only meagerly represented among the legislatures.

If such was the position observed in America and Europe which are developed countries, in India the inequality pattern for lower sections was justified by traditions through centuries. The modern democracy since independence in several ways apparently provide opportunities to the lower sections to get represented in the political structure. In developing societies the importance of decision makers has been already recognised.

T.B. Bottomore (1964) viewed that "we have an excellent opportunity to examine the social forces which are creating the new elites as well as the activities of the elites themselves, in the attempt of transformation of their societies into modern, economically advanced nations." In this way he outlines the emergence of the new elites, the social forces and processes which are creating them and the activities of the elites in transformation of society.

Thus the above framework for studying elites in general and for the developing societies in particular, provides the context and indicates a necessity for the study of emerging elites in the decision making processes in a developing country like India.

The system is a major characteristic of Indian society, a few authors have tried to understand and explain the relationship of castes and politics. The arena of the functioning of leaders are made and some specific studies of different levels of leaders are briefly reviewed.
Oscar Lewis (1954) and Dhillon (1955) brought to light the varied roles of kin and castes in the decision making in rural India. These studies on the power structure in rural India inspired a number of other scholars to take up the study of rural leadership in different parts of India.

Adrian C. Mayer (1963) found it to be true that caste ties helped lead to gain power in rural committee system.

Yogendra Singh (1963) sought departure from the earlier pattern of leadership status and conducted a study in six villages of Eastern U.P. He found that upper in villages and increased competition for power has been emerging from the section of lower castes and class group on organized basis.

Iqbal Narayan (1964) evaluated the impact of election on local leadership in two phases and concludes that new leaders use caste, kinship and clear grouping higher social status and family pre-eminence as bases of leadership.

Vijay Kumar (1967), shown in his study of four villages of Western U.P. that rural community power get transferred from 'Dominant caste' to 'handles castes', such as scheduled caste.

Ajit K. Danda (1993), found in his study that, so far as panchayat representation is concerned, the higher groups, namely the Brahmans, the Chattre and yadav are very much conscious. Scheduled caste members (through represent the panchayat, have little role to play in decision making.
T. K. Oommen (1970) studied power structure in four villages of Rajasthan and concluded that the castes who are numerically superior as well as economically dominant are politically the most powerful.

K. L. Sharma (1973) found that Jagirdars have downward mobility in village politics but not in economic position and there is no relation between economy and political power.

Rangnath (1974) study the changing pattern of rural leadership in 50 villages of U.P. He found that the traditional determinants of leadership have not totally jettisoned like high caste are still powerful, but he reveals that education status has gradually come to occupy prominent role in the selection of leadership.

Rajani Kothari (1980) in well known volume, provide a gist of the changing relationship between caste and politics in India. The relationship between caste and politics is basically a relationship understood for the purpose of organising public activity. The caste system provides the basis for integration and the consciousness. Of course mobility has occurred gradually in strata of castes. In some regions Brahmin section first responded to the English education and as the first to benefit from political and administrative power. In some other regions where the Brahmins were never so dominant, as in Punjab and Harayana and U.P. certain agricultural upper castes wielded social power. In still other regions, few religion and sects (such as Jains and Vaishnavas in Gujrat and Mawar), made for a different model of sequence in regard to accession to political power.
The second aspect is the integration aspect. The caste system determines the individual's social status on the basis of the group in which he is born, differentiates and assigns occupational and economic roles. It thus gives a place to every individual from the highest to the lowest and makes for a higher degree of identification and integration.

The third aspect is consciousness that arose in the context of modernisation. The actual process of interaction between caste and modernisation was because of power structure entailed from the caste system, the distribution of economic benefits and caste consciousness and perceptions. All these were traditional components of the caste system that got down into the new process of change. In the beginning of the process the leadership and access to government patronage came from a limited group of individuals who were educated and traditionally endowed with pedagogic and sophisticated socialization. This group was from certain higher castes with militant caste consciousness and with common social and intellectual endowment. This created consciousness among members of other higher castes in the form of another political group. This resulted in entrenched caste. The polarisation was avoided either where the one entrenched caste was greatly separated in social power and ritual status from all others or where the different higher castes were entrenched at different power points, either regional or institutional, thus involving them in a legitimised coalitional pattern.
The arose stage of caste fragmentation for power strivings and demands for benefits where the competition among groups had to develop for more numerous bases of support. Leadership cleavages were created, political attitudes began to condition symbols of solidarity and consensus. Co-operation came from other castes. The power structure of the caste system now became more complete and entered into a more sophisticated network of relationships, involving such other bases of support as economic patronage, bond groups, and new organisation and caste federations. The upper tiers of the rival chains simply got recruited in politics. Associations and caste federations were not needed much in that group. The process was limited to well-to-do, educated and generally upper castes. The lower castes were still found to be in a dependent relationship with the entrenched and dominant castes. Some new entrants came forward to taste the power from entranch and dominant castes. The dominant and entrenched castes leaders started cooperating each other to remain in power and never worried about the backward masses.

At every stage different type of leadership and organisation skills were engaged and consequently one social group endowed with one type of skills by another endowed with another type of skill. Whatever changes took place were all meant for higher castes (dominant/ascendents). The fragmentation was external as the power was never diverted to lower castes at any stage. Integration has been there purely for higher castes. Political benefits have always been
accrued to higher castes. The lower caste have never been mobilized or influenced by any change because of lower status in hierarchy and stratification.

There are several studies who dealt with changing pattern of leadership in India. Some of these are with special reference of scheduled castes. D.S. Cullen (1955) states that the chamars seem to raise their status by adopting some of the practices of Orthodox Brahmins. The Chamar caste Panchayat has become more active in collectively preserving their name. They constantly the status in this way. It gives an account of changing patterns of Chamars in their culture as a whole. But it does of specifically give any account of the emergence of elites leaders except in the form of caste panchayat taking up the role of leadership.

T.S. Epstein (1962) try to make relationship between economic change and social system. Economic change in the 'dry' village is followed by political change, but in the 'wet' village persistence of its political structure is observed. The provisions of reserved seats at the level of panchayat does not mean real power for them as they are still dependent on their peasant masters. They are not effective because of their dependency on their masters.

Harold Isaac (1965), noted that political changes in India have opened up new possibilities for the poorest communities. Although this may take time, there is no doubt that the scheduled castes ought to make substantial gains in prestige and power. This study takes
note of only gaining power and prestige by the scheduled castes in playing their roles for themselves but has ignored the main factor or caste role to become a cosmopolitan leader which keeps away the scheduled castes to become such a leader in Indian social hierarchy.

K.C. Alachender (1968) reported from Kerala that the changes which occurred among the Pulaiya Harijans of Kerala. They have attained higher status in society and indicate sharing of the positions in the local power structure. In Kerala state, people of the scheduled castes are better educated, changing to Christianity and are appearing for broader spectrum of ideology. Thus the study may appear to boost the image of scheduled castes of a very small part of India. But situations in other states are different and traditional, the study may not effect the leadership of scheduled castes in other parts.

Andre Beteille (1969) states that after independence the traditional leaders like mirasdars (Brahmins) have been replaced by Muslims and Christians (Non Brahmins) after getting modern education. The mirasdars are not in a position to distribute the money as in the past and they still maintain the social distance. While the new leadership does not hesitate to approach a large weaker section to help in changing power structure and shift in the caste behaviour. But there is change in power structures from the higher castes to middle castes.

T.R. Singh (1969) in his study of Madiga of Andhra Pradesh shows that scheduled castes are integrated through their menial
services into the rural economy. They are seeking to align themselves with higher castes. It is a study of social structure and change among the Madigas. But the participation of Madigas in power structure of emergence of leadership does not appear to be taking place. They appear to be comparatively free than what they were earlier and thereby the freedom of association may be got utilized in their own organisations and might pave the way for certain leadership.

Schchidananda (1967) found out that the scheduled caste elites of rural areas migrate to urban areas. An educated elite has emerged among the Harijans. It can provide a reference group for the rest of the community and can become an agent of further change among them. Unfortunately it is happening not so. The scheduled caste elites want to forget caste, low origin and everything connected with their caste. Their is a wide gap between them and rest of their own community. The Harijan elite is more closely knit with the caste Hindus than with the scheduled castes. These elites feel that if they mix with their castemen in rural areas for which they have lost their status in the eyes of the caste Hindus. They are more worried about securing an honourable place for themselves and their families in urban areas. Most of the scheduled caste M.L.As are not known to the rural masses of scheduled castes. Even the non-legislator are reported to have done very little for them. Only local level scheduled caste leaders are available who are without any hopes and aspiration. They are traditional minded and hence do not desire to have any change as it affects the existing social order. They are guided by the caste Hindus
to cast their votes. Caste panchayats are not effective. Majority of the chairmen are caste Hindus. In caste Hindu majority people, scheduled caste members are just dominated by the caste Hindus. Panchayats have neglected the requirements of the scheduled castes. The composite co-operative societies have failed to cater to the needs of the scheduled castes. These are dominated by caste-Hindus. Scheduled caste members cannot afford to pay members fee and share amount. Even the members are not benefited much because goods required by them are not available and credit facilities are not extended to them.

Stock's Eric (1970) concludes that the pre-independent leadership (during British days) was elitist in nature and behaviour. The elites had links with the British on the one hand and excite the tenants on the other hand against the British Government. The change in leadership resulted in the mutiny of 1857. Though the study has not relation with the scheduled caste leadership but indirectly there is message for their change from traditional [elitist] leadership to the democratic leadership.

Alfred D. Souza (1978) has observed that the processes have failed to develop any new leadership and hitherto its effects on the poor masses. To run the politics one must be of higher social status and of course wealthy one. The result of the post-independent leadership shows that the caste-factor has an upper-hand in decision making even in independent India.
G.M. Heredero (1978) reported that after the old trend a new leadership emerged among the scheduled castes with the domination of young groups and of course with association of old traditional leaders. The old leadership was controlling the entire socio-economic and political patterns and behaviour of their caste people. This was indirectly helping the higher castes. The new leadership which emerged after the training resulted in change in ideology of leadership to achieve their goals.

S.S. Sharma (1979) study the identification of leadership of new Panchayati Raj Institution in 66 villages of community development block Bisrakh in Bulandshahr district of U.P. He found in his study, that traditional power holders continue to capture power in the new set up. Although the lower sector society also show a tendency to wrest influential position. The basis of power seems to be the problem solving capacity of the leaders and his contacts with officials and politicians.

S.N. Mishra (1980) shown in his study of a village of Siwan district in Bihar that authorities are exploited by the elite for their own advantage. The widespread control on panchayats by the upper caste rich farmers has prevented panchayats from being agents of social changes through political participation. He found in his study that Chamars, Domes and other scheduled caste are politically unaware and they generally depend on the high castes for their political guidance.
Pundir (1980) find out in a western U.P. village that the village community consists of members of higher, middle and lower castes. is showing the tendency towards pluralism in sharing the power at local level in statutory panchayat and other voluntary organisations. The participation of scheduled castes is increasing in all these organisations. The leadership among the scheduled castes is emerging and could achieve the position of up-pradhan (vice president) of the village panchayat and secretary of the voluntary organisation.

The author has found that they do not have recognised leaders. Scheduled caste elites migrate to urban areas. Educated scheduled caste boys also migrate to the town and cities. As a result of this, the scheduled castes in the rural area do not have leaders. The scheduled castes participate in elections with a lot of enthusiasm. They understand the meaning and importance of political concepts, such as democracy, freedom, women in politics and so on. Caste Panchayats are not effective even in places where they exist. He has also found that barring one village which comes under the jurisdiction of sanitary board, all the remaining come under the group panchayat. Even in the villages where the scheduled castes have numerical domination both in terms of village population and number of panchayat members, the chairman comes from castes' Hindus. The scheduled caste member of panchayat were elected on the reserved quota seats. The scheduled caste members do attend all the meetings, but they are not effective in taking decisions.

Singh and S. Sundaram (1987) explain in his study, that the
scheduled caste people are gradually becoming more conscious about the situation. They do not want status they want prefer to bring about change in the existing structure and want to establish intimate relationship with those who belong to higher castes.

Chakrabarty and Bhattacharya (1993) found in their study that informal leaders mostly come from the families of the traditional leaders while the formal leadership positions are also shared by the numbers of these families of the traditional leaders along the others, who too most often come from the relatively well off in the villages. Poor of the villages are far from power. Decision making power is still in the hands of those who belonging to dominant lineage which have been dominating the village over the years.

M.N. Srinivas (1959, 1987) pointed out that the local leadership with a dominant caste undo the effect of government policies and help provided to the scheduled castes. The socio-economically dominant castes resist the ideology of using their wells, tanks, worship in the temples. They have the twin sanction of physical force and boycott at their disposal. The police and law courts may help the scheduled castes but there are many considerations which come in the way of asking for such a drastic step.

Another states that the Britishers totally helped the dominant castes and increased the discrimination on the group of caste. Thus the pre-independence and post-independence period have been the period of dominance of the dominant castes resulting in producing any change in leadership particularly for a shift for the scheduled castes.
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chances to come forward and to compete with the ruling elite classes. They are in a way eman
tated, though in a related perspective.

Shyam Lal (1995) has studied the social and religious movement among the Bhangis in Rajasthan in 20th century. In this latest study he analysed the changes which have started coming as a consequence of these reform movements. The Bhangis have changes their food habits, have sanskried their names, consistent with the effort to raise their status, emulating the specific religious forms of higher castes, model their domestic ceremonies upon the domestic ceremonies of higher castes. Still despite all such changes taking place, a viable leadership has not yet emerged among the Bhangis of Rajasthan.

Thus in the political process the rural leadership seems to have been energetic in discharging its roles and functions in accordance with the higher institutional behaviour. In the political system as it operates at the grass root level, the rural leadership appear to be active and effective. This amounts in copying the behaviour of the higher level leadership which in turn resulted in a sort vote changing device.

The above review of various studies conducted in various parts of India, determine the following major facts about power holding in rural India.

1. Poors are far from the power in villages because economic status and land ownership are main determinant of power
2. Higher castes play a key role in decision making in Panchayati Raj Institutions.
3. Education play an important role in Scheduled caste where as in case of upper caste it is not so important.
4. The strength of caste voters determines who will acquire the seat of chairperson of panchayat in a village.
5. Persons of deprived class are less aware that the upper caste people, about the politics.
6. After independence persons belongs to schedule cases are participating more or less in the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Thus it is clear that power holding have a direct relation with social structure, who will get power or not, it is decided by traditional social system. But constituions, interfere in traditional social system specially in Hindu and now determinants of power holding have changed. In the present study an effort would be made to identify changing situation in rural society, after the counter of constitution and traditional Hindu social system.