CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

Indian society is based on caste system and consequent social inequality, only the people from higher social status used to be involved in the process of administration, directly or indirectly.

Social inequalities existed in the villages and these have continued for centuries. Under these circumstances, soon after Independence the concept of social justice figured in the Indian constitution. Thus, the constitution of India made an attempt to provide equal social opportunities for the development of personality of all the people in the society, without any discrimination on the basis of caste, sex or race. ¹

However, social inequalities continued for a long time in the Indian society. The reasons may be several. The people from higher social strata had received education, and they controlled and managed land. They took up income - earning activities. On the contrary, the lower strata people were denied education, and they were deprived of their right to manage and control land. Thus, they were forced to take up low - income earning activities. Particularly in the villages the lower strata people took up supportive works for the people who had taken up agricultural activities, such as Carpentry, Blacksmith, Leather work, and labour. ²

Due to the above- mentioned reasons the marginalized became the weaker sections of the society. Therefore, after Independence, India was one among the countries which went in for social and economic transformation of
the rural population. As a preferred condition, rural development became a definite strategy for the improvement of the living conditions of the rural poor. In this direction the Government of India made efforts to solve problems such as poverty, ill health, illiteracy, and backwardness of varied nature prevailing in rural areas, by giving greater attention to the uplift of the rural poor.

Further, the marginalized sections, i.e., SC, ST, OBC have become an important component in defining of the development policies because of their socio-economic deprivation in the traditional society like India. The political involvement of the upper castes is still more in institutions like Assembly and Parliament. The reservation of seats was 15% in State Assemblies and Parliament. On the contrary there was no representation from the larger sections of the marginalized castes i.e., from the backwards. As a result of this, at present, political participation in India is limited to only a few upper castes. As they manage and control the political system, land pattern. The upper caste people did not mind in formulating and execution of welfare and developmental policies intended for the weaker sections. It can be seen in the failure of several programmes. Among these are community Development Programmes (CDP) and National Extension Programme (NEP). These programmes were implemented in tune with the upper caste people in the rural areas.

BALWANTROY MEHTA COMMITTEE REPORT:

In 1957, under the chairmanship of Balwantroy Mehta a study team was appointed. The purpose was to evaluate the functioning of CDP.
While reviewing the functions of CDP Balwantroy Mehta committee thought about panchayat raj system. Thus, the creation of panchayat raj system in India is purely by the intellectual contribution of Balwantory Mehta committee. The creation of panchayat raj system was begun in India on 2nd October 1959 in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Assam, and in some union territories. The basic purpose of creating the panchayat raj system is purely to meet the local problems and to implement the developmental programmes. Balwantory Mehta committee recommended three tier systems for panchayat raj. The committee gave the thrust on panchayat Samithi, which is to be established at block level. It is known as block level body. It is a statutory and executive body, comprehensive in its functions, equipped with necessary authority and in possession of adequate resources. The committee further felt that the panchayat Samithi must not be cramped by too much control by the government agencies. It is an important to note that the committee had given importance to panchayat samithi and neglected the other two systems of PRI’s. Among the other reasons the most important reason was that the committee wanted to implement rural developmental programmes very effectively and without interference from political parties and groups.

ASHOK MEHTA COMMITTEE:

An important committee which was appointed in 1977 by the new government at the center was Ashok Mehta committee. It was appointed to
enquire into the working of PRI’s and suggest measures to strengthen them to “enable a decentralized system of planning and development to be effective”.

The committee also suggested recommendations only with the intention of development in rural areas. It recommended reform and revitalization of panchayat raj based upon the central premises of “linking institutions of democratic decentralization with socially motivated economic development”.

Both the acts thought of attempting to bring about rural development either by three or two tier system of panchayat raj institutions. They could not achieve the specified motive to a larger extent, due to the ignorance of the people, non involvement of weaker sections, to whom the schemes are to be reached. The upper caste and dominant people of the villages intentionally diverted the schemes. Thus, the attempt of panchayat raj institutions in developing the weaker sections has remained limited only to the records.

In view of these, the constitutional amendment Act of 1992 was came into enforce in the year 1993 known as 73rd constitutional Amendment Act of 1993. As per the Act a due share has been provided to the social groups that is OBCs for their political participation and to take up plans and programmes for the welfare of these sections. The 73rd Amendment Act on the other side opted several opportunities only to the people with better agrarian resources among BCs. Thus, the developmental programmes are not reaching to the lower strata categories among BCs and still they remain backward.
ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEM

The lines of exploitation in pre-British India, in terms of the production, extraction and accumulation of surplus, were structured through the caste system. This identified a particular caste division of labour involving specific forms of hierarchy among the exploited, with at least three major groups identified in most villages: toiling peasant castes, most of whom were simply cultivators but with some village management powers held by a dominant lineage, artisans and service castes performing particular caste-duties within a jajmani system: a large caste of general labourers working for the village and its dominant sections and classes as 'untouchable'. Tribals and pastoralists outside the village were also among the exploited sections. The exploited as a whole included a very wide range of castes, the broad 'toiling caste majority'.

The toiling caste majorities also known as the backward classes, which is a general term applied to three different categories of people who have been identified, they are the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes, which together constitute about one third of the total population of India. Among three the other backward castes constitute, in terms of numerical strength and castes, more. The term other backward classes was widely used by the British administration come to mean 'other Backward castes' in administrative usage. It is used in the Constitution of India to designate backward classes other than the scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes. Article 15 (4) refers to them as 'socially and educationally
backward classes (SEBC) of citizens' and article 340 as 'socially and educationally backward classes'. Article 16 (4) mentions 'backward class of citizens' and article 46 refers to 'the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people'. No doubt, the constitutional recognition of the other backward classes as a category of public policy made it one of an all-India scope but by contrast it is a more nebulous category. The other backward classes were mentioned in the constitution in general terms. There were no all India lists drawn for the other backward classes. They were not separately enumerated in the Constitution, and in fact, one has to work with only a rough estimate of their population. Their position was sought to be defined in more specific terms by the backward classes commission.

The Other Backward Castes also termed as backward classes in the policy matter and bureaucratic circles is having theoretical limitation. In fact, in the Indian context all the forward castes and Dalits have got the class character due to their privileged and underprivileged social and economic position, therefore, they may be characterized as the upper class and lower class or exploiting class and exploited class. The backward castes also come under the exploited category by the upper caste but in a different form. The backward castes are collectively exploited and deprived all the privileges along with Dalits. But untouchability is not practiced in the case of backward castes. For practicing the traditional caste based occupations to provide goods and services to the rulers in particular and mass in general got the higher position than the Dalits and lower position than the upper castes and they are
highly heterogeneous and stratified with similar socio-economic backwardness and interdependence nature of all these occupational castes. The traditional occupation prevented them to come out of the social stranglehold resulting in continued backwardness. Therefore, instead of calling them as backward classes, it would be more appropriate to term them as the 'Backward Castes'.

Therefore, OBCs are defined as the producing classes in India either in agriculture or in secondary manufacture through household hand craft production or in guilds of the goods that were of common use for society or specifically for the ruling classes. All these sections of society were made up of dependent 'jatis' whether as peasants or agricultural labour or as artisans upon superior castes: dependence, in other words, were of the collectivities and not merely of the individuals. In other words the direct producer in India was of a 'collective' kind unlike the 'individual unfreedoms of the European serf or earlier of the slaves'.

Socially deprived backward castes lived in a social limbo somewhere between the upper caste Shudras and the untouchables. The Other Backward Castes existed all over the country in general and in every village in the State in particular. According to Nomita Yadav, the core of the other backward classes consists of peasant castes of various descriptions. Frequently they occupy a low position in the Varna hierarchy and they have in general been devoid of traditions of literacy. Further, since they have also lagged behind in the pursuit of western education, they are often poorly represented in
Government jobs and white-collar occupations in general. In spite of this, such castes sometimes occupy a dominant position in the economic and political systems of the village-life. Not frequently, they are small landowners and when they are numerically preponderant, their control over a village, a group of villages or even a district can be decisive. They are known as what Srinivas (1959) calls the 'dominant castes'.

The caste stratification, the occupation division and its hierarchical nature always posed problems in backward castes social mobilization. It is a vicious circle in the sense that stratification cannot be altered without social mobilization and mobilization is a problem due to stratification. It is this enigma that needs to be probed into get at the law of change of these communities.

In order to overcome the caste-feudal exploitation and for the protection of the rights, a number of lower caste movements came into existence during the colonial and post-colonial period. These movements have questioned the very foundations of the caste-feudalism to overcome the exploitation, social suppression and for the human dignity. Before, going into the analysis of these social movements, it would be appropriate here to discuss the political participation of backward castes in Panchayat raj institutions.

KARNATAKA BACKWARD CLASSES COMMISSION:

The developments which took place during 1967 in the Indian politics clearly throw the light on the issues relating to the polarization of Backward
and Scheduled castes. For the purpose of understanding the nature of political polarization of backward castes in Karnataka, it is necessary to analyze the changing nature of political power. As a result of mobilization and polarization of backward castes in the northern states in India, the backward caste movement in Karnataka has spread and strengthened. Particularly, the elections held in 1967, Congress lost in many states. The respective state governments have appointed several backward classes Commission to initiate the process of development of backward castes in the state.

**L.G. HAVANUR COMMISSION**

The Government Order of 1962 of the Mysore Backward Class Committee was set aside by the Supreme Court in 1963. The subsequent Government order of 1963, was also challenged in the High Court of Karnataka. In the judgment, the judges observed that the Government order had given wide scope for its abuse by giving advantage to the non-bonafide candidates. This led to the appointment of the Karnataka Backward Classes Commission in August 1972 with noted jurist L.G. Havanur as its Chairman. The Commission was asked to suggest the criteria to determine backwardness. It conducted a survey and submitted its report in 1975, categorizing the Backward Classes into three groups: i.e., 1) Backward Communities, 2) Backward Castes and 3) Backward Tribes. The Commission determined that 44.52 percent of the State population has to be treated as Other Backward Classes’ in addition to 14 percent of Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes. Some of the important recommendations of the Commission
are as follows: castes, communities and tribes are to be treated as ‘backward’ for purposes of Article 15 (4) and 16 (4) of the Constitution of India; reservation of seats in educational institutions and reservation of jobs in Government Services to the extent of 32 percent excluding the reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; reservation of posts should be made applicable to promotion and selection also: reservation of posts in semi-Government institutions, Corporations and aided educational institutions, raising of age limit for recruitment by five years for backward class candidates, starting of tutorial institutions for coaching Backward Class students to compete with other students, exemptions of various kinds of fees, provision of hostel facilities and scholarships to the students of Backward Classes, constitution of Backward Class Advisory Board, creation of a separate Directorate for Backward Classes: setting up of a Finance Corporation for the economic upliftment of Backward Class people; and establishment of a research institute to study the problem of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. The government accepted the recommendations of the Commission.11

VENKATASWAMY COMMISSION

The Karnataka government constituted the second commission in April 1983, with 15 members including its chairman T. Venkataswamy, and member-secretary. The Venkataswamy Commission made one of the comprehensive socio-economic and educational surveys ever undertaken, covering about 91 per cent of the state’s 3.6 crore population consisting of
about 61 lakh households, by a door-to-door enumeration; issued wide-ranging questionnaires and elicited answers; interviewed large number of individuals and representatives of association; and gathered statistical information from all available sources. For determining backwardness the commission formulated as many as 17 socio-economic, educational, and employment indicators, covering in each caste/community the number of houseless families, families living in pukka/katcha houses, families with annual income of less than Rs. 5,000, and more than Rs. 20,000, families holding less than one standard area of land, and more than 20 standard areas; and the population of agricultural laborers’, urban settlers, illiterates, drop-outs below the seventh standard, SSLC student, employees in each of the four classes (1 to 4), and self-employed. The Venkataswamy Commission report that justice Reddy’s report has to be seen.  

REDDY COMMISSION

The Reddy Commission beginning on page one and going non-stop till page 180, without any contents list and chapterisation, the report in volume 1 demonstrates in ample measure justice Reddy’s sensitivity to the historical and socio-cultural dimensions of the problem of the BCs in a society permeated by cumulative inequality and a polity putrefied by power-hungry politicians.

Justice Reddy’s report, a legacy of the pusillanimous Janata Government headed by Hegde, as the Deccan Herald had rightly pointed out in one of its editorials, has left Veerendra Patil, The Congress(I) Chief Minister
of Karnataka, in a quandary though Patil has repeatedly announced his
government’s commitment the report, if the stirrings in some of the excluded
communities like the numerically strong lingayats and vokkaligas, the two
major vote-banks of Karnataka, and the less numerous devangas, ganigas,
padmashalis, and catholic Christians, and their demands for rejection of the
report, are any indication, this commitment is a ‘doublespeak’, for buying
time for stalling a ticklish issue. This is precisely what the sceptics see in the
government’s action of consigning the decision on the report to a cabinet
subcommittee headed by none other than Patil himself, and in placing the
report before the legislature, apparently for debate in both the houses; more
so when the centre is also still sitting tight on the mandal commission report,
occasional pronouncements on its implementation notwithstanding.

At a time when quarrels over the constitutional provisions on
reservations have almost set the states ablaze and torn the social fabric apart,
Patil’s failure to honour his commitment may push the state and its
reservations policy to an irrational dead end, presumably by also pushing
him again into political wilderness. The centre, which is also in a quandary
now because of the promise on the implementation of the Mandal
Commission report which it unwittingly made even before it could grapple
with the imperfections and inadequacies of this report, may also do well to
have a close look at justice Reddy’s report, especially its methodology and
rich data base.\textsuperscript{13}
Andhra Pradesh:

In the state of Andhra Pradesh several Backward Class Commissions were appointed by respective popular governments to look into the socio-political, educational, cultural and economic status of backward castes. All these commissions had recommended with specific policies and programmes. Among the commissions most important are: Manohar Pershad Commission 1968, K.N. Anantaraman Commission 1970, Muralidhar Rao Commission 1982 etc.

All the above commissions viewed that, caste has long been an important dimension of social articulation and political mobilization in the State. In the domain of electoral politics, caste assumed an active role as the basis of political grouping and the mobilization of electoral support in the State. In terms of caste structure and articulation, the regions i.e., Telangana, Andhra and Rayalaseema display significant variations. The Brahmins, comprising a meager percentage of the population and ritually placed at the top of the caste pyramid, have historically dominated social, cultural and economic life. It is only in the early decades of the 20th Century that we find a serious challenge to their supremacy, manifested in the form of specific caste articulations. ¹⁴

Before the amendment of 73rd Act, in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka the panchayat systems were working. The earth while Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayat Act, 1964 and Andhra Pradesh Mandal Praja Parishads, Zilla Praja Parishad and Zilla Abhivrudhi Sameaksha Mandals Act, 1986 was in force.
Particularly, the attempt made by the act of 1986 for providing reservations to backward castes in PRIs is the significant in the history of AP. This act is considered as the most significant in the process of political participation of low social categories. The political participation of social categories began after the 73rd amendment Act, and its obligation on the states the state of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka passed a subsequent act known as Andhra Pradesh Panchayat raj Amendment Act of 1994, Karnataka Panchayat raj act of 1993.

The state of Andhra Pradesh adopted a uniform pattern of panchayat raj system viz., a three tier system of panchayati raj. 1. Gram Panchayat at Village level, 2. Mandal Parishad at Mandal level and 3. Zilla Panchayat at the district level and Karnataka adopted uniform pattern of Three tier system of Panchayat raj. 1. Gram Panchayat at Village level, 2. Taluk Panchayat at Taluk level and 3. Zilla Panchayat at the district level. Further, these acts also provided for the constitution of Gram Sabha for every village. Besides, the structure of panchayat raj system, the acts also facilitated provision for reservation of people belonging to certain depressed classes’ viz., SCs, STs, OBCs and Women in all the three tiers of panchayat raj institution. As per the act, 33 % of seats are to be reserved to OBCs in all the institutions of PRIs with a definite vision of development of these some sections of the society.

Inspite of the constitutional provisions, the people belonging to weaker sections are unable to work in the institutions of panchayat raj independently. Among the several factors the social system and the structure of caste in
Andhra Pradesh have predominant over the activities of Backward Categories and control.

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

“Political participation” is a term having many meanings. It is applied to the activity of ordinary citizens and to the activity of political leaders. It is used to refer to many different kinds of activity: voting, campaign contributions, marching in May Day or Patriots’ Day parades. A term so broad can lose its usefulness. We must begin, therefore, by defining and delimiting the meaning of political participation. It is not our purpose to present the definition of participation. We simply wish to clarify how we shall be using the term. This is the crucial first step in our analysis. The rest of this book shall be devoted to describing who participates in what way, and to explaining why they do so. But we first must understand what it is we are explaining. For this purpose, it is not enough to define participation; we must also discuss how to measure it, since our analysis requires that we be able to say how active a particular individual or group is.

The problem of defining and measuring political participation is compounded by the cross-national nature of our work. We shall be comparing participation across a heterogeneous set of nations. Is there something called political participation that can be meaningfully compared across these nations? And can we measure such activity in ways that are comparable enough to allow parallel analyses in each of the nations? Before we proceed, we must face these issues.
What is political participation?

By political participation, we refer to those legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and the actions they take, though this is a rough definition. It is adequate for delimiting our sphere of interest. It indicates that we are basically interested in political participation, that is, in acts that aim at influencing governmental decisions. Ours is a broad conception. We are interested in a wide variety of ways in which citizens participate in relation to varied issues. Many studies of participation focus on the vote. Sometimes by choice, some-times by default (because other data are not available), voting turnout of participation and for comparison with participation, not as measures of participation.¹⁶

In addition, we limit our attention largely to participation vis-à-vis the government. The argument has been made that effective participation depends upon opportunities to participate in other spheres – family, school, voluntary associations, the workplace. A participatory polity may rest on a participatory society (Almond and Verba, 1963; Eckstein, 1961). We do not quarrel with this assumption. But we shall not attempt to describe and explain patterns of participation outside those that are more narrowly political – that is, aimed at affecting the government.

One last limitation in our focus is our concern with activities “within the system” – with “regular” and legal ways of influencing politics. This eliminates from our span of concern a wide range of acts – protests, riots,
assassinations, all kinds of civil violence – through which private citizens might try to influence the government. This is not to argue that the latter is insignificant or unworthy of study. It is simply another topic. The activities with which we deal represent a set distinctive enough in origin and impact to merit separate consideration.

Our conception of political participation is clearly broad enough to apply to the set of nations with which we shall deal. In each there are legitimate channels by which citizens can attempt to influence government policy or the choice of government personnel. But the mere fact that we can identify “political participation” in each of the nations does not mean that we have solved the problem of comparability. For one thing, the nations differ in the extent of the rights of political participation that are available. Several provide guarantees of the full panoply of political rights: the right to vote in meaningful elections, the right to join and form political associations, the right to petition the government, coupled with the auxiliary rights of free speech, a free press, and free assembly. Austria, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States fall within the category of nations that provide the full range of these rights. But even among these countries there are variations in terms of restrictions on political activity. Japan, for instance, has a rather restrictive campaign law barring activities such as house to house canvassing, signature campaigns, the distribution and display of campaign paraphernalia such as buttons or posters, and a wide range of activities that might “raise ardor”
(Cuntis, 1971). This makes it difficult to compare campaign activity in Japan with that in other countries where such activities are not proscribed.

The converse problem exists in relation to the Netherlands. Until 1970 one form of political activity – voting – was required in the Netherlands. Our study was conducted after the repeal of that law, and we were able to ask about voting participation in two post repeal elections. But there is little doubt that the law boosted voting turnout when in effect (Irwin, 1974), and there may be a residual effect raising voting rates above their “national” level without such a law. Since ours is a study of citizen activity, not of the legal restrictions on (or requirements for) such activity, differences across nations in what is permitted or what is required compound our problems of comparability.

Similar problems exist in relation to our other three nations. In India, the central government has from time to time suspended certain political rights in states it considers troubled, and democracy went through a two-year hiatus in the mid-1970s for the entire nation. At the time of our field work in 1966-67, however, India could certainly be listed with the preceding four nations as a nation providing opportunities for the full range of political activities. In Nigeria, on the other hand, there was a fairly thorough suspension of such rights under military rule about the time of our field work, and such rights have not yet been fully restored. Our field work in Nigeria had been planned before but took place shortly after the suspension of political rights by a military regime (The field work took place in the summer
of 1966). Our questions, however, were about political activities prior to this suspension. This creates problems of comparability. First, the suspension of political rights under the military regime may have inhibited respondents from mentioning past exercise of such rights. We cannot measure this directly, but the reports of political activity in our survey are sufficiently high to suggest that there was no serious inhibition. The second problem is more directly measurable. Due to the unsettled political situation at the time of our field work we could not ask certain questions about party affiliation or activity in elections. Thus, our data files are blank in relation to an important type of political activity, a fact that will limit certain of our analyses of Nigeria.

The situation in Yugoslavia is even more complicated, since it is a “democracy of a different sort.” In terms of the full panoply of political rights, one would have to say that they are neither fully denied nor fully available. The franchise is universalized, and there are often contests for particular elective positions. But organized opposition via competing parties is barred. Speech and publication critical of the government is allowed, through only up to a point, and that point changes from time to time. At the time of our field work, in 1971, controls were somewhat more tax than in recent years. The Yugoslavian system provides, on the other hand, a wide range of alternative political institutions – local councils, workers’ councils, and the like – that foster high rates of citizen participation.
These differences in institutional structure make comparisons of political activity across nations difficult. The problem is compounded by other differences across the nations. Opportunities to engage in particular kinds of activity may be inhibited by social and economic conditions as well. One cannot follow politics in the mass media where those media are not well established. One cannot put a bumper sticker on one’s car if one does not own a car. In short, our seven nations differ substantially in the opportunities provided for various kinds of political activity.

Furthermore, even if the opportunities to engage in some kind of activity were equal (i.e., if it were legal to put a bumper sticker on one’s car and car and car ownership was equal across two nations), citizens in one nation might have the habit of participating in that way whereas those in another might not. But the citizens in the latter country might be active in other ways – perhaps they display posters. To compare the activity in one nation with that in another one would have to tap the full range of political activities in each nation, establish that bumper stickers and window posters are somehow equivalent (and therefore worth comparing), and decide whether a single bumper sticker is worth a single window poster.

Thus, though our concept of political participation is broad enough so that one can locate some such participation in each of the nations, there are a number of complexities in establishing the equivalence of such participation. The legal opportunities to be active may vary and the kinds of activities that
citizens choose to engage in out of those that are legal may also vary substantially from nation to nation. How then can we compare participation?

Our answer is that one can compare participation in some respects, not in others. The qualifications listed previously make it difficult to compare the amount of political activity in one nation with that in another. To do so, one would have to know that one had asked about the “right” set of acts in each nation, that is, that one had not asked about an act common in country. A but not in B while neglecting a common act in B. Though, we have tried to cast our net wide and ask about a wide variety of political activities in each nation (some acts that were common across nations, others that were asked about in only one or a few countries), we cannot be sure that we have covered all relevant acts. If we had asked about a different set of political acts we might have received quite different results about the amount of activity in one place or another (on this general issue see Kim, Nie and Verba, 1974).

However, our main interest is not in determining whether there is more activity in one nation than in another. We are interested in comparing across nations in terms of the internal distribution of activity within each and in terms of the forces that shape that internal distribution. As we have pointed out in Chapter 1, our main concern is with the relationship between equality of political activity and equality in social and economic terms. This type of comparison cases somewhat the task of locating equivalent measures of political activity. We do not need to know whether Austrians are more active than Japanese, but rather whether there is more or less difference between
relevant groups of Austrians than there is among equivalent groups of Japanese – on the basis of the questions asked in each nation. If we ask about a fairly wide range of political acts we should be able to carry out parallel internal analyses.

Our concern with differences within nations also cases the problem of differences across nations in the types of political activities that are legal. What is crucial to our analysis is, as we have said, that all of these nations provide whatever rights they do provide on a *universal* basis – to all adult citizens, with no sex, income, occupational, racial, ethnic, religious, or other limitations. Our concern is not with the opportunities offered to participate but with the differential use that is made of such opportunities by different groups of citizens. As long as whatever opportunities are there universalized in each of the nations, we can compare the internal differences in the use of these opportunities.

**The Modes of Political Participation**

We have considered the question of the comparability of political participation from nation to nation as though there were some single and unified set of activities called political participation. In fact, we do not believe this to be the case. There are many ways in which citizens can be active in attempting to influence the government. By this we do a letter to a representative, vote, or join a community action group, and so on. Rather, we mean that there are alternative *modes of nativity* that is, sets of activities that differ systematically in how they relate the individual to his government.
The explication of these differences among the modes of political activity is important to our argument both substantively and methodologically. It is substantively important because, as we shall see, the processes by which individuals come to be political activities differ from one mode of political activity to another as do the consequences of the alternative modes of activity. To ignore these differences is to misunderstand some important characteristics of participatory systems. A consideration of alternative modes of political activity is important methodologically as well. If we can locate similar modes of activity in each of the nations, we shall have gone a long way in establishing the political participation across nations.

Our stress on the multidimensionality of political participation differs from the emphasis in much of the earlier literature on political activity. In that literature (Milbrath, 1965; Lane, 1959) political participation was considered to be a unidimensional phenomenon. The main distinction across political actors was the extent of their “activeness” – essentially how much effort they put into political participation. Individuals ranged from activists who took a full role in political life, through spectators who observed but did not take part, to apathetic citizens who neither took part nor cared about public matters. We do not deny that this is an important distinction; “effort” is one of our major dimensions of political activity. In fact political participation is both uni-and multidimensional. There is an underlying “activeness” dimension along which citizens can be arrayed; at the same time one can make finer distinctions among the activists in terms of the modes of activity in which they engage.
Our work on the modes of political activity has been reported elsewhere (Verba, Nie and Kim, 1971; Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1973). The modes we have located appear with remarkable regularity in a number of follow-up studies by others, the similarity being more convincing because of the heterogeneity of the measures used in these studies. We present a synopsis of our analyses of the modes of participation in Appendix A as well as a summary of the follow-up work. Here, we shall simply summarize some results as they affect our argument.

Our approach has been as follows: In each of the nations we asked about a variety of specific political acts. We asked about voting in several types of elections, about a variety of ways in which citizens can take part in election campaigns, about various kinds of group-based activities within the local community, about attempts by the individual to contact officials in his community or outside of his community on various kinds of problems. In some instances we asked about different acts in different nations. The surveys therefore tell us whether the respondent has engaged in our more of the activities about which we inquired. Using these specific acts, we looked for “modes of activity”, that is, clusters of acts that customarily go together – in other words, a citizen who performs one act from a particular mode will be likely to perform other acts from the same mode.

We expected certain acts to go together because they were similar on some more abstract dimensions of participation. The dimensions were: (1) the type of influence that was exerted by the act (whether in conveyed
information about the actors’ preferences and/or applied pressure for compliance); (2) the scope of the outcome (whether the act was aimed at affecting broad social outcome or a narrower particularized outcome); (3) the degree of conflict with others involved in the activity; (4) the amount of effort and initiative required for the act; and (5) the amount of cooperation with others entailed by the act.

Our analyses of the various specific acts in which individuals engaged went through several stages (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba, Nie and Kim, 1971; Verba et al., 1973; and Appendix A). Factor analyses of the various political acts produced modes of activity that were similar across the nations and consistent with our dimensions of activity. The four modes that emerged were:

**Voting**: Voting is the most frequent citizen activity. It exerts influence over leaders through generalized pressure, but it communicates little information about voter preferences to leaders. The scope of the outcome is very broad, affecting all citizens. This combination of low information about citizen preferences and high pressure on leaders with broad outcomes is what gives voting its unique characteristic as a blunt but powerful instrument of control over the government. Voting involves the citizen in conflict, since the electoral situation is by definition a confliction one – at least if the election is competitive. The voting act, on the other hand, is an individual act. And voting differs from other political acts in that it requires relatively little initiative. The occasion for voting is presented to the citizen in the form of
regular elections; he does not have to create the occasion. These characteristics of voting are fairly obvious, but they are useful, for they highlight some contrast with other modes of citizen activity.

**Campaign activity:** The next regular mode of citizen activity is, like voting, in the electoral process. It is participation in election campaigns. It is a significant mode of action, for through it the citizen can increase his influence over the election outcome beyond the one vote allocated to him. Like the vote it exerts a lot of pressure on leaders, and for the same reason. But it can communicate more information about the participants’ preferences because campaign activists are a more clearly identifiable group with whom candidates may be in close contact. Campaign activity, like voting, products collective outcomes. Unlike voting, it requires cooperation among citizens. It involves the citizen in confliction situations. And more initiative is required of the citizen than in relation to the vote; campaign activity is clearly a more difficult political act than mere voting.

**Communal activity:** This mode of activity combines two types of activity: individual contacts by citizens with government officials where the subject of that contact is some general social issue, and cooperative, non-partisan activities involving group or organizational attempts to deal with some social issue. Such activity is outside of the regular electoral process. It conveys a great deal of information to leaders. The amount of pressure depends on the influence of the participating individual or group. The goal is some social outcome. Though some such activity may be conflictual, much
communal activity involves little overt conflict (See Appendix A). The amount of cooperation with others varies depending on whether we are dealing with individual or group communal activity.

**Particularized contacts:** Our last mode of activity involves the citizen as individual (or perhaps with a few family members) contacting a government official on a particularized problem – that is, one limited to himself or his family. Such activity combines high information but usually little pressure. It entails little conflict among social groups and little cooperation with others. But it does require a great deal of initiative.

The characteristics of these four modes of activity in relation to the dimensions of participation are listed in Table-3-1. A factor analysis of the specific political acts on our questionnaire was carried out in each nation and produced results consistent with these four modes. Where alternative modes were found, they were due to specific differences across the nations in participatory institutions or in the information that we could obtain. The alternative patterns were consistent with our over-all logic. Deviations were found in Nigeria and Yugoslavia. In the first country we had been unable to ask questions about campaign activity. Our analysis, naturally, produced no such mode. In Yugoslavia, the absence of competitive elections removed the major distinction that separates communal and campaign activity in the other nations – the conflictual nature of campaigning. Items from our communal activity set and items that would have formed a separate campaign dimension elsewhere (working for the nomination of a candidate,
for instance) formed a single mode we label “regular” political activity. In addition, we found that functional self-management activities (workers’ councils and the like) formed a separate mode.

The fact that we find a structure of participatory acts consistent with our expectations—and, above all, that we find similar structures across our heterogeneous set of nations—is crucial to our argument. From a methodological point of view it provides some evidence for the cross national equivalence of political participation. Further, the existence of a similar structure of political acts across nations provides us with the raw material to construct comparable scales of political activity to use in our analysis. Substantively, the differences among the modes are important as well. Our main concern in this volume is with the processes by which individuals become politically active. As we shall see, the processes differ across the acts.

We shall, in this book, focus on the three modes of activity that involve public outcomes. Particularized contacting, though an important mode of activity, does not have the systematic relationship to institutions and to social conflict that would make it relevant to our current analysis. The three modes of activity that involve public outcomes—voting, campaigning, and communal activity—differ in ways that are relevant to our model of political mobilization based on the interaction of individual and group-based forces. Some modes of activity should be more susceptible to individual forces, others to group-based forces. The characteristics of the modes that lead us to expect this are the case of the act (how much effort and initiative are required) and the
amount of group conflict entailed. Those acts that require a lot of initiative and effort on the part of the individual ought to be less amenable to mobilization through group-based institutional forces. Individual socioeconomic resources ought to play a larger role. On the other hand, those acts that involve conflict across social groups should be acts that group-based institutions would be highly motivated to mobilize insofar as they need support in their conflict with others. Voting is an act that requires little effort or initiative, yet involves conflict with contending groups. This suggests that voting will be an act least affected by individual socioeconomic resources and most affected by institutional mobilization. It should be easy to mobilize, and institutions should be motivated to carry out such mobilization. Communal activity is different. It requires individual effort and initiative but the amount of conflict involved is uncertain. We would, therefore, expect communal activity to be susceptible to the influence of individual socioeconomic resources, and we are unsure about how much it is likely to be affected by institutional mobilization. Campaign activity falls in between. It requires initiative and effort and therefore ought to depend on the socioeconomic resources held by the individual, but it is also a conflictual act that institutions would want to mobilize. We should find it affected by both individual and group-based forces.
Review of Related Literature:

Various research studies have been conducted to study the women, SC, ST, BC’s leadership at Panchayat level in different states. The Panchayat elections that took place in the State of Madhya Pradesh in 1994, brought forward a large number of women, many of who belonged to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Backward Castes. The studies on political participation of weaker sections in the institutions of PRIs in India have attracted the attention of scholars from disciplines such as political Science, Sociology, Economics and Women’s Studies. An array of scholarly works examining the weaker section’s representation, their nature, the factors contributing to their success and failure along with policy implications has been brought out. A review of certain important works is quite pertinent in the context of the present study.

The review of some of such literature related to the topic are G. Palanithurai’s (Ed.) ‘Empowering People’ throws light on Panchayat Raj system, Panchayat Raj Movement and the status of Panchayat Raj system in India under various stages of innovations. ‘Decentralization and Local Politics’ edited by S.N. Jha and P.C. Mathur, deals Panchayat Raj System in India in general and gives us a knowledge about reforms, development of Panchayat Raj and its governance and the implications in scheduled areas. P.C. Mathur in his book, ‘Political Dynamics of Panchayat Raj’, deals in length about Panchayat Raj system in India from 1959-90. Adhishesiah (Ed.) in his ‘Need for Constitutional Safeguards in Panchayat Raj in Karnataka today:

Sweta Mishra (1989), in her book “Democratic Decentralization” reveals that, decentralization is an ideological principle associated with objectives of self-reliance, democratic decision-making, popular participation in governmental affairs and accountability of public servants to the citizens. Decentralization is essential to achieve the broad political objectives such as, promoting political stability, mobilizing support and co-operation for development policies and providing heterogenous regions, interests and communities, with a task in the survival of the political system.

Verma (1990), in his article “State Autonomy and Democratic Decentralization,” expressed doubts about the sincerity and faith of the central and state leaders in the philosophy of decentralization. He regrets that states have been fighting with the center for more and more powers and autonomy and that too discretionary powers, not for democratic decentralization but for enjoying and exercising more powers. Political leaders of the states have shown little concern over their own village folk.
They have never realized the powerful heads, their existence role and importance of these local bodies. It has also been suggested by another writer that political leaders use these local leaders only as their vote-contractors and brokers. It has also been suggested by another writer that political leaders at the higher level must have deep rooted faith and reliance in the capacity and right of the rural masses. No one should consider them as unit for self-government on account of their poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, sex, language, religion and other forms and backwardness.

Nagendra Ambedkar (2000),\textsuperscript{19} in his book on “panchayat raj at work”, explained the origins and growth of panchayat raj institution in India and structural patterns of panchayat raj in Rajasthan. The author also has given importance to electoral system of the local bodies. Further, he analyzed the socio-economic and political background of the panchayat raj elite, their perceptions and orientations of various issues, pertaining to the panchayat raj institution, finally he analyzed the leadership in panchayats and the qualities, attitude of the leaders towards weaker section of the society.

Malviya (1956),\textsuperscript{20} in his book “Village Panchayat in India”, explains the historical and ideological background of the gram panchayats in India from times immemorial. The author focuses as to how the village panchayats in this ancient country developed into a sound system of democracy in accordance with our indigenous traditions and culture. The author concludes with a suggestion that the village panchayats are not the relic of tribalism or feudalism but are the results of matured experiment.
Maddieka (1976) in his book “Panchayat Raj: A study of Rural Local Government in India”, discusses that the panchayat raj is playing a great role in certain areas, particularly in promoting social change, economic development and intelligent administration of representative government. But all these become a vehicle for politics nepotism and corruption. The author suggests that there must be co-operative voluntary associations, between private firms and individual and government agencies dealing with different aspects of rural development.

Asha Kaushik (1998) in her book “Constitutionalization of Panchayat Raj in the Gandhian perspective”, focuses on Gandhian perspective in the context of constitutionalisation of Panchayat Raj and contend that the attempt to realize “Gram Swaraj” through 73rd amendment is a hasty conception premise of the Gandhian framework. Basing her arguments on Gandhian ideas about state, place of individual in social life, and village panchayats, she makes a fervent plea to thinking terms of “democratic governance, which is not merely a structural arrangement of rights, but also a normative concern with civic and political obligations, as visualized by Gandhi”.

Sammiuddin, Abida (1976) in her book “A Critique of Panchayat raj with Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh”, examine the genesis and growth of Community Development Programmes in their broad perspective and has highlighted their relevance to rural economy and democratic institutions of Panchayat Raj. She emphasis on proper training of rural services and has stressed the need for providing job oriented education and training in social
skills to the personnel, programmes and Panchayat Raj Institutions. The authors suggests that the grass root institutions need the revision of the basic objective of development programmes, structural reforms of organizational pattern, administrative techniques and adequate financial resources matching with their responsibilities.

Lakshaminarayan (1976), in his book “India’s Villages at Gross Roots”, focuses on the conditions and problems of rural people, their institutions and way of living under the impact of planned social change after the Institutions of the Community Development Programmes in Mandya District of Mysore State. These villages have been integrated with the wider economic and political system and have many linkages with communication and other Institutional network. The author opined that the improved means of communication, community development programmes and the Panchayat Raj have played a significant role in modernizing the village. He concludes that the political set up has politicized the traditional society. But this have not affected the social structure of village.

Narayan’s, article (1998), on “Panchayat Raj and Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes”, discussed the empowerment of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes. The opined that though, their representation in new structures of Panchayat Raj, the most significant issue of concern and attention of the people. A lot of enthusiasm has been evinced, both by the deserving sections and by the scholars studying new phenomena. He has made a forceful plea for direct election to positions
of Chairperson, at the intermediate and top levels of Panchayat Raj system and mobilization of weaker sections. He rightly feels that any excessive power sharing would be in consequential if it is not preceded by land reforms and reduction of inequalities and end of exploitation. Finally wants political parties and NGO’s to come forward and help the weaker sections by creating political awakening and effective mobilization.

Gehlot (1998), in his article “Toward Panchayat Raj: Some Myths of Democratic Decentralization”, discussed the historical aspects of Panchayat Raj and highlights the problem areas likely to emerge in the way of new devolution and decentralization patterns. He advocated a motivated bureaucracy to gear up the task and devaluation of authority to elected representatives. Highlighting the dominance of vested interests, he makes a plea for providing Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI’s), much needed strength to deliver goods to the deserving ones. Issues of rural electrification, untouchability, discrimination and deprivation of scheduled castes and tribes and reluctance of state governments to share their resources deserve a serious consideration. He feels that creation of legislative council at state level to represent panchayats, according priority to land reform and strengthening MP local areas development scheme (MPLADS) can help PR to grow and deliver the goods.

Rao (1980), in his book “Panchayat Raj and Rural Development”, states that the success of rural development through democratic decentralization largely depends on two basic factors viz., (a) the emergence
and growth of egalitarian power structure in democratic institutions at the
growth and (b) economically viable size of these institutions. The author
deals with the investigation of these two issues at the level of village
Panchayat in Tumkur district of Karnataka. The author comes to the
conclusion that larger panchayats having a population base of 4,000 would be
economically viable to implement rural development programmes. In this
context, he suggests that such a unit of 4,000 persons should form the basis for
Panchayat, a co-operative and other institutions dealing with rural
development; a cluster approach has been suggested. Secondly, there is a
need to give representation to villagers rather than to population within the
unit so that each village having a population of at least 200 persons will have
its representative in the Panchayat to take care of its interest. There is urgent
need for effective implementation of land reform and improving the spread of
education among the weaker section of society, as has been advocated by
many authors. The dominance of the upper economic classes in panchayats
and in other local level institutions is well known and is well-established fact,
as already brought out by other research studies. Further, efforts are made to
suggest how the local institutions can become more representative and how to
ensure that the benefits of development could reach the weaker sections in an
increasing measures.

“The report of the Committee to Review the Rural Development and
Poverty Alleviation Programmes (1985)” examined that structure and
suitability of the institutional arrangement that have been made for the
delivery of rural development programmes, especially to the poor. The study, therefore, also looks at selected programmes to observe the performance in relation to their stated objectives. The authors concluded that poverty and inequality are on the increase. The basic reason for the failure of rural development and poverty elevation programmes is the exclusion of the people from participation in the development process and abandonment of the institution of democratic decentralization and the related electoral process. In the circumstances, the only solution is the democratic decentralization.

1952 was also the year when the First Five Year Plan was started. According to the Planning Commission “Community Development is the method of Rural Extension the agency through which the Five Year Plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the village. In course of five years of experiment in Community Development, it was realized that it failed to arouse popular initiative and cooperation for development and welfare programmes.

Prasad (1971), studied Twin Process of Democratization and Development in Village Awa of Bihar, he concluded that while the village Panchayat has stimulated the process of political democratization, it has not accelerated the pace of economic development in the villages.

Kumar and Venkataraman (1974), examined the Administrative, Financial and Technical Aspects of Supervision and Control in Tamil Nadu. It has been realized that the way in which control is exercised depends very
much on the linkage of officials and non-officials who are concerned with the Panchayati Raj movement.

Rai and Singh (1975) study the Panchayati Raj System from Community Development Programme to Balwant Ray Mehta Committee Report and its implementation. They concluded that the present system of election is not conducive to the growth of healthy popular participation at the local level. To strengthen participation they suggest that the head of the local educational institution and office bearers of different political parties should be associated with the Panchayati Raj bodies.

Pant (1979), tries to delineate the Sources and Areas of Conflict, Cooperation and Collaboration Between Officials and Non-Officials in Bhagalpur District of Bihar and also tries to find out the reasons of the prevailing state of affairs. He concludes that the structural reforms are not the panacea for the ills of Panchayati Raj. Placing the officials under non-officials might create problems of greater dimensions. There is a need of committed non-officials leadership and efficient, development minded officers. This can only be possible if the larger socio-political culture of officials and non-officials undergoes significant changes.

Darshankar (1979), discusses the interaction between Caste and Politics Role of money, Education and Social Rank in the Working of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. He suggested that success of Panchayati Raj largely depends on the leaders and they have to be deeply committed to the ideals of Panchayati Raj. There is
a hope that with the emergence of sound snap enlightened and committed leadership in these institutions will function for the betterment of the rural community as a whole.

Sharma (1979) hints at the links between the Rural Leadership and the needs of Villagers in Negotiations with the Urban Administrative Centers and Political Powers at Higher level in the Western part of Uttar Pradesh. When leadership is viewed over a number of panchayat elections, continuity, discontinuity, re-emergence of leaders appear, caste remains the same, only individuals change. He says that these castes are the major landowners. The castes controlling powers have maintained their supremacy. Even the opposition comes largely from within the dominant caste and a limited number of Khandans act as operators of political powers whether in authority or in oppositions.

Bhargava (1979) examines the achievements and Role of Political Parties in Rajasthan. He maintains that there is too much polities and the benefits of these institutions are only enjoyed by the leaders and their associates. These institutions are financially very weak and its members look after their self-interest and want to monopolies position and power. Cooperation is not forthcoming from the government officials and slackness and indifference have crept into the members because there have been no elections since a long time in these institutions. The role of political parties in relation to Panchayati Raj system has not been satisfactory. Power Orientation of political parties is understandable, but not at the cost of the
functioning of the system. The author suggested that for raising the ‘standards of politics’ and performance improvement’ of the political parties in relation to Panchayati Raj system, steps should be taken in the direction of its (system’s) acquiring reasonable level of legitimacy.

Singh (1987) presents a historical view of the Panchayat Raj institutions in India together with a Discussion on the Theoretical, Organizational and Functional Dimensions of the Panchayati Raj. He concludes that Bihar was one of the first states in India to enact a legislation on Panchayati Raj (1947), yet regular elections could not be held and devolution of power was not possible. The state government played with the idea of devolution of power as it pleased the politics administrative bureaucracy. The Panchayati Raj could not succeed even in eight districts of Bihar where it was launched, the devolution of power to the grass roots level remind a misnomer. This study holds that the gap between theory and practice continued to remain. However, there are some striking points of the Panchayati Raj system in Bihar which the author refers to that the Panchayat is a training ground at the grass roots level which provides an opportunity for the transformation of local leadership into district and state level leadership. The Panchayat remained an institution led by local bureaucracy, and hence to self-dependence and self-reliance among the rural masses could not develop. And without the necessary financial backing the Panchayat remained hollow in its functions. The attitude of the state government towards the Panchayati Raj Institutions remained generally indifferent.
Desai (1990) deals with a Responsive Administration in Rural areas for their Integrated development, contains source readings about Panchayati Raj and its problems. Thus, the study of Panchayati Raj has been analyzed in its historical perspective. An attention is also given to social and economic thought which other surveys, concentrating on political thought, have generally omitted. He studies systematically the varied issues of Panchayati Raj and its administration which will provide the necessary momentum to development in India and pleads for accelerated development of rural areas which is essential for a balanced growth of Indian Economy. He also emphasized the importance of Panchayati Raj in the implementation of multi-directional programmes in rural development. He analyses the relevant problems of functions, finances, management and the organization of programmes initiated to improve the living conditions of the rural people. He contains relevant suggestions and management for speedy rural development.

Murthy (1969) found that if the Sarpanch, who holds a key position in executing the schemes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, is directly elected by the people and not indirectly by the members of the panchayat, then the interests of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes can be secured better. He has made another important observation with regard to the utilization of resources: the specific funds allotted for the amelioration of SCs and STs under the jurisdiction of Panchayat Samitis have usually been merged with other funds and directed for different purposes.
Parvathamma (1975)\(^{39}\) analyzed the Impact of PRI on Weaker sections. One of her observations is that political representation has not helped to bring about the desired level of development among the SCs. She contends that there are built-in drawbacks which prevent the people of these categories from becoming vocal and assertive and much less to mobilize. To quote her "Poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, the near total dependence on upper castes and above all the lowest ritual rank which makes them a constant source of pollution to caste Hindus certainly limits the scope of the roles they could play as panchayat members.

Ali's (1964)\(^{40}\) report points out that by and large, the PRI have not been able to devote any special attention and render any significant help to weaker sections mostly due to limited financial resources. Under the existing circumstances and limitations, "PRIs have not exhibited any special solicitude for the welfare of be weaker sections of the community."

Gurumurthy (1987)\(^{41}\) pointed out that the Participation of Weaker Sections as Panchayati Raj Functionaries at the village level is not satisfactory. They continued to be passive participants in its meetings and proceedings. This is because they lacked the essential requisites of participation like education and sufficient income.

Adiseshaiah (1964)\(^{42}\) observed that the Involvement of Pradhans in the implementation of schemes has given scope for corruption. As a result, the actual beneficiaries do not get their due and only those beneficiaries who aligned with the pradhans receive some benefits. Even schemes, which were
meant for the SCs are manipulated in favour of those who are close to the pradhans. The most deserving cases remained deprived of the benefits of such development schemes. This became possible because of the in-built scope for manipulations at different levels. The well-to-do pradhans had the capabilities and resources for carrying out such manipulations.

Shymala (2001) conducted study on 594 Zilla Panchayat Members in Karnataka, of which 232 were females and 362 males. Specific purpose of the study was to know (a) socio-economic, political and cultural background of the members, and (b) their perceptions and aspirations about the working of Panchayats in relation to the expectations of the people and the villagers in general. These are the specific findings:

In case of both males and females the number of Zilla Panchayat members are more than 50 years of age are very small, but in the case of age upto 30 years the number of female members is much higher than the male members. However, maximum members from both the sexes (40%) are from the age group of 31-40 years. Maximum respondents are Hindus but among them are either from the dominant castes (29%) or from the scheduled castes (20%). The number of illiterates is much lower (1.34%) but the number of graduates and above, in the case of both the sexes, is much higher (33%). About 5 per cent members are wage earners and 70 per cent are the cultivators. The members are from the land owner families. While about 7 per cent are from the landless category, about 36 per cent members own more than 10 acres of land. But about 38 per cent members are from below the poverty line.
Large number of members (68%) have political experience, but disparity exists in terms of sex because in contrast to 82 per cent males only 47 per cent females have that experience. Social service, welfare of the weaker sections etc. were the main motive behind entering the PRI. The respondents received help of both formal and informal sources to win the election. However, formal sources were more important than the informal. So far as development work is concerned, most of them (48% and 36%) have concentrated on welfare and infrastructural development activities respectively. Although 70 per cent come from farming background, only 9 per cent representatives have done work exclusively for agricultural development. However, the author did not give explanation to this phenomenon. Further, no effort was made to test the validity of the responses pertaining to performance of the respondents as shared by them.

In other study Aziz (1994) found more or less the same phenomena. While dealing with the Relationship Between local level Traditional Power Structure, Panchayati Raj and the Dalits he said, "attempt made to access power to weaker sections by reserving seats and executive positions have altered hitherto dominant caste centered rural power structure. It should now go to the credit of the makers of law to have given seats and executive positions to the extent of 18 per cent to SC and ST candidates and 33.3 per cent each to backward communities and women. However, since most of the elected representatives are first generation politicians there is a need for providing training to them".
Singh (1985) observed that in the case of U.P. most of the rural leaders of scheduled castes are now young and literate and hail from dominant caste and well to do families amongst their caste groups. Their exposure to mass media, political awareness and political participation is on the increase, but it cannot be rated as very high or satisfactory, which may be the consequences of their socio-economic backwardness. Their entry to the power and authority structure is by and large moved through the process of reservations. But it would be wrong to say that they cannot share power otherwise. Some of them are emerging as leaders by contesting unreserved seats also. This reflects that they are fitting into the larger political processes in the body Politics. But their emergence as successful leaders depends upon the group support structure they have. Generally only those Persons are able to emerge as leaders who have strong caste, kin and village factional bases. From the point of view of social values they stand half-way between tradition and modernity; they are highly development oriented but feel helpless and at not able to do much because of the oppressive attitudes of the higher castes and classes. Again they are quite responsive to the people of SCs but feel dissatisfied with the role and attitude of the leaders of their own castes and communities. On the whole the findings lend credence to the hypothesis that instead of continuing the old and traditional, the leadership emerging among SCs is new and development oriented and mobility oriented and large sections of them belong to landless working class.
Kanango (1996) discusses Women's leadership in the Panchayati Raj with special reference to the state of West Bengal. The main purpose of this paper is to examine women's leadership in the political arena in the background of the 73rd Constitutional amendment. The author observed that all women candidates were not necessarily formal members of political parties. Different parties identified some female relations of male members and nominated them. Another factor for selecting women candidates is their background and training in different areas. For example, quite a few Anganwadi workers got nomination and got elected too. It was also seen that women instructors of Adult Literacy Centres were selected for nomination. Besides, many of the women candidates had undergone a number of training under TRYSEM, DWCRA and some other programmes carried out by the Development Block.

Women entered in Panchayat politics for various reasons. Some entered because they were asked by the party, but some entered in order to get high status. Women representatives also face difficulties. One of the representatives said "Spoke in the meetings about the needs of my area. Had been attending the meetings quite regularly in the beginning but the men folks do not pay any attention to what I say, do not give any importance. What is the point in attending meetings when I cannot do anything for the people of my area? So I have stopped attending the panchayat meetings since the last six months."
Socio-cultural factors are also acting as a deterrent in many cases. For example, at night if any emergency arises, women obviously are not allowed to go to the spot and help. Even during the day many families object to their going out to settle any dispute among the villagers. Rather their husbands are made b do the job. Apart from attending official meetings at the panchayat or Panchayat-Samiti parents'/in-laws'/husband's permission is necessary to visit any other place.

The author concluded that besides various socio-cultural deterrent the effective participation of women in panchayat may be increased provided they attend training programme on regular basis, mindset of all the political parties are made favorable to them and women's organizations put constant pressure on society for its favour.

Pai (1998) studied the Functioning of Pradhans in the Villages in the District of Meerut in Western U.P. All the Panchayat representatives were Dalit. She found that reservation alone cannot change the status of women in the family and society and thereby ensure their participation in local bodies. The study also shows that rise in family income and improved lifestyle due to better educational qualification, or investment in business by the male members does not make a difference. The position of women and the perception that they have little knowledge about politics and are incapable of taking part in public affairs, even of independent voting, remain strong. The Pradhanis in sampled villagers are mere name sake representatives for the male members of their households. The author added
that economic development due to green revolution and market economy has improved income of the sampled households tremendously but have introduced little changes in the social status of women members. On being questioned, all the Pradhans said they had agreed to stand for election due to family pressure and the decision of their community, and not because they were keen to do so. All the Pradhans were illiterates and only able to put their signatures on official papers. All of them looked upon the Panchayat as a government organization run by officials and participation by the villagers was seen as unnecessary. Finally, Pai suggested that in order to empower these representatives there is, besides reservation, need a develop not only participatory mechanism of empowerment, but also the means to overcome the structural inequalities of social power. However, without promoting female literacy, independent voting rights, improvement in their status within the family, their proper participation in public sphere may not be ensured.

Mahipal (1998) studied the Problems of 651 Women Panchayat Representatives of all the Levels. These women were from U.P. Most of these representatives were Dalit, illiterate and poor. He could narrate twelve problems narrated by these women. These were the following:

a) majority of respondents are not informed about the schemes and the proposed meetings at the Block level. Even if they are informed, in most of the cases they are not allowed by the male family members to attend it. One of the respondents said that "They once went to the
Block office to cast their votes in the election of the Pramukh. Except that they do not know what role they have in PRIs."

b) they added that for economic purpose they have to depend on their husbands,

c) due to fear of above they do not allow girls to attend schools located outside the village,

d) they are denied Patta of their land which they are cultivating since long,

e) malfunctioning of the PHCs or its poor management,

f) no improvement in drainage and drinking water facility,

g) malfunctioning/favouritism in public distribution system shop,

h) lack of toilet and other essential facility at the place of meeting at Block office,

i) No-confidence motions against women Pradhans are moved in number of GPs. As a result functioning of GP has been affected, GP is failed to mobilizes its own resources because as soon as it imposes taxes, it is opposed by the villagers.

It was found that bureaucracy was not cooperative in empowering the women. It feels superior to the elected representatives of the panchayats. To quote the author.

Buch, Jain and Chaudhary (1999) conducted Study on Women in Panchayati Raj in Madhya Pradesh. The study was conducted in three district socio-cultural zones where the ST, SC was others are numerically
dominant. So far as their socio profile is concerned, the study documented that maximum number of PRI leaders (307 out of 343) are from the marginalized groups. 283 women and 80 men participated in the study. Majority of the leaders are above the age of 25 years 'they are engaged in agricultural work. In fact, either they are the wage earners or cultivators. Although, there is slight district wise variation but majority of the respondents are from below the Poverty line. More than 50 per cent are illiterate. Even in the case of chairpersons out of 72, 23 are illiterate. Most of them had no affiliation with any of the political parties in the formal sense. 53 respondents are landless but a good number of them (126) Possess either or more than 5 acres of land. It is interesting to note that a good number of respondents have discontinued labour work after becoming PRI leaders but even today 92 are engaged. This work of the study concluded that PRI is numerically imitated by the leaders of lower Socio-economic status in M.P.

Nayak (1996)\textsuperscript{50} studied the Nature and Extent of Violence against the Panchayat Representative of Dalit community. Citing the case of stripping of Draupadi Bai, a Dalit Sarpanch of Rajgarh district (M.P.) before the BDO on November 19, 1995 the author mentioned that during 1994 election she along with three other women contested the election. The panchayat was reserved for ST women. She defeated the contestants who were Congress supporters. Draupadi is literate, 50 years old poor woman. M. Agarawal (42) was one of the immigrants inhabitants in the village. He belonged to the rich
family, but he was a dull man. He had extramarital relation with Bunda Bai (ST). He wanted to get Bunda elected as Sarpanch so as to control the Panchayat fund. But it did not materialized. She was defeated. From the date of defeat of Bunda onward Agarwal begins to search opportunity to humiliate Draupadi. In the meantime he succeeded in getting a contract to construct a school building with the help of a non-tribal Panch. He made allegation of misuse of fund against Draupadi. No-confidence motion was brought against her. In that meeting she was badly humiliated/abused even before the pressure of BDO and other officials. At 2 a.m. she tried to escape from the meeting but Agarwal and others pulled her Sari and she felled.

Datta (1997) studied the Nature of Relationship between the Established Upper Caste Leadership and the Emerging Dalit leadership in Panchayat. He is of the view that in spite of prolonged backwardness and economic dependence, the poor Dalits may replace the rich leadership of the upper castes, if they are united, assertive and dedicated. The victory of Maiah Wankhede (SC woman) as sarpanch prove this proposition. She herself is an upper caste, educated and urban based woman. But she got married with a Dalit activist. When she heard that the panchayat was reserved for women candidates, she decided to contest the election. But the opponent was from a well-to-do family, the family which had dominated the local politics since last 30 years. In spite of all ethical and non-ethical means adopted by the powerful opponent, she won the election only because (a) she and her panel promised the villagers that it will solve the problem of water, toilet and fuel which is
faced by the majority, (b) they wrote slogans on walls of each of the houses in the village. In fact not a single wall was left for the opposition to write on. The opposition adopted different techniques. They used and manipulated family pressure, money, liquor, political institution and traditions to win the battle. But they did no succeed.

Similar observation was made by Lele (2001). In course of the Comparative Study Between Traditional Village Panchayat and the modern Gram Sabha in Maharashtra from the point of view of empowerment of the weaker sections, the author opined that of course platform of statutory Gram Sabha is theoretically opened for the marginalized but in the real sense it is not. In fact, alienation from the political processes seems to prevail and that is why even reservation has not helped to make the marginalized more vocal. This then creates the right conditions for the domination of traditional power of the upper castes and classes. The other factor is economic dependence of the marginalized on the dominants. For those who work on the fields or run small shops or are service providers, opposing the gavki is unthinkable. They would be digging their own graves by opposing the upper castes and rich farmers on whose fields they work and earn their daily wages. Besides, personal loans are also made available by the same people, those who constitute the gavki. Thus, opposing the gavki could mean starvation as a result of boycott by the rich peasants and others (p. 4703).

Pundir (1995) conducted a study in four areas located in eastern and western parts of UP to know (a) to what extent the scheduled castes have
been participating in the political process? and (b) whether this participation is leading to participation in decision making? The four areas where the study was conducted are different to each other from the point of view of socio-economic conditions of the Dalits. For example, in situation `a' the scheduled caste is numerically superior, they are occupationally diversified and economically independent. They are a bit modernized. In situation `b' they are more than 20 per cent population and neither high nor low. In the situation `c' the SC is politically developed. They organize and consolidate the other scheduled castes for their common cause. The situation `d' is from the eastern U.P. Here the Dalits only participate in voting. There is very less degree of organization of the scheduled castes even for their own affairs. In response to the above two questions the following scenario emerged:

1. The scheduled caste is participating in the political processes to a large extent at the local level and has achieved positions of members, somewhere also the highest power position. As members, largely they go on the basis of reservation of seats and also on general seats exceptionally.

2. The SC members and the highest position holders participate in the decision making to a large extent and influence to some extent, also influence in their favour. This is also generating self-confidence and efficacy among them to some extent. But the extent of this decision making and efficacious participation is not the same in all the above four situations. Actually where there is numerical superiority of SC
population and they are economically and occupationally independent, in that situation the extent and nature of political participation is excellent. The numerical strength alone is not sufficient. Since, in the situation ‘d’ there is almost lack of social capital the level of participation is low. Hence, conclusion of Pundir is more or less similar to the conclusion of Pai.

Research Gap

Studies on political participation of weaker sections have acquired a great social science significance and political significance. Many political scientists, sociologists, anthropologist have studies different, tribes, castes, communities and their leaders. There were studies with special reference to their problems and the role of government in implementing social welfare programmes and to achieve social justice. The foregoing literature clears highlights a despite gap. Thus, the present study is to fill up gap between theory and practice. Since, advocate numbers of representatives belonging to OBC are working in Panchayat Raj Institutions, due to the provisions of 73rd constitutional Amendment Act. And as per the constitutional provisions a number of welfare schemes/programmes are being implemented thorough the PRI in Karnataka.

All these studies contributed to identify the different aspects of PRIs in India, but not directly focused on the nature of social categories among BCs and factors influencing them to capture various positions in PRIs reserved in the name of BCs. Thus, the present study is one of the interdisciplinary one
and has national and international relevance. And in view of this, all these literature which was reviewed facilitates the researcher to adopt appropriate methodology, to prepare to relevant objectives, hypotheses, tools for collecting data, interpretation, analysis and to find out the findings with suitable recommendations.

**Scope and Importance of the Study:**

The study has a vast significance of understanding the political participation of Backward Castes (BCs) in Panchayat Raj Institutions in state of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, where the agrarian structure, economic backward being controlled by major communities, these major land owning communities and other occupants of important positions of villages have traditionally controlled the village politics for centuries. The purpose of the study is to understand the impact of reservation provisions for BCs in PRIs and the role of BCs in achieving the welfare of BCs in a caste dominated society. There are three categories of social groups created by rituals, economy and occupation. As a result of traditional occupation the lower social group was formed, because they are engaging in less income activities and living in chronic poverty. They are backward educationally, socially, economically and culturally. Under the circumstances the present study has its relevance to assess the nature of BCs who are working in PRIs in Andhra Pradesh. It is also intended to examine whether the reservation provisions of 73rd Amendment Act are really utilized by appropriate or genuine social groups among BCs in the state of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. It is to
assess whether the positions in PRIs are captured by agrarian, economically dominated groups among BCs. The study is also intends to examine the role of caste and its dominance in political process of BCS in general and in the institutions of Panchayat Raj in particular. The focus of the study is to assess the conditions of BC’s representatives in issues relating to faction, crime, economic conditions and related issues after 1994. Besides, its attempt to examine the merits and demerits of Panchayat Raj acts in terms of extending reservation provisions to people belonging to BCs along with policy implications.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study has the following objectives:  

• To assess the representation of backward castes in the Institutions of Panchayat Raj in relation to social background in Gulbarga District (Karnataka) and Ananthpur District of (Andhra Pradesh).

• To examine the nature of political participation of backward categories in Panchayat Raja Institution in Gulbarga District and in Ananthpur District.

• To examine the impact of political process of backward categories in the working of Panchayat Raja Institution in the study area.

• To examine the pros and cons of reservation provisions of 73rd Amendment Act in the involvement of Backward Categories in Gulbarga and Ananthpur Districts.
• To examine the factors determining the involvement of Backward categories in Panchayat raj Institution and to assess the role of caste, social status and agrarian resources to capture various positions in the institutions of Panchayat raj in Gulbarga (Karnataka) and Anantapur (AP) District.

• To recommend policy implication for achieving social justice by providing opportunities to the people belonging to lower social categories in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

HYPOTHESES:

The Study have the following Hypotheses. 55

• The reservation benefits in PRIs have reached only the dominant social Categories among the BCs in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

• The representatives belonging to BCs in Panchayat Raj institutions in Gulbarga (Karnataka) and Anantapur (AP) are being controlled by Upper caste people.

• The developmental programmes in PRIs are being utilized by the people belonging to higher economic groups among backward category.

METHODOLOGY:

The aim of the study is to assess the status of backward castes with reference to the nature of social categories among the backward category. The important focus of the study is to identify the factors affecting the really backward categories in political process in the institution of Panchayat raj.
The study is to examine the social, economic and crime status of families of representatives in PRIs in regions of Anathpur and Gulbarga Districts.

As the study intends to examine the nature of categories within the BCs are capturing the positions in PRIs by the reservation provisions and finally to evaluate the over all benefits of welfare policies by category wise. It also intends to examine thus programs whether reached to the needy people from backward category or not. For this purpose an Analytical/Empirical, Descriptive and Normative method had been employed in the study.56

SOURCES OF DATA:

In this study the required information has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The major sources of data in the study was based on published and unpublished works on the subject particular in this study, the Caste of the representative within BCs in the three institutions of Panchayat Raj will be the main sources. The political study of different castes within the BCs were the main source of this study for this purpose, the data in the Election Commission, reservation in provisions, census reports, expert views of govt. websites were also be used for collection of data. Secondary data has been also collected from books, journal and news papers. In addition to these sources, primary information had been collected through interview scheduled intended to serve to a cross sections of representatives, officials, caste leads from BCs were used for analysis.
TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:

In view of the objectives, need and importance of the present study, the required data had been collected using different methods of scientific techniques. Particularly, different methods of social enquiry will be adopted. A special tool (questionnaire) was used by the investigator using the scientific process. The questionnaire consists of items in all spread over behavior areas and also to collect the personal data i.e., name, sex, age, social, economic, political and educational background. Further, the collected data was analyzed with the help of computer. The data transformed into computer code and analysis made with the help of single variable or multivariable tables. Statistical tools such as average, percentage, mean, correlation, cross sectional and SES were measured.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

In the present study, the required information has been collected from both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary information has been collected through structured, questionnaire.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

The present study has certain limitations due to the time, financial resources and the nature of the study. The study is confine to the political process and participation of backward castes only in the institution of Panchayat Raj. The study in confine only to Gulbarga District in Karnataka and Antapur District in Andhra Pradesh.
DIVISION OF THE STUDY:

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION: Discusses in detail about the concepts of political process and political participation, Origin of Panchayat Raj Institutions, its Committees, Review of Related Literature, Objectives, Hypothesis, Methodology, Scope and Importance of the Study and Limitations etc.

Chapter 2: EVOLUTION OF PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA: This chapter is intended to discuss the growth of panchayat raj institutions in India.

Chapter 3: PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM IN ANDHRA PRADESH AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS OF BACKWARD CASTES: which examines the history of panchayat raj institutions in Andhra Pradesh with reference to the participation of Backward Castes.

Chapter 4: PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS OF BACKWARD CASTES: This examines the history of panchayat raj institutions in Karnataka with reference to the participation of Backward Castes.

Chapter 5: PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA: As the study area consists of Two States, the detailed Profiles of Anantapur District in Andhra Pradesh and Gulbarga District in Karnataka has been discussed.

Chapter 6: SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS – COMPARISON: In this chapter the political participation of backward castes in the institutions of panchayat raj has been analyzed on the
basis of field experience. The field evidence with reference to the working of backward castes has been collected from the two districts i.e., Anantapur from Andhra Pradesh and Gulbarga from Karnataka and thus the collected data has been transformed into computer and the respective tables are generated.

Chapter 7: PERCEPTION AND PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL PROCESS - COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: It is widely believed that the analysis of age, education, Caste, family structure, occupation, income, land holding, party affiliation, etc., are important in determining the nature of leadership. The data relating to socioeconomic background of elected respondents of Panchayati Raj institutions were collected in the study to get an insight into the emerging pattern of rural leadership in Anantapur and Gulbarga districts.

Chapter 8: CONCLUSION: This chapter presents precise summary about all has done and found in the present study. The thesis comprises of seven chapters in all.
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