PREFACE

Panchayat Raj is a type of Local Self Government. Panchayat Raj institutions are more than agencies of the State Government for Rural development. The main goal of Panchayat Raj is to mobilise people's enthusiasm and make use of manpower and other resources for Rural Development.

India is a land of villages. According to 1991 census 73.4% of the population still live in villages and agriculture forms the main occupation. Each village has its own distinctive peculiar problems. Chronic poverty is rampant among the agrarian population due to faulty policies of the Government in power. It is difficult to find a solution unless the people of the respective village meet, discuss and sort out their problems. Thus to bring them together and make them involve in their problems by active participation, Panchayat Raj is the right forum. Various
programmes for development of village through local participation, devolution or decentralisation of power have given birth to Panchayat Raj system. Panchayat Raj institutions are the gross root units of Local Self Government and are considered as vehicles for Socio-Economic transformation of the rural society.

The main aim of the Panchayat Raj is to:

1) Vest more power to the people in administration.

2) Decentralising the administration.

Copp has defined Rural Development as a process aimed at improving the well-being and self-realisation of people living outside the urbanised areas through collective effort. He further contends that the ultimate target of rural development is people and not infrastructure. According to him, one of the objectives of rural development should be to 'widen people's range of choices'. The concept of what is known as rural development was born in the context of agriculture, and it remained for a long time, co-terminus with agricultural development in India. The Royal
Commission Agriculture (1928), for instance, provides this kind of interpretation to “rural development”. It reported:

“We cannot too strongly state our conviction that the directorship of agriculture is one of the key posts in rural development and that agricultural advance must in a very great degree depends upon the suitability of the officer appointed”.

Nearly fifty-five years later, another committee took a more or less similar view of rural development. The Planning Commission’s Task Force on Integrated Rural Development observed in 1972.

After careful consideration, we have belatedly decided to take what might be considered a rather restricted view of the expression ‘rural development’. We have chosen to equate it with agricultural development in the widest sense so as to embrace, besides crop husbandry, all the allied activities.²

Since the seventies the concept of rural development has become more confining in its interpretation. The World Bank boldly marks such a shift in emphasis and defines rural development as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific
group of people—the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenant and the landless.  

Since rural development intends to reduce poverty it should be designed to increase production and rise productivity. The World Bank paper argues that the provision of improved food supplies and nutrition, together with basic services such as health and education not only contribute to the physical well being of the rural people but also rise their productivity and ability to contribute to the national economy. The objectives of rural development, according to the World Bank, are not restricted to any single department but spread over several, and the resultant mix services to raise agricultural output, create new employment, improve health and education, expand communications, provide housing etc. Thus, the World Bank defines rural development in terms of an improvement of the economic and social life of the rural poor.

Efforts should be towards preservation and improvement of the rural environment, and rural development planning may
be conceived of as identifying the complex factors, which contribute to the creation, change or development of rural area or community. The main consideration, which prompted their introduction, seems to have been the need for provoking public co-operation and participation in national construction and development.

The rural developmental functions in India were assumed by the Government in the context of recurrent famines, but in the beginning, they did not have any legal sanctions behind them. In the first few decades after 1858, some district officers seized (in the midst of famine) the food grain stocks and controlled the market to ensure their distribution among the needy. All this was done without any apparent legal sanction, motivated, as the action purely was, by a determination to control profiteering land alleviate rural suffering. 'Rural Development, thus, began as a humanitarian act and the practice was not backed by any executive or legal sanction in the beginning. Legality and legitimacy were provided later. Rural development as a function of Government initially began 'as a search for an alternative to laissez-faire,' as B.B. Misra observes.'
To improve the conditions of rural people in all spheres in general, agriculture in particular, the Union Government with the help of Ford Foundation, USA, had launched an integrated scheme of community development projects in 1952. The Panchayati Raj in India owes its origin to the findings and recommendations of the study team on the working of community projects and National Extension Services under the auspices of the committee on plan project, popularly known as Balwantrai Mehta Committee. In its findings, Mehta Report pointed out that the community projects failed to generate necessary enthusiasm among rural people for the programme and its implementation. The Committee felt that people's participation is a must for rural development. Hence, it recommended the introduction of Panchayat Raj institutions at the district level. On 1st November 1959, Mysore Village Panchayat and Local Boards Act was introduced. This created a three tier system a) Village Panchayat at village level b) Taluk Development Board at Taluk level c) District Development Council at district level. Keeping in view the aims of Panachayat Raj an act known as Panchayat Raj Act enacted which came into force on August 14,1985.
Under this Act Zilla Parishad, Taluk Panchayat, Mandal Panchayat and Nyaya Panchayat started functioning.

In 1993 a new act was enacted on 24th April called "Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act" and the same was implemented on 10th May 1993. Accordingly Grama Sabha, Grama Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat were created.

Zilla Panchayat was the new name given to former District Boards. Zilla Panchayat is one of the important units of Panachayat Raj system at the district level. The jurisdiction of the Zilla Panchayat is not applicable to local bodies such as Municipalities, Town Municipal Councils, Corporations, City Development Authority, Boards and Notified areas.

The constitution of Zilla Panchayat is like this. The members of Lok Sabha who represent the district, Members of Legislative Assembly, Members of Rajya Sabha, Members of Legislative Councils are its members. Taluk Panchayat Presidents (1/5 in rotation are its members). As per reservation, seats are reserved for SC, ST and Backward Classes, 1/3 of total elected seats are reserved for women. Besides one member for every 40,000 people is elected for Zilla Panchayat.
The President of Zilla Panchayat presides and conducts the administration. An IAS cadre officer is appointed as Chief Secretary of Zilla Panchayat. Zilla Panchayat is subject to control of the state. It is the duty of Zilla Panchayat to prepare a plan for the development of district. The most important function of Zilla Panchayat is development, water works, Animal Husbandry and poultry, roads, rural housing, drinking water, sanitation, Primary, Higher and Technical education, Women and Children Welfare development.

From Balwantarai Mehta Committee report (1959) to 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992), the Panchayat Raj bodies had an ordinary legislative supports of State Government. Due to the lack of political will, the Panchayati Raj institution at times were superceded by the Governments. Hence most of the states neglected these bodies. Wisdom was dawned on the statesmen of the Nation to seek constitutional support for these bodies by 73rd Amendment.
OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the functioning of the Panchayat Raj Institutions in the Rural Development. Accordingly the issues raised are the following:

1. To what extent the local self government was beneficial to the people during the British rule.

2. The role of Local Self Government in independent India. To study the impact of State Government on functioning of Panchayat Raj in Rural Development.

3. To study of 73rd Constitutional Amendment on Panchayat Raj institutions with special reference to Bangalore Zilla Panchayat.

4. The Role of Bangalore Zilla Panchayat in Rural Development.

5. To study the impact of different programmes implemented by Panchayat Raj Institutions in Bangalore Urban District so as to identify the problems and offer suggestions.
The thesis has been divided into six chapters – The first chapter deals with the History of Local Self-Government in India. (A brief survey)

The second chapter deals with the meaning and importance of Rural Development, and the role of Panchayat Raj institutions in rural development.

The third chapter deals with the Community Development Programme and Panchayat Raj in Karnataka.

The fourth chapter deals with the Bangalore Zilla Panchayat.

The fifth chapter deals with a field study of certain villages with particular Reference to Socio-Economic aspects-problems and suggestions.

The sixth chapter deals with the conclusion regarding the success of Panchayat Raj in Rural Development.
HYPOTHESIS

India lives in villages characterised by the backwardness on all fronts. Though evolution of village development or rural development has started during British period, it got impetus only after 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992. Without rural development, the national development will be incomplete. In other words, complete, planned development through democratic de-centralisation is crucial for national development. Rural Development reflects national culture.

METHODOLOGY

The thesis is an analytical study based on primary source materials such as Parliamentary Acts, State Legislative Acts, Government Reports, Experts Committee Reports and personal visit to certain villages with a proforma for information. The secondary source material includes authoritative books, periodicals, articles, News Papers, Journals like Kurukshethra, Yojana etc.
FINDINGS

The Primary objective of any Government, i.e. Union Government/State Government or Zilla Panchayat is to improve the quality of life of rural people through the introduction of welfare schemes. A responsible Government can never neglect the 73.4% of people. National Integrated development depends on the Rural Integrated Development. Hence, it is imperative on the part of any Government, irrespective of party in power to concentrate more on rural areas. Till the introduction of 73rd Amendment, Rural Government received less attention from Governments. Now, it is mandatory on the part of the State Government to conduct periodic elections based on reservations to the Panchayat Raj bodies so as to enable the people to take active part in the administration of their own area.
REFERENCE


4. B.B. Misra: District Administration and Rural Development, New Delhi: Oxford University

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