The interdependence between land and man can never be exaggerated. Any knowledge, past or present relating to land has always fascinated man. With the rapid growth of population, the dependence and importance of land is bound to increase. In a developing economy like India where a larger section of the population continues to depend on agriculture, land attains utmost importance. History reveals that agriculture besides being the source of livelihood, has also been the major source income and wealth to the farming people and revenue to the state exchequer. Wherever land ownership rights were well settled, not only the cultivators enjoyed better security but the state was also prosperous because of well organised production practices and regular flow of revenue from this sector. But with the frequent change of political rule and pursuance of different policies by the petty rulers who numbered over 360, the fortune of agriculture also changed with uncertainty of ownership, frequent visit of famines, wars and diseases forcing a larger section of Indian farming community into a condition of utter poverty. Further, exploitative nature of landholders had added to the misery of the average small landholders and landless tenants. Hence landreform as a policy pertaining to land acquires greater significance.
Since landreform continued as the main source of income the Britishers introduced Zamindari, Mahalwari, Ryothwari and Inamdari systems making the then title holders the agents of revenue collection. A parasitic class was thus successfully created by the British. These institutional aspects induced a degenerative structural system into the Indian agriculture giving rise to unequal production conditions. After the departure of the British, the National government felt that relieving the millions of cultivators from the miseries of tenancy and landless hereditary serfdom as its top most objective and thus brought about legislations for the abolition of Zamindari system and its attendant evils throughout the country from 1950 onwards. In Karnataka too the enthusiastic social and political leaders adopted the landreform legislation and tenancy regulations in 1961 and enforced it with great vigour and modifications by 1974. With the reorganisation of states (1956), the Southern coastal region which was under the Old Madras Presidency was regrouped and acceded to the State of Karnataka and designated as South Kanara and later called the Dakshina Kannada District.

As a consequence of implementation of landreform laws, the Dakshina Kannada District which was in the grip of old degenerative land system underwent a series of changes. It was found to be one of the model districts in the
implementation of landreform laws in the country. But the institutional reforms have not brought about the desired structural changes which are conducive to economic efficiency and social justice in the country as a whole. Productivity of land has come to depend on the power structure. In view of this fact and the high level of implementation of Land reform in Dakshina Kannada district, it was selected for analysing the economic impact of landreform on the living pattern of the people of the area. The study period considered is 1974 to 1988, the years of effective implementation of amended landreform legislation. The analysis is based on field work and sample study using appropriate statistical methods. The study reveals interesting features of the effects of landreform on the socio-political and particularly the economic conditions of the farming community of the region.

Systematic studies on the impact of landreform on agricultural development in Karnataka are limited. As such, this topic was selected for study under the guidance of Dr. T.K. Lakshman, Professor of Economics and the then Director of Centre for Rural Development Studies. While preliminary preparations for drafting the Chapter analysis were being made there was a rude shock in the sudden demise of Professor T.K. Lakshman. I acquired preliminary aspects
of research from him and place on record my deep sense of gratitude to that noble soul.

When I was feeling that my research and myself were left in the lurch, the timely advice and guidance of Dr. A. Kalappa, Professor of Economics, who took over as the Director of Centre for Rural Development Studies, gave me courage and confidence to continue my research inspite of technical difficulties in changing over from late Professor T.K. Lakshman to Dr. A. Kalappa as guide. In order to make the study more systematic technically, I sought the guidance of Dr. T. Srivenkataramana, Reader, Department of Statistics, who willingly consented to guide me in the mathematical and statistical aspects of the study. It was their patience and sustained guidance and supervision which made it possible for me to complete this work. There was always a personal touch, encouragement and affection added to the academic guidance by them. I am deeply indebted to both of them. Prof. S. N. Nanje Gowda, the present Director, Department of Rural Development Studies has been always a source of encouragement and support to me in the entire program. I sincerely thank him.

Prof. M. V. Nadkarni of Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore was helpful in every step. I had the unique benefit of fruitful discussions with him on several
aspects of the work, which have greatly improved the material. I express my gratitude to him.

I thank the University Grants Commission for providing me research fellowship and the Bangalore University for the teaching assignment in the Department of Rural Development, which gave me the necessary financial support to complete this work.

My parents were always a source of inspiration and assistance in my academic endeavour. But for their sustained encouragement and support, this work could not have been completed.

I will be failing in my duty if I don't thank Miss Maina, who is the source of constant encouragement for the completion of this research.

I thank Dr. Sarala Krishnamurthy who read the manuscript and improved the language to a great extent.

The respondent households deserve special thanks for their whole hearted cooperation.

My thanks are due to Mr. Ashok, Miss Revathi and Miss Suman who typed the thesis in a record short time beautifully.

BANGALORE

DATED- 14-6-1990

K.S. VIJAYA KUMAR