CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ELITE ROLE
DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ELITE ROLE

After conceptualizing and delimiting our study within a structural frame, we now proceed to analyse the history of elite role in the field of development. This is necessary. Unless we deal with the situational and contextual factors, we will not be able to proceed with the development process and the role of the elite in its acceleration.

Soon after independence, the government made a cohesive and concentrated effort towards the modernisation of traditional Indian society. The ruling elite adopted a policy of development through democracy, economic planning and a gradual modernisation of the traditional social structure. They had realized that modernisation did not mean merely a socio-economic development, but also a significant change in the dimension of human personality and motivation. The masses must be motivated for a progressively higher achievement. It was therefore decided to associate and mobilise the masses in the process of modernisation and development.
of the traditional Indian Society.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL EXTENSION SERVICE

It was felt that village panchayats were the most effective instrument for bringing about modernisation. In Punjab, the Punjab Panchayat Acts of 1911 and 1921 were superseded by the Punjab Panchayat Act of 1939. The intention was to make the panchayats democratically elected bodies with powers to discharge their roles as self-governing bodies.

In 1952, the Community Development and National Extension Service was inaugurated. The basic aim was to create in the rural masses a desire for economic uplift and social modernisation. This was to be done by strengthening the village panchayats and associating them with the bureaucracy within the integrated framework of Community Development movement. The assumption was that such an integration of these two institutions, will not only provide all kinds of services to the rural people.

1- Inkles considers modernisation of man essential for modernisation of society. A definite set of attitudes, values and feelings mark out the modern man from the traditional man.

Please see

Inkles Alex; The Modernisation of Man in Myron Weiner's - Modernisation
through a single agency, but also result in a closer
and productive contact between the masses and the
bureaucracy. Another expectation was that the movement
will also promote rural leadership as an instrument of
mass-mobilisation.

The responsibility for achieving all these
objectives as usual was put through bureaucracy. At the
apex of the new organisation, stood the National
Development Council linked with the Planning Commission
and the Union Government. The development structure at
the State level consisted of the State Development Council
and the Development Commissioner. The Chief responsibility
at the district level was put on Deputy Commissioner, who
became the principal planner, energiser, prompter and
director of the districts' development effort. He was
to be assisted at the block level by the Block Development

2- The Community Development has simultaneously
been called as a philosophy and a programme, a
movement and a motivation.
Kunte, J.C.; "Community Development and
Development Administration: Some Reflections",
(Community Development and Panchayati Raj Digest,
Vol. VI, No. 1, July 1974)

3- The National Development Council was established
in August 1952 by Resolution no. 62/GF 30, dated
August 6, 1952 of the Cabinet Secretariat.
The Deputy Commissioner maintained his communication link with the people of his area through the Block Development Officer and the village level workers. It was expected that these functionaries will act as the chief agents of change.

No doubt, the elite, who were in power at the national level, were men of vision, but for socio-economic reconstruction, they depended heavily on administrative machinery, instead of maintaining an equilibrium between administrative and political mobilization. While elite and bureaucrats at higher levels interacted more freely, at lower levels their relationship showed signs of strains and tensions.

In spite of the fact that the Deputy Commissioner was

4- In support of this conclusion reference is made to the Evaluation Report on Second Year's Working of Community Projects, (Planning Commission, New Delhi, 1955), p. 4

5- In an empirical study it has been observed that the information collected from key respondents indicated that the Development Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner were more effective coordinates of Development work at the State and the District level than the Block Development Officer at the block level.

made the fulcrum of district development effort, it was felt that the Deputy Commissioner was already overburdened with the administrative work and he was yet to develop a preferential attitude for the development work. Many times he disapproved the advice of the technical personnel, who by themselves had no matching power of implementing the programmes. The administrative structure created to assist him at the local level too became involved in their own hierarchical stratification and concern for their privileges and status. This distorted the very ends they were supposed to serve.

The non-official advisory committees created at these levels also failed to inspire confidence. The bureaucrats saw in them a source of interference in the administrative functions. The masses, too, did not respond to the efforts of such advisory committees for social mobilisation. They felt that these leaders belonged to a particular class and were more in tune with the district administration for their own political survival. These bodies did not meet often and there was little evidence of the systematic fellowship of their

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6- *Ibid*, *On cit*, p. 10
decisions. However, the number of bureaucrats at the rural and urban levels increased enormously with the inauguration of Community Development programmes. What was intended to be a development administration in practice, became a means for the expansion of bureaucracy.

Keeping these objectives in view, the Punjab Government also replaced the Punjab Panchayat Act of 1939, by the Gram Panchayats Act of 1952. But the Government soon realised the gap between the objectives.

7- Apart from the Agricultural Advisory Committee Report (Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India 1958), p.2
Sherma also observes - "While studying the organisation of Block Development Committees, it was found that a majority of the members have not been trained for their assignments, nor... they intimated officially about their functions... the various sub-committees were not functioning well and meetings were not held regularly due to loose administration".

and the instruments created for it. In 1953, Fletcher Commission was appointed. Apart from recommending administrative decentralisation, the Commission also suggested further expansion of bureaucracy. The Commission expressed the hope that officers will act as a guide and friend of the people. The Officers were prompted by the Commission to cultivate leadership qualities of a high order. Barnabas, reacting to such a tendency of the bureaucracy observes:

"... the problem is that bureaucracy cannot think of any other way of overlooking problems except to expand the existing bureaucracy or to create a new bureaucratic structure. Even if there are other patterns of organisation, the bureaucracy makes it sure that it has the control."

The community project movement did not prove equal to the task it was assigned. There were various causes of failure.

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9- Fletcher Commission was appointed vide Punjab Government Memo No. 184-FS/PS dated June 12, 1953.

In the first place, there was a wide gap between policy formulation and policy-implementation process. The decision-making structure in the Secretariat, which included Ministers and senior Administrators, framed plans and took policy decisions on development. Such plans and policies failed to achieve their declared objectives because of lack of coordination between the policy makers and the field administrators. Then again, the field administrators, who were responsible for implementation of the policies and projects, did not possess the capacity and authority to translate these decisions into action, or to meet the requirements of human situation at their own level. The result was authorities at the centre of administration did spin out beautiful plans, but they were meaningless for the masses. Lines of authority and responsibility got confused. Technical decisions were reversed by purpose and applied judgement. This state of affairs adversely affected the development process in the countryside. Greater centralisation of authority and heavy reliance on the generalists constituted substantial drags on speedy,

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11- The field administration, apart from general administrators, also included programme specialists in the desired field of development—like extension officer on Agriculture, Cooperation Animal Husbandry etc.
wise and economic administration. Then, a weak communication link existed between the people and the bureaucracy. If large-scale development was to take place, the communication link between the bureaucracy and the people should have been more effective. The line of communication to the people was weak because it was primarily through the Block Development Officer and the village-level worker, and the Panchayats were kept out of it. The emphasis was mostly on the utilization of significant amount of grants with some participation by the people. This was in spite of the fact that the First Five-Year Plan had assumed that the increasing frequency of contact between the administrators and the people will create in the rural masses an enthusiasm for rural development. Another hope was that it would break the impersonality of the bureaucracy and bring them closer to the people. The expansion and behaviour of bureaucrats, however, perpetuated this very formality.

Another observation was that the contact of the rural mass was limited only to the village level workers. The Block Development Officers and other Senior Officers were contacted only by the rich farmers. This class-consciousness among senior bureaucrats who interacted more easily with the rich farmers, also created a lack of rapport between them and the masses at the implementation level. In this context Satish Arora (1974) also observes that, "these deprived masses have always been the target of essentially bureaucratic - political exercise in manipulation and mobilization for goals that have already been pre-determined for them."14

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13- "The National Institute of Community Development Survey in 1965 showed that as many as 41.54% of people had not even heard about community development".

San Lalit K. and Prodipto Roy: Awareness of Community Development in India 1 Preliminary Report (National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad, 1966)

Thus, inspite of the re-orientation of community Project set up, the development process did not progress satisfactorily during its earlier phase (in fifties). This was partly due to the problem of administrative coordination, and partly because community development programmes centred only on the building of social services through administrative infra-structure. It was soon realised that without seeking active cooperation of people at the grass-root levels, the bureaucratic structure of the community development movement would collapse. With this end in view, a major structural change was introduced on the recommendations of the Suvant Rai Mehta Committee in 1958. The Committee recommended the establishment of 'Democratic Decentralization'. The institution of local-self-government to be introduced at village, block and district levels, was to create its impact on the local administration. Whereas the nature of Community Development Organisation had strengthened the tendency of centralised control in the office of the Collector, with the Block Development officer acting as a link between the village official and him, the introduction of Panchayati Raj sought decentralisation of administrative control. It was hoped that with the
provisions of Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads, development at grass-roots would become a reality.

The new structure of Panchayati Raj Administration was expected to be an improvement over the early Community Development Administration. It called for establishing a fresh relationship between the bureaucrats, elite and the people. They were now to be treated as three inseparable links of the system. It was realised that administrators left to themselves will not care for the people sufficiently. They were therefore asked to operate in partnership with the local elite. Likewise, the local elite, who were earlier engaged in the defiance and disobedience of authority, were expected to cooperate with the bureaucrats in the task of mobilising public support. The feeling was that the local administrative patterns should be similar to that of the State pattern. Both the administrator and politician at the subordinate level should also act as an instrument of democratisation and politicalisation and help the rural masses in making them more articulate and development-conscious.
Accepting most of the recommendations of the Rehta Committee, the Punjab Government amended the existing legislation on Gram Panchayats by incorporating in it the new concept of 'Democratic Decentralisation'. The Punjab Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad Act came into force on 2nd October, 1961. The idea was to create and govern the functioning of the two higher tiers of Panchayati Raj. The Punjab pattern is similar to that of Rajasthan. It treats the block as a unit of decentralisation. Unlike Maharashtra, it has not opted for a dyarchical pattern of administration at the district level. Whereas there are two district heads (Regulative & Developmental) in Maharashtra, the Deputy Commissioner in Punjab continues to be the Chief coordinator and the head of both the regulatory and development departments in the district.

The Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad were organically linked with the Panchayats as unit of local government and rural development. The Samitis were also made operative units to look after the functions within their respective jurisdiction. Each tier of Panchayati Raj was to consist of popularly elected representatives and official functionaries. While decision making powers were vested in the elected
representatives, the officials placed under different levels of Panchayati Raj Administration were made responsible for properly guiding the representatives and for implementing the decisions taken by them."

But, how far these objectives have been accomplished? Has the Panchayati Raj been able to inculcate 'Development Consciousness' among the concerned elite and the masses? How far have the elite become development-oriented, for it is through them that 'development consciousness' is to percolate below and influence the psychology of the people in general? How far has the bureaucracy adjusted itself to the democratic control exercised by the elite at different levels? What is the image of the elite in the eyes of the people whom they are supposed to serve? These are some of the problems associated with the development of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The development consciousness generally depends upon the extent of involvement in developmental tasks and the quantum of power exercised. In this context it can be hypothesized for further testing that members of Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti will be most development-conscious, Sarpanches of Village Panchayats coming later and Panchas last on the ladder. This is due to the facilities availed and extent of power exercised by them. Even among the masses, it appears that except for 'progressive farmers' the consciousness does not appear to have percolated down below the rural masses.
connection the Panchayati Raj Bodies continue to be statutorily and administratively controlled by the Government through its officers.\(^{16}\)

The Punjab Administrative Reforms Commission (1965)\(^{17}\), and Rajinder Singh Committee on Panchayati Raj (1966)\(^{18}\), realised that these bodies were deficient in their capacity to plan and execute activities contributing to rural development and growth, and that

\(^{16}\) In Punjab, Government can cancel or suspend a resolution approved by a particular Samiti or Zila Parishad on the ground of illegibility, or if it is not in social interest. It can also remove or suspend a member for misconduct. The Government can also constitute an enquiry, or if necessary supersede any Samiti or Zila Parishad. A general control over these bodies is also maintained by the Government through the Deputy Commissioner. Please see (Section 102, 103, 104 and 114 of the Punjab Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad Act of 1961-aa amended upto 31st December, 1973)


\(^{18}\) The Government of Punjab - The Study Team on Panchayati Raj in Punjab - Report, (Chairman Rajinder Singh, Chandigarh, 1964)
they have failed to create any psychological impact on the rural masses. There was also lack of cooperation from officials, who were expected to guide these bodies.

The interaction between the bureaucrats and elite at district and block level was characterised by tension. Each group tended to assign much more importance to its own role and evaluated the relevance of the other group. Naturally, such a situation was not at all conducive to the forging of relationship based on reciprocal understanding and appreciation. It prevented bureaucrats and elites from developing healthy conventions.

It has been pointed out that the lack of success of these institutions was due mainly to the lack of co-ordination. (a) between different level of Panchayati Raj and (b) between bureaucracy and the elected representative.

Please see:

Further studies on this issue, from time to time about which reference has subsequently been made in this study are by:
Kothari, S. and Roy, Ramshray; Relation between the Politician and Administration at district level, (Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, 1969), p. 170
Nathur, Kuldip; Bureaucratic Response to Development, (National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1972), p. 89-91

Soshadhar, K.; Political Linkages and Rural Development - a comparative study of the political process and interactions between different levels of Govt. in two Indian states, (National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976), p. 217-226
It also alienated them from the rural masses, whose interests they were supposed to serve.

The development orientation of the elite too is dependent on the social structure of the community which continues to be inequitable. Those who expected that Panchayati Raj will do away with political discrimination and bring about a real democratic society, seem to have largely been disappointed. The rural power structure continues to be dominated by economically rich class. The poorer sections of the rural population remain as benefit of economic advantage and political power as before. Even the elite participation in Panchayati Raj has been with some objective. Either they desire through it, a convenient entry into state and national politics, or to secure economic advantage from government planning and policies.

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21- Ibid. p.61

22- "Only a limited number of farmers, therefore by virtue of their position in rural society have been able to make use of the facilities offered by Community Development and Panchayati Raj Programmes, but the real spirit behind these programmes has been largely defeated."

Bandhopadhyay, Kalyani: Agricultural Development in China and India, (Ullly Eastern Ltd. 1976), p. 121-123
The elite-mass relationship is also marked by a big gap between the citizen's expectations and elite responses. In spite of the political tension existing between bureaucrats and local elite, it can be safely assumed that if their class-interests suffer they will not hesitate in coming together. The Panchayati Raj hierarchy, thus, consists of a set of individuals having common social and economic properties, linked in a loose-knit network and becoming increasingly aware of their common economic interests. These persons use development agencies as a means to develop a resource base to nurse and enlarge their body of supporters.

This elite-mass gap at the local level remains one of the most visible and salient features of the newly-independent countries of Asia and Africa. Project implementation in these countries is always identified as administrative, except in case where a politician

has a personal interest in a project. For instance, Sharma (1973) observes, "Except for Tanzania centralised control is the order of the day. In Sudan, the amount of centralised control at all the levels downwards reduced the local authorities to the status of advisory bodies. The position is different in western countries. For instance, in his study of local elite in America, Arnold Rose observes, "Leaders or the elite of our society are not completely distinguishable from the mass in their monopoly of power or their absolute class-differentiation." Likewise, bureaucrats have also lost touch with the poor. There is little contact between the lower strata of society and the bureaucrats. The attitude of


the rural fold towards government, particularly
towards local bureaucracy is conditioned by the kinds
of adaptation bureaucrats make to the Government's
development activities. Actually the poor have
resigned themselves to their fate, in spite of the fact
that so much is being done by the Government for them.

Thus, due to the absence of satisfactory
relationship between the different organs of Panchayati
Raj, the Panchayati Raj Scheme, too, has failed to
achieve the expected results, specially in the field of
economic development. This proves F. U. Rigg's contention
that "the price of democratic development may have to
be slower development in the economic sphere." In

26- Weiner Myron: India: Two Political Cultures
(Edition by Pye, Lucien - Political Culture and
27- Barnabas A. P.: op. cit., p. 10
28- Rigg, F. U.: Cited in Le Palenboros-
"Bureaucracy and Political Development", p. 27
Riggs substantiates his thesis further by quoting
Malcolm B. Parson, that "efficient administrative
machine can be used to prevent as well as promote
development and much of the effort that it takes
to produce the appearance, if not the reality of
improvement in public administration, can become,
as it has in Phillipines, a means of concealing
inability or unwillingness to undertake needed
action on other fronts" Parsoni Performance Budgeting in the Phillipines-
(Public Administration Review 17 (Summer 1957)
p. 173-179)
this context, we can also hypothesize for further testing that the elite-mass relationship is correlated with the intensity of development in a particular area.  

INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT PROGRAMME (I.A.D.P.)

A reappraisal of the whole situation led to the setting of Intensive Agricultural District Programme, most popularly known as IADP. The programme was initially launched in April, 1961. It was jointly financed by the Govt. of India, State Governments and also supplemented by Ford Foundation. The new programme also known as Package Programme was started in seven selected districts in India; Ludhiana was one of them. The main object of this programme was to make rapid increase in foodgrains production. The programme was initiated with district as a unit of development, and concentrated mostly on an optimum use of fertilizer, high-yielding varieties of seeds and the teaching of latest technical knowledge to the farmer. The entire work under the programme (IADP) was controlled by the Deputy Commissioner. He was provided with a Pilot Project Officer - a senior technocrat from the Department of Agriculture. The Programme also provided for subject-matter specialists at the district level, who rendered advice to the
junior staff and the farmers. The block and village level set-up, however, was not very different from the earlier community development set up, except that a number of additional extension officers in agriculture and cooperatives were appointed. The number of village level workers in each block was also increased to meet the requirements of the programme. The underlying idea was to cut down unnecessary procedural delays. The programme thus took into consideration all the economic activities and infra-structure relating to a particular district. The hypothesis was that I.A.D.P. and High Yielding Variety Programme along with a change in agriculture and other socio-economic sphere of life, will also help in stimulating leadership in rural community.

Every new project introduced by the Government for socio-economic uplift, was initiated with the hope that it would inspire village leaders and masses. At the same time the trend of making the Deputy Commissioner as the central actor of such projects continued. The belief was that his position within the district and

his link with the Government could ensure a prompt action in coordinating the efforts of bureaucrats and elite. His position could be utilised in accelerating the implementation of development schemes in the district.

But the attempt at the co-ordination of elite-mass participation in the implementation of development projects could not prove very successful, for the initiative for such schemes always came from the top. Inspite of the suggestions to share power, the bureaucrats are not prepared to pass over the 'power' along with responsibility to the elite and the masses at the local level. As Dube (1966) observes:

Efforts at decentralisation of powers such as the experiments of democratic decentralisation for development in India meet with even greater resistance. Doubtless, the infant grass-root democracy is not without its shortcomings but its threat to the perpetuation of bureaucratised interests have alerted the administrator whose approach to the experiment is extremely guarded, wooden and unimaginative.30

30- Dube, S.C.; The Bureaucracy and Nation-Building in transitional societies (Extracts from Political Development and social change) (Edited by Finkle J.K. and Gable R.W. John Wiley and Sons, 1966)
Though an attempt towards power-distribution was made, through the enactment of Panchayati Raj Acts, the power went into the hands of the existing dominant elite of society, and the poorer sections of society still remained without it. The power-structure thus continued to be dominated by higher-class and castes - which included both elite and the bureaucrats. The poorer section of society, inspite of their numerical majority lacked resourceful and articulated leadership, and were unable to bring about a revolutionary change in the power structure. Naturally, development could not be a mass-movement, because the schemes were never initiated from below. On the other hand, they were imposed from the top.

The benefits of these development schemes like fertilizers, irrigation facilities, pesticides etc. also did not completely reach the poorer section.

31- In the case of Bihar, Sachidanand observes: "Our studies of some T.A.D.P. areas in Shehabad revealed that only higher caste people with more education, higher socio-economic status and larger holdings are credited with maximum adoption of improved practices like seeds, fertilizers etc." Sachidanand: Social Implications of Agricultural Development, (National Publishing House, Delhi 1978), p. 154
of the rural community. Administratively too, the shortcomings centered on the split line of command at the district and the block levels, the inadequate decentralization of administration and financial power, and the lack of inter-departmental coordination.

The inadequacy of administrative system for a dynamic change was realized and the second report of Expert Committee on Intensive Agricultural District Programme, observed that the A.D.P. has been a square peg in a round hole.

Thus, the impact of T.A.D.P. too was marginal.

The big gap between the mass expectations and the response of the elite continued as usual. The seriousness of the situation in Punjab, was realized by

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32- In Punjab too it has been estimated that only 10% to 20% of farmers were able to participate in and benefit from the High Yielding Varieties and that not more than 10% of the small farmers were involved in it.

33- Kahlon, A.S., Sharma, A.C. and Oesb, P.C.; op. cit., p. 22

the Punjab Administrative Reforms Commission. It made a series of recommendations including a clear and firm directive to all officers to maintain good relations and to work in harmony with Panchayati Raj Bodies and the people. In practice, however, officers' harmony with the people tended to mean keeping harmonious relations with the existing elite.

As a result of these recommendations, the Punjab Government's firm commitment to increase agricultural production in the State, the whole administrative machinery was geared under the overall supervision of the Development Commissioner, Punjab. Periodical instructions (for Rabi and Kharif Crops) were issued to field officers for accelerating development work.


Thus, along with the steps taken by the State Government in establishing institutional structure, and with the impact of several other factors, both economic and non-economic, the farmer of Punjab rapidly adopted the new farm technology. The transformation of agriculture from 'subsistence' to a 'modern' one started taking place. This became possible due to the unique characteristics of peasantry, their skill and entrepreneurial ability, and their psychological orientations in viewing agriculture as a productive business. Related to these were the simultaneous growth and expansion of the institutional structure, which paved the way for the adoption of the 'seed-irrigation-fertilizer technology' and the intensive use of associated technological inputs that go with the intensive and profitable agriculture. All these efforts brought a revolution in the agricultural production in Punjab, most popularly known as 'Green Revolution'.

GREEN REVOLUTION

A view of the progress made in Punjab during the period 1965-1977 - popularly associated with the period of Green Revolution can be taken from the following figures. The average yield per hectare
(wheat example) rose from 1236 in 65-66 to 2395 in 74-75. The area under High Yielding Varieties of wheat increased from 5700 hectares in 1965-66 to 25.79 lakhs hectares in 1976-77. The wheat yield in the state also touched a new high with the production of 65.72 lakh tons foodgrains in 1976-77. Government expenditure on Community Development also increased from Rs. 126.04 lakhs in 1965-66 to 203.03 lakhs in 1974-75.

The most significant impact of Green Revolution was the emergence of 'Progressive Farmers' in Punjab. The state has probably the largest concentration of such farmers. This new class of rural elite are more development-conscious, articulate and are able to interact more freely with the bureaucracy. They are also emerging as the new Panchayati Raj leaders in Punjab. A situation has thus developed, where, in

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38- Statement by Minister of Agriculture, Punjab - The Tribune, (Chandigarh, October 20, 1975)
40- The Statistical Abstract, Punjab - 1974
Punjab the local administration comes more into direct contact with this organised class of rural elite, who are always responsive to and ready for experimentation in scientific farming. As more and more governmental benefits are made available through different administrative channels, awareness of the rules for acquiring these benefits increases among this section of society. Because the benefits are in short supply, they activate not only the normal administrative channels but also utilize the network of their personal contact with the local bureaucrats. Whatever measures are introduced by the Government, the benefits are generally syphoned off at the top by this new class of rural elite.

The provisional hypothesis (to be tested later), that in Punjab the new class of rural elite interact freely with the Officers is different from the conclusion arrived at by Ranganath in his study of changing pattern of leadership in U.P. He observes "The C.D. Leadership is chiefly composed of lower and lower middle income groups and the upper income groups are generally out of the picture. The reasons are—(1) C.D. Leadership implies a sort of subordination to the Block staff, which is not the linking of rich; and (2) they withdraw the moment their interests are actually or potentially threatened".

On the other hand, the economic conditions of the small and marginal farmers continue to deteriorate. They are always under debt. It has been estimated that small and marginal farmers in Punjab are under debt to the tune of 135 crores. Socially, too, they continue to be at the bottom of the power-hierarchy, because of their lack of organisation and relative absence of political skill.

The improve the conditions of the small and marginal farmers, another scheme under bureaucratic patronage took birth—commonly known as Small Farmers Development Agency (S.F.D.A.) and Marginal Farmers Loan Agency (M.F.L.A.). The underlying idea of the scheme was to diversify the economic activities of the rural poor. The benefits of this scheme as usual went to rich farmers with the active connivance of the bureaucracy. More disturbing were the findings that about one third of marginal farmers in Punjab still lived below poverty line. The bureaucratic plea about the failure of the scheme was that they had no exclusive powers to implement the programme.

42- The Tribune (Chandigarh, Feb. 14, 1978)
In 1977, the emphasis shifted from SFDA/MFLA to another scheme, known as Integrated Rural Development Programme (I.R.D.P.). Though theoretically sound, this scheme too remained practically in-operative. A tragedy which always repeats itself is that, whenever a development scheme fails, the bureaucrats instead of self-introspecting themselves, are always ready with a substitute scheme. In submitting the new scheme to their political masters, they always ensure that it is implemented through them.

In 1989, both SFDA/MFLA and IROP were merged and its implementation was sponsored through a new agency now designated as Integrated Rural Development Agency (I.R.D.A.). To justify its indispensability, the bureaucrats started its new familiar strategy of casting doubts over the utility of other development agencies and justifying their own expansion for the effective implementation of the scheme. Suggestions were made to re-structure the Rural Development Agency right from the State to local level, by the creation

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*Details about the Integrated Rural Development Programme are given in the subsequent Chapters.*
of a separate hierarchy. Acting on such an advice, the Punjab Government have already conferred additional powers to the Block Development Officers and Project Officers for the effective implementation of the rural development programmes. All I.A.S. and P.C.S. Cadre Project Officers have been given charge of the development branch of the Deputy Commissioner's Office and have been redesignated as Additional Deputy Commissioner (Development). Similar functions and powers have been assigned to Sub-Divisional Officers at the Block level. The infra-structure of Rural Development Agency accordingly stands bifurcated from that of the Panchayati Raj Organisation.

The current problem therefore is not confined only to those factors that have accelerated development, but also to examine as why such a process has benefited only a particular section of the society? Why the institutional arrangements made for development and democratic decentralisation are merely working as a bureaucratic dominated development agencies? Also how far development process is influenced by the socio-economic and cultural composition of the elite class who at present are acting as development agents?
Our hypothesis is that most of the elite and bureaucrats, who are acting as development agents belong to affluent classes and dominant castes. They will naturally try to benefit each other. They, however, will resist socio-economic change, if in the garb of development and democratic-decentralisation, it disturbs the existing castes and class power-structure. To justify our hypothesis it will be necessary in the first place to study the socio-economic profiles of the elite and bureaucrats.