CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY
This chapter deals with the background of the Panchayat raj institutions, statement of the problem, hypothesis of the study, objectives of the study, review of literature, significance of the study, justification of the study, relevance of the study, methodology of the study, limitations of the study and organisation of the study.

Panchayati Raj Institutions have been proclaimed as the vehicles of socio-economic transformation in rural India. Effective and meaningful functioning of these bodies would depend on active involvement, contribution and participation of its citizens both male and female. It is the basis for the achievement of 'Social Justice' and 'Empowerment' of weaker sections on which the development initiative has to be built upon for achieving overall human welfare of the society. Decentralisation is a prime mechanism through which democracy becomes truly representative and responsive. The democratic ideals of decentralization, development and increased continuous and active popular participation in the process of nation-building can be secured only through the working of an efficient system of local government. Without a well organized system of local government, no democratic political system can be expected to become stable and really developed.

**Background of Panchayat Raj Institutions in India**

Panchayats as institutional vehicles for development have been an integral part of the Indian political and social system for ages. They have been the backbone of the Indian villages since the beginning of recorded history. They have functioned and are functioning as a very good tool to achieve socio-economic change in the society. Administratively, it is good for the local communities to decide of what is best for them in terms of spending on infrastructure and on other important aspects pertaining to the socio-economic upliftment of the society from the grassroots level, because the bureaucrats living in the state capitals will not have enough time to know as to where to build a road in a village and to identify about where and which locality needs better drainage, so it is much better that this should be decided by the elected officials who are at present residing in their respective villages and talukas.

Gandhi, the father of the nation, in 1946 had aptly remarked that Indian independence must begin at the bottom and every village ought to be a republic or
panchayat having powers. Gandhiji’s dream has been translated into reality with the introduction of a three-tier Panchayati Raj system to ensure people’s participation in rural reconstruction. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are empowered to function as institutions of self government and to prepare plans for economic development and social justice and for the empowerment of the people of all sections. Panchayati Raj Institutions constitute the bedrock for the implementation of most of the rural development programmes in India. Local Government or Local Self-Government, as named in India, has come into existence through a long process of evolution. In the western countries this evolution has taken place over recent centuries and in some of those countries, its origin was due to deliberate decentralisation of politico-administrative powers to representatives or institutions set up within the governmental system. In our country, the establishment of Panchayat Raj system is a milestone in the journey of political institutions at the grassroot level. The development of Local Self-Government is pivotal in nurturing grassroot democracy. As Mahatma Gandhiji said, democracy to be meaningful and realistic, must be practiced at the village level and India’s future at the micro level depends upon people’s participation in decentralized planning and development.

In India and several other Asian countries the origin and development of Local Self-Government institutions has been a comparatively recent phenomena within their respective governmental systems. The Panchayati Raj institutions began to be gradually democratised in structure and were also empowered to undertake increasing responsibility for local affairs, including civic services. Strengthened representative local government institutions have been expanding to cover the length and breadth of the country in recent decades. Recently, definitive initiatives are being undertaken by the Central Government and under its guidance by the State governments to renovate and revitalise the Panchayati Raj System.

The concept of local government is well known in India since ancient period. Throughout the history, some traces of Village Panchayats are found in the form of village communities. Empires have been built and destroyed by invaders but the villages have retained their identities. Villages have always had a headman as a
government representative. Village was an economic and an administrative unit at the grassroot level.

In India, Panchayat Raj institutions, which commenced functioning in the year 1949, have been increasingly perceived as important institutions and regarded as an instrument of participatory democracy for national development. Participatory democracy or grass-root democracy or democratic decentralization for development through Panchayat Raj has drawn the attention of policy makers, programme planners, programme implementing authorities, researchers, sociologists and other professional workers. The Government of India Act 1935, Malaviya Committee (1956), Balwant Rai Mehata Committee (1957), Ashok Mehta Committee (1978), Hanumantha Rao Committee (1983), G.V.K. Rao Committee (1985), Singhvi Committee (1986), etc., have dealt with the development, functioning, autonomy, freedom, weaknesses, and remedial measures for strengthening of the Panchayati Raj system. Reddy (1974) asserted that, to promote political development and social justice, people's institutions should be created.

Objective of Panchayat Raj Institutions in India

Independent India opted for parliamentary democracy, owing to the big size & heterogeneous nature of Indian society. The framers of the Indian constitution decided to have a federal form of government i.e., one at the centre & the other at the state level. When the draft constitution touched upon local government in a small way, many members of the constituent assembly demanded that the local self-government should be given a prominent place in order to fulfill the dreams of Gandhi's 'Ramarajya'.

When India won independence, the constituent assembly framed up two committees, i.e. one for drafting up the constitution and the second for provincial committee, but in neither of these committees, any mention was made of panchayat raj based on Gandhian ideals.

The main intention or objective of introducing panchayat raj institutions is to provide democracy from the top to the grass root level ensuring involvement of the people in all activities and processes of rural development. The people enjoying the liberty of a sound democracy should participate in the government activity, because
both union and the state governments are functioning through the elected representatives of the people, because sovereignty lies with the people and the union and state governments derive their authority from the people through voters and all the funds that the union and state governments are spending mainly come from the people through taxing them directly and indirectly. So, it is the bounded duty of a dutiful citizen to prefer right things and should exercise their right to observe how the governments are functioning and watch everything being implemented in a proper manner.

After the formulation of the constitution on 26th January 1950, the Indian government clearly recognized that without a definite and far-reaching rural development programmes, the aspect of alleviation of poverty and associated problems would remain a distant dream. So, the Community Development Programme (CDP) was introduced in 1952 and intensified from 1953 onwards had sought for regional approach to planning and development of the rural areas. The National Development Council affirmed the objective in introducing democratic institutions at the district and block suggesting that each state should work out the structure which is suited to its conditions; otherwise we would never be able to evoke local interest and excite initiative in the field of development.3

**Community Development Programme (CDP) - 1952**

The rural population scattered all over the nation, often in distant places or areas had to be reached out and involved in the development efforts. This kind of a gap was fulfilled through the Community Development Programme, launched on 2nd October 1952. The CDP experiment continued for quite a long period. Eventually, that experiment failed to bring in desired results. In the higher political areas the catch phrase i.e. 'Democratic Decentralization' became very popular. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, himself believed in real power being transferred from top to the village level or the grassroot level.

But, the Community Development Programme, met with an utter failure because of its only involvement by bureaucrats and which became bureaucratic programme planning, formulation of policies, decision-making and implementation fully looked and cared only by officials and this is because at that time, the local
governments were not the self-governments and there was no participation of the local people.  

Local Self-Governments depend on the culture and ideology of decentralized democracy, because democracy indicates the rule of people i.e., the people must exercise political power and decentralized democracy desires the rule of people and the accountability of the administrators to the people at the grass root level. In other words, people have to participate in both political and administrative fields because democratic decentralization relates primarily to political and administrative fields. Democratic decentralization relates preliminarily to political decentralization and later to administrative decentralization and its responsibility to the former decentralization.

It was largely through the good will initiative of the late K. Santhanam, who always stood for economic and financial decentralization of powers. Because, when K. Santhanam moved the resolution on Panchayat Raj, there were diverse obstructive and overall criticisms from all quarters. The over centralization and denial of village government was largely condemned. The only way open was only through the Directive Principles of State Policy as enshrined in the Constitution of India. Article 40 of the Constitution also explicitly mentions that "The state shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of local self government".

The Community Development movement was predominantly development oriented and not merely for the reason of the agro-technological, industrial programmes that it was intended to administer, but also for embodying in itself the pioneering and meaningful attempt for the creation of what has been described earlier as developmental conscience. It was a kind of self-help, people's programme with government participation. The C.D.P. provided only for association of the people through the Block Advisory Committees, while the panchayats look forward to their participatory partnership through people's elective institutions. The contextual link between the two and the failure of the community developmental conscience in the rural masses provided a scope for the appointment of the
Balwantray Mehta committee and in turn as per its recommendations; the three-tier scheme of democratic decentralization was established.

The panchayat raj was therefore, recommended as a remedial measure for the shortfalls of Community Development Programme in its basic objective of creating a self-helping rural community because the panchayat raj had already learnt its lessons from the community development. The development of self-helping rural community, which was the basic postulate of community development programme gave a meaningful goal orientation to panchayat raj and the extension approach which had been the main stray of the former and to enrich the operation of the latter. The C.D.P. had failed to relate the issue of building up a self-helping rural community mainly to the harsh realities of rural life. The delays in the tradition of existing agrarian and economic relationships are enormous impact of social hierarchy, halting attitude shown towards developmental activities by bureaucracy, lack of communicational gap between extensional services and the rural people. The ambitious character of the programme both in context and coverage led to the gap between official expectation and people's responsive attitudes and thin spread of resources on the other. The overall slump in the post-intensive stage, the failure of the C.D.P., to throw up non-official leadership and reach the lowest and the last, have contributed to the weakening of the C.D.P., movement in many ways.

**Second Five-Year Plan**

In India, the second Five-Year Plan made an attempt at planning from below, by inviting plans from the covert authorities at the district, block and even village level which received set-backs. It is clear from the reports of the panchayat raj research project of the University of Rajasthan on Panchayat Raj institutions in Jaipur district, which maintains that: “The Panchayat Samiti Plan was so unrealistic that it was sent back to it with a note by the Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, that it needed thorough revision and alterations, since the calculations of fund needed for local demands embodied in Panchayat Samiti show that these could far exceed the total funds available for the entire State Plan”. 6
Panchayat Raj in a state of stagnation - 1964 to 1977

During the period i.e., from 1964 to 1977, the panchayat raj institutions remained in a state of stagnation. After the Janata Government came to power at the centre in 1977, a fresh effort was made to put some life and vitality in the panchayat raj system because the Ashok Mehta Committee was set up of which S.K. Dey was also a member. Following the recommendations of Ashok Mehta Committee Report, model bills were prepared with an intention that every state government would follow the pattern and pass the bill. However, this did not happen and in 1986, the Government of India appointed a high power committee by L.M. Singhvi to enquire into the working of Panchayat Raj Institutions and to suggest ways and means of strengthening them. The committee held the view that panchayat raj institutions declined due to lack of conceptual clarity, absence of political will and denial of national priority, lack of continuous process of research, evaluation, feedback and correction. The committee suggested that the panchayat raj institutions should be organized in the manner on the process of democratic decentralization for building up the institutional edifice from the grassroots to upwards and not as a gift of devolutionary process.

The committee's view on fresh conceptualization of Panchayat Raj had taken the whole subject to a higher degree of consideration. After decades of deliberations by committees and commissions and public reactions to them, the Union Government decided to take a conclusive step, to provide full fledged political and constitutional support and apparently by introducing a Constitutional Amendment Bill (64th Amendment) in the Lok Sabha by the late Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi but the bill lapsed with the dissolution of the parliament.

Introduction of 73rd Amendment Act

The Narasimha Rao Government, which came to power after the general election of 1991, reintroduced the bill to incorporate local government including panchayat raj, endowing it with the power, resources and independence for its effective functioning. In May 1993, the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment Bill) 1991, was notified by the central government and as such became a part of Indian Constitution.
As a result, local government including both panchayat raj institutions and urban local government have become the third layer of the Indian governmental system and so far as the constitutional status is concerned, it was for the first time that these institutions were accorded the constitutional status on par with the central and state governments.

The Panchayat Raj (Seventy-third Constitutional Amendment) Act provides certain far-reaching proposals. It provides for direct election to all the seats of the panchayats, at the village level to the body at the intermediate block Samiti and Zilla levels. It provides for a fixed tenure of 5 years and next elections to be held within a period of six months in the event of suppression of any panchayat or at the expiry of its period. The Act also provides for a compulsory 3 tier-system in all the states, except where the population does not exceed 20 lakhs. In the latter case, the states can have the option not to have the Block Samiti. The Constitution provides reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes in proportion to the total population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of their respective area.

The Constitution links the various panchayat tier-systems by an arrangement providing for interlocking membership. The heads of the village panchayat are to find representation in the intermediate bodies and the heads of the latter in the district level bodies. The elected representatives in the national and state legislature may be made members of the intermediate and district level bodies and they may even have the right to vote.

The Constitution provides for two independent authorities, one to conduct free and fair elections to the panchayat raj bodies and second, to devolve appropriate funds to make them financially sound. The proposed one-member State Election Commission is to enjoy the status and independence of a High Court. A Finance Commission is set up every five years to determine the devolution of finances on the Panchayat Raj bodies.

A third stratum of government is essentially a constitutional requirement and to what extent the requirement is fulfilled will depend on how far State Legislatures are prepared to go in endowing the powers and legitimate authority to their panchayats. The people's participation at the local level in administrative and
political matters is a necessary prerequisite for strengthening a sense of maturity among the masses and for the development of locality to solve their problems. The people possess adequate right to express their meaningful demands and they could themselves provide solutions to those problems. The term 'development' includes not only material improvisation but also mental, moral, philosophical and if possible spiritual that gives an opportunity for the people to exercise political power with responsibility. This according to Shiba Prasad Mukherjee refers to it as "empowering the people".\textsuperscript{11}

When people are given an opportunity for constant participation in this process which is possible only through the means of decentralization i.e., political decentralization then the aspect of decentralization of planning in the real sense would therefore, imply handling of the planning functions to the Panchayat Raj Institutions.\textsuperscript{12}

Decentralization of planning in the real sense would imply a complete change in the planning set-up from the prevailing bureaucratic-technocratic framework to a participative one. This would require that the district planning team should work directly under the Zilla Parishad and this should be followed by a similar arrangement at lower levels of planning at the Block level. Therefore, decentralized planning becomes the most meaningful and effective aspect when the people themselves become the planners at the Village level, Mandal or Block level and finally at the District level.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{Article 40-Directive Principles of State Policy}

After India got independence, panchayats were specifically mentioned in Article 40 of the Constitution as part of the Directive Principle of State Policy\textsuperscript{14}. This Constitutional provision directed the union and state governments to take steps to organize village panchayats and give them such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to act as units of self-government. Since this article, was not binding on the states, the panchayats were not taken up seriously by the states. But through the 73\textsuperscript{rd} Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992, panchayati raj has now been granted constitutional recognition and through which all the states are entrusted to work for the welfare of all in the rural areas.
In some states like Karnataka, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat the panchayats have benefitted the rural people by undertaking social and economic welfare measures mainly because the elected representatives are directly involved in the process of planning and development. But this role is yet to be assumed by the panchayats in most other states. Therefore, the overall socio-economic and cultural developments of rural areas depend on strong panchayats.

To conclude, the panchayat raj can be called the institutional mechanism for decentralized democracy in India. The Indian rural development and modernization have changed its meaning because in order to understand the extent of modernization it is essential to understand the initial stages of village development in India, which needs the understanding of the villager’s situation and their place in a better world. It is essential that such a conscience should grow for the betterment of their lives. The basic postulates of democracy like politicization and democratization is one of the most important attributes to a responsible government.

The Panchayati Raj system, it is generally felt, can be made to succeed through decentralization of authority with popular participation at the grass-root level. Participation of the people in the lower units of administration in the process of decision making through panchayati raj institutions is the sine qua non of the success of development programmes meant for the upliftment of the rural poor both socially and economically. But the panchayati raj institutions are confronted by several problems. Hence, there is a need for a scientific study, based on field work, to examine the awareness about the panchayati raj system, current practice of participatory democracy and factors contributing to the successful functioning of panchayati raj system especially for the welfare of Scheduled Castes.

Statement of the problem

Inspite of various welfare measures undertaken by the Union and the States to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes, they tend to remain vulnerable. Till today they are denied certain important civil rights by the upper castes especially in the remote villages. They are subject to various offences,
indignities, humiliations and harassment. Serious crimes have been committed against them for various historical, social, cultural and economic reasons. The Scheduled Castes had to perform such unclean occupations as carrying night soil and dead animals, cleaning urinals and cattle shed, washing clothes and performing certain duties at places of cremation. These occupations were treated as polluted or impure. So, people performing these occupations were treated as untouchables. On account of the practice of untouchability the Scheduled Castes had to suffer from the following types of disabilities viz., no physical contact, ban on the use of common wells and tanks, prohibited from entering the temple, did not receive service from other occupational castes, non-acceptance of cooked food, status incongruence and dependence proneness and so on. The Scheduled Castes were deprived of their economic rights. So they remained poor and dependent on others. The problems associated with the poverty of the Scheduled Castes are as follows: material deprivation, landlessness, educational backwardness, low employment and government service opportunities, indebtedness and bonded labour, health and nutrition etc. The Scheduled Castes have to face the problem of atrocities. Their houses are burnt, their animals are snatched away, and women are subjected to humiliation. They are beaten mercilessly and are also murdered and killed in groups till date in various parts of rural India, which are highlighted by media frequently, are some of the forms of atrocities to which they are subjected to and when they dare to resist and demand their social, economic or political rights in our country. But, due to the constitutional safeguards and the awareness created among the Scheduled Castes through education, they are trying to assert their rights to some extent. Taking into consideration of the above stated problems and difficulties faced by the Scheduled Caste people, an effort has been made to evaluate the role of panchayats in the implementation of the welfare schemes and ascertaining the significant role of the government programmes in the lives of the Scheduled Caste people of Karnataka to improve their socio-economic conditions in general and Bellary district in particular. The study entitled "A Study on Socio-Economic Conditions of Scheduled Castes under the Panchayat Raj Institutions in Bellary District of Karnataka [2005-10]" makes an attempt to evaluate and access the
role, impact and implementation of various welfare and developmental programmes on the life of the Scheduled Castes in Bellary district through the Panchayat Raj Institutions.

**Hypothesis**

The proposition or a set of propositions that are put forward for an empirical testing in this research work has been presented below:

- The local and self-administration are not the same as they were in earlier India.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions took an important role in implementing welfare programmes flowed over State and Central Governments.
- The performance of decentralized institutions differs compared to the Central and State Governments.
- The development of the villages has a bearing on the socio-economic development of the society with special reference to Scheduled Castes.
- Bellary Zilla Panchayat has rendered the socio-economic programmes before the SCs.
- The Scheduled Castes have had fruitful benefits from the panchayat programmes and are at a peak stage of development.
- The Panchayat Raj programmes have facilitated favourable changes in the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes.

The primary and secondary data collected has been analysed considering variables which are relevant for identifying the socio-economic impact of Bellary Zilla Panchayat on the Scheduled Castes in various spheres of their lives viz., improvement in education, livelihood opportunities, living conditions, health, per capita income, spending ability, eradication of untouchability, free from bonded labourness, self-employment opportunities and so on and so forth.

**Objectives of the study**

The present study has the following objectives:

1. To study the historical background, concept, origin and growth of Panchayat Raj Institutions in India and Karnataka.
2. To have a deep study and analyze the socio-economic status and political background of the Scheduled Castes in Karnataka and particularly in Bellary district.

3. To assess and throw a light on the socio-economic profile of Bellary district.

4. To examine and understand the role performed by the Panchayat Raj Institutions in the socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes in Bellary district.

5. To evaluate as to how far the utilization and the impact of Panchayat Raj Programmes has a bearing in improving the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes in the study area.

6. To assess the socio-economic conditions of SCs under the umbrella of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Bellary District with special reference to Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

7. To identify the loopholes in the effective, efficient and transparent implementation of the welfare schemes for the Scheduled Castes within the jurisdiction of Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

8. To suggest suitable measures for the effective, efficient and transparent implementation of various welfare schemes to improve the socio-economic conditions of weaker sections particularly for the Scheduled Castes in the district through Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Review of literature

An attempt is made to review a few important studies on Panchayat Raj Institutions and Scheduled Castes in India and Karnataka. In order to provide a logistic base in research, the studies on history provide fairly good background. A study of the genesis and growth of any organization is essential and it is a significant factor for further research studies. Panchayat Raj system is a well researched topic; there are quite a lot number of publications both by the government and in the writings of various authors. In the form of various committee reports, a lot of literature is available on Panchayat Raj Institutions. Some studies on panchayat raj have an all India character and where as some studies concentrate on state, district, block and village level. Most of the studies have given importance to structural and
functional aspects of these institutions. In this context the research scholar has referred a number of books, reports of various committees, articles, journals, news papers and so on and so forth of which a few important ones are mentioned below:

Maddick Henry (1970) in his book, *Panchayat Raj: A study of Rural Local Government in India*, discussed 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 and he further says that all these become a vehicle for politics, nepotism and corruption. The author suggests that there must be a hub of co-operative, voluntary associations, private firms and individual and government agencies dealing with different aspects of rural development. In India, the rural government should be democratic and effective and this is possible only, if Panchayat Raj system is organized and guided to serve its long term objectives.

Parvathamma.C., (1984) in her book, *A study of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes - A Socio-Economic Survey*, had observed that the position of the Harijans has deteriorated more than what it was in the pre-independence period. She shows many instances of the Harijans being beaten up and harassed in the socio-economic front when they demand higher wages during the lean seasons and attempt to switch over from their traditional occupations to some non-traditional ones.

George Methew (1986) in his book, *Panchayat Raj in Karnataka Today: Its National Dimensions*, highlights the aspects to acquire knowledge of the objectives and scope of various policies and plans of development and to develop understanding of social policy perspectives for national goals of development and as well to acquire skill of critical analysis of social policies and plans.

V.B.Krishnaiah Chetty (1991) in his book, *Scheduled Castes and Development Programmes in India*, has evaluated the impact of development on Scheduled Castes in India and concludes that the programmes have played a vital role in providing for the increased output, increased net income and improved asset position of these people. Chetty in his study on Integrated Rural Development
Project (IRDP) in Andhra Pradesh has found that the majority of the Scheduled Castes in rural areas are still engaged in traditional low status occupations and very few of them own land. He has found that the amount of loan sanctioned to this group was inadequate and some of these beneficiaries found it very difficult to produce surplus income. He also highlighted the inadequacy of follow-ups of programmes and recovery of loan sanctioned.

S.K. Singh (1992) in his book, Role of Panchayat Raj in India has analysed the planning process for the programmes of local bodies, administrative arrangement for national and state level rural development programmes, administrative set-up in states, district and block levels on the one hand and in the panchayat raj institutions on the other so as to get a clever view of the agencies executing the programme, the role of panchayat raj institutions as an implementing agency and an attempt has made to gauge the performance of the states in regard to effective implementation of different national and state level programmes.

S.N. Mishra and S.S. Singh in their book, Roads to Modern Panchayat Raj - A Review of Panchayat Raj Acts in the context of 73rd Amendment Act (1993), have said that in whatever form democratic decentralization, popularly known as Panchayati Raj in our country, was introduced, it failed to deliver good results due to the lack of political will. Several Committees and Commissions have been appointed since 1957 by the Government of India to suggest ways and means to improve the functioning of these institutions so as to make them an effective instrument of change and development. The present study is an attempt in this direction. The study highlights three alternative roads for the success of these institutions but the whole discussion boils down to giving constitutional status to these institutions. Several suggestions, as a result of field experience and interactions with the officials and general public, have been made in the study which is likely to prove highly useful to policy planners as it will enable them to take immediate steps in right direction. The book is strongly recommended for the benefits of policy planners, practitioners, academics and students of Panchayati Raj.

S.N. Mishra, et.al., (2000) in their book, Decentralised Planning and Panchayat Raj Institutions, have analysed the decentralisation of planning process
which has now become a matter of worldwide concern. Decentralisation through involvement of local level representative institutions in the formulation of plans for development as well as their implementation is advocated in the interest of efficient utilisation of resources and for ensuring more equitable sharing of benefits of development. Accordingly, decentralised planning is not a new concept for India. Though introduced in 1951, it was limited to sectoral programmes at lower administrative levels rather than comprehensive planning for units below the centre or states. After becoming the part of the Constitution (1992), the planning process at district and below has got added importance. The present volume after analysing the concept and strategy of planning and discussing centralised versus decentralised planning, attempts to test empirically the working of District Planning Committees vis-a-vis the role of Panchayati Raj representatives and comes out with some revealing findings and meaningful recommendations. A useful book recommended to academics, planners and practitioners.

Dr. Raj Singh, (2000)\textsuperscript{22}: \textit{New Panchayati Raj -A Functional Analysis}, is a book which is substantially based on the research papers presented at a regional seminar on the Functioning of New Panchayati Raj Institution. This book portrays different aspects of the Functioning of the New Panchayati Raj Institutions after the Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. The papers contained in the book may be classified into five categories. One, papers pertaining to Women's Participation in the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Problems encountered by them in discharging their constitutional obligation. Capacity building in Panchayati Raj Institution is another category of papers. Efforts have been made to elaborate about the knowledge level and training needs of functionaries at the grass-root level. Third type of paper's pertain to the problems encountered by women's representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in discharging their roles effectively. Fourth category concentrates on perception of voters towards Women's Empowerment, Participation and Problems. A few papers pertain to functioning of New Panchayati Raj Institution in totality. Finally there are also papers which have discussed about the decentralization of power at the grass-root levels, participatory development and Gandhian perspective of Panchayati Raj Institutions. The book depicts an all
round situation about functioning of new PRIs in the post constitutional amendment era and it will serve as a bench mark for future research on the subject.

Singh and Malik (2001) in their study on *Socio-Economic Development of Scheduled Castes in India*, have lamented upon the poor status of Scheduled Castes. They said that the Scheduled Castes in the country are the economically, socially and culturally downtrodden sections of society which in turn has been the outcome of neglect and negation of benefits that should have accrued to them. In spite of planned development for nearly four and half decades and constitutional provisions as well as agreed policy priorities, the development effort for Scheduled Castes has so far been too small to make any major impact on their socio-economic conditions. Hence, most of them continue to be, below the poverty line and suffer from all the age-old disabilities. They conducted a study of Special Component Plan (SCP) in Haryana state to assess the impact of various programmes adopted for the development of Scheduled Castes in Haryana.

Anil Bhardwaj (2002) in his book, *Welfare of scheduled castes in India: Gandhi's social approach: Ambedkar's political approach, constitutional safeguards, schemes for welfare of Scheduled Castes*, had discussed about the programmes initiated by the government of India in successive periods. The main effort of the study seems to be that it evaluates and assesses the impact of developmental programmes. The study throws a light on plight of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes even after five decades of independence.

M.Krishna (2003) in his book, *Poverty Alleviation and Rural Poor*, has said that since independence, poverty alleviation has been on the national policy agenda. Consequently, the importance of reduction in poverty and provision of other basic needs has been regularly emphasised in Five Year Plans. Even today, the main objective of the poverty alleviation programmes is to minimise the high incidence of poverty and thus, to improve the economic, social and physical conditions of the rural poor. These schemes are supposed to protect a person in the case of both chronic and persistent nature of poverty. The major poverty alleviation programmes for rural poor in India viz., wage employment programme (WEP) and self employment programme (SEP) have been evaluated in this book with an aim to
bring sharp focus of its impact on employment and income generation of the beneficiary group. Using both field-level primary data and secondary sources, this study has come to the conclusion that the impact of programmes is marginally positive leaving much to achieve. Their effectiveness is quite low and considerably below the official estimates. This book provides a holistic view of the issues related to poverty alleviation and rural poor. With the qualities of ground realities that could be observed in the analysis of this book is that it will serve as a sound basis to initiate remedial measures.

Goel, S.L.Rajneesh.S., (2003) in their book, Panchayat Raj in India-Theory and Practice, had focused on the aspects which would be of great use to students, faculty members, policy-makers, planners, decision-makers and elected members of PRI system. In this book, they have stated that the Panchayati Raj was in existence since ancient India and after independence, the Government of India was committed to set-up Panchayati Raj system to provide real Swaraj to the people of rural areas to come out of abject poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, squalor, disease, etc. The latest development in this direction is the Constitutional Amendment (73rd and 74th) of 1992 which aims to provide constitutional status to Panchayati Raj System. The amendment stressed the importance of Gram Sabha and made it obligatory to set-up Gram Sabha as a part of PRI system.

P. S. K. Menon, Bakshi Dayanath Sinha, Institute of Social Sciences (New Delhi, India) Panchayat Raj in Scheduled Areas: A Critical Study (2003): This study is oriented on the present and has its real purpose in projecting the measures for better local self-government institutions in the Scheduled Areas of the country in pursuance of “The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act” 1996.

D.Bandyopadhyay and Dr.Amitava Mukherjee (2004) in their book, New Issues in Panchayat Raj, have focussed on the new issues which have harassed the protagonists of panchayats and bolstered the skeptics. When the panchayats were being formed, the celebration was that these were being elected, at all. Who ascended the power ladder was not much of a phenomenon to join the issue. After two rounds of elections it seems that intended benefits of PRIs have not
flowed to empower the truly disempowered: the poor, dalits, minorities, women, disabled, old-aged and socially marginalized groups in our societies. He gives a succinct account of astonishing ways and means adopted by the legislators, bureaucracy and the rich to appropriate power to them sacrificing without demur or hesitation well down the road of decentralization that had provided for legislation to make serious inroads into the letter and spirit of the Constitutional Amendment under reference.

S. Baluchamy (2004) in his book, *Panchayat Raj Institutions*, has presented that the Panchayati Raj System in India has come into existence through a long process of evolution. Panchayati Raj institutions began to be gradually democratized in structure and were empowered to undertake increasing duties and responsibilities for local affairs, including civil services. Decentralization is the only way of ensuring radical development through the democratic process. This book is an in-depth study of Panchayati Raj Institutions in one of the districts (Dindigul) of Tamil Nadu, India. The study focuses on knowledge of the Panchayati Raj system, opinion on the adequacy of devolution of powers, resources, decision making etc., attitude and support of the state government, nature of role or attitude of the elected representatives to their work, training for functionaries of PRIs, needs assessment and fulfillment, qualities of leadership and their influence on the functioning of the Panchayati Raj System, reservation for women and Scheduled Castes, supportive agencies, participatory democracy and performance and the role of the Gram Sabha. The study is based on personal discussions, observations and available documents.

Prasad, B.K. (2004) *Rural Development and Village Democracy*, in this book the author has said that the Government of India declared the year 1999-2000 as the 'Year of Gram Sabha' to set the process of decentralised democracy in motion, with human development as the core objective of planning. This signified the importance and potential with which the institution has to serve as the basic unit of village governance and could be the most effective mechanism to involve people in planning, implementing and overseeing the village development activities. The two
volumes of this book discuss about these and other aspects related to the strengthening of democratic institutions in rural India.

**Sharma, Sanjay Prakash (2004)** *Dalit Society and Upliftment*: This work focusses at the problems and prospects of Dalits and the various measures and programmes taken up by the government and other bodies to better their lot. The work analyses the socio-economic conditions of the Dalits by giving both a historical and modern perspective of their problems. It also includes the role of Vinoba Bhave, B. R. Ambedkar and Gandhiji in this direction.

**Jain, Jasbir S., et.al., (2005)** *Panchayat Raj In India-Emerging Trends Across the States*, have described as following: Panchayati Raj, as a system of governance at the grass root level in rural India, has been rightly conceived as the most viable and proper mechanism of realizing the goals of democracy and decentralization. The current debate is not on its desirability but on strengthening it by identifying its weaknesses and taking care of the lacunae which are still present in spite of its Constitutionalisation through the historical 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. Likewise, empowerment of women and weaker sections, through a well-devised system of reservation, has not only brought about a change in the socio-political culture of these sections of society, but has also led to a virtual transformation of the rural scene, where people have increasingly become aware of their rights and have started demanding their share in power. In fact, rural India today has become the embodiment of a new revolution, which seeks to provide direction to the polity, thereby making democracy and decentralization vibrant and feasible for those who deserve it.

**Yatindra Singh Sisodia, in his book, Functioning of Panchayat Raj System (2005)**: has vividly highlighted that the functioning of Panchayat Raj system in India has been a matter of debate and speculation about its performance and impact. In almost all states, two or three rounds of elections for Panchayats have been completed. The sizeable presence of underprivileged and poor in the grassroots political institutions is a landmark development in the rural politics of the country. This is also a matter of serious debate as to how this excluded a lot, after their inclusion in active politics at grassroots, would effectively tackle local
power equation and set the agenda for development. The responses of state governments to the implementation of Panchayat Raj varied significantly and it is very difficult to generalise about this issue on the basis of their functioning for the last one decade or so. A perusal of functioning of Panchayat Raj puts forward a mix scenario with enough evidences of positive movements and several hurdles, nevertheless a hope for the best can be expected at this juncture.

Bibek Debroy & Kaushik.P.D, (2005)34 *Energising Rural Development Through Panchayats*, the ten papers in this volume gives a very good idea of what the rural development issues in India are and what the PRIs can do to address rural development concerns.

Rajawat, Mamta (2005) 35 *Development of Dalits*, deals with development of Dalits while analysing in detail their socio-economic conditions in a manner which gives us a clear picture of their earlier status and modern status.

Rajeshwar Prasad Singh Chhapra, (2007) 36 *Rural Development & Panchayati Raj in India*, attempts to examine the concept of rural development and also people’s participation through the medium of Panchayati Raj. It provides an in-depth study of the impact of both on each other. It also analyses various other issues necessary for ensuring proper and effective rural development and also the participation of all the sections of the rural population. It celibately deals with the issues of weaker section women in the functioning of Panchayati Raj. It even provides suggestions for an effective development of rural areas.

Ghosh, Ratna & Pramanik, Alok Kumar (2007) 37 in their book *Panchayat System in India- Historical, Constitutional And Financial Analysis*, have highlighted that the Constitution (73rd) Amendment Act, endowing PRIs with constitutional status, constitute a significant landmark in the evolution of grass root democratic institutions in India. It ensures full freedom to plan, according to the local needs and potentials. The comprehensive framework provided now, will truly transform the rural economy and give a practical shape to people’s participation in the process of economic development with social justice.

Sudha.V.Menon, (2007)38 in her book *Panchayati Raj- Perspectives and Experiences*, has said that the panchayats have always from time immemorial, been
the backbone of Indian villages. Gandhiji, the father of the nation, in 1946 had aptly remarked that Indian independence must begin at the bottom and every village ought to be a republic or panchayat having powers. Gandhiji's dream has been translated into reality with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system to ensure people's participation in rural reconstruction. The passage of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992, marks a new era in the federal democratic set-up of the country and provides constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). This book attempts to capture the dynamics of Panchayati Raj experience in India since 73rd constitutional amendment, taking stock of devolution of powers, extent of de-bureaucratization and availability of finances. The book analyzes and critically evaluates the effectiveness of PRI as a system of governance for securing people's participation in the decision-making process, women empowerment, local leadership creation, social capital formation and poverty alleviation. It attempts to explore the possibility of making PRI an effective tool for participatory development, empowerment of marginalized classes and management of local resources. Above all, the book examines the impact of Information and Communication Technology [ICT] on PRIs and its effect on rural people.

Rao, Yagati Chinna (2007)\textsuperscript{39} Writing Dalit History and other Essays, in this book the author has discussed, that the history of these 'untouchables' has yet become a part of Indian historiography, though the study is of immense relevance and significance on account of the inherent radical democratic identity of their movement and their role as productive communities. Available scholarship on these oppressed communities suffers from lack of historical and written documentation.

Swain, Pratap Chandra (2008)\textsuperscript{40} in their book Panchayati Raj, have elaborately discussed that the Panchayati Raj is a traditional concept with a modern philosophy. As a modern political institution, it combines the representative democracy, bureaucracy and technocracy at the grassroots level. However, the indigenous tribal society in Arunachal Pradesh fails to accommodate itself with a modern complex bureaucratic culture. The present work studies the Panchayati Raj in the tribal situation of Arunachal Pradesh and examines the problem of
adjustment of modern Panchayati Raj institutions into an indigenous tribal framework.

Mahi Pal in his book, *Decentralised Planning and Development in India, (2008)* highlights that the country, now has the experience of more than a decade in the working of decentralised planning and Panchayati Raj under the new Act and at this juncture, it would seem like a good opportunity to take stock of the progress that has taken place towards decentralised planning in terms, inter-alia, of the issues as follows: whether planning process has really started from the Gram Panchayat level in consultation with the Gram Sabha, going up to the district Panchayat; whether planning has been prepared with the involvement of people, particularly women and marginalized sections; whether District Planning Committees have been constituted and what is their composition; whether spatial and temporal sequences of activities have been coordinated at different levels; whether adequate infrastructure in the form of planning machinery and requisite technical personnel are available at district and sub-district levels; whether proposals submitted by the Panchayats and Municipalities have been integrated with the departmental schemes with due regard to linkages and complementarities; whether projections were made and targets were set in the right perspective by the Panchayats, Municipalities and District Planning Committees; whether costs and estimates for the projects included in the plans were prepared; whether the requisite basic planning skills for preparation of local plans have been imparted to elected representatives through training programmes; whether adequate united funds have been devolved to rural and urban local bodies for the implementation of local plans keeping in view the felt needs of local people. It is well known that not much relevant literature on the progress of decentralised planning after the enactment of the 73rd and 74th amendment acts is available, on the basis of which one could, adjudge as to what extent decentralised planning has been operationalised in various States and Union territories. This book therefore attempts to diagnose the malady from which the decentralised planning suffers and has also suggested the remedy for curing it.
Barik, et al., (2008) in their book *Panchayati Raj Institutions and Rural Development: Narratives on Inclusion of Excluded*, have highlighted that the 73rd Constitutional Amendment provided space for the first time to the invisible and excluded categories in the society to participate in the decentralized democratic institutions like Panchayati Raj, which works at the grassroots level for the development of these people and left alone in the society at large. The papers presented in this volume, narrate about the micro-macro ground realities on a broad canvas of interdisciplinary approach. It also offers a comprehensive account of development dynamics, participatory governance and empowerment of excluded categories.

Rani, Neelam (2008) in the book *New Panchayati Raj Institutions: A Sociological Study*, has discussed, that the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been playing a pivotal role for rural development in general and especially upliftment of down-trodden people in rural areas in particular. This is a fact, that certain changes in the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions have taken place in the context of constitutional amendment. Some policy decisions and statutory changes would need early consideration by the State Government and political parties to remove the constraints, which have become obvious during the recent working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Biju, M.R. (2008) in his book, *Panchayati Raj System in India: A Symbol of Participatory Democracy and Decentralized Development*, has vividly explained that the rural development programmes are designed to facilitate a multifaceted growth of the rural poor by extending the benefits of development to them. It aims at the improvement of their living standards by providing them opportunities for the fullest utilization of their potential through their active participation in the process of goal-oriented change. Rural development also tends to reduce migrational pressure on cities and towns. It also enables the use of human and national resources in the rural areas and to reduce area-wise differences and imbalances. The government has initiated a number of programmes to resolve the chronic problems faced by Indian villages. As we have adopted policies of liberalization and globalization since 1991, we will have to look at rural
development from a holistic angle rather than from the angle of compartmentalization between the urban and rural development, which particularly became a part of the fast changes that are taking place in all spheres of life with market driven economy.

Prakash Chandra Deogharia and Ashok Kumar Maji (2008) in their book, *Panchayati Raj and Mobilisation of Weaker Sections*, have stressed that the role of PRIs in mobilisation of weaker sections is crucial not only to strengthen the grassroots democracy but also for rural development of our country. PRIs ensure participation of masses in the process of development and it also mobilizes the weaker sections of rural India to actively participate in the developmental process. However, despite the constitutional provision, the PRIs act is not being implemented effectively in our country. It contains four important sections viz., Panchayat Raj Institutions, Panchayat Raj Institutions and Mobilisation of Weaker sections, Role of PRIs in Rural Development, PRIs and Role of Women, which provides immense information about the role of PRIs in the development of weaker sections.

Singh.K.K. & Ali.S., (2009) in their book, *Role of Panchayat Raj Institutions for Rural Development*, have discussed that there are strong reasons for making the Panchayati Raj bodies directly responsible for planning of all the anti-poverty programmes and also for the overall monitoring of their implementation. Further, sometimes the power groups in panchayat bodies are represented by the vested interest in rural areas, who cannot be expected to be sympathetic to the needs of the poor. In considering these arguments it needs to be recognised that poverty alleviation is a political process involving the use of resources and technology for the benefit of the poor and there is a need for poor to gain control over the institutions, vested with decision making at local level for such use.

Verma, S.B., *Empowerment of the Panchayat Raj Institutions in India (2009)*: This book has been designed to meet a long felt need and it provides a realistic picture of democratic decentralisation of powers, which cannot be made a success unless the active participation of the people.
Hariprasad Chhetri, (2009)48: *Panchayat Raj System & Development Planning*, in this book the author has widely discussed that there has been utter lack of cohesion between the strong political will for decentralization of powers on the one hand and relatively weak and ineffective means of delivery mechanism to support the will at the grass-roots level, on the other hand.

Jagan Karade, (2009)49: in his study on, *Occupational Mobility Among Scheduled Castes in India*, focuses on the nature of occupation and factors which are more related to Inter-generational as well as Intra-generational occupational Mobility in the society. After independence, the Constitution of India has made a provision of protective discrimination policy, especially the reservation policy. Therefore, following the constitutional provision of reservation policy in the post-independence period, many persons of Scheduled Castes left their traditional occupations and took responsibilities of new jobs or position, but those who have taken education and those who have developed skills are taking more benefit and a tremendous change is observed in connection with their family status in the society. The author has made a systematic attempt to establish a positive co-relation between education and occupational mobility among the Scheduled Caste people of India. Karade in his study has found that even those who have secured higher education and obtained better positions in terms of economic and social status are also not able to overcome the prejudices at the hands of the upper castes and thus could not totally escape from the discrimination at the latter’s hand. As far as intra-generational occupational mobility is concerned, Karade rightly observes that the successive generations of the Scheduled Caste communities aspire for still better occupational positions as these impart social prestige along with material empowerment. Karade has also drawn attention to an erosion of the reservation policy due to a declining space of the State in the economic activities especially in the aftermath of the process of globalization, liberalization and privatization.

Mohammed Azam Khan & Tosib Alam, (2011)50: *Financial Decentralization Panchayati Raj Institutions PRIs and Rural Development in India*, in this book the authors explain about the amendment in acts for panchayats like according to the article 243G with eleventh schedule of the Indian Constitution
explicitly requiring the States to devolve powers and authority on panchayats which may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government.

**Significance of the study**

The population of Scheduled castes in Karnataka has increased from 3.12 million in 1961 to 8.56 million in 2001, registering an increase of 174.3% as compared to an increase of 158.5% of the SC population at the national level. The reservation policy for Scheduled Castes is continued till today, in the context that they are still not yet developed especially in the socio-economic arena as compared to the other developed castes. The social and economic conditions of the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes has been the concern of the Indian political system and various social movements even before independence and since independence, a number of programmes have been undertaken by the Union and State Governments for the all-round development of Scheduled Castes, which includes an array of constitutional safeguards and the enactment of a number of special legislations, reservations in public employment as well as in the elected representative bodies, various welfare schemes, budgetary allocations and in general giving high priority in all the governmental activities. The series of land reform legislations, the land allotment rules and the myriad developmental programmes known as 'Poverty Alleviation Programmes' constitute positive measures intended to secure livelihood opportunities besides betterment of this section in the society. In some states like Karnataka, the Panchayats have benefitted the people by undertaking social welfare measures. The elected representatives are directly involved in the process of planning, and development. But this role is yet to be assumed by panchayats in most of the other states. The overall socio-economic and cultural developments in rural areas depend mainly on strong panchayats. Therefore, the panchayats are the foundations of democracy at the grassroots and can be strengthened only by reposing faith in them, endowing them with adequate administrative and financial powers and encouraging vigilance and active participation of the people. In this context it is highly significant that the evaluation should be undertaken from time to time to know about the socio-economic conditions of this section and working of the panchayats mainly to avoid loopholes
in the programmes and their implementation process and to suggest new and additional schemes and more financial allocations by the centre and the state for their upliftment, according to the changing needs of this dynamic society in all the spheres of development inorder to bring them to the mainstream of other developed castes in India.

**Justification of the present study**

Bellary district is spread from southwest to northeast and is situated on the eastern side of Karnataka state. The district is situated on 15° 30' and 15°50' north latitude and 75° 40' and 77° 11' east longitude. Its geographical area is 8,447 Square kilometers.

This district is bounded by Raichur district on the north, Koppal district on the west, Chitradurga district and Davanagere district on the south, and Anantapur district and Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh on the east. The normal rainfall is 639 mm.

As per 2001 census the population of the district stood at 2,245,000. The rural population of the district constitutes 70%. The density of population is 196 per km², which is much lower than the state average of 235 per km². However, the decimal growth rate for 1981-91 was 26.92% which is higher than the state growth rate of 21.12%. As per 2001 census, the SC population in the district was 18.5%. The sex-ratio was 965, which is slightly higher than the state average of 960. The major Scheduled Caste groups in the district comprise Adi Karnataka, Madiga, Banjara, Bhovi, Holaya, Adi Dravida and Bhami.

Bellary district which has such a glorious historical background has been witnessing ill-treatment of the downtrodden for decades especially in the rural areas. According to the latest incidents against the Scheduled Castes in Bellary district the unwritten rules of caste govern life in most villages especially in the northern areas of the district. The brazenness, however, of this well-planned act of upper caste vendetta suggests the depth of upper caste domination in this area and the contempt that the upper castes have for the law. The government of Karnataka has identified the SC atrocity prone areas in Bellary district as Deshnur and Teleg.
In the district the dalits are subject to various offences, indignities, humiliations, inequality in treatment and usage of civic facilities, discrimination, harassment etc. Serious crimes have been committed against them for various reasons. Today even among the dalits there is lack of unity. So in this context, the present study is apt and appropriate mainly to uplift the Scheduled Castes in all the spheres of their lives in our society and suggest measures for their development to the Union, State, local governments and NGOs.

Relevance of the study

From time to time it is very essential to conduct the impact evaluation studies, because these studies play a key role in the policy decisions and proper implementation of the schemes meant for the upliftment of the people of various sections in the society. Information on the target groups for policy, alternative options available for intervention and impact of new policies, requires impact evaluation studies which are gaining much more importance in recent days. This study has been undertaken recognising the need for an evaluation of the socio-economic impact assessment of the rural development and Panchayat Raj programmes on the Scheduled Caste people implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat. This study covered a spectrum of programmes in general and the schemes specially meant for the Scheduled Castes sponsored by both the Central and Karnataka government and implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat within its jurisdiction. The information from this study is useful for analysing the changes in the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes in Karnataka and India as a result of the implementation of the programmes by the Panchayat Raj Institutions national wide.

Methodology

The methodology of the study involves a mix of questionnaires and formats, discussions and personal visits to the wards and households of the Scheduled Castes in the study area. The study draws on both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires, open and oral interviews, interview schedules and focus group discussions were the main methods of data collection. The study has been carried
out based on primary data collected from random sampling method of Scheduled Castes beneficiaries and also, all the relevant available secondary data has been utilised effectively i.e., from the offices of Bellary Zilla Panchayat, National Informatics Center of Bellary district, data from the seven taluka panchayats of Bellary district, women and child development department, SC/ST corporation, Social welfare office, District Industries Center and so on. This work is intended to know the role of Bellary Zilla Panchayat in the socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes empirically with careful consideration of objectives and to achieve them the researcher has collected the necessary data viz., primary and secondary data.

(a) Data Base

Primary method of data collection

Primary data has been collected by face-to-face interview, with the Scheduled Caste people residing in the selected talukas and villages because of the nature of the study. The questionnaire and interview schedule method has been used effectively to collect primary information from the Scheduled Caste households keeping in view of the objectives. The semi-structured interview was also used especially for the panchayat members and officials. Besides this, participatory and non-participatory observation techniques were used to bring out the insights of the beneficiaries and their perception to the programmes implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

Secondary method of data collection

Secondary data was collected by referring various related works, text books, journals, annual reports, government official records—both published and unpublished, NGO reports which are related to the study, office records in the district social welfare office, internet browsing which includes official sites of Bellary district; Karnataka government; census reports of India; official records of rural development panchayat raj department, reports of various research projects, magazines and daily news papers.
(b) Sampling design

It is a descriptive study, based on the empirical data, collected from the field survey. Therefore, the research design used in this study is of descriptive and analytical in nature particularly to assess the role of panchayat raj and rural development programmes in improving the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes in the study area. For an empirical study, the entire district was divided into two revenue divisions, viz., Bellary division and Hospet division, which in all include seven talukas. Bellary comes under the administrative control of Gulbarga division and development jurisdiction of H.K.D.B, Gulbarga. So, for the convenience of the study two talukas from Bellary revenue sub-division and two talukas from the Hospet revenue sub-division were selected for the study respectively.

The Bellary subdivision has three talukas viz., Bellary taluka, Sirguppa taluka and Sandur taluka, while there are four talukas in the Hospet division Viz., Hospet taluka, Kudligi taluka, Hagaribommanahalli taluka and Hoovinahadagali taluka. There are 27 Hoblies, One Corporation, one City Municipal Council, two Town Municipalities, six Town Panchayats, 542 revenue Villages and 436 Habitations as per 2001 census report.

Statistical design of the study

The list of the sample talukas and number of Scheduled Caste beneficiaries selected for a sample study under the jurisdiction of Bellary Zilla Panchayat is presented below:

Coverage of sample households in four talukas and number of beneficiaries selected for the study:

Table: 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bellary District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellary revenue sub-division</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Name of the taluk</th>
<th>Name of the village</th>
<th>No. of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bellary taluk</td>
<td>1. Kudithini</td>
<td>2. Sanganakal</td>
<td>3. Paramadevanahalli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tools of analysis

With the help of random sampling method the talukas were selected for the study. Both the questionnaire and interview schedule methods were used extensively to collect the required data for the present study.

The purpose of the questionnaire method in this research work refers to a device for securing answers to questions by using a form which the respondent fills in by himself and the interview schedule which was used in this dissertation refers to the technique which is usually applied to a set of questions which are asked and filled in by the researcher in a face-to-face situation with a respondent.

For the convenience of the study two talukas from Bellary division and two talukas from the Hospet division were selected for socio-economic analysis of SCs in the study area. From each taluka 100 SC beneficiaries were selected for the study. Therefore the total sample for the study constitutes 400 beneficiaries.

The data has been collected for a period of six months i.e., from January 2010 to June 2010 and from 3rd January 2011 to 23rd January 2011. The researcher had spent enough time during the course of field work to get more reliable information.

List of the tools used for various respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Tool used</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Panchayat Beneficiaries benefitted under few programmes</td>
<td>1. Questionnaire method</td>
<td>100x4=400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Interview schedule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Participatory observation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Non-participatory observation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Personal observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panchayat members</th>
<th>Semi-structured interview</th>
<th>3 from each panchayat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zilla panchayat members</td>
<td>Informal discussion with detailed checklist</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key informants</td>
<td>Detailed discussion</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The collected data has been coded with the help of coding key into code sheets and the coded data has been processed over computer to get bar graphs, pie graphs, percentage frequencies, counts and tabulation.

The following phase-wise approach and methodology was adopted for the study in a systematic and organised manner:

**Planning and preparatory phase:**
- Discussion with the research supervisor and other professors in the department.
- Discussion with the subject experts.
- Selection of the topic and contents.
- Framing of questionnaire to beneficiaries, officials and so on.
- Finalisation of the survey tools for primary data to be collected in consultation with the research supervisor and subject experts.

**Data collection phase:**
- Available secondary data has been collected from different sources.
- Primary data collection through random sampling method was done in different phases so as to adjust even the allotted teaching work in the department.
- Discussions were held with the beneficiary user group and local level institutional members such as panchayat members, officials on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes in utilising the benefits provided by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat through various schemes.

**Data analysis phase:**
- Computerisation of the sample data.
- Collation and analysis of data collected from the SC beneficiaries.
- Collation of available secondary data collected from various sources.
- Presentation of the data through tables, bar graphs, pie-charts, etc.
- Summarization of information.
Report preparation phase:

- Analysing and correcting the chapters.
- Presenting the findings with regard to the problems of Scheduled Castes, SC beneficiaries, loopholes on the side of officials and Bellary Zilla Panchayat and presentation of suggestions, recommendations and conclusion to overcome the socio-economic backwardness of the SC’s by the Scheduled Castes themselves through active participation, utilisation of the Rural development and Panchayat Raj programmes that are provided by Central Government, Karnataka State Government and implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

Major parameters/variables for data collection, cross classification and analysis:

- Information on the social status, literacy levels, economic status, employment opportunities, family composition, landholding category, cropping pattern, livestock holding, income, expenditure, involvement of Scheduled Castes in the programmes provided by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat etc., are some of the major variables on which the information has been collected through the survey in different phases.
- Classification of the respondents has been done by different socio-economic status and analysed as developed, partly developed, backward, more backward, and most backward.
- Data analysis corresponds to analysis of the changes in the socio-economic parameters over a period of five years, correlating different variables and suitable tests of significance has been carried out.

Field study processes

The information was collected systematically by the researcher and in turn he has taken the help of the data collection assistants who stayed in the respective talukas and villages during the stage of data collection and this helped the researcher in understanding the dynamics of the Scheduled Caste people and their participation in utilisation of the schemes meant for them, which are sponsored by
both the Central and Karnataka government and implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

Limitations of the study

The geographical area of the present study is limited to Bellary district. Perhaps, to overcome the wide area of Bellary Zilla Panchayat, the random sampling tool was adopted in selecting the talukas which are limited to more than half of Bellary talukas viz., Bellary taluka (100 beneficiaries), Sirguppa taluka (100 beneficiaries), Hospet taluka (100 beneficiaries) and Hagaribommanahalli taluka (100 beneficiaries) i.e., in total 400 beneficiaries are selected for the study. From each taluka headquarter (25 beneficiaries) and three villages of respective taluka i.e., (25 beneficiaries) x 3 (villages) = 75 beneficiaries, [total 100 beneficiaries from one taluka] respectively) were covered under the study as stated in table 1.1. The important parameters that are taken into consideration with regard to the SC beneficiaries of Bellary Zilla panchayat are the socio-economic, political and other indicators are also covered. There are many programmes undertaken by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat, but for the convenience of the study only few programmes are selected under which the Scheduled Castes people are benefitted.

Organisation of the study

This thesis is organized into seven chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction and Methodology – It deals with the background of the Panchayat raj institutions, statement of the problem, hypothesis of the study, objectives of the study, review of literature, significance of the study, justification of the study, relevance of the study, methodology of the study, limitations of the study and organisation of the study.

Chapter II: Historical Background and Growth of Panchayat Raj Institutions in India – This chapter has made an attempt to study the growth and evolution of the Panchayat Raj Institutions in ancient, medieval, colonial and post-independence period developments.

Chapter III: Genesis and Development of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Karnataka – This chapter covers within its framework the evolution and
development of Panchayat Raj Institutions in pre-independent and post-independent periods of Karnataka state.

Chapter IV: Socio-Economic conditions of Scheduled Castes - This chapter highlights the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes in India, Karnataka and Bellary District. It also includes the constitutional safeguards meant for Scheduled Castes in India.

Chapter V: Socio-Economic Profile of Bellary District and Working of Bellary Zilla Panchayat - In this chapter an attempt has been made to highlight the socio-economic profile of Bellary district. It also covers a brief account of Bellary taluk, Hospet taluk, Sirguppa taluk, Sandur taluk, Kudligi taluk, Hagaribommanahalli taluk and Hoovinahadagali taluk. It even includes the organisation and working of the Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

Chapter VI: The Role of Bellary Zilla Panchayat in the Socio-Economic development of Scheduled Castes - This chapter presents the efforts of the Panchayat Raj Institutions for the welfare of the SCs through various welfare schemes implemented in the district.

Chapter VII: Socio-Economic Analysis of the Scheduled Caste Respondents - This chapter presents the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) from 2005-10 in the study area respectively. It also highlights the perceptions of the SC beneficiaries and makes an evaluation and detailed analysis of the impact of the welfare schemes on the living conditions of the Scheduled Castes in the study area.

Chapter VIII: Summary of Findings, Suggestions, and Conclusions - This chapter focuses on the observations and major findings of the study with regard to the problems faced by the Scheduled Castes in the study area, socio-economic status of the beneficiaries, drawbacks identified in the effective, efficient and transparent implementation of the socio-economic programmes by Bellary Zilla Panchayat, Taluka Panchayats and Grama Panchayats. It even offers a good number of suggestions to overcome the socio-economic issues of Scheduled Castes in the study area, to strive for their all round development through Panchayat Raj Institutions in Bellary district. It also includes several recommendations and finally it concludes the main theme of this thesis in a compact manner.
In this first chapter, the researcher has presented a brief account of the Panchayat Raj Institutions and further he has discussed about the aim, related works pertaining to this work, significance, justification, relevance, methodology, limitations and organisation of this study and so also in the upcoming chapter he has very well concentrated and presented on the historical background and the growth of the Panchayat Raj institutions in India based on the available secondary data.

References

8. Ibid., p.529.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., pp. 530-534.


