PREFACE

The concept of village Panchayati is not new to India. Existence of the institution can be traced to the Vedic age. Reference to the Panchayati is found in the Shruts and Smiritis. But as it happened with many at has institutions, ravages of times did not spare the institution of Panchayati also. Choked and polluted by vested interests, this fountain of village administration was no longer capable of making the steam run longer or run clear. They came to be dominated and controlled by members of the leading castes or by a few principal landlords. The village elites received deference and consolidated power. The power equations were skewed against the poor and socially marginalized groups. After independence the most challenging task before the nation was elimination of this feudal system. Democracy could not be made possible without putting an end to reign of these semi feudal chiefs in the villages. To reach message of democracy to the masses the power equations had to be changed and made and range of local-governance had to be redefined. There had to be political mobilization of local people, who had to be encouraged and motivated to participate in the democratic process of self-governance. Panchayati Raj Institutions had to be redesigned and revitalized to function as limits of self-governance at grass-root level.
Without popular participation of people in the democratic process of self-governance, it was not possible to attain constitutional goals of social, political and economic justice to every citizen of the country. To make these basic democratic entities viable and functional, various committees were set up to strengthen them. Constitutional recognition for Panchayati Raj and constitution of statutory elective bodies with the necessary resources, power and authority devolved on them as a decentralized administrative system working under their control was one of the recommendations voiced in unison by these committees. Based on reports and recommendations of these committees, the constitution (seventy third Amendment) Act 1992 was enacted, which came into force on 24th April 1993 with a mandate for the states to enact conformity legislations to accord statutory status to elected local bodies i.e., the states were required to take steps to organize village Panchayaties on the lines of the provisions of the said Constitutional Amendment by making law or amending the existing low suitably state laws were accordingly reviewed and re-written in time with 73rd Amendment Act.

The aim of my study is to consider the various stages through which the Panchayati Raj system evolved and also the promise it holds for the future. Further, an attempt was made to study the organization and functioning this system in Mudigubba Mandal of Anantapur district. The study discusses and analysis the Panchayati Raj system keeping in view of Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act 1994.