CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY OF THE WORKING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN KARNATAKA
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An attempt will be made in this chapter to survey the working of Panchayati Raj institutions in Karnataka.

A Brief History of Panchayati Raj in India:

The existence of Panchayati raj institutions in India is as old as human society and civilization. In ancient days village communities with communal function and ownership were the most common form of village organisations.¹ There are many references to village institutions in the Vedas, Manusmriti, the Mahabharat and Valmiki Ramayana. These local bodies were called as Kula, Gana, Jati, Puga, Vratha, Shraini, Sangh, Samudaya, Samuha, Parishat and Charan.² Manu considered the village as a fundamental unit of administration. The village was a republic like the Greek city states. Manu considered three kinds of settlements, namely, village (grama), town

1. H.D. Malaviya, Village Panchayats in India, (New Delhi, All India Congress Committee, 1956), p. 3.
The remoulding of Local Self-Government began under the British rule and these efforts were supplemented in a major way only after India's independence.

Soon after independence, there was a growing demand for reorganisation of States on a linguistic basis. The States Reorganisation Commission under the Chairmanship of Fazal Ali was appointed to study and recommend the reorganisation of the Indian Union on a linguistic basis. As per the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission, Karnataka (the then Mysore State) was established on 1st November, 1976. It was reconstituted by including areas of Kannada speaking people of erstwhile Bombay State, Hyderabad-Karnataka, Mysore, Madras and Coorg. Thus the present State of Karnataka is the result of integration of five territorial units which were formerly under different politico-administrative dispensation. To trace the history of local self-government in Karnataka one has to dwelve into the history of these territorial units which enables us to have a comprehensive picture of the evolution of panchayati raj institutions. Hence it is desirable to discuss the growth

and evolution of Panchayati Raj institutions under different politico-administrative configurations which are relevant to the new State of Karnataka.

Old Mysore:

In Mysore the Representative Assembly was established in 1881. However, the development of local bodies had engaged the attention of the princely Government from 1862 itself. In the initial period the emphasis was on urban local bodies. As a first step in local self-government institution the District Committees were established in 1874 to help the officials in local administration. The Draft Local Boards Resolution was prepared in 1883, but it got a proval only in 1892. These local institutions were purely notional bodies dominated by officialdom with less of popular element in them.

In order to liberalise the power and functions of local bodies the Government constituted two Committees. The first one was the Local Self-Government Committee presided by Sardar Kantaraj Urs established in February, 1914 and the other Committee was known as the Local Finance Committee formed on 15th May 1914 under the Chairmanship of K.R. Srivathas Iyengar. On the recommendations of these committees a new Local Boards

and Village Panchayat Act, 1918 was passed by the Representative Assembly. This Act provided for the creation of a new three-tier rural government with District Boards, Taluk boards and Village Panchayats. For the first time these local bodies were given independent powers, functions and resources. These bodies were constituted by popular elections. In spite of its liberal provisions the 1918 regulation was in existence for a short time i.e., till the Second Local Self-Government Conference of April, 1923. The Government of Mysore abolished the Taluk Boards in December, 1924, which went a long way in strengthening the District Boards.

Nevertheless in 1926, two separate legislations were enacted with regard to local self-government. These new regulations abolished all District Boards, Taluk boards and Village Panchayats. The new experiment of 1926 was in operation for a decade. But in the light of the experience gained the government wanted to tone up the Village Panchayat administration. In order to achieve this objective, the Government introduced the 'concentrated propaganda scheme' with a view to increase the scope of village panchayat administration in 1936. The main objective of this scheme was to create model villages which would act as stimulus to other villages. This was expected to bring about rapid socio-economic development at the level of villages. This was followed in 1942 by the 'hobli drive scheme' with a view to

tone up rural development. Likewise in the year 1948 a comprehensive scheme known as the 'rural development scheme' became operational. It consisted of fullfledged taluk, district and state level development committees with non-officials as Chairmen. These committees were given specific powers in administering a new rural development fund. These Committees were charged with the responsibility of all-round rural development.

In course of time these committees suffered from lack of independent resources. There was crippling official control over local bodies and lack of integral relationship between the district boards, village panchayats and other development committees. The government policy over the years was one of ad hocism and experimentation. They followed what could be called as a trial and error method policy. What was needed was a comprehensive policy of rural development and that was lacking in a large measure.

The dawn of independence brought new changes in local self-government institutions. The Government of Mysore took a number of steps to reform the local government institutions. Firstly, it appointed a Committee under Venkatappa to study

and reform local self-government institutions in 1949. Secondly, based on the recommendations of the Venkatappa Committee the Village Panchayat and District Boards Act of 1952 was enacted and made operational. Lastly, it appointed another committee under the Chairmanship of Chandrasekhariah to study the rural local self-government institutions.

The Venkatappa Committee known as the Committee for Integration and Co-ordination of Local bodies submitted its report in June, 1950. The Committee's recommendations were as follows:7

(1) It rejected the establishment of a Taluk level body,

(2) It recommended the establishment of statutory local bodies at village and district level only,

(3) At the taluk level it recommended the establishment of a non-statutory co-ordination committee consisting of the Chairman of Village Panchayats of the concerned Taluk. Such a committee was to be presided over by an officer of the rank of Assistant Commissioner for local

7. Ibid., pp.116-117.
bodies. This taluk organisation was supposed to be only an advisory body.

The Government of Mysore having adopted the recommendations of the Venkatappa Committee enacted the Mysore Village Panchayat and District Board Act of 1952. This Act provided for the establishment of village panchayats and district boards with a view to provide substance and strength to the local self-government institutions at the grass roots level. The 1952 Act created major problems for the people at the rural level and the government. Subsequently it was amended to remove the lacunae inherent therein. But eventually it was deemed fit to allow this Act to lapse. Thus the 1952 Act was in force for a short period. In due course the Government under popular pressure established another Committee in 1953 known as the Local Boards Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of D.H. Chandrasekhariah. The main recommendations of the committee were as follows:

(1) The committee recommended for the continuation of Taluk Boards along with Village Panchayats and District Boards.

8. Ibid., pp.126-128.
(2) The committee also suggested the establishment of Taluk Boards to provide an organic link between Village Panchayats and District Boards.

The committee submitted its report on 28th August 1954. However, by this time there was a popular upsurge for the formation of a unified State of Karnataka on a linguistic basis. In view of the momentous political change the government did not proceed further in this direction. The political climate in the country had undergone a major transformation and the government's intention to come up with a comprehensive Act on rural local government institutions could not take a concrete shape.

Bombay - Karnataka:

The Belgaum division comprises of four districts of Dharwad, Belgaum, Bijapur and Karwar in the integrated unified State of Karnataka. The local self-government bodies in these areas were governed by the Bombay Act of 1928. Under this Act, District Boards were truely representative in the absence of nominations. The emphasis was on greater autonomy and less bureaucratic or governmental interference. Conversely greater powers were given to the functionaries in the rural areas.
The Taluka Boards were abolished and Village Panchayats became the primary units of decision-making and functional relevance. The District Boards were also in existence. Simultaneously to assist local bodies in the field of primary education this Act was amended subsequently in order to accommodate the Bombay Primary Education Act of 1947. The Village Panchayats were governed by the Village Panchayat (Amendment) Act 1939 which provided for the constitution of elected Village Panchayats. The provision of elected village panchayats was a very welcome step towards democratisation of rural self-government institutions. It was a sound step towards grass roots democracy, where the sovereign people would elect their own representatives to operate the institutions at the ground level. This Act also provided for Nyaya Panchayats in the form of constitution of a village bench for dealing with petty civil and criminal matters. The Amendment of 1947 provided for a grant of 15% of land revenue for village panchayats. Again in 1956 this Act was amended to provide additional powers to panchayats. These steps strengthened the financial position of rural institutions.

Hyderabad - Karnataka:

In the Hyderabad-Karnataka area the panchayats were established for the first time in 1941 under the Village Panchayat Act of 1941. The Tahasildar was empowered to call
meetings of all adult residents of the village to select a panel of names for the constitution of village Panchayats. The collector was to nominate the required number of members including Sarpanch and Honorary Secretary from the panel made by the Tahasildar. The Hindus and Muslims were given equal representation. The obligatory duties of the Panchayats were mainly of civic nature, while agriculture, industry and co-operation were confined to discretionary functions. Such an arbitrary division of powers and functions made the village panchayats to concern themselves with routine matters without much say in bringing about rapid socio-economic development. The Panchayats were empowered to levy prescribed taxes, fees and levies. The portion of local cess on land revenue was given to Panchayats. Under the Hyderabad Village Panchayats Act of 1951 the Panchayats were made fully democratic since membership was determined through proper elections. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were provided with reservations. It also provided for the establishment of Gram Sabha and expansion of the traditional functions of the Panchayats. However, all villages were not covered under this Act. The District Boards were governed by the Hyderabad District Boards Act of 1956. These were not elected bodies but were purely nominated bodies under the Chairmanship of the Collector.
**Madras Presidency:**

The Bellary and South Kanara districts were under the Madras Presidency. Hence it is desirable to look into the tradition of local self-government in this area too. In the Madras Presidency village panchayats were formed under the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950. District Boards were constituted in accordance with the Madras District Boards Act of 1920.

**Coorg:**

The Coorg Village Panchayats Act of 1926 governed the functioning of local self-government institutions in this area. There were no Taluk Development Boards at any time. The District Board which was established in the year 1901 worked for over 50 years until it was abolished in 1953. There were only 3 village panchayats functioning in the Coorg district. In 1956, the Coorg Panchayati Raj Act was adopted, but the states reorganisation was on the anvil and hence the Act of 1952 was allowed to lapse.

**Panchayati Raj Institutions In Reorganised Karnataka State:**

The reorganised Karnataka State inherited four distinct patterns of local self-government in operation in different parts.
of the State. The Bombay-Karnataka region was covered by the Bombay District Local Boards Act of 1923 and Bombay Village Panchayats Act of 1933, the Madras-Karnataka region had the Madras Boards Act of 1920 and the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950, the Hyderabad-Karnataka region was under the Hyderabad District Boards Act of 1956 and the Hyderabad Village Panchayats Act of 1951 and lastly Coorg was under the Coorg Panchayati Raj Act of 1956. The immediate necessity was to consolidate these different legislations and provide an uniform pattern for the whole State. At the same time the Government of India was thinking in terms of new people's institutions at the grass roots level. The Government of India's thinking resulted in the appointment of the Balwantray Mehta Committee which recommended a three-tier of organically linked panchayati raj institutions. This was indeed a major innovation and a new and bold experiment in the rural areas. In Karnataka the Mysore Village Panchayats and Local Boards Act of 1959 was enacted and came into force on 21st December 1960.9

The 1959 Act provided for a three-tier panchayati Raj system for Karnataka. At the village level the village panchayat

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9. The Karnataka Village Panchayats And Local Boards Act Of 1959 (Received the assent of the President on the Sixteenth day of July 1959) (First Published in the Karnataka Gazette on the Twentythird day of July 1959), (Karnataka Act No.10 of 1959), (Bangalore, Department of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Karnataka).
occupied the prime place. The Taluk Development Board for the taluk become the middle rung of the three-tier Panchayati Raj institutional structure. At the apex level the District Development Council was a body with wide powers at its command. The Village Panchayats and Taluk Boards were popularly constituted keeping in view the requirements of the democratic process. They had both obligatory and discretionary powers in civic and developmental spheres respectively. They were given powers to mobilise their resources through various kinds of taxes. They were also provided grant-in-aid facilities for various kinds of activities. The District Development Council was mainly a nominated body with the Deputy Commissioner as the Chairman. It was dominated by bureaucratic functionaries since it was not a popularly constituted democratic body. It was in essence a supervisory and guiding body. In 1962 the Committee on Panchayati Raj was appointed by the Government of Karnataka under the Chairmanship of Kondaji Basappa. This committee recommended for the replacement of the District Development Council with a directly elected powerful Zilla Parishad, establishment of Nyaya Panchayats and strengthening of Gram Sabha, Village Panchayats and Taluk Boards. Based on the

10. See Report Of The Committee On Panchayati Raj, (Chairman, Kondaji Basappa), (Bangalore, Government Of Karnataka, Development And Co-operation Department, 1963.)
recommendations of Kondaji Basappa Committee a Bill entitled 'The Mysore Panchayati Raj Bill, 1964' was introduced in the State Legislature. After the select committee stage this Bill was allowed to lapse by the Government because of serious disagreement over it within the Congress Legislative party which was in power at that time.

In 1983, the non-Congress Government under the Chief Ministership of Ramkrishna Hegde came to power. The Janata Government took keen interest in reorganising local self-government in a comprehensive manner. In this direction it first drafted the Bill entitled 'The Karnataka Zilla Parishads, Taluk Panchayat Samithis, Mandal Panchayats and Nyaya Panchayat Samithi Bill 1983', and submitted the same to the Assembly and the public for public scrutiny and opinion. The same was passed in the 10th day of July 1985 with the assent of the President of India. The new Panchayati Raj Institutions were constituted through elections to these bodies in January 1987. The basic framework provided for in this Act is mainly derived from the Asoka Mehta Committee recommendations.11 The Act provided for popularly elected Zilla Parishads at district level with wide ranging development functions and generous funding. For each taluk, a Taluk Panchayat Samithi is provided under this Act.

for coordinating and supervising the Mandal Panchayats within the taluk. The Mandal Panchayats are made up of a cluster of villages and is another important body in this Panchayati Raj model. This is also a popularly elected body made up of the entire rural social strata. It gives representation to various sections of the rural polity. Further it has provision to invite women in the functioning of rural institutions. It is for this reason 25% of the seats are reserved for women. The weaker sections are provided adequate representation. The Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes have 18% reservation, and nominated members of the Backward Classes on the basis of 2 members for each Mandal Panchayat. The Mandal Panchayat has also been vested with wide-ranging developmental functions along with civic functions. The Gram Sabha comprising all adult villagers is formed as a base for this whole edifice. 12

Hence the dawn of independence in India ushered an era of development and modernization. The development process was initiated in a planned manner to ameliorate the socio-economic condition of the masses. The idea was to remove poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. The development efforts were directed at increasing productivity in all spheres so that standards of

12. The detailed structure of Panchayati Raj Institutions is discussed in the Second Chapter.
living could be improved in consonance with human dignity. Apart from this, the modernization process sought to transform the old order and stood for changing social and moral values, attitudes, orientation and the entire approach to the way of life. Thus, development and modernization became two important planks of national reconstruction and nation-building efforts of free India. The development and modernization processes involved the following three components:

1) Planning;

ii) Institution-building; and

iii) Democratic decentralisation (facilitating people's participation).

Planning for developing various sectors and spheres assumes great significance. This is because planned development has become the order of the day in all the developing nations. India is no exception to this general phenomenon. In a sense development through planning is inevitable. Planning involves the ability to anticipate future course of growth, potential bottlenecks and possible achievements which could create the conditions of material advancement. Without perspective planning it is not possible to identify priorities and regulate growth in desired directions. Secondly, institution-building is another facet for bringing about development and initiating
modernization. This is because institutions serve a two-fold purpose. Firstly, by creation of certain institutions which in themselves may initiate changes in the surrounding environments. Secondly, institutions can perform certain specific functions in the field of development. People's participation is of relevance in planned development and modernization. The important task of nation-building and of development is to bring together large masses of the national community into a web of relationships and institutions so as to enable them to participate actively in decisions affecting their individual and collective welfare. Hence people's participation determines the efficiency of the government. This is because participation in the normal sense is considered as all forms of action by which citizens take part in the operation of administration. People's participation also helps individuals to


assert their dignity and self-respect particularly in political affairs. In a sense people's participation is the people's initiative to assert themselves as useful human beings in conformity with their dignity and self-respect. People increase their awareness of the environment they are in and find their own identity as they are desirous of a transformation of their life situation.\textsuperscript{16} Given these advantages, people's participation assumes crucial role in rural development. In fact, people's participation becomes a pre-requisite for bringing about rural development.\textsuperscript{17} People's participation generates various kinds of faiths in rural development affairs,\textsuperscript{18} i.e., faith in rural development, in the capacity of the rural people, in science and technology, in social justice and faith in democratic values. In India rural development has almost became a corrolary to national development. This is due to the fact that more than 70\% of the population lives in rural areas with a very poor standard of living. The rural populace is under the clutches of abject poverty, hunger, disease, unemployment, ignorance and traditionalism. The thrust of rural development

\textsuperscript{16} V.Krishnamurthy, "Participation : Some Rambling Thoughts", Kurukshetra, Vol.XXXI, no.1, October, 1, 1982, p.27.
\textsuperscript{17} For a detailed account on this see Report Of The Workshop On People's Participation In Rural Development, held at National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad, on November 26-29, 1984.
must be to increase the standards of life of these poor, deprived, ignorant, ill-fed and unemployed people.  

The Community Development Programme was the first bold attempt launched in the field of rural development in India. The Community Development Programme started on October 2, 1952 with the inception of 55 community projects. Later it was extended to cover the whole of India. Along with the Community Development Programme, National Extension Service (N.E.S.) was also initiated. Community Development is a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation and initiation of the community. The Community Development Programme is a multi-purpose, multi-focused and multi-processed programme characterised by comprehensiveness in rural development. The basic objectives of community development are:

1. To bring about a change in the outlook of the village community to create a desire for a better standard of living and a readiness to use scientific methods in agricultural and other activities of village life;


(2) To promote self-help, self-reliance and co-operation;

(3) To extend the principle of co-operation to myriad phases of community life in the village;

(4) To utilise the local resources, spare time and dormant energies of village people for works of village development and social benefit;

(5) To bring about increased production, increased income and employment, better social amenities and more social and economic overheads;

(6) To bring supplies, services and credit to the very door of the villager;

(7) To prepare and execute a village production plan;

(8) To prepare a plan for every family to make every family a member of the co-operative society;

(9) To promote youth, women and child welfare and welfare of the unprivileged classes and
To bring about community mobilisation to activise and energise functional groups, voluntary agencies and village institutions.\(^{22}\)

The focus of community development was on agriculture, animal husbandry, minor irrigation, education, social education, health and rural industry. More than this, community development stood for the development of 'man' on whose life all these are inextricably inter-linked aspects.

The Community Development and National Extension Service created a new administrative setup and ethos in the field of rural development administration. For the first time the block administration was initiated under the stewardship of Block Development Officer. (There were 5265 blocks in India). This block administration was assisted with a team of Extension Officers specialised in agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives, industries and panchayats. The village level worker was made a development functionary in the village. The Community Development Administration promoted positive administrative attitudes and at the same time discarded and corrected negative ones.

\[^{22}\text{S.G.Deogaonkar, Administration For Rural Development In India, (New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1980), pp.61-66.}\]
There were positive achievements as well as shortcomings in the implementation of Community Development Programme. This programme created an awareness in rural development among the rural people. It also resulted in village development in its basic sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, education, health, sanitation and so on. In spite of its positive achievements, the programme exhibited certain inherent weaknesses. Its prime weakness was that it failed to enlist the support of the people in the implementation dimension. There was severe criticism that it was mainly a governmental programme rather than a people's programme. It was due to lack of people's participation in the programme. The UNESCO delegation in 1954 was frank in its comments when it pointed out "we do not see human touch in any case not as much as we expected."23 This problem was also perceived by the planners during the Second Five Year Plan. The Community Development Programme failed to achieve its objectives mainly because of lack of public participation, which is considered as one of the critical variables in the achievement of development goals.24


In view of these criticisms, the Government of India appointed a Study Team in January 1957 under the Chairmanship of Balwantray Mehta with the following terms of reference to study the functioning of the Community Development Projects and National Extension Service with reference to the problems of Village panchayats in a democratic administrative set up. The study team toured all over the country and submitted an exhaustive report. As regards the implementation of the Community Development Programme, the team felt that it did not evoke the much needed popular participation. It recommended a three-tier structure of local self-governing bodies from the village to the district, the bodies being organically linked up; genuine transfer of power and responsibility to them; adequate resources should be transferred to the new bodies to enable them to discharge these responsibilities; a developmental programmes of these levels should be channelled through these bodies and the system evolved should be such as will facilitate further devolution and dispersal of power and responsibilities in the future.

The Mehta Committee recommended the setting up of Panchayati Raj institutions with genuine power for bringing rural development. The resultant panchayat system was made an instrument of village government for realising the Gandhian ideals. In essence, panchayats were to be made responsible
for the total development of the village i.e., they will concern themselves with the physical, mental and moral development of the community including the socio-economic progress of the community. If the panchayats do not as yet approximate to this picture, then concerted efforts will have to be made in this direction.  

States were asked to implement recommendations of the Mehta team as per their local settings, resulting in States enacting panchayat legislations for the creation of Panchayati Raj institutions. The creation of Panchayati Raj in 1959 with the object of entrusting the authority and responsibility for rural development to rural people is considered not only an innovation but also a revolution. In this revolutionary task, the Rajasthan State did pioneering work by setting up Panchayati Raj Institutions in the year 1959. Then other States took action in this direction. In Karnataka also the

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Panchayati Raj Institutions were setup by enacting the Karnataka Village Panchayats And Local Boards Act, 1959, (Karnataka Act No.10 of 1959). The three-tier system was adopted with District Development Council at the apex, Taluk Development Board at the middle level and Village Panchayat at the lower rung. Village Panchayats and Taluka Development Boards were popularly elected bodies whereas the District Development Council was a nominated body and constituted through indirect election. This system was in operation from 1960 to 1986. During this period these were constituted thrice in 1960, 1968 and 1978.

In 1983 the non-congress Government came to power in Karnataka with the election Manifesto of 'power to people'. In fulfilment of this, the Janata Government passed a new Act namely The Karnataka Zilla Parishads, Taluk Panchayat Samithis, Mandal Panchayats And Nyaya Panchayats Act 1983. This Act provided for the Gram Sabha at the Village level, Mandal Panchayat for a cluster of villages, Taluk Panchayat Samithi for a taluk and Zilla Parishads at the district level. The Act also provides for the Constitution of Nyaya Panchayats to dispense with minor and petty civil and criminal offences which will come into force after the expiry of five years of the commencement of the Act. The Mandal Panchayats and Zilla Parishads were popularly constituted through elections. The wide-ranging financial and other powers have been delegated to these bodies. In essence, all development work at the sub-district level is carried on by Zilla Parishads and Mandal Panchayats. Thus, the development of a district is now purely in the hands of popularly elected local bodies.
The elections for the constitution of Zilla Parishads and Mandal Panchayats were held in January, 1987. In the same year the Government transferred all the development schemes to Zilla Parishads and Mandal Panchayats as per Government order number RDP,183, VAC 1986, Bangalore dated 1-4-1987. Along with the transfer of development functions the Government devolved adequate finances to these bodies.

The new experiment in rural local government is a bold one in terms of the financial powers and the magnitude of functions transferred or conferred on the rural institutions. For bringing about rural development greater responsibility is placed on these institutions. Almost all development works barring a few have been transferred to these bodies. Sizeable funds have been transferred to these bodies to carry out development activities of wide-ranging import and significance. The scheme of democratic decentralisation in the form of rural local government introduced in Karnataka has far-reaching implications for democracy and rural development. The notion of people's participation, development from below, grass roots democracy are likely to find expression in the present panchayat institutions. The new experiment raises a number of challenging questions in the sphere of rural local government, public administration and economic and social development. Certain crucial problems arising out of this scheme need to be carefully
studied. We will have to ask a number of important questions.

i) Whether the new rural local government institutions will function democratically and justify the faith reposed in them;

ii) Whether they will ensure efficiency in administration; and

iii) Whether they ensure rapid and sustained economic and social development in rural areas based on local initiatives.

It is essential that these questions are examined objectively from time to time and proper solutions are found. A concurrent evaluation of the functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions will throw light on the above questions. Such an academic exercise will bring out the successes or failures, inadequacies and weaknesses of these bodies. This enable leaders, planners and administrators to rectify the defects and weaknesses so that these bodies can effectively contribute to rural development. The areas or spheres of success can also be replicated in other areas of human endeavour. Within this framework the present study has been undertaken to examine the working of Panchayati Raj institutions in Karnataka with special reference to Dharwad.
District. The proposed study examines the working of Panchayati Raj institutions with reference to its functional and structural dimensions, emerging pattern of leadership, finances, developmental role, problems and prospects and policy prescriptions.

**Scope And Methodology Of The Study:**

The Panchayati Raj institutions are working throughout Karnataka since many years. For the individual researcher it is very difficult to survey the whole State of Karnataka. Hence, it was felt proper to select a district for an indepth study. The Dharwad district is taken as a sample district for examining the working of Panchayati Raj institutions. In all there are 166 Mandal Panchayats in the Dharwad district. Here also it was felt that it would be difficult to cover the working of all these Mandal Panchayats. Hence the researcher chose two Mandal Panchayats namely, Amminbhavi and Nigadi from Dharwad taluk for a micro study. The selection of Mandal Panchayats is based on their performances, cropping pattern and the geographical and agronomic environments in the two Mandal Panchayats. On the basis of discussions with officials and from the perspective

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27. The statistics has been compiled from the concerned official and non-official functionaries and through field work.
of academic objectivity Nigadi and Amminbhavi Mandal Panchayats have been selected for study. These two Mandal Panchayats have been selected for study. These two Mandal Panchayats represent two different geographic and agronomic environments. Nigadi comes under Malnad tracts whereas Amminbhavi is in the Maidan land. As such the agronomy differs in the two Mandal Panchayat areas. The cropping pattern also differs in these two Mandal Panchayats.

In this study the empirical method is followed with a view to understand the working of local self-government institutions in Nigadi and Amminbhavi. In the contemporary period the purpose of social science research is social engineering and critical understanding of the phenomena. This necessitates an empirical approach to socio-political investigations. Empiricism is the hallmark of today's social science research. This is because the empirical method is adopted in many research studies. In this field study the following tools constitute important sources of data collection:

1) Questionnaires;

ii) Informal and formal interviews

iii) Field observations;

iv) Office documents, circulars, orders, notes etc; and

v) Secondary sources consisting of books, reports, articles, unpublished seminar papers, memoranda etc.

(i) **Questionnaires**:

Two types of questionnaires were framed for getting the responses of officials and non-officials respectively. The questionnaire for officials touched upon their socio-economic background, issues and problems regarding Panchayati Raj institutions. The elected members of Panchayati Raj institutions are non-officials. The non-officials were interviewed with the help of a questionnaire. This questionnaire touched on their socio-economic background, elections, party affiliations, leadership variables, issues and problems of Panchayati Raj institutions.

(ii) **Informal And Formal Interviews**:

Some aspects were not covered by the questionnaires administered to the officials and non-officials. Such information was elicited through formal and informal discussions with them. Reliance was placed on informal discussion, especially for collecting information on sensitive issues such as factional
politics etc. This method yielded rich dividends in terms of exposition of Panchayat politics, conflicts and cleavages. In certain cases formal discussion with the help of questions was also used through a participatory process.

(iii) Field Observations:

The University academicians are often criticised for their arm chair theory building about rural India. M.N.Srinivas is highly critical of the lack of field study culture in social science research. This is because of difficulties in conducting survey research in social science in a developing country like India where the respondents may not respond properly. Survey research is a costly affair consuming both money, time and human resources and lack of training in conducting surveys has also formed the major difficulty in this exercise. In Anthropology and Sociology participant observation constitutes an important source of data collection technique. In our study also the technique of participant observation is used, but in a different fashion. Field observations of the conduct of Gram

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Sabha meetings of Mandal Panchayats, Taluk Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishads were made in order to perceive the behaviour of non-officials as well as the conduct of statutory proceedings. This technique of field observation especially meetings yielded rich data in terms of the behaviour pattern of non-officials.

(iv) **Office Documents, Records etc.**

The Mandal Panchayat records, Meetings, Proceedings, Office Orders, Circulars and notes provided valuable insights into the working of Panchayat administration. The plan documents and budget estimates gave an idea of development activities in this rural setting. Important Government orders were also consulted. The office orders, documents, circulars and other jottings were analysed through the content analysis method.

(v) **Secondary Sources:**

Books on development administration, Panchayati Raj, Local Self-Government and rural development were referred intensively and extensively. Journal articles on various dimensions of rural development and Panchayati Raj were consulted as and when necessary. Government reports, Five Year Plan documents, evaluation reports were also examined with a view to draw appropriate conclusions. Unpublished theses and seminar papers
were also used in the analysis. For collecting secondary data, the following institutions were visited:

1) National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad;
2) Osmania University Library, Hyderabad;
3) Administrative Training Institute, Mysore;
4) Mysore University Library, Mysore;
5) District Training Institute, Mysore;
6) Legislature Library, Bangalore;
7) State Archives, Bangalore;
8) University of Agricultural Sciences Library, Dharwad;
9) District Training Institute, Dharwad;
10) Gram-Sevak Training Centre, Dharwad; and
11) Karnataka University Library, Dharwad.

Sample of Respondents:

In order to elicit information it was decided to interview the officials, and non-officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions.
The number of such respondents is given in Table-1

The technique of random sampling was adopted by the researcher.

**Table - 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Officials</th>
<th>Non-officials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandal Panchayats:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Amminbhavi</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nigadi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dharwat Taluk Panchayat Samithi</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dharwat Zilla Parishad</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Approaches for Analysis:**

The Structural and Behavioural approaches were employed for the study.  

32. In this connection see V. Shivaling Prasad's *Panchayat's And Development*, *Op. cit.*
The structural analysis will cover the following aspects:

1) The structure of Panchayati Raj institutions from State to village level;

2) The developmental bureaucracy involved in rural local government;

3) Selection, training and promotional aspects of Panchayat personnel;

4) Panchayat finance in terms of taxes, grants, other sources, accounting methods and auditing; and

5) The committee system in panchayati raj institutions.

The behavioural analysis will look into following aspects:

1) The functioning of panchayat institutions in terms of panchayat elections, meetings, co-ordination, planning and implementation;

2) Leadership behaviour;

3) People's participation;
4) Official, Non-official relations; and

5) Functioning of political parties.

**Organisation of the Study:**

The study is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction and importance of the study, purpose, scope and methodology, data collection techniques and limitations of the study. A brief history of Panchayati Raj institutions in India and Karnataka is also described in the first chapter. The second chapter touches upon organisational aspects of Panchayati Raj institutions in Karnataka. The structural and functional analysis of Panchayati Raj institutions has also been made. The third chapter deals with panchayat leadership in terms of the following aspects. They have been analysed as follows:

(a) Socio-economic background of leaders;

(b) Factors determining leadership;

(c) Leadership in terms of electrol politics;

(d) Popular participation; and

(e) Pattern of emerging leadership.
In the fourth chapter, panchayat finance in terms of budgeting, accounting and auditing are investigated. Also the tax structure and the system of grants are analysed and suitable conclusions are drawn. The fifth chapter has dealt with the working of panchayat. Planning and implementation are examined thoroughly. The civic and developmental works of Zilla Parishad and selected Mandal Panchayats are discussed at some length. The sixth chapter tries to come to grips with the problems of Panchayati Raj institutions in the spheres of legislations, officials, non-officials relations, taxation, recruitment and transfer of personnel and training of official and non-officials. In the last chapter the findings of the study, policy prescri-

otions are indicated with a view to help policy planners in the Governmental administration.