Chapter III
Methodology

The Problem Statement
There is a situation of widening social inequalities and increasing divisiveness and communalization of social identities in our villages. Poverty, human rights violations of the marginalised groups in particular, social and ecological disharmony and much human suffering are found in these localities. The forms and processes of relations of power are considered responsible for persistence of inequalities, divisive trends and deprivations in our society as in others. However, lack of studies with appropriate framework or tools to study the relations of power is a major limitation faced by community workers/social activists who work with the subalterns in various historical eco-social regions of our country.

This research study seeks to address the problem by attempting to design a theoretical framework of analysis of power (incorporating the seven salient features of relations of domination and facilitative power) and applying the same to the study of sites of power especially agrarian sites in a village in Dakshina Kannada district which comprised part of a historical geo-politico social region namely Tulunadu. It needs to be emphasized here that no claim is being made to evolve a framework of analysis of power for universal application through a case study of a village in a particular geographic region. The effort is to evolve a more comprehensive, framework of analysis of relations of power in a village and test its appropriateness and utility for understanding the dynamics of power in a village within the particular region under consideration.

Motivation for the Study
The research scholar has been a student, educator, practitioner as well as researcher in the field of community work/community organization in rural areas of Dakshina Kannada
and Karnataka. Her practical interventions along with many others in the lives of the marginalized groups such as farmers, agrarian labourers, dalits, street vendors, women and children, made her realize that unless one has deeper understanding of the relations of power at work in a given locality/region, one cannot facilitate effective interventions to contribute to the process of engaging the marginalised groups in deepening their critical consciousness and building a more just and socially as well as ecologically harmonious society where human rights and liberties are fulfilled.

The region of Dakshina Kannada is quite advanced in the field of modern education inclusive of professional education. However the extensive spread of modern education has not coincided with the critique of divisive social identities and human rights violations. In fact the district has been experiencing spurt in incidents of communal riots in recent years which are overt manifestations of historically embedded biases and prejudices.

The district is also known for its extensive and modern health facilities. Measured in terms of health indicators such as life expectancy, reduced infant, child and maternal mortality, immunization rate, the district has shown phenomenal progress in par with the developed nations of the world. But the health conditions of the people envisioned in terms of total physical, mental and emotional wellbeing remains far from being desirable. The mushrooming health centres, pharmacies, counselling services are indicators of increasing dependence on physicians, therapists and drugs in this region.

The district has a vast network of cooperative institutions and welfare societies established since early part of the last century. An inventory of the non-government agencies undertaken in 2005 reveals that there were nearly 125 such agencies engaged in various types of welfare, socio-economic development and human right oriented activities. While contributing to Welfare and development in certain forms, these organizations themselves have incorporated people of the rural and urban areas into new relations of power (relations of dependency and subjectification).
So, one continues to find deep rooted inequalities based on gender, jati, vocation, wealth, education, position, and control over organizational means in the region. All sites of social relations in the region i.e. agrarian, industrial, educational, medical, governmental, political party, cooperative society and non-governmental agency are more or less asymmetrical. Relations of power are immanent in each of these sites of social relations, wherein individuals are subjected to various strategies or practices of domination as well as disciplining.

Within such a context, community organization practitioners/activists who seek to intervene to facilitate participatory and sustainable process of strengthening economic, social and political democracy in regions like Dakshina Kannada, require multiple competencies. Ability to study and understand relations of power with their distinctive features in particular historico-geo-political regions by using appropriate tools or frameworks is an important competency area in community organization practice. The indigenous concepts and interpretations should be utilized in facilitating such an understanding. Keeping these factors in mind, the research scholar was motivated to develop a framework for the study of relations of power in a village of Dakshina Kannada district.

Relevance of Village as a Unit for the Study of Relations of Power

In order to understand the relevance of village as a unit for the study of relations of power, it is necessary that we summarise the way in which the village has been conceived as a subject of study. It is important to note here that village societies have been variously conceived of as being geographic localities, human settlements based on agriculture as primary occupation, unit of revenue administration and localities of residence for households characterized by primary relationships. Villages have also been seen as micro-units of a macro socio-cultural or civilizational set up and village institutions, such as economic, politico-administrative, religious, health and educational have been seen as inherent parts of the relevant macro-system of the wider society. More so in a rapidly changing situation of globalization which is becoming increasingly more complex, every
village is getting more deeply linked to other villages, region, nation and the globe. So it becomes meaningless to look upon a village as being the locale of all relations of power. As a result one cannot conceive of relations of power incorporating village residents as being restricted to the village context alone. The residents of the village as employers and employees, rulers and ruled, political leaders and followers, kin group/jati leaders or members, producers/providers and consumers of agricultural and industrial products as well as services (i.e. food and cash crops, health, education, transportation, electricity, communication, household appliances, schemes and programmes of government, non-government and financial institutions) are engaged in relations of power outside the village as well.

Villages of Dakshina Kannada as in other parts of India have never lived an isolated existence. They were involved in relations of trade both in-land and overseas since millennia. They were engaged in relations of subordination with rulers or chieftains during the feudal past of Tuluva history (i.e. as payers of revenue, receivers of land grants and as rent paying tenants of supra local feudal lords/landlords). The kinship and jati linkages which bind villagers of Tulunadu have always extended to a wider geopolitical zone comprising of hundreds of villages. There are many agriculturists in Dakshina Kannada including the village under study whose ownership and control over land have not been limited to areas within village. Adherence to religions/sects links villagers to far off places of worship as believers and donors (land, grants, funds, gold, grains and other products). There are village employers who employ casual/migrant labour from outside the village/district/state. There are residents who work outside the village as employers, contractors and employees. There are many villagers (i.e. beedi rollers) who work within the village for employers who are outside the village, but who operate through resident or visiting contractors or agents. The villagers do not depend only on village shops or sellers of products/services (i.e. health, education, government services) to meet their needs nor do the village producers market their products within the village alone. Besides such direct supra local relations of power, village residents are also involved in indirect relations of power at the supra-local level that are mediated at the village level through
local agents (i.e. government functionaries, teachers) or through channels of mass communication. For instance a village accountant is an agent of the government who is the mediator between the villagers and revenue administration (district, state and nation). Text books, press, television or radio are channels of communication that link villagers indirectly in relations of power with producers and transmitters of messages from more or less distant places.

So the investigator does not wish to add to the debate on the question of whether or not village could form a unit or case for the study of relations of power. Instead, the focus is on the significant sites of relations of power with focus on agrarian sites in which the residents of a village are involved at various historical junctures.

**Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to understand and analyse the relations of power in the agrarian sites of the village in a historical perspective. Other related sites of social relations would also be covered to some extent to understand the wider context of relations of power. This requires adopting an appropriate theoretical framework of relations of power and making a comparative analysis of the historical and contemporary situation of the relations of power in the village.

The specific objectives of the research will be:

1. To study the changing demographic, settlement and social composition patterns of the village in order to clarify the context of the study of relations of power that incorporate the villagers in the agrarian sites at particular historical junctures.
2. To describe the characteristics of various sites of social relations that have emerged in the village as venues of relations of power at particular historical junctures by focusing more in detail on the agrarian sector.
3. To explore and analyse the salient features of relations of power with focus on agrarian and other more or less related sites of the village at particular historical junctures.
4. To arrive at certain generalizations concerning the changing trends in relations of power from the traditional to the contemporary with emphasis on the agrarian sites of the village.

5. To draw implications for community work/social action praxis in villages of the region based on the findings of the study.

Theoretical Framework

The relations of power in which the residents of a village which is an integral part of a historical geo-political region are involved are manifold and complex. Such relations could only be understood fully if traced historically. An appropriate framework is a must to undertake the study of historical and contemporary relations of power. A review of literature on power attempted in Chapter II of this research, highlights two major notions on power namely power as a relation of domination and power as a facilitative (productive and disciplining) relation. The former notion of power as a relation of domination is highlighted in the agency and structural (constructivist) perspectives or approaches to the understanding of power. The latter notion of power as a facilitative relation is emphasized in the Parsonian and Foucauldian (post modern or post structuralist) perspective on power. These two notions have been explained in the preceding chapter. In order to understand the historical and emerging trends in relations of power in a village, it was felt that to begin with a more comprehensive definition of relations of power incorporating the salient features associated with both the notions on power need to be evolved and the terms signifying the salient features of power need to be clarified. This would provide the theoretical basis for designing the framework for the analysis of relations of power for the research study attempted here.

Conceptualization of the Term Relations of Power

The term relations of power is conceptualised here to mean a variable force or energy that is brought to bear on one another by more or less asymmetrically or hierarchically situated subjects (individuals/groups), in particular sites of social relations, at a particular historical juncture, by acquiring authority (legitimate or illegitimate) from one
or more forms of power, through strategies and practices, that are integrated with one or more type of discourses/truth claims, by utilizing more or less effectively the appropriate resources and capacities directed towards attainment of concrete objects, that result in certain effects despite resistance from those on whom it is exerted. Conceptualized thus relations of power remain not only context and time specific but also socio-relational site specific. As such relations of power may remain relatively stable, for a long time or manifest certain modifications from time to time due to the impact of one or more significant factors of social change.

The salient features of relations of power identified from this comprehensive explanation of power are: (i) Sites of social relations, (ii) Forms of power, (iii) Asymmetry or hierarchy, (iv) Strategies or practices, (v) Discourses or Truth Claims, (vi) Resources and capacities, (vii) Objects and effects, (viii) Resistance. An attempt is made to explain these salient features of relations of power as these constitute the framework for the analysis of relations of power with focus on agrarian and related sites of the village at particular historical junctures.

i) Sites of Social Relations: A ‘Site of social relations’ is a more or less organized, elaborated, rationalized venue that involves more or less number of subjects in processes of observable patterns of interaction by integrating rules, resources, tasks and knowledge in order to produce specific outputs/outcomes or fulfil specific needs or objectives. Examples of such sites are centres of production (agricultural, industrial and crafts), kinship, family, revenue, law and order and development oriented state agencies, village panchayats, schools, colleges, health centres, political parties, places of worship, non-governmental organisations, banks and cooperatives. Some of these sites may not be operational within the geographic limits of the village. However village subjects are involved in social relations in a multiplicity of sites that are situated within a geographic territory and or outside of it. These sites are more or less asymmetrical/hierarchical or more or less symmetrical/democratic. More the symmetry higher is the power equation and vice versa. As stated by Held
relations of power systematically generate asymmetries of life chances. They create a situation where there is asymmetrical production and distribution of life chances that limits and erodes the possibilities of political participation. By life chances Held means the chances that a person has of sharing in the socially generated economic, cultural or political goods, rewards and opportunities typically found in their community. The focus of this research is on agrarian sites of the village and on subjects who are situated within these sites, by taking into consideration where appropriate other more or less co-related sites of social relations. It is significant the note here that the embodied self which is the locus of multiple identities is also considered as an important site of relations of power by Foucault.

ii) Forms of Power: The two major types of power identified in the theoretical literature on power namely power as domination and power as facilitative relation, assume various forms. Relationship of domination is termed as 'Sovereign power' by Foucault. Domination assumes various forms. Weber (cited in Parkin, 2002:74) identifies two broad types of domination. One of the forms of domination combines, both the legitimate and illegitimate authority exerted by the superiors, over the inferiors. When it is legitimate, obedience and compliance is built into domination, whereas when it is illegitimate, domination may lead to coercion/suppression. Another form of domination arises from monopolistic control of economic resources in the market place which is exercised indirectly through the mediation of commodities and resources. Weber distinguishes between three forms of legitimate domination namely traditional domination (patrimonial/patriarchal/feudal), charismatic domination and legal-rational domination (i.e. bureaucratic).

Wrong (1979) has classified domination into five types depending upon the particular mechanisms involved: i) Coercive domination involve the threat of force or the threat to deprive or apply a sanction. ii) Induced domination exists where power holders offer rewards for compliance to command (i.e. higher remuneration or
pay packages). iii) **Legitimate domination** is based on authority which involves consent and a framework of shared norms through which subordinates are invited to see their superior as possessing the right to command (Weber's traditional and rational domination are seen as being the most common bases of legitimate domination). iv) **Domination based on competence** is seen as that particular form of institutionalized power that rests upon the possession of specialized knowledge or expertise (technical competencies). v) **Personal domination** according to Wrong is same as that of Weber's charismatic domination where subordinates obey because they identify some traits in the superior.

Power as domination is seen as being tied to the kings, rulers, feudal lords, elites, capitalist or the centralised state apparatus or to certain structures (i.e. economic structure or socio-cultural structure in the last instance). Domination involves exercise of command, control and influence by those in position of authority or supremacy over those in subordinate or inferior positions. For example, rulers or elites exercise domination over subjects or masses respectively, men exercise domination over women in a patriarchal society, members of the privileged lineage groups and castes exercise domination over the members of the underprivileged lineage groups and castes. It could also involve domination over ideas, symbols, rituals and media of communication so as to exert control over minds of people and command their obedience or compliance. It is termed variously as cultural domination or 'hegemony' (Gramsci, 1971.).

**Facilitative relations of power** take mainly two forms namely the form of social conditioning (socialization) cum social control and the form of disciplinary power. Relations of social conditioning and social control are inherently present in all sites of social relations during every phase of history. All individuals are products of the process of socialization and in turn become the agents of socialization. Relations of disciplinary power take on either the disciplinary form or bio-power form (both of which have been the focus of attention for Foucault). The organisation of techniques
of production and discipline is called as disciplinary power by Foucault (Clegg, 1989: 232). Foucault (1979a) argues that disciplinary power is one of the distinctive conceptions of power which has characterized the ‘modern’ epochs, from early nineteenth century onwards (Clegg, 1989:155). ‘Disciplinary power’ is targeted at individuals and works through disciplinary practices which aim at creating others into docile bodies. It works through the construction of routine. The subject himself, his daily rhythm, time, bodily actions, mode of life becomes the objects of power (Bauman, 1982: 40-41 cited in Clegg, 1989: 167-168). It is a power that reaches into the very grain of individuals, as it is exercised within the social body rather than from above it (Foucault 1980-39; cited in Clegg, 1989: 155). The disciplinary power is knowledge constituted in definite institutional and organizational practices. It is a very practical knowledge which disciplines the body, regulates the mind and orders the emotions in such a way that the ranking, hierarchy and stratification which ensues is based on the productive worth of individuals as they are defined by those new practices of power (Clegg, 1989: 153). Another form of facilitative/productive power according to Foucault is ‘Bio – power’. It is oriented to the subjugation of bodies and control of population in general. In particular control over re-productivity and sexuality is brought under the theme of bio-power. Bio–power is also a form of disciplinary power that normalizes through discursive formations of psychiatry, medicine and social work (Foucault, 1984: 140-144; Clegg, 1989: 155-156). For instance, early 19th century philanthropists involved in the lives of others (i.e. health, nutrition, housing). Out of these confused set of philanthropic/charitable formations, there emerged certain personages, institutions, forms of knowledge, public hygiene inspectors, different categories of social workers and psychiatrists. Foucault calls these the new agents of the political body, the agents of liaison. These new agents are professionals who operate new disciplinary mechanisms of power/knowledge. Professionals are looked upon as privileged occupational groups exercising particular authority or control over subordinate groups. In this sense, professionalisation is viewed as an occupational strategy to maintain certain monopolistic privileges and rewards by controlling their place within the market.
Professionals such as correctional officers, doctors, psychiatrists, social workers, lawyers, teachers are said to play a significant role in disciplining the offenders, patients, clients and students within the respective sites of power relations namely modern penitentiary, prison, hospital and school and state bureaucratic sites. All these are considered as elements within an expanding apparatus of control, discipline and regulation which have secured order not through overt violence but through micro politics of discipline whereby people have been morally regulated into conformity (Turner, 1987: 12).

In reality both relations of domination and facilitative power combine at the operational level. In certain relational sites this is more visible. For example, patriarchy which implies male superiority and female subordinate in specific relational contexts combines domination and facilitative power. For instance in the case of women in patriarchal relational sites, not only the productivity of women, but also their fertility or re-productivity as well as sexuality is brought under the control of patriarchal forces. At the same time gendered subjectivities are reinforced, re-fixed or altered through patriarchal processes of disciplining to be obedient and docile objects and productive subjects of patriarchal forces, who collaborate in the process of gender identity construction.

iii) Asymmetry or Hierarchy: Another salient feature of relations of power is that such relations are by nature more or less unequal, in other words asymmetry or hierarchy, individual differentiation or diversities characterise such relations. This means that the agents or subjects (identities) engaged in relations of power in specific site of social relations are organised into grades or ranks each subordinate to the one above it. Such gradation or ranking is usually on the basis of one or more issues of salience such as age, gender, ethnicity (jati, race or religion), ownership, control and utilization of wealth, vocational standing, social status (ritual status, style of life), position of authority, education, competence or ability, reputation and influence. Each site of social relations especially organised relations may manifest hierarchical
authority structures of various forms of domination (i.e. ownership and control over productive wealth), jati/ethnic domination and domination by levels of competence or expertise. The extent of asymmetry may or may not vary from one site of relations of power to another, one form of power to another, one historical period to another and one eco-cultural location to another. So it is important to study how the various subjects or agents engaged in relations of power are ranked or ordered in specific relational sites of the village at a particular time and whether or not change has occurred in the asymmetrical relations or gradations prevalent from one historical phase to another.

iv) Strategies or Practices of Power: Strategies or practices of power constitute another salient feature of relations of power. According to theorists on power such as Foucault, strategies or practices constitute one of the most significant features of relations of power. According to him “power strategies are the totality of means put into operation to implement power or to maintain it”. Strategies of power enable actors in relations of power to effectively use capacities and resources over which they have varying control to produce consequential outcomes for their own and others agency. Foucault distinguishes between two types of power strategies namely strategies and practices of domination and strategies or practices of facilitative, productive/disciplinary power (See also O'Neill, 1987:234).

Strategies of domination are negative/exploitative/repressive. These include use of force or physical coercion by threat of arms, physical punishment, torture, extermination, insults or verbal abuse and other practices or emotional harassment, destruction of properties, overt and covert forms of discrimination, exile or forceful eviction or displacement. Strategies of appropriation of surplus produced by the peasants and labourers are strategies of domination, so are the strategies used to oppress as well as suppress others.
Strategies of facilitative power are positive, productive and disciplinary. These include practices of division of labour, routines, ritual and other customary practices, disciplinary modes of socialization and social control, inclusion and exclusion, segregation and mixing, purity and pollution, hierarchical observations, verbal communication (i.e. forms of addressing others, joking, teasing, story telling) and non-verbal communication strategies (i.e. bodily acts such as gestures, postures, facial expressions, folk and mass media communication inclusive of advertising).

Foucault focuses on facilitative/productive strategies which he terms as disciplinary or discursive strategies or practices. These include drills, parades, marches or processions, assembly, lines, uniforms and styles of dressing, control over time (time schedules) or daily rhythm and way of life. Such strategies are utilized as part of disciplinary technologies which include establishment of standing armies, police force, development and expansion of permanent bureaucracy, strengthening of public taxation, codified laws, development and expansion of schools/universities and hospitals (John L, 1986: 14-18). When Freire (1972) speaks of education for domestication through schools, he is basically focusing on the disciplinary power that is at work there.

v) **Discourses/Truth claims:** ‘Discourse’ in the broader sense means anything written or said or written using signs. Discourses are linguistic explanations that are offered for a social, human or physical phenomenon. Foucauldian notion of discourse is considered in this study. Foucault equates discourses with truth claims. The types of discourses which each society accepts and makes function as true are termed as a truth claim by Foucault. By truth, he means, the systems of ‘ordered procedures’ for producing, distributing and operating linguistic statements which stand in a circular, indeed inseparable, relationship with systems of power (1980: 131-133). For Foucault, discourse was always associated with forms of discipline, discipline that acted upon groups of humans (Poster, 1984: 9).
Relations of domination is integrated with discourses such as pastoral ones in the west, Vedic Brahmanical discourses in the Indian subcontinent which upheld the divine right of kings and the superiority of the priestly class (i.e. Brahmins). The colonial or imperialist discourses facilitated the domination of the colonizers over the colonised people and the colonial systems of thought over the indigenous ones. On the other hand, the facilitative power in traditional society was accompanied by certain religio-cultural discourses that incorporated customs, norms, rituals and practices. Relations of disciplinary power in modern societies are integrated with so called humane and enlightened discourses which includes rational disciplines of the human sciences.

vi) **Resources and Capacities**: Resources and capacities are all those natural, material, physical intellectual attitudinal, emotional, social, linguistic, technological and organizational means, strengths, capabilities or competencies, opportunities, privileges and entitlements that are possessed, controlled, mobilized and/more or less effectively utilized by individual and collective subjects (agencies) in various sites of social relations to exercise domination and or facilitative (disciplining and productive) power. According to Held (1994: 223), there are diverse range of socially patterned resources from the material (wealth and income), coercive (organized might or deployment of force, to the cultural (the stock of concepts and discourses that mould interpretation frameworks, tastes and abilities) Resources being multiple, individuals, groups (identities), organizations including political bodies such as states may control and use these resources in various combinations more or less effectively through varying means to exercise domination, and facilitative power in various sites of social relations (Annexure II: Various Resources that aid the Exercise of Power). Possession of, control over or access to such resources by themselves is not enough. Only when such resources are effectively used in various combinations to set in motion certain strategies or practices of power, these serve the aims of power. In the words of Clegg (1989:209) “Resources
become power resources depending entirely on how they are positioned or fixed by the players, the rules and the game”.

vii) **Objects and Effects:** There is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objects’ (Foucault cited in Fillingham, 2000: 144). Objects of power cover those concrete outcomes/results which are sought to be achieved through the exercise of power in a particular site of social relations. The **objects of relations of domination** have been broadly classified into two types (i) Power over physical objects, (ii) power over human bodies. Objects of feudal power are human labour and products of human labour. It includes extraction or appropriation of surplus produced by the labouring peasants and others in the form of rent, tax, levy or tribute and various forms of services (we can add free labour or begar in Indian context). Increased control over natural as well as human resources and increasing share in the profits, as well as preferential access to opportunities especially those leading to acquisition of capacities (technical and managerial, human and material resources) are the objectives of power in a capitalist society.

**Objects of facilitative relations of power** are bodies of individuals themselves, their daily rhythm, time, bodily actions, mode of life including their tastes, and dispositions. The productive/disciplinary power seeks to bring the totality of an individual’s life process under perpetual surveillance (Bauman, 1982: 40-41 in Clegg, 1989 P 157-167). It naturalizes the socio-culturally constituted unequal identities based on gender, jati, vocation, religiosity and nationality. In short, its aim is to produce useful and at the same time docile and obedient bodies in the service of power. It seeks to empower all the subjects who come within its ambit to serve power as its faithful subjects as well as agents.

The **objects of power** cannot automatically be translated into effects or outcomes. Effects of power are conceived of as the outcomes or consequences of relations of domination and relations of productive power. **Relations of domination results** in
win-lose outcomes (i.e. surplus appropriation by some at the cost of others). It may result in contradictory effects: wealth, comfort, security and pleasure for some, hunger, poverty, backwardness, discrimination and violence, resulting in loss of life, disfigurement of the body, stunted physical/mental growth for others. Relations of facilitative/productive power may result in win-win outcomes—the generation and increase of certain bodily competencies and resulting in high outputs and desired outcomes with more or less share of benefits for all concerned.

One major area of effects of relations of facilitative power is manifested in various types of super-ordinate and subordinate identities that are present in different sites of relations at particular historical junctures. Relations of facilitative power result in production or construction, alteration and fixing of identities. Individuals as embodiment of differential and related social identities based on features such as age, gender, ethnicity (caste, race, religiosity, and community), occupation and nationality are significant effects of relations of power. For example, the gendered subjects are produced and reproduced in relations that privilege male and subordinate female (Weedon, 1987). In the Indian context an example is the construction and alteration of Brahmin (Savarna) and the achuth (untouchable) identities from a specific historical phase (Kurien. 2002: 22-27). Foucault emphasises the need to focus on the ‘myriad of bodies which are constituted as peripheral subjects as a result of the effects of power’ (Foucault, 1980:39, in Clegg, 1989:155). This research focuses on particular identities that emerged during specific phase of Tuluva history as products as well as vehicles of power.

viii) Resistance: Resistance is another salient feature of power. Resistance is adverse reaction against the exercise of power manifested by an individual or group. It is against domination (oppression/exploitation) on the one hand and facilitative (productive or disciplinary) power on the other within varied relational sites. Both power and resistance stand in a relationship to each other. There is dialectic of power and resistance in diverse sites and practices (Clegg, 1989: 183, 208). Individuals as
labouring subjects (possessors of bodily capacities who engage in relations of production), as speaking subjects (possessors of discursive capacities engaged in relations of meaning) and as embodied subjects (possessors of multiple identities) have the capacity to resist total control through the exercise of power by other agents who are placed in a situation of relative advantage over them in specific sites of relations of power (i.e. employers over employees in a capitalist factory or husbands over wives in a patriarchal family). Both relations of production as well as relations of meaning are resistant to total control (Clegg, 1989:193-194). In short, resistance is conceived here as a countervailing power which occurs within relations of power and is inherently a part of it and operates through one or more of the strategies and practices of power, using one or more resources or means of power that are accessible in order to oppose or struggle against specific forms of domination and specific forms of facilitative/productive power.

Resistance could be radical or soft. It could be individually or collectively manifested. It can be overt (i.e. violent) or subtle. It could be manifested in human behaviours (verbal/non-verbal, facial, postural) or through practices or strategies. It could be sustained for a long time or short lived. When it is radical and sustained, it may result in altering the organization itself (i.e. organizational out-flaking). When resistance leads to organizational out-flaking it may consolidate itself as a new power, constituting a new field of force altogether (Clegg, 1989: 207). When it is relatively mild it is against the exercise of power without questioning the premises that makes such exercise of power possible (Clegg, 1989: P. 207-208).

**Resistance within relations of domination** involve strategies or practices such as disobedience, non-cooperation, silence, avoidance, dropping out or running away, petitioning against grievances, manipulation and persuasion. Domination may provoke violent acts of resistance (riots, revolts, terrorism) resulting in loss of lives and properties and or non-violent individual or collective action (or struggles). **Within relations of facilitative power** everyday acts of both subtle and overt
resistance tend to occur, which may lead to radical, broad based and sustained collective struggles on rare occasions. This is despite the fact that relations of facilitative/disciplinary power seek to produce subjects/identities that are least resistant to power. Resistance could also occur against knowledges or truth claims of both dominant and disciplinary power. In such cases it may result in counter cultural movements, reinterpretation and demythification of truth claims as well as insurrection of subjugated knowledges or memories of struggles (Annexure VII Clarification of Terms used in the Research Study – 2 and 3).

The Research Design

The theoretical framework utilized in this research incorporates all salient features of relations of power explained above for the analysis of the relations of power with focus on agrarian production and related sites such as ritual or religious, and governance (political – administrative) within the demographic and eco-social context of the village as a whole at particular historical junctures. The case study or historical exploratory study design is considered most appropriate for the study. This is mainly because the study seeks to explore the characteristics of agrarian and other sites of social relations that have emerged from time to time in order to analyse emerging trends in salient features of relations of power.

The historical phases covered for the study and analysis of relations of power in the agrarian sites in particular and other related sites of social relation are: (i) Traditional/feudal phase (Prior to the British rule) (ii) Beginning of the 20th century: Under British rule (iii) Post independent phase from 1950's to late seventies (prior to the implementation of Karnataka Land Reforms Act 1974) (iv) The current phase (1995 and 2005)

Selection of Village

For the purpose of the case study it was decided to select one village from the Dakshina Kannada district, which was a composite part of the erstwhile Tulunadu, a historically
unique region in Karnataka. The selection of the village for the study was guided by the following criteria:

- Long history of folk tradition and inclusion in the revenue records of the colonial period.
- Fairly large, with at least 1,000 households.
- Multi-jati as well as a multi-religious in composition (that is, having families belonging to all the major Jatis (i.e. the Bunt, Pujary (Billava), Brahmin, other intermediary and scheduled castes) as well as religions (i.e. such as worshippers of Bhuta and Naga cults, and adherents to Vedic, Christian and Muslim faiths) in Dakshina Kannada.
- Facility of at least one primary school.
- Neither too isolated nor too close to the city market.
- Where the research scholar has had certain links or contacts.

Keeping these criteria in mind, 'Mudusede' village at a distance of 13 to 17 kilometres from the various residential zones in the village to the city of Mangalore, was selected for the study.

Sources of Data

Being a case study of the historical and emerging trends in relations of power, in the agrarian site in particular and other related sites in general multiple sources had to be utilized to collect the needed information. The primary sources of information were residents (men and women) of the village who belong to a cross section of the village population—varied occupational, Jati, religious groups. There was, neither fixed/specifed number of individuals to be contacted nor any definite sampling frame. Anyone who was found to be capable of providing relevant information and available at the time of investigation was contacted. Such people include descendants of early settlers, recent migrants as well as the temporary residents or office staff of the village (who hold transferable jobs). Knowledgeable elderly inhabitants have been contacted and interviewed to obtain historical data from the earliest period known to them. Much time
was also spent with some of the key informants who could provide relevant historical and other details. Many erstwhile landlords, tenants and agrarian labourers belonging to varied Jatis were interviewed to arrive at some understanding of the typical patterns of relations of power that they were involved in since their remembered past.

Government land and revenue records, panchayat registers of house taxes, programme registers, minute books of the panchayat, school records, and electoral rolls have been utilized to collect relevant information about the village and its residents. Land documents available in the district record room, from the earliest period (colonial) concerning the village were utilized. Data available in the statistical office concerning the demographic trends has been collected. A version of the Ballala or ‘paddana’ of Jarandaya the prominent spirit propitiated in the village was collected from a descendent of Jhati Pujary (who continues hold the title of Jhati Pujary - his ancestor. He in turn had collected it from a paddana reciter). Sources that could provide relevant information about the village from other areas such as leaders of the Mosque in the neighbouring Adyapady village have also been contacted.

Secondly, sources of information such as books on the history and culture of Tulunadu including agrarian relations, Bhuta cult and folk culture of Dakshina Kannada have also been perused to understand the changing relations of power in the region. This contributed to the understanding of traditional relations in the village.

**Methods/Tools of Data Collection**

Multiple methods have been utilized to collect necessary information on varied aspects of relations of power. Guidelines were prepared in advance to give a direction to the case study and set a framework for collecting information. Those who could provide relevant information about the varied aspects of relations of power have been contacted in person in their houses for in depth interviews which were held in a conversational style. A short interview schedule was prepared to gather basic information concerning the socio-economic profile of households in varied zones of the village during 1995. Observation
of non-verbal behavioural manifestations, living and work conditions of the villagers, and as well as perusal of records and research studies available were other methods used to collect the needed data. Attempts to collect life histories or genealogies of established landed families, their tenant and agrarian labourers and a cross-section of village households have also been made to illustrate the changing trends in relations of power. Certain situations of conflict were also studied.

The researcher took assistance from knowledgeable villagers when involved in field work. This enabled the researcher to countercheck information which was provided by the villagers and probe deeper to check on the facts revealed by them. The positive relations that the research scholar has had with some key persons in the village facilitated the process of data collection.

**Period of Research Study**

The first phase of collection of data for the research study was started in the year 1995. The information was gathered whenever the investigator could get time as the research scholar lives just 3 to 5 kilo-meters away from different localities of the village. Researcher visited all the households in the agrarian zone of the village to collect relevant information. She also visited households of the relatives of erstwhile tenants and agrarian labourers who were living in the agrarian zone and the padav zones. Wherever information appeared to be contradictory, crosschecking was done with other residents or knowledgeable persons. Days were spent in the government offices (district, taluk and village), and one of the schools to peruse the records and take down needed information. Getting access to relevant government records was not always easy. Some of the official records had to be counterchecked as there were double and triple entries and some were in a dilapidated shape and could hardly be used. The researcher visited the village again in 2005 after a gap of nearly 10 years. Almost all agricultural households in the village were visited. Many of those who had provided information in 1995 were present in the village and could be contacted to get their opinion on further developments. Some elderly respondents were no more.
Significance of the Study

Designing and applying more appropriate tools or frameworks of analysis of power by drawing on ideas on various features of relations of power from innovative thinkers and researchers on the widely debated subject of power and insights gained through community work and social action praxis within particular historical eco-social region, is an exercise that has to be undertaken for the following reasons:

First of all, more comprehensive tools for the study and analysis of complex relations of power that are binding the people of our villages, towns and cities could enable us to discover the workings of power and its effects on the lives of people in particular and the local environment in general at various historical junctures.

Secondly, to be effective, interventions directed at positive change in any locality/society need to be based on an understanding of the forms of relations of power within which its inhabitants are engaged. This is more so because our societies are being caught in rapidly advancing processes of globalization and consequently individuals and groups are getting incorporated into new forms of relations of power which could nullify the positive effects of many an intervention.

Thirdly more meaningful interventions by community workers/activists which are sustainable, people based and social movement associated are possible, when the marginalized groups in particular, and villagers in general are engaged in processes of understanding the mechanisms or practices of domination as well as facilitative(productive/disciplinary) power. Research studies on relations of power could enable them to take stock of forces that reduce them to the state of objects/commodities, perpetuating various forms of discrimination, violence and suffering in their lives.

Fourthly, the study of relations of power could especially be of use to those change promoters who seek to understand the dynamics of resistance in various localities/villages in the village of Dakshina Kannada. It would also enable one to expose
the counter currents of resistance or counter power that remains hidden in all localities and sites of relations of power. This understanding is a must to uncover the experiences of resistance at an individual and collective level and the subjugated memories of struggles in the past, which could be strategically deployed to strengthen the resistance struggles and social movements of the subaltern groups/subordinate social identities at the local and regional level.

Fifthly, well designed and effectively used frameworks or tools of analysis of power could enable community workers, not only to study and analyze the relations of power in which the various subordinate groups that they work with are involved, but also those in which they themselves are involved (which include the relations with the people they work with). In other words, there is need for tools that aid us not only to engage in social critique but also self-critique. Such tools of analysis ought to better equip those engaged in the so called helping professions, to initiate the twin process of (i) exploring the ‘other’ embodied subjectivities/identities (i.e. gender, Jati, racial, religious, vocational linguistic and national) some historically constructed to be relatively superior and others relatively more inferior in relational contexts and (ii) their own embodied self with multiple identities in multiple sites of social relations. It is only through a continuous process of analysis of relations of power assisted by effective tools of analysis, individuals and groups inclusive of change promoters can resist being objects of domination but also docile locus of productive/disciplinary power or subjectification.

Sixthly such innovative frameworks could enable community workers/activists to take a critical look at the assumptions or truth claims that pervade professional social work as a whole and community work theory and practice in particular on the subject of dynamics of power in society on the one hand and empowerment/liberation of the marginalized groups in society on the other. Because the very discourses, that give rise to such truth claims may be the product of particular forms of power and knowledge. A stance critical of their interventions could enable them to become aware of the forms of relations of power that these may give rise to. If not the very practices which are set in motion by
them may turn out to be new strategies of domination or productive power and instead of
democratizing relations could result in constituting new identities, new hierarchies or new
relations of subjectification.

**Seventhly**, as the framework designed is inextricably linked to the analysis of relations of
power in the region, it may have relevance for context specific application. If adequately
tested and found valid as a framework by many community workers/activists, the study
could make some contribution to the literature on critical theory of community work and
social action.

**Limitations of the Study**

- One of the major limitations of the study was the non-availability of adequate
  historical data, including inadequacy of current data. There was reluctance on the
  part of some respondents to share certain facts related to loss of land through land
  reform litigation, eviction of tenants and court cases which were considered harmful
  to one's own reputation. Attempts to collect data on some subjects from other
  sources and through records available with the government were not always
  successful.

- The sites or situations of relations of power in which the villagers are involved both
  intra-village and extra-village are multiple and complex. But all such situations
  could not be covered by the study. The site of agrarian relations to a larger extent
  and those sites that are associated with it to some extent and a few other significant
  ones were covered. As such it cannot be considered a comprehensive study of
  various forms of relations of power incorporating all its residents in all the sites of
  social relations.

- The single village selected for the study which is an inland village, cannot be
  considered representative of villages in the varied ecological zones of the (i.e. coastal
  villages) district of Dakshina Kannada. As a result one cannot claim to formulate
generalizations concerning relations of power based on the study of one village which are applicable to other villages in the district as a whole. Perhaps a comparative study of representative villages from distinct eco-zones of the district may have to be conducted to gain better insights into variations in relations of power.

- The study was an ambitious attempt which ended up with a lot of field based data on different sites of social relations. However the researcher had to leave out some data on various sites as the work of writing was tending to be too lengthy. Especially the data collected on families as sites of relations of power has been left out.

- The researcher assisted along with others, some erstwhile tenants in their struggle against the landlord in late seventies and five cent colony dwellers in their attempt at initiating an organization. Though such interventions enabled the researcher to utilize the contacts she had with some erstwhile landlords and tenants as well as agrarian labourers to facilitate access to information, the knowledge of these interventions may have coloured the responses of some erstwhile landlords to the researcher.

- The researcher being a social worker cum social activist, there was a tendency to react emotionally to issues of injustice in the village and to sympathize with the victim/survivors. Keeping this tendency in mind, she tried to collect facts as objectively as possible.