INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Rural Development is the raising of the socio-economic status of rural population, on a sustainable basis, through optimum utilization of local resources, both natural and human. While external assistance is necessary, and is often appreciated, rural development can be achieved only if the rural people actively participate in the development process (Sundaram, 2011). The essence of development is not in ‘providing’ but in ‘promoting’ the rural sector. The rural people should know how to sustain itself, financially, and gain economic independence, in time and over space. The stress of rural development is on self-reliance. Also, rural development should result in greater access to goods and services for the rural population (Desai, 1988).

Rural development is defined as the improvements in the living standards of the rural people, of low income groups, residing in villages and in the making of the process of self-sustenance. Rural development is a process which leads to a continuous rise in the capacity of the rural people to control their environment, accompanied by a wider distribution of benefits, and resulting from such control. Rural development should be viewed as a process of raising the capacity of the rural people to influence their total environment and the benefits occurring from the distribution of technical developments and the participation of weaker sections (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural development, in its comprehensive sense, relates to all-round development of the rural areas; and also conceptually, rural development is the development of rural areas to achieve desired, positive changes both in a quantitative as well as a qualitative sense. Rural development is the ultimate analysis, which involves the provision of opportunities for the optimum utilization of the population residing in the rural areas (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Development, by definition, is the act or process of developing within the framework of available resources. Its primary aim in India is the removal of poverty and all the socio-economic evils, which are interlinked. Development of the people
should be *the beginning* and *not the end*, especially in the rural areas of the developing countries like India. Rural development as a process is continuous, in time and space, whereas rural development activities should be time-bound and target-oriented. Land and human resources are the two main possessions of the rural poor residing in the villages.

The term “rural development” was understood in the past to mean only agricultural development but no attention was given to other sectors of the rural economy. It is not merely agricultural development but rural transformation as well, which includes development of all facets of human civilization (Desai, 1988).

Rural development comprises of three dimensions in regard to activities. As a method, it seeks people’s involvement in all programmes. As a process, it seeks to modernize the traditionally oriented rural masses, through the application of science and technology. Its major objective is to bring about improvement in the living standards of rural people (Sundaram, 2011).

Rural development has emerged as *a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people—the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the rural population who seek a livelihood in the rural areas* (World Bank, 1975).

1.2. Rural Development in India

India has been the land of village communities and very high proportion of population living in rural areas- it was 89 percent in 1901, 74.3 percent in 1991, 69.2 per cent in 2001 and 64.4 per cent in 2011. Rural development is, therefore, an absolute and urgent necessity in India now and will continue in future. That is why in India, rural development has always attracted attention of economists, Social Reformers, Geographers and Politicians. This is because more than 75 per cent of the population resides in the rural areas – the work force depends on agriculture and allied activities S.K. Singh, 2002).

The past experience of planning for rural development shows disenchantment with growth centered strategies and percolation theory of rural development on the basis of which planning was done or the removal of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The first attempt for rural development in India was made in 1985
with an ultimate objective of bringing immediate relief and development in rural areas of Baroda.

The first step in rural development was the development of social consciousness and to create awareness among the people about the different hindrance to their development, the ways and means of overcoming them, their rights and duties in community in which they live, progressive aspects of their traditions their own strengths and potentialities to develop themselves. That is why the emphasis placed on rural development is not new. Even prior to independence, Gandhiji had succinctly pointed out the importance of developing out villages to achieve the overall development in the country. No doubt, substantial efforts were made from the beginning for the development of the rural areas but unfortunately the majority of the rural poor continue to live in abject poverty (S.K. Singh, 2002).

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, rural development, including rural industrialization, to a great extent is based on the availability of power. One can do many things in the rural areas without much pomp and show and without making major investments. Agricultural activities have to be tied up with industrialization. So can animal husbandry along with similar other programmes be tied up and integrated with industrialization. It is therefore, desirable that these aspects should carefully be examined. An enormous field has been opened and it is necessary to train the people (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural development is an old theme, but has been evolving new contents and fresh concerns. The definitions of rural development assumed the villages to be a homogenous entity. But this myth was exploded under the impact of the first set of rural development programmes undertaken during the First Five Year Plan period. Rural development on its comprehensive sense related to all round development of the rural areas. Many sectors of our plans such as rural electrification, water supply, health, education, improvement of agriculture and industry sectors have a direct bearing on the income generation and providing employment opportunities to ensure up-liftment of the rural poor thereby influencing the standard of living obtained in the countryside.
1.3. Problem of the Study

Michael Todaro (1988) views that rural development encompasses (i) improvements in the levels of living conditions including employment, education, health and nutrition, housing and a variety of other social services, (ii) minimizing inequality in the distribution of rural income and to balance the rural urban incomes and other economic opportunities, and (iii) the capacity of the rural sector to sustain and accelerate the place of such improvements (K.V. Reddy, 1988).

Rural development is a strategy to enable to target group of people, poor women and men, to grain for themselves and their children more of want and need. It involves helping the poorest among the poor, those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand the control more of the benefits of rural development. The group includes small farmers, marginal farmers, landless agricultural and non agricultural labourers, especially below the poverty line (S.K. Singh, 2002).

The emphasis on rural Development (RD) in most developing countries is understandable. A majority of the population lives in rural areas. As such, their backwardness would be retarding growth in other sectors and in the economy as a whole. The growth of towns and cities (urbanization) is possible; it is backed by prosperity in rural areas. Rural backwardness is the major cause for the falling demand (recession) for most products (Sundaram, 2011).

The stress on rural development is also due to many constraints facing the rural areas, which generally suffer from inadequate infrastructural facilities and technological advancements. The rural areas are not well placed in terms of even minimum needs like safe drinking water, primary health and road transport. This apart, the rural population suffers from indigence and illiteracy. Their traditional outlook towards development has been preventing them from taking full advantage of the incentives offered by the Government. But with substantial exposure to media, both electronic and print media, the rural sector is moving towards self-reliance and economic independence. Also, the ownership of land and other assets has been heavily concentrated in the hands of a few. It is precisely for this reason that the benefits of rural development programmes failed to reach the rural population targeted for these benefits to the extent expected (Sundaram, 2011).
Rural development denotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improving the quality of life of the rural people. The concept is comprehensive and multi-dimensional in nature. It encompasses development of agricultural and allied activities, cottage and small-scale industries, traditional crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, rural manpower and improvement in community services and facilities. Rural development covers, besides agricultural development, a comprehensive set of activities, pertaining to all aspects of rural economy. It confers benefits on a number of classes of people like the cultivators, landless labourers and rural artisans.

A single approach to rural development, it is common knowledge, would not be effective. In fact, rural development is the product of interaction between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural, institutional and environmental factors. Indeed, the rural sector experiences required changes so that it can join the mainstream of national development and contribute its share for economic development. It has been rightly said that ‘in the end, however, rural development should not be seen as a package of specific needs but as a transformation of rural life and conditions’ (Cruz, 1979).

Rural Development Programmes, in the Indian context, have aimed at achieving a number of objectives, these include: Changing the attitude of the rural people towards development/ transformation of the village community, promotion of democratic leadership at the grassroots level by setting up local self-governments, provision of basic needs such as drinking water, health care, better sanitation, housing and employment, development of both farming and non-farming activities so as to generate gainful employment without adversely affecting the environment. Improving infrastructural facilities in villages, particularly transport and communication facilities, and also ensuring a tension-free environment for the rural population by promoting communal harmony and unity, levels of literacy, education and cultural activities are an important part of rural development (Sundaram, 2011).

Rural development should have the following major objectives: (i) full employment of labourers and physical resources; (ii) setting up of agro-industrial complexes; (iii) laying down minimum standards of productivity or efficiency for those owning or using precious resources; (iv) minimum standards of performance by
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public agencies by making them accountable to the local people; and (v) creating a scientific temper which implies a changing of the mind and old habits of thought and action.

According to ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific), the criterion for rural development involves: (i) drawing the entire rural labour force into the mainstream of economic activity; (ii) realizing the creative energies of the rural people; (iii) checking the drift of the rural population to cities; (iv) enhancing participation of women and youth in the rural development process; and (v) improving the quality of life through integration by tapping the abundant manpower (Sharma and Malhotra, 1977).

A review of rural development programmes and policies in our country after independence reveals four strategies of development; that is, growth-oriented strategy, welfare-oriented strategy, responsive strategy and integrated strategy. Rural development programmes have been accorded a high priority in the country’s five year plans. First plan was dominated by the community development programme which reflected India’s overriding concern with nation building and minimizing the disparities integrated rural development presented a significance departure from the community development programme (S.K. Singh, 2002). All these programmes were growth oriented that was why most of these concentrated in achieving rapid increase in food production failed to resolve the basic problems of rural poverty and income inequality. As a consequence, special programmes were introduced to tackle the problems of poverty and backwardness. Integrated rural development programme, for example, was launched in 1978-79, and it was the single largest anti-poverty programme implemented in the country (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural development involves generating employment opportunities for the rural people in order that they are able to meet their basic needs and ultimately become major agents of economic progress and bring about social transformation. A climate should be created therefore to enable the rural people to realize their full potentialities and attain a higher quality of life with economic security. This alone can prevent rural exodus (Sundaram, 2011).
Rural development is not a new concept. Several eminent people (Singh, Katar, 1986) have contributed their mite towards rural reconstruction. Rural development is a classic concept and everyone interprets it his own way, but the consensus is that more emphasis should be given to development activities, which are concerned with the rural areas. These include agricultural growth, putting up economic and social infrastructures, fair wages as also housing and house sites for the landless, village planning, public health, education and functional literacy and finally communication (S.K. Singh, 2002).

An overview of the concepts and methods of rural development provided so far suggests that it has been viewed from different perspectives by various scholars and institutions. Of course, people appear to be common denominators in the development of rural environment. Since the 1970s, the concept of rural development has become more confining in its interpretation. Its strategy has been designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural poor. It has attempted to extend the benefits of development to the poorest among the poor living in the rural areas.

In recent years, the concept of Integrated Rural Development Programme has been very much used in our plan documents and in different studies on rural development (Indira Hirway, 1995). The framework for rural development, based on this concept, aims at the removal of poverty, inequality and unemployment by adopting area planning, so that the pressure of dependence on agriculture is reduced by creating additional sources of income and employment for the rural people, but particularly to the rural poor living below the poverty line (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural development traces its history to the seventeenth century when voluntary efforts to serve the mankind were initiated by the rulers. The rural development functions of India were summed up by the Government of India in the context of recurrent famines but, in the beginning, they did not have any legal sanctions behind them. In the first few decades, after 1858, some district officers seized the food-grains stocks in the midst of famine to ensure the distribution of food-grains among the needy and serious efforts were made to control the market. The Famine Commissions of 1880 (Maheshwari, 1985), for the first time, recommended the policy of positive intervention in the occurrence of scarcity or famine. It made
recommendations for kind reforms, agricultural improvements, construction of transport links and the communication system expansion of the canal irrigation system and expansion of protective works along with administrative reforms to ensure the implementation of various schemes suggested by the Commissions.

For the first time, the need for rural development was realized by the Indian masses with Mahatma Gandhi’s initiative in 1919, after his return from South Africa (1915), and the rural development programmes received a popular support realizing the significant role of RD in the well-being of the rural masses. The Calcutta (now Kolkata) session of the Congress 1920 articulated the approach for rural development (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural Reconstruction and Sriniketan Institute was established in 1921 (Mathur, 1985), with the main objective of bringing back the life of rural masses in completeness, making rural folks self-reliant and ensuring self-respect, to create awareness of their own cultural traditions and their competence to make an efficient use of modern resources for improving their physical, intellectual and economic conditions. In the same year, Marthandam Rural Reconstruction Experiment was initiated under the leadership of Dr. Spencer Hatch, who aimed at bringing about a complete upward development towards a more abundant lift of rural people, spiritually mentally, physically, socially and economically. The Gorgon Experiment of 1927 aimed at nothing more or less than the self-respect, self-control, self-help, and mutual help. Similarly, the Baroda experiments of 1932 aimed at development towards living better and a capacity for self-help and self-reliance. The Gandhian constructive programme was essentially a programme of human activity in various fields of activities; that is, it was beneficial for the economic growth of rural India. It portrayed at once the integrated approach to rural development and the goals were thus set for the up-liftment of the Indian Society. Gandhiji wished to evolve a philosophy of life, which would achieve the good of all. For this purpose, Antyodaya programme consists of: (i) use of khadi; (ii) promotion of village industries; (iii) removal of untouchability; (iv) basic and adult education; (v) village cleanliness; (vi) prohibition; (vii) education in health and hygiene; (viii) communal harmony; (ix) woman up-liftment; and (x) propagation of national language. This was initiated to
cover various issues related to the rural masses. The Firka Scheme in Chennai, for example, has aimed at organizing the villagers for a happier, more prosperous and full life in which the individual as a unit representing the integrated society would benefit greatly. The Nilokheri attempt called the Mazdoor Manjil, because it was based on the principle of ‘He who would not work, neither he shall eat’ and the Etawah Pilot Project thus aimed at assessing the degree of productive and social improvement as well as self-confidence and co-operation, which can possibly be developed. The problem was, to a certain extent, how quickly these results might be achieved and would remain a permanent part of people’s mental, spiritual, technical equipment and outlook when the special pressure is lifted (Mathur, 1985).

India launched the First Five Year Plan in 1951. It was rightly thought that planning would not be effective without substantial participation of the people, thus suggesting that planning ought to be a ‘people’s movement’. Development effort cannot be the sole responsibility of the Government. The Government may create a climate conducive for development, but the pace of development depends on the initiative and dynamism exhibited by people with necessary skills and resources to take advantage of the Government – sponsored programmes, relating to rural development.

Community Development Programme (CDP) was launched in 1952, with an aim to bring about the overall development of the rural community with people’s participation in the development process. An institutional structure was provided in the form of Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and village schools. The approach to rural development is holistic one (S.K. Singh, 2002).

Rural development for the first time was recognized as a centrally directed responsibility of the provincial Government, and of the decentralized local bodies having limited resources. As a continuation of the above policy in 1937, Development Department was established in Bihar, with an integrated concept and goal for rural reconstruction and the necessity to achieve these goals, in a mass development programme. Local bodies were asked to increase the amount in proportion to their income.
Before the Community Development Programmes were launched in the early 1950s, the serving ministries and departments carried out their activities in rural areas independently through their own functionaries at the state, district and village levels and in isolation of each other. Due to the limited functionaries, the Ministries and Departments were able only to take up new rural development scheme and could cover a small section of the rural population, that too, interference of the influential and vocal persons of the villages deprived a majority from the benefits of these programmers.

Tinebergen, as quoted in Katar, S. (1986), shows the differences between a qualitative policy and a quantitative policy. A qualitative policy seeks to change the magnitude of certain parameters. For example, change in tax rates, and introduction of free education system, exemplify both.

Katar Singh (1986) defines agricultural policies in development policies and compensation policies. One seeks to increase the supply of commodities and resources and to improve the quality of products and inputs. A compensation policy is aimed at compensating its target group in various manners though subsidies, and price support.
Figure 1.1: Hierarchy of Rural Development Policy Goals

General Welfare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Welfare</th>
<th>Cultural Welfare</th>
<th>Social Welfare</th>
<th>Political Welfare</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maximising National Income</td>
<td>Ensuring Equal Opportunities</td>
<td>Distribution of Income</td>
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Allocation of Resources

Agriculture

Objective Programmes

Subsidy | Support Price | Crop Insurance | Research and Extension

Production Credit | Soil Conservation | Pest and Disease Control |

Irrigation | HYV Seeds |

Drought / Flood Relief | Rural Electrification |

Land Reforms | Debt Relief Subsidies | Rural Health Services | Co-operatives
Seven categories of rural development policies, namely, i) Land; ii) Forests; iii) Inputs; iv) Supporting services policy; v) Price policy; vi) Policy for the development of backward areas and underprivileged and weaker sections of society; vii) Policy for the organizations; and viii) administration of rural development (see Figure 1.1).

The local governments are no less numerous. Indeed, there has been an impressive increase in the functions of local government. Local government has been undertaking new activities which either regulate the conduct of the citizens or are in the nature of services, such as provision of mass transport: construction of houses for the poor. Supply of electricity, health centers, parks etc., in fact local government is today much more important in the daily life of citizen than the State or Central Government.

In India, the popular term is local self-government, in England local authorities in the other places local government in India the Provisional Governments were know as local governments. The local self-government includes both urban and rural areas. The urban local authorities include Corporations, Municipalities and Town Panchayats. The rural or local government includes panchayats and Gram Sabahs.

India is in her villages. There has been a traditional presence of what may be called grassroots level representative institutions of local self-government all over India even before independence. However, the nature and degree of popular participation varied rather widely from time to time – region to region. However, the modern village panchayats are essentially the product of the British rule. But after independence, and under the impact of the Gandhian ideology of rural development, there has been a gradual development of institutions, supposed to embody the principals of democratic decentralization. The objectives of these grassroots level institutions are to facilitate rapid rural development in all fields, to involve people in the process of development and ensure social justice, empowerment of SC, ST, Women and backward class people.

Under the guidance of the British, the local government institutions gained new attention and new character in Karnataka State. The beginning of modern local government in Mysore (Karnataka) was the establishment of separate “Local Fund” in
1862 and “Local Fund Committee” in 1874. These institutions continued under various regulations. After the Re-organization of the States, the local self-government established by virtue of Karnataka Local Boards and Village Panchayat Act 1959 came to stay with us. Especially, the 1983 Act, which introduces Zilla Parishad and Mandal Panchayat as elected bodies, has been considered as an outstanding achievement in the country by Karnataka state.

Panchayati Raj Institutions were considered to be the best suited agencies of the State Government to carry out rural development activities in the rural areas. Therefore, the panchayats established by almost all the states in the country after independence, but the major thrust to Panchayati Raj system was given after the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee’s report in 1957, which recommended the three-tier panchayati Raj system in India (Belwant Rai Mehta Committee Report 1957).

Mahatma Gandhi was well aware of the Indian society and wanted village self-sufficiency (Gram Swaraj) to be the objective of independent India (Manor, 1978). The Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee, B.R. Ambedkar, was however against the village panchayats. Only lip service was paid to the concept of village panchayats in the Draft Constitution. When Gandhiji came to know about this, he insisted on its inclusion in the Constitution. As a result, the Directive Principles of State Policy in Article 40 mentioned that the states shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-Government. Gandhi’s concept of decentralization was for motivating the powers of the people, was a functional, viable and relevant concept adopted by the societies.

To operationalize this into action, Panchayati Raj Institutions were established throughout the country, in the late 1950s, to carry out the central policies and programmes, when it was realized that the Community Development Programme was unable to motivate and involve people in it. But the panchayats also failed to seek the people’s participation. Therefore, the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee 1957 was constituted to suggest a viable institutional structure for people’s involvement. The Committee visualized that the Panchayati Raj System would establish a linkage between local leadership, enjoying the confidence of the local people and the
government, and translate the policies of the Government into action. The Committee put forward an elaborate scheme of enshrining them with powers to carry out rural development programmes and related activities.

The Ashok Mehta Committee, constituted in 1977, suggested a viable organization for grassroots institutions to mobilize people’s participation and their active support. In its report, the committee wanted structures with development orientation at two level: the district and the Mandal Panchayats for the gross roots levels. The other recommendations were open participation of political parties in the Panchayati Raj elections and Constitutional Protection to further decentralization of power. The Committee further stressed that the PRIs should participate in the development activities, in the areas of agriculture, forestry, cottage industries and welfare activities (Ashok Mehta Committee 1957).

In the 1980s, due to the expansion of anti-poverty programmes and the creation of District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) and other organizations for rural development purposes at lower levels, it was required to integrate the PR System with development programmes (C.H. Hanumantha Rao Committee 1983). As a result, the C.H. Hanumantha Rao Working Group on District Planning 1983 and G.V.K. Rao Committee 1985 for reviewing the existing administrative arrangements for rural development and poverty alleviation programmes (Singhvi, 1985) were setup. The G.V.K. Rao Committee had recommended the strengthening of the Zilla Parishad and district level planning as well as integration of the block and lower level planning with lower level PRIs. The L.M. Singhvi Committee (1986-87) had prepared the concept paper on PR (Derhgawen, 1992), which stated that PRIs should be closely involved in the planning and implementation of rural development programmes at the lower levels. Proper utilization of the funds requires that the various development agencies, including the lead banks and commercial banks, should work hand-in-glove with the village level institutions. Further, the Panchayati Samitis and the Zilla Parishads should increasingly be associated with the formulation and execution of block level and district level plans, including credit plans.

According to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, all the states in India should establish PRIs. Besides, it spelt out the creation of a three-tier structure and also
appointment of the State Finance Commissions once in five years for distribution of finances between the states and the PRIs. The reservation policy should be adopted and the extent of devolution of powers and functions were however left to the respective state Governments. The Karnataka State has also established three-tier PRIs, with Gram Panchayat (GP) at the village level, Taluk Panchayat Samiti (TPS) at the block / middle level and Zilla Panchayat (ZP) at the district level (Mishra, S.N., 1996).

The Karnataka State Government has transferred 29 development sectors to the PRIs. The important functions entrusted with the PRIs are: education, health, social welfare, agriculture and allied activities, employment related programmes like the Jawahar Rojgar Yojane (JRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWACRA), Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarajgar Yojane (SGSY) and other rural development activities. Very recently, elections were held to Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Panchayats. The Karnataka State has also launched services for rural development programmes (Mishra, S.N. 1996).

1.4. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The present study has the purpose of examining the structure, processes and functions of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the district of Mysore, Karnataka, with a view to analyzing rural development related issues and constraints and also exploring the inter-relationships between various aspects in the role of Zilla Panchayat in Rural Development in Mysore District. In order to fulfill the purpose, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the nature of the three-tier structure of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the district of Mysore, Karnataka in the context of three taluks, namely, Mysore, Heggadevanakote and T. Narasipura;

2. To examine the functions of the PRIs in respect of various rural development programmes, operational in the district, and understand the issues, difficulties and constraints thereof in regard to people’s participation; and
3. To suggest and recommend ways and means of overcoming the functional difficulties from the points of view of the elected members of the PRIs and the people of the rural areas, particularly in respect of their participation in the rural development programmes.

1.5. Research Methodology

The present study examines the role of Zilla Panchayat in rural development in Mysore district and focuses specifically on the people’s participation in such rural development programmes. The research methodology consists largely of methods of primary survey, namely, the questionnaire survey and individual interviews. The primary sources of data are the elected members of the PRIs in the three taluks of Mysore district and the people who are beneficiaries of the rural development programmes operational in the district.

1.6. An Analytical Framework for the Study

Given the background thus far, the analytical framework of the study, in its simplest form, would look very much like the flow diagram below in Figure 1.2. The flow can be changed further to suit any of the changes that the researcher sees as fit for the case study reported here.
Figure 1.2: An Analytical Framework for Study

Conceptual Framework
Decentralization, People’s Participation and Rural Development

Panchayati Raj Institutions in Karnataka
Rural Development Through Zilla Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat Samitis and Grama Panchayats

Constitutional Amendments and PRIs in Mysore
Three-Tier Structure and Functions:
Zilla Panchayat
Taluk Panchayat Samitis
Grama Panchayats
Resources, Powers and Responsibilities
Difficulties and Constraints

Questionnaire Survey and Individual Interviews
Interviews with Rural Development Beneficiaries
Interviews with Functionaries of the PRIs and Officials
Interviews with Elected Members of Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayat
Case Studies and Statistical Analysis of Data
Simple Frequency and Percentage Analysis
Diagrammatic Representations and maps

Review of Studies

Descriptive analysis of documents

Results and Discussion

Structures
Functions
Impacts of PRIs on Rural Development through Decentralization and Participation

Recommendations and Suggestions for Panchayati Raj Institutions’ Effectiveness in Rural Development

SYNTHESIS
1.7. Sample and Sampling Procedures

The sample for study consists of two elements: one, the PRIs of the grama panchayats, taluk panchayats and zilla panchayat; and two, the people who are part of them: the beneficiaries of rural development schemes implemented in the district, and particularly, in select three taluks of Mysore district, the functionaries of the PRIs in the district, and the elected members of the three-tier panchayat system in position.

**Taluk Sample:** Mysore district has been selected as the study area, because of two very important reasons: it was the seat of the Mysore kings who were benevolent and in a sense supporters of self-governance of some sort; and that Mysore district is unique to the entire state because of its princely heritage as well as being the seat of the elected state Governments. It was the headquarters of Mysore State of the Indian Union and thus was a site of several experiments including the rule of panchayats, in the earlier years.

The district has 7 taluks, in its recent reorganization for administrative convenience. They are: H.D. Kote, Hunsur, K.R. Nagar, Mysore, Nanjangud, Periyapatna and T. Narasipura. Out of the seven, three taluks, namely, H.D. Kote, Mysore and T. Narasipura, have been chosen for their representative characters. Mysore taluk is named after the district headquarter city of Mysore, and is known for more urban, high literate and scholarly population. It is industrially forward looking, even considered as the second hub of the IT industries, with Infosys, the second largest Indian Information Technology Corporate. Mysore taluk is also agriculturally well known for sericulture and silk industry. There are both irrigated and dry lands and farming in the taluk. There are employment opportunities for the newly emerging technical and professional manpower in the State. Heggededevankote, on the other hand, is a backward taluk and also has a large forest area with largest tribal concentration on the hills and in the forests. T. Narasipura is also a backward taluk with irrigated agriculture. It is poised for greater growth with the commissioning of new industries in the vicinity of the taluk, if not in it.

**Selection of Grama Panchayats:** Mysore district has 235 grama panchayats in all. While Mysore taluk has 35 grama panchayats, H.D. Kote taluk has 34 and T. Narasipura taluk has 36. The three taluks together account for nearly 45 per cent of the grama
panchayats in the district. However, for the conduct of the questionnaire survey and personal interviews, only 12 grama panchayats (or 11.4 per cent of the panchayats in the three taluks) have been selected, 4 each to a taluk as all of them have more or less similar number of grama panchayats. Some of the panchayats chosen for questionnaire interviews are: Elawala, Nagawala, Varuna and Keelanapura in Mysore taluk, Hampapura, Antharasanthe, D.B. Kuppe and N. Belthur in H.D. Kote taluk and Algudu, Mugur, Byrapura and Hemige in T. Narasipura taluk.

**Beneficiaries Sample:** There are in all 2,589 beneficiaries in the 12 grama panchayats, of whom about 10 per cent have been randomly chosen for interviews. As many as 250 beneficiaries, with between 20 and 23 beneficiaries from each of the grama panchayats, have been interviewed for the purpose of the study, using a separate questionnaire, pilot tested in the district elsewhere.

**Functionaries Sample:** Again using a random sampling method, 50 officials of different categories have been interviewed using another questionnaire, towards understanding their perspectives and perceptions of panchayati raj institutions and their work in rural development in the district of Mysore district. The functionaries interviewed constitute a larger proportion of the available functionaries (nearly 77 per cent of the 65 functionaries in position) in the three taluks, namely, H.D. Kote, Mysore and T. Narasipura.

**Elected Members Sample:** The sample of elected members has however been purposive in that only the elected members in position currently have been selected: one in two of grama panchayat members (that is, 136), taluk panchayat samitis (48) and zilla panchayat (26). Thus a total of 210 elected members have been interviewed using yet another questionnaire, pilot tested again in the district for the purpose of refining it.

In particular, however, the grama panchayats (12), taluk panchayat samitis (3) and zilla panchayat (1) have all been chosen in a way that they truly represent the diversity of natural, social, cultural and development aspects. Some of them are in the midst of irrigated tracts of agricultural lands in the Cauvery basin of Karnataka, in the midst of forests (in H.D. Kote taluk), near and in towns (all taluk towns and one in each taluk near
them), in the midst of high concentration of population (near Mysore city) and also backward areas (both H. D. Kote and T. Narasipura taluks). In all, 510 individual interviews have been made with beneficiaries (250), functionaries (50) and elected members (210). The break-up is as follows:

The primary, questionnaire survey is thus based on a random sample of 136 elected Grama Panchayat members, 48 Taluk Panchayat members and 26 Zilla Panchayat members, a total of 210 elected members; 83 beneficiaries from H.D. Kote taluk, 84 beneficiaries from Mysore taluk, and 83 beneficiaries from T. Narasipura taluk, making up a total of 250 beneficiaries; and 50 select functionaries from the three taluks chosen for study.

The information related to structure and functions of Zilla Panchayat has been collected from secondary sources of data such as the Departmental and Governmental or Administrative reports and research related literature on the Zilla Panchayat Systems in the State and the country. A review of literature, both international and national, has been done to arrive at a background for the study as well as the conceptual model of grassroots development.

The information related to plan formulation, implementation and monitoring of the rural development programmes has been collected through visits to PRIs and also reports and documents available from them. The linkages between Zilla Panchayat and the taluk and gram panchayats have been studied and understood through primary survey and observations and also from the secondary data.

The questionnaire-collected data have been processed using the simple statistical method of frequency and percentage analysis such that the tabular outputs – both one-way and two-way tables – have been analyzed and interpreted for perspectives and insights on the structure, process and function of the PRIs and the participation of the people in rural development programmes implemented by the PRIs. Appropriate diagrammatic representations have been used to graphically represent the results of the analysis. Inferences are drawn from the analysis and interpretation of data. Appropriate policy and programmes for rural development in the study area are suggested and
recommended using the suggestions and recommendations of the elected members and the beneficiaries of the rural development programmes.

1.8. The Questionnaires

**Construction of Research Tools:** As per the research design, and for the purpose of data collection, the investigator constructed three different interview schedules, one each for the beneficiaries of the rural development schemes, the functionaries of the PRI in the district and the elected members of the panchayats at the village, taluk and district levels. The prepared interview schedules have then been subjected to jury opinions. Based on the jury opinions, some items have been deleted and some others have been modified and finally the interview schedules have been streamlined.

**Gaining Access:** One problem is to gain access to respondents, and the problems of being able to study them, and gain some familiarity with their world, or share their ‘reality’. Social science methodologies propose many different ways in which this can be achieved, and guidance on the extent to which involvement in a respondent’s life world is necessary for particular descriptive or analytic ends. Practical problems include getting people to speak to the researcher at all, then getting them to be open, co-operative, and sincere in discussing the aspects of their work and lives that interest the researcher. More fundamental for research methodology is the reliance on the personal descriptions of the respondents, who may either intentionally conceal or mislead the researcher, or unintentionally mislead them. In studying someone’s life and works, it is unlikely that the respondent will be able to comprehensively and thoroughly describe not only their opinions and thoughts, but the details of activities of the PRI, and the context in which they understand them, especially in the space of a relatively short interview.

Participant observation is a method that tries to surmount these obstacles, but at the expense of huge effort by the researcher, and can only be carried out in a situation where the researcher can actually live or work within a small group over an extended period of time. Since the researcher is intended to look at a number of groups, and across the social networks of several people, this type of methodology is impossible.
Pilot Study: The questionnaires have been pilot-tested in a random sampling and administered to a sample of 20 beneficiaries, 20 functionaries and 20 elected members of Hunsur taluk, including 2 zilla panchayat members from Hunsur. Proper instructions were given to each of them before the administration of the questionnaires. This has enabled the researcher to identity the vague questions, which have been ambiguous or difficult to understand. Such have then been removed and certain revisions and modifications effected in the questionnaires which have finally been used in the survey.

The Content and Intent of the Questionnaires: The content of the questionnaires has depended on the intention of the interviews with different segments of people. Obviously, the intention in interviewing the beneficiaries of the rural development programmes and schemes has been to get an assessment from the beneficiaries as to how beneficial or effective the schemes have been. All three questionnaires have questions on the socio-demographics of the different respondents for they are important in identifying their socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

The Beneficiary Questionnaire: The questionnaire that has been administered to beneficiaries has 30-odd important variables. Beginning with the socio-demographic questions, of age, gender, caste communities, employment, land ownership and income of households, the questionnaire helps with the construction of socio-economic characteristics as well as demographic. This section is more or less common for all the three questionnaires, although they are all different in regard to other sections. The beneficiaries are asked about the appropriateness of 3-tier system and then about the visits of the elected members to their constituencies so as to determine their interest in the rural development activities being carried out in the panchayats.

Further focus on assessment of decentralization, participation and rural development schemes looks at the visits of the ZP officers and staffs to the village communities and their consulting with the constituencies in regard to rural development programmes. Knowledge of the beneficiaries about the rural development schemes and the transparencies of the administration of ZP come next. They are also enquired about their visits to the ZP and the cooperation given by the ZP officers and the elected
members in the rural development efforts. Complications arising in the functioning of the GPs, TPs and ZP are also enquired about from the point of view of the beneficiaries. Their participation in the rural development programmes, their suggestions for the same and the social responsibility of the elected members and the ZP personnel are then probed into.

Also, the beneficiaries are asked to assess the decentralization of the PRS and the role of gender in the PRIs. There are questions as to support of banks and cooperative institutions to ZP and their difficulties in getting loans from the banks and cooperatives. They are further asked about their opinions on the NGO cooperation with the ZP, TPs and GPs and their knowledge of the gramasabhas and their workings. There are enquiries as to the participation of elected members and ZP officers in them. They are further queried about the criteria for selecting the beneficiaries and the difficulties in implementing rural development programmes. They are finally asked for their suggestions as to achieving complete development and appropriate agency in their opinion for implementing rural development.

The overall intent of the questionnaire is on understanding how appreciative of the benefits of rural development are the development beneficiaries of the Mysore villages and how do they perceive the benefits of the 3-tier system of panchayats and their work in the villages.

**The Functionaries Questionnaire:** The socio-economic and demographic part of the questionnaire is the same almost as the beneficiary one. There are nearly 15 other different variables of which the researcher is interested in seeking the answers from the functionaries. There are of course a few parallels in the two other questionnaires, but the functionary questionnaire is pointedly different in intent.

The functionaries of the ZP are asked about the Standing Committees operative at the ZP as well as the financial independency of the ZP. Turning to their participation in ZP, they are also queried about the financial grants and the independency of the ZP. They are asked about their opinions on the selection criteria for beneficiaries as well as their knowledge about rural development programmes in operation in the district. Besides
asking about their cooperation in the effective implementation of the rural development programmes, their knowledge of the participation of the NGOs in them are also enquired about.

The role and cooperation of the political parties, media help in the reach of the rural development programmes to the people, formulation of the rural development programmes and the difficulties in the effective implementation of the rural development programmes are the significant areas of investigation with the ZP functionaries. They are further asked to suggest measures for overcoming difficulties and thus contribute to the understanding of what needs to be done if rural development programmes by the panchayats are to succeed amidst the people.

**The Elected Member Questionnaire**: This questionnaire is rather elaborate than the other two, although the items found in the other two find their rightful places here as well. Besides the socio-economic and demographic aspects, the questionnaire dwells considerably on the political experience of the elected members, seeking to know which political party they are part of, what do people think about their parties and what do they think about their party. They are further asked about the length of their time at the offices in GPs, TPs and ZP and what is their current role at the panchayats they are elected members now. Their subcommittee membership, their agreement with the decentralization principle, their liking for the PRI system type and whether or not they are agreeable to the three-tier system are all queried about. Further, their agreement with the existing ZP system, the election process and its correctness, and also about elections of presidents and vice presidents are sought after. Then a few questions dwell on their perspectives on and perceptions of the election process to be followed, the election term of the ZP, their preferred election term and the qualifications for contesting the elections. They are also asked about the list of qualifications they would prefer.

Importantly then, they are queried about the kind of powers possessed by the ZP and their adequacy for achieving comprehensive rural development. They are also asked about the kind of powers they expect to have. From now on, the questionnaire turns to questions more similar to the ones in the Functionary questionnaire, especially in the
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areas of standing committees, their membership in them, and the Committees’ capabilities for generating rural development. They are further enquired about their attendance at the ZP meetings, participation and the methodologies of the meetings, prior preparations for the same by them and what do they feel about their participation, the officials’ participation and their attitudes to them. Some questions that follow these are quite incisive in that they probe into the preparedness of the officials and the staffs of the ZP, the receipt of secular, unbiased and constructive discussions and decisions at the meetings and their introspections regarding rural development programmes. Political interferences, corruption as the main road block to achieving rural development and the means to eradicate corruption at the grassroots are some of the sticky but pertinent questions asked of the elected members, to get their considered opinions and perceptions.

Then the questionnaire focuses on their work at their constituencies and their inspection of the deficiencies thereof, turning to their visits and the receipt of petitions and applications and further on how they redress the situations. They are asked here about the cooperation the officials and the staffs render to them and the kind of publicity they are involved in the rural development programmes reaching the public. They are then enquired about how they conduct themselves in respect of decisions taken by the gramasabhas and how they direct the officials and staffs for the related work. Their perceptions about the difficulties faced from the public in the meetings and kinds of difficulties they have faced in the delegation of their duties and the criteria for the selection of beneficiaries are all asked about.

They are further asked as to their role in defining and planning rural development and how they seek the cooperation of other elected representatives and officials. Then their knowledge of the different rural development schemes in operation in the district, their names, and how they see the role of people, media are all quersried about. Finally, they are asked to name the difficulties in the implementation of the schemes and their suggestions for overcoming them.

Thus, the three different questionnaires have been designed in a way they could provide for how the different stakeholders perceive decentralization, participation and
rural development in their own particular ways in order that the researcher may get good perspectives and ideas for making the benefits better for the people.

1.9. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The main emphasis of the study is on the evaluation of the role of Zilla Panchayat in rural development. The study focuses on various dimensions of rural development namely, structure, processes and functions, and also planning strategies, organizations and financial linkages of the Zilla Panchayat and programmes related to rural development.

As it is a single scholar study, it has been constrained by time, money and scholarship available only with the scholar. The research work has been limited only by the perspectives and experience of the scholar, even as he has tried harder to accomplish much through his field work and the largely qualitative data that were generated by the field work.

1.10. Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized in seven chapters, commissioned for the purpose of assembling ideas and analyzing and interpreting the data from the field work and secondary sources, including review of literature.

Chapter I: Introduction is an introduction to the thesis as well as the problem of study. It introduces the problem of analysis, the objectives, the methodology and the scope and limitations of the study. In essence, this study is about the Panchayati Raj Institutions and their structures, processes and functions in rural development, with a view to analyzing the participation of people in rural development programmes implemented in Mysore district.

Chapter II: A Review of Literature is a review of some relevant, and available, literature, from abroad as well as India. The review provides for a greater understanding of the problem being investigated. Some theoretical and methodological issues and major conclusions of the studies reviewed are indicated and they form the backdrop of the study of PRIs in Mysore district.
Chapter III: Profile of the Study Area: Mysore District and the Study Taluks deals with broad-based information on the district and taluks (H.D.Kote, Mysore and T. Narasipura) of the study. Both a geographical and a socio-demographical profile is given for the district and taluks in order that the reader understands the context of our study.

Chapter IV: An Overview of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in Karnataka is a chapter dealing with historical as well as developmental problems relating to PRIs in Karnataka. The chapter speaks clearly of the structure, process and behaviour of the PRIs at the three levels, namely, Grama panchayats, Taluk panchayats and Zilla panchayats in Mysore district of Karnataka. The three-tier structure and their functions are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V: Structure and Functions of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. This chapter is specific to Mysore district and hence it is the structure and functions of the PRIs (Zilla, Taluk and Grama) are discussed, giving an overview of the topic of research in Mysore district, particularly, the taluks of H.D. Kote, Mysore and T. Narasipura. This chapter deals rather with how the PRIs are structured in order to function and how they work vis-à-vis rural development programmes. This chapter is thus entirely on the components of PRIs in Mysore district.

Chapter VI: Participation in Rural Development Programmes of the PRIs deals with the participation of people in the rural development programmes implements and assesses the role of men and women of the places. Participation in rural development is seen as a mandate of the policy and thus is measured in terms of participation in individual programmes implemented in the district. The chapter deals with the data collected using two separate questionnaires, one with the elected members of the PRIs and the other with the beneficiaries (or people) of the rural development programmes. Analyzed data, qualitative in content, give us an understanding of how the participation works and what is required for it.

Chapter VII: Conclusion and Recommendations summarises the thesis in a nutshell and draws conclusions, suggestions and recommendations for improving the functioning of the PRIs in the district.
The thesis also has appendages of the References and Appendices of questionnaires, sample datasets and some of the analytical results.
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