

CHAPTER - II

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You cannot build anything new unless you survey and find out all that went into building what went before. A good probe into the related 'old' will tell you many things including the mistakes that were committed, the elements and dimensions that skipped the vigilant or vagrant notice, the failures that were inherent and the gains that came naturally. The past has always a lesson for the present and even for the future. Our greatest advancement has come from the calm and unruffled review and evaluation of the past. Stock-taking and planning have got to be done before you decide to have a further exercise in any human endeavour.

-- Professor D.M. Desai

("Some Dimensions of Our Educational Research")

CHAPTER

TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

2.1 Introduction

In the present investigation, the principal concern is to find out to what extent the Panchayati Raj system introduced in Gujarat State as a measure of democratic decentralisation has really been a popular local self-government in the matter of administration of the programme of universal primary education that vitally affects growth, development and consequently determines the happiness of the rural people. A good deal of research effort seems to have been directed towards the Panchayati Raj. Several studies have been reported on the Panchayati Raj in various dimensions. These studies have larger interest to the social scientist, political scientist and the economist. The present investigator being an educator

his interest and concern is to examine the effects of the

Panchayati Raj on the administration of primary education. He has, therefore, touched upon here only a few studies on the Panchayati Raj as a whole and in details, and the bulk of the review he has riveted on the progress and problems of primary education under the Panchayati Raj Administration.

The major sections under which the review of research is designed to be presented are :

- 2.2 The Community Development and the Panchayati Raj : Task Expectations
 - 2.3 Leadership in the Panchayati Raj
 - 2.4 Institutional Behaviour of the Panchayat bodies
 - 2.5 The Panchayati Raj and Bureaucracy
 - 2.6 The Panchayati Raj and Factionalism
 - 2.7 Democracy and Development
 - 2.8 Impact on the Expansion of Primary Education
 - 2.9 The General Impact of the Panchayati Raj on Education
 - 2.10 Role of the Panchayat Leadership in Education
 - 2.11 Problems of the Primary Education and the Panchayati Raj
 - 2.12 Conclusion
- 2.2 Community Development and the Panchayati Raj : Task Expectations
- Dube (1969) has studied India's changing villages and

identified human factors in rural community development. He views the community development programmes and the related Panchayati Raj set-up as multi-purpose development ventures of faith. The objectives of both is to organise the teeming millions of villagers for the happier, fuller, and more prosperous life in which the individual villager will have the opportunity to develop both as an individual and as a member of a well-integrated society. This objective is to be realised by using local initiative and local resources to the utmost extent possible in the economic, political and social fields of reconstruction on cooperative lines. It was hoped that a self-reliant, self-dependent and properly organised life would emerge in the villages as a result of these efforts.

Two features of this programme deserve special notice. First, it laid great emphasis on educative propaganda; and, second, rather than render direct service to the village people it worked mostly through local agencies and institutions to which grants-in-aid were given for approved projects in the fields of agriculture, sanitation, improvement of communication, adult education and cottage industries.

It was essentially a programme of mobilising manpower and of developing local human and natural resources. It was not a programme of outside charity and aid, but one of village self-help. According to the first Five Year Plan, the aim of this movement was to create in rural population a burning

desire for a higher standard of living and the will to live better.

The programme was started with the assumption that, in general, village people were eager and ready to improve their way of life. They were reluctant to accept the new unless they were convinced that it was better than what they already had. It was, therefore, necessary to translate development ideology into the language and symbols of the people. This raised the question of relating planning to the felt needs of the people and also that of evolving an agency that could understand the village mind and interpret the programme to the village people in a language which they could understand.

It was recognised in the very early stages of the development of this movement that rural welfare workers would need special orientation and training. To make the project a success, the officers needed a new outlook: they were to function not as mercenaries, but as devoted servants of the nation. It was felt that the old bureaucratic ways and the 'official mentality' of the former regime would not suit the temper of New India. Understanding of the rural mind and a grasp of methods of extension work were regarded as indispensable qualifications for those who were to administer the projects. Dube's major finding is that in this the Panchayati Raj has failed.

Gore(1963) has concluded that the problem of rural change is a problem of rebuilding an entire social world of which the economic problem is only one, albeit, an important factor. The change, to be effective, must be accompanied, if not preceded, by changes in the motivational patterns and the social relationships characteristic of our rural society. Education can make a large contribution to this.

The comparatively recent enactments in certain States, on Panchayati Raj constitute an attempt to reach democracy to villages. Since the Indian Republic is wedded to democracy the means within which the objectives are to be achieved are defined. Democratic planning intends to revitalise and democratize the traditional village Panchayat in order that it may secure the ends of planning and implementation.

Rao (1969) has concluded in a study that the community development movement further demands basically an effective social reorganisation of the community characterised by selfhelp, local initiative and cooperation. The spirit of modern democratic cooperation demands first that the members of the community or team are treated as equals. Second, the members are guided by ideas of efficacy of the cause and efficiency of cooperative action irrespective of particularistic standards. Third, the members should

have the community's interest as their goal, and not the parochial interests.

Gangrade (1963) in a case study done in the University of Delhi illustrates the use of the process and method of community organization in completing a rural development project of building a school.

The village in which the study was set had gained notoriety in the area for factions and feuds. The Brahmins and the Jats wielded considerable economic powers, had numerical strength over other castes and were generally the dominant castes of the village. The ownership of land had given the Brahmins a superior position and status in the village. The resident Jats resented this development. The Jats lived under one roof as members of a joint family system. A study of the village revealed that there were eleven small groups, each with its own separate leader. The interests of these leaders often clashed and there were continued struggles for power between them and no programme for the whole village community could be thought of and implemented successfully. It was found, as the study progressed, that despite all the factions and quarrels there were some areas of working together in the village. Efforts made to bring together the conflicting groups and participate in joint

programmes yielded some good results. That encouraged the social workers to sensitise the villagers to the need for a school and to build it through cooperative efforts. The local leaders were led to understand that they could not have a school unless the resources of all the groups were pooled together. They were persuaded to visit other villages where a school was built through local community participation and cooperation. This impressed the local leaders. The Chairman of the local panchayat called a meeting. The whole school project was planned out. And the school came to be built through joint local efforts.

2.3 Leadership in the Panchayati Raj

In this field a large research effort seems to have been expanded. Here, the review of only selected researches is presented, as the focus in the present investigation is not on rural leadership but on the impact of the Panchayati Raj system on education. However, the importance of rural leadership has been amply acknowledged in this sphere by the present investigator.

Rao's (1969) findings are that the reestablishment of statutory Panchayats through adult franchise has given a new role to the dominant caste. Where a caste is economically and numerically dominant, and ritually higher up its sway in the election is decisive and its political power more secure. Even in cases

where an economically dominant caste is not numerically preponderant its political sway in the Panchayat may not be ~~obviated~~ because the patron-client relationships develop loyalties across caste line. The clients of lower castes are attached to the patrons of dominant caste in various ways; as tenants, debtors, ~~and servants~~. Such vertical ties across caste prevent, to some extent, polarisation of higher and lower castes. Nevertheless polarisation of higher and lower castes cannot be ruled out. Therefore, where a caste is economically and ritually dominant but not numerically preponderant and where there is a polarisation of higher and lower castes on the basis of faction, the Panchayat becomes more representative of higher and lower castes as the seats are proportional to the population. But the lower caste which is numerically preponderant without the elements of economic dominance cannot stand ^{and} continue to compete with the higher castes in respect of holding political power. This competition sometimes takes an ugly form of bitter quarrel and physical violence. Wielding of political power by the lower castes becomes a near impossibility specially when the lower castes are under economic control of the higher castes. The net result is that the traditional pattern of political authority and leadership persists under the new frame work of democratic organisation.

Rao has also brought into focus a fact that there is also a provision for the villagers to constitute the Panchayats on the basis of consensus without any elections. Such villages are given prizes by the Government. On the face of it, this looks truly democratic. But often this unanimity is a camouflage which may strengthen the hold of the dominant caste.

Dube (1969) in the study referred to earlier found that many recognised 'village leaders' are village politicians, with some education and considerable outside contact and function as a link between the world of villagers and the outside world of village administration.

According to Dube a related problem merits serious attention in this connection. In changing over from a bureaucratic to an active 'social service' role, government officials as body must preserve their identity. In India social service so far has been closely associated with political worker, and political leaders have often been identified as leaders of social reforms. Because of lack of perspective and improper understanding of their new role, some officials have come perilously close to viewing their function as political function. Dube warns that young democracy must guard carefully against the development of such a trend. The permanent executive will always have to work under the direction and control of political executive, but it should never identify itself too closely with the latter. Party politicians often tend to use

government agencies for immediate party ends. Safeguards must be devised to minimize the use of State sponsored programme and official machinery towards such objectives.

An understanding of the levels of leadership and of the specific roles of different types of leaders is vital for development programmes. In rural areas certain types of persons having urban contacts, especially contacts with administration and political leaders, occupy strategic positions. Yet it would be a mistake to single them out as local agents of change to the exclusion of persons on the other levels of leadership.

Village factionalism often puzzles development workers and failure on their part to understand the group dynamics in the rural communities under their charge often leads to the ultimate failure of their desirable and technically sound projects.

The rural communities place a very high value on education, and for this reason projects for building schools for children get appreciable support from the villagers.

The higher castes want their children to have modern education so that they may equip themselves to face the changing conditions of the modern world and acquire modern urban skills to help their parents in maintaining their privileged status and position. But there is also the fear that

lower caste children may use their education to break away from tradition and may thus bring about a disintegration of the traditional social organisation. For its novelty value women's education is supported, but fears are often expressed that as a result of this education village women may take to some undesirable traits of urban women and may become misfits for traditional domestic roles.

Bhat (1967) has studied the emerging pattern of leadership in the Panchayati Raj set up in Karnatak State. Bhat's study was confined to an examination of the emerging pattern of rural leadership in the State after the introduction of the Panchayati Raj. For the purpose of this study a questionnaire was sent to all the directly elected members of one taluka board, consisting of nineteen members, and five of its Panchayats. This was followed by personal interviews mainly because the response from these members was found to be inadequate. These members were considered as leaders as they were directly elected to their local bodies by the popular vote.

Traditionally, leadership in the villages was determined by age and experience; more particularly, the well-to-do caste groups dominated. Ownership of land was closely correlated with the hold on the village. Bhat, however, finds that

with the establishment of the Panchayati Raj, the political power structure is slowly undergoing a change. The members of these rural local bodies are expected to be elected by the popular vote on the basis of their merit without regard to social and economic considerations. Yet, one cannot expect a sudden deviation in the social behaviour of the people as the process of such a change is only gradual. Such a change is also visible in the Mangalore taluka board and five of its panchayats.

A study of the socio-economic background, educational attainments, community participation and political association of these members points to the changing pattern of leadership in the villages. One of the important factors that determines rural leadership is age. Traditionally, it was the privilege of the elders to occupy important positions in the villages. However, there is a change in the present pattern. The table given below analyses the comparative age-groups in the old set-up and the new setup.

TABLE -2.1 : Age-group in the Old and New Setup

Age group	1958		1959		Percent variation
	No. of members	Per-cent.	No. of members	Per-cent.	
20 - 30 yrs.	2	4.9	15	20.5	+ 15.6
31 - 45 yrs.	29	70.7	40	54.8	- 15.9
46-60 yrs.	1	2.4	17	23.3	+ 20.9
61 yrs and above	9	22.0	1	1.4	- 20.6
Total:	41	100.0	73	100.0	

Religion and caste have been the other factors in the village leadership.

Occupation is yet another important factor affecting rural leadership, Agriculture being the predominant occupation in rural areas, agriculturists are obviously in a majority. At the same time, the influence of small traders cannot be ignored as they also function as money lenders on most occasions; with their supply of credit, they often control a considerable section of the rural population.

Of the ninetytwo members, 46 were agriculturists, 19 were engaged in business and the remaining twentyseven were professional men like doctors and teachers or were occupied in fishing or weaving or who lent their services as paid labourers.

It is still true that the pattern of village leadership is determined by the economic status of its members. Generally villagers refuse to disclose their income to an outsider.

It is also true that illiteracy restricts one's capacity to give thoughtful judgment on national issues. A good education definitely facilitates the development of progressive attitude in any individual towards social and economic problems. Yet a better educational background of these members has a definite superiority over the illiterates. A large number of the members have not much education though most of them are literate. They had the following qualifications :

- 55 primary education
- 20 completed secondary education
- 4 under-graduates
- 3 diplomas in medicine
- 2 illiterate

Participation in community organisation is yet another determining factor of village leadership.

TABLE 2-2 : Participation in Community Organisation

Organisation	Taluka	Board Panchayat	Total
1. Cultural Organisation	13	25	38
2. Educational organisation	18	46	64
3. Farmers club	3	14	17
4. Religious organisation	14	44	58
5. Sports	1	1	2
6. Trade organisation	5	6	11
7. Vanita samaj	3	3	6
8. Youth club	7	14	21
9. Non-participation	-	3	3
10. Others	1	6	7

K.V. Rao holds the opposite view on the basis of his study on the Panchayati Raj in Orissa : "The new system had not made any change in the nature of leadership i.e., the Panchayat Sabha members have come from exactly those strata of society from which natural leaders were drawn so far".

Hugh Tinker's (1964) conclusion in a study^b is that "throughout the Indian politics, this rural middle class can be roughly identified with the castes who, throughout southern India, have taken over completely from the former Brahmin leadership".

Sirsikar's (1964) observations in an interesting study of the pattern of rural leadership emerging in Maharashtra are: "It appears that there is a perceptible trend towards concentration of social, economic and political power. The decentralisation of power has not yet reached the poorer sections of the village community, like landless labourers and the scheduled castes".

Mathur and others (1966) in a study on the Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan studied leadership pattern and behaviour in the Panchayati Institutions. They observed that emergence of a new pattern of leadership in a developing society such as India is bound to be a long-term process. The quest for new leadership is indeed the quest for a change in the psychology of the people who do not stand in isolation, but who are subject to a number of influences, both historical and contemporary. Thus, the problem of new leadership becomes essentially a problem of social change. Further, it is this new leadership which at once is the cause and consequence of social change.

It is this interdependence which makes both the pace of social change and process of the emergence of new leadership painfully slow.

The process of social change and the emergence of reoriented leadership become difficult in rural context, particularly in India. Rural India has been accustomed in an accepted pattern of thought and life which has come down to the people from their ancestors and which they treat as a sacred trust. They are naturally skeptical even about the need for reorientation. Moreover, they tend to have a docile psychology because of their long history of subservience to the political overlord, to the intermediary overlord (such as Zamindar or Jagirdar), to the ruling agents (such as mukhiya, or the patwari) and most of all ^{to} the village money-lender. It may be added that the pace of education which can weaken this resistance to the ideas of change can be but slow. Mere literacy is not very significant. Finally, the primary task is to provide fresh stimuli in terms of ideas, devices, and institutions that may eventually become rooted in rural life. Institutional devices such as Panchayati Raj can at best help the process and expedite it to some extent, but should not be expected to accomplish these ends on a short-term basis.

From this point of view, the problem of leadership is very vital for Panchayati Raj. Thus, it has assumed three broad aspects.

(1) availability of the right type of leaders and methods adopted to secure them; (2) relationship of the officials and non-officials at all levels; and (3) role of State level leadership in local affairs and problem of initiative and flexibility in operation.

The Panchayati Raj calls for a meaningful and dynamic leadership, for the exercise of leadership functions is necessary at every stage. Such leadership should be forthcoming and if it is lacking, it should be found or even created. Initially, Panchayati Raj movement has to depend largely on existing base of leadership. While the progressive and modernised elements in the leadership operate on upper levels of administration, the lower levels are dominated by traditional and conservative elements. The latter have a great hold on the masses and if they are included in the main stream of the programme, they may constitute powerful agents to the acceptance of any change or innovation.

They found that birth, wealth, age, education, personality and skill are major determinants of leadership. Birth or social origin is a very important factor. Persons born in high castes have greater opportunity to acquire positions of leadership.

Sanction of tradition, congruity between economic positions and socio-economic (ritual) status, opportunities of higher education and outside contacts, as inter-related factors combine to work towards this effect. Most of the newly emerging leadership stems from the upper strata of the rural social hierarchy but exceptions to this general rule, particularly at the Panchayat level, are not infrequent.

Wealth is another important factor. The patron function presupposes a measure of economic stability if not affluence. The broker function especially in relation to the world outside the village requires some free time from pressing daily economic worries. Decentralised democracy by making the holding of offices, particularly the more important ones a semi-professional and nearly full time activity, helps to retain the significance of wealth and leisure.

Age is venerated for its own sake. This has been traditionally so in India. Therefore, the young persons are naturally regarded incapable and immature. Effective positions of traditional type go to those who are in the age group between forty and fifty. Under the Panchayati Raj it is better that the leadership has some degree of education to deal with officials and also perform its functions well. This along with the new methods of recruitment, has lowered the age factor

to a significant degree and new persons in the age of 30 to 40 years are coming to the fore-front. The gap between ideal analysis that the leaders should possess and those which are actually found in them ^{is} are glaring. Ideally a leader should be fair, decisive, firm, intelligent, resourceful and dedicated. But in practice, it bears the evils of factionalism, favour, corruption etc. The ideal types of virtues in leaders are rare; the majority of leaders are those who belong to the second category.

The Panchayati Raj leaders are expected to act as elite serving as a model for the village people and setting the norms of daily life. But, by and large, the new leadership has failed to act as an agent of social change and has not yet functioned as a modernizing group. According to one report the new leaders attempt to maintain a strict division between their political activity and social life; use caste, kinship, and family pre-eminence as bases for leadership have traditional attitudes towards the participation of women in Panchayati Raj and follow traditional practices with regard to such customs as death-feasts, child marriage, dowry and female education in co-educational institutions. This can be understood in the context of pace of social change in India which is certain to be slow. These local leaders do not operate in social vacuum; they are cast in the traditional mold. They

are bound to take time to act as a modernising influence.

2.4 Institutional Behaviour of the Panchayat Bodies.

Mathur and others in the Rajasthan study referred to earlier also studied the institutional behaviour in the Panchayati Raj. Their conclusions are :

- (1) The members of Panchayat are, by and large, indifferent to its activities. Even when they attend Panchayat meetings, they normally prefer to toe the line of Sarpanch and would most often not participate at all. There would hardly be an occasion when they would take any initiation in the deliberations of its meetings. They are not active partners to the decision-making process.
- (2) The utility of the Panchayati Raj institutions is not appreciated by those below the level of sarpanch-those who may be called the Panchayat incarnate. This has naturally made the Sarpanch a very important and powerful functionary who is tempted to misuse his position by the sheer docility of other panchayat members. It is very difficult to say whether the pre-eminent position of Sarpanch has contributed to the lack of initiative on the part of panchas or whether the docility of panchas has strengthened the position of Sarpanch to a point which tempts him to misuse his powers. Perhaps it will be nearer the truth to say that both these factors have contributed in making the panchas inactive.

(3) As a corollary to this, Panchayats have failed to enthuse or activise the villagers through ward panchas who themselves are inactive.

(4) The Sarpanch has also not taken initiative, perhaps in his own self interest, to activise the panchas.

The lack of interest or involvement and participation on the part of the panchas should not however be taken as an argument for discrediting the Panchayati Raj mechanism. It should be recognised that the villagers from whom the panchas come have not had the taste of self-government for quite some time. They had lost self-confidence and initiative in the wake of authoritarian government which simply made them to obey and follow its directives. It would naturally take time for them to become active partners in rural self-government and rural development which are the twin objectives of the Panchayati Raj. If the Panchas are assigned some specific responsibilities on the model of portfolio system earlier suggested, it will be a significant step in the direction of activising them. Their activation has, however, to be accepted as a slow and long-drawn process.

The institutional behaviours in the Panchayat¹ Raj were found as under :

(1) The extent of participation in the Panchayat Samiti also does not go beyond a few sarpanch^{as} who are more vociferous than others. Normally either the close associates of Pradhan with a gift of the gab or the more prominent members of the opposition group dominate the floor of the samiti. Most members of Panchayat Samiti, however, remain passive receivers of information toeing the line of action that is suggested to them by Pradhan or the B.D.O. It may be noted, however, that whenever the Sarpanchas participate, they bring to bear local orientation on their observations, spotlighting thereby the problems and difficulties of their areas. They thus serve as true representatives of their respective areas and hence fulfil one of the important objectives^{of} the Panchayati Raj namely spotlighting the needs and problems of the local people. It is true that most often they do not make any suggestion. But when they do the suggestion carries sense.

(2) Most Panchayat Samitis have been monopolised by the Pradhan or the B.D.O. or by both. Little effort has been made by them to encourage participation of other members.

(3) The meetings of the Panchayat Samiti are orderly held. The customary parliamentary decorum is generally taken for granted.

2.5 Panchayati Raj and Bureaucracy

Gaekwad (1969) has made a comprehensive study of the Panchayati Raj and bureaucracy. Failure of the officially planned, organised and guided community development programme had been a matter of deep and continuous concern. The trend in thinking on the Panchayati Raj is that, so long as we do not discover or create a representative and democratic institution which will supply the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon local objects conforms to the needs and wishes of the locality, invest it with adequate power and assign to it appropriate finances, we will never be able to evoke local interest and excite local initiative in the field of development.

With the introduction of the Panchayati Raj, a new era in rural development has started in the country. Under this programme, important powers and functions in the sphere of development are being transferred from the bureaucratic administration to the elected representatives of the people. It is assumed that the government officials will work along with, and often under the direct control of the, elected representatives and at the same time provide them necessary education and training. This de-bureaucratisation has been introduced rather suddenly, disturbing the existing traditional power

authority and administrative structures in the society which could be said to be lacking the essential prerequisites of democracy such as literacy, secularism, political education and democratic experience and which, because of certain historical accidents and political deliberations, has been accustomed to look towards the officials with awe. Such reorganisation of power and authority structure under the principle of democratic decentralisation which has a tremendous potential for effecting far-reaching social change, is not without its teething troubles.

The implementation of policy evolved from the principles of democratic decentralisation has had two immediate effects.

First it had brought together, for the first time, at the district and lower levels, two divergent sets of people - the elected representatives of the people and the government servants - in an active working association of unprecedented dimension and scope. The areas of differentiation, which are varied and many, between these two sets of people could in general be said to be : training and educational background - illiteracy/high education, social back-ground-rural/urban, low caste/high caste, economic and occupational background - agricultural class/political careerists/social worker/ white-collar salaried class, the politico-historial background - the ruled/the rulers.

Second, the democratic decentralisation has raised expectations in people's minds of radical change in the roles of government servants and in their attitudes and behaviour.

Gaekwad feels on the basis of his research experiences that one of the most important and difficult-tasks being faced by the officials and the non-officials in the Panchayati Raj institutions is that of maintaining good working relationship. The importance of mutual regard and understanding between the two cannot be under-rated.

Notwithstanding a good deal of awareness at the state and national level, there is evidence of growing deterioration in the relations between officials and non-officials in the Panchayati Raj bodies. Some of the apparent causes for tensions between the officials and non-officials isolated by researches are : lack of clear demarcation of spheres of action and powers and functions of the two: interference by the non-officials in administration and poor quality of the officials.

2.6 The Panchayati Raj and Factionalism

In a case study on village government in India, Retzlaff (1962), bears a witness to the fact that the existence of what is loosely termed "factionalism" within a dominant caste in a village has led to the necessity of one or the other faction

seeking the support of the lower caste elements in such things as Village Panchayat elections. As a price of this support, some change, however modest, is made in the position of these lower caste groups, both in terms of tangible economic rewards as well as in less tangible alterations in status relationships. The effects stemming from the opportunity of lower caste members to secure education and acquire positions in the government services, is less perceptible in the brief time span that has elapsed, but this is also an important factor making for change in rural India.

The researcher has noted another effect of the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system in India. The political parties have felt obliged to more to capture the control of these local bodies. The emergence groups, able to command substantial blocks of votes, have already begun to force political leaders to become more responsive to the wishes of these groups, and will make it increasingly difficult for the dominant rural elite to retain its control over, and relatively exclusive access to, the benefits of social and economic development that have been flowing into the rural areas. And education is going to be one of these primary developments.

2.7 Democracy and Development

Prasad (1971) has attempted a deep study of the Village Panchayats of Bihar under the title 'Democracy and Development:

The Grass-roots Experiences in India". To that end, a fairly typical Village Panchayat, Awa, located in the central part of the State, was selected for a close and exhaustive study. The Village Panchayat studied here has a population of less than 4,000 living in two multi-caste, nucleated, villages of unequal size. Various aspects of the Village Panchayat system as a politico-administrative system have been brought into focus. The presentation of data in the study is done with a view to studying (1) the distribution of the Village Panchayat system and (2) the performance capability of the Village Panchayat, especially as an agency of rural development. The sources of the study were : (1) published or some unpublished official documents; (2) discussions with government officials at all levels and with some non-official persons associated with the Panchayat Movement, and (3) the field-study of the Village Panchayat Awa.

The Village Panchayat System in Bihar has three organizational wings, viz., (1) deliberative (Gram Sabha), executive and judicial. The Gram Sabha is a statutory body and is the supreme decision-making authority in the Panchayat in financial and other non-judicial matters. The Executive Committee of the Panchayat carries out the financial and other non-judicial matters. Its head called the Mukhiya is elected by the members of the Gram Sabha. The other members of the Executive Council

are partly elected and partly nominated. A Panchayat Court constitutes the judicial wing of the Village Panchayat. The membership of the Panchayat Court is completely separate from that of the Executive Committee. The head of the Panchayat Court, called Sarpanch, is elected directly from the Gram Sabha and of its members, half are elected by the Gram Sabha and half, indirectly, by an electoral college made up of elected members of the Executive Committee and the elected members of the Panchayat Court.

The study revealed that the Gram Sabha was a large, amorphous body and had been largely inactive. "Its meetings are not called regularly; and few persons care to attend such meetings when called. Women, as a rule, do not participate in the meetings". (p.306). The elections in the Panchayat revealed that "Contests in election are considered bad and are dreaded to disrupt the peace and order of the village community. Attempts are, therefore, made to patch up differences and to select Panchayat personnel through a compromise between the contending blocks. In such a situation, the personality and the temperament, not the caste, of the candidate become the crucial factors in the election." (p.307). The Executive Council reveals in composition as well as in its modus operandi, a great deal of resemblance with the traditional Village Council. The dominant caste holds virtually complete control of the Executive Council. The members of the Executive Committee have not

had any perceptive political leanings, even though some of them had political leanings.

The modus operandi of the Executive Committee reveals tremendous influence of the traditional method of work. The popular image of Mukhiya, the Chief Executive, as a Panchayat leader is yet to crystalize. The Panchayat leaders are the 'ruler' type as well as the 'chairman' type. In the case of the latter, the leader has to accommodate the views of his friends, to whose efforts it is that he largely owes his present position, in decision-making. The responsibilities of the Mukhiya have been in the increase, and only a man with enough leisure can discharge them successfully. His role as an agent of the Government has, however, been more pronounced than his other roles.

The conclusions of the study are that (a) the Panchayat system has given rise to a common urge for controlling the decision-making apparatus; (b) it has not satisfactorily stimulated mobilization of local resources for economic development; and (c) political democratisation and economic development have failed to interwine.

Mehta (1964) studied democratic decentralisation in education under the Panchayati Raj in some States of India.

He found that primary education was transferred in

Rajasthan to the control of the Panchayat Samitis at the Block level but no change was introduced in the urban areas. In Rajasthan, it was maintained that 'the administration of primary schools' and not 'primary education' was transferred to the Panchayat Samitis and several powers in the field of primary education continued to be vested in the State Government. The sub-deputy inspectors of schools had been transferred to the Panchayat Samitis as government servants on deputation.

In Andhra Pradesh, primary education was transferred to the control of the Panchayat Samitis at the Block level, and the position was found to be very similar as in Rajasthan. The primary teachers are recruited at the district level as in Rajasthan, but their appointments at the Block level are made by the presidents of the Panchayat Samitis and not by the Block Development Officers. The powers vested in the Panchayat Samitis in Andhra Pradesh are larger than in Rajasthan. The inspecting officers of primary schools are also more fully under the control of the Block Development Officers. Grants to Panchayat Samitis are also more liberal. In Andhra Pradesh all Middle Schools are transferred to Zilla Parishads whereas in Rajasthan it was found that they continued to be under the State Education Department.

In Maharashtra State, the unit of administration under the Panchayati Raj system is not the Block but the District. The Zilla Parishad continues to be quite a powerful body as was the case with the former District School Board. In Maharashtra, not only primary, but all school education is transferred to the Zilla Parishads. All officers of the Education Department upto and inclusive of the District Education Officers have also been transferred to the Zilla Parishad.

As in Maharashtra, in Gujarat also the Zilla Parishads are very powerful. The primary school teachers are recruited by a Staff Selection Committee at the district level and the appointments are made from the list of the approved candidates by the District Administrative Officer. Transfers within the Taluka are made at the Taluka level while inter-taluka transfers are made by a Transfer Committee.

In Orissa, the administration and management of all primary schools have been transferred to the Panchayat Samitis. At the district level, the Zilla Parishads exercise advisory and supervisory powers over the Panchayat Samitis. Appointments are made by the Zilla Parishads after the selection is made by a district selection committee. The Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti has powers to transfer a teacher within the Block in consultation with the Sub-Inspector of Schools. The Chairman of the Zilla Parishad may transfer a teacher from one block to another.

In Tamil Nadu State, Panchayat Unions have been established at the Block level, but there is no Panchayat body at the district level as in other States. The Panchayat Unions manage all elementary schools which were formerly conducted by District Boards. Teachers are appointed by the Appointment Committee of the Panchayat Union. Elementary schools are inspected by the Deputy Inspectors of schools, but they are under the control of the District Inspectors of Schools. Grants to Panchayat Unions are based on a Slab System which takes into consideration several factors such as land revenue, cess receipts, etc. Matching grants are also given for a surcharge of cess levied by Panchayat Unions.

Trilok Singh (1955) in a study has shown that the attempt to place the Village Panchayat at the Centre of Village development is, in fact, an effort to establish a new institution under an old name. His findings are :

"In order to get adequate results from established Village Panchayats it is necessary to view the institutions as a part of a larger process, namely, the fundamental reconstruction of the social and economic relations with the rural society. This move will succeed in the measure which (1) the Village Panchayat can function within a more or less homogenous social structure in which different sections of the community are moved by common loyalties and urges, and (2) economic basis of village life is expanded and strengthened. Relative quality of status is a fundamental requisite of a homogenous social structure, as is also the absence of large disparities in the ownership of land, the primary source of employment and wealth in rural India. "

An exhaustive case study of the Panchayati Raj in Jaipur District of Rajasthan was done by Mathur, Iqbal Narain and Sinha (1966). It was done at the Department of Economics and Public Administration of the University of Rajasthan. The rationale behind the study was that it should pay dividends in terms of a healthy and vigorous growth of democracy at local rural levels if emerging problem areas pertaining to the Panchayati Raj were identified on the basis of an empirical academic inquiry in the initial stages of its life, and if an effort was also made to offer solutions to the problems so identified.

The sample was though limited to one district in Rajasthan, viz., Jaipur District, ^{its} coverage of areas as well as issues were rather exhaustive. The Panchayati Raj system was examined from the point of view of emerging institutional leadership, the behaviour pattern and the interest of its members, its functioning in the specific context of 'planning from below' and the implementation of development programmes; the baffling problems of the 'official-non-official relationship; the financial and administrative challenges; and finally its overall impact.

The Zilla Parishad at Jaipur was self selected. But for selecting the Panchayat Samitis, four-fold criteria were followed. These criteria were : (a) distance from the city;

(b) level of development in terms of the stages of the community Development Programme; (c) the Jagir or Khalsa background; and (d) distinctly outstanding or poor performance record. Four Gram Panchayats were selected in each Panchayat Samiti (i.e. from each Block area). The Nyaya Panchayat located at the headquarters of the Panchayat Samiti was also included in the study.

The approach adopted in the study was of qualitative appraisal. The quantitative method was also fruitfully used to feed the qualitative analysis and to import empirical validity. Regarding the methodology of research adopted in the study, the researchers make the following observation :

"Methodologically speaking, the report has been an amalgam of several methods; it has been built around qualitative analysis, quantitative information and even impressionistic observations which in the present stage of development of social sciences cannot as yet be processed through reliable tools and acceptable norms of judgement, though we have tried to verify them with the help of comparative method and cross-referencing. The approach of qualitative appraisal is expected to yield the advantage of a deeper and closer probe into the interplay of human sociological and politico-economic factors in the operation of an institutional apparatus as the Panchayati Raj. This institution has a social base in the tradition bound villages and which has to work through the ages and who have, therefore, developed a psychology of Mai-Bap Government, besides the phenomenon of mental resistance to the demands of modernisation" (pp.5-66).

As regards the impact of the Panchayati Raj, the researchers observe that no final verdict can be given on the nature and prospects of the Panchayati Raj for several reasons. First, the experiment was barely four years old. Secondly, the Panchayati Raj institutions are living and dynamic, and they would change and grow with the people. Thirdly, the success or failure of the new experiment is closely linked with the process and speed of social change that can take place in rural areas. Fourthly, the number of variables that are involved in the study further make the researchers cautious against any sweeping generalisations.

However, some more important findings are summarised below:

(1) There is hardly any unanimity and clarity of thinking on the concept of Panchayati Raj among leaders, intellectuals, administrators and rural community people. The national and state leaders often make out that the Panchayati Raj is a character of rural self-government. This would imply that non-official or popular leaders at the level of local rural areas would enjoy the maximum autonomy in decision-making, planning, implementation, control of resources and their allocation and supervision and control. These promises of national and State leaders have raised high hopes and aspirations of the rural people. But these hopes are belied and dreams are shattered. In actual practice, the Panchayati Raj institutions are performing just an agency role as if they were

mere extension of the State Government administrative machinery.

(2) The functional impact of the Panchayati Raj has been four-fold : political, administrative, economic and sociological. The Panchayati Raj has so far shown greater political potential than economic or sociological results. A neo-traditional leadership has emerged in rural areas under the Panchayats. This leadership is material-benefits oriented. It is a combination of both power and development orientation. The new emergent leadership in the Panchayati Raj institutions, partly because of its comparatively young age, of development orientation and of the exigencies of the situation has lesser resistance to social change or is inclined to accept the demands of modernisation.

The more important of the political consequences of the Panchayati Raj are as under :

(1) The local leaders is developing strong links with the State leaders, particularly with the Ministers who, in enlightened self-interest, patronise him because they know that he is more or less to serve as a vote bank for his area.

(2) The Panchayati Raj institutions cannot be expected to work on non-party basis because the political parties are in the field.

(3) The political consciousness has increased under the Panchayati Raj. It is expected that gradually this might help the rural people to overcome their psychology of the Mai-Bap Government.

(4) The political consciousness is not in all cases constructive.

(5) The Panchayati Raj institutions have also provided a training ground in democracy to rural people.

(6) Factions have deepened under the Panchayati Raj.

(7) Whenever the relationship between officials and non-official functionaries is harmonious, the Panchayati Raj mechanism has a smooth running; where this is not so, this has serious repercussions on the implementation of the development programmes.

(8) The role of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the process of planning from below has been almost negligible.

(9) The Extension Officers have failed to play their role and have become a major bottleneck in the success of the developmental programmes on the operational side.

(10) The Panchayati Raj, in its operational aspects, has generated a development consciousness but this has not led to the growth of a feeling of social solidarity or cohesiveness.

(11) The Panchayati Raj non-official leaders have shown little concern for ameliorating the lot of the weaker sections of the society.

The general emphasis that has emerged from the study is to ^{the} mend ~~Panchayati~~ Raj institutions, and not to end them.

A study, called 'the Misrod Study' was made in 1962 by the National Institute of Basic Education in the area served by the Misrod School (District Sehore, Madhya Pradesh). The study covered 11 habitations. It was found that only 59.8 percent of boys and 4.8 percent of girls in the age-group 0-14 were enrolled in the school; the other children of the age-group were the non-enrolled students, the girls were in very large numbers. The findings of the study which corroborates the earlier conclusions that the most important single factor which reduces equality of educational opportunity, at every stage of instruction including primary, ^{is} ~~the~~ poverty. The findings of the study were as under :

(1) The enrolment of boys was directly proportional to the economic condition of the family. The enrolment (53.7 percent) was the least in the lowest income group (less than Rs.150 per head per year). It increased continuously as the income per head increased and that in the income group of Rs.001 or more per head per year, the enrolment was 100 percent.

(2) The enrolment was at its best in the age-groups 7-8, 8-9 and 9-10, where it rose continuously from 61.0 percent in the age-group 7-8 to 75 percent in the age-group 9-10. Then, it began to drop rather sharply and reached 35.7 percent in the age-group 13-14.

(3) As many as 55.8 percent of the non-attending children (59.0 percent boys and 50.9 percent girls) in the age-group 6-11 were doing nothing except some casual work of a minor nature, and that about 38.8 percent of them (20.2 percent boys and 47.2 percent girls) were doing some domestic work or employment within the family.

(4) The vast majority of the non-attending children in the age-group 6-11 did not attend school mainly because of the indifference of parents, and poverty, which compels the children to work at home. This was only the second contributory cause of absenteeism at this stage. The girls are more useful at home and hence a very large proportion of them was found to have been engaged in domestic work.

(5) In the age-group 11-14, as many as 60.6 percent of the children (39.7 percent boys and 81.5 percent girls) were found doing some domestic work within the family. Another 17.3 percent of them (41.4 percent boys and 0.0 percent girls) were found to have been employed outside the family and earning some money.

Thus, the study reveals that poverty is the main cause of non-enrolment or non-attendance, and indifference is the primary factor leading to absenteeism. The Gram Panchayats can at least prevail upon the indifferent parents to enrol their children of the age group 6-14 in schools and cause them attend school regularly till they pass class VII examination.

2.8 Impact on the Expansion of Primary Education in Rural Areas

Kothari Commission (1966) has surveyed and studied the problem of equalizing educational opportunity for the weaker sections of the society and has identified several social, economic and educational factors that impede the spread of education among the weaker sections of the society.

Kamat (1968) has studied comprehensively the progress of education in rural Maharashtra in the post-Independence period. The investigator has summed up his conclusions as under :

Primary schools established during the last two decades have grown in size and classes. New schools have been established in small and remote villages. Compulsory education of four years' duration has been introduced in Western Maharashtra and is now being extended to Vidarbha and Marathawada. A large proportion of the younger generation, especially among

males, has acquired literacy. An increasing number of girls is also taking to education. Socio-economic strata which were hitherto backward in education are on the move and the pace of advance is often quite rapid.

This general progress is not, however, uniform everywhere; it is in fact extremely uneven. Bigger villages, where schools have existed during the pre-independence period, had an early start in this respect, and they are much ahead of the smaller villages where schools have been opened only recently.

Another contrast in the educational progress is the general background of women. The situation is no doubt improving so far as elementary education is concerned in bigger villages, especially in those where compulsory education has been effectively implemented. But even here women remain far from attaining higher stages of education as compared with men.

The spread of education during this period in the rural areas is found to be very uneven also between different socio-economic sections of the society. Education is no longer the preserve of the few advanced caste groups, of the Brahmins and the other advanced Hindus. Although both in terms of higher stages of education, these caste-groups are still leading, the spread of education in the other caste-groups

which form the overwhelming majority in the rural areas has completely changed the face of the village elite.

The three main caste-groups in the villages of Maharashtra are the Marathas, the Scheduled Castes (mainly Mahars) and the Scheduled Tribes, and their numerical strengths are generally in that order in most of the villages under the study. During the post-independence period, the Marathas have made considerable educational progress, often a very rapid one. And the progress of the Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities has a slower pace. In fact, in certain areas, they are just making a beginning. Female education, although considerably behind, shows the same pattern in respect of the three important above mentioned caste-groups.

It is found that it is the peasant farmer who is pushing after, very rapidly. The labourers (mainly the agricultural labourers) are relatively backward. In terms of the size of landholding and income, it is the more affluent sections of the society that have registered social progress. It is true that the spread of compulsory education operates towards reducing these differences especially in the case of men. It is also noticed that when the general male literacy is high, the difference in literacy according to income narrows down consi-

derably. But ^{the} investigator ^{for} maintains that the contrasts mentioned above always crystalliz^{2c}e sharply when one considers higher attainment in education and even literacy among women. When one takes into consideration the existing economic and occupational structure in the Maharashtra Villages, these contrasts are obviously closely related with those mentioned in the caste-wise analysis.

Inamdar (1971) studied the effects of the Zilla Parishad, the top tier in the Panchayati Raj system, on the administration of primary education. The researcher formulated the following five hypothesis :

- (1) The Zilla Parishads have been able to tackle that expansion of primary education, but the quality of education has been adversely affected;
- (2) Wide spread interference from elected office bearers and other popular elements in educational administration is present specially in matters like teachers' transfers, particularly during early years, resulting in dislocation of stable functioning of schools and other aspects of educational administration.
- (3) Harmonious relationship between the educational administration and the generalists depends upon personal factors such as the atmosphere of understanding

among the elected office bearers and other popular elements in the Zilla Parishads;

- (4) The Zilla Parishads have been slack with regard to inspection and supervision arrangements, as the identity of the educational officials was completely lost due to the dominance of the elected element; and
- (5) Financially, the Zilla Parishads have been solely dependent on the State Government for the implementation of the educational programmes, and they have not been able to find out resources commensurate with the functions entrusted to them.

The sample included the Poona Zilla Parishad and the Haveli Taluka Panchayat Samiti. Data were collected through questionnaires, informal discussion and personal approaches. The respondents were primary school teachers, Block Development officers, Education Officers, members of the Poona Zilla Parishad and of the Haveli Taluka Panchayat Samiti. A few case studies of the primary schools in the district were also undertaken to obtain an intimate knowledge of the functioning of primary schools all over the district.

The results showed that all the four hypotheses excepting the third one were true. The researcher's observation is worth citation.

"The conclusions from the analysis of the data point out that the present pattern of the educational administration under the Zilla Parishad is defective and that, unless a radical change is brought about in the whole pattern, there is no possibility of reforms towards the improvement of the quality of primary education in rural areas."

The Planning Commission of India had conducted a comprehensive study (1965) of the problems of extension of primary education in rural areas. Of the 16 States, one district each from each State was selected for the study. From Gujarat, the Amreli District (Mamnagar-Amreli Beat No.2) was included in the sample. The respondents were of two types, officials and non-officials. The non-official respondents were selected on the basis of a random sample of 16 households per selected village in areas in which eight villages were selected, and 24 households per village in which five villages each were selected.

Among other areas of the inquiry, the physical plant, facilities and textbooks in schools were included. In Gujarat (Amreli District), the conclusions were as under :

- (1) Percent of primary schools having adequate accommodation was 50; of the school building owned by school were 88 percent and the remaining 12 percent were rent free;

- (2) The primary schools having satisfactory conditions in respect of walls were 88 percent, roof 88 percent, floor 75 percent, ventilation and light 100 percent, drinking-water facilities 13 percent, general condition 88 percent, urinal nil and latrines nil.
- (3) The primary schools that were in good conditions were 62 percent, those needed minor repairs 38 percent, and those needed major repairs nil.
- (4) Percentages of schools having play-ground were 75, having land for agriculture 12.5, and for vegetable and flower gardens, having drinking water wells or hand pumps 25.9 and children's park nil.

The percentage of primary schools providing stipends, free books and free uniforms was found to be nil.

Johari's (1965) study provides both direction and dimensions of evaluation of primary schools within a district. Such an evaluation provides evidences of the success of the Panchayati system on the administration of primary education. The researcher has attempted evaluation of primary schools in Broach District of South Gujarat. He has developed criteria for evaluating school buildings, staffing, the intake capacity of a lower primary and an upper primary school, the land of the school, some important activities of school, improvement and

and protection of the health of school children, craft activities in a primary school, cultural activities, academic programmes and school records.

The study used a sample of 100 primary schools selected randomly from all the 11 Talukas of Broach District. The study revealed serious inadequacies in primary schools in respect of the provision of the following. This highlights, incidentally, the spheres in which the Panchayati Raj institutions should concentrate their efforts :

- (1) Medical inspection and health education;
- (2) Sufficient sanitary facilities;
- (3) Provision of cooperative store
- (4) Separate library room;
- (5) Laboratory room with adequate science apparatus;
- (6) Attention on teaching of crafts with a focus on self-sufficiency;
- (7) Maintaining contact with old pupils by primary schools;
- (8) School Community closer contact;
- (9) Enrichment of schools with teaching aids that could prove effective in class teaching;
- (10) Improvement of attendance and reduction of wastage and stagnation.

2.9 The General Impact of the Panchayati Raj on Education

The Rajasthan State Primary Education Committee (1963) had also attempted a systematic assessment of the impact of the Panchayati Raj in the State. The major focal point in this study was to evaluate the progress made in elementary education in the Third Plan. The data included responses from 54 Vikas Adhikaris, 25 non-officials including eleven representatives of the Panchayati Raj institutions, 61 education extension departments, 29 officers of the Education Department, and 446 primary school teachers. The research group also interviewed at Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Udaipur and Kota a large number of persons belonging to each of the different categories mentioned above.

The replies showed wide divergence of opinion between the elected representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions on the one hand and teachers, S.D.I.s and the Officers of the Education Department on the other. The former thought that the experiment had achieved many good results, such as improvement in the attendance of teachers, regular and quick disbursement of salaries, and an enhancement in the interest shown in education by the local community. They did not hold the view that the experiment was instrumental for affecting the morale of teachers. The Panchayati Raj leaders did not agree to the allegations being made that there were many

political pressures, underlying postings and transfers of teachers. They also denied the allegation that the introduction of the Panchayati Raj experiment had brought down the standards. They had, however, pointed out that if the results of the new experiment were not striking, it was due to the fact that the officers of the State Education Department did not take enough interest in primary education, provided little guidance to the teachers or the Education Extension Officers and did not give a fair publicity to the good work that had been done by the Panchayati Raj institutions in the administration of primary education.

The second category of the respondents-the teachers as well as the officials - did accede to some facts. For instance, they agreed that the attendance of the teachers, under this democratic decentralised administration, had improved and their salaries were disbursed more regularly than before, but they were emphatic in their assessment that as a result of the administration by the Panchayati Raj institutions the morale of the teachers had deteriorated lamentably, that teachers had got ^{themselves} involved in politics and that postings and transfers were done on an arbitrary basis and quite often on political grounds. The inspecting officers of the State Education Department were strongly in favour of abandoning the experiment and transferring the administration of primary schools to the Department of Education.

Bordia (1969) has studied the impact of the Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan on educational administration. He has listed five gains that accrued to the administration of primary education in Rajasthan from the adoption of the Panchayati Raj, viz.,

- "(1) An interest in the development of primary education has been awakened in the minds of the rural population;
- (2) A new leadership has emerged, which compensates, by boldness and enthusiasm what it lacks in ability and experience;
- (3) Attendance of teachers ~~has~~ improved, as on the spot supervision is exercised by Panchayati Raj authorities, Sarpanchas, and informal leadership;
- (4) There has been a marked improvement in the enrolment of pupils in primary schools in some Panchayat Samitis, though in the State as a whole, the rate of expansion has slowed down during the Third Plan period; and
- (5) A closer contact has been established between the school and the community leading to a widening of concept of education as a part of the rural community's effort at all round development. There has been a closer link-up between education and other aspects of life such as health improvement,

agriculture and community development."(p.368)

Some shortcomings in the impact have been also pointed out. They include the following :

- (a) Demoralization of teachers by frequent and arbitrary transfers;
- (b) Relegation of primary school teachers as a helpless victims of pressure politics;
- (c) Frequent cases of flouting the authority of educational administrators by teachers who have a favourable personal equation with the Panchayat leaders;
- (d) Inefficient functioning of the Education Committees of the Panchayat Samitis owing to the low competence of their members;
- (e) Low participation of the members in the meetings;
- (f) Unwillingness of the members to consult technical officers;
- (g) Inadequate human resources at the Panchayat Samiti level.;
- (h) A large proportion of the sub-standard teachers appointed under the system;
- (i) Teachers being required to devote a great deal of time to extra-mural duties like taking round visitors and arranging or participating in non-educational development activities and functions;
- (j) Teachers not being able to get the necessary technical guidance;
- (k) Detached attitude adopted by district level officers, and indifference of officers of the Education Department,
- (l) Failure of the Panchayati bodies to raise adequate finances required for school improvement or even maintenance.

The study entitled "Community Participation in the Development of Education in Gujarat" has been done by Patel (1972) at the State Institute of Education, Ahmedabad. Its purpose is to generate among people an appreciation of the efforts that have been made by community in Gujarat State to support education at all levels and to motivate people to accelerate the process to accept greater responsibility of education ^{the} in years to come. The study presents a picture of progress achieved in the State in spheres of primary, secondary and university education. It provides statistics of community support to various aspects of education at the three levels- school building, teaching aids, residential facilities for teachers, welfare services, cultural programmes, festivals, sports, etc. The study throws light on two achievements of Community participation in education. Regarding the first, the conclusion of the study is : "Efforts have been made to overcome the economic barrier of parents through creating facilities of providing books and slates free of cost, school uniforms free of cost or at cheaper rates, free mid-day meals, part-time education, etc." The study has evaluated the impact of the Panchayati Raj in these words :

"The Panchayati Raj in Gujarat has generated in the people the spirit of cooperative efforts towards the implementation of the Community Development Programme. Primary education is looked after by the District Panchayat Education Committee in the district and various needs of the schools receive due attention by them and people at the village

level are motivated to take up the responsibility of meeting these needs of the school with the backing of either the Village Panchayats or the social workers... The satisfactory progress of compulsory education programme can thus be attributed to this factor".

The study suffers from objectivity in data as well as its scheme of selection, analysis and interpretation of data.

The overtones of propaganda are conspicuous.

The working of education under the Panchayat System in Central Gujarat was first studied by Patel (1960) in the M.S. University of Baroda. In his study he included the Panchayati Raj institutions in the districts of Baroda, Panchamahals and Kheda. The researcher studied administration of primary education at the levels of village, Taluka and Jilla. He also traced the growth of the Community Development Movement in relation to Panchayat. Patel's conclusions are the following :

- (1) In most of the villages, the Panchayat Committees are not working efficiently and effectively;
- (2) Instead of helping the school activities, more hindrances are created by the members;
- (3) The success of Panchayats was found to be highly related to the educational qualifications of the members;
- (4) The officers in charge of primary education at the Taluka level are often not educationally trained persons, and they do not have competence and insight

to make administration of primary education smooth and fruitful;

- (4) The understanding among members of Taluka level Education Committee about the development needs and problems of education leaves much to be desired;
- (5) The performance of District Panchayat Education Committee was adjusted significantly better than the corresponding committee at the intermediate Taluka level and the grassroot Gram Panchayat level.

The study is more factual than analytical and interpretative.

2.10 Role of the Panchayat Leadership in Education

Joshi's (1973) study is pioneering. He has examined critically the role of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the three districts (Valsad, Surat and Bharuch) of the South Gujarat region in a larger perspective of administration and finance of primary education in the State. He has presented, perhaps for the first time, a well built and meaningful story of the growth and development of primary education in Gujarat right from the beginning of the British rule. This study being the first of its kind in Gujarat State, it is reviewed here with some length and in depth.

The researcher has divided his comprehensive and voluminous report in three parts. The Part I is conceptual and comparative; Part II deals with the details of administration and finance of primary education in Gujarat in historical perspective (1824-1971); and Part III of about 100 pages is devoted to the field study on the impact of Panchayati Raj on administration of primary education in the region of South Gujarat.

The sample of the study consisted of 3 Jilla Parishads, and 82 Gram Panchayats. The researcher built up his own instruments for data collection. The approach used in the study was principally of qualitative appraisal. The quantitative approach was also used, but its purpose was to feed the qualitative analysis or to provide a base for evaluating qualitative achievement. The qualitative appraisal had a focus on the broad evaluation of the success and failures of the Panchayati Raj in the administration of primary education in the State.

The study throws significant light on the structural-functional analysis of the leadership in the Gram Panchayats and the Jilla Parishads. Joshi's findings in this respect are the following :

- (1) At the Gram Panchayat level, the higher caste had been ~~lost~~ its dominance. Though caste continued to be an important factor, it was not an exclusive determinant.

- (2) More of the leadership in Gram Panchayats was drawn from intermediate caste-groups.
- (3) Caste constituted a more important factor in the election of the Panchas rather than of the Sarpanchas.
- (4) The grass-root leadership was predominantly from the farming group.
- (5) This leadership was also found to be in the hands of middle income group.
- (6) Their leadership showed strong political affiliation.
- (7) The indirect election system had resulted in considerable manoeuvring, plotting, and resorting to strategies and pressure groups. It became a trial of strength for the offices of the Presidents of Taluka Panchayat as well as of District Panchayat.
- (8) Most of the leadership had educational background of study upto primary IV class or primary VII class but a trend was also in evidence of higher qualifications. Some sarpanchas with even post-graduate qualifications were also discovered.
- (9) A positive tendency was detected to elect younger people in Gram Panchayats.

Among the Gram Panchayat leadership Joshi identified the following weaknesses or inadequacies :

- (a) Caste-mindedness;
- (b) Political manoeuvring and scheming;
- (c) Least satisfactory dynamism and initiative;
- (d) Inadequate leadership skills and behaviour;
- (e) Large scale self-centredness and low sincerity of purpose;
- (f) Superficial and non-genuine or feigned commitment

to public service or welfare.

- (g) not enough understanding of problems and issues of primary education.
- (h) not much active work done in the field of enforcement of the Compulsory Education Law, or School improvement or even adult literacy.

In the election of the leadership in Jilla Panchayats, Joshi found that the political factor was the most dominant. These leaders were all as individuals very strong with considerable popular following. They also constituted the ~~bulwark~~ of strength at the local level of the ruling Congress Party. In their election, castes did not play any significant part. This leadership was also drawn from the farming occupational group, and economically these leaders are pretty well off. They seemed to be habituated to get their voice heard and commands obeyed. They seemed to be conscious of their power and usefulness to continue to be in office in the interest of the stability of the political party in power in State Government.

This leadership in the Jilla Shikshan Samiti was found to be making a claim that it understands all that need to be understood in respect of the administration of primary education. The leaders were insistent that their advice and directions in respect of decision-making in primary education should be carried out. It cannot be said that the district level leadership was well-motivated, active and interested

participants of democratic government, and that it had the good of the education of the Community children at heart. Education was, along with others, a side past-time activity. The top leadership is too strong and ego-centred to permit the leadership at member-level to make tangible contribution to the development and enrichment of primary education within the district.

The study revealed perceptions of the leaders of Gram Panchayats on the desirability of having Education Committee. The majority view recognised the following merits:

- (1) Development of primary education needs special and close care and attention;
- (2) It can enthuse and release initiative and energy of the local community in educating their children and that too in an effective way;
- (3) It can better organise drives for enrolment, attendance and retention as well as for adult literacy;
- (4) It can serve as a better check for the defaulting parents to abandon their obstinacy and send their children to school;
- (5) It can create a better climate for thoughts as well as for action to meet the needs of development of the local primary school.

- (6) It can meaningfully contribute toward reduction of wastage and stagnation at the primary stage.
- (7) It can plan programmes of school improvement and enrichment.

The rating of 'not much' or 'not at all' of beliefs, attitudes or actual work put up by the district level leadership in primary education which was found significant was in the following spheres :

- (1) Faith in the vigorous enforcement of the State law on Compulsory education;
- (2) Favourable attitude toward prosecuting the defaulting guardians;
- (3) Active work done in collecting funds for the development of primary education;
- (4) Active work in spreading adult literacy; and
- (5) Intelligent and adequate knowledge and understanding of the needs and problems of primary education.

The study revealed that the following hypothesis either fully or partially did not stand so far as the South Gujarat region of the State was concerned :

- (1) With the introduction of the Panchayati Raj, the local rural Communities and their leaders will be drawn closer together and they will apply themselves to the task of spreading universal primary education on compulsory basis.
- (2) The experiment in democratic decentralisation will succeed in helping the rural folk to escape from the hold of the Mai-Bap psychology and break away from the age-long authoritarian traditions which sap their vitality.

! Because of passive Panchas and dominant and dictating type of Sarpanchs, it has not been much possible to attempt educational planning at grassroot level, involving the local rural community in the decision-making process about quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of primary education.

Joshi did not find noticeable impact of the Panchayati Raj system on rapid change in the approach, attitude, interest and concern of the rural community in the administration of primary education and primary schools. The involvement of rural community was, as such, small. Powers got concentrated in leaders. The channel of communication and ~~traffic~~ between people and their leaders was small and superfluous. There was not much synthesis and harmony between the non-official leadership of the Panchayats and the official leadership from

Government. The attitudes, on both the sides, in many cases were stiff and uncompromising. Attempts were made by non-official leadership to dominate over and dictate the official leadership. The result was clash in some cases and submission of the official leadership to the dominant and hard hitting non-official leadership.

The Panchayati Raj experiment in the administration of primary education in South Gujarat was found to be having only a marginal success.

Kaul Adalati (1969) in his doctoral study on the role of local authorities in India in the sphere of education has traced out the evolutionary growth of local bodies with particular reference to the cause of education and to find out how democratic decentralisation of power has helped to shape the educational patterns and growth.

The study was limited to the State of Uttar Pradesh.

It has contributed significantly to the evolution and growth of the concept of local self-government in education. The study has thrown light on how local self-government institutions can be harnessed to serve the people in education, solve their educational problems and serve the local children well in their needs of schooling. The study has concluded with striking a hopeful and more optimistic note to the effect

that local bodies have worked more efficiently and profitably than other administrative and educational agencies in India.

Vartak (1971) has made a critical study of educational organization, administration and problems under the Maharashtra Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samities Act, 1961. This is, also a Ph.D. study done at the S.N.D.T. Women's University, Bombay.

The investigator has formulated the following specific objectives for her study :

- (1) To evaluate the educational administration of local authorities;
- (2) To review whether the democratic decentralisation of educational administration, as envisaged by the Balwantrai Mehta Study Group has come to stay and whether it has helped the cause of rural educational development; and
- (3) To suggest measures of needed reform in the Panchayati Raj set-up in relation to education in Maharashtra.

The State of Maharashtra has 26 districts. Of them, the investigator collected data from 23 districts. These data came from government education authorities, officers, locally elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj institutions, teachers, and so on.

The tools used for the data collection were :questionnaires, interviews, observations and attendance at meetings of the Education Committees of some of the Zilla Parishads.

The study has yielded the following major findings:

- (1) Due to the decentralized administration of education, there is spread of education in rural areas, and it has started developing inasmuch as that the new administrative set up is more conducive to growth and development;
- (2) Education has become the common man's interest and because of this, it has gained momentum;
- (3) Considering the achievement of objectives of decentralisation of administration, local authorities have been successful in spreading education and, in rural areas, local participation in solving the educational problems. This has been achieved despite the fact that the participation of local leaders in educational administration is limited;
- (4) The emergent young rural leadership has proved to be useful for the development of education in rural areas;
- (5) Administrative delay has been reduced appreciably by devolution of the administration of education at block/taluka level;

- (6) The attitude of the members of the Panchayat bodies is cooperative, and there is a feeling among them of participation in educational administration; and
- (7) Improvement and lessening of lethargy in educational administration are noticeable;

These are the points on the credit side in the balance sheet of the Panchayati Raj institutions in respect of administration of education. But there are also points on the debit side. They are as under :

- (1) The number of elected members of the Education Committees of the Zilla Parishads was found to be inadequate to undertake educational responsibilities of the whole district effectively;
- (2) Bureaucratic attitude of the administrative education officers appears to be still almost the same as was the case during the British regime.
- (3) In no district of Maharashtra, a long term planning of education was undertaken, with the result that the needs, aspirations and expectations of the local people could not be reflected in official planning that usually takes place.
- (4) Due to the present structural limitations, decentralisation of power has not reached the people according to their expectations.

- (5) Due to increase in the responsibilities of the education officers, they find it difficult to pay due attention to their academic functions of instructional supervision and improvement.

2.11 Problems of Primary Education and Panchayati Raj.

Research findings on the following problems of primary education from studies done in Gujarat and other parts of the country are also available. Selected research findings are summarised below on the following problems

- (a) Enforcement of compulsory education
- (b) Shift system in primary schools
- (c) Single-Teacher schools
- (d) Education of tribal children
- (e) Wastage and Stagnation
- (f) Student welfare services
- (g) Standards of education

(a) Enforcement of Compulsion

Desai (1954) was the first to undertake a comprehensive research in different dimensions and issues of compulsory education in social, economic and political setting. Both Desai (1949) and Bhavsar (1951) studied the problem in Gujarat setting.

Soni (1970) studied enforcement of compulsory education in the medium sized village of Ranu of the Baroda District.

He found that there was no appreciable increase in the case of enrolment of children in primary schools during the period of 1955-1969 despite the fact that the local village population increased by 21 percent during the period. He attributed this phenomenon to indifference of parents to send their sons and daughters of the age-group 6-14 to school and the apathy of the Gram Panchayat leaders and members to motivate the local families to take the advantage of education. Apart from persuading the defaulting parents to cause their child attend the local school, they connived at the breach of the State law on Compulsory enforcement. The researcher found that practically no efforts were made to bring the non-attending 39.47 percent children to school. Among those who were enrolled in school, the percentage of stagnation began increasing with the advancement of the class. Girls' primary school did not receive the care that the boys' primary school received. The researcher found that the percentage of trained and better qualified primary teachers was more in the boys' school than in the girls' school. The local community was apathetic to providing residential facilities to local school teachers. This difficulty was especially experienced by women teachers and others belonging to the backward communities.

(b) Shift System in Primary Schools

Tannu(1959) investigated the problem of shift system in primary schools. The method used was experimental. Five pairs of schools, from primary schools having shift system and primary

schools without shift system were selected as sample for the study. The sample covered 1000 school children. The school children were administered tests in languages and general knowledge. Fifty students were randomly selected for the administration of mental tests in order to compute their I.Q.s. Three hours of instruction were given to the children of the shift system schools and five hours instruction to the children attending on full time instruction basis.

The study revealed that the shift system does not work fruitfully when the school timings are fixed according to the availability of the school building. When the timings of the shift are odd and inconvenient, it results in poor attendance of the children. It was also found that promotions in the shift system schools were not strictly based on merit but on other considerations.

A good feature of the study is the Model scheme for the shift system developed by the investigator. There are two main objectives of this Model Scheme, viz.,

- (i) To reduce the expenditure and
- (ii) To lessen the problem of accommodation, and making more seats available in schools without increasing the number of teachers.

The Model provided by the investigator is likely to be a great boon to economically poor and educationally developing areas.

(c) Single Teacher Schools

A study in regard to single-teacher schools and the problems facing them was done by the National Institute of Basic Education (1962). The sample chosen was randomly selected 25 single-teacher schools. The population of the villages in which they were located ranged from 315 to 2,500. Most of these places were difficult of access, being about 9m to 40 miles from the nearest railway station or main road. Four of these schools had three classes, 11 had four and 10 had all the five classes.

It was found that the enrolment of these institutions ranged from 13 to 89, with a median of 37. The average daily attendance was 82.9 percent on the whole - it ranged from 44 percent in one school to 100 percent in another, with a median of 32 percent. The enrolment was discovered to have been distributed over classes in the following pattern: Class I 51.6 percent; class II 20.8 percent; Class III 14.2 percent, Class IV 8.6 percent and class V 4.8 percent.

The proportion of wastage went on increasing progressively from Class II to Class V.

Girls' enrolment in these schools was found to constitute only 13.1 percent which was much less than the overall enrolment of girls in the primary schools of Rajasthan. This low enrolment of girls was attributed to the backwardness of the villages in which these single-teacher schools were located.

The qualifications of teachers in these schools were broadly in keeping with the overall position in Rajasthan State.

The other disturbing facts were : (1) 64 percent of schools had no time-tables; (2) 72 percent of teachers worked separately with each grade; (3) The teachers had no companion and felt lonely; (4) The living conditions in the small villages were extremely trying for the teachers; (5) teaching of grades simultaneously created many academic difficulties and problems; (6) equipment provided was inadequate; (7) it was difficult for teachers to get leave in hours of need; and (8) difficulty was experienced in covering the entire syllabus.

In a study on single teacher schools in Gujarat, Dave (1966) found 41.4 percent of the total elementary schools to be single-teacher schools. Their classwise distribution was: one standard 2.4 percent., two standards 5 percent, three standards 20.3 percent, four standards 68.4 percent; five standard 2.2 percent, and six and seven standards 1.7 percent.

The investigator found that the Shikshan Samiti hardly makes attempts to educate the community leaders about the importance, needs and problems of single-teacher schools with the result that the community becomes apathetic to it. Further, untrained teachers get appointed in these schools for one reason or the other. When the teachers of such

single-teacher schools lack ability to create the local Community's interest in the school, people become apathetic to school. The proportion of non-attending children increases, the flow of materials to school does not take place, the standards of teaching-learning goes down, wastage and stagnation go up; and the school teacher gets all blame. The researcher suggests that the teacher of a single-teacher school should not only be trained but should be specially oriented into the academic and other problems of these schools and be armed effectively to face them with confidence and insight. These schools will have to lean heavily on whatever assistance they can derive from monitors, beat-supervisors and from the sympathy and support of the local community. She has particularly stressed the importance of the role of the members of Gram Panchayats and of the Sarpancha and Upa-Sarpancha in this respect.

Chaurasia's (1964) conclusions and observations on a study of single-teacher schools are as under :

"It will be seen that... single teacher schools exist in our educational system in very large numbers, and that they will continue to exist so long as small habitations remain. A programme of eliminating the single-teacher schools is, therefore, unworkable; and it would be far better to concentrate on an effective programme of improvement of these institutions.

Such improvement can be secured if special techniques required for the organization~~na~~ of instruction in single teacher schools are evolved and popularised. The evolution of these techniques needs competent and extensive research. Unfortunately, very little research has been done in this field in India...

For popularising the techniques that would be so discovered, special arrangements will have to be made for the training of teachers of single teacher schools. At present, very little emphasis is placed in training institutions on these special techniques"

Shah (1972) conducted an inquiry into the problems of single teacher primary schools of Bhavnagar District. ~~HE~~ investigated sample of 211 schools (61.34 percent) of the total 344 single teacher schools under the management of the Bhavnagar Jilla Panchayat Shikshan Samiti. He found teacher-student ratio in these schools to be 1 : 39. Eighty-three percent of the teachers in the sampled schools belonged to the age-group of 21-35 years. Ninety-nine percent of them were trained. It was found that most of these schools were conducted with the assistance of the monitor. The District Education Committee did not do much to interest these teachers in inservice training with the result that 73 percent of the teachers of these schools did not possess favourable attitude to professional work and growth. In 73 percent of these schools, the problem of pupil attendance and regularity was found to be serious. Though 96.5 percent of the schools met in Government buildings which were brick, cement-concrete constructions,

however the repairs work was largely neglected. The provision of instructional aids and materials was found to be inadequate. These schools did possess time-tables but a few followed them in actual practice. Only in 47 percent of schools, the cooperation of local parents was satisfactory and fruitful. The Education Committee was slow to understand that the change in the vacation time was likely to improve class attendance. The Panchayat members did not evince any live interest in providing instructional aids and materials and make educational guidance available to the teachers to solve their instructional problems.

(d) Education of Tribal Children

In a doctoral research work, Ambasht (1966) studied some aspects of tribal children education. Intensive field study and questionnaires were the tools used in the study. The scene of the study was Ranchi District in Bihar. Some of the salient findings of the study can be summarised as under :

- (1) The school buildings are ill-built except for Mission and Seva Mandal Schools;
- (2) Residential schools exclusively for tribal children helped towards increase in enrolment of tribal children;
- (3) Scholarships and stipends awarded by welfare and Education Departments of the State Government provided motivation to more tribal children to attend school;

- (4) Tribal Christian teachers were more favoured by students because of cleanliness, capacity of narrating stories from the Bible, loving and helpful nature and speaking the same language of the school children.
- (5) Most of the teachers liked their place and the majority of them did not want to go to the cities;
- (6) The teachers rated the honesty of the local people as quite high;
- (7) About 63 percent of the teachers liked their students very much because they were tribals;
- (8) Almost all teachers favoured the periodic visit of inspecting officers to their schools;
- (9) Men and women had equal status in the tribal society. Therefore, the girls' students numbered as much as boys.
- (10) Economic reasons accounted for whatever resistance existed among the tribal parents to send their children to school, because the children could help in earning the family bread.

Srivastava, Lal and Lal (1971) conducted a study to identify the educational problems of the Saora of Orissa. This study is of some significance to the present study because the

sample of the study consists of one of the most undeveloped tribes of India. The educational problems of this tribe are immense and of great magnitude, and, inspite of the sincere efforts made by many agencies to solve them, many of them still remain unsolved. The educational performance of this tribe has continued to be discouraging and the gap between this community and other non-tribal communities has been widening instead of narrowing. This is partly because the tribal community is not developing fast enough and partly because the programmes of educational developments of the tribal people are not creating the required amount and degree of impression on them.

The Villages where these tribal population lives are under the administration of Gram Banchayats.

The present study is based on a sample of 2 Zilla Parishads, 6 Block Samitis and 36 percent of the Gram Banchayats with tribal population. It revealed a low literacy percentage ranging from 3.01 percent to 5.19 percent. The study showed that some of the schools in these areas go without teachers for long period and most of them are not provided with a suitable school building and necessary teaching aids. The impact of the Block Panchayat Samiti was found to be very small. Schools have not been able to attract the tribal children in sufficient numbers. In the tribal community, every child is an economic unit. Therefore, parents of tribal children

resist any attempt to force them to send their children to school.

The study revealed that villagers do not cooperate with the teachers. No accommodation for the teachers is available. He cannot remain in the village and has to come from a distant place. It was also found that students who were enrolled in often absented from schools. This was schools/traced to both the lack of interest of parents in the education of their children and also their hostility to children going to school for learning.

The School Committees of the Panchayats did not meet regularly. No attempt was made to arouse the enthusiasm of the local community and tap their initiative. It was found that the villagers did not appreciate the necessity of regular functioning of schools. In some habitations, there were definite evidences of non-cooperation, and conflict between the local people and the school authorities. Instances were also reported to the researchers that the proposal to open a school in a particular village had to be dropped due to the unwillingness of the local tribal villagers.

In tribal areas studied, it was found that most of the school committees were not interested in the welfare of their schools as they were not aware of their responsibilities and duties. About 66 percent of the children of the school Committees in the sampled villages were illiterate. Those

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who were literate were mostly non-tribal or Christians. They were, therefore, unable to keep an eye on the teachers and look after the affairs of the schools. The indifference of the leadership was so colossal that cases occurred where a teacher would not go to a school for several months, but he continued to get his pay by producing certificate from the Chairman of the Committee that he had conducted classes satisfactorily. Cases of school buildings in dilapidated conditions were found to be numerous. The inspection of tribal schools by Government Officers was found to be much unsatisfactory. They lacked enthusiasm and interest probably this was due to hardship of travel in tribal area, and non-cooperation of the local people and lack of supervision over them by higher inspecting officers.

(e) Wastage and Stagnation

Gadgil and Dandekar (1960) conducted an investigation in wastage in the Satara District of Maharashtra. They found that of every 10,000 pupils who entered Class I, only 6,388 or 63.98 percent passed class IV and the remaining 36.12 dropped down on the way of these, 19.32 percent left in class I, 7.06 in class II and 5.04 in class III and 4.70 in Class IV.

The researchers have suggested the following :

"Our investigation indicates that a lapse into literacy, when it takes place, does so within a comparatively early period after leaving schools. The efforts intended to be supplementary to the schools system must, therefore, be planned to begin almost immediately after the pupils leaving school. The work aimed at preventing non-use of ability acquired at school will thus have two aspects : (i) some type of continuous work in the period immediately after a pupil leaves school, and (ii) actively aiming at stimulation and maintenance of reading and writing, etc., habits among pupils" (pp.67-68)

Naik (1941) studied the problem of wastage with special reference to their causes. The main findings of the study were that the causes of wastage are economic, social and educational.

(a) About 65 percent of cases of wastage are economic in origin. After the age of 9, a child becomes an economic asset. He is, therefore, withdrawn from school to assist in adding to the family income directly or indirectly.

(b) Social causes operate more in the cases of girls. Betrothal or marriage, unwillingness of parents to send grown-up girls and lack of women teachers are ^{some} of the causes of wastage among girls. The fact that a girl is more useful at home than a boy adds to the difficulty further so that wastage among girls is generally greater than among boys.

- (c) The educational causes of wastage operate to the extent of 30 percent. They include (1) existence of incomplete schools which do not teach the full course; (ii) large prevalence of stagnation which discourages children from staying longer at school; (iii) dull character of most of the schools and their poor capacity to attract students and to retain them; (iv) absence of ancillary services like the school meals and school health; and (e) failure of the average parent or child to see the 'good' of attending school.

Desai (1972) has identified several obstacles which throt^tle women's access to both primary education and secondary education. She has particularly brought to light the social customs and prejudices and the community's perception of the traditional rôle of girls as housewives as obstacles for women's education.

Parekh and Dhotre (1974) have identified, in a recent study the following factors involved in dropouts and stagnation at the primary level :

- (a) Failure of children in Class I in a large number. This large scale failure is due to low achievement in the mother-tongue and arithmetic;
- (b) Admission of pupils in Class I of varying ages;
- (c) Repeated failures in one and the same class;
- (d) Inability of the school to attract children to continue their studies therein;

- (e) Unsuitable school time-table or programme;
- (f) Indifference of parents to school;
- (g) Weak health of school children;
- (h) Weak economic condition of parents;
- (i) Social traditions and customs (particularly in the case of girls) ;
- (j) Dull school programme;
- (k) Defective school evaluation system;
- (l) and other causes. Many of these causes are supported by other researches also on the subject.

(e) Non-Graded Primary School.

In an experiment-cum-research project, the State Institute of Education, Gujarat State, tried out the ungraded class System in 12 of the 19 districts. The project was launched from 1968-69 in the Ahmedabad District and was extended progressively to the districts of Amreli, Kheda, Gandhinagar, Junagadh, Panchamahals, Mehsana, Rajkot, Vadodra, Valsad, Banaskantha and Surendranagar. This has been done with collaboration of the District Education Committees of these districts. The S.I.E. was able to bring down the rate of wastage to 4.8 percent in the Vadodara District and to 13.4 percent in the Sabarkantha District. The rate of wastage, prior to the launching of this experiment, was 40 percent at the end of Class I and 60 percent at the end of class IV. In the Valsad and Ahmedabad districts also the results of the experiments are encouraging.

In Ahmedabad Nagar Shikshan Samiti., the project was tried out in 11 primary schools in 1971-72. The results of this experiment were as under :

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate of dropout</u>	<u>P.C. of stagnation.</u>	<u>P.C. of Wastage</u>
<u>1970-71</u>			
(prior to the project)	16	40	49.7
<u>1971-72</u>			
(after the project)	12.2	26.6	36.0

The results in other Districts as well as in Nagar Panchayats were equally encouraging. The Project supported the claim that the non-Grading System is very helpful in reducing the rate of dropouts as well as stagnation.

(f) Student Welfare Services

Naik (1964) has, in a paper entitled "Ancillary Services in Elementary Schools", made out a thesis that if the education given in an elementary school is to be fully effective, it is not enough to provide teachers, buildings and equipment and school supervisors and to design curricula and teaching methods. He has emphasised the need to supplement these programmes by certain ancillary services the primary objective of which should be to help children to benefit better from the instruction provided in the schools. Some of the suggestions made by

Naik have a research base. They are summarised below :

- (1) The provision of health services in rural elementary schools should be built around the primary health centre. Health services could be provided to 44 percent of the children of school going age in rural areas at a cost of Rs.40 million during the Third Plan and of Rs.140 million for the Fourth Plan period.
- (2) The Indian Council of Medical Research and the W.H.O. found in their survey of several States in South India that 2 percent of the children belonging to poorer socio-economic groups suffered from 'frank' signs of deficiency. Such results were found in other States. The Central Food Technological Research Institute of Mysore has prepared a multipurpose food of a very good quality. This cost 44 paise at one time. Studies have revealed that wherever school meal programmes have been introduced, the enrolment of children has increased and their daily attendance at school sessions has shown distinct improvement and so has their progress in studies. In the Madras pattern, which is the least expensive, the cost of a school meal works out at 12 paise per day or Rs.20/- per child per year.
- (3) Studies have also shown that children who have been newly enrolled in schools generally require two or three copies of their first primer and reader before they pass class I, so that the average life of a textbook in this class may be said to be 3 to 6 months. As against this, the average life of a school book in England is 8 years. Studies have also shown that factors affecting the life of school textbook include, among others, paper, binding and

production of the book, the attractiveness of the book, the home atmosphere of children, the attitude of the teacher and the emphasis that is laid by him in teaching children on how to take care of books, and on whether the books are kept in the school or given to children to be taken home.

(g) Standard of Education

The findings and view-points of the Study Team on Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan (1964) are divergent from those that have been generally held. Their over-all assessment is that the experiment has succeeded. The team observes :

"It is sometimes argued that the standard of education after the transfer of primary education to Panchayati Samitis has deteriorated. We feel that there is no basis for such conclusion. It is quite certain that there has been no deterioration owing to the transfer of primary schools to the Panchayati Raj institutions. If there has been some change in the standard of education, it has been ascribed to the process of quick expansion, lack of adequate resources and supervision. It can be said with confidence that the enthusiasm of the general public for education has considerably increased after Panchayati Raj".

2.12 Conclusion

Naik (1964) in an illuminating paper on "Research in Elementary Education" has identified some vital areas of investigation and study. These areas include (a) the problem of providing school facilities in small villages or habitations where the total population is less than 200; (b) studies of non-attending children; (c) absenteeism; (d) wastage and

and stagnation; (e) part-time education for children who cannot attend school on full-time basis and who grow older and who are particularly in the age-group 9 or 10 to 14 - studies be directed for evolving criteria and special methods of teaching for part-time education; (f) problems of special groups such as girls, Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes; (g) for evolving proper techniques for educating handicapped children; (h) economic conditions and academic life of primary school teachers; (i) Selection for teachers for admission to training institutions and their recruitment to the profession; (j) evaluation of the effectiveness of the training programme for primary teachers; and (k) practices followed at present in the postings and transfers of primary teachers with a view to evolving equitable and practical solutions to guide the authorities entrusted with these responsibilities and investigations in the different aspects of service conditions of primary teachers are crucial.

Naik concludes by observing that "there is almost an infinite scope for the development of research in devising curricula and teaching methods for elementary schools, and in regard to the preparation of textbooks and other reading materials needed by elementary school children."

In Gujarat State the experiment of the Panchayati Raj has a decade of experience behind its launching. It is presumed that the Panchayati Raj has become stabilised in Gujarat. It is necessary to evaluate the impact of the Panchayati Raj in several fields of community development including education. It is all the more important to do research not only on the dimensions and directions, suggested by Shri J.P. Naik as set forth above, but ^{also} the researches in these fields should be designed in perspective of the operation of the Panchayat bodies at the village, taluka and district levels. The Panchayati Raj is people's democracy and community participation in education. Experiences of Western democracies show us that peoples' education and the demands of universal school education are best met when the latter is made the immediate concern and responsibility of the people's elected representatives. This was ~~what~~ was done in Gujarat. It is necessary to evaluate the impact of the Panchayati Raj on primary education in Gujarat, as in other States, and to identify the future directions of change and enrichment in the Panchayati Raj if this experiment ~~has~~ reveals unrefutable evidences of promise in the sphere of primary education or suggest its scrapping altogether ~~if~~ the experiment is altogether unproductive and wasteful. In this perspective the present investigation is planned. Its research design will be given in details in the next chapter.

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