

CHAPTER - VI

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Some people thought that if the responsibility was handed over to the people, they would probably not be able to shoulder it. But it is only by providing opportunity to the people that they can be trained to shoulder responsibilities. It became imperative that a bold step be taken whereby more and more responsibility could be transferred to the people. They - people-were not merely to be consulted but effective power was to be entrusted to them. The responsibilities of administration should not be only in the hands of big officials but should be divided among our 400 million people.

- Jawaharlal Nehru
(in Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches,
Vol.IV)

CHAPTER

SIX

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

6.1 Introduction

It is the Constitutional Directive that Universal, Compulsory and free primary education should be provided to all children without any exception on any demographic social, economic and cultural ground till they complete the age of 14. The provision of universal primary education on such lines has always been a struggle in ours and other developing countries. The slow growth of national economy, the slow pace of the transformation of a traditional and superstitious society into a modern society based on rationalism, experimentation, hard and honest work and corporate social life have all been the result of the slow pace of universalisation of primary education, slow growth of adult education, inadequate expansion and

extension of facilities for part-time education and a programme of continuing education. The Kothari Commission² had observed with great understanding and foresight that education is the great instrument of social change and the destiny of the country is being shaped in her classrooms. The World Organisation like the UNESCO³ has also come to the conclusion that the minimum fundamental education to be provided to each and every child should be of seven or eight years till the child completes the age of fourteen.

In India, the ideal of universal, free and compulsory primary education of seven or eight years has been recognised. Not only that its growing importance and urgency are being also recognised, ^{but} There has been a commitment in unambiguous terms, both by the National Government and all State Governments that primary education on universal, free and compulsory bases, shall be provided. There is no going back on this Commitment. The machinery of the Five Year Plans has also been geared to this ultimate goal. This has resulted in the country in an enrolment of around 593 lakhs or 80 percent of the children of the age-group 6-11 and around 134 lakhs or 34 percent of the children in the age-group 11-14⁴. The rate of expansion achieved in our country so far after 1951 has no parallel in the earlier educational history in our country and only a few in the

contemporary educational histories of other developing countries. In Gujarat State the same glorious record of achievement is to be seen in the sphere of primary education. Provision of primary schools in their own habitations has been done in 97.70 percent of total habitations, and other school-less villages are also been covered by school facilities.⁵ The number of primary schools that stood in Gujarat at 11,189 in 1950-51 is estimated to have reached the respectable figure of 23,500. A target has been set by the State Government to provide universal primary education in the age-group of 6-11 by 1978-79 to cover 75 percent of the age-group of 6-14 in regular school classes and 25 percent in part-time education classes by 1978-79⁶.

The major problem in universalising primary education which has come to the fore in Gujarat is the high rate of drop-outs, and here the rate is higher among girls than among boys,⁷ still higher among the children of scheduled castes and highest among the children of scheduled tribes. Five types of programmes are being considered by the State Government to reduce the rate of wastage which has been sapping the vitality of the system of primary education in the State⁸ :

- (a) Introduction of part-time educational facilities for the children of the age-group 11-14;
- (b) Provision of ancillary services for poor and backward class children which should include free supply of instructional materials like books, notebooks, slates, pens or pencils, etc., of mid-day meals and of school uniforms;
- (c) Providing creches and pre-primary classes as adjuncts to primary schools and the appointment of women teachers to conduct them as a step to step up enrolment of girls in schools and improve their retention. (It is also visualised that grown-up girls will help in conducting creches and infant classes.)
- (d) Improvement of school quality so that more children feel motivated to join school and remain in the school till they complete successfully the schooling in class VII; and
- (e) Intensification of the drive for spreading adult literacy and continuing education which would incidentally help in increased enrolment and retention of children in school.

These indeed are laudable targets set in very good social, economic and cultural perspectives. But these targets are to be achieved. Here the crucial agencies will be the school, community, and Government. If these three elements become adequately active, take enough initiative, evince live interest and make firm and determined efforts, it is not difficult to launch these five pronged programmes fully and effectively, and substantial advance in the sphere of universal primary education in the age-group 6-14 could be made by 1978-79. But now the administration of primary education is with the Panchayati Raj bodies. The Gram Panchayats, the Taluka Panchayats and the District Education Committees ^{are} the principal authorities to provide, administer and supervise primary education. The leadership of the Panchayat bodies in all the tiers of the Panchayat^{is}, is with the elected leaders of the Community. Therefore, the leadership in the Panchayat bodies actually holds the key to the success of these five Star programmes outlined by the State Government in its Draft Outlines of the Fifth Plan of the Gujarat State. The Draft Fifth Plan has provided Rs. 3,176.50 lakhs for primary education for the plan period of 1974-79 in a total Plan allocation of Rs.7,200 lakhs for general education. This proportion is indeed good. But mere provision of finances will not make primary education universal. This programme has to be put

in the field. Schools will have to be provided, teachers will have to be recruited school equipment and instructional materials and aids will have to be supplied to schools, pupil welfare services will have to be organised in schools, the enrolled children will have to be made to attend school regularly and till they complete successfully schooling in Class VII, schooling shall have to be made so motivating, attractive and effective that the present high rate of wastage and stagnation in primary schools will have to be brought down and controlled effectively. These tasks cannot be accomplished without effective leadership in the Panchayat bodies which implement the programmes of universal primary education through the State's hundreds of primary schools and their teachers. Therefore, the focal point in the success of the State's programme of primary education is the effectiveness of the Panchayat leadership and the planning, organization, implementation, coordination, communication channel and evaluation of the programme to achieve universal primary education of a reasonable quality. It will be the Panchayat non-official leadership and the official leadership which control the heart-line of the successful implementation of the programme of primary education in the State. In the present investigation, the Panchayat leadership in the East Gujarat in the Panchamahals District has been studied. Its major findings and conclusion are given in the next section.

6.2 The Major Findings and Conclusion

The present investigation is focused on the study of the Panchayat leadership in perspective of the achievement of the Constitutional directive on universal primary education for children in the age-group of 6-14 and that universal primary education should be of reasonably adequate quality or standards so that effective citizenry might result therefrom and many of the contemplated and under-way community development will have a fair chance of success. The investigation^{gati} has special significance because it is cast in the backward district of the Panchamahals⁹ where the literacy is only 22.82 percent and that too among women only 11.23 percent, where rural population is as high as 88.79 percent, where the rate of population increase has been + 25.86 during 1961-71, where the population of economically active persons is only 36.69 percent, where farmers and farm labourers constitute in all a high proportion of 87.58 percent and where 38.55 percent of the population consists of tribal population. Thus, the Panchamahals District provides various testing premises to verify the validity of the claim being put forward that the Panchayati Raj has been a significant success in Gujarat.

The investigation is based on a stratified 10 percent taluka-wise sample of 90 gram Panchayats. All the Taluka Panchayats of the 11 talukas and the District Education Committee have been included in the sample. The 90 villages studied include 2 with less than 200 population, 12 in the population range of 200 to 499, 17 in the range of 500 to 999, 28 in the range of 1,000 to 1,999, 26 in the range of 2,000 to 4,999 and 5 in the range of 5,000 to 7,999. In the matter of urban influences 34.4 percent villages are advanced, 42.2 percent average and 23.4 below the average i.e. they are extremely rural type. As regards the provision of primary facilities and services, the sampled villages, are advanced to the extent of 36.6 percent, average to the extent of 45.6 percent and very backward to the extent of 17.8 percent. In economic status, 17.70 percent sampled villages belonged to the advanced category, 50.00 percent to the 'average' category and , 32.30 percent to the 'below average' or 'poor' category. In the matter of educational development, only 1.1 percent of the sampled villages could be, termed 'advanced, 12.2 percent, 'average' and the rest 'below average'.

The findings of the study are based on eighteen data collection tools focused on Gram Panchayats, Taluka Panchayats and District Panchayat and the District Education Committee. Besides these, the data yielded from the inter-

views of about 80 knowledgeable persons about the Panchayat administration of which 32.50 percent were primary teachers, 32.50 percent were primary school headmasters, 13.75 percent Extension Officers in education, 10 percent the officers of the Education Department and 11.25 percent were educationists including university teachers and researchers in the field of primary education. Views of about 100 persons with 50 percent having actual experiences of working in the primary schools of the district, 25 percent being officers connected with the Panchayat bodies and their work and 25 percent consisting of the D.D.O., the T.D.O.s, the A.O. and the inspectors of primary schools were also collected and fed into the data.

The major findings and the Conclusion are briefly presented below :

TABLE - 6.1: Major Components of the Study

Major Components of the Study.	Levels of Panchayats	Major Findings.
1. Leadership Qualities.	Gram, Taluka, and District Panchayats.	The leadership seems to have failed in creating a positive and enlarged image of an unbiased personality. It is of average calibre at District and Gram levels. It is slightly better at the Taluka level. It can be said that the pattern of leadership varies according to three types of the Panchayats differing in the degree of educational accomplishment.

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| 2. Leadership Orientation towards educational improvement. | Gram Panchayat. | Leaders of the Gram Panchayats of the 'A' type are found to be oriented towards the educational improvement of primary schools to a greater extent than the Panchayat leaders operating in relatively less progressive Panchayat administration set-ups. |
| 3. Meetings of the Gram Panchayats and Attendance of members. | Gram Panchayats. | It can be said, in general, that the meetings of the Panchayats are well organised, the prescribed procedure is followed, the members are well informed in advance, the agenda is prepared and sent to the members, and the minutes are regularly maintained after their due approval by the members of the Panchayats. |
| 4. Quality of the Proceedings of the Gram Panchayats. | Gram Panchayats. | The members are more active and participating in progressive or advanced Panchayats than in case of the Panchayats rated low in effectiveness. |
| 5. Democratic and Foresightful leadership of Panchayats. | -do- | So far as free climate is concerned in the Gram Panchayats of the 'A' type, it prevails to the extent of average level, while in the 'B' type and 'C' type of Gram Panchayats free climate prevails to the extent of below average level. |
| 6. Meetings of the Taluka Panchayats | Taluka Panchayat | The meetings of the Taluka Panchayats are conducted without any conflicts, in an atmosphere of peace and harmony with emphasis on work rather than talk. |
| 7. Role of Panchayat leadership in educational accomplishments. | The Panchayats in General. | On the whole it appears that the Panchayats of the Panchamahals Districts have achieved success to a varying degree in fulfilling the various tasks expected of them. |

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| 8. Assessment of the contributions of Panchayati Raj by experts. | Panchayats in general. | It can be said that the Panchayati Raj bodies have not achieved considerable extent of success towards the improvement of primary education. |
| 9. Composition and other related facts about the Education Committee of the Gram Panchayats. | Gram Panchayats. | The Education Committees of the 'A' type Gram Panchayats have more distinguishing factors. The general picture of the Education Committee in 'B' and 'C' types of Panchayats is unsatisfactory. |
| 10. Assessment of the Education Committees of Gram Panchayats. | Gram Panchayats. | It can be concluded that the various duties and responsibilities are well attended to by the members of the Education Committee in a Panchayat set-up which is relatively more effective. |
| 11. Assessment of the Role of a Taluka Panchayat in Primary Education. | Taluka Panchayats. | It can be said that the Education Committee at Taluka level does not carry out its functions as effectively as is expected of them. |
| 12. Democratic Climate in District Education Committee. | District Panchayats | It can be concluded that the meetings of the District Education Committee are conducted in a more democratic way. |

In terms of the twelve hypothesis formulated, the conclusion is as under :

Hypothesis No. :	Related variables :	Whether accepted or not accepted.
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1 Leadership qualities.	Accepted
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22 Leadership orientation towards Educational Improvement.	Accepted
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3	Meetings of the Gram Panchayats and attendance of members.	Accepted
4	Quality of the Proceedings of the Gram Panchayats.	Accepted
5	Democratic and Foresightful leadership of the Panchayats.	Accepted
6.	Meetings of the Taluka Panchayats	Accepted
7	Role of Panchayat Leadership in Education Accomplishments.	Accepted
8	Assessment of the contributions of the Panchayati Raj by experts	Not accepted
9	Composition and other Related Facts about the Education Committee of the Gram Panchayats	Accepted
10.	Assessment of the Education Committees of Gram Panchayats.	Accepted
11.	Assessment of the Role of a Taluka Panchayat in Primary Education	Not accepted
12.	Democratic Climate in the District Education Committee.	Accepted

6.3 Some Facts about the Emerging Panchayat Leadership in the Panchamahals.

The Gram Panchayats, the Taluka Panchayats and the District Panchayat are the institutions in the Panchayat framework in a District. In the Panchamahals District, the average membership of the Gram Panchayat is 7 , of the Taluka Panchayat is 131 and of the District Panchayat is 64. The Gram Panchayats and the Taluka Panchayats have discretionary Primary Education Committees and the District Panchayat has a Statutory Education Committee. Each Education Committee has 9 members. All these are Panchayat leaders . Leadership is viewed as a function of the institutional role to be performed by the leaders as well as the members of the Panchayat bodies at all the three tiers of the Panchayat structural machinery. The emergent facts about the leadership in the Panchayats in the district have to be viewed in their demographic, social, economic, political and cultural dimensions. Only such perceptions in wider but related perspectives can give one better idea of the basic equipment of the Panchayat leadership in the district.

In rural sociology, caste has become an important factor atleast in a caste-bound traditional society like the Indian society. For many years, in the power-structure and resultant social, economic, cultural and even political activities caste has played a major role, though perhaps

not an exclusively dominant role.

In the Panchamahals District, as revealed by the present investigation, the leadership at the Gram Panchayat level is in the hands of the high-castes to the extent of 48.9 percent and in the hands of the backward castes to the extent of 48.9 percent. In the Panchamahals District, in the total context of the district population the percentage of the population of the scheduled tribes is around 9 percent and of the scheduled castes is below one percent. Thus, on the strength of their population alone, the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes between them should have 10 percent seats in the Panchayat bodies. But in actual practice the position is different. The percentages of members belonging to the Scheduled castes and tribes are only 59.6 percent in Gram Panchayats, 34.7 percent in the Taluka Panchayats, and 33.3 percent in the District Education Committee.

It is one thing to have memberships from the rural weaker section, and to ensure their active participation in the proceedings of the Panchayats and involvement in their decision-making is a different thing. The present political leaders of Gujarat have been now championing firm representation of the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women on the Panchayat bodies. For instance,

the Zeenabhai Darji High Power Committee on the Panchayati Raj in Gujarat (1972) had observed in its report :

"Several witnesses have suggested to us to increase the number of seats in the Panchayats for those castes and classes who have been allotted reserved seats. Suggestions have been placed before us that whatever may be the proportion of the population of scheduled castes, they should be allotted at least two reserved seats in villages that have a population of more than a thousand. Similarly, views have been placed before us to increase representations of women on the Panchayat bodies. We accept these suggestions and endorse the principle that the rural weaker section should be given more representation on the Panchayat bodies.... We believe, such a step would result in the village community paying more careful attention to these classes". (page 19)

Thus, the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes as well as women have been allotted more seats than before in the proportion of their population. The Zeenabhai High Power Committee's concern was to make the village community pay more careful attention to these weaker sections by giving them more representations. This objective can be accomplished provided the traditional values and perceptions of the rural communities can be changed only by giving them more seats in the Panchayats. On the contrary, the dominant castes, economically viable groups and political parties are likely to exploit them more to serve their interest unless this rural weaker section is made to participate more vigorously, with increased understanding, of their own needs and problems, in the proceedings of the

Panchayat bodies, their exploitation will continue. Mere increased representation of the scheduled castes, tribes and women is not going to make the rural 'elite' to perceive them differently and accept them as partners in the process of development and democracy.

The experience of the Panchayats in Rajasthan, as discussed in a research report (1966) entitled 'Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan' edited by Professor M.V. Mathur and others, has shown that "the cooptation of women and representatives of scheduled castes and tribes has not served any genuine interest, except giving a formal representation to the backward sections of our society (pp.37-8)...." "The situation in regard to the improvement of the lot of the weaker sections by the Panchayati Raj institutions is rather discouraging. The non-official leaders have shown little concern for ameliorating the lot of the weaker section" (pp.296-7). Professor H.R. Joshi in his study of the role of the Panchayats in education in South Gujarat (1973) has observed : that the women, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe members remain passive for the most of the time when the Panchayat meetings are in session and sometimes they are found hardly opening their mouths also. This happens because of reasons such as under :

- They are not well educated;
- They do not very much understand the implications of various items on the agenda in the context of the rules framed under the Panchayat Acts, rules framed under the Bombay Primary Education Act, 1947, financial provisions in the budget, the needs, of and problems involved in universalising primary education in age-group 6-11 and 11-14;
- Their vision and perspective are limited;
- They have psychological fright of speaking in public meetings;
- They are not sure of their ability to express in a language that is correct, accurate and expressive;
- They do not have experience in democratic participation;
- Some members from higher caste also dominate the Panchayat proceedings;
- The leadership of the Sarpanchas or the ^{President or} Taluka Panchayat or the Chairman of the Jilla Shikshan Samiti, as the case may be, is quite often authoritarian, dominant and less inclined to be democratic;
- Political affiliation and the resultant feeling of party discipline keeps them quiet;
- No serious attempt is made by the chair to stimulate and encourage them to express their views frankly and fearlessly; etc.

Under these circumstances, the effectiveness of the leadership of the representatives of the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women will always remain uncertain and doubtful.

Some of the other significant facts emerging from the present investigation are :

- (1) The ~~Gram~~-Gram Panchayat Secretary is quite a powerful leader in Gram Panchayats that are small and have preponderance of backward class representatives. He is found to be preparing the minutes of the Gram Panchayats in the way he likes or thinks it proper even before the meetings are actually held and get the minutes approved by the Panchayat members who sign the meetings without reading or just affix their thumb impressions;
- (2) The Office~~x~~ of the Sarpanch has acquired around it so much focus, weight and power-concentration that the Gram Panchayat members have in very many cases automatically paled intoⁱⁿ significance;
- (3) In Gram Panchayats where there is more alertness and firm and strong leadership, the Sarpanchas are found trying to concentrate all powers in their hands rather than sharing with the members. This naturally affects the initiative of the members and reduces considerably their participation in the decision-making process of the Gram Panchayats;
- (4) The Sarpanchas have become important and powerful because they alone can reach Taluka Panchayats and Panchayat, government officers;

(5) The caste is an important factor in the leadership at the Gram Panchayat level, though not an exclusive factor, the Sarpanchas of the Gram Panchayats from higher castes are more in number than ~~in~~ their numerical strength of population. The backward castes do not have so many Sarpanchs from them as could be expected on the basis of their numerical strength. Even in the case of memberships in the Gram Panchayats, the finding of the Panchamahals District is that the percentage of caste population and the percentage of caste representation differ significantly from each other. This is not true in the Panchamahals in those Talukas which are predominantly inhabited by the scheduled tribes. The higher castes in the Panchamahals have been securing a larger number of offices at the level of Sarpanchship than at the level of the Panchship;

These are facts, and they cannot be helped. The law can provide more reserved seats to the weaker sections of the rural community, but can do nothing to get them elected as Sarpanchs, Taluka Panchayat Presidents or Jilla Shikshan Samit Chairman. That battle has to be fought by them. The strength for fighting this battle for earning Panchayat leadership will come when more education is spread among them, when there is equitable distribution of wealth among all sections of the society, when the pace of industrial development is accelerated and when the process of urbani-

sation, modernisation, community development, democratisation and political awakening reaches a pitch of intensity that is necessary for the speedy development of a backward district like the Panchamahals.

6.4 Effectiveness of Panchayat Leadership in the Panchamahals

The facts about the age, sex, caste, socio-economic status, political affiliation etc. about leadership in the Panchayat bodies of the Panchamahals have significance only from the points of sociological impact, economic impact and political impact of the Panchayati Raj. The effectiveness of the impact is indeed very important in the sphere of social change, economic growth and healthy and virile development of political democracy. But, for the purpose of the present investigation, more important is the effectiveness of the Panchayat leadership in the context of universalising primary education, maintenance and improvement of quality and standards of primary education, expansion of pupil welfare services and health services in primary schools, reduction of the rate of wastage and stagnation and making primary schools community-centred and introducing some possible elements of need-based curriculum in primary education.

The effectiveness of leadership depends upon personal

qualities of leaders, their leadership skills and competences, their democratic attitudes and political behaviours and their knowledge and understanding of the needs and problems of primary education.

The present investigation has revealed that in all these dimensions of leaderships, the Panchayat leaders of the Panchamahals district were found to be of average calibre. In the five components of leadership qualities selected for the study, viz., (1) Understanding the needs of the village community, (2) readiness to make sacrifices for the village, (3) budgeting adequate time for community services, (4) skills, and tact in handling difficult situations and (5) ability to take quick and judicious decisions, the mean rating was 3 on a five-point scale.

The situation here can be improved, to some extent, by exposing them in periodical seminars and discussions where experts should be called to present background talks and lectures. Skills can be developed, to a large extent, by a well thoughtout programme of situational expositions, demonstrations, screening of appropriate films and role playing demonstration. Decision-making quickness and ability are a part of one's personality and also the result of wider experience, development of self-confidence, guidance, evaluation and feed-back. In Indian setting, the emergent

new leaders have limited experience of involvement and participation in the management of public affairs. There should be increased scope for participation for members in committees, work-groups, study teams and also in local self government. This would be more the function of the higher Panchayat leadership and the political leadership. The Panchayat and Health Department of Gujarat Government should commit itself to the development of democratic climate in the Panchayats of all districts, the official leadership of the D.D.O., T.D.O., the Extension Officers, D.E.O. and A.O. should have anxiety to strengthen Panchayat non-official leadership by laying down proper guide-lines, giving needed advice and extending help to the non-official Panchayat leaders as technical experts rather than haughty, dictating and superior bureaucrats. There is not yet enough clarity prevailing in rural community about the concept of the Panchayati Raj. A concept grows on the anvil of experience and develops new dimensions in the operational process. Political leaders have added confusion regarding the conceptual reference frame about the Panchayati Raj by lending overtones of a charter of rural self-government to it. In the Panchayat Act, the emerging concept is not rural self-Government - it is very limited. In actual practice, the Panchayati Raj institutions are performing just an agency role, as if they are a mere extension

of the State Government administrative machinery. The rural community looks upon the Panchayati Raj^{with respect}. The Rajasthan study (1966, by Professor M.V. Mathur and others) on the Panchayati Raj referred to earlier makes an eye-opening observation, which holds true not only for Rajasthan, but also for Gujarat and other States :

"An average villager looks upon the Panchayat as an all-purpose organisation. He expects that all his difficulties and problems would find a solution near home, through the Panchayat. But in practice, he is told that the Panchayat, as also the Panchayat Samiti is primarily a unit for development administration. This frustrates the villager and saps his enthusiasm for the Panchayati Raj movement itself" (Report, p.279).

The Panchayat leaders - the Sarpanchas, the Taluka Panchayat Presidents and the District Panchayat Presidents and the Chairmen, District Education Committees should be so oriented as to enable them to guide the members to raise all the felt problems of their rural community at the floor of the Panchayats, but they should make it clear to the members and the members should make clear to the people that their Panchayat itself would not be able to tackle these problems but would draw the attention of the authorities to them. The democratic process demands, therefore, as the Rajasthan Study points out, "Our higher leadership should have courage to take the nation into confidence and tell the rural people about the limited conceptual

framework within which Panchayati Raj institutions should be expected to operate". (Report, page 279). This would certainly improve the image as well as the effectiveness of the Panchayat leadership in all development programmes including development of primary education.

A criticism is often levelled against Panchayat leadership that it has emerged primarily as a power mechanism. In a democratic institution of public or community work, power is developed to people's leaders, and where there is authority, power creeps in automatically. One cannot help it. There is, thus, no inherent contradiction between the Panchayati Raj leadership and power mechanism. What should concern one is the fact that an equilibrium between the two has not come about and at times it hinders development. This has been understandable in the initial period of 1963-1973. But the situation will have to be henceforth improved upon. The leadership should mature through wider and more experiences and through situation based and skill-oriented training. This training has got to be in position or in office for the leadership as well as members. This is part and parcel of the democratic process. Principal V.A. Patel has suggested in his doctoral study on the impact of the Panchayati Raj on the administration of primary education in Mehsana District. To this investigator, however, a more practical and field-oriented

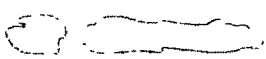
programme appears to be more practical and likely to be more effective. He is of the view that the training programme should be more need-based and functional; the theory should be woven in the practice or rather theory should emerge, when necessary, and that, too, in the form of deductions and principles, from practice. The training should be brief and spread out in short spells in the first year of the office of the leaders. It should largely be woven around seminars, workshops, panel discussion, demonstration, role playing, situation-diagnosis, and specially prepared films, short circuit T.V. mechanisms would greatly help. Case studies would also help. Here, the role of the State Institute of Education, primary teachers' colleges, Panchayati Raj training institutions, social work colleges, etc. would be recognised and properly built up.

In the training, the leaders of the Panchayat should be made to realise that the Panchayati Raj institutions will have to operate as units of planning and implementations within the orbit of national priorities[&] State targets of development. For instance, in the sphere of primary education, the State Government has set a priority to the programme of achievement of a target for enrolling all children of the age-group 6-11 in all parts of the State by 1978-79 and all children upto the age of the 14 years

by 1980-81 and also to bring about the qualitative improvement of primary schooling. (Gujarat State's Draft Fifth Plan, page 247). The Panchayati Raj institutions constitute an agency or an extension of Government Administration for Community development in some vital spheres of village community concern. The Panchayat's leaders should be helped to perceive their role through training and to pick up enough competences to act their role in the actual implementation of the programme. Thus, a well conceived and effectively organised training programme for Panchayati leaders would serve the interests of the Panchayats as well as their stipulated community development programmes to a great extent.

6.5. Tasks Completed and Ahead in Primary Education in the Panchamahals District

The progress of education in an area, region or a country has always been influenced by several cultural, social, economic and even political factors operating therein. As it was pointed out, the Panchamahals District is one of the backward districts of Gujarat in several respects. These aspects have already been dealt with in some detail in Chapter IV. In this section, an attempt will be made to take a stock of the progress achieved in the district so far and incidentally assess the impact of the Panchayati Raj in the district in the sphere of primary education, during the decade 1963-1973. The effectiveness of the

programme of universalising primary education for children in the age-group 6-14 and making primary schooling of an adequate quality 

In 1962-63, the year in which the Panchayati Raj institutions were introduced in Gujarat State, there were in the Panchamahals District 1,837 primary schools, 4,352 primary school teachers, 1,63,274 enrolled school children, of whom around 30 percent were girls. In 1972-73, the number of primary schools was 1,898, the number of primary school teachers was 5,406, and the number of primary school children was 1,97,414 of whom around 27 percent were girls. If the impact of the Panchayati Raj is to be assessed in terms of expansion, then the record of the Panchamahals District is not at all heartening. In a period of ten years, when the number of primary schools ^{in Gujarat} rose from 19,148 in 1963 to 23,500 in 1973, a mere increase of 22.7% primary schools is no credit to an organisation which is headed by popular community leaders. The number of enrolled school children in the primary schools of the district also rose by trifling figure of 34,140, during the period when the same increased in the States primary schools from 25.31 lakhs to 39 lakhs (1973-74 figures). The enrolment of girls was 47,049 in the Panchamahals in 1963; this figure increased by 5,935 in 1973. Whereas in the Gujarat State enrolment of girls had increased almost twice from 1963

to 1973, i.e. from 9.50 lakhs in 1963 to 18.64 lakhs in 1973-74, the corresponding increase in the Panchamahals District was around eight thousand or by around 12 percent. These statistics are clear enough to indicate that the expansion of primary education that has taken place in the Panchamahals District is rather small and slow in perspective of the rate of expansion that has taken place in Gujarat State as a whole. This would indicate little effectiveness of the Panchayati Raj system and its leadership.

In 1969, it was found that in the Panchamahals District 96.70 percent of the inhabitations had facilities for primary education in their own area within one mile walking distance from the residence of school-going children. There are in all 1,903 villages in the Panchamahals District, of which 1,490 villages are schoolless. In 1971, there were 403 school-less villages and they were to be found in all the eleven Talukas of the district. The highest number 140 and 095 were in the Santrampur and Lunawada Talukas respectively. The other Talukas have school less villages ranging from 8 in the Kalol Taluka to 62 in the Limkheda Taluka. The average number of school-less villages per Taluka comes out to be 45.5 or around 46. The Table given on the next page shows the proportion of primary schools per one thousand population in 9 Talukas of the district.

TABLE - 6.2 : Proportion of Primary Schools per Population of a Thousand in the Urban Areas of the Panchamahals District.

Sr. No.	City	Proportion of a Primary school in 1,000 population.
1.	Devgadh Baria	0.529
2.	Dahod	0.428
3.	Freeland Ganj	0.281
4.	Godhra	0.419
5.	Halol	0.305
6.	Halol	0.271
7.	Lunawada	0.371
8.	Santrampur	0.469
9.	Shivrajpur	0.420
Average		0.388

The Panchamahals District has 38.55 percent of its population belonging to scheduled tribes. It has comparatively a smaller percentage of the population of Harijans or scheduled castes which is to the extent of 3.68 percent. Thus, the size of the backward class population in the district in its total population is 42.23 percent. This is against the 20.83 percent population of backward classes in Gujarat State as a whole. In around 8 lakhs of population of scheduled tribes and castes in the district, the enrolment of 46,325 of Tribal children (20.5 percent girls) and of 11,147 scheduled caste children (23.7 percent girls) cannot be regarded as satisfactory. This also shows a

low impact of the Panchayati Raj leadership in expanding and extending equality of educational opportunity in the backward classes of the district.

In 1973-74, there were 5,430 primary school teachers in the district of which 1,106 or around 20.4 percent were women. It is an accepted principle in education that most of the teachers at the primary school stage should be women. This should be particularly the case in Classes I and II where a woman teacher with her natural motherly affection and approach would prove more effective in winning over the hearts of kids which would help in improving school enrolment and retention. In this respect, it appears that the achievement of the Panchamahals Panchayat bodies is inadequate. Among the teachers (5,430 primary), only a small proportion - a bare 57 out of 5,430, are untrained. Sixty seven primary teachers are graduates among whom a little less than half are trained.

One of the glaring inadequacies of the district, as admitted by the Panchamahals District Education Committee itself in its Annual Administration Report for the year 1973-1974 (p.2) pertains to the small number of primary schools having pukka school buildings. In 1973-74 there were 2,672 classrooms to accommodate totally 1.96 lakhs children. The average per classroom comes out to be 73.

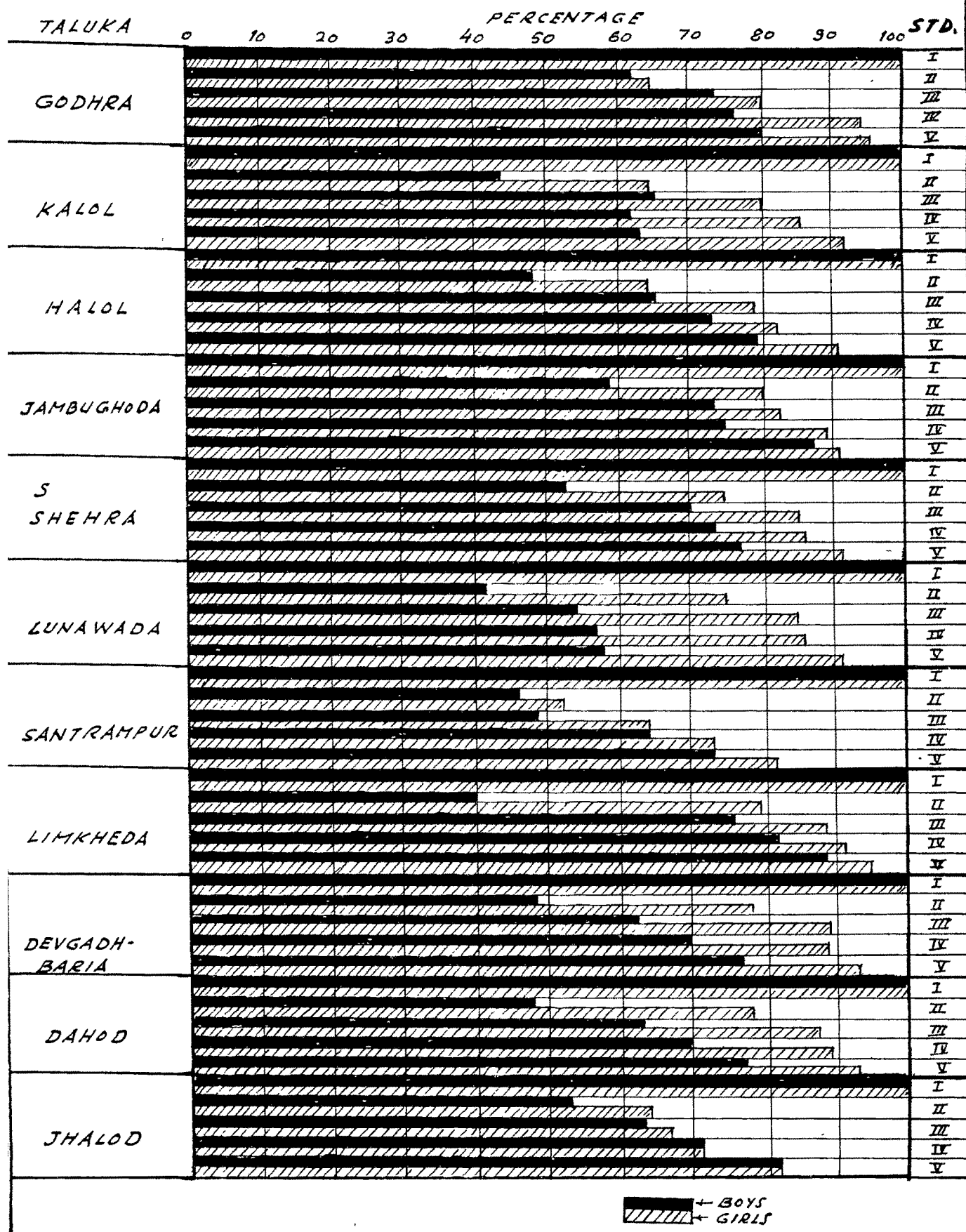
This shows that the primary school on an average is overcrowded and there are no adequate numbers of classrooms built in the district. The programme of constructing additional classrooms has been planned. It is called Scheme No.395. In the year 1973-74, as many as 517 new classrooms were constructed. This programme of constructing pukka classrooms should be made a built-in programme in the District Panchayats development ventures.

The mere provision of primary schools, recruitment of teachers and the enrolment of school-going children do not give a good idea of the development of primary education. Not only schools should be provided in adequate number and located effectively, but they should be properly and adequately equipped. Of the 11 Talukas in the district, as many as 9 are economically backward. The State Government itself has declared nine Talukas of the district as economically backward and in 1973-74 had allocated Rs.1.17 lakhs to improve equipment and teaching aids in primary schools in these nine talukas. Some schools were given a grant of Rs. 1,000 each to put up barbed wirings around the school compound. The expansion of infra-school facilities in 1973-74 included 72 Urinals, 65 flag posts, 9 erection of platforms in the compound to facilitate organization of cultural programmes, drilling of 9 wells for water

supply for the primary schools, electric connections in 2 schools, school gates for 28 schools, latrines in 4 schools and Handpump for water in 1 school. This shows that the Panchayats in the Panchamahals District have become somewhat active in expanding the infra-school facilities and equipment.

The Panchamahals District being a backward district, its great need has been to introduce and expand ancillary services for school children in schools. These services should include free supply of mid-day meals, instructional materials and aids, school uniforms and health services for school children. Not much seems to have been done in these excepting in respect of free supply of milk to backward and poor children under the CARE's programme. Something is also being done for supplying school uniforms to the children of the backward classes. The Gujarat State Khadi Gram-Udyog Board has a scheme to supply Khadi cloth for stitching school uniforms for primary school children. For the supply of school uniforms in 1973-74 to 11,209 backward class children the Panchamahals Jilla Panchayat had contributed one and a quarter rupees per child. The Taluka Panchayat also contributed the same amount and the Gram Panchayat half a rupee. But the cost of a school uniform per child is much more than Rs. 3 subsidised by the Panchayat bodies. Therefore, the programme of free supply of lunch packet, school uniform and instructional materials and aids need

TALUKA-WISE PERCENTAGE OF STAGNATION AND WASTAGE
(1971-72)



to be considerably expanded. In the Draft Fifth Plan of the Gujarat State a scheme to provide mid-day meals in some selected urban and rural areas to about 2.50 lakhs children was included. This scheme was to be in operation for 200 days in a year. The cost per child per day was calculated at the rate of 30 paise, and the scheme would cost Rs. 67-crores to the State Government during the period 1974-75 to 1978-79. But there are no indications in the Draft Fifth Plan of the State that Government would provide funds to the Panchayati Raj institutions in the State to provide school uniforms, instructional materials and aids and expand and improve school health services. Therefore, this burden will have to be borne by the Panchayat bodies from their own resources, and here the leadership in the Panchayats has to play its firm and positive role.

Wastage and stagnation seem to have been firmly entrenched in the School System in India. They constitute the weakest link of school systems in almost all the States of the country. Within a State, they form vulnerable facets of primary education of every district. This is certainly true of Gujarat State. In a study the results of which are tabulated in the "Perspective Plan of Gujarat : 1974-1984", it is seen that the wastage rate in classes I to V ranges from 49.4 percent in the Ahmedabad District to 84.6 percent in the Dangs District, the mean percentage of wastage

for the whole Gujarat State being 71.1. The Panchamahals District stood nearer to the higher range with its percentage of 83.6. Another study of wastage on Gujarat, reported in 1970, gives the figures of wastage for boys and girls in standards I to V during 1963-64 to 1966-67 and also in standards V to VII, also for boys and girls, during the period 1966-67 to 1969-70. The study presents the district-wise percentage of wastage. In Stds. I to Iv, the wastage rate was found to range from 40.97 percent in Ahmedabad District to 80.90 percent in the Dangs District for boys, and from 45.29 percent in the Surendranagar District to 89.21 percent in the Dangs. The rate of wastage in the Panchamahals District in Stds. I to Iv for boys was 59.69 percent and for girls 69.05. In Stds. V to VII, the corresponding percentages for boys and girls for the Panchamahals District were 46.82 and 45.67 respectively. A Study by the State Institute of Education has also reported in 1970. This study shows a high wastage rate for Stds. I to VII - for the Panchamahals the figures were ~~82.40~~ 82.40 percent for composite or total wastage, and 78.14 percent for boys and 86.14 percent for the girls. The table below gives the picture of both stagnation and wastage - and stagnation is a prime factor in the causation of wastage- in the primary schools of the district :

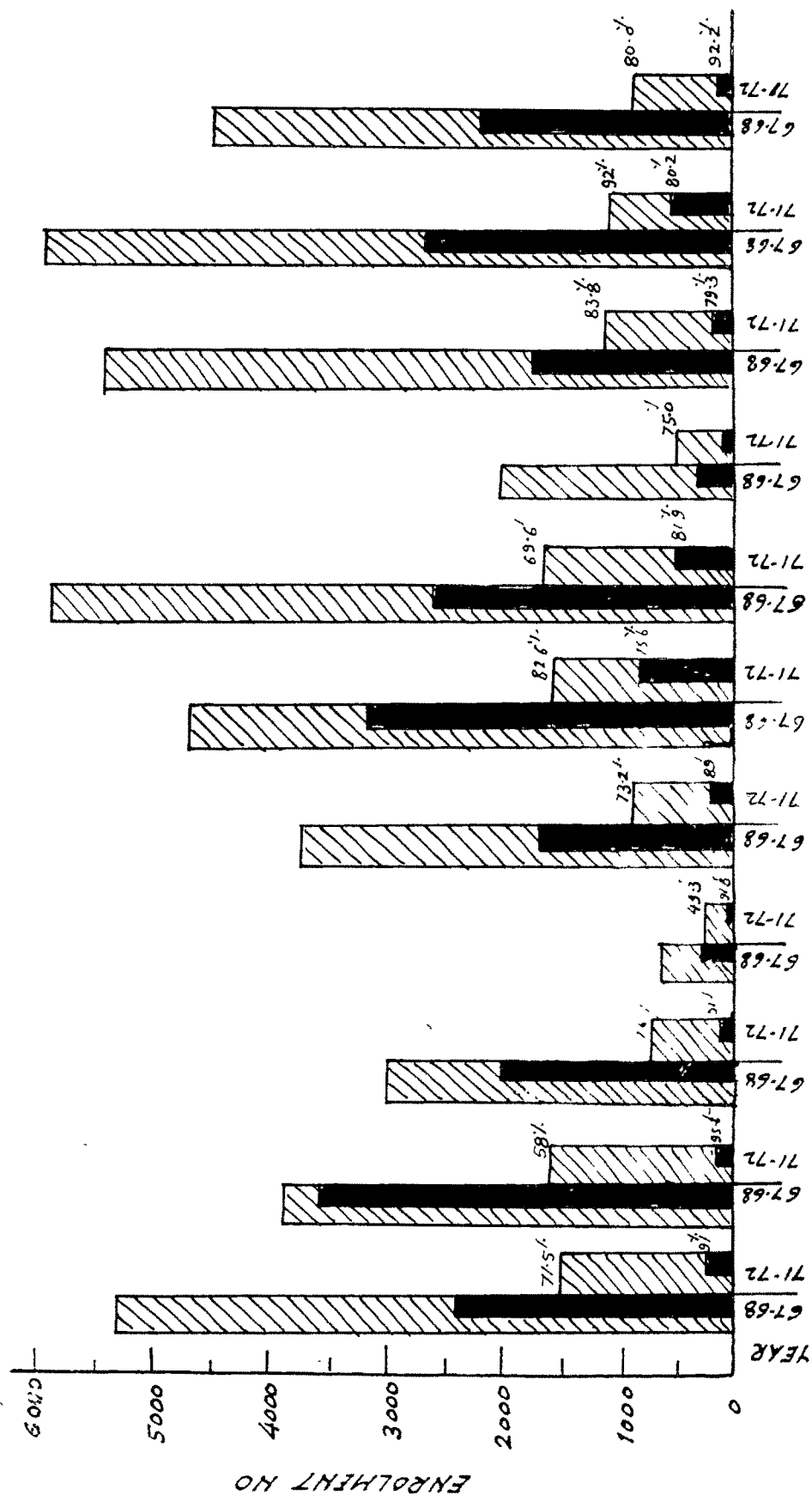
TABLE -6-3A: Talukawaise Percentage of Stagnation and Wastage(1971-72) Panchmahals District

Sr. No.	Taluka		Std.I	Std.II	Std. III	Std.IV	Std.V
1	Godhra	Boys	100	61.8	73.9	77.6	80.2
		Girls	100	65.1	77.9	95.7	96.1
2	Kalol	Boys	100	44.0	64.9	61.8	63.6
		Girls	100	64.1	80.0	86.3	92.4
3	Halol	Boys	100	49.0	65.4	73.0	79.0
		Girls	100	63.9	78.8	82.5	91.2
4	Jambughoda	Boys	100	59.6	73.2	75.7	87.3
		Girls	100	80.2	82.4	89.2	91.4
5	Shehera	Boys	100	52.2	70.4	73.2	77.4
		Girls	100	75.2	85.1	86.4	90.8
6	Lunawada	Boys	100	41.2	54.4	56.9	58.2
		Girls	100	75.2	85.1	86.6	90.8
7	Santrampur	Boys	100	47.3	49.1	64.2	73.1
		Girls	100	52.7	64.4	73.2	81.5
8	Limkheda	Boys	100	40.5	76.6	81.7	89.2
		Girls	100	79.0	89.2	92.4	96.5
9	Devgadh Baria	Boys	100	48.0	63.2	70.7	77.5
		Girls	100	78.1	88.9	89.7	93.4
10.	Dohad	Boys	100	48.0	63.2	70.7	77.5
		Girls	100	78.1	87.9	89.7	93.4
11.	Jhalod	Boys	100	53.3	63.1	71.2	81.4
		Girls	100	64.0	67.8	71.2	81.4
BOYS MEAN				49.5	65.1	70.5	76.8
GIRLS MEAN				70.5	81.6	85.3	91.1

TABLE-6.3B: Talukawise Rate of Wastage and Stagnation
Panchamahals District.

Sr. No.	Taluka		Enrolment in 1967-68.	Enrolment in 1971-72	Rate of Stagnation & Wastage.
1	Godhra	Boys	5299	1513	71.5
		Girls	2462	270	91.0
2	Kalol	Boys	3795	2609	58.0
		Girls	3571	160	95.6
3	Halol	Boys	3071	700	76.7
		Girls	2005	176	91.0
4	Jambughoda	Boys	628	317	49.3
		Girls	353	29	91.8
5	Shehera	Boys	3695	984	73.2
		Girls	1709	188	89.0
6	Lunawada	Boys	4748	1655	82.6
		Girls	3156	778	75.6
7	Santrampur	Boys	5837	1775	69.6
		Girls	2604	469	81.9
8	Limkheda	Boys	2011	509	75.0
		Girls	299	50	83.8
9	Devgadh Baria	Boys	5436	1119	79.3
		Girls	1745	141	92.0
10	Dahod	Boys	5900	1168	80.2
		Girls	2754	656	78.2
11	Jhalod	Boys	4480	899	80.0
		Girls	2270	182	92.2
BOYS - MEAN					72.3
GIRLS- MEAN					87.4


TALUKAWISE RATE OF WASTAGE AND STAGNATION IN PANCHHAHALS DISTRICT



TALUKA : GODHRA KALOL HALOL JAMBU-CHODA SHEHRA LUNYAWADA SANTRA LIMKHEDA DEVGADH DANDU JHALOD

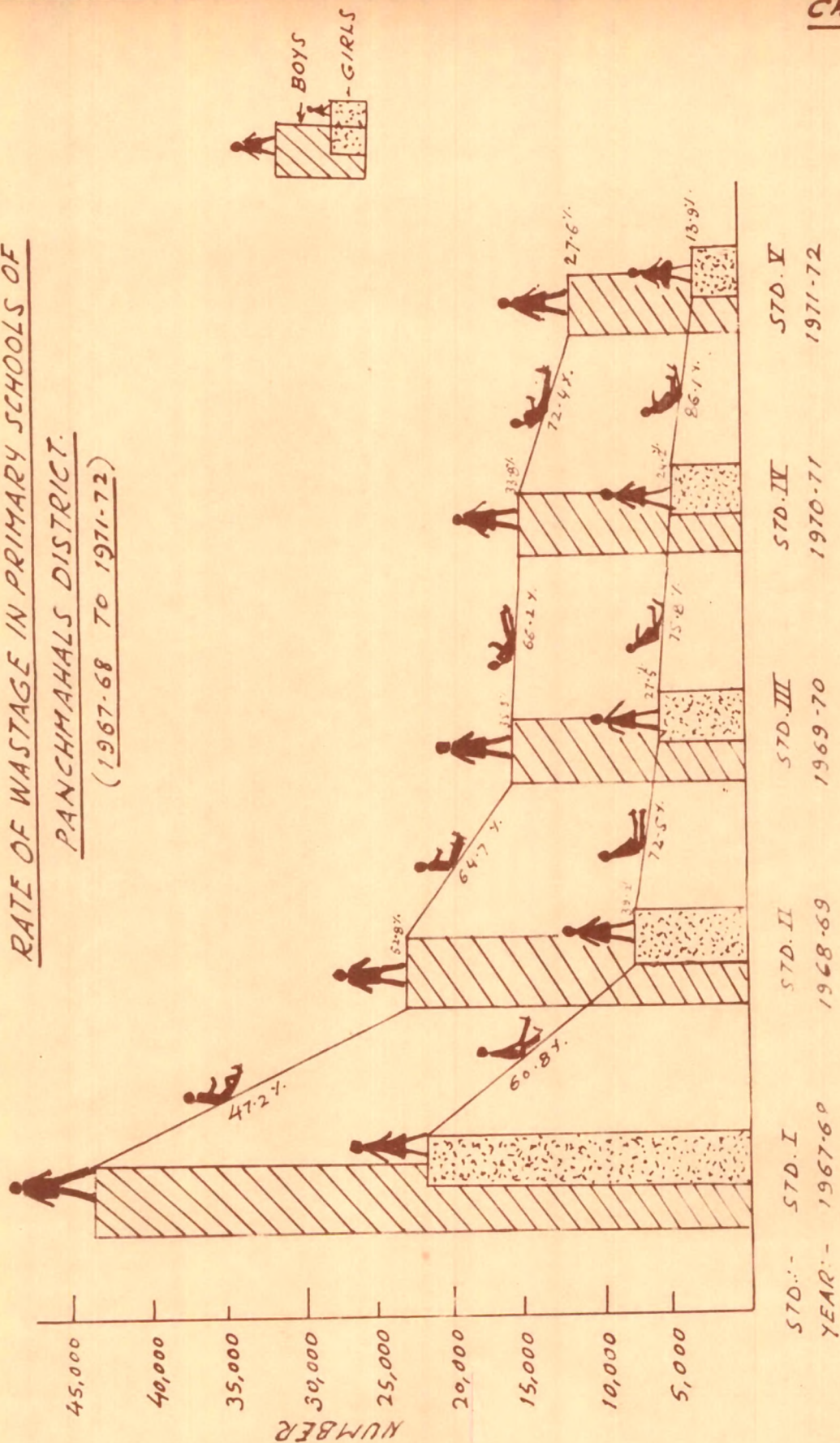
There are several factors responsible for the causation of stagnation and wastage in primary schools. These factors can be largely grouped under the cultural, social, economic and educational factors. All these factors are dominant in the Panchamahals District. They operate more powerfully in Stds. I and II, also in the lower primary schools (Stds. I to IV) than in the upper primary schools (Stds. V to VII), operate more in single teacher schools, more in the case of girls than boys, more in the backward castes than in the higher castes, more among Harijans and tribal population than among advanced section of the society, etc. The challenge of combating stagnation and wastage is all the more tough and enervating in the Panchamahals because it has a predominant population of scheduled tribes. In the district, around 40 percent of the population consists of scheduled tribes. The district is economically backward, it is yet to come up in social development - in modernising its traditional and hierarchical society with vertical mobility and educationally also the district has been developing slowly in terms of good school buildings, adequate and modern school equipment and instructional aids as well as materials, Organizational Climate of schools, inculcation of an attitude towards educational innovations and change, communication channel, human relationship and pupil welfare ancillary services.

Stagnation and wastage are more social and economic causes. It is difficult to control these factors and combat them effectively because it is not in the school system itself to ameliorate the social and economic backwardness of a society. The rural weaker section is more noticeable in backward tribal districts like the Panchamahals without making allowance for change in income fractiles, the percentage of ^{the} rural poor on account of rising cost of living and population works out to 57 percent in 1974. In a study (1973) entitled "Incidence of Poverty in Gujarat" by the Gujarat State Bureau of Economics and Statistics makes allowance for changes in rural income, fractiles and put the proportion of the rural poor in 1963 between 60 to 66 percent.

Social backwardness can be reduced only by bringing about a silent social revolution. This needs to set in motion a process of social change. This process is necessarily slow  predominantly ⁱⁿ a traditional, hierarchical society with vertical mobility and is all the more slow in the society of tribal people. Economic betterment considerably helps the process of social transformation. But economic betterment changes backward social groups more externally than internally. Quite often the perceptions, the value systems and the attitudes of people in desirable directions are not much changed. Such a change can be effectively and speedily brought about by the instrument of education. More

education and better or effective education may mean a more social change. As wastage and stagnation have their moorings in the beliefs, attitudes and value systems of the society as well as individual parents to the education of Harijan Children, tribal children and girls, it becomes difficult to combat the evils of wastage. It is by spreading more and better or effective education that the attitude and values of people can be changed. Education is a great instrument to bring about social change and assist in the process of economic growth. Education is a sound investment to help bringing about a silent and bloodless revolution in social, economic and educational spheres. The efforts of the Panchayat leadership in the Panchamahals to reduce the rate of wastage and stagnation should, therefore, be conceived in this larger perspective and a relentless battle has to be carried on to fight and overpower the enemy of poverty, social traditionalism and conservatism and irregular school attendance, low quality of class instruction, dull, mechanical and lifeless bookish learning, poor human relationship and low pupil motivation. Only by planning out some such comprehensive approach and by catching up missionary zeal and determination, the evils of wastage and stagnation can be fought out in backward areas.

RATE OF WASTAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF
PANCHMAHALS DISTRICT.
(1967-68 TO 1971-72)



6.6 Some General Suggestions

Before this study is concluded, the investigator would like to make some general suggestions for the improvement of primary education in the Panchamahals District. Many of these suggestions have actually come from persons - teachers, Panchayat leaders, Government officers, rural community leaders, university professors, and eminent educationists in the State. Some of the suggestions are also based on comments in the Gujarati Press during 1973-74 regarding the operational behaviours of the Panchayats in Gujarat. The suggestions are about the following :

- (a) The role of the Sarpanch;
- (b) The role of the district association of primary school teachers;
- (c) Improvement of Panchayat finances;
- (d) Panchayat leadership;
- (e) The role of Talati-cum-Panchayat Secretary;
- (f) Administrative Red-Tape;
- (g) Organisation of drives for school attendance;
- (h) Reducing the rate of wastge;
- (i) The transfer of primary school teachers;
- (j) Construction of school buildings;
- (k) Constitution of social justice committies;
- (l) The role of the Taluka Panchayats.

The Role of the Sarpanch : The Sarpancha should be made to realise that it is his responsibility to see that each and every child of the compulsory school age residing in the village of the Gram Panchayat is enrolled and attends the local primary school regularly. He should extend his help to the local primary teachers when they approach him for his assistance. He should accompany the teacher or teachers in the Prabhatferi and in the rounds for contacting guardians of enrolled school children. He should also see that 5 percent of the budget of the Gram Panchayat is earmarked and spent on school improvement. It should be his concern to supply free of cost for the mid-day meals, instructional materials and tools and school uniforms to economically poor and socially backward children. His constant efforts should be to raise a school Fund from the Contributions of the local village community.

The Role of the District Primary School Teacher Association:

- (a) To raise the moral force of the primary teachers by motivating them to attend to their duties and responsibilities and to awaken them to their rights;
- (b) Government opens more and more primary schools in tribal areas. The teachers should be made to realise that they have a sacred duty and an obligation to society to see that the school-going children are enrolled in schools and they attend them regularly.
- (c) The abolition of adult illiteracy is a national work

and obligation. The Association should give a directive to the primary teachers that they play a large role in reducing the rate of illiteracy which is as high as 77.42 percent, 66.37 percent for men and 88.48 percent for women.

(d) The teachers should be prevailed upon to participate with understanding and enthusiasm in all programmes of inservice teacher education and of school improvement.

Improvement of Panchayat Finances:

(a) House tax, profession tax and vehicle tax should be compulsory taxes of Panchayats;

(b) Minimum and maximum rates of compulsory taxes should be prescribed;

(c) There should be no exemption from the levy of house tax;

(d) The rate of cycle tax should be fixed by Taluka Panchayat and be made uniformly applicable throughout its area;

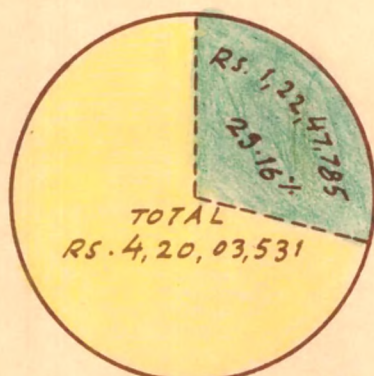
(e) Vehicle tax should be levied on all vehicles;

(f) A tax on produce sold in village by weight, measurement or number may also be considered for levy by the Panchayats;

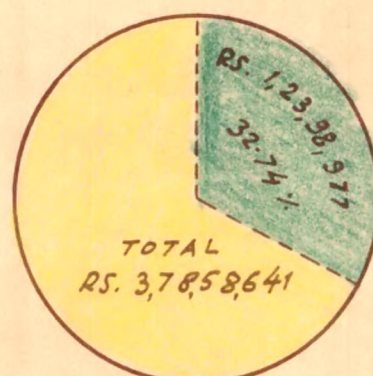
(g) The Panchayat Corporations should reserve 10 percent of its own free fund for primary education;

(h) Every Taluka Panchayat should allocate 10 paise in every rupee of its land revenue for its educational expenditures;

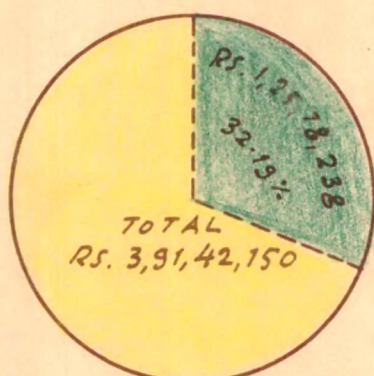
BUDGET OF DISTRICT PANCHAYAT AND DISTRICT
EDUCATION COMMITTEE



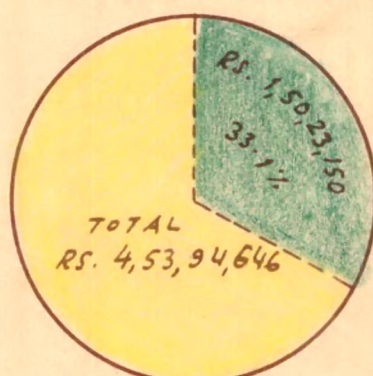
1968-69



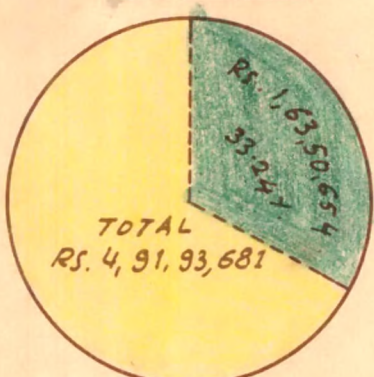
1969-70



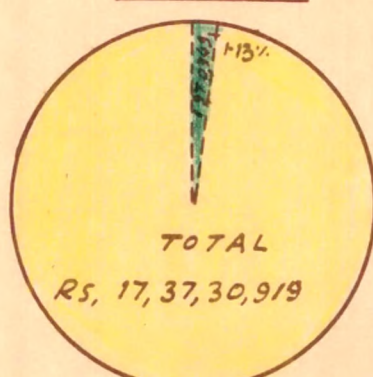
1970-71



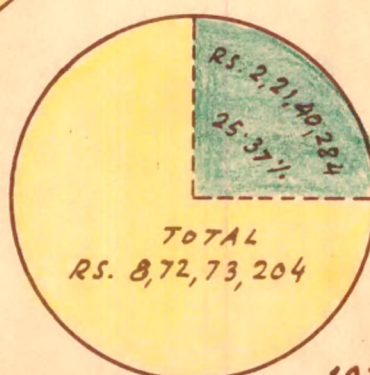
1971-72



1972-73



1973-74



1974-75

(SOURCE: ANNUAL BUDGET REPORT DISTRICT PANCHAYAT, PANCHMAHALS, GODHRA.)

(i) Out of the receipt of the Local Fund Cess of the District Panchayat, 10 paise in every rupee should be allocated for primary education;

(j) The attendance grant on a cent percent basis should be given for all schools where the attendance is 60 percent of the enrolment.

Panchayat Leadership : In a number of villages in the Panchamahals the local Panchayat leadership has been found to be passive and lifeless. The leadership is primarily pre-occupied in ^{its} own struggle for life and in the advancement of its own personal interest. The village leaders in the district seem to be merely tools in the hands of political leaders at the Taluka level. They have become leaders in Gram Panchayats by accident and not on merits and ability. The Social Education Classes run in several Talukas are more eye-wash. The public opinion should be cultivated against the following failures of the Panchayat leaders of the district :

- (a) The mis-appropriation of grants;
- (b) Their passivity and ignorance have made Talatis, the T.D.O. and other members of the bureaucracy powerful and at times even dictating;
- (c) Leadership tending to become hereditary. This happens particularly in Shirajpur ~~Gram Panchayat~~ Gram Panchayat;
- (d) Politicisation of Panchayati Machinery and administration;

(e) Leaders have become 'rubber-stamps' of Government officers. They are in actual practice led by the Panchayat secretaries.

(f) Leaders who fail with Government officers try to show their ability by trying to exercise bossism and unwarranted dominance over primary school teachers;

(g) Panchayat leadership has become a mockery of adult franchise and democracy;

(h) There are factions and internal conflicts among the Panchayat groups, members and leaders.

It is said that the Panchayats of the district have not enough funds, the leaders do not possess leadership qualities and in the society the social service has lost its prestige. In one village of Lunawada District, a 50 year old Harijan Woman ^{was} the Sarpanch. The Talati made all possible efforts to harass the woman leader and made her to resign from her office. It was with great difficulty that this Talati could be changed by transfer.

In the Sphere of Education Committee, there is a predominant thinking that they should be manned by teachers.

The Role of Talati-cum-Panchayat Secretary: Talatis are also secretaries of Gram Panchayats. They are small Government officers but they create maximum trouble for the Sarpanchas. They change, sometimes make illegal alterations in the Gram Panchayat records. A machinery should be set

up by the District Development Officer and the Taluka Development Officer to keep a watch over the malpractices of Talati-cum-Secretaries of Gram Panchayats;

Administrative Red Tape : The work of construction of school buildings is often delayed and thrown out of gear by the red tape in the Public Works Department, slackness or ineptitude of the engineers. They take months to go to the place of constructing the school building and give what is called "Khuntio". Sometimes even school Administrative Officers add to the delay by writing to the Panchayat that the land selected is not suitable for the construction of a school building. This red tape and internal scheming and plotting should be controlled firmly in Panchayats.

Organisation of Drives for School Attendance : The drives for improvement of school attendance should have following objectives :

- (a) To build up an educational climate in the Taluka;
- (b) To stimulate leadership in the Taluka Community which has an understanding of and interest in education to take greater interests in issues and problems of primary education;
- (c) To remove barriers to the progress of education of girls;
- (d) To bring the community closer to school;

- (e) To equip and enrich the schools with community support;
- (f) To stimulate and coordinate the understanding, interest and concern of local community leaders, panchayat members and President of the Taluka Panchayat, members of the District Education Committee, members of the State legislature and the M.P. in the manifold complex problems of primary education.

Reducing the Rate of Wastage : Programmes on the following lines be organised :

- (a) The syllabus and teaching in Stds. I and II should be integrated. The promotion should be decided at the end of the last session in Std. II. The same teacher or teachers should teach children of these two classes;
- (b) The supervision should be strengthened. A Beat Supervisor should not be allotted more than 40 primary schools to visit and supervise. It should be realistically possible for a supervisor to give attention to all matters of home-school instruction. Home-school teacher-pupil headmaster-teachers relationships, enrichment of instructional materials and aids, examination results, project work etc. The number of supervisors should be increased in backward Talukas as in these areas the pertinent issues and problems are many and complex.

(c) The Refresher and intensive study classes should be organised for all pupils who fail in school annual examinations and their re-examinations be held in June of the first session of the new academic year. The reduction of the rate of stagnation would help in the reduction of the rate of wastage. Teachers who participate in the instruction in these vacation classes should be paid extra remuneration ⁱⁿ consultation with the District primary Teachers' Association;

(d) Examination procedures and the system should be changed. It should take the form of educational evaluation which means that it should be continuous, comprehensive, objectives-centred, diagnostic and remedial;

(e) Timing of vacations should suit the farming season of the local community. Even the school timing- hours of work should be adjusted to suit the needs of the local community during the farming season;

(f) Primary school instruction should be made three hours of well planned, intensive instruction in areas where guardians find it difficult to send their sons and daughters in school for a six-hour instruction. There should be more three hour schools in backward rural areas.

(g) There should be one special supervisor per Taluka who can control irregular school admissions and attendance.

school admissions should be stopped in the first week of July every year;

(h) There should be playcentres-cum-Balwadis attached to rural primary schools. The social worker women belonging to the local community should be persuaded to work in these centres.

(i) Wherever possible, schools should be encouraged to hold 'self-study' classes for school children who are motivated in this direction.

(j) The single-teacher school should have help by way of one additional teacher from the neighbouring Taluka school being requisitioned for it. etc., etc.,

Transfer of Primary School Teachers : This is a sore point in the administration of primary education in almost all districts of Gujarat. The Panchayat leaders have come into disrepute greatly because of their alleged involvement, interference and dirty politics in manipulating primary school teachers' transfer. Several suggestions are made by the respondents and interviewees to improve the situation relating to teacher transfer in the district. The suggestions include also the following :

(a) A teacher should be allowed to remain in a village at least for a period of ten years;

- (b) Transfer should preferably be made at a place which is nearer to his native place.
- (c) Primary school teachers should have representation on the Transfer Committee;
- (d) Norms for transfer should be laid ^{down} ~~down~~ and they should be firmly adhered to;
- (e) The headmaster should recommend the transfer of a teacher who is not doing justice to his work and school children. Such recommendations of headmasters should be adequately supported by remarks from the Beat Supervisors;

Construction of School Buildings : Construction of school buildings should have a priority base in Panchayats' budget on education. In the Backward and economically poor areas, Government Building grant should be on a cent percent basis. Rich persons should be encouraged to donate liberally for building school premises by naming such schools after them. A school should be provided with 4 hectares of land for school farm, the income from which can be harnessed for constructing school buildings and strengthening and enriching schools' academic programme. Researches in universities should be directed to develop plans for cheap and effective school buildings. Loans can be had from nationalised banks to build school buildings with such design that in the ground floor there are shops which could be given on hire, and which thereby can be a continuous source of income for the

school. The labour and expertise of local community people should be obtained in the construction of school buildings. This could be either free¹⁵, or cheap.

Constitution of Social Justice Committee : In a number of villages Harijans and tribal people are shabbily curtailed. In order to safeguard their rights and to provide them equality of opportunity in all the vital sectors of life, a social Justice Committee should be constituted in every Gram . The entire village should accept the responsibility for educating all of its Harijan and tribal school-going children.

The Role of the Taluka Panchayats : This should particularly be in the following :

(a) To give top priority and complete the arrears in work relating to the repairs of schools buildings, extension of school buildings, erecting a hedge of barbed wire around the compound of primary schools, etc.

(b) If questions arise in regard to the construction of a new building for a primary school or finding out residential quarters for teachers, especially Harijan Adivasi and women teachers, then the members at the Taluka Panchayat should visit such places personally and try to deal with the emergent situation;

(c) To send round instructions to all villages when drives

for improvement of school attendance, or even for school enrolment are to be organised in the Taluka;

(d) To cooperate and help the Talati-cum-Secretaries of Gram Panchayats and Village level workers on issues brought to the fore at the bi-monthly meetings of these personnel;

(e) To dispose of expeditiously all cases pertaining to sanctioning of leave asked ^{for} by teachers, supplementary bills, medicine bills, T.A. bills, etc.

6.7 Conclusion

The results of the present study show that much is yet to be accomplished in the matter of universal primary education in the Panchamahals District. The evidences are that the Panchayati Raj in the district has not so far fulfilled, in a substantial measure, the great expectations that it had aroused though it has the potential as people's institution to deliver the goods. The leadership has been found to be weak. It is true that there are less political conflicts, But the neo-traditional leadership that has been found to be emerging in south Gujarat ⁱⁿ a study of Panchayats by Professor H.R. Joshi and in North Gujarat by Principal V.R. Patel has not been noticed in East Gujarat. The reasons may be the backwardness of the district in cultural, social, economic and educational dimensions. The failings of the

Panchayat Raj that are found in the district are human failings - failings - what one might hazard to say - of our national character but these failings are not exclusive to the Panchayati Raj leadership of the Panchmahals District. The clarity of the concept of the Panchayati Raj in the minds of the Panchayati leaders as well as of the people is not there - they do not look at the Panchayati Raj as an agency for rural community development but their concept is that it is people's raj or self-government. If the leaders perceive their role as agents of rural community development and discharge their functions as servants of the community rather than as masters, their role would be better understood by the people and there would be less disappointment on their part and about them among people.

The Panchayati Raj has aroused in the course of a decade, the rural community to many of their needs and created a climate for community development. Some advances have been made in the sphere of community development. Democratic process has also begun to emerge. Both literacy and education have made rapid strides if the accomplishments in this sphere ^{are} viewed against what could be achieved in the one hundred and fifty years of the British rule. The expansion of education and experience of the democratic process have been gradually reaping their fruits. From the study, it appears that democracy is yet weak in the functioning of

the Panchayats of the district. But one should not feel frusted^{frustrated} about it, as democracy establishes itself firstly when it is practised and then through a process of trial, error and corrections. The limitations of the democracy in the Panchayats of the Panchamahals belong to a transitional phase. But there is no ground to raise alarm. There is no need to scrap the Panchayati Raj institutions. With a more realistic concept of the Panchayati Raj and the leadership in all spheres of community development including primary education and also with the Panchayati Raj leadership exposed to training and educational reorientation, the Panchayati Raj institutions would improve in their working and the primary school teachers in particular and people in general would have more confidence in the Panchayati Raj. The suggestions made in this study should be carefully considered by the pertinent authorities, and their potentiality for the regaining the confidence of primary school teachers in the administration of primary education by the Panchayati Raj should be objectively examined. If the Panchayati Raj leadership is exposed to in-office training and educational orientation in an adequate and effective measure, the necessary climate and confidence would result in teachers and people. And therein lies the future of the Panchayati Raj and its leadership. The faith in democracy should be sustained at all costs.

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