INTRODUCTION

In the sugar co-operative and Urban co-operative Banks Maharashtra is ranking first in India. The source of co-operative movement in Maharashtra was intellectual and activists the late co-operative V. Mehta & Prof. D.R. Gadgil. The Co-operative movement in India is one hundred years old and the co-operative Sugar movement in the state of Maharashtra was launched by late Shri Vithalrao Vikhe-Patil in 1954. The Co-operative sector flourished under the Patronage of the Govt. in particular is threatened by forces unleashed by the processes of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The co-operatives in Maharashtra acted as leadership training organizations. The movement has given number of leaders to Maharashtra. This is very important contribution of co-operative sector in Maharashtra’s economy. (Commission rate of co-operation Maharashtra State) 2001, Intellectuals Sandarbh Maharashtra, p. 149, 153.[3]

Co-operative Movement:

“ As a form of organization where in the persons voluntarily associate together as human beings on a basis of equality for the promotion of economic interest of themselves”. The Law and Principle of co-operation (H. Calvert).

“An association of the weak gather together on common economic needs and try to lift themselves and others out of weakness into strength, through business organization, conducted for the common benefit of all who join it ” (Talmaki).
“Co-operation is self help as well as mutual help. It is a joint association of those who are not financially strong and are unable to stand on their own legs and therefore, come together not with a view to getting profits but to overcome disability out of want of adequate financial resources and thus better their economic conditions” (Prof. V.L. Metha[3])

**Rural Development :-**

As already stated the broad research themes analysis in the present work are the (i) Process of rural development (ii) the role and contribution of institutions in rural development (iii) evaluation and contribution of the Hutatma Kisan Ahir Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd. Walava & Rajarambapu Sahakari Dudha Utpadak Sangh Ltd Walava in the process of rural development.

The rural development sector policy paper of the World Bank (1975) observed that ‘Rural Development’ is a strategy designed to improve the economic & social life of a specific group of people. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless. Again a World Bank publication defines rural development as “improving the living standards of the masses of the low income population residing in rural areas making the process of rural development self-sustaining”. World Bank Publication, 1975 Sector Policy Paper, pp. 10-12.
Sangli District:

A case study of the role and significance of the co-operative movement in rural development with special reference to the Hutatma Kissan Ahir Sahakari Sakhar Karakhana Ltd. & Rajarambapu Sahakari Dudha Uatapadak sangha Ltd. At Walava, Taluka of Sangli District in the southern Maharashtra is the subject of the present research study.

Location of Sangli in Maharashtra and India, that is $16^0 52' 01''$ N - $74^0 34' 01''$ E, $16^0 87''$ N $74^0 57''$ E. The linguistic state of Maharashtra was politically evolved on the first of May, 1960. (Maharashtra B. Arunachalam, pp. 3) Maharashtra, extends from $15^0 45'$ N to $22^0$ N, and $72^0 45'$ E, to $80^0 45'$ E. The state is about 800kms from East to West and 700 kms, from North to South, it has a total land area of 306345 sq.kms.

2. STUDY REGION

Sangli is one of the important District in dairy and Sugar Industry. There are eight sugar Co-operative Industries & eight Co-operative projects, & four collecting milk centers in village level. Geographical area is 8572 sq.kmts. 9 Taluka’s that is Khanapur, Miraj, Shirala, Walava, Tasagaon, Jat, Kavathe-Mahankal, Atpadi, Palus. It’s has 731 villages and have population about (2001) 25,81,835. Literacy 76.70%, Area under agriculture 6,29,200 hectares. (Intellectuals Sandarbh Maharashtra, p. 474-475).
**Industrial Estates**

Sangli, Miraj, Islampur, Vita, Kavathe-Mahankal total 8 cities and total length of Road 8,837 km. Some important rivers like Krishna, Varana, Yerala, Managanga. Average rainfall 62 cm and temperature is 46°C to 2°C. These features which is responsible for dairy farming and Sugar factories on rural development of Sangli District. (Intellectuals Sandarbh Maharashtra, 2002-2003, p. 474)\(^3\).