



Study on level of awareness regarding Panchayati Raj system among Government officials and elected representatives

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh to assess the level of awareness about Panchayati Raj System among the two categories of respondents, viz., Government officials and Elected representatives and from each group 50 respondents were selected at random as the study sample. Interview schedule was used for data collection. Findings of the study revealed that majority (72%) of the Governmental officials had medium level of awareness followed by high (14.6 %) and low (13.3 %) level of awareness. However, in case of elected representatives around 77 per cent had medium level of awareness followed by high (14.6 %) and low (8 %) level of awareness. Statistical analyses of the findings depicted that the level of awareness of Government officials had positive correlation with occupation ($r = 3.00^{**}$), material possession ($r = 0.319^{**}$) and social participation ($r = 0.330^{*}$) at 5 and 1 per cent level of significance, respectively. However, level of awareness about Panchayati Raj was found to be significantly and negatively correlated with family size and material possession but positively correlated with age of the respondents ($r = 0.277^{*}$) at 5 per cent level of significance in case of elected representatives. Conclusively it may be said that score obtained by Government officials and elected representatives were approximately similar, but the former had better association between level of awareness and selected socio-economic variables in comparison with the later one.

INTRODUCTION

The concept behind the Panchayat is local governance of the people, by the people and for the people. Panchayati Raj has the objective of placing more powers in the hand of rural people, enhancing their capabilities to involve themselves in the process of decision making, preparation and implementation of programme for economic development and social justice.

Panchayati Raj has made excellent progress in India. It covers almost 98-99 per cent of rural population as a whole in India. The Panchayati Raj System has been launched in India since 1959 and Uttar Pradesh implemented it in 1947. Uttar

Pradesh has the fortune to firstly buildup and passed the "U.P. Panchayati Raj Act 1947" on 7th Dec. 1947 and the whole.

Islam *et al.* (1987) observed that, all officials were not properly aware of their duties and responsibilities. Through appropriate training and assigning responsibilities, from time to time, they may be made aware of their duties, responsibilities and obligations. If not regular pay, some kind of monetary incentives may be given to them on their basis of their achievements.

Balaramulu and Rao (1995) reported that, most of the respondents who were working under Panchayati Raj System, were aware of only the broad objectives of the Panchayat bodies *i.e.* socio-economic and political development. Most of the