



Research Article

## A comparative study on working pattern of elected representatives and government officials in Panchayati Raj system

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**SUMMARY :** A comparative study on working pattern of respondents *viz.*, Government officials (75) and elected representatives (75) and elected representatives were undertaken and they were interviewed with the help of schedule. A largest section of Government officials (60%) were having working pattern score between 15 – 37 followed by 21.33 per cent respondents with scored < 37. In case of elected representatives, 69.4 per cent respondent were having score between 18 – 37 and 13.3 per cent respondents were having score more than 37 for their working pattern. A positive correlation was obtained for both the groups of respondents in case of association between their working pattern and selected independent variables like occupation, family size and social participation.

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**Key Words :**

Panchayati Raj system, Government officials, Elected representatives, Level of awareness

### BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Rural development implies all round development of villages. Panchayat Raj institutions are functioning in rural India at different levels which play vital role in rural development. The concept behind the Panchayat is local governance of the people, by the people and for the people. The main objectives of Panchayati Raj are decentralization, development and social change.

The Panchayati Raj System has been launched in India since 1959 and Uttar Pradesh implemented it in 1947. For giving the three tier structure of Panchayat system and fulfilling the recommendation of Balwant Ray Mehata Committee (1957), the U.P. Government built “Uttar Pradesh Kshetra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act 1961” in 1961.

To fulfill the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, the U.P. Government possessed a new “U.P. Panchayat law (Amendment) Act” in 1994 and later on also in 1999 on the basis of Bajaj

Committee recommendation. That act has amended in the provision of “U.P. Panchayati Raj act 1947” and “U.P. Kshetra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act 1961 constitutional (seventy third amendment) Act 1993.

Sharma (1967) concluded that, the participation by village people have neither been outstanding nor effective. The villagers attended Gram sabha, and Gram panchayat meeting and voted in Panchayati election but the factor motivating them were other than political consciousness. By and large, village cast structure, narrow village outlook and the personality of the Sarpanch determined the nature, extent effectiveness of direct participation.

Choudhary and Rajakutty (2000) concluded that, the genuine decentralization though adequate devolution of power and resources to Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) is an essential pre-requisite, with appropriate capacity building effort to bring out empowerment of people, particularly the disadvantage section such as S.C./S.T., landless and marginal farmers and women, success of

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poverty alleviation programme (PAPS). Transparency and accountability of the political and administrative execute through strengthening of the civil society should receive the highest priority. It is important that enabling environment is created so that community based organization (CBOs) and PRIs work in symbolic relationship rather than competing of conflicting interest groups.

Jhamtani *et al.* (2001) observed that, by and large, the women Panchayat members were not very special as they are not members in any other organization. Even in Panchayat activities only few women reported their participation. The study revealed that only two women members reported having attended all the meetings held by Panchayat, all other mentioned only once or twice during the year. A few (3) also confirmed that they had never actually attended any meeting.

Narayana (2003) observed that, PRIs are not making much headway an account of the non-cooperative attitude of state government. Found from the Rural Development Ministry flow directly to the district account but the same thing is not happening from state to district level. Despite the fact that Art 243 ZD of the constitution requires the state governments to constitute district planning committees (DPCs), several state like Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Pondichary, Panjab, Tripura and Chandigarh have failed to do so far. Even though, the DPCs have been constituted in M.P., U.P., H.P., Lakshwdeep, State Ministers, in charge of district, are the chair person of DPCs diluting democracy at the grass roots. So, most of the devolution of power to PRIs is detested by MLAs and politicians at Zilla Parisad since their sphere of influence will diminish. All this has reduced the Panchayats to mere puppets.

Singh (2004) concluded that, the overall working pattern of elected representatives were found to be average to poor whereas the working pattern of government officials was average to good.

The present study was aimed to study the working pattern of Government officials and elected representatives under Panchayati Raj system.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Bara Tahasil of Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Two Blocks from this Tahasil were selected and five villages from each CD block were randomly selected for the propose, so there a total of 10 villages as local's of the study. There were two categories of respondent *viz.*, Government officials and elected representatives at three levels of Panchayat bodies. A total of 150 respondents (75 from each category) were selected by stratified random sampling method. Structured interview schedule was developed on the basis of objectives and selected variables.

Data were collected during April 2006 to December, 2006.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The working pattern of Panchayat functionaries – elected representative and government officials is referred as the degree to which they were participating in the general session of respective Panchayat bodies and their involvement in the decision making process, preparation, implementation and evaluation of programme of Panchayat Raj Institution. The basic concept of panchayat Raj–local governance of the people, for the people and by the people is much depended and determined by the working pattern of any Panchayat raj body and its functionaries.

Respondent (G.O.) were categories under three heads on the basis of working pattern (Table 1). A largest portion of the respondents (60.0%) were having working pattern score between 15–37 followed by 21.33 per cent respondents with more than score 37 for working pattern, whereas 18.66 per cent respondents were having score below 15 for their working pattern.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondent (G.O.) on the basis of working pattern**

| Sr. No.      | Working pattern | Frequency    | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| 1.           | < 15            | 14           | 18.66      |
| 2.           | 15 – 37         | 45           | 60.00      |
| 3.           | > 37            | 16           | 21.33      |
| Mean = 26.00 |                 | S.D. = 11.01 |            |

Respondents (E.R.) were categorized under three heads on the basis of their working pattern (Table 2). A largest portion of the respondent (69.4%) were having working pattern score between 18 – 37 followed by 17.3 per cent respondents with less than 18 score for working pattern, whereas 13.3 per cent respondents were having working pattern score more than 37.

**Table 2. Distribution of respondent (E.R.) on the basis of working pattern**

| Sr. No.      | Working pattern | Frequency   | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| 1.           | < 18            | 13          | 17.3       |
| 2.           | 18 – 37         | 52          | 69.4       |
| 3.           | > 37            | 10          | 13.3       |
| Mean = 27.86 |                 | S.D. = 9.70 |            |

Working pattern of the respondents involves existence of Panchayat building and favourable working conditions, meeting of Panchayat bodies, preparation, implementation and evaluation of development plan, Study and solution of area problems by Panchayat bodies etc. Ranking of these attributes were done accordingly to simplify the present study. It might be understood from Table 1 that 60 per cent of government officials have got scores between 15-37 on the basis of their

working pattern while 21.33 per cent of them scored more than 37. It is also obvious from the present finding that 18.66 per cent respondents had low level of working pattern because they scored below 15.

It is clear from Table 3 that working pattern of respondents (G.O.) was found to be negatively correlated with independent variables like age and social participation while family size was found to be positively correlated with working pattern of Government officials at 5 per cent level of significance.

Table 3 reveals the association between selected independent variables and working pattern of government officials. It is obvious from the present finding that working pattern of the respondents was positively correlated with independent variable like occupation, family size and social participation.

The working pattern of elected representatives was having positive correlation with selected independent variables like age and the value was found to be significant. A significant and negative correlation was observed between working pattern and caste, family type as well as social participation of the respondents (Table 3).

**Table 3: Association between selected independent variables and working pattern (G.O.)**

| Sr. No. | Independent variables | 'r' Value |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1.      | Age                   | - 0.360** |
| 2.      | Education             | - 0.020   |
| 3.      | Caste                 | - 0.040   |
| 4.      | Occupation            | - 0.055   |
| 5.      | Family type           | - 0.051   |
| 6.      | Family size           | 0.274*    |
| 7.      | House                 | 0.096     |
| 8.      | Material possession   | - 0.204   |
| 9.      | Land possession       | - 0.041   |
| 10.     | Farm power            | - 0.170   |
| 11.     | Social participation  | - 0.299** |

Table 4 depicted that similar case was obtained by elected representatives too as that of Government officials. However, difference in working pattern between the two categories of respondents was obtained which may be due to variation in occupation and social participation.

The finding of the present study also supported by Singh (2004) who concluded and reported that the overall working pattern of elected representative was found to be average to poor whereas the working pattern of Government officials was average to good.

**Table 4. Association between selected independent variables and working pattern (E.R.)**

| Sr. No. | Independent variables | 'r' Value |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1.      | Age                   | - 0.317** |
| 2.      | Education             | - 0.101   |
| 3.      | Caste                 | 0.241*    |
| 4.      | Occupation            | - 0.165   |
| 5.      | Family type           | 0.290**   |
| 6.      | Family size           | 0.067     |
| 7.      | House                 | - 0.100   |
| 8.      | Material possession   | - 0.046   |
| 9.      | Land possession       | - 0.078   |
| 10.     | Farm power            | - 0.017   |
| 11.     | Social participation  | 0.244*    |

In light of above data and discussion the Null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) that there is no difference between the working pattern of elected representatives and Government officials, it is rejected hence the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) that there is difference between the working pattern of elected representatives and government officials is formulated and accepted.

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