CHAPTER – 1

Introduction

This is an era of women empowerment. Rural women are weaker than Urban women in all respect. Panchayti Raj is an Institution by which some people exercise the power. Provision of reservation for women in Panchayti Raj System is a part of the process of women empowerment. Thus how far the Panchayati Raj System is empowering the rural women? This is a burning question for social scientist. Researcher and supervisor made an attempt to solve this question, collectively in a specific region of Sadar and Jansath block of Muzaffarnagar District. This research is based on rural elected women leaders in Panchayati Raj System. The data has been collected through interview schedule and observation. The data has been analysed through tables.

The women development programme emphasized on the employment and health of the women. But they reflect the sympathetic attitude of the programme. Thus for proper development of rural women, there should be enthusiastic effort for all over development. Because women are the bases of the family and play a significant role in social development.

The social role of women in India is important to observe. The women are considered as the agent of the Social change & cultured institution. If the women are backward, the society is too also be backward. Thus the women development is an important aspect of society.
It was to improve this situation and to make them to come out the coma of social bandage. That the policy of reservation has been introduced by the state govt. But why reservation? Despite the existence of constitutional and legislative provision designed to guarantee equality to women, the majority of women are still at the bottom of Indian society. Women are still vastly under represented in political and administrative posts that make important policy decisions affecting them while efforts to improve women’s status have some success. It is evident that new measures need to be taken to solve the problems of the continuing inequality of women (Gender).

Today, one of the issue of concern is the level of women’s participation in local politics. This is because achievement of equality in all areas is seen as inseparable from active political participation. Here women participation in politics includes right to vote, right to contest, right to candidacy, women as campaigners, women as members, women’s involvement in the politics and appointment of women at all level of the government, including the participation of women at the grass roots level through the Panchayati Raj institution.

Reservation of the seats is one of the instrument of political empowerment for women leadership in Panchyati Raj Institution. Although this technique guarantees women representative and a recognition of half the population. Many feel that through such a method a small number of women representative can be isolated from decision making and not represent a power to be reckoned within these institution.
However, through reservation, the presence of women in these institutions can be ensured which in turn may encourage other women to slowly come out of the age-old barriers imposed on them by social structure and share political power on an equal footing with men.

India has Panchayati Raj System but the participatory role of the women is negligent. But with the implementation of 73rd constitutional amendment of Panchayati Raj. The women are given 1/3 reservation of seats in membership and they will be playing an important role in development programmes under the Panchayati Raj Systems. The 73rd constitutional amendment act of 1992 mark historic events in the advancement of Indian women as they ensure 1/3 of total seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies in rural areas and urban areas. In the rural areas, about 1 million women are going to emerge as leaders at the grass roots level and enter into public life through the existing 0.25 million bodies of these, about 75,000 will be chairperson at the village, block and district levels. Women have thus been brought to the centre-stage in the nations efforts to strengthen democratic institutions. The grounds well that is likely to build up as a result will undoubtedly influence of development and impact on the likes of women.

So focus of the present study is on emerging patterns of women Political participation in panchayati Raj system. To empower the women means to develop the capacity to influence the political participation by integrating them into our constitutional system. Implementation of this is the policy of reservation. Reserving seats of women in the political institution will provide
them an opportunity to raise the grievance and other related social, political and economic problems in a formal manner.

It is a study of power position holders of women in Panchayati Raj Institution. Especially in Muzaffarnagar district of Western Uttar Pradesh. The Panchayati Raj functioning in its true sense, can provide very significant benefits to our nation. It can also give real meaning to national aspirations in respect of democracy. A feeling of participation in meaning public affairs, a sharing of authority for public purpose, self respect, unity in face of problems, development of leadership qualities, participation of women with reservation all these crucial/core elements can be promoted through Panchayats Raj and only those governing local bodies could improve economic condition in India. Mahatma Gandhi had always impressed upon the people that India must be governed by Panchayati Raj. He also said that our cities are not India. India lives her seven and half lacs of villages and cities live upon villages. Balwant Ray Mehta Committee recommended that a three tier system should be set in every district. It should be known as Zila Parishad at district level, Panchayat Samiti at block level and gram panchyat and village level for the development of rural areas and should have its own resources of income, own staff. It should be fully democratic in nature. The recommendations of this committee were accepted at national level and the system was called “Panchayati Raj System”.

Both the Late Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and P.V. Narsimha Rao stressed the need for the provision of women reservation to be renewed and also of
devaluation of power through Panchayati Raj System. They also called a qualitative change in the devaluation of power at the district and local level to ensure people’s participation of scheduled castes so far is negligible. So it is considered as an urgent need to increase their strength in the Panchayati Raj Institution at different level to ensure their betterment on the whole. Sociological studies have also revealed that politicization can help women to enhance their status. Thus the establishment of the Panchayati Raj Institution provide an occasion for enquiry.

To what extent, the women participation in Panchayati Raj would be influence the society can be studied by observing the political aspects of women representation, their role in Gram Panchayat Programmes and their participation in development programmes etc.

The following questions have been formulated in the present study.

1. To find out the mode of political participation of higher and lower caste women’s in village panchayat.
2. To find out the political aspect of higher and lower caste women in village Panchyat.
3. To find out the dimensions and limitations of higher and lower caste women in Panchayt Raj Institution.
4. To find out the effect of area (Rural & Urban) of higher and lower caste women in Panchayt Raj Institution.
Interview with a schedule, general observation with respondent and case study methods have been used for collect the information. Some problems have to face in duration of field work (investigation) as absence of respondent at their home, when I visit of villages. Because study is related to women many time the male family members of the respondent did not permit to interview with respondent. Male member’s usually interrupt in the field of women’s.

Chapter 1 is introductory part of research. Chapter 2 of the thesis deals the historical resume of political participation of women in India, because problem is related to Panchayati Raj therefore theoretical knowledge was necessary about the political institution of India. The second part of this chapter reveals the theoretical part of Panchayti Raj. The Panchyati Raj System is existed in India since a long time the development of Panchayati Raj System is explained systematically in this part of the thesis. This part also have the review of literature related to studies on panchayati Raj.

Chapter 3 explains the methodology of this research. Concept explanation, tools and techniques, objectives and about the area of study. Chapter 4 is related about the historical base of district Muzaffarnagar. Empirical data collected by the field work is analysed in Chapter 5 through the tables. Table shows the comparision among higher and lower caste women’s situation in Panchayati Raj System at Village level. Chapter 6 describes the factors affecting the political participation of women in village Panchayat. Chapter 7 is
the discussion and suggestion on the research work and chapter 8 have the Summary of the research work.