

Development Interventions: A Factor of Social Structural and Cultural Change in Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Development is a binary process which brings both positive and negative results. Gradually, the process of development results in the emergence of complexity in all aspects of society. Change in one single aspect holds the potential to bring change in all other aspects of a society. The changes brought about by various development agencies have led to changes in the system of production. The availability, utilization, and accessibility of natural resources as well as the technology required to fully utilise them have a significant impact on the decisions that determine a society's livelihood opportunities. Additionally, it affects social behaviour and social structure. Earlier, when people solely relied on traditional livelihood resources, the socio-structural context of the village was distinct, and this context underwent a transformation as a result of changes in livelihood resources and methods brought on by development initiatives. This paper intends to draw attention to the changes in the village's social, political, and economic structures in Amrai Village of Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh, brought about by modifications in the production systems driven by development interventions.

Keywords: social structure, development interventions, change, culture, production, village, pratapgarh, uttar pradesh

I. INTRODUCTION

Development is a continuous process that involves functioning of various agencies to sustain its continuity and make a remarkable impact. Since India gained independence the primary focus of every Government that served its session has been Development in diversified domains for citizens of India. From social, economic, infrastructural, political to trade and commerce and every other domain that concerns a human being has been under a process of constant scrutiny for its further development. According to Powell, success is unattainable with artificial arrangements created to fit revenue ideas but not having evolved with the growth of the nation. Various developmental schemes, programs, policies and projects are being run by the Government and these are the interventions that we will be talking about. These developmental programs are being run for both urban and rural population but since development at grassroot is necessary for overall development of the nation hence special focus of various five-year programs was the development of villages. And even now we cannot imagine a developed India without developed villages. This is what has been the major context of holistic development for our nation. According to World Bank Report the rural population in India was reported to be 64.61% in 2021. Though, earlier Indian villages were known for its self-subsistence but a lot has changed since independence and the factors of development has been both a boon and a curse. And thus, now various villages are living under a condition that can be considered poor as per the standards established by the Governments. Hence, various Governments that served their sessions has come up with several programs and initiatives for developing the rural settings in all its domains. From providing basic amenities like that of water supply, electricity, roads, schools and hospitals to starting new initiatives of bio conservations, rain water harvesting and others, the think-tank of our governments are coming up with so many remarkable ideas that holds potential for bringing about positive development for citizen of India. Various development interventions have brought change in the diversified domains of society. One major change that can be witnessed is in the change in the system of production. The availability, utilization, and accessibility of natural resources as well as the technology required to fully utilise them have a significant impact on the decisions that determine a society's livelihood opportunities. Additionally, it affects social behaviour and social structure. Earlier, when people solely relied on traditional livelihood resources, the socio-structural context of the village was distinct, and this context underwent a transformation as a result of changes in livelihood resources and methods brought on by development initiatives. This paper intends to draw attention to the changes in the village's social, political, and economic structures in Amrai Village of Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh, brought about by modifications in the production systems driven by development interventions.

Objectives

- To assess the change brought by various developmental interventions that were undertaken in Amarai Village of Pratapgarh
- To assess the impact of development interventions on change in Social Structure and Culture of Amarai Village of Pratapgarh.

Hypothesis

- Various development interventions in the village by various agencies has led to changes in social structure and culture.
- Change in the system of production due to development interventions is the major cause of the change observed in social structure and culture

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Scarlett Epstein in “Economic Development and Social Change in South India”, 1962 followed an analytical framework to understand social and cultural changes wherein she has analysed i) structural changes through observing economic, political, familial, ritual and organizational change and ii) cultural change in terms of changes in economic and prestige value due to economic development. Same framework has been adopted for this study. The selected field area was Amarai village of Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. The sample size was of 60 households selected through purposive sampling. The techniques of observation, interview, schedule, case study was employed for the collection of primary data.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Due to modifications in production systems brought on by development initiatives, the village's social, political, and economic organizations saw remarkable transformations. Following were the major development initiatives and its implications in Amarai Village.

Major Development Interventions

Various development programmes are being run by the State Government as well as Central Government for the development in the Amarai Village of Pratapgarh. Few of these are MGNREGA, Jal Jeevan Mission, Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana, Hariyali, Credit cum subsidy scheme for rural housing, Kisan Samraddhi Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, PM Saubhagya Yojana, Sadak Nirman Yojana, Kanyadan Yojana, Sukanya Yojana, Vridhha Pension Yojana, Gram Sadak Yojana, National Skill Mission, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gramin Kaushal Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Vidya Lakshmi Karyakram, Swatch Bharat Mission, Uttar Pradesh Lohia Gramin Awas Yojana. All these programmes cater to diverse need of rural population of Uttar Pradesh in general and Amrai village in particular. Numerous development initiatives are being carried out in major part by the Ministry of Rural Development. Its goals include reducing rural poverty, creating jobs, eliminating hunger and malnourishment, and raising the standard of living. Although the government has prioritised rural development and has spent thousands of crores on various programmes, there is worry that not all of the funding for these programmes actually reaches the intended recipients. Ecological transition is the term used to describe the way in which people integrate nature into civilisation (Bennett, 1976). Hence nowadays conscious efforts are made by policy makers to draft such policies which can fulfil the dire need but also take nature into its account. It is an issue of balance and a policy-oriented cultural ecology needs to be constructed to maintain an equilibrium with development interventions facilitated by Government and local ecology. As a result, progress has continued at a slow pace. Though, these interventions has managed to trigger gradual change in various socio-economic domains of inhabitants of village. The major implications can be studied in the following sub headings.

Economic Mobility

Earlier, the traditional Jajmani System existed to support the members of various caste groups to sustain themselves under a reciprocal economic system in which caste group on its occupational basis contributed to the continuation of this system. The introduction of development initiatives changed the production relations, which caused the Jajmani system to collapse. Earlier the farming system in village largely depended upon the natural course of rainy season. At that time the resources of irrigation were mainly well and were very limited. In such a scenario the landless, marginal lower caste population had no other alternative but to maintain the patron-client relationship aka jajmani system as it provided food security to landless inhabitants of the village during severe seasons of drought and for the landowner upper caste it secured the work force for their farming activities. In addition to standard occupational services, the landless farmers offered their clients labour services for tasks like weeding, irrigating fields, guarding, and harvesting crops. After the harvesting season, either a predetermined sum was paid or the patron received a share of the yield. Villagers claimed that because moral objections to pre-existing patron-client relationships could be made, both the assistance and payment from the patron were guaranteed under the customary system (Tripathi, 2010). The income of farmers from lower caste

classes has increased due to changes in the ownership and accessibility of irrigating and ploughing resources. The conventional patron-client relationships were affected by this. By providing labour during the off-seasons, the NREGA plan in the village also boosted the financial independence of farmers from lower social castes. This has freed the farmers from their former reliance on upper caste farmers with abundant resources, ending their relationship with their clients on a traditional patron-client basis. At present, in Amrai village the relationship between the landowning farmers and landless farmers largely depends upon money and self interest rather than the obligation. Now it has become more capitalistic as the need of labour force for agriculture has taken a commercial form increasing the demand.

Change in Social Structure of Amrai Village

In the past, caste and hereditary relationships governed the social interactions and patterns between the villagers. Caste defines a village group based on traditional occupation, commensal regulations and a particular status and mode of behaviour in the village (Mayer, 1960). In this the traditional Jajmani system played a role in making the social interaction between various caste groups operational with a cause. Though, the concept of purity and pollution was deep rooted in the minds of upper caste population and they maintained distance from the members of lower caste by following various measures of untouchability, commensality etc. Srinivas examined how the idea of a unified pan-Indian hierarchy of varnas obscures the dynamic understanding of pre-British India in the and also discussed how British colonisation made the varna hierarchy worse, particularly by emphasising the place of religion and Brahmins in society. But after the adaptation of constitutional provisions these measures gradually started to vanish as it became illegal. The population belonging to lower caste got many rights which served for both their social as well as economic upliftment in the society. The unfair conventional socio-economic linkages, including the practise of untouchability, have been weakened by the growing competition among farmers, the transfer of resources, economic mobility, and the work guarantee provided by MGNREGA. The need for labour in the village increased as agriculture became more intensive, especially during the post-sowing, harvest, and post-harvest periods. The lower caste members make up a sizable fraction of the labour force thus major landowners from upper castes who have less workers are forced to hire lower caste members for a variety of agricultural tasks. Demonstrating any form of discrimination against the lower castes would lead to loss of their services, which are crucial in the new production environment. People from lower castes now have greater employment prospects both inside and outside the village due to numerous government programmes. The changes in the village have led to nonhereditary, impersonal, and professional ties. The basis of the organisation in Amrai is no longer solely caste-based and hereditary. Additionally, this has made social distance less rigid and the constraints on geographical transit more lenient.

Political Scenario

The change in political environment of Amrai was stimulated because of the economic mobility. Earlier, power was mainly concentrated in the hands of landowning upper castes but due to various development interventions, adaptation of constitutional provisions and the collapse of traditional economic system the power structure of village went through a transition. The socio-ritually higher caste of Brahmin are no longer the politically dominant group and the Baniya caste of the village which has acquired comparatively more land than other castes now hold political power to an extent as they are the regular representatives in the Panchayat elections. Also, the members of other caste contest the panchayat elections regularly. Most development programmes are distributed through Panchayats hence the position of Head or Mukhiya occupied by a person make him/her as the leader and thus the person has the advantage of managing the majority of these programmes. Hence the democratic structure of politics has removed the factor of concentration of power to any particular caste. Now, it rather depends upon the rational decisions which are made on the basis of various factors.

Family Structure

The change in economic system of the village has led to change in the relations within the family in Amrai. As the relationships has become more materialistic due to strengthening capitalism, the internal structure of family has also transformed. In the past kins used to participate collectively in all agricultural activities as they considered it to be their own responsibility but now for their services they expect to be paid. Also, the disintegration of joint family due to increase in population and scarcity of resources has also led to the emergence of materialistic system. Earlier the resources were shared among family and even among extended families, like if they needed bullock for ploughing, seeds, waters from well or other tools and cooperation from other family members then they used to have that but at present this kind of cooperation can not even be imagined. The new farming system has also exacerbated disputes and conflicts among family members, weakening kinship bonds and dissolving joint families. Also, the economic mobility and introduction of capitalism has changed the perception of land. Earlier it was viewed as a source of livelihood which was needed for subsistence but now this perception has changed and has taken a materialistic form where land is viewed as a possession which can contribute in profit making. And this is the reason every kin desires a share of ancestral land and there is countless instance of land disputes all over India.

Rituals and Relationships

The collapse of traditional economic system triggered various changes in belief and perception about the ascribes status of a caste. As the dependency of lower caste on upper caste started to decrease hence it also led to the reduction of

dominance. At present the achieved status is a matter of pride for the villagers and in this the role of education is primary. Now the educated are considered to be the referred group and they are the ones who are sought by other inhabitants of villages whenever a problem arises. The encouragement from various policies that are being run by the Government has made education functional in its truest sense. It has changed the whole status quo between the members of various caste. The social and economic values have changed as a result of change in the system of production and has led to emergence of harmonious environment in the village which aspires towards a positive development.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper highlighted various developmental interventions and its implications on social structure and culture of Amrai village of Pratapgarh. The hypothesis of various development interventions in the village by various agencies has led to changes in social structure and culture and Change in the system of production due to development interventions is the major cause of the change observed in social structure and culture stands to be validated. It is apparent that changes in the production system had an impact on social organization and behavior and these changes in the production system has been brought by various development interventions that were operational in the village since our country got independence. Various Five-Year programs focused on various facets of development and at present the contemporary policies and programs are forming the basis of long lasting positive developmental changes in the village of Amrai. Though, a more thorough analysis of each and all policies and interventions need to be executed to understand and identify the prospect of social transformation.

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