



REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.2331(UIF)

VOLUME - 7 | ISSUE - 3 | DECEMBER - 2017



SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN RURAL SOCIETY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

Prof. B. C. Mylarappa

**Professor, Department of P. G. Studies & Research in Sociology,
Bangalore University, Bangalore.**

INTRODUCTION

Indian society is primarily a rural society though urbanization is growing. The majority of India's people live in rural areas (67 per cent, according to the 2001 Census). They make their living from agriculture or related occupations. This means that agricultural land is the most important productive resource for a great many Indians. Land is also the most important form of property. But land is not just a 'means of production' nor just a 'form of property'. Nor is agriculture just a form of livelihood. It is also a way of life. Many of our cultural practices and patterns can be traced to our agrarian backgrounds. You will recall from the earlier chapters how closely interrelated structural and cultural changes are. For example, most of the New Year festivals in different regions of India – such as Pongal in Tamil Nadu, Bihu in Assam, Baisakhi in Punjab and Ugadi in Karnataka to name just a few – actually celebrate the main harvest season and herald the beginning of a new agricultural season. Find out about other harvest festivals.

MEANING OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

One definition of **Social transformation** is the process by which an individual *alters* the socially ascribed social status of their parents into a socially achieved status for themselves. However another definition refers to large scale social change as in cultural reforms or transformations. The first occurs with the individual, the second with the social system.

The Individual

This is different from social reproduction and social mobility because instead of looking at the intergenerational mobility or the measure of the changes in social status which occur from the parents' to the children's generation, social transformation focuses on how an individual can alter the class culture to which they feel aligned. One socially transforms in three steps: by associational embracement, associational distancing, and the distinct presentation of self.

Social transformation is considered an interpersonal negotiation because it requires that the individual have their social position be validated by others for transformation. It is a reciprocal relationship in which people have to be *embraced* and correctly identified with the cultural expectations of their particular class membership. This is the only way that persons can move from their own ascribed status to a new achieved status.

The Social System

Social transformation in this context requires a shift in collective consciousness of a society - local, state, national or global - so that reality is refined by consensus. This often



happens by external stimulus and sometimes intentionally. Scientific discoveries have triggered many social transformations throughout our history as have religious and royal edicts.

Cities which have reinvented themselves serve of examples of conscious transformations of a social type resulting in reinvigorated and revitalized populations, economic prosperity and restored civic pride. Some countries have achieved these intentional social transformations, one such example being South Africa in 1994 when it ended apartheid.

Social transformations are such when they sustain over time where attitudes and values are held in a completely new context (or paradigm) based upon different assumptions and beliefs.

Main Features of Rural Society

1. **Village is a community** : The village satisfies all their needs in the village. They have a sense of unity and a feeling of amiability towards each other.
2. **Village is a institution** : The development of villages is influenced considerably by the life of the village. In this way village is a primary institution.
3. **Religiosity** : Faith in religion and universal power is found in the life of the villages. The major occupation is agriculture which involves dependence on nature. Farmers worship forces of nature. The life of the village is the joint family system.
4. **Family** has a strict control and administrative powers over the individual. All the members of the family share the burden of the family occupation. In this way of working together the villagers maintain sense of cooperation among themselves. In the life of the villagers group feeling occupies an important place. They respect the judgment and obey the orders of their elders and the panchayats. Society, caste and panchayat have control over the individual.

MARRIAGE FAMILY AND KINSHIP

Marriage is an institution that admits men and women to family life. Edward Westermarck defined marriage as the more or less durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring. Lowie defined it as a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates. Malinowski defined marriage as a contract for the production and maintenance of children. According to Lundberg Marriage consists of the rules and regulations that define the rights, duties and privileges of husband and wife with respect to each other. According to Horton and Hunt marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family. According to Anderson and Parker marriage are the sanctioning by a society of a durable bond between one or more males and one or more females established to permit sexual intercourse for the implied purpose of parenthood. According to John Levy and Ruth Monroe people get married because of the feeling that being in a family is the only proper indeed the only possible way to live. People do not marry because it is their social duty to perpetuate the institution of family or because the scriptures recommend matrimony but because they lived in a family as children and cannot get over the feeling that being in a family is the only proper way to live in society.

The major trends of rural transformation in post-independence era may be discussed as under:

1. The transition of agrarian society from subsistence base to market based agrarian sector.
2. The introduction of modern technology and devices to transform the underdeveloped colonial agrarian economy into a, well knit compact one and its organic integration into the total national economy.
3. Emergence of power blocks which try to work within Constitutional frame using a combination of protests through mass action, appeals to bureaucracy and courts and even lobbying in centers of power.
4. State interventions in adopting different measures to strengthen certain communities, groups or classes on the one hand and weaken others, on the other.
5. Emergence of dominant group like neo-rich peasants, intermediary castes etc. and their tightened hold over avenues of political power. Socially, the green revolution has been basically a contribution of middle class peasantry who have had traditionally a strong attachment to land and agriculture as mode of life and livelihood. The Jats, Kurmis, Yadavas in North; the Patels and Patidars in Gujarat; the Kammas Reddis and Rajus in Andhra Pradesh have been the leaders of green revolution.

The green revolution has led to the consolidation of the status of the middle peasantry as a dominant of class. But the rural poor too have got more organized. They too have now youthful leadership which deals with agencies of development, political parties and institutions of law and order.

The upper caste-class groups which traditionally dominated have now been either replaced by the middle peasantry or have to compete with them to maintain their traditional status and power. The quality of the relationship between the middle caste peasantry and the lower castes has particularly declined and is marked by exploitation and violation.

The relationship of peasantry caste with the agricultural working classes, the lowest castes and the Hanjans is increasingly that of aggressiveness and antipathy. This is being reciprocated by the lower castes and working classes as well, leading to a sharp decline in the cultural ethos of rural society.

A situation is emerging in which the dominant classes do not take kindly to policies of protective discrimination and the weaker sections do not accept the legitimacy of such reform measures. The result is conflict and fewer consensuses on social issues. This happens when more and more mobility and development is taking place.

In this process, mixed blessings for society are seen in general. It indicates a remarkable process of restructuration and social mobility. It reflects the rise of an economic ethic which is productive and generates surpluses and capital accumulation. Various development, however, also coincide with negative social process.

A change in the value system and ideology of the people which promotes localism, casteism and communalism has taken place. This results into conflictual and exploitive relationship between the peasant classes and the rural poor. Thus, social changes also have brought about conflict and maladjustment in the structure of society.

GLOBALISATION, LIBERALISATION, AND RURAL SOCIETY

The policy of liberalization that India has been following since the late 1980s have had a very significant impact on agriculture and rural society. The policy entails participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO), which aims to bring about a more free international trading system and requires the opening up of Indian markets to imports. After decades of state support and protected markets, Indian farmers have been exposed to competition from the global market. For instance, we have all seen imported fruits and other food items on the shelves of our local stores – items that were not available a few years ago because of import barriers. Recently, India has also decided to import wheat, a controversial decision that reverses the earlier policy of self-reliance in food grains. And bring back bitter memories of dependency on American food grains in the early years after Independence.

CONCLUSION-

These are indicators of the process of globalization of agriculture, or the incorporation of agriculture into the larger global market – a process that has had direct effects on farmers and rural society. For instance, in some regions such as Punjab and Karnataka, farmers enter into contracts with multinational companies (such as PepsiCo) to grow certain crops (such as tomatoes and potatoes), which the companies then buy from them for processing or export. In such 'contract farming' systems, the company identifies the crop to be grown, provides the seeds and other inputs, as well as the knowhow and often also the working capital. In return, the farmer is assured of a market because the company guarantees that it will purchase the produce at a predetermined fixed price. Contract farming is very common now in the production of specialized items such as cut flowers, fruits such as grapes, figs and pomegranates, cotton, and oilseeds. While contract farming appears to provide financial security to farmers, it can also lead to greater insecurity as farmers become dependent on these companies for their livelihoods. Contract farming of export-oriented products such as flowers and gherkins also means that agricultural land is diverted away from food grain production. Contract farming has sociological significance in that it disengages many people from the production process and makes their own indigenous knowledge of agriculture irrelevant. In addition,

contract farming caters primarily to the production of elite items, and because it usually requires high doses of fertilisers and pesticides, it is often not ecologically sustainable.

REFERENCE

1. Report of the All India Rural Credit Committee, New Delhi, 2003.
2. Structural Dimensions of Poverty in India, S. P. Gupta, Mittal Publications, Delhi, 1987,
3. Robert Chambers, Rural Development in India, Oxford University Press, 1987.
4. Indian Rural Problems, Ashok Navrang Murarilal & Sons, New Delhi, 2006,
5. Gadgil V. K. (1974) in "Report of Minimum needs and effective remands", New Delhi, Govt. of India, Planning Commission.
6. www.sociologyguide.com
7. Mukherjee (1971), "Rural Poverty and the Minimum level of living a reply". Indian Economic Review,
8. Ojha P.D. (1970), "A configuration of Indian Poverty," RBI Bulletin, January.
9. Burdhan P. K. (1970), On the incidence of Poverty in the rural India in the Sixties. 4. Dandekar and Rath (1971), "Poverty in India", Economic and Political Weekly, Jan.
10. Ojha P.D. (1970), "A configuration of Indian Poverty", RBI Bulletin, January.
11. Dandekar and Rath (1971), "Poverty in India", Economic and Political Weekly, Jan.
12. Minhas B. S. (1970), "Rural Poverty Land Distribution and Development", Indian Economic Review,
13. Related articles, Govt and private websites, and internet information.