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“AGRARIAN SOCIAL RELATIONS IN WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH”

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Abstract:

Indian society is overwhelmingly rural. The village is the unit of the rural society. India means rural India. In India, agriculture is not merely an occupation or a business; it is a way of life which for centuries has shaped the thoughts and outlook of the rural people. Agriculture still plays a key role in the economy of India. Nearly one - third of the gross domestic product is accounted by agricultural sector. Now a days the traditional social structure of village is changing due to change in economic and political sphere. Agriculture still plays a key role in the economy of India. It is important to know that how far rural economy interacts with power structure in a dynamic situation of agrarian society and its impact on rural society.

Key Words: Agrarian Relation, Rural Economy, Power Structure, Land Ownership

The emergence of villages marked a significant milestone in human evolution, particularly with the advent of settled agriculture. According to Professor K L Sharma, a renowned sociologist, the Indian village has undergone substantial transformations over time, influenced by factors like caste, social inequality, and mobility (Sharma, 2014). A villager is tied to land for his sustenance. He survives on land and, therefore, he is emotionally attached to it (Joshi, 2014:114).

Agrarian structure means all mutual relations among the landlords, tenant and agricultural labourers (Joshi quotes in Caubey, 1988). According to 1991 census the three-fourth of Indian population 74.3 per cent lives in villages (Doshi: 2014). Agriculture still plays a key role in the economy of India. Nearly one-third of the gross domestic product is accounted by agricultural sector. About two-third of the workforce is engaged in agriculture. Agricultural inputs account for an important part of the raw material base of Indian industries. Agricultural exports contribute significantly to the total exports of country (Vyas, 2003: 41).

The agrarian social structure varies from one region to another. The relations among classes and social composition of groups that occupy specific class positions in relation to land-control and land use in India are so diverse and complex that it is difficult to incorporate them all in a general scheme (Nagla:2019). Andre Beteille mainly focused on India's agrarian social structure and problems related to land because agrarian structure is the central theme of sociology. Land problems or agrarian social structure has also been taken for intensive study by A.R. Desai. Agricultural production or cultivation is obviously an economic activity (Beteille: 1969). Agrarian structure is the complex whole in which agriculture does. It is very wide in scope and complex in nature. In simple it can be described as, the agrarian structure can be understood to mean the institutional framework of agriculture: it includes the distribution of ownership in land; the form of land tenure and the forms of agriculture employment and organisation such as cooperatives, agricultural societies and it can be regarded as a part of the structure and membership of which is obligatory (Warriner: 1969).

The agrarian structure refers to the social, economic, and political organization of agriculture in a society. Some key characteristics include:

1. Land ownership and distribution: The pattern of land ownership, including the concentration or distribution of land among different groups, affects the agrarian structure.
2. Farm size and scale: The size and scale of farms can influence the organization of agricultural production and the livelihoods of farmers.
3. Labor relations: The relationships between farmers, labourers, and other

stakeholders, including the terms of employment and working conditions, shape the agrarian structure.

4. Technology and mechanization: The use of technology and machinery in agriculture can impact productivity, labour requirements, and the overall organization of farming.

5. Market relationships: The connections between farmers, markets, and other actors in the agricultural value chain influence the agrarian structure.

6. Power dynamics: The distribution of power and influence among different groups, including farmers, labourers, and policymakers, can shape the agrarian structure.

7. Social relations: The social relationships between different groups, including caste, class, and gender, can impact the agrarian structure.

These characteristics can vary significantly across different contexts and can have important implications for agricultural development, poverty reduction, and social justice.

Rural sociology has been powerfully influenced by anti-urbanism, producing a stereotypical view of rural society as stable and harmonious. Robert Redfield adopted a very simple method to view that rural societies were inherently characterized by traditional family social network, consensus rather than conflict, and ascribed not achieved statuses (Marshall: 1998). "Peasant is definitely rural yet live in relation to market towns they form a class segment of a larger population which usually contains also urban centres, sometimes metropolitan capitals. They constitute part-societies with part-cultures" (Krober; 1948-284). Agrarian class structure in a given society evolves over a long period of time. It is shaped historically by different socio-economic and political factors. These historical factors vary from region to region. Thus, though one can use the concept of class to make sense of agrarian structures in different contexts, the empirical realities vary from region to region. The traditional Indian 'rural communities' and the agrarian social structures were organised within the framework of 'jajmani system'.

Kumar (2011) focused on agrarian change in rural Andhra Pradesh, India. Butola (2016) mainly focused on the agrarian relations in India and finds that in general agrarian relations in particular, is an ensemble of India's history,

geography, political economy, society and scientific tempers along with pluralities of culture and diversity of wisdom of its people. Trivedi (2017) chiefly attempts to explore agrarian relations in Senapur, which is a village located in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Andre Beteille (1969) conducted the study in Sripuram village of Tanjore district in South India. K.L. Sharma (1986) studied the problem of agrarian stratification and argued that agrarian structures in India. Andre Beteille (1969) observed the caste structure, class structure and distribution of power in South India.

Respondents and Sample Design: The respondents were selected by purposive sampling method, because agrarian society is stratified in various occupational groups of persons as farmer, peasant, tenants, sharecroppers and landless agricultural labourers etc.

Technique of Data Collection: The study was based on primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from the respondents with the help of structured interview schedule, observation, and group discussion through a field survey in the village. Data collected with the help of interview and schedule/interview guide technique from respondents was analyzed quantitatively by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science Data Analysis) and Simple statistical techniques.

Area of Study: The area of the study was conducted in Bulandshahr district of western Uttar Pradesh. The village Firojpur is situated in the Khurja Block, which is situated at 15 kms from the Block and 35 kms from district headquarter in the Northeast.

Objective: The present study chiefly focused on the agrarian relation in a Western Uttar Pradesh. Thus, the present study focuses upon the following specific questions:

1. The present study mainly focused on the agrarian social relations in a village of western Uttar Pradesh. Thus, the present study focuses upon the following specific questions:
2. What are the changes occurring in the agrarian relations in social, economic and political spheres?

Rural Economy interacts with Power Structure:

Large majority (80.50%) of the respondents has awareness on the basis of political party and the small number 2.50% of the respondents have awareness on the basis of candidate's image. All most all respondents give vote. Large majority (93%) of the respondents do not follow jajmani system and the small number (7%) of the respondents have follow jajmani system. Large majority (95%) of the respondents have responded that the impact of rural economy on jajmani work is decreasing and the small number (5%) of the respondents has responded that the impact of rural economy on jajmani work is increasing.

Changes in the Agrarian Relations

Large majority (97.50%) of the respondents have agreed about change in the relationship between different castes, while 2.50% of the respondents do not agree about change in the relationship between different castes. Large majority of the respondents have responded that the relations are changing from informal to formal between different castes, the relations are changing from traditional to contractual between different castes and relations are changing from jajmani to occupational between different castes. However, the small number i.e. very few of the respondents does not support the fact that the relations are changing from informal to formal between different castes, the relations are changing from traditional to contractual between different castes and relations are changing from jajmani to occupational between different castes. Large majority (73.50%) of the respondents have responded that the family status in rural society is increasing and the small number (26.50%) of the respondents has responded that the family status in rural society is decreasing.

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