

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

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1.0 Introduction :

Geography is concerned with the arrangement of things on the surface of the earth. It is one of the fields, interested in man's use of space and natural resources. It examines the bonds between man, culture and land from a comparative regional view point and can initially be approached from the natural (Earth Science) and cultural (Social Science and Humanities) side. Geographers contend that human societies can be fully understood only if their behaviour and activities are examined against the background of space they occupy, their situation (Relative location in terms of both natural and cultural patterns), and present and prospective resources and resistances facing them (Hoffman, 1965). ✓

Economic Geography is concerned with the distribution of man's productive activities over the surface of the earth. These activities we commonly divide into three kinds, primary activities are those which obtain simple commodities or raw materials from the soil, sea and rocks. They are agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining etc. These goods are then manufactured, processed or fabricated in factories and workshops. This constitutes the secondary group of activities. It rarely happens, however, that a manufacturing process can be completed without making use of transportation services, of insurance

agents, brokers and dealers. These services constitutes tertiary activities (Pounds, 1970).

Social geography can be defined as "identification of different regions of the earth surface according to association of social phenomena related to total environment. It is a study of patterns and processes in understanding socially defined population in spatial setting. It is a study of areal patterns and functional relations of social groups in the context of their social environment (Fielding, 1974).

Socio-economic studies are interdisciplinary approaches which reveal many corelated aspects of the society and economy of a region. They are indeed the bases for the habitat of the region. It is therefore, necessary to investigate the social and economic changes in a developing country to make an assessment of the growing prosperity and welfare of the region.

In India special efforts are being made to raise the level of standard of living of the people. The region under study is no exception to it. Malshiras tahsil is the region where attempt is being made to make the people responsive to the socio-economic plans being undertaken in the area.

Malshiras tahsil situated on the western part of Solapur district, accounts for 10.13 percent area of Solapur district and 10.81 percent population of the district.

The entire population lives in the villages. Agriculture is the main base of the economy of the tahsil and it needs development, diversification and association with industries, big or small.

In this dissertation attempt has been made to analyse the changes in the fields of agricultural productivity, dairy farming, poultry farming, education, electrification, gohar gas plants, medical facilities, irrigation and sugar industries and other industries. It has been revealed that positive changes have taken place rapidly and absolutely in these fields during the period 1961 to 1981. These changes influenced the social and economic conditions as well as political and administrative factors to achieve the desired goals.

1.2 Choice of the region :

The region for the study of "Geographic Basis of Socio-Economic Transformation In Malshiras Tahsil" (Solapur District), selected on the following criteria :-

- i) Malshiras tahsil is most important and prosperous tahsil in the Solapur District. It comprises mostly plain area and fertile soil which are favourable for the agriculture.
- ii) The Nira right bank canal passes through the central part of the region in which northern part of the tahsil

is benefitted by canal irrigation. *Irrigation extent*

- iii) Out of eight sugar factories in the Solapur district four sugar factories are located in the Malshiras tahsil.
- iv) Sugar factories almost become "Growth Centres" from where various innovations like economical, social political, educational etc. are being diffused.
- v) The region has adequate transport and communication facilities which are the basic requirements for the sugar industry.
- vi) The author is well acquainted with the Malshiras tahsil as he belongs to Malshiras tahsil.

1.4 Methodology :

Success of the research work depends upon the methodology adopted for the study. In the study of "Geographic Basis of Socio-Economic Transformation In Malshiras Tahsil" the stress is given on the primary data as the socio-economic transformation cannot be measured directly. Author has collected data personally by visiting various villages in the Malshiras tahsil. Methodology of the study consisted various characteristics and the changes made as per need during the investigation stages.

Primary data was collected by samples. The sampling

technique based on two stage stratified selected sampling was used. Village is considered as one unit and farmer is the ultimate unit of the study. Fifteen villages (9 from the northern part and 6 from the southern part) were selected for the study and fifteen farmers from each village were interviewed. These selected villages are as below :-

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1) Akluj | 9) Sangam |
| 2) Malshiras | 10) Piliv |
| 3) Natepute | 11) Bacheri |
| 4) Borgaon | 12) Mandki |
| 5) Velapur | 13) Girwi |
| 6) Dahigaon | 14) Kothale |
| 7) Fondashiras | 15) Chandapuri |
| 8) Purandawade | |

The Malshiras tahsil is divided into two parts, the northern part and the southern part. The topography of the Malshiras tahsil made these two divisions naturally. The northern part is plain with canal irrigation facilities and southern part is hilly with no canal irrigation facilities. Farmer is the second stage of stratified selected sampling. Fifteen farmers producing sugarcane were selected from each village. These were divided into three groups based upon the size of the land holdings designated as small, medium and

large. Limits of the size groups were as below.

- i) Small land holdings - below one hectare
- ii) Medium land holdings - 1 to 2 hectares
- iii) Large land holdings - above 2 hectares

According to the above classification the farmers in the sampled villages are grouped as under.

Table No.1.1 : Classification of Farmers.

Sr.No.	Class	Number of farmers	Percentage
1.	High	38	16.89
2.	Medium	57	25.33
3.	Low	130	57.78
Total		225	100.00

Source : Compiled by author.

Detailed questionnaire was prepared. It included the general information of the farmers to be asked, details about the population structure, age group, educational structure, occupational structure, information about the agricultural implements and machinery, cropping pattern, use of modern technology, livestock, the detailed information about income,

especially the agriculture, machinery, subsidiary, occupation, trade and commerce etc. The information about the standard of living and social attitude is specially included in the questionnaire.

First, questionnaire was first tested by taking interviews of the cultivators from both the parts, the northern part and the southern part and required modifications were made in the questionnaire, and finalised questionnaire was prepared.

Interviews of the farmers from selected villages were taken and information was collected. Analysis of the data was made. It was divided into seven categories. These are population structure, educational structure, occupational structure, irrigation, cropping pattern, agricultural productivity of crops, standard of living and social attitude.

1.6 Sources of data :

Data and information have been collected from various sources. All the relevant published and unpublished materials have been referred. The main secondary data collected from Socio-Economic Reviews and District Statistical Abstracts of Solapur district, Census handbooks, District Gazetteers, Annual Reports of Shivamrut Dudh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh, Ltd., Shankarnagar (Akluj), Annual reports of Rajhuns Sahakari Kukut

Palan Sangh Ltd., Shankarnagar (Akluj), Annual Reports of Panchayat Samiti Malshiras, etc. ✓

Various institutions have been visited by the author for the collection of data. All the sugar factories in the region were visited and information was collected. Data for dairy collected by visiting Shivamrut Dudh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh Ltd. Shankarnagar (Akluj). Author also visited Panchayat Samiti Office, Malshiras; Tahsil Office, Malshiras and Electricity Board Office, Akluj. All the selected villages were visited by author personally for interviews. Similarly the leading news papers in the region, other news papers and periodicals have been scanned, for the necessary up-to-date data. ✓

Significant attempt has been made to collect information about the socio-economic aspects of the region and to evaluate the role of sugar factories. ✓

Discussions were held with the different experts, viz. economists, sociologists, geographers, and particularly the farmers and authorities of sugar factories to collect the reliable information.

1.6 Limitations :

The present dissertation is prepared for the submission for the M.Phil Degree in Geography. The study is confined to

Geographic Basis of Socio-Economic Transformation In Malshiras Tahsil. As the time factor is concerned, it is rather difficult to evaluate the all socio-economic factors in the region. Hence major socio-economic factors are considered. Secondly, this transformation was mainly caused due to the establishment of sugar factories; hence in this work mainly consideration is made of sugar factories as an influencing factor, other influencing factors are ignored in the present study. Hence it will be urged to remember the limitations of the study.

1.7 Outline of the chapters :

Entire dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter gives the information about the choice of the region, objectives of the study, methodology adopted for the study and the sources of the data.

The second chapter deals with the presentation of geographic basis of the socio-economic transformation of the tahsil, the physical factors as well as cultural factors of the Malshiras tahsil.

The third chapter "Economic Transformation in Malshiras tahsil" consists the study of economic activities of the region. The economic activities are grouped into three kinds, as primary activities which include agriculture, dairy farming, poultry farming etc. The secondary activities include sugar

industry and other industries of Malshiras tahsil. Tertiary activities include trade and commerce etc.

The chapter fourth "Social Transformation in Malshiras Tahsil" includes the introductory part consisting the changing views regarding the caste and class relations, views about the family institutions and marriage institutions. The medical facilities increased, education facilities developed, drinking water supply schemes of the region, gobar-gas plants stimulated by sugar factories and Panchayat samiti were evaluated. The assessment of electricity supply and role of market centres in social transformation of the region also made in this chapter.

The chapter fifth "Analysis of the Survey Work", consists the evaluation of the actual survey done by the author in the region. It is divided into eight categories for interpreting the information as population structure, educational structure, occupational structure, irrigation, cropping pattern, agricultural productivity of crops, standard of living and social attitude of the people.

The last chapter "Conclusion and Suggestions", deals with evaluation of the work done by the author and certain recommendations are made for the enhancement of socio-economic transformation in the region.

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