

CHAPTER - I

Introduction

India is a nation of villages and hence the economic and social development of the Indian society largely depends upon the rural development. Since independence the pace of social change has increased. This change in the rural areas has increased. This change in the rural areas has attracted the attention of a large number of research scholars. The present study is also an attempt to study the nature of change in rural society.

Our main interest is to focus the attention on the change in traditional occupations. This is because, one of the basic features of Indian caste system is occupational differences. The various forces of modernization have brought on significant changes in the rural occupational structure. However we observe that the traditional occupations of some of the castes have changed more rapidly and significantly than those of some other castes. This has made us to concentrate on the occupational mobility of the rural society in general and the village Masudmale in particular. We shall also take into consideration the changing outlook towards the caste system in rural society.

Methodology :

Research Problem :-

The problem of the present research is the nature of changes, brought about in a village, as an impact of the growth

of sugar and other industries in the vicinity of the said village. This change is looked up on as a form of modernizing process.

Objectives :

The general aim of the study is to gain insight into the changes taking place in a traditional village. The specific objectives set are :

- 1) To find out the nature and extent of changes in the traditional occupations of the different sections.
- 2) To see the changes in the socio-cultural outlook and practices.

The Area :

For this purpose we selected a village ' Male '. This selection was made because of three reasons (1) It is a village under the influence of a number of modernizing forces; (2) There are as many as 19 castes and hence our study of occupational changes in a village was likely to be fairly typical ; (3) The research worker is a teacher at Warana Mahavidyalaya, Warananagar and hence in a position to visit the field regularly and easily. The village has the advantages of a) vicinity of daily or weekly shopping facilities, b) proximity to urban centres, c) a highschool, d) a health centre, e) availability of road connections and f) postal facilities.

Besides, the following facts regarding the selected village are also noteworthy. (1) Gram Pandhayat, (2) Co-operative society and (3) proximity to industrial and educational complex of Warananagar. Thus 'Male' with a population of 3461 according to 1971 census was selected for the proposed study.

Sampling Plan :

It was not possible to study all the families in the village due to limitation of time. Therefore, it was decided to draw a 10 percent sample. In order to see that all the castes in the village are represented in the sample, a list of all the families according to their caste was made and stratified random sample method was applied for selecting the families for special study. The caste-wise total number of families and that of selected families in the sample are given below :-

TABLE NO.1 - Caste-wise number of families and the sample drawn for study in 'Male'.

Sr.No.	Caste	Number of families	10 % sample
1)	Brahman	4	1
2)	Maratha	409	41
3)	Vani	16	2
4)	Kumbhar	4	1
5)	Lohar	9	1
6)	Mali	8	1
7)	Teli	2	1
8)	Gurev	8	1
9)	Nhavi	3	1
10)	Parit	1	1
11)	Jangam	3	1
12)	Sangar	42	5
13)	Dhangar	26	3
14)	Kaikadi	3	1
15)	Khatki	3	1
16)	Chambhar	8	1
17)	Dhor	15	2
18)	Mang	10	1
19)	Buddhist(Earlier Mahars)	83	9
20)	Muslim	19	2
Total		676	77

As Table No.1 shows that the village population comprises in all 676 families belonging to 20 different castes. Muslims are included treating them as one caste only for convenience. Out of these 676 families we selected 77 families for our study.

Sources of Data :

The interview technique was applied to get information from the sampled families. Before the actual survey general information about the village was obtained from the village records. The information was secured on the following items to get a proper perspective of the village.

- i) List of the families with caste-wise classification.
- ii) Particulars of land in the village in respect of land utilization, cropping pattern etc. from revenue records.
- iii) Particulars of Nagari Sahakari Pat-Sanstha, Co-operative society, Sangar Sahakari Ghongadi Utpadak Mandali, Dairy and Vachanalaya.
- iv) List of saving accounts holders in Post-Office.
- v) Cultural associations, ' Bhissi ' Mandals and religious festivals.
- vi) List of Vehicles.
- vii) List of members and employees of different institutions at Warananagar.

For this and other particulars of the village, besides interview, the following sources were tapped.

- i) Gram panchayat records.
- ii) Revenue records from the Talathi
- iii) District Census Hand-Book
- iv) District Gazetteer
- v) Records of the Post-office.
- vi) Records of the Primary and Secondary Schools.
- vii) Records of the Co-operative Society and Pat-Sanstha.
- viii) Records of the Shree Warana Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana, Warana Sahakari Bank, Warana Bazar, Warana Dudh Sangh, Warana Kukkut-Palan Sangh and Warana Vibhag Shikshan Mandal.

The above sources provided details to give a general idea of the village under study.

Interviews :

Interview schedule was prepared to obtain pertinent information from the sampled families. A draft of interview schedule was pre-tested and it was finalised after entering certain modifications in the light of the result of pre-testing.

The field investigation commenced from April, 20, and was completed by the end of May, 1985. The interview was conducted in Marathi, the spoken language of the respondents.

During the investigation, it was noticed that some people suspected the study to be a government sponsored one with some ulterior motive presumably harmful to them. They were not willing to give their personal bio-data and family information. After clearing off the doubts and explaining the purpose of the present study there was little difficulty in collecting information.

The past and present students of the researcher also helped in this process.

Hypothesis :

The main hypothesis is that due to the forces of modernization there is a change in the traditional caste system, especially the traditional occupations and socio-cultural outlook. But at the same time some occupations are still regarded as exclusive field of some castes and this fact is an obstacle in the process of change.

The changes that are taking place in Indian villages can be studied as a process of modernization. It is quite clear

and obvious that rapid economic changes are taking place and rural agriculturists have been benefitted from the development work in the surrounding areas. One of the characteristics of the caste system, namely the traditional occupations, is also seen to be changing. This change is of course not uniform for all castes. Some change can also be observed in the values and outlook of people towards society in general and caste in particular. Economic changes bring about changes in other aspects of life. But at the same " traditionalism " also works parallelly. As a result of this we see both the forces of modernization bringing about social changes and the forces of traditionalization reinforcing certain elements of traditional social structure.

C) Plan of the thesis :

The thesis is conveniently divided into seven chapters. The present introductory Chapter gives along with the introduction the methodology and brief plan. The second Chapter summarizes the concept of modernization that is kept in mind while studying the social change, especially the change in traditional caste system. The third chapter describes in brief the salient features of the Indian caste system, main characteristics of a typical Indian villages and the prominent forces behind the process of modernization. In the fourth chapter we

have presented a brief profile of the village Masud-Male. The out come of our study regarding the nature of occupational changes is the subject of the fifth chapter. The significant changes in the outlook towards 'caste' and in the actual practices among the different caste groups form the theme of the sixth chapter. Lastly, in the seventh chapter a summing-up is presented with our concluding remarks.