

Village Society - A review

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Received: May 10, 2018

Accepted: June 21, 2018

India is predominantly a rural country with two third populations and 70% workforce residing in rural areas. Rural economy constitutes 46 per cent of national income. In India on the basis of human settlements rural and urban are two different types of social formation. So in this cognizance traditionalism and modernism are interwoven in globalized India. Over the past two decades rapid economic growth, counter-urbanization, larger capitalistic market set up and gradual changing political scenario have also resulting rural power structure and occupational pattern indeed. Despite the rise of urbanization more than half of India's population is projected to be rural by 2050. Rural transformation and changing pattern of agrarian relation are focal theme of concurrent research in social sciences.

The present volume of *Village Society*, which is the combination of a series of essays has been published in Economic and political weekly over few decades. The present volumes of village society are the trio factor of *UGC*, *TISS* and *EPW* in a systematic manner for promote research.

A book constituted *Village Society* contains sixteen essays on four major themes i.e., methods and perspective, social and cultural life, social-economic and political process and finally perspective on change. It totally provides a comprehensive introduction of historical analysis of the rural India, the changes in rural social life and forces forging concurrent village termed as *Rurban*.

The first essay by *M.N.Srinivas (1975)* brought up *Village studies, participant observation and social science research in India* denotes field view of Indian village. He stresses the importance of field work in social sciences rather known social anthropology to promote growth and development of the subject through the vivid picturisation of socio political economic factors at grass root levels.

He introduced participant observation as a methodology can be a crucial attention to intellectual development. It would also help policy makers to go beyond abstract model of changes.

In next chapter, *Andre Beteille (1972)* emphasizes on rigorous field work to develop experience of society and culture of marginal village to avoid the imposition of dominant sections views.

The essay by *Surinder S Jodhka (2002)* offers a historical perspective of Indian villages. The author focuses political and social transformation of Indian village direct the perception of political leaders of contemporary India, such as Gandhiji, Nehru and Ambedkar so on. In the nationalist discourse, the conceptions of village are too much diversified in nature. Accordance to Gandhi villages as an *authenticity*, for Nehru the village was the source and site of India's *backwardness* and for the Ambedkar, village was a space of oppression where the institution of *caste system* represented in inhuman form. Being a Dalit child, Indian village is a trap of communalism, exclusion, untouchability, localism in inhuman forms.

In the second section of the book, the first essay by *G.K.Lieten (1996)* based on his study of a village of Uttar Pradesh. He discusses dual major sides of Indian religious political issues. Does Hindutva reflects inter class homogeneity and the idea of Hindu-Muslim dilemma in the village found with in upper class and dominant caste. It is surprisingly to notice how religion measured for political purposes by the sake of secularism.

The second chapter of this section by *K.L.Sharma (1970)* based on the field visit of six villages of Rajasthan after post independent time. Author noticed that occupation depended on caste and cultural system. Upper caste was in an advantageous position to meet their income, affirmed self- esteem and power in the society. This kind of caste discrimination supplies fuel to occupational diversification, social system paralyze and deficiency of accountability for right of work and wages in village society. The author focused the so called modernization was in vein to strengthened marginalized society.

The next essay of *Mukul Sharma (1999)* denotes a lucid picture of ST community of the Musahars of rural north Bihar state. The experience of deprivation, un touch ability always outlined with economic deprivation. He provides vivid information about the migration of poor ST community of Mushahar to urban center of India for searching employment and livelihood. It is the way of retain their self-prestige to gain employment and earn money.

The next chapter of *G.K.Karanth* foreground of the impactuation of new technology on traditional rural society of *Jajmani*s under examined in Karnatakavillage.

The essay by *Pratap Chandra Aggarwal (1969)* provides a scenario in rajastha with the phenomena of *Sanskritisation* vs. *Westernisation* in post independent India. *Sanskritisation* is a process by which a lower caste being a tribe changes its custom, rituals, ideology in the direction of higher caste. Alongside, *Westernisation* basically included humanitarian approach and rationalism. The author stated that after the independence, the distribution of land, access to education and giving political power among the under privileged society of the village change their social status.

The last chapter in this section by *Jishnu Das (2000)* on better management of common property resources in village. Based on his study of hilly Garhwal of North India, author focused the dual role of both resource conservation and improvement of labour to the commons.

The third section of the book contained four essays. The first one by *R. Jeffery, P. Jeffery and A. Lyon* also argues the divergent between social and private space of women taken in consideration. The author says the process of rural development by petty job of women aside their domestic responsibility. This work based on field work in Uttar Pradesh villages, focuses the multidimensional uses of dung, as a cementing agent, fuel for cooking, manure, decorative ingredients in houses also economic value.

The chapter by *Leela Gulati (1987)* examines the socio economic impacts of male migration to gulf countries on household women in Kerala. It's the factual that the group of women engaging with other world without male participation. So, Women widened their responsibility to manage their fund and property, child care and carry forward the education of their child smoothly.

The next essay of *Sudha Pai and J. Singh* advocate the growing of Dalits and marginal portion of the society are actively engage with political arena in Merrut district of Uttar Pradesh. Here political mobilization takes place through Bahujan Samajbadi Party (BSP) intervention. The marginalized community exposed to the media and they are aware of their right. Political conflict between Dalit's of Uttar Pradesh and marginalized caste community are taken in to account and amazingly changed the local power equation in governance.

The Final essay of the section three, by *A.K.Vaddiraj* based on a study in Telengana. Due to massive underdevelopment the upper castes tends to migrate for searching better quality life and essence of development. So, Political space of the village handed over the back ward caste (OBCs). Reservation of women and specific social groups in Panchayats election marked the decline of upper caste political power.

The concluding section of the book after a variety of perspectives on processes of change. The beginning chapter of the sector four by *Dipankar Gupta (2005)* focuses the agricultural economy no longer capable of holding people retain in the village. The village has undergone a social and political change to promote caste identity. According to the author "the village is as bloodless as the rural economy lifeless".

Next chapter by *John. Harriss and Nagraj (2010)* offer the rural transformation of twentieth century. As the agriculture mostly in mechanized by using modern irrigation facility, tractors, power tillers, harvester, cutter etc. The agriculture system turned in to capitalistic, market oriented, expertise in nature. So worker participation are less, non-firm employment going hiked. In Dalit's community the dependency on agriculture are decline as it was a preview of development or status upliftment to cope up previous vulnerability. They are less depending upon Hindu land lords. A unique kind of social evolution in terms of revolution takes place through opportunity for work by the social protection scheme of central or state government. The state plays a vital backward welfare scheme to promote PDs, schooling, employment, and health service, food security to avoid oppression and establish social security of the marginalized society.

The last essay of this section by *N.S.Jodha* on the prime importance of common property resource (CPRs) for the poor people in terms of income, livelihood, sustaining ecology. Jodha highlights that if the state or central government intervention on CPRs should check. Law and policy on proper exploitation, scientific and logical idea about CPRs and proper governmental and community participation may change the fallacy of the tragedy of commons.

So, in a nutshell the total volume of the book *Village Society* will be a single reference point and well researched and informed also for some of the best work in the field of development studies in Indian perspective.

References:

1. Jodhka, Surinder S. (ed.) (2012), *Village Society*, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, Economic and Political Weekly, Mumbai.