



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Social Science

CASTE STRATIFICATION AND OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY: A STUDY OF AN URBAN FRINGE OF LUCKNOW

KEY WORDS: Fringe, Urbanization, Stratification, Occupational Mobility.

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ABSTRACT

The physical expansion of cities has given rise to the formation of fringe which is a highly transitional zone between rural and urban land uses. Rapidly growing metropolitan cities expands itself into the countryside leading to the changes in land use patterns. Thus, urban fringes express certain typical characters such as increase in commuting population and conversion from agriculture to non agricultural land uses. Growth of metropolitan cities has brought about important changes in rural- urban interactions. Urban employment and commercialization of agriculture are leading to occupational mobility in fringe areas. As some aspects of social life are interrelated, occupational mobility in fringe has affected traditional service relations and status system in rural society. Traditional status system was based on ownership of land but the new criterion of differentiation is based on income, occupation and education. The present paper would intend to explore the trends of occupational change in an urban fringe of Lucknow city.

MAINTTEXT

Economic development and growth of industries in the post independent period gave impetus to the process of urbanization; which can be defined as a process of concentration of population in a particular territory. Growth of cities has expanded the economic opportunities and attracted the people from small towns and villages. Rural people have migrated to cities in search of better employment opportunities and other facilities. Many other social factors such as attraction of cities, better standard of living, better education facilities, need for status also induce people to migrate to cities and these resulted into the expansion of urban area into its periphery. The big cities are expanding physically into the peripheral villages in an unplanned and haphazard manner. Human ecologist and geographers described this unplanned area as a fringe, which is a transition zone between urban and rural land uses while some economist have described fringe as a combination of farm and non-farm occupations and part-time farming and part time commuting activities. Some sociologists have paid attention to the emergence of changing occupational structure and new family forms in fringe villages. Change in occupational character of fringe villages leading to change in traditional stratification system which was earlier based on caste.

The occupational structure of Indian Village has been rigidly fixed with caste stratification. The occupation of an individual was determined by the caste system in which membership was restricted by birth. Each specific occupation was ascribed to each caste or sub-caste. Since caste was hierarchical, the occupation dependent upon the caste was also hierarchical in its status. When the traditional Indian society came into contact with modern society, the close relation between caste and class got diluted. In the modern Indian society, the occupation is neither caste based nor hereditary as it was in past. New Industrial-Urban society created several non-conventional jobs and broke the barriers of caste. The present study is an attempt to understand the occupational mobility in a fringe village of Lucknow city.

Area of the Study:

Studied village *Sonva* is situated towards north at a distance of 35 km. from the Lucknow city headquarters. It is connected with the city by all weather roads and covers 2.33 km. square area of this region. People of the village used to take private buses and auto-rickshaws for transport which are available at small time intervals. Thus from the point of view of transport the village is well connected with the main city. The village has all 322 families with 2300 total population in which male constitute 1260 and female constitute 1040 no. of total population. Total literacy rate of the village is 76.27%. Literacy

rate of male is 83.54% whereas females are showing 68.1% literacy.

METHODOLOGY:

Village is the focus of present study in the context of Stratification and occupational mobility. The sample design of present study was done at three stages. At the first stage the selection of an urban fringe through purposive sampling was made. Selected fringe area is *Bakshi ka Talab* block, located at the distance of 27 kilometers from the Lucknow city. At the second stage, the selection of village, namely *Sonva*, made through purposive and at the final stage, 161 households that is 50 % of the total households, of *Sonva* selected through stratified random sampling. The criterion of selecting the village is that it is passing through the process of urbanization. The quantitative and qualitative socio-structural data have been collected from a comprehensive and purposeful field work which is based on the interaction with the people. For the effective and flawless data collection, interview and focused group discussion methods were extensively used during the field work. Interviews done are mainly semi- structured and questions are open ended so that responses are not restricted.

Caste Profile of the village Sonva

Sonva is a multicast village where different castes and categories are living together. Agriculture is the main occupation of the village, though villagers are also doing many other non-agricultural works available either in village or in the main city.

Table: 1 Distribution of Household on the Basis of Caste/ Religion

Castes/Religion	No. of Households	Percentage
Hindu		
Brahmin	45	28.0
Kashtriyia	10	6.2
Yadav	12	7.4
Lodh	11	6.8
Goswami	06	3.7
Nai	02	1.2
Kumhar	02	1.2
Chaurasia	01	0.6
Mallah	01	0.6
Gautam chamar	20	12.4
Pasi	29	18.0
Dhobi	13	8.0
Total	152	94.5
Muslim		
Darzi	08	4.9
Sikh	01	0.6
Total	161	100

Brahmins, Kshatriys and Sikhs constitute as 56 households of General category or upper castes in the village. Yadavas, Lodh, Goswamis, Nai, Kumhar, Chaurasias, Mallah and Muslim Darzis constitute 43 households all together, comes in Other Backward castes or Intermediate castes category while all total 62 households of Gautam, Pasi and Dhobi falls in the category of Scheduled castes which is supposed to be a lowest castes in the caste stratification. In this village, Brahmins are in dominant position as they are in maximum numbers and also holding the major portion of agricultural land.

Table: 2 Distributions of Households Involved in Agricultural Occupations

Castes/Religion	Total Households	Landowners	Tenants	Landless labourers
Brahmin	45	32	04	03
Kashtriya	10	07	-	02
Sikh	01	-	-	-
Yadav	12	09	-	03
Lodh	11	06	01	04
Goswami	06	03	-	03
Nai	02	-	-	-
Kumhar	02	01	-	01
Chaurasia	01	01	-	-

Table: 3 Occupational Structure of the Village by Caste

Caste/Religion	Total Households	Total Dependence on Agriculture	Agriculture & Non-Agri. Occupations In Village	Agriculture & Urban Occupations In city	Agricultural, Non-Agri. & Urban Occupations	No Dependence on Agriculture		
						Non-Agri. Occupations In Village	Urban Occupations In City	Combining Both
Brahmin	45	24	07	08	-	01	04	01
Kashtriya	10	05	03	01	-	-	01	-
Sikh	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	01
Yadav	12	06	05	01	-	-	-	-
Lodh	11	06	02	03	-	-	-	-
Goswami	06	04	01	01	-	-	-	-
Nai	02	-	-	-	-	02	-	-
Kumhar	02	-	01	-	01	-	-	-
Chaurasia	01	-	01	-	-	-	-	-
Mallah	01	01	-	-	-	-	-	-
Muslim Darzi	08	-	02	-	-	01	05	-
Gautam	20	16	03	01	-	-	-	-
Pasi	29	26	-	02	-	01	-	-
Dhobi	13	03	03	-	-	07	-	-
Total	161	91	28	17	01	12	10	02
Percentage to total		56.5	17.4	10.6	0.6	7.5	6.2	1.2

FINDINGS:

Besides agriculture, there are other rural occupations in which the families of village Sonva are engaged. Few of the occupations are based on traditional callings of the castes whereas some others have emerged as the repercussions of many new social processes entering into rural society. Occupations which are traditionally associated with castes of Nai (Barber caste), Dhobi (Washer-men), Darzi (tailor) and Kumhar (Potter) are still being continued by the people of the respective castes in the village. New professions of Gram rojgar sevak, Shiksha Mitra and cook in schools, Asha Bahu are the outcomes of New Education system and village development programmes are running by the Government. As situated on an urban fringe, village Sonva is opened up to various urban occupations offered by the growing city. Many of the households are seen combing both rural and as well urban occupations. The occupational status of the people of the village in urban areas is reflected by their educational profile. Since most of the villagers are not much educated and

Mallah	08	-	06	07
Muslim Darzi	20	02	07	10
Gautam	29	07	-	-
Pasi	13	11	-	-
Dhobi		06		
Total	161	85	18	34
Percentage to Total		52.8	11.2	21.1

It can be well observed from Table 2 that 52.8 % of total households are landowners, 11.2 % households are tenants and 21.1 % of total households are agricultural labourers. It is clear that 137 of total households, that is, 85.1 %, are dependent on agricultural occupations in any of its kind. This is an overwhelming dependence on agriculture though many amongst them have started combining both, agricultural and non- agricultural occupations simultaneously. Only 24 households, that is, 14.9 % of total, are involved in the occupations other than agriculture. Amongst them 06 households of Brahmins and 01 of Kshatriys are totally involved in urban occupations, 01 Sikh household is seen doing the non-agricultural occupations in village and in city also. All 02 households of Nais are involved in their traditional calling in village while 06 households of Darzis are continuing their traditional work of tailoring in village and in city. 01 of the Pasis household is involved working in city and 07 households of Dhobis are continuing with their traditional calling of washing clothes in village and its vicinity.

not technically sound, their jobs are mostly unskilled and are put to use in unorganized sectors. Only two exceptions were found in the research: only two members of one of the Brahmin families were found to a teacher and a manager. Other than this, all the people, irrespective of their castes are doing unskilled jobs as peons, security guards, artisans, property dealers, electrician and laborers. Village economy is encountering with new economic forces which have emerged as a result of rural-urban interaction. Urban employment is leading towards occupational mobility in fringe villages, which is fading away the traditional ties of caste and occupation.

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