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SOCIO ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF CHURA COMMUNITY IN RURAL HARYANA: A CASE STUDY OF JHAJJAR DISTRICT

Doctoral Dissertation Abstract (2021)

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Caste is a basic attribute of the Indian social structure. Traditionally, the Indian society has been governed by the institution of caste. Therefore, caste has operated as an instrument of social ordering. The term 'caste' has been first used by Portuguese travelers who came to India in the 16th century. The word caste has been derived from the Portuguese word 'casta' meaning 'race, lineage, breed' and, originally, 'pure or unmixed'. The fundamental and core feature of India's social structure has been its caste system. Even after nearly seventy years of Indian independence, caste remains the symbol and essence of Indian society differentiating it from other societies. It is believed that scheduled castes have been impure and polluted. The scheduled castes are comparatively backward socially and economically as well as politically. The recent past has witnessed a significant improvement in levels of educational attainment among scheduled castes. Growing urbanization and awareness among people residing in countryside towards modern way of life, declining interest among youth in traditional economic activities and increasing occupational mobility have played a pivotal role in overall transformation of the society. It has also been observed that social, economic, educational, cultural and political status of chura community has improved. The

present study is an attempt to understand the socio-economic structure of chura community in Jhajjar district of Haryana.

Objectives

Major objectives of the study are:

- to study the genesis of chura caste;
- to analyze the clan-wise as well as block-wise population characteristics, with respect to educational attainment, socio-economic structure, availability of modern assets and amenities and
- to study the rural dwellings and house types of the chura community.

Database and Methodology

For the present research work, both primary and secondary data have been used. The primary data have been collected by using the well-prepared schedules and personal interviews conducted with the head of family. On the basis of four parameters such as percentage of scheduled caste population, literacy rate, work participation rate, and number of households of chura community in a village, 15 villages have been selected with the help of stratified random sampling to collect primary data. Primary data have been collected from 460 sample households from selected villages.

To analyze the various levels of educational attainment, the clan-wise and block-wise total educated persons with males and females have been calculated in percentages. In order to determine the ranks of different clans and blocks, weighted score has been given to the proportion of educated persons in various levels of educational attainment. Finally, the weighted aggregate score has been worked out to assess the highest and lowest rank difference of educational attainment among the clans, as well as at block level in the study area. To describe the clan-wise as well as block-wise socio-economic structure of various aspects and the availability of household assets and amenities have been calculated into percentages. Further, the weighted score has been assigned to 36 selected variables covering nine selected socio-economic aspects of the population under study. Individual amenities have been assigned weights depending upon their function and relative importance to derive composite weighted score. Further, to identify the average composite weighted score of various selected aspects, the total composite weighted score has been divided by the number of households of each clan. Finally, the differentials among the clans with regard to all the selected aspects have been worked out. To analyze the clan-wise and block-wise house types like kutchha house, mixed house and pucca house, households based on building materials have been calculated into percentages. The village level data in respect of population characteristics of Jhajjar district and district-wise per cent share of chura community in Haryana have been obtained from various primary Census abstracts and special tables on scheduled castes of Haryana. Tables and diagrams have been prepared with

the help of suitable cartographic techniques and methods. Maps have been prepared with the help of ArcGIS software.

Major Findings

The study reveals that Bidhlan, Kangda, Pihwar and Sarser are dominant clans in respect to households as well as population and shared more than 60 per cent of population. The largest and lowest share of chura population has been found in Bahadurgarh and Salhawas block respectively. Total, male and female literacy rate among chura caste in Jhajjar district has been 72, 79 and 63 per cent respectively. Among the clans, the highest male literacy rate has been recorded by Chandalia clan, while highest female literacy rate has been found in Lauth clan. Among the blocks, the highest and lowest literacy rate have respectively been recorded by Beri and Salhawas blocks.

The study constituted nearly two-fifth workers in proportion to the total sampled population of chura caste. It has been found that 62 per cent workers are engaged in primary activities, 34 per cent in tertiary activities and only 4 per cent workers are engaged in secondary activities. The highest work participation rate has been recorded in Bagri clan, while it has been lowest in Pihwar clan. The average sex ratio among chura community has been 825 females/1000 males. The highest sex ratio has been recorded in Chandalia clan (959 females/1000 males), while it has been the lowest in Deeka clan (650 females/1000 males). The average size of the household among chura caste in the study area has been 4.9 persons.

On account of education, it has been found that among chura caste 95 per cent males and 96 per cent females have attained educa-

tion upto 'plus two' level. Among chura caste Tank clan has obtained first rank, while Deeka clan has obtained lowest rank in the levels of educational attainment in Jhajjar district. It may be noted that Salhawas block has obtained first rank among the blocks in levels of educational attainment, while the lowest rank has been obtained by Beri block.

More than three-fourth households save income less than Rs. 3500 of their monthly income which reflects the poor economic status of chura caste. The people of chura caste spend more than one-third of their total expenditure on food. The households of Salhawas and Bahadurgarh blocks spend maximum amount on food, religious activities and education, while the Beri and Matanhail blocks spend more amount on food, clothing and education. About one-fourth households have double bed and nearly one-fifth households have the facility of sofa set. About three-fifth of total households, use gas cylinders for cooking.

Out of total sample households, less than one per cent have the facility of computer, laptop and internet. About half of the households have the facility of latrine/pit toilet, and nearly one-fifth households use flush toilet. Nearly, 28 per cent households have no facility of toilet, therefore, use open space for toilet. Nearly three-fourth households use tap water for drinking, one-fifth households use hand pump water and only 2.4 per cent households use the tube well water for drinking. More than three-fifth of the households have dwellings size of up to two rooms. Out of the total houses of chura caste, three-fifth houses are mixed types, 35 per cent are pucca and nearly five per cent of the houses are kutchra.

Geychand clan has better conditions in electric appliances and automobiles; Dulgach clan in drinking water facilities and communi-

cation facilities, while Lauth clan has better conditions in the availability of sanitation facilities and fuel used for cooking as compared to other clans. Tank clan has better access in the availability of modern assets and amenities like furniture, number of rooms and type of houses. It has also been recorded that the first rank is obtained by Geychand clan, while the lowest is obtained by the Kangda clan in the availability of modern assets and amenities.

Salhawas block has better access as compared to other blocks in the availability of modern assets and amenities like drinking water facilities, furniture, electric appliances, number of rooms and type of houses, while Beri block has better conditions in the availability of sanitation facilities and fuel used for cooking. On the other hand, the Jhajjar block has better conditions in electric appliances and automobiles. The first rank has been obtained by Salhawas block, while the lowest has been obtained by the Matanhail block in the availability of modern assets and amenities among chura caste in Jhajjar district.

The rural dwellings and house types denotes the economic level of the people. About three-fifth walls of the houses are built of un-burnt bricks, 36 per cent of burnt bricks and only five per cent houses' walls are built of mud. Nearly 63 per cent houses' roofs are made of stone, followed by 22 per cent made of reinforced cement concrete, nine per cent are made of mud and about six per cent houses' roofs are made of burnt bricks. While, more than half of the houses' floors are made of cement, 22 per cent made of mud, 11 per cent made of tiles, 10 per cent made of burnt bricks and only five per cent houses' floors are made of marble. The chura community is generally very poor, only 37 per cent of the houses are

pucca. Geychand clan is comparatively developed group among the chura community. As much as 60 per cent of the houses belonging to Geychand clan are pucca followed by Tank clan.

The number of storeys of houses indicate economic condition of the clans among chura caste. It is recorded that about 94 per cent houses have single storey, five per cent houses have double storey, and less than one per cent houses have triple storey. It has been observed that all the houses in Beri block have

single storey, 10 per cent houses of Salhawas block have double storey. Only two per cent houses of chura community in Jhajjar block are triple storey.

The study can be helpful for the policy makers to formulate the policies for the upliftment of Chura caste, particularly residing in rural areas of Jhajjar district. It is suggested that the government should provide more facilities to chura caste to improve their educational and economic status in rural areas of Jhajjar district of Haryana.

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