

CHANGES IN FAMILY INSTITUTION WITH ECONOMIC TRANSITION IN BARAD TRIBE OF PUNJAB

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Economy has always been an important part of every society and also among tribes. Tribes mostly had subsistent economy and were not exposed to market forces till the advent of industrialisation and modernisation. Now tribal economy is changing which is having its further impact on the institution of family. While earlier the economic activity of the tribes was under the preview of family community setting but now due to development of technology family ceases to be the economic unit of production. Now one or more member leaves the household to seek employment in the labour market which has led to the origin of nuclear family system. Decrease in the integrity between kins could also be seen along with decrease in the domination of males in the family. Hence the present paper is an attempt to examine qualitatively, the change in occupation over generations of the Barad tribe and its impact on the structure and function of the family.

INTRODUCTION

Economy has always been an important part of every society. Tribal economy has always been subsistent and homogeneous. The whole tribal community could be seen doing the same traditional occupation which they pass on to their future generations. As modernization and development has affected each and every aspect of society, hence also the economy of the tribes. It is true that the achievements of man in the modern age provide unprecedented opportunities for human welfare and fulfilment, but they have also placed in the hands of man instruments of universal destruction. Tribes are now being deprived of their most important and natural asset, 'the forests'. The tribal economy is getting monetised and people are getting aware about the cash economy. They are losing their traditional occupation and moving towards the modern. The occupation followed by the fore-fathers is not followed by the new generation. (B.P. Singh 2012). This change in the economy has its further social implications which could be seen as a change in the marriage and family institution.

Family the basic unit of society is very much influenced by the social environment and other social institutions. This influence is reciprocal i.e. other social institutions also gets influenced by family. For example, 'William J. Goode (1963) believes that certain family systems facilitate industrialization as much as the latter affects family system' (cited in Robert O. Blood, 1972).

Traditionally economy and family had been closely related. The family was the group or unit which worked and earned together. The activity of earning the

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livelihood was family and caste oriented and not individual oriented. Marx and Engels also pointed to the inter relationship between the larger economic structure of the society and the family. According to them, the family is historically changing as the material conditions of the society change. The industrial revolution, intense concentration of wealth, capitalist mode of production, modernisation, economic development and more recent conglomerate mergers have had a great impact on the family. The nature of the relationship between the family and the labour force has greatly altered by separating work from home. In a non-commodity oriented society the economic activity was part of family community setting. But the rise of machine-run factories and the concentration of productive property in the hands of a few in the 19th century led to profound changes: more complex stratification; the separation of work from home; the individual worker rather than the whole family as the economically productive unit in society; the transfer of goods that were produced in the home to factory production etc. Hence as the family ceases to be an economic unit of production, one or more members leave the household to seek employment in the labour market. This has resulted in separate and quite unequal shares of responsibility for husbands and wives instead of the previously joint participation in economic functions; hers in the private and emotional world of the home; his in the world of works'. The worker in the labour market faces a lot of adjustment problems. He has to conform to the rhythm of machine rather than the rhythm of his own mind and body. The consequence of the removal of economic activities from the family-community setting is that the family itself loses some of its previous functions and become a more specialised agency. The family's activities become more concentrated on emotional gratification and socialization. The social implications of these structural changes in the family are enormous. The most fundamental change is the change in the quality of family life which is becoming more personalised, individual, emotional, psychological and isolated. The connection with collateral kinsmen is eroding as the joint families are changing to nuclear. The other social problem that arises as a consequence of this is the place of the aged. 'No longer cushioned by a protective kinship unit, the older folk are thrown onto the community or the state as "charges" in greater numbers than before. Because of the special isolation of the aged, new institutional arrangements, such as pensions and social security programs, become imperative'. (Smelser, 1966)

Simultaneously the relation between parents and children is also changing. The father loses the economic training functions he previously enjoyed over his children. Correspondingly, apprenticeship system which requires the continuous presence of father and son decline as specialised factory production arises. Hence the family tends to give most of its training functions to the formal educational system. (Cited in Sokoloff, 1977; Smelser, 1966; Desai, 1964).

William F. Ogburn in his early work asserted that the 'prime mover of social change is technology (material culture) and that the non-material elements adjust

to it after a time (culture lag), but his actual research and his later theoretical position were more eclectic. He saw a wide range of new elements as sources of family change, from ideologies to airplanes. Like many family analysts of the past generations, he saw the modern family as “losing its function”, because industrial production took place in factories, education in schools, religious training in churches and so on’. (cited in Goode, 1965).

The same scenario could also be seen among the tribes in Punjab. Seven ex-criminal or denotified tribes (Vimukt Jatis) could be found in Punjab namely Bauria, Bazigar Banjara, Bangala, Barad, Gandhila, Nat and Sansi. All these tribes are given the status of Scheduled Castes. The present study focuses on the Barad tribe of Punjab. According to the Census of Punjab (2001) their total population in the state is 8,679, that is 4,519 males and 4,160 females. But according to their own estimation the number is approximately 12,000 to 15,000. Singdiwala village (Hoshiarpur) has a large population of around 1,500. The maximum concentration of this community is found in the districts of Gurdaspur, Jalandhar,

Hoshiarpur and Amritsar. The people of Barad community are timid and shy but social. Initially they were nomadic but most of them now lead a settled life. It is believed that they migrated from the Kangra district (in Himachal Pradesh) to Punjab nearly 150 to 200 years ago in search of livelihood. The main occupation of this tribe was making *kanghis* (combs for weaving) for *Adharmi julahas* (lower caste weavers) who used these to weave *khaddar* (a type of cloth) on *khaddis* (handlooms). Due to modernisation and change in technology, handlooms lost their importance and their making of *kanghis* (combs for weaving) suffered a setback. Now people of this community are seen indulged in petty jobs. Most of them are wage labourers (Harinder Kaur 2010). With this economic transition changes could be seen in their family set up too. Where earlier the economic activities were located in the traditional family-community setting now one or more members of the Barad family have to leave the household to search work in the labour market. Hence significant changes could be seen in the family system of the Barad tribe which will be discussed further.

METHODOLOGY

The universe of proposed study is the Barad community in Punjab. For present study three districts of Punjab have been chosen i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Nawashehar due to their maximum concentration there. The population of the tribe is very less and they are found only in few villages or towns of these districts. Hence two villages/towns were chosen from each district taking into consideration the duration of the study. In Hoshiarpur district the villages chosen was Singdiwal and Baria kalan, Adampur and Jalandhar city was chosen from the Jalandhar district and from Nawashehar district Banga and Nawashehar city was chosen.

It is an empirical study that calls for the collection of primary data from a requisite sample hence the field work was done in the month of August and September 2015. Non probability sampling method was applied and hence as per convenience fifteen households were interviewed from each village to collect the desired information.

ECONOMY OF THE BARADS: PAST AND PRESENT

Barads have traditionally been doing the work of making *Kanghis* which were used to make *khaddar*. *Kanghis* were made of *kanne* and *bans*. The *kanghis* of *bans* were more costly as their quality was far better. *Judde* and *binne* were also prepared by the females of the barad community which were made up of *bagad* and *munj*. The raw material like *kanne*, *bans*, *bagad* and *munj* were all collected from *mand*. The work was very finely divided between the community members showing proper division of labour. The work of getting the *kanne* or the *bagard* was solely done by the males. Men used to go to *mands* to get these items necessary for making *kanghis*, *judde* and *binne*. Females didn't used to accompany them. The work of making *kanghis* was done both by men and women. Children also used to participate. *Kanghis* were sold to *Adharmi Julahas* or the traders who used to come home to collect them. The selling and purchasing was mostly done by the males. But on the other hand *judde* and *binne* were made only by females and were also sold by them. They used to go to nearby villages to sell them for money and grains. But due to the prevalence of barter system taking grains was preferred as compared to that of money.

Due to industrialisation the occupation of Barad tribe has received a setback. The *kanghis* made by them are no more used, as now the iron *kanghis* and other equipments are used in the factories. Hence Barads could be seen doing other occupations like tailoring, small shop-keeping, selling petty commodities, cycle and scooter repairing, stitching clothes, vegetable-sellers etc. Most of them are working as wage labourers or as workers at shops. Females could be seen selling bangles or working as maids. They are economically weak and struggle to make a livelihood.

EFFECT OF ECONOMIC TRANSITION ON FAMILY

In pre-industrial societies economic activities were linked to traditional family-community setting. There was division of labour and every person of the family contributes in the production. The whole of the community used to do same occupation. The similar was the case in the Barad community. The whole family indulged in the production. There was division of labour as discussed above. But with economic development the segregation of economic activities from this traditional setting could be seen. Now the Barads are no more working in the family. They could be seen working outside in the labour market. They are

segregated not only from the control of their capital but also from other family members since they are placed side by side with other workers in the labour market. Due to this segregation they have to face a lot of adjustment problems. They find the definition of economic security greatly altered. In the traditional system of economic activities the workers were likely to be underemployed rather than unemployed. They always used to turn towards their tribesmen for help. But in today's urban-industrial setting worker may get unemployed due to greater fluctuations in the market though the income might be higher as compared to that of the traditional setting. Hence most of the male members could be seen sitting idle at home without work which is the basic cause of their poverty. Their average working days vary from 18 to 20 days a month. Now Barads are no more working at their own place so they have to adjust to the notion of workday and work week.

As now the male members of the family spend most of the time outside home the relationship between father and children and between husband and wife have greatly altered. Where earlier father used to train his children in making *kanghis*, now he loses this economic training function he previously enjoyed over children. As the father loses the economic authority he also tends to lose the paternal authority. The mother often being the only adult to spend most of the time with the children develops more intensive emotional relationship with them.

The similar things were ascertained by the Barad community as well. While interviewing the Barad females said '*pehla mard ghar rehnde c ta bachea nu dar hunda c, hun ta eh dar de hi nahi kise to, sade vele ta bapu da ki naal de gavandi da vi dar hunda c, koi kuskda v nahi c*'. (Earlier as males used to be at home so children were scared of them, but now they are not scared of anyone. During our times children were afraid not only from the father but also from the neighbourer). One of the aged Barad male said '*pehla asi eh nahi keh sakde c ke aj kam karan da man nahi karda, khedan vaste v thoda kam kar ke pher puchde c, hun oda da sama nahi reha*'. (Earlier we could never say no to work because of fear. Before playing we used to finish work. Now time has changed).

Along with this even the relationship between husband and wife has changed. It is true that females have always enjoyed equal status in the Barad community. They equally participated economically as they used to go for selling *judde* and *binne* and had an equal say in family decisions. Even today the females could be seen selling bangles or doing household chores in other's home as the *judde* and *binne* are no more used. But now the authority of the females has increased as compared to that of males. A male member of the Barad family said, '*pehla janania de muh vich juban nhi c hundi te hun marda de*' (Earlier ladies had no tongue in their mouth and now males).

Barads have patriarchal and patrilocal families. The joint-family system still prevails but it is giving way to nuclear families. Though the family lives in the same house but mostly parents and children have their own separate kitchen. It

was found that even the aged parents make their own food. Children are not ready to take the responsibility of their parents now-a-days. This is all due to modernisation as people want their privacy and also due to lack of proper source of income. A Barad said, '*pehla ohni der tak vakhre nahi c karde jad tak kabildari nahi c sikhde, hun ta aundea hi vakhria ho jandia aa*'. (Earlier the new couple never used to get separated from the family till they get matured and learn how to manage family but now joint family changes into nuclear family as soon as the marriage of the son takes place). Earlier also households with separate kitchens were found but there was mutual love as their occupation was same. All members used to sit together to make *kanghis*. Children also used to participate and work together. But now as Barads move outside for work, the love and solidarity among family members has declined. A Barad female told while interview, '*pehla sade ghara dian kanda v nahi san hundi, sare mard bahar ikathe manjia la ke sonde c te raat tak gallan marde rende c, pehla loka vich bhut piyar hunda c, eh kanda ta hune thodi der pehla baniya*'. (Earlier the houses had no walls. Elderly men of the complete tribe used to sleep together in open and used to talk till late night. There was lot of love among them. But now recently these walls of houses have been made up).

Earlier in Barad community education was not given to children especially girls. Girls were not allowed to move out of their homes and neither to come in front of any outsider. They were just given vocational training of how to make *kanghis*, *innu* and *judde*. They used to remain at home and do this work. This behaviour was just done to protect girls and not due to discrimination. During marriage the parents used to give tools needed to make *kanghis* to their daughters but now their children don't know anything about this occupation. Now Barads are giving education to their children including girls. No restrictions are imposed on girls and they can freely move out. But still the dropout rate among their children is high due to their poor economic condition. Earlier the ladies also used to take *ghungat* (veil) from the elder males and also when they go outside home. But now even this tradition is changing. Ladies no more do *ghungat* when they go outside though few still do it from elder males especially their father-in-law.

Child marriage is still prevalent among the Barads. Children are married as soon as they reach puberty. Earlier marriages were solemnised at much younger age and sometimes even when the children used to be in their parents lap. But now this tradition is not prevalent. Now the age of marriage has gone up to 14 to 16 years and in some cases it has been raised even more where the children are studying and the economic condition of the family is good. But such cases are very few in number. 'They marry within their own community. Traditionally, they do not marry their daughters to people of other castes. If someone does this then he is declared an outcaste. There is strict tribal endogamy and no space for love-marriages either'. (Harinder Kaur 2010).

Family tensions are found in every community and Barad tribe is no exception. It was found that among them the tensions are due to lack of proper source of income and also insufficient land to live on. They could be seen living in small congested houses. Earlier also tensions were prevalent but mutual love between them remained intact. A Barad female said, '*sade parivara vich hun bhut badlav aa geya hai, pehla lokan vich piyar hunda c, hun ta koi kise nu dekh ke jarda nahi*'. (A lot of change has occurred in our family system. Earlier there was lot of love and feelings of brotherhood among the family members but now it is not present).

The Barad community do not interact much with other communities. Earlier they used to interact with *Adharmi Julahas* and other traders who used to buy *kanghis* from them. Now as the traditional occupation has ceased to exist therefore there is no social relationship with *Adharmi Julahas* now. The interaction of the barad community is either among themselves or with the lower caste people who are their neighbors. Hence with the change in the economic relations social relations have greatly altered.

CONCLUSION

The present study fulfils its objective of delineating the changes that have occurred in the family institution due to economic changes. Along with this it also highlights other changes that have occurred in family of Barads. Modernisation and development has brought unprecedented changes to our society but there are communities who have been adversely affected by it especially the tribal communities in every part of the world. The economic changes in this community are also the result of the same which has changed their very identity. Their traditional occupation of most of the tribes had totally extinct which has reduced these communities to labourers or unemployed. The social implications of these economic changes are tremendous. The paternal authority which parents used to enjoy over their children has declined and modernisation has given way to individualization and personalisation. No doubt that few positive changes could be seen as providing education to the children but the integrity and the solidarity among the family and kin members has declined. The functions of the family as a unit and also of the family members have greatly altered and more of individualization is making way for nuclearization of the family structure.

Indigenous communities consist of a unique life style and type of work. They have been living in close proximity with bio-diversity and have evolved specific and novel livelihood strategies based on their indigenous knowledge. It is the duty of government to preserve their distinct culture and identity. No doubt numerous government schemes are launched every year for these communities but the forces of industrialization and modernization are so strong that they have uprooted the tribal community. Therefore, measures should be taken to preserve the traditional

occupation and efforts should be made for arranging proper marketing facilities for their products. Government should play an important role to ensure that the industrialized goods should not hamper the occupation of the tribal as has been done in the case of Barad tribe. Special provisions should be made to provide occupation to the Barad community as they have been reduced to labour class or are unemployed. Hence the government has to make suitable efforts so that the tribal communities remain closer to their traditional economy and way of life.

Appendices

<i>Adharmi julahas</i>	Lower caste weavers
<i>Bagad</i>	Thick dry grass (raw material for making <i>judde</i> and <i>binne</i>)
<i>Bans</i>	Long sticks for making <i>kanghi</i>
<i>Binne</i>	Brooms for cleaning floor
<i>Ghungat</i>	Veil
<i>Judde</i>	Round thick item made from <i>bagad</i> and <i>munj</i>
<i>Kanghis</i>	Comb used for weaving
<i>Kanne</i>	Long sticks for making <i>kanghi</i>
<i>Khaddar</i>	A type of cloth
<i>Khaddis</i>	Handloom
<i>Mand</i>	A type of jungle
<i>Munj</i>	Thick dry grass (raw material for making <i>judde</i> and <i>binne</i>)

Note

1. Caste based data of 2011 census is not available so of 2001 is taken.

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