

## **Historical Analysis of Changes in Rural Social Structure: A Sociological Critique on Relevance Of Theoretical Perspectives To Empirical Data**

### **Abstract**

This theoretical paper focuses on socio-structural changes in a rural community of the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Specifically, changes in the social structure of rural community of the Punjab and factors associated with such changes over a period of fifty decades are examined retrospectively. A village named Mohla is situated in Central Punjab, Pakistani. It was extensively studied soon after partition of the Subcontinent by a Turkish scholar, Eglar (1960). A comprehensive probability sample survey was conducted to assess the changes in the social structure along with relevant reasons. Changes in various social institutions are discussed in the light of various social structural perspectives which include functionalism, modernization and globalization. Local structural context is also looked into to develop a comprehensive analysis of the changes that have taken place in the community over the study period. It comprises of factors such as political, religious and regional aspects associated with the variables under study. A thorough critique on the aforementioned perspectives is also developed while discussing the social structural changes in the rural community.

**Keywords:** Functionalism, Modernization, Globalization, Social structure, Social change

The present study focuses on socio-structural changes in a rural community of the province of Punjab, Pakistan. In this paper, we have discussed the observed changes in the light of various theoretical perspectives. Specifically, changes in the social structure of rural Central Punjab and factors associated with such changes over a period of fifty years are assessed retrospectively. A village in Pakistani Punjab was extensively studied soon after partition of the Indian subcontinent by a Turkish scholar, Zekiya Eglar (1960). Our research is being inspired by the intensive work done by her. We have taken her study as a starting point to observe the changes that have taken place over the period of time. Aspects of social structure that we have covered are stratification structures, marriage and family institution, gender roles, traditions, belief system and leisure activities.

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## **Theoretical Framework**

Social structure and its interrelated variables could be explicated and understood in the light of various theoretical perspectives in this section. Perspectives that are primarily discussed include functionalism, modernization, globalization and local structural context. Structural context comprises of factors such as political, religious and regional background.

Social structure from one point of view is referred to recurring patterns of social interaction responsible for institutional arrangement of the society (Germov 1998). Functionalists hold that social institutions (family, religion etc.) provide guidelines for social action and are durable to the extent that they are reinforced through socialization (Clemens and Cook 1999). For instance, religion through family institution influences social relations and integration among people. Besides, modernization, globalization and local context might be pertinent for understanding of social structure and its influence on social, political and religious dimensions. Functioning of these institutional structures that are interlinked with one another may be understood in terms of a social system. Parsons (1950) defines social system as a collectivity of actors interacting with one another in a social context, in order to gratify their social needs. Their actions are defined and mediated by culturally shared symbols. Perhaps, social institutions are reproduced and maintained through this mechanism.

System theorists argue that interrelationship among parts of society cannot be understood out of the contextual whole (Ritzer 2000). Auguste Comte also emphasizes that parts of a society need to be studied as a whole to understand the functioning of the system (Ashley and Orenstein 2005). To Comte, social statics and dynamics both are to be looked into to understand the order as well as changing structural aspects. For a complete understanding of any social system, social and cultural aspects need to be studied together. Cohen (1965) also endorses Comte's social structural composition of statics and dynamics which contribute to order as well as change in the system. One may find that many of these social and cultural elements are interlinked and even overlapping at times. Moreover, dynamics of various social institutions may not be understood as independent of each other. For instance, change in stratification structure may affect the marriage patterns in a given community. Similarly, religion may not be reduced to social and psychological factors as it is important to understand the overall culture of a society

(Yang 2004). Mostly social rules and values rely heavily on religious guidelines.

Various institutions that are included in a social structure reproduce themselves and at the same time are subject to change. Social institutions generally maintain themselves by punishing those who violate the norms and rewarding those who do not (Scooler 1996). Social systems are directly or indirectly creation of cultural values (Quddus 1989). Every change in values of social groups leads toward changes in social institutions. Social institutions may change over time due to diffusion and learning of new cultural elements (Clemens and Cook 1999). Some of the modern values are in consonance with the traditional ones while others may not match the existing structure (Gusfield 1967). Values that do not

contradict with the traditional structure may be well adaptive and contribute to development of a society. However, elements of conflict and strain are undermined by the functionalists. Pace and direction of change also vary in different social settings (Cohen 1965). The difference might be observed in a comparative analysis of pace of change in developing and developed world. Various social practices in a given social setting need to be studied for the purpose.

Significant attributes of social structure include division of labor by occupation and prestige (Ferriss 2006). These together reflect the social status of a person in community. However, structural conditions such as stratification do not always sufficiently explain the social outcomes (Lee 1999). Social organization is a process that comprises of interrelationships among people, reciprocity and exchanges that exist in these relationships, norms of social support and control that regulate social interaction (Mancini, Bowen and Martin 2005). Moreover, social groups could be differentiated as formal or informal having different yet interrelated functions. Formal groups may include educated and occupational ones whereas family and caste are referred as informal groups. Both groups are interdependent and functional for the system.

Structural components together form a social world. It comprises of members, their way of organization, events, and practices in a given region (Unruh 1980). Interrelationships within these structural elements make us understand significance of each component. Many sociologists believe that dynamics of social structure can be measured quantitatively but that might not be the case for studying cultural meanings (Mohr 1998). However, quantitative studies may be considered efficient in gathering sufficient data regarding prevalent social phenomenon in short period of time. Major limitation of many social researches is that they are time bound. Social variations and its associated factors might be important in developing comprehensive analysis and therefore, need to be studied accurately and efficiently. Its importance cannot be undermined as social structure seems to be in a constant state of evolution.

Social structures are reproduced by its members who are also constrained by their social environments (Lee 1999). Similarly, these actors may also put pressure on some structural elements to transform. In Lee's view, these may be reflected through changing economic conditions, social cohesion, stratification and normative structures. Social mobility and development of infrastructure together may become conducive to such changes. Durkheim views evolution of society from homogenous to heterogeneous form (Ritzer 2000). Weber considers it social transformation from informal and traditional to formal and the most rational structures (Levin 1984). Developing societies may also be evolving from conservative to liberal system. However, change in the structure is subject to various indigenous factors. For instance, open societies encourage education and social mobility which might not be the case in closed and traditional societies.

Social structures can be manipulated by the individuals to enhance their resources in given social positions (Breiger 1995). Two types of change are

identified which generally take place in a society are structural differentiation and change in value system (Augusta 1960). The former asks for modification in social institutions such as family whereas complete reorganization of the structure is followed by the latter. Society regains its balance after passing through the process. As a result, some social forces dominate the other and become functional aspects of a new structure. Functional perspective emphasizes on consensus and order in the system. However, it fails to explain serious contradictions within a system which may lead to drastic social change. Such changes might occur as a result of grave disparities mostly likely at the time of rapid social change. For instance, functional theorists undermine the conflict between certain groups or structural elements. It is a macro-level approach which lacks explanation regarding micro-level phenomenon such as smaller group interaction or formation and change of attitudes.

Modernization theorists suggest social change as a linear institutional transformation from traditional to modern. The proponents of this perspective define tradition as indigenous and conservative whereas modern is referred to Western structures. Changes are supposed to replace political, family, economic and value structures with the Western structures (Galland, Lemel and Djezriri 2008, Smelser 1992). Equalizing modernization with Westernization makes this perspective questionable. Structures might get evolved and developed from conservative to contemporary without being compromising on all of their traditional aspects. For instance, gender roles might be modified while keeping their traditional responsibilities. Similarly, professional change might take place within traditional occupations. Social and cultural change as proposed by modernization theorists is functional and formal in nature (Eder 1992). In this way, modernization theory is closely associated with explanation of social change by functionalists (Smelser 1992). Critically analyzing this approach Galland et al. state that social systems of traditional societies are not that simple and homogeneous as presented by these theoretical perspectives. Societies also vary in their mechanism and pace of change (Bernstein 1971). In certain societies factors of change are internal (such as political) to the system whereas other societies are significantly influenced by external factors such as media and migration.

Social change may be understood in a better way by having knowledge of its various sources and dimensions. Divale and Seda (2001) refer modernization as change from traditional customs and behaviors to the ones that are forced or voluntarily borrowed from dominant societies. These changes may be observed in the area of health, education, family, technology, religion etc.. To Divale and Seda, modernization also becomes a source of strain as social change brought by modernization is, at times, rapid and involuntary. However, Pappé (2005) argues that various socio-structural changes that are caused by modernization due to adoption of technology by Non-Western countries are generally stable. Kinship organization, language, technology and religion are considered essential elements for societal development (Parson 1964). To Parson modern economy, rational organizations, formal legal systems and democratic structure are basic features of modern societies.

If the institutions develop over a period of time, change is likely to be less disruptive otherwise it could produce social chaos and unrest. Durkheim referred such situation as anomie (Ritzer 2000). Drastic social change demands replacement of conventional social patterns with the non-traditional ones (Wieczorkowska and Burnstein 2004). Strain among opposing elements of social and cultural structure may be dysfunctional for the system and may also be instrumental for causing changes in the social system. If social mechanism operates effectively it manages strains in such a way that limits changes in the structure. Any attempt to eliminate an existing social structure without replacing it with the one which can fulfill the functions of the previous structure is doomed to failure (Merton 1964). Deductively, social system which leads to drastic disruptions in its culture may lead to social and cultural disintegration of a society. Rapid industrialization is one such example which is considered to have negative impact on social values and family system though it spurs economic growth.

Mechanization of tools has changed the mode of earnings of the majority. The shift from rural to urban areas due to industrialization has caused many changes in social structure (Niehoff 1959). Economic disparity is observed in mostly less developed countries (Bahramitash 2002). It is further explained that industrialization is not keeping pace with urbanization and population growth leading to urban poverty. Therefore, social planning is pivotal for prevention of many social problems that are emerging from unplanned growth of industries. Changing occupational structure may also influence the structure of social relationships and interdependence of social groups in a community. However, system analysts emphasize on structural changes that affect social expectation from associated roles. Global inter-linkage is likely to influence regional structures as well.

Globalization is a complicated process including technological, economic and cultural aspects (Thorlindsson and Vilhjalmsjon 2003). Modernity is also characterized by increase in industrialization and globalization (Haferkamp and Smelser 1992). In this way, globalization and modernization perspectives have certain converging points. Change is an outcome of both external and internal factors (Smelser 1992). External factors are referred to those elements which are foreign to a system and affects through diffusion whereas internal factors lie within it. In the light of this, one may state that borrowed technology, media and migration are among the exogenous factors while political system, religion, stratification and economic structures are endogenous ones. Type and degree of change in each segment of the culture is significant. The increasing gap between material and non-material aspects of culture may have its own social costs.

The growing influence of foreign media in Pakistan also has its advantages and disadvantages. Cable television and internet are accessible almost equally and easily to almost all segments of society whether rural or urban. Media, particularly cable network exposes us to various other cultures. Apparently, influence of Western and Indian culture is among the most prominent in Pakistan. Cultural impact not only includes the material aspects but also carries social influence. It can be observed in social norms, values, traditions and other non-material aspects

of a society. For instance, media images of gender roles may have the ability to influence social attitudes towards cultural stereotypes.

Technology has both advantages and disadvantages for human life. It facilitates peoples and saves time. Information technologies provide knowledge, leisure, speed and efficiency. It also affects work and family relations by making lives more busy (Carlson et al.1999). It coincides with the idea of Mead (1964) that imitating both the essential and unessential is one very quick way of adopting another culture. Globalization process including economic interconnections, information technologies and other cultural influences is complicated (Thorlindsson and Vilhjalmsson 2003). Researches reveal that there are traditional societies which are also achievement oriented. Similarly, there are modern societies equally emphasizing on ascription of status (Bernstein 1971). Traditionalism and modernity are relative terms in this context. Therefore, careful analysis is required to understand how and why socio-cultural aspects change and how society maintains its balance.

Social change in developing countries has its own form, however, the stimulus can partially be linked indirectly to the developed ones as part of the global process (McMicheal 2004). To an extent, all societies are influenced directly or indirectly by global process (Pieterse 1996). Globalization is a multidimensional concept including economic, social, cultural, technological and political aspects (Castells 1999). Traditional societies are characterized by low literacy and differentiation whereas specialization, high literacy, mass media are characteristics of modern societies (Einsenstadt 1973). Economic structures and resources influence social change by affecting the system. Development economists are of the view that industrialization of the developing countries relies on shift of rural resources (McMicheal 2004). According to these experts, export of agricultural products is one such example of rural-urban global process. On one hand, globalization is referred to time and space compression which has political and economic advantages. On the other hand, it has serious consequences for social and cultural aspects. Shift in traditional values and identity crisis becomes a matter of concern for many social analysts who are critical of the global perspective.

Perspectives that have been discussed so far (functionalism, modernization, globalization) might appropriately explain social change at macro-level. However, these models do not truly and adequately delineate the mechanism of changing structures in their local structural context. It includes institutions that are not directly observed, however, their indirect influence can be assessed through the course of study such as regional history, political and religious structures. Regional differences also have the impact on the structuring of various social institutions. Generally, religion is considered a prime factor that provides basis for social norms, values and traditions. These factors provide base for functioning of other institutions. The Indian subcontinent had been a territory of different religions which once flourished in the region. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Christianity. All these religions have left their impact on culture of Pakistan.

Moreover, socio-structural changes in Pakistan may also be described in terms of changes in material and non-material aspects of culture. Sorokin's perspective on social and cultural dynamics suggests that although cultures vary in their complexity, wealth or population growth but major changes are marked by the dominance of material culture than non-material culture (Weinstein 1997). Furthermore, changes in material aspects of a society may influence the non-material aspects and vice versa. For instance, use of technology is causing change in attitudes and lifestyles of people. However, change in value systems is taking place partially due to erosion of traditional social institutions (Rahn and Transne 1998). Change in family structure that is considered an effective source of informal social control in mostly traditional societies is one such example.

Values and beliefs are basics of all human social systems (Parsons 2007). Study of social change must include religious expressions whether in structural analysis or in relation to social attitudes (Eister 1964). It is emphasized that social analyst should be familiar with the patterns of religious traditions and practices while studying a social system. It is generally believed that religion plays considerably important role in various social institutions especially in traditional societies. Its role is less significant in modern societies. However, in certain instances religious expressions get strengthened with the development of institutions. Education may play significant role in this regard.

Misztal (2003) agrees with Durkheim's view regarding role of religion in modern societies. It may lead to the assumption that role of religion would be less significant in modern societies and that it will be replaced by other institutions. In his view, law is also a conscious creation in modern societies whereas in earlier times it was a matter of tradition. Some researchers emphasize the role of law in social change. For instance, Kostiner (2003) presents three schemas to explain this association between law and social change. These are instrumental, political and cultural in nature. Instrumental schema includes provision of basic resources such as jobs, healthcare and education to marginalized people. Political schema is referred to mobilization and empowerment of these people. Third schema focuses on social and cultural traditions that are unquestionable and shared by all the members of a society. Therefore, it is expected of societies in transition that formal institution would replace informal ones.

Changes in the political structures and public policies may also have important social consequences. For instance, if public policy supports female education it may lead to decline in fertility rate. Each one of the political eras in Pakistan is generally marked by some distinguishing policies. During 1960s and onwards, Green Revolution promoted irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides, machinery and improved and multiplied the varieties of crops such as wheat, rice, corn etc. from Mexico to Pakistan (Whitman 2010). Both Indian and Pakistani Punjab experienced the Green Revolution in later part of 1960s (Adams 2001). Public policies which facilitate international migration may influence existing social structure directly or indirectly. Impact of international migration can be observed both at macro as well as micro-level. At micro-level, it affects the well-being of individuals and their families whereas at macro-level, affect is on social

development (Hujo and Piper 2007). For instance, increase in overseas migration, particularly to Middle Eastern countries had significant impact on rural sector in Pakistan (Chaudhry, Malik and Ashraf 2006). Change in occupational and economic statuses is likely to influence the attitudes and social relations of people.

Some governments promote liberalism whereas others might have conservative ideologies. Both of these radical and liberal political groups have respective impact on social institutions. Spread of information technology and mass media perhaps are significant agents of social change. Social consequences of communication technologies are multi-range. For example, an advantage of mobile phones is to provide us with an easy access to friends and relatives worldwide. On the other hand, its negative consequences include health hazards, fear for children's well-being and threats to moral indecency (May and Hearn 2005). May and Hearn further state that these consequences would increase as number of mobile phones is multiplying worldwide as compared to television sets and computers. One may conclude that various political structures and policies bring about their respective social impact.

Overall, social impact might be assessed appropriately by analyzing patterns of change along with its associated causal factors. Traditional societies, generally belonging to developing countries including Pakistan are adopting much of the changes brought about mostly by borrowed technology. It is important that Western values and technological advancement may not necessarily be equated with social development. Problem begins when means and ends are confused with each other in a system (Carlson et al.1999). In other words, social changes in the developing countries have their own form but much of these are part of global process which is directly or indirectly linked with changes in the secular world. Critical observation of inter-linkage and interdependence of institutions becomes imperative for structural analysts. Besides, the Western impact and global influences are also important in observing social change in a community.

### **Methodology**

For objectivity and representativeness of the results, quantitative data was collected through a probability sample survey. An interview schedule permitting multiple responses was constructed comprising of both open and closed ended questions to interview persons, age 55 + years. These persons are assumed to have observed changes during period under study (1960-2008). Of all the households in the village (350), every second household was systematically selected resulting in 109 respondents (54 males and 55 females).

Our findings are based on descriptive and trend analyses of the data. Since the response are based on recollection of memories, we specified ten years as point in time for obtaining required information. It was expected to reduce the influence of any memory lapse. Moreover, questions were asked about general social patterns prevalent in various decades instead of specific events. This was assumed to have further enhanced the validity of the responses.

### **Summary Of Major Findings**

The present study aimed at observing changes in social structure of the village over the period of five decades. Social institutions that were investigated during the course of the study include caste system, marriage and family, gender roles, belief system and leisure activities. Expectedly, changes have occurred in almost every aspect of social structure since Eglar (1960) studied the village community. Over and above what Eglar studied, we attempt to investigate some other social aspects that were not covered by her. In earlier decades, social conditions were quite similar to the description given by Eglar. It is evident from the findings that socio-structural changes are the most prominent ones in the recent past. As expected, pace of change got accelerated during the last two decades (1990s and onwards).

Major changes are observed in the stratification structure of the village. Caste used to determine life opportunities and social status of a person and a family. Our results show that caste system is losing its significance. At the same time, class system is becoming fundamental aspect for determining the social status of a person. Most of the craftsmen have changed their trades (previously known as castes). International migration and education are pertinent factors for the change in occupations and castes. This shift in professional statuses has also affected other social institutions. For instance, changes in the caste system gave rise to a new trend of inter-caste marriages that emerged in 1990s and onwards. Compatibility on the basis of education and economic status has become major consideration for marriage decisions.

Changes are also observed in the family structure. Contrary to a general rural family pattern where joint families are prevalent, over one-half of the families are nuclear in this village. Apparently, nuclear families are substituting joint family system. Lack of integration and intolerance (in a joint family) are among the most significant reasons for this change. Gender roles, particularly role of women has changed over the given time period. More women prefer to earn through various jobs than in earlier times. It is also influencing their role in decision making.

Social roles and interrelationship among individuals also seem to be in transition due to technology. For instance, it is observed that people prefer to watch television as a leisure activity during their free time. As a result, apparently social interaction among the family and community members has declined. Modern sports such as cricket have replaced the traditional sports of boy such as *kabbadi* etc.. Young girls have also started participating in various outdoor sports such as badminton during the recent decades. Religious festivals have been celebrated by all throughout the decades.

### **Analysis And Critique On Theoretical Perspectives**

The major findings of the present study are discussed in the frameworks of functionalism, modernization and globalization, and local structural context.

Major themes of the perspectives are considered relevant to the changes in the rural community.

Generally, social structure is interchangeably used with social system. Functional theorists, for example, Parsons (1950) interprets social system in terms of social structure. Without going into details of Parson's theoretical assumptions, social system is viewed in a state of dynamic equilibrium and understood in its holistic form, that is, interdependence of various social institutions (Berghe 1963). Our definition of social structure includes various social institutions that are commonly found in rural communities of the Punjab, Pakistan. These are linked to one another to form a larger structure. We observe that all these institutions and social groups have been complementing one another in their functioning making up a social system.

In this context, social system may be referred to functioning of institutions. According to Parsons (1950), social system comprises of integrated social roles and distribution of resources. Change in one of the structural aspects influences all other social institutions. For instance, it is observed that changes in political structure have its impact on the economic structure of the community. It is evident from our data that variation in sources of income got influenced by change in political leaderships. Every political regime has some prominent features of the public policies. We find that proportion of foreign laborers becomes quite high during Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's regime (1970s) due to flexible visa policies, particularly towards the Middle Eastern Countries. Migration, in turn, has an enormous impact on socio-economic status of the people. Increase in income results in the access to and affordability of education which then creates awareness of rights and degree of autonomy. Social, educational and religious organizations are the examples of pattern maintenance system in any society (Parson 1956). To Parsons, power is regularized through these organizational structures. Kinship groups are modifying into nuclear form in highly differentiated societies. It is observed that social organization in the village is in transitional state basic of which is family unit. Current economic division is redefining the stratification structure as well as the family institution. Role of men and women are likely to be influenced by changes in family and economic structures.

Gender roles are changing due to education in the village. This is found true, particularly for females in the community. Participation of females in formal employment sector is another outcome of better educational statuses of females as compared to the earlier times. Deductively, changes in educational status affect traditional gender roles that, in turn, influence family institution. Trend analysis shows that female education was not encouraged during the first two decades (1960s and 1970s). Substantial increase is observed in female education in 1980s. A vast majority of the villagers started encouraging females to get education in 1990s and onwards. Presently, one-half of the respondents state that females do various jobs for earnings in or outside the village. During the same time period (1990s and onwards), the marriages among close relatives drastically declined. Simultaneously, marriages within major caste increased significantly during the last two decades. A new trend of marriages outside the major caste also emerged during this period due to education and economic factors. Holistically, it is

observed that all the social institutions including economic, family, education, gender roles are interdependent showing simultaneous change as proposed by the functional school of thought.

Some other sociologists such as Weber and Durkheim view changes in social structure as a linear evolutionary process. Weber explains evolutionary societal changes in terms of rationalization and its types (Levin 1984). To Weber, societies move from subjective and informal to objective and formal structures. Similarly, the present study reveals that the shift is taking place and system is evolving from informal structure to formal one. For instance, informal sources of income (caste based) and justice system (*punchayat, biraderi* decisions) have changed into formal means of earnings (job market) and mechanism to resolve criminal issues (police, courts) respectively. Durkheim calls it a shift from mechanical (homogeneous) to organic (highly differentiated) structure (Levin 1984). It is evident from our findings that caste ascription was sufficient in determining the life opportunities during the earlier time periods. The situation has changed over the period of fifty years. Achieved statuses based on modern economic structures, nuclear families and redefined gender roles are emerging structures of the time.

Aforementioned linear theories of social change suggest that societies move from simple to complex ones in one direction. To Nisbet, social evolution is commonly found perspective in philosophies of Hegel, Comte, Spencer etc. which delineates the process of change as natural, continuous, directional, essential and typically moving from homogenous to heterogeneous structures (Pieterse 1996). Similar evolutionary transformation is observed in stratification structures of the village in our study. In earlier decades, social division was simple and the most pronounced one primarily based on ascribed status. Social groups were stratified on the basis of castes which were determining factor for life opportunities. Singh and Prasad (1977) also observe in a study of an Indian community that social and economic resources were unequally divided among low and high caste members. The argument is supported by the findings of the present study. However, social conditions got evolved over time and emergence of class structure blurred the line of demarcation between the two strata.

Our findings suggest that agriculture has declined as a source of income over the decades. Development of infrastructure, education and migration are observed the most significant factors for change in the occupations during the last two decades (1990s onwards). Munshi and Rosenzweig (2006) speculate that forces of modernization such as education and occupation are likely to disintegrate the caste system that has been prevailing for centuries in the Subcontinent. Occupational change also occurred in landholding class due to education and other related work and income opportunities. Moreover, landholding remains constant and population keeps on growing. As a result, portion of inherited land becomes less significant source of income due to its repeated divisions over generations. At the same time, emphasis on education has increased as it is considered a basic requirement for formal services.

Education is found to have negative impact on agriculture and skilled labor in 1970s. Perhaps, it was due to better job and earning opportunities, villagers left the trades of their forefathers and preferred to pursue careers different from the ancestors. The most prominent occupational change in 1970s appeared in the form of foreign labor. In our study, economic factor and public policies are positively associated reasons for encouraging villagers going for foreign labor in 1970s. Similar to our results, Chaudhry et al. (2006) also observed that international migration have largely influenced the rural communities of Pakistan in 1970s. Regression analysis also shows that infrastructure was the most significant factor that had negative impact on agriculture sector in 1980s. Similarly, infrastructure and migration have led skilled laborers to change their traditional trades during this decade.

In general, migration is considered an important global dimension that influences not just economic growth at macro-level but also social practices at micro-level. Abu-Laban (1980) documents the change in ethnic identity of Arabs (majority is Muslims) in Canada. Abu-Laban states that ethnic awareness gets changed with migration, particularly for second and third generation. Similarly, economic empowerment and cultural diffusion through migration are considered to have negative influence on the caste system. Traditional identities and affiliations have changed over the period of time. However, in the present study, migrant are individuals (mostly craftsmen) and not the families. Besides economic gains, these craftsmen bring influence of other cultures to the families living in the village. Global influences then redefine their statuses and social attitudes regarding the social group in the community contributing to overall social change.

Globalization analysts suggest that educational and cultural development affect technological advancement which generates economic growth and this, in turn, again stimulates cultural and educational development (Castells 1999). We observe education as the prominent feature of 1990s which caused substantial increase in number of people joining government and private services. This trend prevailed during the following decade. In 2000 onwards, infrastructure is found statistically significant negative factor for change in agriculture as a source of income. Overall, change is observed in the stratification structure of the community. Our results show that village community was strictly divided on the basis of trades (castes) in the earlier decades. Occupations that used to be the basis of stratification and identification have changed over the period of time. Rigid division of castes (based on traditional trades) is dissolving with the emergence of new class categories. Bian's (2002) study of traditional Chinese community also suggests that stratification structure is changing and class boundaries are fading out which is creating confusion.

Land, occupation and economic status are three factors that determine the social prestige of a person in the village. Supporting Eglar's findings, our study also shows that landowners used to be ranked first in social hierarchy in 1960s. On the other hand, craftsmen were ranked the lowest on the social scale of respect during this period. Foreign laborers and educated group used to fall between these two categories. In 1980s and onwards, more respect is reported by people for educated and foreign laborers than the earlier decades. The disparity among

various strata has slightly reduced, however, trend remains the same throughout the decades. Similarly, Bandyopadhyay (2004) concludes from a study of changing Indian stratification structure that strong association between caste and power has diminished due to increased social mobility.

Mostly tradesmen left their traditional professions and adopted new occupations in 1990s and onwards. Craftsmen have welcoming attitude regarding modern structural components as they used to be dependent and suppressed social category in the community. Education and economic independence has an immense impact on their social life and self esteem as well. However, landowners remain resistant towards such structural changes that negatively influence their highest social rank (ascribed). The disparity in attitudes reflects through findings of this study which might produce some tensions in the system. It is expected to become adaptive in future as proposed by the functionalists. Changes in education and economic structure are then likely to influence relations among various social categories in the community.

Economic growth is generally affected by development in communication, education and political structures (Gusfield 1967). However, one fallacy of modernization perspective is that new cultural structures require complete replacement of old ones. Additionally, it provides more alternatives. Tradition and modernity are complementing rather than forces in conflict as argued by Gusfield. For instance, people and social groups who were previously deprived of education now can benefit from it to acquire better social status and employment as well. It supports the notion that education and occupation are the basis of social differentiation in modern societies (Betelle 1996). Moreover, global changes may also influence political structures and policy making in a country.

Political leaderships impact various social institutions through their unique public policies. We find that Green Revolution (global phenomenon) improved the agricultural productivity in many countries including Pakistan during 1960s in consonance with other studies (Adams 2001 and Whitman 2010). Public policies in 1970s have facilitated international migration for foreign laborers. It also has an impact on rural sector of Pakistan (Chaudhry et al. 2006). Social mobility changed the economic status of many craftsmen families and reduced their dependence on landowners to a great extent. Upward social mobility is an evident phenomenon among the craftsmen. President Zia's regime was effective in inculcating Islamic way of life in 1980s. The impact of the policies became prominent during the following decade. Major development of infrastructure took place in 1990s. Construction of factories and the highway near the village are the phenomenon of this decade. In 2000 onwards, spread of technology and empowerment of media brought about major attitudinal changes. Deductively, all the political regimes have their mark on the social structure in their own specific ways. For instance, religious awareness is at times deliberately created by formation of certain public policies.

Religion is another institution which is not independently studied. Nevertheless, findings of the present study might indirectly reflect the change in attitudes and practices by growing awareness of Islamic knowledge. This conjecture is based on Islamic studies being compulsory in schools. Construction of schools, colleges, factories and highway further facilitated the villagers to benefit from educational and employment opportunities. One can safely state that exposure to religious programs on television and education has enlightened the people about the interpretation of various social aspects (such as caste system) in the light of Islamic ideology. This is in conformity with the findings of Srinivas (1969), an Indian sociologist, who highlights the difference between Hindu and Muslim caste system. To Srinivas, social ranking is emphasized by Hindu caste system whereas caste is meant for group identification and not social inequality in Islam. Barth's (1960) study of a Muslim community in Swat (Pakistan) also suggests that division of social groups on basis of purity and pollution are there in Hindu caste system which is discouraged in Islam. Some of these practices are also prevalent in Pakistan. This may be due to the impact of historical and cultural background of the Subcontinent. The Hindu cultural influence perhaps would be devolved due to education contributing to awareness of Islamic teachings in the long run. Its reflection might be observed in some customs and also in marriage practices.

Our findings of marriage patterns confirm Eglar results that mostly marriages were arranged between first cousins and close relatives (from 1960s through 1980s). About one-half of the landowners are married to their first cousins and the other half within their major caste. Mostly marriages of the respondents are arranged by their parents and some by close relatives. It is observed that choices of marriage partners have diversified. To some extent, compatibility on the basis of kinship and caste affiliation is substituted by education and economic statuses. Qadeer (2006) in his analysis of marriage patterns in Pakistani society also states that marriages are based on economic status more than the caste. The shift in marriage practices is not radical but a transitional one. Comte proposes that it is important to have knowledge of both static and changing aspects for having comprehensive understanding of the functioning of the system (Ashley and Orenstein 2005, Cohen 1965). For instance, villagers prefer to have compatible marriage partners for their children within their major caste. Development of education and economic institutions are also proposed by modernization theorists. We observe that these factors are agents of change and are internal to the system. On the contrary, modernists and globalists advocate development of institutions following the Western model. Due to social structural and regional variations, universal application of such conceptual frameworks seems inappropriate, and therefore, are not recommended.

In our study of a small rural community, generally conservative attitude regarding preferences of marriage partners of children is observed, perhaps due to older age group of the respondents. Overall, majority of the respondents wish their sons to marry within close relatives. Similarly, first cousins and close relatives are the most preferred choices for marriages of daughters. Probably, families wish to keep landholding within the close kinship network. This may be true for landowners but not in general. Sex differentials of the landowners are quite

evident from our study regarding their opinion about marriage partners of sons and daughters. Majority of the female landowners do not prefer their daughters to marry first cousins or close relatives. It could be due to education of young females. Major caste is also preferred for marriages of children (sons and daughters) by some of the respondents. Ali (2002) also observes that within caste marriages remain a popular practice due to its social advantages to the caste groups in an Indian Muslim community. The social privileges can be familial or political in nature. There are rare instances for preferring marriage outside the major caste for both sons and daughters. We can deduce from these findings that elements of modernity are coinciding with the traditional structural patterns. Contemporary structural elements (education, formal employment, media) encourage participation of young adults in decision making whereas traditions favor family (or caste) unity rather than individual preferences. Integration among caste members is also considered functional aspect of social life.

Structural strain can be observed in various social and cultural aspects. Parsons (1964) observes that cultural traditions are under strain due to increase in population density and diversity. Political and religious authorities might contradict at certain viewpoints during the time of change in structural elements, however, new laws and social norms are supposed to be “based on Koran and its interpretations” in an Islamic society (Parson 1964, 351). If we relate it to changes in marriage practices then Islamic teachings do not present any preferences for within or outside caste marriages. Marriages within close relatives and caste have been a social and cultural norm not a religious practice. Majority of the marriages remain arranged (traditional pattern) and do not violate any religious guidelines in the village. Marriage practices are also linked with type of family structure.

Joint family system was the most prevalent during the first two decades. It started to decline in 1980s. Proportion of joint families reduced drastically during the last two decades. Simultaneously, nuclear families increased significantly during this time period. It shows transition in family structure from joint to nuclear one. Family structure is changing as people believe in freedom of choice these days (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001). Our findings are also in conformity with the aforementioned study. We find lack of integration and intolerance the most significant reasons for change in family structure. Economic factor is another important reason causing the shift from joint to nuclear family system. Teachman, Tedrow and Crowder (2000) also argue that changes in economic structure are going to influence the traditional family system. Education along with the economic independence is making young adults more inclined towards individualized system than collective one. Similarly, decision making appears to shift from elderly members (grandparents, senior caste member) to parents and young adults. This too might be a reflection of the above factors. It may also be partially responsible for the shift in gender roles.

As expected, it is found that general perception of roles for men is different from that for women in the village. Men are primarily considered responsible for earnings (outdoor and indoor). Females are supposed to do household work such as cooking, cleaning etc.. Provision of protection and doing

outdoor work other than earnings are also perceived among the duties of men. Women, on the other hand, work indoor for earnings and take care of dependent members in the household. Some people also encourage women to participate in various formal sector jobs for earnings. It reflects that change is taking place in the gender roles. Less change is acknowledged in the role of men than of women. It also shows that though females have started participating in market economy yet they keep their traditional role (domestic chores). Referring to modernization theory, Margavio and Mann (1989) argue a similar viewpoint that modern gender roles can be formed in traditional societies by having some modifications in existing social institutions. For instance, development of separate schools for girls might be a conducive factor for bringing about change in their traditional role.

Education is considered a key factor for change in the role of women (Turner 1990). Our results support the argument given by Turner that education is the most significant reason for this change. Agarwal reports the role of females in a Muslim society (Malaysia). It states that Islamic movements are generally led by conservative male religious leaders who emphasize traditional role of females (housewives, mothers etc.) and discourage female education and employment (McMicheal 2004). In fact, contrary to the general notion, education of females is emphasized in Islam (Predelli 2004). The fallacious impression regarding Islamic interpretation of gender roles might be dispelled to an extent through the findings of the present study. Education and participation of females in formal employment may also have implications for their autonomy in family.

Power structures appear to evolve from authoritative (traditional) to more democratic (inclusive of the consent of females and young children) regarding education, marriages etc.. Our findings on autonomy of family members suggest that role of parents taking academic decision of children increased over the period of time. Simultaneously, sizable increase in the role of children regarding decision about education increased in 2000 onwards. Similar to the previous trend, role of both parents in resolution of family disputes was significant in 1960s. It kept on increasing till 1990s. In 1990s and onwards, role of adult children increased in resolution of such disputes. Results also show that father used to decide property matters independently in 1960s. Role of father started declining afterwards. Role of both parents increased significantly over the period of time. Role of young children emerged in 1990s and increased in 2000 onwards. This shows transition in shift of authority from elderly members to young adults. It is probably due to increasing levels of education, increased spatial mobility, exposure to media and urban lifestyle of the young ones.

In the village under study, material items are exchanged mostly on occasions such as marriages, births and deaths. These cultural practices serve the function of social integration. However, decline in some traditional customs (for example, certain death rituals) are encouraged through individualistic lifestyles, an element of modern societies. Trend shows that besides marriage, material exchanges on other vital events (births and deaths) have declined, primarily due to economic factor. Majority of the people think it worthless to spend on births and deaths. Differences are observed in customs practiced on the birth of sons and daughters. Increase in the celebrations is observed on the birth of female child,

particularly during the last two decades (1990s and onwards). Awareness, primarily through education played vital role in bringing about this change. Improved Islamic knowledge could be evident from positive change in social attitudes regarding daughters.

Our study shows that visiting neighbors or other community members was the most favorite free time activity in 1960s. Participation in sports, listening to folklore, smoking *huqa* and household work were also popular leisure activities during this period. These activities significantly got reduced in 1990s and onwards. Simultaneously, watching television increased substantially during the last two decades. Peterson (1981) also observes in a study of the USA that television is a prime source of news and information. In Pakistan, media industry and information technology got expanded during the political regime of President Musharraf (2000 onwards). Use of computers also appears to have emerged as a leisure activity during this period. There are certain other activities through which respondents draw pleasure including worship, resting and playing with grandchildren. An Australian research conducted by Kabanoff (1982) also suggests that family related work and taking rest are among the leisure activities.

People are observed to have a wider range of leisure activities as compared to earlier time periods. The trend shows, technology (particularly television) has significant impact on the social practices. Informal social activities such as visiting neighbors and getting together for smoking *huqa* have faded away over the period of time. In the recent past, watching television has become the most popular source of entertainment. It partially becomes a disintegrative factor for the family members as perceived by the villagers. Economic factors are also responsible for bringing about the change in leisure activities due to affordability of such technological items. Global impact, particularly through media and migration is also affecting the group ties and unity. Leisure activities of the people have also changed from more collectivist (socializing, chatting over smoking *huqa* in a group, visiting neighbors) to individualized (watching television) ones. Similarly, modern sports are replacing their traditional forms. For example, cricket has taken the place of *gulli danda*. Participation of girls in sports appears to be a new phenomenon in the village. It can well be associated with influence of media and their enrollment in formal educational institutions.

Trend analyses of sports of boys and girls show that gender differences prevail in the village. A study conducted in Pennsylvania by Kreager (2007) reveals that gender inequalities are reinforced in displays of aggression, independence and competition by men participating in various sports. We also find that traditional sports such as *kabbadi*, *gulli danda* and playing marbles were among the popular games of boys during the first three decades (from 1960s through 1980s). These games declined substantially during the latter period. It can be derived from the comparative analysis from the East and the West that certain aspects of traditional and modern societies are similar to each other. Modern sports such as cricket and football increased significantly in 1990s and onwards. Perhaps media, particularly television, played role in the promotion of these sports among boys during the last decade. Buysee and Embser-Herbert (2004) also conclude that

media preserves male domination through presenting superiority of men in certain sports. Probably, it is one of the reasons that male participation in physically active outdoor sports is much more than that of females in the village.

A study of the USA by Wesely and Gaarder (2004) shows that females are generally not encouraged to participate in outdoor games in conservative societies. Our results confirm their findings that young boys participate more in outdoor sports whereas females participate more in indoor ones. Girls used to play indoor games including marbles, *stappoo*, skipping, hide and seek during the first three decades. Significant decline is observed in these games in 1990s and onwards. On the other hand, *ludoo* and badminton increased during this period.

Modernization has its influence on various social aspects such as education, family and technology, it also becomes a source of strain in traditional structures (Divale and Seda 2001). On the other hand, Pappe' (2005), believes the technological change in developing countries is mostly less disruptive. We find some elements of conservative structures contradicting with new ones whereas other traditional components and social groups are more flexible in terms of adaptation. It is observed that more resistance is shown by landowners than craftsmen regarding modern structures as discussed earlier. Strain might emerge in the system, if the weakening of conventional structures is not adequately substituted by the contemporary ones. The gap might produce disturbance in the system. Analysis of Pakistani society by Qadeer (2006) suggests the imbalance in the system due to gap between material and non-material culture, particularly, when the former is developing at the expense of the latter one. Melvin (1974) states one such example of television as having negative impact on family relations and traditional values. It is supported by our findings of changes in family system and leisure activities. In general, television has reduced social interaction and integration which is considered negative, particularly by the elderly members of the village.

Globalization gives rise to both functional and dysfunctional consequences (Tsai 2007). Advancement and spread of technology as well as expansion of modern economy have affected the social institutions in the village. These two factors are important for bringing about change in attitudes and values of the people. For instance, social values are considered to be negatively influenced by watching various programs on television. Technology itself is believed to have promoted individualization besides knowledge and efficiency (Carlson et al. 1999). Disturbances in traditional structures such as family, community or political system, generally cause social disruption (Einsensadt 1973). Its main reason is the weakening of effective social control (for example, caste and family) that used to be exercised by these institutions. Therefore, traditional structures of social institutions are found to be in transition where some elements are changing swiftly while other components remain resistant to modernity. Furthermore, certain modifications in institutions are considered more functional as compared to the past due to emerging social needs. For instance, rise in female education has positively influenced the attitude of the people which is somewhat reflected in the customs associated with birth of daughter. Similarly,

caste disparity has reduced due to increased social mobility over the period of time.

We find that social change in the village is outcome of both exogenous and endogenous factors which is inconsonance with viewpoint of Smelser (1992). Both external and internal factors have affected various aspects of social structure in the village. Endogenous factors are internal institutional changes whereas exogenous are Western and other global influences which cause change. It is observed that internal (political, religious etc.) and external factors (media, migration etc.) are not mutually exclusive. All the social institutions are going through transition during the decades covered in the present study. Functional interdependence of institutions is quite obvious and understandable from the findings. In line with Qadeer's (2006) analysis, incompatibility between material and non-material cultural aspects has also caused strain within a system. As mentioned earlier, watching television as an increased leisure activity has impact on the traditional value system of the community. Our analysis also reveals that certain traditional differences are not losing their ground whereas other structural elements are more flexible and adaptive to change. Traditional structures are changing, however, these are not completely replaced by new ones which is found contrary to modernization theory. For instance, resistance between the two strata is reflected through their social ranking and limited interaction. One such example is non-existence of marriages between the two main castes (strata), that is, landowners and craftsmen.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Overall, pace of change got accelerated during 1990s and onwards influencing almost all social institutions in multiple ways. Many structural aspects are evolving from traditional to contemporary but not necessarily Western ones. Societies vary in their structural aspects and pace of change. Although pace of change got accelerated during the last couple of decades, however, it remains slower as compared to the developed countries perhaps due to structural constraints. Proponents of modernization theories advocate a universal linear transformation of institutions without keeping in view the structural variations and indigenous context. Pace of change is subject to such institutional variations. For instance, our findings show that education has influenced the social practices (caste stratification, marriage, customs, gender roles etc.) of the villagers. Globalization appears to have both positive and negative consequences for the community. All types of information technology, though not widely spread in the village is considered to have negative impact on social values. On the other hand, modern economy has opened many platforms for occupational skills which contributed to reduce the dependence of low stratum on the landowners. It is a study of small village community, therefore macro-perspectives have limited applications and generalizations to other structural aspects may cautiously be inferred from the study.

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