

Tourism Influencing Occupational Structures in Saidpur Village, Islamabad

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Abstract:

This research article is helpful to look into the core issue that how tourism is playing its role to develop a village community through different stages like as from traditional phase to a modern phase. Article also explain that how occupational variations, prompt by tourism, has turned a rural village into Semi-urban village which is growing more and more urban day by day. The research was conducted in Village Saidpur Islamabad. Qualitative anthropological techniques were used to collect empirical data.

Key words: Organic community; Mechanical community; Traditional phase; Modern phase; Domestic tourism.

Introduction

Saidpur is a historical village on the foot of Margalla hills (hill range, part of lesser Himalayas located in north of Islamabad). This village has been used as a main crossroad between Kabul city (capital of Afghanistan) and Arabian Sea. Travelers who

came from south Punjab, Sind or Arabian Sea, used this rout. Many western and central Asian invaders used Margalla pass (a mountainous pass very close to Saidpur village) as a gate way to enter in south Asia. Village is located in northern heart of Islamabad, opposite F-6/2 sector, one of the most posh areas of Islamabad. Islamabad being the capital of this country (Pakistan) is a well planed city. In this city Saidpur is only village which is going under development very fast. The survival of such a big village in this capital is unbelievable Due to historical importance, multi-cultural heritage and scenic beauty of village, in 2006, government of Pakistan announced it as a model village. The government of France provided technical assistance in remodeling the village. Initial cost of this project was estimated to be around 400 million rupees. Since that day village has become famous tourist spot. Domestic and foreign tourism has influenced the occupational structure of village too much. People of village are adopting new ways of living due to the change that have taken place over a period of time during last decade.

Research Methodology

Present research was conducted in Saidpur Village Islamabad. Qualitative methods of research were used to collect pure data from target community. Researcher used socio-economic survey, participant observation, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and focus groups discussion to make his data empirical. For sampling, stratified random sampling which based on social classes was performed to choose 100 household. This research was conducted by spending 6 month in field in 2012.

Results and Discussion

In the past occupations of the village were pottery, agriculture and herding. Basic productive resources (land, water and sun) were available to carry out the activities related to these occupations. Village was famous for grapes production and pottery. Saidpur village was renowned as a garden resort in the past. People of village were related to agricultural farming on small tracts of land. Farmers were using simple tools and traditional techniques of farming. Main crops of the village were grapes, maize and wheat. Irrigational needs were fulfilled very efficiently by natural water streams which came from Margalla Hills and run throughout the area. In spring season people saved plenty of water for drinking and for watering garden. But now natural streams have become polluted because all the narrow streets have open sewers and sewage drain into the main streams. There are open pipe into the streams, from which filth mix directly into the stream water. Now ponds are in deplorable condition and there is no point of irrigation. The land which used to be so fertile is now covered with houses and remaining is barren. Whereas, other occupation is pottery making which is the only skill villagers keep even now. It is important to notice that this craft not only depicts the skill and excellence of the artisans but also is a source of income. Another important and interesting fact is that these artisans have not received any formal training or technical education thus they all have acquired their skill informally as the saying, practice makes a man perfect' befit them very well.

Case Study: Niaz Muhammad was the most famous potter of the village. His age was forty years and he had two sons and a daughter. Pottery was their family profession. By caste he was Mughal (name of caste/jati) and he belonged to seventh generation of the Mughals. His father was skillful potter who made a train with clay which is still present in village.

According to him, pottery as profession was at its peak in Mughal period of rule (1526 to 1857 AD). Following his footprints his son Niaz also tried to make a sample of mud train. He continued the profession of his father as he did not have any formal education. One of his son who only passed primary (education up till level five) also took up same profession.

Due to the emergence of tourism in this area, people had to adopt different ways of earning. They could not run their life with traditional and low earning professions. Tourism did not only increase their awareness but also their needs. It produced economic pressure on the life of villagers while in a same time it dragged the natives to find and finally avail the new opportunities of livelihood emerged by tourism. Same type of situation has been explained Chaudhry et al (2012a¹, 2012b², 2012c³, 2013⁴) wherein they talked about the creation of new occupations due to economic pressures. It effected the professions of the people to much extent and people who were having limited occupations and were related to different professions, they changed their professions to adopt new one which tourism had created in the village. As one of our respondents reported that before the convergence of village into a model town, people were mostly doing agriculture but after the convergence of the village's status they adopted their own

¹Mohyuddin, A., Chaudhry, H.R. & Ambreen, A. (2012). Economic Empowerment of Women in the Rural Areas of Balochistan. *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies: Alam-e-Niswan*. Vol. 19, No. 2, 239-257.

²Mohyuddin, A., Chaudhry, H.R. & Ambreen, A. (2012). Perception and Process of Development in Zandra, a Village in Balochistan: World System Analysis at Micro Level in Anthropological Perspective. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences & Education*, Vol. 1No. 3, 66-79

³Mohyuddin, A., Chaudhry, H.R. & Ambreen, A. (2012). Contribution of Women in Economic Activities in Rural Balochistan: World System Analysis at Micro Level in Anthropological Perspective. *Academic Research International* Vol. 03 No.02, 548-556

⁴Mohyuddin, A., Chaudhry, H.R. & Ambreen, A. (2013). Apple Economy of Village Zandra in light of World System Theory: Micro Level Analysis in Anthropological Perspective. *Open Journal of Applied Sciences*. Volume 3 No. 1, 39-43

business for example shops keeping, business of livestock stalls, property rent, hotels and hotel managements government job in CDA (capital development authority) projects, laboring profession, and purchasing cars just to use them as a taxi for the fulfillment of the needs of visitors to go in other areas of Islamabad, from the village.

Table: 1 Survey Results of Occupational Variation

| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Drivers | 86 | 33.46 |
| Labour | 32 | 12.45 |
| Own business | 67 | 26.06 |
| Government servants | 34 | 13.22 |
| Others | 38 | 14.78 |
| Total | 257 | 100 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Graph: 1 Occupational Variation

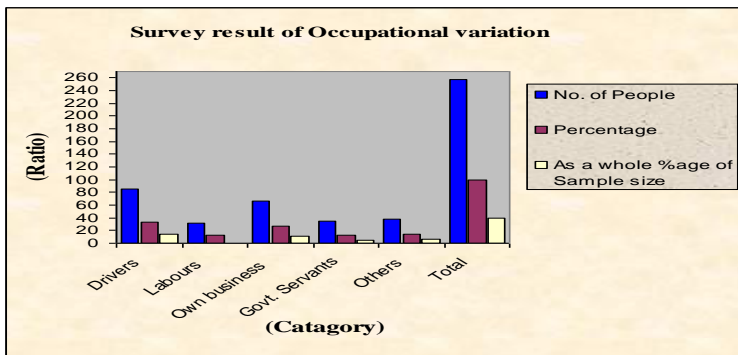
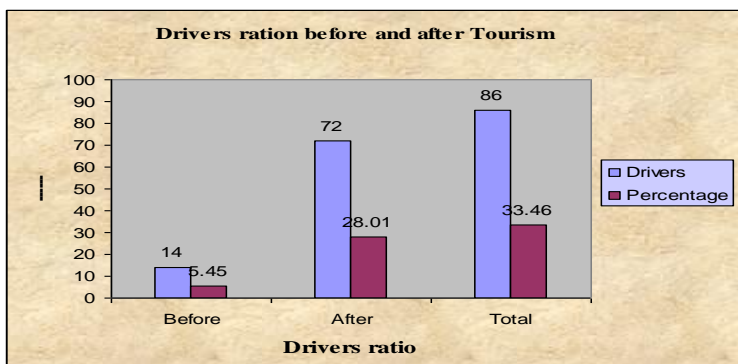


Table: 2 Taxi Driving Occupations Before and after Tourism Start

| Drivers | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Before | 14 | 5.45 |
| After | 72 | 28.01 |
| Total | 88 | 33.46 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Graph: 2 Driving as Profession



No doubt the most affected area, due to tourism in the village is sector of occupation. Pottery and agriculture, which were main occupations of the village once, are very limited now and many new fields of work and occupation, tourism has brought here. Taxi driving profession started to meet the demand of visitors. Mostly visitors, (domestic visitor usually and foreigner visitors specially) parked their vehicle here in the village to visit this village and then take taxi from here to go out the other visiting spot like *Mannal Hotel*, *Daman-I-Koh Park*, *Pir Sohava* and the shrine of *Bari Ammam*. These all spots are situated on the top of the mountainous ranges except *Bari Ammam* which located at the foot of *Margala Ranges*. Driving through mountainous and zigzag roads to reach these beautiful tourist spots is not an easy job that's why visitors do not take risk of their lives and use taxi to reach at these spots.

Aslam kiayni who was famous by the name of *Aslou* driver, reported that he had seen many accidents of feigner drivers, here. Many people who came from plain area of our country or from other countries could not drive well on these narrow hilly roads. He said that one day he was going to drop a *Gora* (a white person from Europe) on *Pir Sohawa* (a tourist spot on the top of mountain). *Gora* was sitting on the front seat parallel to me. He was observing my driving with keen interest and then he said that he could drive batter than me. He

thought that types of routes were easy for him. He was good driver and had driving experience since his childhood. So it was challenge to me. I stopped the taxi on a wide turn and invited the *Gora* to drive taxi to lead us towards the top of *Margalla* hills. As he started driving, within five to seven minutes he did a lot of mistakes and at next crossing he turned the taxi so foolishly that we were about to fall into the deep gorges of the valley, so instantly I stopped him to drive and started driving myself. After that incident *Gora* started lame excuses about dysfunctions of some mechanical tools of the taxi, actually it was not easy for the outsider to drive here who had no practice of these routes.

So the profession of taxi driving is progressing here very fast. That's why the ratio of drivers is high than any other profession of this village. Twenty eight percent, from all professional people, are drivers. They were only five percent before tourism started here. These figures show the strong influence of tourism on this profession. Government servant and labor are other main sectors which also have positive influence from tourism. Increase in the number of professional taxi drivers as a result of development has also been reported by Chaudhry et al (2012)⁵

Idrees Anjum who was the Project Manager of Saidpur reported that when CDA started Saidpur project to change the village as a model village of Islamabad. It was the policy of CDA (capital development authority) to give chance only to the villagers for the jobs to meet the need of labor and even government servants who were badly need at that time. So CDA did same as its policy was. Now mostly government servants as well as the workers of Saidpur project of CDA are the natives. CDA has settled the educated people of the village

⁵Mohyuddin, A., Chaudhry, H.R. & Ambreen, A. (2012). Economic Structure of a Village in Balochistan: World System Analysis at Micro Level in Anthropological Perspective. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Research*. Vol.2 No.3, 79-98

in administrative jobs while illiterate people are doing minor jobs like sweeping, security guard and labor, in CDA.

Hustle bustle of the visitors in village has created market trend. Local products and wood works shops have great attraction for the visitors. Visitors give handsome money for local products of daily use. So tourism is increasing the interest towards business. Own business ratio is 26 percent which is second highest ratio in professions of the village and then government servants and laborer comes respectively.

Table: 3 House on Rent

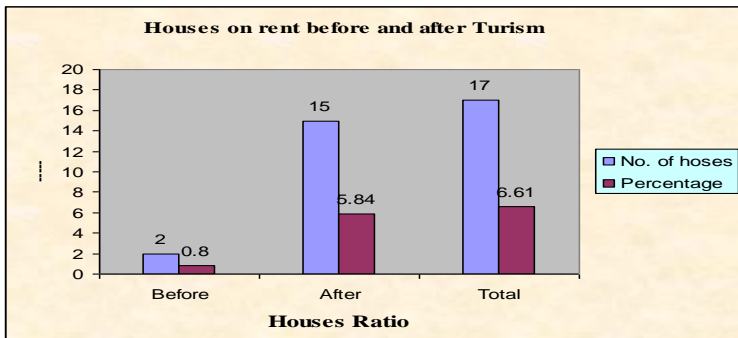
| Houses on Rent | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Before | 2 | 0.8 |
| After | 15 | 5.84 |
| Total | 17 | 6.61 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Another most important impact of tourism is on the process of habilitation in village. Village is located in the heart of posh areas (F5, F6, F7, F8 and E-series sectors) of Islamabad. A large numbers of government institutions are also present near the Saidpur village. After announcing this village as a model village of Islamabad people diverted their attention toward this village for their residence because it was the only area which was suitable for the residence having low rent and short distance from different important government's offices. In other word Saidpur village was a cheap and mediocre station surrounded by expensive sectors of Islamabad. So it was only suitable resort for the people from middle class. This phenomenon has increased the demand of houses on rent and charm for property business in the village. Moreover remodeling of this village (by government) has made the village more attractive CDA has changed it much now. After the process of renovation village gives completely new look CDA has broaden the streets and has constructed new roads, schools and play grounds in the village. The existence of the new hotels

and restourents like Polo Lounge, Chutkhara,Cafe-99 and Dais Perdais also working like a attractive stigma for the people who want to visit and live in this village. many people live in this village because of easy apporach to their offices and easy access to go in any sector of Islamabad and Rawalpindi while posh areas (F5, F6, F7, F8 and E-series sectors) have very high rent of houses which is not affordable for commoners.

Graph: 3 Houses on Rent



At recent time more than six percent houses of the village are at rents which were only two percent before becoming the village as tourist spot. Just in eight years this percentage has increased more to six percent so this is another positive impact of tourism for the people of the village. Native people are earning money in the shape of rent of their houses.

Table: 4 Shopkeepers

| Shopkeepers | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Before | 3 | 1.17 |
| After | 13 | 5.05 |
| Total | 16 | 6.22 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Livestock is one of the important features of this village as many people are busy in cattle rearing and herding and it's been their profession for generations. Mostly the women of the house are engaged in rearing activities.

Table: 5 Livestock

| Livestock | No. of Animals | No. of Households |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Sheep and goats | 38 | 4 |
| Beefalos | 5 | 4 |
| Hens | 139 | 100 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Case Study: Respondent name was Muhammad Iqbal and he was famous into the village with the name of *Malik sahib*. He was 74 year old and was very experienced person. He belonged to *Awan* caste which was also known as *Malik* caste. He told me that when he was child village was very simple and very small only some house were there and the occupations of the people were Pottery, Agriculture. There were only two occupations of the villagers at that time. But when Islamabad became capital some people adopted government jobs but others continued their occupations. No considerable change occurred in the village. He told me that when CDA (Capital Development Authorities) announced this village as tourist spot since that time people changed their occupations, lifestyles and food patterns as well. Mostly young men started driving (taxi driving) and many established their shops into the village. People left their ancestor's occupations like pottery and agriculture. He told that he himself left his parent occupation which was agriculture and now he was the owner of a big sheep stall; he purchased sheep from rural area of all over the Pakistan and then sold them on his stall. So because of this new occupation he earned lot of money. This case study shows the occupational changing and change in economical setup of natives of Saidpur village.

CDA has allowed keeping livestock stall here in the village and there are four livestock stalls over here. People from the Islamabad come here and purchase livestock for sacrifice to perform their religious activities, ceremonies and festivals. Taxi drivers are earning handsome money due to the hustle bustle of tourists here. A large number of villagers doing their own

business at most 64 people are running their own shops, some are potters and many people have their houses on rent. People have extra home to earn the money (as rent) from visitors. Tourism has also given the sharp revival to the industry of pottery (local industry) in the village. According to one of my respondents (a tourist) when first time he visited the village before its remodeling (remodeling of village occurred in 2006) potter industry was near to die. There were only two shops in the mid of the village. Now there are 8 shops of potters. Tourists like local pottery having local art and design engraved on it. Tourists bought pottery to take it back to their native areas or countries. They (tourists) adorned their houses and drawing rooms with these artifacts. They also give these artistic pieces to their friends and relatives as a gift. These potteries and wood artifacts make them remember about the tour of this village.

Due to new occupations and revival of some old occupations villagers have increased their monthly income which shows better economical position of the village. They are living in better way than before they were living. Now they are not limited to a few occupations but have many options of earning. New sources of earning have risen the individual earning as shown below in table.

Table: 6 Earning of the People

| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Below 10000 | 88 | 34.24 |
| 1000-20000 | 101 | 39.29 |
| 20000-30000 | 58 | 22.56 |
| Above 30000 | 10 | 3.89 |
| Total | 257 | 100 |

(Source: Socio-economic survey)

Conclusion

Tourism is an act of travelling or sightseeing for temporary destination particularly away from one's home. It leaves impact

on all aspects of life of recipient (native people from tourist spot). Tourism create new occupations dimensions and business opportunities. Tourism develops the society from mechanical shape to an organic shape as this article shows: Before starting tourism villagers were having only two occupations, agricultural farming and pottery. It was just a mechanical community while after starting tourism villagers have many occupations which tourism has created for them. This variety of occupations has made the village an organic community.

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