



# Agriculture and Socio Economic Structure in Kashmir Valley (With Special Reference to Block Awantipora)

Mudasir Ahmad Wani<sup>1</sup>, Mohd. Shafi Mir<sup>2</sup>  
Research Scholar<sup>1,2</sup>

Department of Sociology and Social Work<sup>1</sup>, Department of R.P.E.G<sup>2</sup>  
Government Hamidia Arts and Commerce, College, Bhopal (M.P), India<sup>1</sup>  
Barkatullah University Bhopal (M.P), India<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract:

The fundamental role that agriculture plays in development has long been recognized. Agriculture has been a way of life and continues to be the single most important livelihood of the masses. Agriculture forms the resource base for sizeable number of agro based industries and agro services. Although contribution of Agriculture towards Gross Domestic Product at National level has reduced from 30% in 1990-91 to less than 14% in 2011-12, but still it is considered backbone of Indian economy and around 50% work force still dependent on Agriculture for livelihood despite of structural change taking place over the years. For ensuring inclusive growth, agriculture needs to be given priority for any reform agenda in order to make adequate dent to poverty reduction and providing food security to the people. Since livelihood and food security of preponderating number of low income and other disadvantage sections of society is directly involved, its performance assume great significance in view of proposed National Food Security Bill. Therefore rapid growth of Agriculture is indispensable for faster inclusive and sustainable growth.

**Key Notes:** Agriculture, Socio, Economic, National, Livelihood, Masses.

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The fundamental role that agriculture plays in development has long been recognized. Agriculture has been a way of life and continues to be the single most important livelihood of the masses. Agriculture forms the resource base for sizeable number of agro based industries and agro services. India is a developing country and has a vast population scattered in the metropolitan cities, small town and sixty lakh villages and agriculture is their main occupation. The majority of our population still resides in villages and agriculture is their main source of income. Agriculture not only provides the food to its rural population but it also generates the employment and food to its urban population. Although contribution of Agriculture towards Gross Domestic Product at National level has reduced from 30% in 1990-91 to less than 14% in 2011-12, but still it is considered backbone of Indian economy and around 50% work force still dependent on Agriculture for livelihood despite of structural change taking place over the years. For ensuring inclusive growth, agriculture needs to be given priority for any reform agenda in order to make adequate dent to poverty reduction and providing food security to the people. Since livelihood and food security of preponderating number of low income and other disadvantage sections of society is directly involved, its performance assume great significance in view of proposed National Food Security Bill. Therefore rapid growth of Agriculture is indispensable for faster inclusive and sustainable growth. The year 1965 in India is considered as the revolutionary year in agriculture sector. It was the year which brought tremendous changes in Indian agriculture. The green revolution was started in India in 1965 with the introduction of high yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers and an intricate canal irrigation network throughout India, which made the region less dependent on precipitation. Agricultural changes which take place in the agriculture sector, like use of hybrid seeds, fertilizers and

high yielding varieties of seeds, crop patterns, land use patterns and use of new technologies. These changes helps the farmers in producing more crops and production, thus helps the farmers in their socio-economic development of their family. Rural society is an agrarian society and its growth depends upon the state of agriculture. If farming yields a fair amount of produce only, then the village communities will be prosperous and would find some leisure time to engage themselves in other activities. Prior to 1947 the agrarian system of Kashmir was feudal in character. The dominant feudal structure consisting of Jagirdars, Mukharidars and the Maufiadars exploited the cultivators for their selfish interests. Agriculture was entirely traditional in nature. Subsistence farming was in vogue and farmers were quite ignorant about scientific methods of cultivation. Since agriculture was the backbone of Kashmir economy, the Maharajas were supposed to pay due attention towards its development. But, contrary to it, we witnessed an agrarian crisis that hit hard upon the working classes in general and the peasantry in particular. The crisis was inevitable because of the policies of the state, like exorbitant taxation, corruption of officialdom and the negligence of agricultural sector. The worst thing was the oppressive taxation which had compelled the rural society to live from hand to mouth. The cultivator's right to food was almost negligible and the most of his production was taken away by the state and its collaborators and intermediaries. Frequent epidemics and famines that took place during this period made the lives of people miserable. People would often migrate to plains of Punjab for search of livelihood. These reforms triggered an era of revolution in the socio-economic development of rural Kashmir. Subsequent measures were taken by the government to accelerate the pace of development. In 1963 Land Commission was set up to undertake a detailed examination of the existing land laws. After examining states agrarian system, the commission proposed certain basic changes in these laws to bring them in time with the broad

objectives of increasing agricultural production and providing social justice. In order to bring the tiller into direct relationship with the state by abolition of all intermediary interests in land, the state government again came up with a bold legislation in July 1978 fixing a ceiling of 5.1 standard hectares on agricultural land holdings, excluding orchards. As a result 4000 acres of land were redistributed among landless poor. The reforms achieved the twin objectives of according the cultivators rightful place in the social order, and also ensure more efficient utilization of the state's resources. These reforms were further supplemented by the programs and schemes undertaken to bring more acres under crop production with emphasis on the use of High Yielding Varieties, adoption of latest techniques coupled with use of fertilizers and coverage of more and more land under irrigation facilities. The introduction of the programs like High Yielding Varieties, Advanced Chemical Fertilizers, Intensive Agricultural Development Programs, brought about a Green Revolution in the state.

## II. OVERVIEW OF J&K AGRICULTURE

Jammu and Kashmir state is situated on the northern extremity of the country covering a total geographical area of 2,416 thousand hectares. It lies between 32°-17' and 36°-58' North and 73°-26' and 80°-30' East. It is divided into three divisions, viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh comprising a total of 22 districts. Major portion of the state is hilly, and the height from sea level varies from 1000 feet to 28,500 feet. The temperature also varies across the year. This, coupled with the highly undulating topography, has conditioned the agricultural and other livelihood practices of the people. Agriculture plays a very prominent role for development of economy of J&K State. Around 70% of the population in the State gets livelihood directly or indirectly from the Agriculture and allied Sectors. Paddy is the main crop of Kashmir, followed by maize, oilseeds, pulses, vegetables, fodder and wheat. In Jammu region, wheat is the prominent crop followed by maize, paddy, pulses, oilseeds, fodder, vegetables and other crops while in Ladakh, barley is the major cereal crop followed by wheat. Jammu & Kashmir is basically an agrarian state. Agriculture occupies an important place in the economy of the state. Agriculture is the main stay of the state's economy. The state is predominantly a mono cropped and rain fed with about 40% of the area in Jammu division and 60% in Kashmir Division having assured means of irrigation. Irrigation is crucial input for development of agriculture in the state. As per the provisional figures of census 2011, population of Jammu and Kashmir is 1.254 crore with decadal growth rate of 23.71 % at the State level (rural 19.77% & urban 35.66%).

### Research Objectives:

1. To study the agro-social structure of the block Awantipora.
2. To study the socio-economic structure of the block Awantipora.

### Research Hypothesis:

1. Modern technologies influence the agrarian socio structure.
2. Agriculture sector enhances the socio-economic structure of the block Awantipora.

### A brief review of the work already done in the field:

The competence of the study lies with revisiting a bulk of literature available in the form of books, articles, journals,

magazines etc. A description of few books and research papers consulted is as following:

**Hajam and Shafi (2012)**, the eradication of the defects with existing agrarian structure is the need of current land reforms system. All intermediaries between the tiller and the state should be eliminated and all middlemen should be replaced by non-profit making agencies like cooperatives. The maximum size of holdings should be fixed and the surplus land should be acquired and placed at the disposal of the village cooperatives. Small holdings should be consolidated and steps should be taken to prevent further fragmentation. Therefore, it is imperative that the preparation of land records should be given top priority in the whole scheme of enforcement of land reforms. Tenants, tenants-at will, and share- croppers should be promptly and properly identified and their names should be recorded forthwith. It can, how- ever, be said that the interest of the owner should not be ignored.

**Malik and Husain (2012)**, The unique features of Jammu and Kashmir's agriculture are predominance of cash crops, homestead cultivation, shrinkage of areas under paddy crop and dominance of small holders. A large percentage of population depends for its livelihood on crop cultivation with recently introduced horticultural Sector or fruit cultivation and cash crops like pulses and vegetables. The present investigation shall provide a detailed account of agrarian transformations and their impact on the age old agrarian relations in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Syed (2012)**, **Awantivarman's** period (AD 855- 883) is famous not for wars but for peace and prosperity. The reign is known for bringing agricultural revolution, state machinery was utilized for the betterment of healthy social structure irrespective of caste, color and creed. Agriculture was the main economic activity of the Kashmiri people. No doubt there were other economic sectors too, like trade and industry. But the trade of country was mainly dependent on agricultural production. The people who mainly remained engaged with land were the peasants with small holdings of land. These holdings were mainly managed single- handedly by them, while as the people with large holdings of land rented out their lands for cultivation to peasants for a certain share of produce. The lot of agriculturalist was on the whole most unviable, they lived in poverty.

**Bazaz, &Haq, (2013)** in this paper an attempt has been made to understand the patterns and determinants of crop diversification in Jammu and Kashmir agriculture. In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, agriculture is the key sector for employment and income generation, because large scale industrialization is not ecologically desirable, and the infrastructure is too poor to attract industries. Therefore, agricultural sector continues to remain the important sector for socio-economic development of the people.

**Irshad et al.(2013)**, This paper briefly reviews earlier as well as recent approaches of Indian Social Stratification System and there relevance in present era. Much of what is known about Social Stratification in India is based on studies conducted in early and middle part of the 20th century. There is a lot of literature available on the theme of social stratification in India. In fact, the most researched area in the Indian sociology deals, directly or indirectly with the social stratification or caste. In this regard, the Indian society has been studied both by the local sociologists as well as the alien sociologists. The focus of these studies has been on the origin, dynamics, implications and change in the Hindu caste system excluding Muslims from their studies. Hence there is a requirement of a study of Social Stratification among Muslims in India as well as in Kashmiri society.

**Wani & S.M. Zuber (2013),**

In recent times some attention is being paid to the study of social stratification and modes of life prevailing among Muslims in India. This study is also an attempt to study social stratification among Muslims in Kashmiri society. This Article on Kashmiri society is studied on the basis of Caste, Class and Power. Caste system is radically different from Caste system in Indian society. The rigid aspect is missing and very few people are ready to attach any importance to ascribed status. In Kashmir Class is the base of social stratification and most of the times its bases are economic. There are three fold divisions of Kashmiri society, Syeds, Peer, Ulemas, and Sheikh at the top, Dom, Wattles, at the bottom and rest in the Middle Class. However, the process of Modernization, secularization, education and new found economic prosperity has made the lines of demarcation very blur and flexibility is quite visible while analyzing social stratification in Kashmiri society.

**Bhatt and Khanday (2014),** Just as the Indian economy which is mainly agrarian based, the economy of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir was/is primarily agricultural. The bulk of the people in the state lived on agriculture. Agriculture therefore, constituted the backbone of the Kashmir's economy and prosperity of the state depends up on the well-being of its peasant. The socio-economic life in Kashmir has always been very deeply rooted in agrarian sector, the peasant's main domain. Furthermore makes it clear how the nature of agrarian produce, the productivity of land and yield per acre was significantly controlled and determined by the regimes, and also discusses the role of animal husbandry, the backbone of rural economy.

**Hassan et al. (2014),** this paper focuses upon the different dimensions of growth in the agriculture of Jammu and Kashmir from last thirty years. This paper takes a more emphasizing on aspect of technological progress and the transformation of traditional agriculture of Jammu and Kashmir which become responsible for small growth in the industrial sector of the state. The paper concludes that Agriculture in the state is growing tremendously but still the use of modern agriculture measure is limited due to slow growth in industrial sector.

**Khan (2014),** studied a very high proportion of working population is engaged in agriculture. In Jammu and Kashmir about seventy five percent of the population derives its livelihood directly and indirectly from the agricultural sector. It is evident that the proportion of population engaging agriculture in developed economies is much less than the proportion of population engaged in agriculture in under developed economies like Jammu and Kashmir economy.

**Singh & Andrabi (2015),** Regional imbalances in agricultural development of Jammu and Kashmir are the major structural constraints to the equitable rural development of the state, which needs to be overhauled through spatial planning approach. In this approach, the systematic identification of levels of development is the pre requisite. This paper attempts to find out the inter-district disparities in agricultural development in Jammu and Kashmir. The study reveals that Pulwama and Kathua districts are the highly developed region while as Anantnag, Srinagar, Jammu, Budgam, Udhampur, Baramulla and Kupwara fall in medium category group and Doda, Leh, Udhampur, Rajouri, Kargil and Poonch are the least developed regions.

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peasant. The socio-economic life in Kashmir has always been very deeply rooted in agrarian sector, the peasant's main domain. The Third study is devoted for assessment of the peasant economy in the light of rural produce and livestock. It elaborates on a wide variety of crops (both Kharif and Rabi) cultivated by Kashmiri peasant. Furthermore makes it clear how the nature of agrarian produce, the productivity of land and yield per acre was significantly controlled and determined by the regimes, and also discusses the role of animal husbandry, the backbone of rural economy.

#### **Proposed methodology during the tenure of the research work:**

So far as collection of data is concerned which would be based on the sources such as direct and indirect sources. The former represents the primary data which would be directly collected from the respondents, the latter represents the secondary data which would be collected from text books, newspapers, periodicals, publications, web sites, Journals etc. The techniques used in this research would be based on sampling method and interview.

#### **III. SAMPLING PROCEDURE:**

For the purpose of collecting data and information, the study of sample of three hundred (150) respondents were selected from the concerned field work area of block Awantipora. We will take samples from east, west, north, south and central parts of block Awantipora. The sampling would be randomly selected from the villages of block Awantipora. Random method of sampling was used for this research. The techniques "used in this research was based on interview schedule.

#### **IV. STUDY AREA**

The study was carried out in block Awantipora of district Pulwama and **Pulwama** (known as **Panwangam** in antiquity ,and later as **Pulgam** is a town and a notified area committee in Pulwama district in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is almost 40 km (25 mi) from the summer capital of Srinagar. Pulwama is often called the "Anand of Kashmir" or "Dudha-Kul of Kashmir" on account of its high milk production. The district Pulwama is strategically located in the south-east corner of Kashmir valley. The district Pulwama is located at 32.88°N 74.92°E. It has an average elevation of 1,630 m (5,350 ft). In District Pulwama there are eight (8) tehsils, namely Pulwama, Tral, Awantipora, Pampore, Rajpora, Shahoora Litter, Kakapora and Aripal. The total number of villages came down to 331 with four (4) CD Blocks and part of Keller block. The reporting area of this district has been reduced to 0.61 lakh Hectares from 0.98 Hectares after creation of the new Hill District, Shopian. The present study is being made towards the "**Agriculture and socio economic Structure in Kashmir Valley (with special reference to block Awantipora)**". The research study was carried out in blocks Awantipora of District Pulwama of Jammu and Kashmir.

#### **V. RESULTS:**

India is a developing country and has a vast population scattered in the metropolitan cities, small town and sixty lakh villages and agriculture is their main occupation. The majority of our population still resides in villages and agriculture is their main source of income. Agriculture not only provides the food to its rural population but it also

generates the employment and food to its urban population. Although contribution of Agriculture towards Gross Domestic Product at National level has reduced from 30% in 1990-91 to less than 14% in 2011-12, but still it is considered backbone of Indian economy and around 50% work force still dependent on Agriculture for livelihood despite of structural change taking place over the years, The fundamental role that agriculture plays in development has long been recognized. Agriculture has been a way of life and continues to be the single most important livelihood of the masses. Agriculture forms the resource base for sizeable number of agro based industries and agro services. Rural society is an agrarian society and its growth depends upon the state of agriculture. If farming yields a fair amount of produce only, then the village communities will be prosperous and would find some leisure time to engage themselves in other activities.

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