

## POWER STRUCTURE AND MANIPULATIVE STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS: A CASE STUDY OF A PUNJABI VILLAGE OF DISTRICT SHEIKHUPURA

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**Abstract:** Violence and show of power is a typical feature of rural life in province of Punjab, Pakistan. The Power elites in the Extremities among the factions based on caste factor in rural areas are wide spread in the villages. The purpose of the paper is to see the major developmental projects in village for agricultural development and the cultural response. In order to better understand role of power structure in manipulation of the developmental work, the inevitable existence of influential *Deraydars*, the evolution of all major power groups in the village are also discussed. This paper also discusses the political set up of the village to see how the political set up of village revolves around the pressure groups of village. How these pressure groups are formed, why these pressure groups try to manipulate benefits using their influence, political links, relationships, etc. The paper is based on an empirical research conducted in a Village 'Sacha Soda' located in Sheikhpura district of the Punjab province.

**Key Words:** Power, Power Structure, Power Holders, *Deradari*

### INTRODUCTION

Development is long debated issue and has been visualized by various scholars in diverse perspectives. Most common are economic dimensions strictly related to economic gains. Other social science especially anthropology gives importance to other human factors like its interplay with a society's cultural values, norms and beliefs systems, historical components, native perceptions, ecological consistencies, environmental constituents etc. As per Anthropological explanation, no change especially social change is complete unless it responds to the needs and requirements of people of a particular area. Development cannot be complete and sustainable unless it is human centered in which the ultimate recipients and beneficiaries are people. The history of rural development models and strategies are replete with examples in which human populations are consciously organized to follow a purposeful line of desired progress that ultimately aims to improve the living conditions as well as material comforts in lives of target populations.

The role of power, exercise of power and the vehicles responsible for perpetuation power is very necessary in current day's debate on development and its aftermath. In the same way, show and retain retention of power by the holders is at also important for apprehension specifically when a planned change is envisaged to bring forth desired

results that aim for increasing outputs as well as balancing the progress socially and culturally.

Culture being a man made live recipe for ensuring human survival over the centuries have its unique way of reading and labeling the social realities. It further has its own way of categorization and interpretation. The scholars of change and practitioners of planned change have studied over decades the importance of cultural factors that enhance or even retards process of social change though planned changes introduced in societies especially rural.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

'At the level of village, economic power is a major factor in establishments of positions of Political leadership' (Burky 1976) this citation is quoted by (Alavi 1976). 'Land Lords in the Pre-Ayub era were able to control at least twenty Punjab villages' (Burky 1976) is a reference to the exceptional case, rather than the rule few villages were (or are) owned by a single family. In the typical of about 12, 000 Acres, these are usually a few Land Lords (some of whom may own more Land is adjoining 'Mauza' (villages) plus a large number of Peasant proprietors as well as members of other classes. Given such a composition of the rural population, it would be simplistic to explain Political power in the rural society merely be references to exceptional Political power in the vast majority of villages in Political power in such missed villages is typically,

organized by the '*Keth*' or the '*Dharras*' (Factions). The *Dharra* leader, who is typically a big land owner, organizes support by a variety of means like they rely on a core of supporters namely their economic dependents, their Share Croppers, who have little option but to follow their master. And also their close relatives who might also be the big Land lords. The faction leaders enter into alliance with fellow land lords, who too bring with them economic dependents into the faction with the power of this core. The faction leader set out to recruit following from among other section of the rural community principally, the independent small peasant proprietors. The later are weak individually but often they are organized under the Authority of their '*Biraderi Panchayat*' (Linkage Council).

Faction leaders enter into alliances with '*Biraderis*' (Brethren) for which they use a variety of mean of persuasion. A powerful factor is the ability of a faction leader to bestow favors and patronage. For this, the faction leader's relationship with the administration and his access to official favor is of special importance. Another way to secure support is by '*Dhamki*' (Threat) or '*Taunni*' (Coercion). Big landlords with influence at high level are '*Rassagirs*' (Protectors of criminals) of small '*Gundas*' (Bandits). Also individuals and political parties with ambitions in district, provincial or national politics seek alliances with the local faction leaders that secure for them support at the gross root level' (Burky 1976).

Under British rule, articulation of power between the village and council regime was achieved by appointment of locally powerful men to the hereditary office of '*Lambardar*'. Similarly, appointments were made to higher office such as '*Zaildar*'. The *Lambardar* held a crucial position in the system. Formally his function was collect land revenue for which he was allowed to retain a commission called '*Pachotra*', but that was the least important of this function. He was not servant of the state rather he was the holder of a quasi-political office. He represented the village before the administration and the administration before village. To be effective, it was essential that he should be power holder in the village. The appointment was therefore always from leading land lord family of the village of the head of a '*Biraderi*' (Linkage) of peasant proprietors where such a '*Biraderi*' was large. By virtue of his rule as a mediator, between the people of the village and the administration, the '*Lambardar*' was in a position to bestow favors and patronage. This further reinforced his power because the power at village was assimilated in this way into the political

systems of the colonial regime. Through the administration, the '*Lamberdari*' system consolidated the power of the administration against political challenge, especially the way, which was posed by the national level politicians (Alavi 1976). Political parties attracted local faction leaders who established ties with aspiring leaders with politicians installed in the office, a new channel of articulation of power between the local and the national levels was established.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Methodology refers to the structure of procedures and transformational rules whereby the scientist shifts information up and down this ladder of abstraction in order to produce and organize increased knowledge. Thus defined 'methodology' can be distinguished from research techniques in that the latter term is useful for referring to the pragmatics of primary data collection, whereas methodology denotes the 'logic-in-use' involved in selecting particular observational techniques, assessing their yield of data, and relating these data to theoretical propositions. In practice, the practical problems of using particular techniques of data gathering cannot be entirely separated from the examination of their logic-in-use. Any methodological discussion then must include some reference to techniques.

### **Locale**

The current study was conducted in Union Council of Sacha Soda in tehsil and district of Sheikhpura district of the Punjab province. The life of this Union Council is characterised by big political players who acted as middlemen in the local power structure. Sheikhpura District lies roughly between North latitudes 31.0 degree and 32.5 degree and East longitudes 73.5 and 74.42 degree. Its shape is roughly that of trapezoid with a triangular off-shoot to the west from the Southwest corner. The village Sacha Soda is 18 km from Sheikhpura city towards North West.

### **Methods**

Data collection was done through the exploratory method while using main techniques of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and key informants.

### **Observational Method**

To collect information from the respondents, the research team was properly trained and was especially asked to be vigilant in the field during the phase of data collection. It was also done to with a perspective to take notes of the observations made during the data collection.

### Focused Group Discussions

The research team conducted one FGD per district that involved stakeholders from both public and private sector also including the NGOs staff. This method was helpful in a way that I used to get loads of information in short span of time as compared to other techniques. The importance of Focus Group Discussion is also stated by Dick in the lines below:

‘Focus groups are a method particularly suited to preliminary research where some time-economy is a need, and where a more structured approach may be premature. It is common for the group session to be audio-taped (or sometimes videotaped) for later analysis, though that is not my preferred option. Focus groups are a method of group interviewing for obtaining qualitative data. It is not so much a research design as a data collection method’ (Dick 1998).

The way of conducting focused group discussion was very interactive in which members were very keen to participate. In a sense, it also provided a forum to the senior representatives to speak up and share their experiences. This method served four important functions which were as under:

1. Firstly identification of the respondents who had been involved in similar activities;
2. Secondly, the preference was given to respondents, who were somehow involved in skills trainings or knowing the importance of the process;
3. Thirdly, the necessity of knowledge about development and community organization in their local terms; and,
4. Fourthly, their willingness to share their experiences was the basic condition during core group operation.

### Political set up of the Village

The village is represented as national level through constituency no NA 134, and at provincial level through constituency no PP 169. Besides this the union council of Sacha Soda is also working at a district level the village is represented by the members of Nazim of Union Council at District level and the Naib Nazim represents the Union Council in Tehsil Council. Further than this, another influential element in the village is the presence of local pressure groups which played an important role in the village politics and concerned politics at district, provincial and national level.

### Power Structure of Sacha Soda

The power i.e., political influence, numerical superiority and possession of land is divided with a somewhat difference among the following pressure groups:

1. Rana Group
2. Gujar Group
3. Virak Group
4. Dogar Group

When I discuss the power distribution in the area, I mean to say the affiliation of villagers with these prominent groups. One outer group also came in the competition of beholding power that was Rai group.

### Enmities among the groups

Though every pressure group had its definite links in all institutions like parliament, provincial assembly, district government, Tehsil council, union council, district administration and police department, etc. These pressure groups had serious tensions for one another, probably due to the desire to be more influential in the whole area. Many precious lives have been spoiled in the race of getting more influence (as I was told by my respondents in the village and checking the police record)

### Concept of ‘Deradari’ Politics and Influence

To be influential in Sacha Soda, the following things were very much important. Firstly, the potential leader should be having big land; it made no difference that how the person had achieved that land. He should be a ‘*Deraydar*’<sup>1</sup> which means that he should have an open ‘*Baithak*’<sup>2</sup> or ‘*Dera*’<sup>3</sup> where people gather to discuss different matters of village life. Other people come to see *Deraydar* to ask for helping various matters and problems. In fact the most important thing was the links which a ‘*Deraydar*’ was having with the politicians of all levels including district and tehsil level administration, national and provincial politics, civil bureaucracy and police. This thing makes the people believe that their *Deraydar* is influential and has the guts to get his benefits and also for the people who Join his *Dera*.

This influence was further strengthened by the number of ‘*Gundas*’<sup>4</sup> (Bandits) being employed by

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<sup>1</sup>A person who organizes the men’s room and is responsible for its whole affairs. Normally a *deraydar* is well off person having a big piece of agricultural land, with lots of people thus providing him numerical strength. *Deraydar* enjoys relationship with influential people at all level which makes him inevitable in village life as he occupies a position to solve villages’ day to day problems both within and outside village.

<sup>2</sup> Drawing Room: A place where guests are entertained

<sup>3</sup> Men’s Room: A specified place where only men of the village gather and socialize

<sup>4</sup> They are mostly the ones who are wanted by Police or are in clash with law due to litigations. The nature of litigations are normally murder, kidnapping, kidnapping for ransom, illegal usurpations of agricultural lands, water

the *Deraydar* for casting terror in the minds of people in general and the opponents in particular. Out of these armed guards, few of them always accompany the *Deraydar*. Some of them always remain in the latent side. In return the *Gundas* are given protection of the party of their *Deraydar* from police. Each *Deraydar* eventually develops his pressure group in the village and tries to make people of the village come in his group on the basis of 'Qaum' (Caste) and also by obliging them by providing those help in their problems which are usually concerning the water theft, destroying crops etc., in the police stations.

A *Deraydar* was only considered to be more influential in terms of having more 'Taluks' (Links) with the institutions mentioned above becomes more important in the area and establishes his 'Say' (Worth) in the area. People approach him for the solution of their problems. On the other hand, these *Deraydars* during the election and provides support to their candidates in the area. The success of their candidate not only strengthened the political position of them in the village but also bestowed onto them benefits from this elected candidate. It was basically the crucial importance of these *Deraydars* in elections and other related matters that their position brought them in a bargaining position with these politicians. The more influence the *Deraydar* enjoys, more powerful he would be. For politicians these *Deraydars* were important as they provided more numerical support for them in elections. Due to the vested social and Political reason these politicians always encouraged these *Deraydars*.

#### **Hierarchy among Links**

The term 'Taluk'<sup>5</sup> (Links) has the hierarchy among itself. As it is said above that the *Deraydar* at the same time enjoyed three (3) types of links i.e.

1. Politicians (district, Tehsil, province and national level)
2. Administration (all relevant departments working at district level)
3. Police and Judiciary (at district, province and national level)

So every case which was faced by these *Deraydars* was also dealt regarding gravity of the issue. If the *Deraydar* felt that case as nominal and did not require extra ordinary influence, they merely approached police and get the 'Solution of

Problems'. If the problem is bit serious then *Deraydar* tried to influence the case from district administration. He had also another source to influence the case i.e. political influence from politicians, but approach to these types of links depended on the austereness of the case.

#### **Political Affiliations of People with Pressure Groups**

Masses of the village join any group on 'qaum' basis i.e. Gujar wants to join the Gujar group, in which he feels himself secure and finds space to say and worth for his words in different matters. The case is different in the case of 'Mazarey' (Tenants) and 'Kammis' (occupational castes) because usually these people have the affiliations where their patron directs them. Though affiliation to specific *Dera* is not a rule, yet usually is expected on the part of people in the village that a person who shares a *Dera* of any specific group would not attend other's *Dera*. Yet, there are people in the village who attend more than one *Dera* and in this way they usually try to make benefits from both sides. On the other hand, pressure groups also try to attract more and more people in the *Dera*. As a rule in the village for a successful *Deraydar*, it is must that he should be more resourceful, he should have powerful links in the politics, civil bureaucracy, police and even Judiciary. He should have more armed people around himself. Above all he could help a person who visits him for helping in any matter.

#### **The Traditional concept of leadership**

The properties of leadership that was once trait of the village's life as reported by the people of the village were very interesting. The traditional leadership requires the leaders to be generous and democratic in nature. The leaders usually had big land holdings but they were not feudal. They usually ran the *Dera* as a common place for the village people used to come and socialize. The *Dera* itself demanded economic resources for its continuous running and maintenance therefore only the economically well off land owners were the right people to run the same.

Education was not common in old days due to many factors like non-availability of schools in or nearby villages, lack of economic resources to bear expenses of educating the children. Usually people preferred their children to seek the religious education that was almost available in all villages of the areas. It is probably due to which the people still have high deference and regards for the

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theft, caste disputes, etc. These people are provided shelter and protection by *deraydars* and in return they perform according to commandments of *deraydars*.

<sup>5</sup> Social networking with influential people in police, district administration as well as politicians of national, provincial, district and local level to get fringe benefits.

*Madrassas*<sup>6</sup>. It was also therefore that the economically well off people usually preferred their children to get education and thus build their social status even outside the village.

The means of communications and the nature of the village being independent in major respects also made the villagers unknowledgeable and innocent of the need to go outside the village and explore the world. The traditional leader who was the educated and having access to the out world was believed to be guiding the others in case if they required. The reason of still a high level of illiteracy among the farmers is also because of the fact the people think that agriculture does not need education as it is something their forefather had been doing over centuries. To the utmost of their perception, illiteracy is the only tool if somebody wants to do a respectful job in the city.

In the circumstances mentioned above there was a need for a person having know how of learning and being capable of the guiding lay men in village in their daily chores. Similarly the same person should be knowledgeable in order to understand the legal procedures of the courts, '*Patwar*' (office of land clerk), '*Thana*' (police station), etc. Interestingly, the role of such person was advisory not a dictator telling style. The villagers were confident of the same person as becoming their spokesman in matters of collective importance. The same person's *Dera* was the available for the people in case during ceremonies, if large number of guests would have arrived. The place was open on behalf of the *Deraydar* for the guests who were treated as the village guest.

The traditional respect of the *Deraydar* was deeply embedded because he was supposed to talk with the police to save the villagers from the threats, often consolidating the village consultations, acting as mediator in the village feuds between or among the muddling parties, etc. it was since the British rule when the traditional leaders were used for the sake of increasing the control over the masses when the traditional and respected role of traditional leaders was badly demolished and turned into a villain's outlook.

Finally few natives were trained in the language of the colonial power or in any universal indigenous tongue. This destroyed or, more accurately, never prepared the way for communication, particularly on the lower level, thereby diminishing opportunities to establish national discussion,

symbols, and myths. Still another colonial policy which was later to cause disunity was the method of indirect rule inaugurated by the British and the Dutch, under which territories were controlled through indigenous rulers and administrators rather than directly through the appointed civil servant. Actual control was often in the hands of British or Dutch 'advisors' who saw to it that the administration of the area adhered to general colonial policy. In practice, the limits of power of the native authorities varied even within the same colony. Where most successful, the façade of indigenous rule, with all its ceremonial accouterments, was carefully maintained. Indirect rule was considered desirable for three reason: it decreased the number of Europeans necessary to control the outlying regions; it brought loyalty and peace to the colony by maintaining old traditions (and some argued that there was intrinsic merit in traditional society as such); and it dampened feelings of nationalism by directing both loyalty and criticism toward the local ruler rather than towards the colonial administration. In direct rule was particularly effective in discouraging nationalism and unity when it was applied only to part of a country, as was the case in former Dutch East Indies'. More interestingly Stephen M Lyon in his doctoral thesis observed and noted that

*'I often wondered why anyone would be willing to work for a rural landlord. In general they do not pay generously. They can be remarkably demanding of other people's time. They frequently use harsh and insulting language. I understood why the Afghan migrants might want any opportunity for a chance to earn some food but I could not understand why villagers continue to provide corvée labour for landlords, nor why anyone would willingly accept to be a home servant for a rural landlord. The liaising that landlords do between villagers and the state seemed an important but inadequate explanation. Surely other employers might also be persuaded to carry out these functions. I had seen in Lahore employers who protected their servants from the police and who helped them make sense of legal documents, so I knew that these services might be provided elsewhere. When I discovered that landlords were significantly subsidizing villagers' food supplies, in many cases in exchange for what amounted to a few weeks labor, I began to understand a little better' (Lyon 2002).*

It was my personal encounter with the *Deraydars* and their supported to learn about the inevitability

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<sup>6</sup> Institutions where Islamic education is imparted. These institutions impart education free of cost but normally run under the patronage of village people especially economically well off.

of the power holders instructing the lay men in the village because of the factors mentioned above. My respondents also commented that it was due to the mechanization of agriculture when everything was put into the terms of money and all considerable commodities were made commodities and monetized by the government due to which the already diminishing mutual respect for the cultural norms vanished in an eye blink.

There was an unending race for money and later the same was considered to be the easy route to get the power. The then Pakistani society was already under so many drastic social changes like the independence injuries were still not recovered, the death of the unanimous national leader and the political upsets were the hallmarks that laid the foundations of unrest in the society and among the masses. The sense of insecurities made people also think to take all necessary measures to make sure that they are safer as there was still a fear going on in the minds of the people that may be some day they are again asked to go back from where they came which was surely a risk as nothing was left behind on which they would have dared to decide to go back.

Since after the independence, the land claims from the emigrants were not entertained because of so many hurdles in the official work like no proper work places, no facilities for the office work, serious lack of stationery, the whole official records were missing or even destroyed, etc. These problems needed proper and regular official procedures for solution. The emigrants were already under mental stresses and lots of insecurities were along with them while coming to newly born Pakistan. The early mess in the government set up really provided a paradise for the criminal minded officials and even criminals to do whatever they wanted. There were forgeries in the land claim of the emigrants on the part of the land clerks due to which still hundreds of cases are pending in the courts and waiting for the decision.

#### **Cultural Response to Projects Details**

After throwing light on power holders of the village, the details of Projects with respect to village Sacha Soda are discussed. The purpose is to give details of each project (scheme wise), its organization, objectives, and participation of village people in the different schemes of project. In fact, three different projects regarding mechanized agriculture were launched in the village. The name of each project is given below:

1. Agronomic Research Project (ARP)
2. Second Scarp Transition Project (SSTP)
3. Water Management Program (WMP)

#### **Second Scarp Transition Project (SSTP)**

SSTP was launched in 1992. The village Sacha Soda came in the Chor Kana Scheme. The Purpose was to install tube wells to control water logging and salinity problems in the area of the village.

##### **Main Objective of Project**

The officials of the project realized that the water salinity and water logging would be controlled, if the tube wells are sunk in the area. Two types of tube wells were recommended which are described below:

- i. The tube wells which would extract water from underground and then that water would be drained into different 'Sem nallahs' (water logging channels), to control high level of water underground.
- ii. The tube wells which would extract water from underground and this water would be used later on, for irrigation purposes so that the underground water should not go down from desired level.

The project authorities divided the whole project areas into different Schemes. For each scheme a team of social organizers were employed. The team was supposed to be supervised by the team leader in the branch office (Sheikhupura). Social Organizers were expected to visit target area for monitoring progress of project. Now each social organizer was given a cluster comprising several Villages, where he had to perform his duties mentioned above. According to plan, social organizers were supposed to visit their cluster on specified days for convincing farmers to install community tube wells (for which they were given subsidy money worth Rs. 32,000/-) through proposed Farmer Organizations (FOs). The essential part for installation of CTW was the conditions that a CTW as the term elucidates that it would not be a private property of any person. Rather a CTW would jointly be owned by FO comprising 5 to 6 farmers to suck underground water for irrigation purposes. The prerequisites for FO were that it would be registered body and select its President, Secretary and Other officials and would function formally. The officials of Organization were expected to work in harmony to ensure the provision of water to each member on equal terms. The criterion for the establishment of FO also demanded that all aspirant farmers must have their agricultural land adjacent to one another.

##### **SSTP's progress in Sacha Soda**

Village Sacha Soda was included in Chor Kana Scheme of SSTP. Initially when social organizer started visiting village to approach farmers to

counsel them about the benefits of CTW and FO nobody cooperated. This innovation was conceived as strange idea by villagers to work in organizations. The struggles of social organizer became fruitful when he told farmers about subsidy money to install the tube wells. Just before advent of project, farmers were facing severe water logging problems. The water provided from Upper Chenab Canal insufficient to meet the needs of farmers especially in rice growing season plenty of water was required. Another problem of insufficient amount of water was the water theft committed by the influential people in the village deliberately. So the water theft was creating problems. The lack of irrigation water was a great problem faced by the small farmers. In this regard, project was a substitute for farmers to form their own FO and to install their own tube well from which they would have easily met required volume of water for irrigation. SSTP made another distinction while excluding the farmers already having their private tube well (PTW). The initial innovators and beneficiaries of SSTP were big and influential landholders in Sacha Soda, due to which the Chor Kana scheme faced many problems.

#### **Problems faced by Social Organizer in Sacha Soda**

The empirical data revealed that power influence of power holders was evident in SSTP. In one case, an influential power holder already having his private tube well constrained the Social organizer to reflect PTW as CTW. The Social organizer who hailed from the same village knew influence of the power holders had to obey the order to save his life and job. On the other hand, farmers with no link with power holder or small piece of land were ineffective in FO affairs especially when they had to deal with power holders or their group members. They faced problems of not having water or getting it very late. It was seen that poor farmers in that case had no social status in front of the influential person or his group fellows.

The influential people by using their links installed CTWs which later on became their private property. The Social organizer of Chor Kana was changed several times because, when any influential person heard about any social organizer helping his opponent group, then that influential landowners also took the example as granted to exploit the project into his favor. If the Social organizer tried to resist before these influential then he was transferred, beaten, or suspended from the job. The followers of these influential land owners were more or less acting in the same way similar to their group leaders. Using their links, they were also influential in running business of FOs. They

managed to get water on priority basis without considering whether it was their turn or not. They also managed to get more water than quantity prefixed for all members.

The small farmers embraced another problem that they were already having contradictions with their fellow farmers due to they usually refused to cooperate in running FOs. Another difficulty which arouse in the project was that the new appointed Social organizer from the village Sacha Soda well acquainted with influence of these landlords and their influence did not try to contradict in any matter of these influential people because of knowing that these influential land owners have the sources to give any possible harm to him. Having this idea he decided to cooperate with the power holders as no security was given to Social organizers to deal with this issue. This was also noticed that these influential land owners had already links with higher authorities of project.

#### **Achievement of Objectives**

The purpose of project was to subsidize the farmers in installation process of CTW to manage the dearth of irrigation water and to overcome water theft. Definitely CTWs contributed in controlling the issues of water logging and water shortage in Sacha Soda and also compensated canal water and reduced water theft through better water management practices introduced by SSTP.

At the same point, this project became a source of manipulation of links among big and politically influential landlords as they managed to install CTWs in which they included their tenants shown as members of FO. By doing so they had CTW as their own property. They also provided same benefits to their fellows and group allies. The influential were effective enough in running the affairs of FOs in getting water more than their own share and sometimes before their turn, etc. These influential figures also created hurdles in the way of their opponents in village so that opponents may not benefit from the scheme. The course of events led to a commencement of an unending competition of becoming more influential among these pressure groups in the village.

The already tense situation of village became tenser due to SSTP because it provided another battle field to these opponent groups to show their superiority over one another. The small farmers also faced problems from their neighboring influential farmers therefore many small farmers refused to participate in SSTP. The project though controlled problems of water logging, dearth, theft and salinity but further instigated new problems in the community of Sacha Soda.

### **Water Management Program (WMP)**

Unmetalled water channels are a great source of wastage of Irrigation water. Unnecessary bends in the channel, growth of herbs and grass in the unmetalled water channels and mud in channels usually creates the flow uneven and reduced the required water pressure in irrigation. These were some problems which featured the water channels of Sacha Soda. After realizing the problem, the agriculture department launched WMP in collaboration with World Bank to resolve problems and control the water shortages. In addition, WMP was providing technical assistance to farmers in Sacha Soda. WMP was an attempt to improve the irrigation system therefore the project was also trying to educate farmers about importance of land leveling due to which water logging and salinity problems could easily be solved. The recommendations of WMP emphasized that if the farms and fields were leveled properly, irrigation time can be considerably reduced. WMP demonstrated farmers about how to manage farms and fields by showing them preparing model plots to provide farmers an opportunity to match modern farming and its benefits with their own traditional methods. WMP after explicating farmers about benefits of modern methods also provided modern agricultural equipment at every tehsil level on low rents.

### **Functions of WMP in Sacha Soda**

WMP established its offices in different areas which dealt with surrounding villages. Sacha Soda village was supervised under main district office in Sheikhupura. Its officials according to their visit plans visited village and approached farmers for convincing them to reconstruct their water channels. The whole work was planned to be executed with cooperation of officials of WMP and FOs. The functions of FO in SSTP and WMP were different. In SSTP, the organization comprised 5-6 farmers who had installed their CTW but in WMP the farmer organization comprised the number of water users from each water channel. The registration of FO was also mandatory WMP. The contributions of WMP were that it helped farmers in conducting free of cost physical surveys of water channels about rightful designs. After the surveys, requirements of establishing and registration of FO were completed with mutual consent of all water users of each water course. WMP also helped in provision of construction material handed over to officials of FO. Concerned FO was responsible for supervising construction process of water courses. Besides this, '*Bhal Safai*' (clearing of mud from channels), rooting out all herbs, grass and provision

of labor during construction of water channels was also among responsibilities of each FO.

### **Progress of W.M.P in Sacha Soda**

Before the WMP, all water channels of Sacha Soda were damaged and unmetalled, except the main distributary that came upper chenab (it was the property of canal department and also metalled by Canal Department). As discussed in SSTP scheme that the only water distributary from upper chenab was not sufficient to provide water to the 9,389 acres of agricultural land of Sacha Soda. The events of water theft were very common and poor conditions of water channels were also a great hurdle for the farmers due to which they were not having water as allocated by canal department for irrigating crops. SSTP contributed to greater extent to control shortage of water but due to poor conditions of water channels water was still wasted. When this scheme started, there was a relief for farmers to hope for having the right volume of water that was why water users as compared to other projects were ready to participate in project.

The procedure of WMP which was quite similar to SSTP created problems for farmers, as it was said that farmers who were getting water from one water channel were supposed to form their own FO. After construction of water channels, the whole expenses which were initially contributed by WMP would be equally divided on members of FO to be paid in into ten installments after every six months. This thing made small farmers anxious because they were depending on their agricultural production. The reason was that after six months they were supposed to get money after selling out the crops. The profit earned on each crop helped them to meet their ends like marriage of daughter, expenses of kids' education, and construction of house, etc. The farmers could not afford another expense which could lessen their earning. The neighboring farmers who were '*Mukhalif*' (opponent) of one another created problems for small farmers to participate in FOs. The majority of farmers already had registered complaints against one another in police station and canal department about water theft and such like other matters. It was very difficult to bring them to cooperate in a new situation while ignoring previous contradictions.

The case of big and influential landlords was different as they managed to get their own water channels metalled. The landlords manipulated project in a way that they formed their personal organizations under guise of FOs in which they showed their own tenants as members and got



material for reconstructing their personal water course passing through their lands. The water channels for which construction material was claimed were private property of influential land owners. The construction material was consumed in their personal water channels. WMP was also committed to provide modern tools on cheap rents at every tehsil level. This scheme totally gone problematic, when it was observed that at every tehsil level managed more or less 50-100 villages due to which equipment's demand was high but availability was very poor. WMP lacked the required number of equipment to meet needs of farmers. Only influential people were successful to get equipment thus leaving thousands of farmers lacking opportunity to hire equipment to get benefits of using modern machinery on low rents.

#### **Objectives' Achievement**

Objectives were to reconstruct water channels to stop water losses, making the flow of water smooth and swift. The controversial procedure of participation in project restricted the farmers from getting benefits of W.M.P. After the start of W.M.P in Sacha Soda in 1991-92 only 10% of the water channels were metalled and rest of the channels remained unmetalled. Out of the 10% of the metalled water channels, W.M.P was facing problems while getting back the installments. Most of the newly metalled channels were located in the lands of influential land lords who did not pay the installments. The vast links of them in the power holding departments made them exceptionally powerful to impose their own desires by distorting the projects shape in the village. These influential people also resisted against the applications of their opponents for reconstructing of water channels so that their opponents could not get benefits. This thing created the already tense situation among two opponent groups getting worst. So far as, the progress of W.M.P in Sacha Soda was concerned, it was not impressive rather it created the old contradictions of the already opponent groups more severe.

#### **Cultural Response to the Projects in Sacha Soda**

After discussing the local power structure and the developmental projects launched in the village Sacha Soda, I will present few relevant case studies to understand what happened with the projects and how they were manipulated by the power groups. The current section deals in details with the progress of all of the three projects in the village. It is discussed that how the local power structure influenced them and changed the shape of the Schemes, which were set by the project authorities. The objectives of the projects were not achieved in

an expected way. The present section also elaborates the interaction of project officials with the local power structure as well as the small farmers. In a way this commentary highlights the real beneficiaries of the projects.

#### **Second Scarp Transition Project (SSTP)**

The severe water logging and salinity problems, faced by the farmers of area was attempted to be solved by SSTP, while contributing farmer organizations in cash to install their community tube wells (CTW). The authorities of the project employed 'social organizers' for this purpose. The social organizers were given a specific area where they were supposed to operate. The selection criterion of social organizer was that the potential candidate for the post must be belonging to the same area where he was supposed to operate in the belief that beneficiaries of the area should have trust in him. The social organizers, after selection and completing their training session were sent to the areas where they were given the task.

The village Sacha Soda was included into the Chor Kana scheme. The social organizer firstly visited the village. He decided to gather the people of village, so that he could explain the details of the scheme and the expected benefits of the project. When he addressed the meeting of farmers and told that an amount of Rs.32, 000 would be given to the specific farmer organization that showed its interest to install a CTW.

The farmers showed their interest in the installation of CTW but the criteria of farmer organization was new to the farmers rather it was complicated for them. They discussed in the meeting that people having '*Mukhalfats*' (Opposition) would be a problem for the project and the farmers both. Social organizer told that he was bound due to the rules of project to meet the same. The same thing was later on expressed in a case that is mentioned below that describe the issues of the farmers and their reservations to participate in the project on the basis on said criteria.

#### **Case Study: 1**

Mr. Walli and Mr. Yar Mohamad were '*Mukhalif*' (Opponent) of each other. A case of water theft was also registered by Yar Mohammad against Walli. Yar Mohammad was approached and later on convinced by the Social organizer to install CTW In this regard three other farmers were also willing to participate in farmer organization (FO). Walli who had his land close to Yar Mohammad refused to involve in FO To have his '*badla*' (Revenge), Walli did not show his agreement on becoming member of said FO Due to which, all of other farmers lacked the CTW

A similar case also happened, when social organizer gathered people at Mr. Lal Mohammad's, '*Bhaithak*' (Drawing room). Lal's own application was rejected due to refusal of his '*Shareek*' (parallel cousin) and also neighboring farmer Mr. Faqir. The reason was that Lal's son refused to marry with Faqir's daughter. Faqir thought that the marriage of his daughter with Lal's son was deliberately denied by Lal's son after encouragement of Lal. Very similar to the previous scheme, the SSTP Scheme was also approached by the influential *Deraydars* as well as big land owners. The scheme was failed to progress smoothly in the village when these influential people tried their best to get the most of the project. Only one example provided a specimen for other groups to manipulate. A good example of influence of the influential people is stated below:

#### **Case Study: 2**

When S.S.T.P was about to start in Sacha Soda, the physical survey was conducted. The survey covered the number of private tube wells (PTWs) working in the village. Purpose was to delist those owners of tube wells, who were already having their P.T.Ws. The Project was started after the four months of survey. The PTWs which were installed after the cessation of the physical survey and before the start of the project had no record. This weakness in the project was exploited by those owners and they claimed money from project official showing their private tube wells (PTW) as community tube well (CTW).

Rana Tariq (Younger brother of Rana Riaz) called the social organizer and showed him the application for submission. The subsidy money was released and the already working P.T.W of Rana became as a CTW of the Rana group. The members of FO were the tenants of Ranas. In another case, similar to the above, the Ranas also helped their group members, to have the full benefits from the project. Mr. Shafi who had only two acres of land, he used to get some land from Ranas on contract basis. He also showed his desire to install a CTW. He was an ardent supporter of Ranas in Sacha Soda. He came to Rana Waheed (Younger brother of Rana Riaz) and said that if he would help him in the installation of CTW, then he would provide Ranas water free of cost. Rana Waheed met the social organizer and asked to do the same thing, after a week the application was approved and money was released.

This specimen provoked the other influential *Deraydars* that Ranas are using the project to oblige their group members. Therefore other *Deraydars* also decided to get more and more. The following case studies throw light on the example set by

Ranas as a specimen by other strong groups in the village for their manipulation.

#### **Case Study: 3**

The Social organizer of Chor Kana Scheme completed an application of CTW. The money was later on released. When the Social Organizer went to visit the CTW and FO, he came to observe that there was no CTW working. He reported in the office, due to which the second installment of subsidy money was stopped. The applicants were close associates of Islam Dogar they went to him and asked for help who eventually went to his MPA. He gave a '*Parchi*' (interceding letter) to Islam. Islam went to the head office of the project in Lahore. The higher officials were shown the *Parchi*. In which the M.P.A showed his dissatisfaction with the social organizer. The social organizer was blamed of claiming '*Rishwat*' (bribery) from the applicants. He was also accused that he wanted the said CTW to be installed for relative of his own.

The action initiated on the complaints was the suspension of social organizer. The cheque was later on released and consumed by the same applicants. More or Less, same kind of behavior was shown from the Gujar group. Ch. Abdul Rehman (Head of Gujar Group) who deliberately called the social organizer at his *Dera* and said that Mr. Yaqoob is trying to get his application approved but he must not be given a CTW. It was so because Yaqoob did not obey his orders of withdrawing the complaint against his cousin namely Ch Naseeb from the police station. Social organizer told him that he had no legal grounds to refuse the application. Ch. Abdur Rehman threatened him that then he (social organizer) would not be allowed to enter the village. The social organizer had to obey the order to save his life and job both but later on the same social organizer was suspended due to Rana's application against him.

When the new social organizer came to village, was reported to be claiming for '*Chah Pani*' (Bribery) that was why many small farmers hesitated to participate in the project. As it happened to Mr. Varyam and Mr. Ghulam Rasool in the following case study:

#### **Case Study: 4**

Mr. Ghulam Rasool and Mr. Varyam decided to install a CTW. They completed the paper work. They also got the mutual consent of the latent members of the FO When both Ghulam Rasool and Varyam submitted the application to the new Social organizer. The Social organizer deliberately delayed the application. When he was enquired, he claimed '*Chah Pani*' (Bribery) from them. They left the idea

of participating in the projects by refusing to give *Chah Pani*.

### **Manipulative Strategies adopted by the influential Land Owners**

This section is a concluding part of the evaluative portion of the review of developmental work carried out in the village. It dealt with the manipulative strategies adopted by the politically influential people of the village, during the projects in the village. The review is also compared with the main anthropological contribution done in agricultural domain by different anthropologists.

#### **Manipulative Strategies**

This is now clear that the politically influential factions in the village were very successful in getting the favors from projects in the village. To have favors from projects and project officials, these influential factions and their leaders called '*Deraydars*' adopted following strategies:

#### **Threat of Transfer or Suspension**

The influential *Deraydars* and their groups possessed an inevitable status for the politicians during the election campaigns and for the district administration for keeping law and order situation intact. Because, these *Deraydars* had definitely control over a faction of people in their area, so they served the purpose of providing help to the district administration to protect the stability in the area.

These factions and their leaders (*Deraydars*) had the links in the government and administrative institutions which brought them in a position to influence the government decisions. Their vast links were observed to be a great threat for the officials to co-operate with them in order to protect themselves against the transfers from one place to another or to avoid suspension from the jobs.

#### **Physical Molestation**

The numerical strength of *Deras* was the key factor for the *Deraydar* being an influential person. Many officials who tried to obstruct the way of these influential people were physically molested. The events of physical molestations were reported to be happened as frequently as one tried to interrupt. The Officials were also not guaranteed on the part of their higher authorities, if they dared to be neutral.

#### **Friend Ship**

The friendships developed during these projects were to a greater extent responsible for the problematic progress of projects in the village. Many officials were keen to have good interactions with the influential people in the village. This desire led to the deliberate favors from the project officials for the *Deraydars* and their followers. In

which other farmers or beneficiaries were either not served or served very late.

#### **'Chahpani' (Bribery)**

The often referred factor from the small cultivators was '*Chah pani*'. It was observed that the applications of small cultivators who had no affiliations with any one of the strong *Dera* were deliberately delayed. The demands of *Chah pani* were made to the small farmers from project officials in the village. This thing led this group (small farmers) hesitant to take part in the projects.

#### **Favors as Specimen**

If any influential group got information about favors to any other group in the village, that particular groups felt this as its legal right to exploit the project. The group blamed the project organization for favoring specific people in the village. They became brave enough to take that specimen for granted. Therefore, they started threatening the project officials by using their numerical strength in the village and political relations to get more benefits from the projects for themselves and for their group members.

#### **Comparison with Anthropological Work**

As it is discussed, that all of the three projects did not bring its expected results in the way, it was desired. We have seen the effectiveness of local power structure in the village affairs. Similar interference was observed in all of three projects in the village. Due to which the two other actors of the projects, i.e. small cultivators, and project officials in the village faced problems to avail themselves of the facilities being provided through the three schemes.

The role of pressure groups and influential people in the adoption of innovation especially through a project. He says that these pressure groups or influential people get their share on priority basis, due to their inevitable position to politicians and bureaucracy. So, they are in a situation where they can afford taking risks, and also share of others, because they know that while doing this nobody would stop them. Their links in bureaucracy and politics would protect them. The similar situation was seen in the village. The local power structure was effective enough to control the most of the offerings of all of the projects.

On the other hand, the second actor, i.e.; small cultivators were not successful to get the offerings. The project officials were also found to be disorganized. They were divided into groups, while supporting the factions of their choice or with which they were sharing benefits. The case with small cultivators was different. They were disorganized because of their already existing

interclass conflicts. The factors of Old 'Mukhalfats' (opposition), 'Shareeka' (Parallel cousins), 'Izzat' (Prestige, honor), 'Badla' (Revenge), etc were common in this class.

The people who are neither big landlords nor politically influential, can easily be suppressed by influential people due to their inter-class conflicts (Nash, et al. 1976). This inter-class conflict makes them politically disorganized. The economical factors are no doubt very important for a farmer to be the first in the process of adoption of an innovation. The majority of farmers in the village were poor therefore they could not afford to install tube wells, or to reconstruct the water channels, which were definitely very expensive items for the poor farmers. The project authorities rightly studied these very factors and decided to contribute the poor farmers in a way to make them encouraged to adopt the innovations, the project authorities positively decided to provide Rs.32, 000 to farmer organizations to install community tube well in S.S.T.P and provide construction material regarding the building of water channels in W.M.P. Charles John Erasmus in his study threw light on same factors. He is of the opinion that:

*'Farmers appear to be more receptive to improved cultivation practices, when they are being materially aided in other ways; i.e. by distribution of seeds, and tools at cheap rate'* (Erasmus 1952).

As in many studies regarding Mechanized Agriculture, there are many evidences when the new innovations were rejected in specific area in spite of the recognized factors of the effectiveness of the innovation. Scholars provided the evidences that

*'The innovations created unintended social and economic problems because in most cases only the wealthy farmers have the capital to invest in irrigation equipment, Chemical fertilizers and have the big tracks of land'* (Leaf 1984; Franke 1974) and similarly *'wealthy farmers adopted the technology readily through investing their capital in equipment and land, in village Shahidpur in India Whereas the poor peasants however took the needed capital investment risks with support of Government Development agencies'* (Leaf 1984).

Both project, i.e. W.M.P and S.S.T.P financially contributed the farmers. The risk factors of poor farmers were also financially compensated. But, the second proposition of Charles John Erasmus did not come true with reference to the village studied. He further says:

*'Material Aid, especially in irrigation projects is conducive to an atmosphere of co-operation on the part of farmers in their relations with extension agents. Under such circumstances they are much more willing to accept new and improved plant species, new cultivating practices and, co-operative work tasks'*(Erasmus 1952).

The projects in earlier stages were working smoothly in the village but since the involvement of influential factions in the projects made the positive picture problematic. These factions or groups were successful enough to get their interest by using different manipulative strategies as discussed above. The small cultivators became dishearten from the officials of projects and started blaming them for getting money and being pressurized by influential factions of the village which was to greater extent correct. The involvement of Influential *Deraydars* in the projects thus caused the positive situation as depreciating.

In this regard, the problematic decision from the project authorities also made the project's acceptance doubtful. As the decision regarding the community tube well through a Farmer organization in S.S.T.P caused problems for farmers who had been opponents of one another over years to participate in project. Similarly, the decision regarding paying back the expenses of construction material after every six months caused the participation of farmers suspicious in the scheme of W.M.P. The decisions were throughout criticized by the community of farmers in Sacha Soda as they found it not helping or facilitating them to take part in these schemes. The rule regarding W.M.P was not possible as the farmers who were totally dependent on agricultural product. They could not dare to have risks of decreasing their profits gap because; they already had many things in their mind which they kept pending and waited up till the profit from next crop is in hand. The similar issue was raised by Currens (1976) who conducted his study in North Western Liberia and Says:

*'The traditional rice cultivation was affected by the cultivation of coffee because people have to pay taxes which they cant's pay by growing only rice. That is why the people started cultivating coffee'*.

Regarding the innovativeness of the farmers of the village, the influential *Deraydars* having big pieces of lands were found to be exceptionally innovative. The followers of these influential people who were supported by them were also found to be innovative as they were also in a position to afford taking first. Whereas the small farmers were the

people who decided to participate in the project but their inter-class conflicts were the greater reasons that they did not get the full benefits of the project. Issac (1971) has in his study also found the people innovative who were either powerful or wealthy. He says:

*'In the initial stages of adoption of agricultural innovations, persons in the higher quartile of a society in terms of wealth, power and influence will be exceptionally innovative while those in the lower quartile will be exceptionally conservative. Persons in the upper middle rank will also tend to be conservative supporting the common idea of middle class conservation'.*

The only thing that was new in the study conducted in Sacha Soda was the people who had their group affiliations with influential *Deraydars* were also very innovative. They ever tried to get their share on priority basis as those of other people. The problems faced by all of the three projects in the village were because of lack of 'Anthropological Approach' in words of Doorman (1991). He says:

*'While seeing the feasibility of diffusing of innovations, person's personal characteristics including education level, exposure with media and relationship of the innovation with agro-ecological factors are studied. He says that farming system research analyst do not seem to pay attention to the socio-cultural factors that are very important to a person, to respond positively to a specific innovation, which is intended to be introduced. He emphasized on the introduction of anthropological approach to all this. The anthropological approach is keen to study the socio-cultural Factors that are significant while responding a specific technology'.*

I saw Doorman's view correct when his hypothesis was applied to the context of Sacha Soda. Firstly farmers decided to boycott the farmer organization's idea, because of having old contradictions with other neighboring farmers. These farmers found it strange to forget all previous matters and sit with one another for water purposes. Secondly, in W.M.P it was seen that the poor farmers hesitated to participate in farmer organization because they knew that they couldn't afford the installments which would be claimed from them after every six months. It was so because they could not afford the profit gap of each crop after six month to be so little. As they had to marry their daughters, buying house hold articles, new seeds and chemicals which after every six months go more and more expensive, etc.

Mandonsa (1980) has also appraised the failure of modern farming in Sisala lands, Northern Ghana. He says:

*'New innovations are rejected in under developed countries, in spite of massive amounts of aid. The innovations are accepted if are according to the needs of and values of population'.*

Mendonsa further discusses that the factors causing failure to introduce innovation are studied in a good manners by the social scientists. The village of Sacha Soda was also referring to the same problems. The projects in the village lacked the Anthropological Approach in words of Doorman. The local power structure was overlooked. A comprehensive study was not held before the project's start, which later on changed the shape of projects in the village. The beneficiaries were these influential faction leaders or *Deraydars*. The idea of farmer organization was made essential, which was rejected by the majority of farmers in the village due to their old opposition with their fellow farmers.

The vast links of influential *Deraydars* in government administration and police department totally made these influential people very powerful. These influential people were successful to get the offerings more than their legal share. They also tried to bring more benefits for their group members and associates. Later the projects became so helpless, as the factions became successful in developing groups even among the officials of projects in the village which were defending their specific groups.

In short, the necessity of missing pre project study or the need assessment study was felt later on when the projects were started. Due to which, all of three projects were not successful to meet their objectives in the way, they were formulated. The project authorities were mistaken while designing the procedure to provide their offerings to the farmers because of not studying and assessing the needs of people and the way the target beneficiaries wanted to be benefited.

## **CONCLUSION**

Launching developmental projects are required to be clear in the methodology and the staff's capabilities to cope with the difficult circumstances. The picture mentioned above describes that the project authorities sitting in the main offices were highly politicized whereas the lower field staff was easily harassed by the local power holders and their group members. It also tells the reality that the lower field staff was not free from the fears of being molested, or losing their jobs in case if they

attempted to remain fair in the whole developmental efforts. The story above speaks of three main developmental projects out of which two were highly funded by the World Bank but the local power structure successfully manipulated the same. The project officials were only concerned about the physical targets given to them but no concern was shown to clearly study that whether the project offerings really approached the intended beneficiaries or not. This is the point that would speak of something else as revealed in the progress reports of the projects' documentations.

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