

# Evolution of Rural Settlements of Nadbai Tehsil (A Geographical Study)

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**Abstract:** *The rural settlement geography is concerned with the orderly description and interpretation of process, patterning, functions and spatial organization of human occupation with rural environment over the earth surface. It had been felt that despite the work done in this direction by eminent geographers, there is still paucity of the geographical material of applied nature in analysing rural settlements. For that matter the area under investigation attracted my attention and it has been felt that there is a need to analyse the Evolution of rural settlements of Nadbai Tehsil of Bharatpur District of Rajasthan with reference to its environment. This work may be of some help to the other working in this field of actively. Broadly the aim of the present study is to examine the spatial pattern of settlements, to analyse social and cultural patterns, to examine to contribution of Jat rulers in developing the socio-economic culture, to find and the relationship between caste and primary occupation and to review and suggest the prospects of development in the aforesaid area.*

## 1. Introduction

The geography of rural settlements is a recent sprout of the vulnerable trunk of science of Geography. Although the scientific methodology on various aspects of habitations analyses was not developed until the present century. Its antecedents may be traced in important writings which developed gradually increasing attention to human habitations from the geography first began its modern moorings in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The study of habitations in modern context began with Karl – Ritter's work (1779 A.D. – 1859 A.D.) in the early nineteenth century. His theme of interdependence among the elements of landscape gave a broad base of early settlement geography, which included studies of such phenomena as rural house types, settlement patterns and colonization as the results of complex land – man relationships. Geography of settlements attracted the human eyes of ancient geographers of which the Greeks, the Romans and the Indians were the pioneers. Attributes and approaches like man – land relationships in the context of rural settlements have been expressed by Brunhes (1925) and (1962). Then with the works of Stone (1965) and Jordan (1966), rural settlement geography enriched itself. Stone stated in his work that "Geography of rural settlements can be defined as the description and analysis of the distribution of buildings by which people attach themselves to the land for the purpose of primary production" But he excluded some significant constituents like building materials, architectural style, land use and the fence types. After sometimes, his ideas were challenged by Jordan who wrote on the "Nature of settlement Geography" and defined settlement geography as "the study of the form of cultural landscape involving its orderly description and attempted explanation". The present study aims at analysing the Evolution of Rural Settlements of Nadbai Tehsil of Bharatpur district of Rajasthan with reference to its environment.

## Objectives of the Study

- 1) To examine the spatial distribution pattern of the settlements in the context of geographical environment of this areas.
- 2) To analyses social and cultural patterns as developed by the people.
- 3) To examine the contribution of Jat rulers in developing the socio economic and ethno – cultural patterns under the contemporary geographical conditions of the area.
- 4) To examine the areal differentiation in rural areas in the context of village morphology.
- 5) To find out relationship between caste and primary occupation, field systems, innovation, etc.
- 6) To find out the evolution of settlement in different periods.

## 2. Methodology

The present work on Evolution of Rural Settlements of Nadbai Tehsil of Bharatpur district of Rajasthan has been planned to be completed in various stages. In the first stage basic material available on this subject in and outside India has been studied to form concepts and hypotheses in this aspect of geography. A detailed bibliography has been prepared on the theme of investigation and some relevant literature was sorted out to become familiar with the rural settlement characteristics of the area under study. Another important step taken to complete the project is the collection of information and data both the primary and secondary, but for the deep study of geographical background of the area, secondary data has also been collected from various government and quasi government agencies in whatever form published or unpublished. Since after 1931 census, caste wise enumeration of population has been given up due to several socio-political reasons, and there is no other way but to depend on 1931 census data for study of caste and its various parameters national scale. We know very well that various major changes including the major political event of partition of the country took place between years 1931 and 2011. This has resulted in a lot of population movement

from one region to another region. Primary data necessary for analysing cases and indentifying prospective places of social activities has been collected through questionnaire. The sampling method of enquiry has been used by the investigator. The work is mainly based on the field trips and visits to most of the places (selected by random and stratified sampling) of Nadbai Tehsil. The author has personally enquired about the problems on the spot and has tried to discuss the same with related persons and officers. Although data available with the survey reports of various departments of district and state were collected but it was felt that the same were meagre and would hardly serve the purpose of analysing the problems which taken in hand. Therefore, it felt necessary to supplement the available data with the information's collected with the help of the schedules prepared from various official agencies.

### 3. Evolution of Settlements

Rural settlement represent social, economic and cultural network of rural population occupying huts, hamlets small and big villages located at various points of significance in the area. These settlements show interesting aspects of geographic and non-geographic basis in their physical structure as well as in social and economic forms of their inhabitants. As a rural settlement is mainly an agricultural workshop, any change in agricultural landscape brings modification in the rural habitat. During pre- historic period, people were mainly hunters and food-gatherers and used to live in rock- cut caves and bushes. Their settlements started with the practice of cultivation. The information about this change is meagre and speculative, But some idea about it can be gathered from evidences available through ancient sites and archaeological remains, distribution of religious centres such as temples, monuments etc. Distribution of communities contemporary historical accounts, literatures available and nomenclature of settlement for the convenience of analysis, this changing historical background has been sub-divided into the following:

- 1) Pre-historic and ancient (B.C.400-A.D.500)
- 2) Hindu Period (AD500-AD1200)
- 3) Medieval Period (AD-1200-AD1600)
- 4) Jat Period 1600AD -1826 AD)
- 5) British Period (AD1826 – AD )
- 6) Post independence Period (Since AD – 1947)

#### Pre historic and ancient settlements (B.C. 400-A.D.500)

The pre historic stage of human habitation in this area is shrouded in mystery and it is impossible to give a definite account. Except a few hazy legends of the aboriginal races and a few ancient sites, there is little material available even for speculation. New excavations reveal that Lohagarh (Present Paharsar), Katara, Enchera, Khatauti, Dehra, Gadoli, Pingora, Bachhandi, Nam and Mai settlement are of pre historic period. It is noted that these settlements existed even in 400 BC. Some more researches reveal the pre-historic antiquity of Peeri and Lulhara of Nadbai Tehsil. Eastern portion of this area was the part of 'mathura' and western part was in 'Bairath' Kingdom in ancient period. Form the verses of 'Rigved'. It has been proved that the region was inhabited by matsya people. Budha and Jain literature also indicates that Kareeli, Kheriya Jaga, Hantra, Aroda etc. were the main settlement of these people.

Archaeological sources found relics of third century in Nadbai. Paharsar, Gadoli, Pingera, Bachhmadi and Kawai were the main and important settlements during 400 AD. According to Gupta sculpture. Pharsar which is situated in the middle of the southern side of the Tehsil contain prehistoric relics. The flow of Banganga river during the floods was invariably towards the East and these settlements were situated on its banks. The present village is known by the same name (Paharsar) while in the prehistoric era it was described as Lohagarh. Bachhamdi Thakran is presently situated on left bank of the Banganga but the old evidences prove that this settlement was destroyed and took shape again. The floods also affected it. The river changed its course again. Some thousands years ago the river flowed on the northern side of the village while presently it flows on the southern side. Godoli which was founded on left side of Banganga provides old evidences which proves that it took is an old settlement.

#### Hindu period (A.D 500 to A.D. 1200)

In this period the agricultural and cattle rearing thrived systematically due to peace and security all around. So new settlements took shape. According Hiun Song (Chines & Traveller) the Gujjars had already settled their which were mainly engaged in cattle rearing. Besides, Mallah and Dhimar Castes were found on the banks of the streams and canals evidences for this have been found Mallah situated near the Tehsil boundry. And evidences have also been found a little further from the Tehsil boundry and nearer the district headquarter (Bharatpur) at Noh linking it Harsh and Morya periods. To the north of Tehsil headquarters. The old relics of Virat prove the historical aspect of this region. 'Manjhi', 'Baroli', Bhadheera', 'Raina', 'Gagwana' were settled in the same period. In these settlements we get the evidence of local administration and panchayats. 13rd century A.D. inscriptions have been found in Vijay Garh in the south of Tehsil headquarter's (Near Present Bayana). Which describe that the area was ruled by Yaudheyas. In the early Kushan period the region was connected with Mathura as per the evidence. Pingora which lies in the southern east of the Tehsil headquarter owe its existence to the same period. Agapur situated towards the east of Tehsil headquarter contains the evidences of Kanishka period. It has been known from Huin Song's descriptions that in the second half of the sixth century Gujar settlement were spread here which were ruled by Bayana state. Gwalior inscription prove that in the eight century Nag Bhath II ruled here. And in this period the Matsya settlements had come into existence. In the ninth century this region was ruled by Chauhans of Dholpur. Yadhu dynasty ruled here in eleventh century whose headquarter was Sri Path (present Bayana). The decendents of Yadu tribe who called themselves Jat presently occupy the most of the villages of the Tehsil and are the leading caste population wise. Their ancient centres were Gadauli, Bachhamdi, Raisees, Jhoroli, Beelot, Dahra, Akharigarh etc and these even-to-day contain most of their population. Yadu ruler Vijaypal ruled Bayana in the fifth decade of the eleventh century and his decendents founded the Jat state of Bharatpur.

#### Medieval period (1200A.D. to 1600 A.D.)

In the medieval period Mohammad Gauri ended the Chauhan dominance and his Sardar Qutab-Ud-Din Aibak

attacked Bayana region and destroyed many of its settlements. In the beginning of this period at the time of Delhi Sultanat, these settlements came under the influence of Mewat whose headquarter was in the north of the Tehsil headquarter (towards Alwar). The effect of Muslim and Afgan culture can be seen in these settlements to-day. Paharsar got its name when Shah captured the place within one Pahar (a period of 3 hours) Shah Mahmood camp was located near this settlement and another settlement which came up on the camp site was known as Shahpur. In the second half of the Medieval period Moghals entered this region and in 1527 the famous battle fought here between Mu8ghals and Rajputs and as a result Sanga was defeated and Babar won and hence established his presence in the area and made nearby Agra his power centre and the present settlements are :- Alipur, Salimpur (Saleem) Cheetaheri, Khurampur, Talchhera, Kailoori, Noorpur, Mai, Dayawali, karomeo, Sirsai, Mehrampur, Jahangirpur, Isapur, Lalcha, Lakhanpur and Lohasa etc.

#### **Jat period (1600A.D. to 1826 A.D.)**

The Jats who are found in majority in this Tehsil and the whole district, are known even today as former rulers and skilled farmers of this area. It is said of them they have the mastery in handling both the sword and the plough. Jats have been spreading their settlements in the area since the sixteenth century and are still dominant in the area. According to the literature the Jats came to this area from Malwa and Maru who came here in large number in the first of sixteenth century and with their grit, determination and hard worked converted the marshy land into agriculture land and settled here and started farming activities. Some Jat historians trace their origin to Yadu tribe to Vijaygarh (present Bayana). Various groups of Jat tribes came to this area who belonged to different 'Gotras' (clans), which mainly includes 'Dagur', 'Deswar', Rautwar, 'Bhagor', 'Sinsinwar', Sikharwar, 'Bhatra', Bhikarwar, 'Indolia', 'Kuntal' and 'Saurat' (Solanki). The main settlements of the Dagur clan are:- 'Badha' Utarda, Sahapur, Atari, Tohila and Gobra etc. these were established in the first half of the Sixteenth century. The centre of these settlements are near Dagarwati (present Jagrotti) area in which settlements of Dagur clan are spread in the eastern part of Karauli District. Deshwar Gotra (clan) settlement:- Enchera, Roneeja, Bhadeera, Kailuri, User, Behramda, Unch and Khangri etc. were established in the second half of the Sixteenth century. Rohitwar Gotra (clan) Jats came from Rohtak (Haryana) and settled in Hantra, Aroda, Dehra, Bharkau and Parswara. Sinsinwar Gotra (clan) Jat who are decedents of the rulers of Bharatpur state who came here from Sinsini village (Present Tehsil of Deeg) and settled in Raisees, Nam, Godhawali, Kasganj and Budhwari Khurd and Khan. Bhagor Gotra (clan) Jat settlements are also found in this region who came and settled in Sewla, Binua, Karai, Piprau and Baroliran. Sikarwar Gotra (clan) Jats were rulers of Sikri (Present Fatehpur Sikri). But, Sikander Lodhi's attack weakened them and then Babar after khanwa war also conquered Sikri and named it Fatehpur Sikri, this clan was compelled to flee and scattered here and there, Kawai (Nadbai) was earlier inhabited by Gujjars. Later Sikarwars settled in Baroli Chhar, Sailimpur and Kheri Devi Singh etc. Sikarwars are also settled on right bank of Chambal who call themselves Rajputs. Mahaware Gotra Jats, according to

famous historian Thakhur Des Raj are Surya Vanshis (Mathura memoirs) who ruled Mathura for twelve years and later after their fall some of them settled in Jharkai, Nythu, Jhorol, Manjhi and Lohasa of Nadbai Tehsil.

#### **British Period (AD 1826- AD 1947)**

With the arrival of the British in this area in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it experienced numerous changes in its settlements. The British constructed several roads to connect inaccessible places for administrative division, sub-division, revenue than as, police stations, etc. Several rural habitations developed around them which in course of time became permanent. Further, change in the distribution of rural settlements came due to the increase in communication facilities. The development of revenue administration prepared detailed large-scale maps of rural settlements in the first decade of the present century, showing individual agricultural plots and inhabited sites, etc. The most important thing that took place was establishment of police stations at a distance of every 10 to 15 miles to control crime in this region. This reduced the number of internal disputes between different castes and local zamindars. As a result people started settling wherever they got facility of cultivable lands and postures. Several tracing centres developed at suitable locations. A large number of settlements lost their agricultural landscape and attracted administrative, commercial and industrial activities. British period of settlements of Nadbai Tehsil village are – Ohak, Bhiki, Chek, Mihal, Chak Chattar, Kothen Kalen, Khothen Khurd, Nagla Bakhta, Nagla Phardhan, Basaiya Kalan, Bajhera etc.

#### **Post-Independence Period (Since AD1947)**

After independence there has been rapid growth of educational institutions of various grades, medical services and roads. In this period significant changes have taken place in the Zamindari system that has made the people free from the clutches of the traditional feudal lords who terrorized the people and did whatever they liked in the past. The people have now selected those areas to settle where they found significant resources. Certain facilities were given to the people by the government regarding construction of building, wells, school, etc. In some cases they have been allotted certain habitable sites for their habitation.

The development of medical science and cheaper production of medicines have enabled our Government to check the Natural Epidemics such as cholera, small pox and plague which had devastated the vast populated areas of the regions in the past. Previously the areas depopulated by epidemics were neglected by the people for habitation due to superstitions, but now a day such natural hazards are almost negligible and even Depopulated areas are being selected for habitation with growth of cultural development. In 2011A.D. there were 115 villages, out of these 114 were inhabited.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In short, it can be said that a rural settlement is mainly an agriculture workshop, any changing in agriculture landscape brings modification in the rural habitation. It is seen in study area also where there are a lot of change happened in the

evolution of rural settlements in different periods Like Pre – Historic, Hindu, Medieval, Jat, British and post independence period also.

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