

11) The orientation courses/ workshops for field staff like Extension Officers, Gram Sevaks / Sevikas should be organised on priority basis in SIRD/ETCs ;

12) There is a need to organise intensive training in the operations of computers in different functional areas to reduce the workload and streamline the functioning ;

13) The Governing body meeting should be held regularly once in a quarter as envisaged in guideline and there should be detailed discussion on the problems encountered in implementation of various rural development programmes. The active social workers, Academicians and Industrialists should also be involved as members of Governing body to revitalise it ;

14) There should be collective responsibility between bank and DRDA officials and deputy Commissioner as Chairman of DRDA should try to achieve coordination

15) The physical facilities of DRDAs and block administration level need to be improved for better performance of the staff ; and

16) There should be a government decision not to deploy DRDA functionaries for non DRDAs works so that they can devote more time in implementation of rural development programmes.

NOTE : The present study was sponsored by the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Govt. of Assam and conducted by the National Institute of Rural Development, North Eastern Regional Centre, Gauhati. The author is thankful to Dr. B.P. Maithani, Director, NIRD, NE Regional Centre for his help and guidance in conducting this study.

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BOOK REVIEW

S.N. Chaudhary

1993 : **Community Power Structure : Search for Alternative Paradigm**, New Delhi. Har-Anand Publications, pp 161, Rs. 195.

The concept of power although attracted the attention of social scientists and philosophers from the very beginning as reflected in their thoughts and writings but a systematic analysis of the notion of power became popular only after Second World War. The book under review claims to take a note of the development in the concept of community power structure in last four decades and as its subtitle suggests, it also makes an attempt to formulate an alternative paradigm for the analysis of community power structure.

The book is divided into eight chapters. In the first chapter, the author introduces the theme of the book and provides a comprehensive picture of the concept of power in historical perspective. Here he also explores the relation of the power with some other concepts like authority, prestige, influence, dominance and force.

In the following chapter, three major perspectives on power - Marxist, Elitist and Pluralist - are discussed and an attempt is made to highlight the strength and weaknesses of these approaches. The author argues that despite of all merits all these theories project only one sided picture of the phenomenon and have certain limitations when employed to the analysis of power structure at the micro-level.

Therefore, in the third chapter, he reviews four models - reputational, decision - making, control and resources - developed for the study of power structure at the micro-level. The author then discusses the contribution of Jacobsen and Cohen in integration of these models for the micro-level analysis. Here, it is argued that the play of power is not always vertical but sometimes power also works in a group at the horizontal level. In the fourth and fifth chapters major dimensions and techniques for the measurement of power are discussed in a comprehensive manner.

In the sixth chapter the author attempted to take a note of the major studies on community power structure in India. Here first he describes two models used for such studies namely, Dominant caste model and Rich Peasant model. Then, he goes further and selects a few sample studies from north and south zone of the country. From the north zone the Yogendra Singh's study of eastern Uttar Pradesh and F. R. Frankel's study of Bihar are taken into consideration while for the south zone Andre Beteille's study of Sripuram is selected by the author.

He first summarises the major findings of these works and

then makes a commentary on merits and de-merits of these works in a typical style.

In the light of his observations, the author makes an attempt to draw his own model of village power structure by integrating all the previous models on power. But the strength and weaknesses of this model may be delineated only after empirical testing. To me, the next task of the author must be to test the model in an empirical setting. The attempt made by the author in this work is appreciable despite of certain limitations. The book may be useful for the students as well as teachers as it provides a comprehensive material on community power structure.

VIRENDRA PAL SINGH

Editor

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I must congratulate you for two articles published in the Jan-July 1994 issue of the ETDR. It makes a student of Sociology of development very happy to be able to touch important issues by publishing articles regarding issues of development in two of India's backward regions.

The first article "Tourism: An Alternative Strategy for the Development of Garhwal Himalayas," is that of Prof. Sisodia of Dehradun, giving us very useful information and also insight into development issues of Garhwal region. Being a frequent visitor to Garhwal Himalayas probably this article has attracted my attention. I do not think that anybody having sufficient knowledge about Geo-Ecological conditions of Garhwal will disagree with Prof. Sisodia when he brings out that Travel and Tourism is one of the most important activities that will promote economic development of Garhwal with minimum investment of money, labour and other resources. I think that he has very rightly warned that development of Garhwal should take place i) without disturbing the existing agro-based economy, ii) without disturbing and further degrading their existing eco-system and iii) without derogating their cultural identity. This approach is highly commendable since it ensures development which will sustain for longer times in future.

The other article to which my attention was drawn is contributed by Mrs. Manju Singh and it is also related to future development, of fisheries in Assam. In order to 'develop' aquatic resources and harness fish as a commercial production in Assam, no doubt plans will be made keeping only one target in the mind that is 'tonnage' of fish. Experience of administrators regarding such 'development plans' has not so far shown that they pay any heed to the traditional ingenuity of the local people. Sitting at Delhi, Bombay or Guwahati they think that local ethnic techniques are worthless since they don't help in achieving calculated 'tonnage' of production. In coastal regions of Western India already a lot of permanent damage has been made because the policy-makers have permitted such fishing practices which destroy the natural reproduction cycle of the oceanic fish species to a great extent.

Mrs. Manju Singh has lucidly described the various fishing gear used by local Assamese people which ensure sustenance of lifecycle of fish species and thereby continuation of fishing as an economic activity for many decades to come. Especially 'Katla' and 'Banias' methods tell us that traditional fishermen also develop new techniques which are suitable to the eco-system. Before taking any concrete step to bring about changes in fishing techniques in Assam, one only hopes that policy makers take note of existing techniques and of local wisdom which is a product of day-to-day experience. No doubt something will be done in near future because the gap between estimated potential [70,000 mt] and actual commercial production [10,000 mt] is wide enough to attract attention of revenue seeking administrators and therefore the importance of such research-work is very high.

Generally Economists and Sociologists are people who take more interest in 'post-event' research. But these articles have given us an impetus for 'pre-development' studies. I think it is time for Social Scientists in India to go to people of backward regions, find out their felt needs and suggest some measures for the uplift of such people. 'Pre-development' studies will not only reduce costs of development projects but will also lead to development in the real sense of the term by making development projects a shared experience rather than 'an encroachment trauma' as experienced by most of the people of developing regions.

This should also be seen as an opportunity by Social Scientists to prove their utility to the society which is in doubt today.

Thanks for making room for my reaction

S. D. Gore