

“Role of NRI's in Gujarat’s rural-urban Development in the context of Dharmaj village of Anand District.”

(Mr. Sandip H. Sanchala & Miss. Pallavika M. Bhatt)

Abstract

As India inches forward and takes its seat on the World stage, we must fully understand the 2 extremes in India – prosperity and poverty. If current projections materialize, India will soon become the largest economy in the world. United Nations established the Millennium Development Goals and classified the poorest 1 billion people in the world as people in ‘extreme poverty. More than 25% of India’s population falls under the ‘extreme poverty’ group. Another 40% of the population falls under the category of ‘poverty’ leaving around 30% as the ‘urban middle class’. This ‘urban middle class’ of around 300 million people have just started their consumer goods spending spree. Almost 72% of India lives in around 700,000 villages. People from villages have been migrating to large cities seeking employment and other opportunities for themselves. Cities like Mumbai and Delhi, Ahmadabad have almost number of people living in slums and are called the ‘urban poor’. In Gujarat every village is different. Some villages are really in a desperate situation. Some have made good progress. If we look at what is common to all of them, we can narrow it down to 4 basic requirements. They are –Education, Health, Water, agriculture and Livelihood. Gujarat State Non-Resident Gujaratis' Foundation (NRGF) has been established by the Government of Gujarat to further the common interests, concerns and historical ties that bind the people of Gujarat to NRGs (Non- Resident Gujaratis) or people of Gujarati origin living outside Gujarat, in other states within India as well as places outside the country) with a firm belief that the contact and friendship established through programs of the foundation can go a long way towards generating mutual benefits for the people of Gujarat as well as NRGs and achieving avowed objectives of the NRGF. The objectives of the Gujarat State Non Resident Gujaratis' Foundation ("Gujarat Rajya Bin Niwasi Gujarati Pratisthan.") are to explore the possibility as to how Non Resident Gujaratis' / Non Resident Indians (NRGs/ NRIs) can play vital role in the development of rural and urban development in Gujarat and India.

- Key words : NRI, Indian Diaspora, Rural-Urban Development

Introduction:

India is known as a rural country. Approx 70% of people live in rural India. After independence government of India tries improving the quality of life and Economic well-being of the people of rural India. Integrated rural development programme (IRDP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment guarantee programme (RLEGP), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), National Social Assistance programme (NSAP), Rural Group Life Insurance Programme (SGSY), Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), Sampoorna Grammin Rojgar Yojana (SGRY), Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY), Anpurana Yojana, Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme Act. (MANREGA) etc. introduced and implemented by government for Rural Development. But the development scenario of the Indian villages is not same. Specifically when we talk About Gujarat, there are many differences in the rural development of Gujarat. Present research paper is based on NRI's Contribution in the Rural Development of Gujarat.

Since the pre-independence Non Resident of Indian's (NRI's) have been contributing to the process for the driving social change. Even mahatma Gandhi was an NRI at once. He was working as a barrister in South Africa and later he became a freedom fighter. Day by day NRI's become socially conscious and have a strong sense of connection with India. They invest their hard Earned Money in India and most of share of that going towards social causes. They contribute their bit for Indian Growth including the social space. It is not surprise that NRI's are driven to give back to their homeland.

Methodology:

Methodology of present research paper is as below as

- **Objectives:** The objectives of present research paper is
 1. To Know the Share of NRI's in Development of Dharmaj Village in Anand District.
 2. To know the areas in which NRI's mostly focus to develop in that village.
 3. To find out The Factors that inspire the NRIs to contribute for developing Village

- **Method:**

A case study method has been used for the present research. Secondary sources and primary sources also have been used for data collection. As a secondary source researchers used various websites about the topic and as a primary source researchers used telephonic interview technique for data collection. Due to lack of time and resources only one case 'Dharmaj Village' has been studied and tried to understand its development and contribution of NRI's in it.

About Dharmaj Village:

Dharmaj is the village of the Petlad taluka of Anand district. It is situated on Borsad-Tarapur highway. It had very busy rail traffic in the past due to falling Railway line of Nadiad-Bhadran. But now the state transport buses and private vehicles are in vogue. Dharmaj is known as a '**Paris of India**' because of its facilities and amenities which even a city cannot boast of. Among population of 11,000, Dharmaj consist of mainly Patidars and rest of the population is a mix of Baniyas, Brahmins, Suthar, Valand, Garasiya, Vankar, Harijan, Rohit etc.

History of Dharmaj Village:

The history of the settlement of Dharmaj village is very ancient. It was said that it settled down by Dharma Rabari in 1130 A.D. He used to take his cows for grazing there. One day he had found a shivaling, while digging in the remote area of jungle. Thus, recognized as the founder of this region, the village of Dharmaj was named after Dharma Rabari. In 1155 A.D. Narsinhbhai Patel of Jargal came to Dharmaj and settle down in it. This way the patidar community settle down in Dharmaj village.

Facilities and Amenities of Dharmaj Village:

The Facilities and Amenities of Dharmaj Village is as below as

Dharmaj has two trust, Dharmaj kelavani mandal & Jalaram seva trust which are working for social welfare.

Pre-primary school, H. M. Patel English Medium school, Kashiba Kanya Vidhyalay (primory school), Triji Misra Shala (primary school) and V.N. High School all educational institutes run by Dharmaj Kelavani Mandal and medical facilities and other amenities provide by Jalaram Seva Trust.

H. M. Patel English medium school set up in 1978 and around 1983 it moved five acre campus. It is equipped with a language laboratory, a computer and bio-technology lab, boarding facilities (both for teachers and student), workshops, conference room, library and e-library with 17,000 E-books. The School charges nominal fees and mainly it runs on donation from NRI's.

Jalaram Arogya Kendra, medical complex has facilities for pediatric, glucoma research centre, maternity, children's hospital with neo-natal care, orthopaedic, dental and ocular treatment etc. all these hospital are run on the super speciality levels.

Since the time of Gaekwad rule there are library with 15,000-20,000 books and a gymnasium also. Vipassana Dhyana Kendra is a Meditation centre which is favourite centre for meditators from Mumbai to palanpur and kutchh.

The Surajba Park with a boating area, lawns, swimming pool, water rides also was built with the money of Jalaram seva trust and panchayat maintains it with the money it earns as entry charges. However, the entry charges is nominal as Rs. 3 and water ride, fun rides swimming pool and boating charges are as Rs.12.

There are about 13 banks in Dharmaj village which has deposits approx 1000 carore. The source of wealth is remittances from NRIs. There is a Huge clock tower in the village which gives look village like European village. Apart from that, old age home named 'Maniba Van Prasthan' and 'Lagani Care Centre' for specially able people are also tell the story of social consciousness of Dharmaj.

Since 1969, Dharmaj has biggest liquid waste management project named 'Gauchar Vikas Yojana' in which liquid waste has been take to the pasture by underground drainage system and used this water for irrigation of pasture land. From this water they grow grass and sell it at door step by tractor by minimum rates Rs. 20 of 20 kgs. The collected fund by selling grass goes to gram panchayat. This project helps landless people for pastoral and also gives solution of liquid waste.

Dharmaj has also an R.O. plant by which villagers get refined water in only Rs.12 per bottle at door step. In case of epidemic poor people can get refined water one litter in one rupee.

Contribution of NRIs :

Migration started from Dharmaj Around 1895 for earning livelihoods. There as many as 1,700 families hailing from this village settled in Britain, around 300 families in USA, 160 in New Zealand, 1,500 in Canada and 60 in Australia, among others, talking the total numbers of families staying abroad to around 3,120. Though having settled abroad for years they regularly visit back home and donate for social causes and rural development. Both trust Dharmaj Kelavani Mandal and Jalaram Seva Trust mainly funded by NRIs. Local villagers also respond but all the facilities and amenities can't be possible without NRI's contribution. They not only contribute for their mother land but they also serve for those countries where they live. For example, Kantibhai patel former Indian ambassador served as a social worker in Africa and get honour by declared one week holiday on his death. Apart from that, in London Dharmaj Society of London, in USA United Dharmajins (as they like to call themselves), in Canada Canadian Dharmajins etc. organizations are working for their own identities and rights as well as social welfare. Alizabeth invites the trustees of dharmaj society of London (Dhasol) for grand dinner in honour of their services.

Factors that inspire the NRIs to contribute:

There are three factors founded which inspire the NRI's to contribute for their mother land.

(1) **The belief of being a descendant of the same father :**

Through the telephonic interview respondent says, “basically we all patidar of dharmaj are descendant of the same father so there is close bonding among us which creates unity and the unity is the key of development. when one initiates the others ready to support.”

(2) **Gujarat State Non Resident Gujarati’s Foundation (NRGF):**

The government runs an NRI division under the general administration department to deal with issues related to GNRI's. The common interests, concerns and historical ties bind the people of Gujarat to the people of Gujarat origin living outside the country with a firm belief that the contact and friendship established through programmes of the foundation can go a long way towards generating mutual benefits for the people of Gujarat as well as GNRI's.

(3) **Dharmaj Day celebration :**

It was natural for the first generation migrates of Dharmaj to have emotional bonds with the native place because they had passed their childhood and the earlier years there. But on account of the idea in mind that the second and third generation who have hardly visited their native place can visit often to develop the deep felling for the Indian culture of them ancestor native place, the Dharmaj day celebration organized every year where they have get together with the earlier and later generation. They choose 12th January, birth day of swami vivekanda as a Dharmaj day. On that Day all 6 (chha) gam patidar samaj get together. Thus, most probably Dharmajians NRI tries to come Dharmaj on that day. NRI patidar of Dharmaj collectively decided that they will save one dollar per day for their native place. On that day they also give the award to the person who did noticeable service for society. It's also inspiring the patidar of Dharmaj to do something for their community and their village.

The other side of Dharmaj:

During the research the other side of Dharmaj come to know when respondent talks about Dharmaj it sounds like a Dharmaj as a patidar (patel's) village. Mainly Dharmaj history glorify about only patidar history. Of course, demographically patidar are dominant cast but their is no space of other cast in it's history, in it's development and on 'Dharmaj Day Celebration' also. 'Dharmaj Day Celebration' is celebrating only for 6 (chha) gam patidar samaj, while Dharmaj village belongs to communities other than patidar also. Further, researchers found an article of Times of India published on 8 Dec 2015. It reveals that only 24 of 274 dalit families have remained in the village. The reason for the mass absence they claim is that they were

being intimidated by the dominant patidar community, for trying to exercise their right to vote for local body polls held on November 29. However, since this was a matter of 2015, only one question was asked to know the present situation of Dharmaj. The question was “who is the sarpanch today?” The answer is “Babubhai Dahyabhai Rohit is the sarpanch of Dharmaj and vice sarpanch is Tusharbai Babubhai Patel. However, only Tusharbai manages all the matters about gram panchayat.”

Conclusion:

- (1) Migration started from Dharmaj around 1895 and around 3,120 families staying abroad.
- (2) The main source of wealth is NRIs contribution in developing Dharmaj.
- (3) The development of Dharmaj is mainly focused on education, health and entertainment. They also should develop sports facilities and try to create employment in their region.
- (4) Factor that inspire the NRIs to contribute:
 - (1) The belief of being a descendant of the same father
 - (2) Gujarat state non resident of Gujarati’s foundation (NRGF)
 - (3) Dharamj Day celebration
- (5) Patidars are the dominant cast, so they dominate the village.

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<p>Mr. Sandip H. Sanchala (Author) Department of sociology Gujarat Arts & Commerce College (Evening), Ahemedabad. Gujarat (India). Contact: 7984181322 sandipsanchala@gmail.com</p>	<p>Miss. Pallavika M.Bhatt (Co-Author) Department of sociology Government Arts & Commerce College, kathlal. Di- kheda Gujarat (India) contact: 7383484997 pmbhatt85@gmail.com</p>
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