

PREFACE

Land use or land utilization may be taken as one of the primary concerns of Human Geography. Indeed, Human geography, in a sense, emerges from the varied modes, methods and objective of the use of land by man. Land use is that first activity which the first man on the earth started to sustain himself. With his development is seen the development of the modus operandi and modus vivendi of land use. Land use is, some way or the other, linked with the life and activities of man be he in the state of nomadic, semi-nomadic or sedentary stage of existence. Some people do not include the nomadic type of use of land in the strict frame of the definition of land use. But it is cognizable that though the nomadic people do not occupy a permanent piece of land, they move about from place to place in search of fodder, pasture, water and camping site and use land for their temporary settlement and sustenance. In a very primary sense, therefore, this type of use cannot be excluded from the definitional frame of land use.

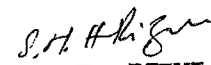
Since land use is closely interlaced with the natural environment and natural environment has greater element of dynamism or, in plain words, change, the land use is liable to varied changes along with the changing nature and behaviour of natural environment. Besides, human efforts have also the credit of being the generator of change in the various uses of land. The transformation by man of parts of deserts into green belts may be cited as an example. But in this case also the nature assists him in doing so.

The studies in land use are not new. Since the beginning of the past century these studies have been the focus of geographers, economists and environmentalists. Varied dimensions in land use studies have been developed by different workers. Even the studies in changes in land use have been looked upon from different angles and amply substantiated by maps, charts and diagrams.

My interest to work in this area was aroused in 1982 when I first visited some villages in the Bara Tract of Jambusar taluka, with a team of experts of Narmada Planning Group. A brief survey and a hopping glance over the area made me curious enough to see the area from a closer angle. Perchance, our Department was assigned a research project on "Land Use Survey and Mapping" of the same area in 1983. I was one of the research associates. This gave me the desired opportunity to have a closer acquaintance with the area and its conditions. This strengthened my desire to do an elaborate work on this area. This led me to select the topic "Dynamics of Land Utilization in Bara Tract of Jambusar" for my Ph.D. work.

Bara tract is a segment of Jambusar Taluka in the district of Bharuch. It occupies slightly more than half of the area of the Taluka. Being small in its geographical extent an endeavour is made to go for an intensive study. The main text is concerned with two broad aspects of land use; general land use, which explains the changes that have taken place in the use of land for purposes other than agriculture; and agricultural land use which discusses the use of land for agricultural purposes and the changes having taken place in them. An attempt is made to measure the nature and levels of change and investigate the catalyst of change in these two aspects of land uses in the area within a time interval of twenty years between 1959-60 and 1979-80.

The work is primarily based on the secondary data obtained from the Talati (Patwari) and from the Mamlatdar and Taluka Development Officer. Besides, field work was conducted to obtain first hand information about the changing practices, adoption to innovations and some other relevant matters. They are incorporated in the main text. Published data, except census report, could not be available on village level. The data constraint was actually a retarding phenomenon, which has been overcome with the help of local authorities, and also the knowledgeable and experienced farmers.


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