CHAPTER: VII

COMMUNITY BOARD (*GYATIPANCH*), LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL LIFE (ORGAZATION)

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7.1 Introduction:

"Changes in the society are part of an ongoing process. Social changes take place in a community because of the influence of geographical, biological, economic, mechanical, scientific factors. There have been several important political and cultural events affecting social changes in the Indian society. As a result of the arrival of several foreign races in India, there have been speedy social changes in the Indian society and culture. In 712 A.D. Arabs entered India for the first time in *Sindh* and established their rule there." [1]

"Thereafter, in 1175 A.D. the Afghan king Mohammed Ghori of Kabul laid foundation of the Muslim rule in Delhi defeating the *Kshatriya* king Prithviraj Chauhan." [2] "Before that, in 788 A.D. the Muslim invaders destroyed the famous Vallabhipur *Vidyapeeth* in Gujarat and Saurashtra. The regular Muslim empire, however, began in Gujarat in 1304 A.D. when Muhammed Ghori sent his brother-in-law Alakhan to win Gujarat. First of all, the Muslim rule was established in Patan. By the end of the 13th century, Muslim invasions on *Saurashtra* had begun for a regular rule and settlement, and, the Muslim rule was established for the first time in Mangarol and Prabhaspata. After the arrival of the Muslim and spreading of the Islamic culture, Vasco de Gama invented the sea route to India in 1498. Since then, the European people began to come to India for trade and commerce. From 1510 A.D. when Alfonzo de Albukirk won Goa, the rule of European people began in India. Then, other European people like the French, the Dutch, and the British came to India for permanent business. In 11757 A.D. the British began their rule by defeating Siraj-ud-Daula." [3]

Thereafter, "the British began expanding their rule and gradually established their power in the whole of India. In 1802 A.D. the British power became dominating when the Vasai treaty took place. The British Company entered *Saurashtra* as a well-wisher of the King Gaekwad. Then, by the Walker Agreement in 1820 A.D. joint rule of the British and Gaekwad was established. The British, however, usurped power from Gaekwad and became the sole ruler there. Thus, the seeds of the Western culture were sown in India and then there was a gradual increase in them." [4]

"Due to arrival of the foreign people and due also to the rule of the Muslim and the British, there was a deep impact on the Indian culture which accelerated change in the

Indian culture. The Muslim spread Islamic culture, so, changes took place very fast. The foundation of modern industry was laid down during the British rule. Total change took place in the field of education as modern education system was introduced. Under the influence of the Western culture, various reform movements began and, thus, the British laid foundation of modernization. As a result of this, processes like Westernization, urbanization, culturization, mechanical, scientific changes became speedier which accelerated the process of change in the Indian society." [5]

Moreover, "due to the impact of Gandhian and Marxist ideologies, changes started taking place. After the Independence, the Constitution became the basic source of the social change in India and new values like secularism, democracy and nationalism developed. Due to the influence of these factors of social change in India, changes in social institutions like family, marriage, caste, religion, materialism and education ushered in. Changes began to come in the status of women as well as weaker sections as they also began to appear in the rural and urban communities." [6]

"The impact of the above process of social change took place directly on the *Kshatriya* first of all because the *Kshatriya* kings and their *girasdars* came into contact with the foreigners for administrative and political reasons. On their arrival, the Muslim had become competitors of the *Kshatriya* in their unchallenged power. The power of the *Kshatriya* became limited during the British rule. After the Independence of India, the *Kshatriya* came to the level of ordinary citizens as their states and *giras* were taken away. The Constitution eradicated their privileges." [7]

During the tenure of Indira Gandhi as India's Prime Minister, the Government of India removed the privileges of the *Kshatriya* kings like the annuity and ownership of land by the 26th amendment on 28 December 1971. Many tenants became owners of land by the new law which enabled them to hold the land they tilled. The new tenancy law protected the rights of the tenants. At the same time, power and influence of the *Kshatriya* decreased in their traditional professions like administration (kings, lords, and army chiefs), defence (soldiers) and ownership of land in the vocation of agriculture. So, in order to find livelihood and meet expenses of maintenance, the *Kshatriya* turned to new vocations which they had never done before. As a result, the

Kshatriya faced problems of adjustment in the new social system as well as the socio-professional adversities.

Along with the above mentioned factors, during the time of princely states before Independence, people had a feeling of animosity towards most of the *Kshatriya* rulers for their injustices against the general public. Democracy provided them opportunities and freedom from the *Kshatriya* rulers, the anti-*Kshatriya* communities became strong and began to oppose them. This resulted into casteism. At the same time, as the hostility against the non-*Kshatriya* castes became stronger in the mind of the *Kshatriya*, casteist sentiments emerged and politics of castes began.

Under the influence of the above factors of change, the social status of the *Kshatriya* began to change. A large section of them became of vertically down going dynamism.

As a part of *Saurashtra* province of Gujarat possessing a special position geographically, the *Kshatriya* culture in this area and the changes in it have several varieties and peculiarities in comparison with the other areas of *Saurashtra*. So, the study of these changes in the social status of the *Kshatriya* of the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area as a dominating community was taken up.

Village Board (*Gampanch*) or Caste/Community Board (*Gnatipanch*) in the life of the Rajput of the *Bhal-Nalkantha* region is very important. *Panch* is believed to be equal to God. This Caste/Community Board keeps control over the social behaviour of the community. In the past, when there was a quarrel in a family, it was represented to the Village Board for a solution. The Community Board listened to both the parties and then gave a judgement for the quarrel whether they should be excommunicate, penalized to give a dinner to the entire community and son. Today, however, people have started going to court as a result of factors like education, constitutional laws, social laws and so on.

7.2 The Form and Function of the Community Board:

In the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area there are Boards for reforms in the community in different parts of the region like Bavla-Dholaka *Taluka* Community Board, Sanand-Viramgam *Taluka* Community Board and so on. Besides this, there is an independent Community Board called *Shri Bhal-Nalkantha* area *Karadiya* Rajput Community Board in the region. This Board is known as the Board for the Community. People of

this region organize meetings at different locations on social occasions celebrating community-level marriages, building schools, hostels for boys and girls, community halls, buying land for Community Boards and so on. Moreover, whenever any untoward problem or problems like family disputes arise, the members of the Community Board or elderly leaders solve them. Today, however, people prefer to go to the court if they cannot solve the problem with the help of the relatives.

It is worth-mentioning that years ago when a boy or a girl married in castes inferior to the *Karadiya* Rajput community, the family of that boy or girl was declared as outcaste and nobody kept any communication with them nor were they allowed to share the community meals or participate in any public functions. No member of that family could marry in the community. There was a ban on that family to keep relation with anybody in the community. Today, however, because of many factors, grip of the Community Board has weakened. Before the Independence, remarriages, widow-marriages, divorces were banned by the Community Board for reasons like community traits, cultural purity, restrictions of behaviours, traditions and so on. Today, however, people try to solve problems by persuasions by relatives, compromises or by going to the court of law. Such cases are, however, rare.

Table: 123

7.17 Table showing population of the Rajput in the villages of respondents:

Sr. No.	Name of Village	Men		Women		Total	%
		Number	%	Number	%		
1.	Bhayla	521	54.6	433	45.4	954	25.3
2.	Arnej	482	54.8	398	45.2	880	23.4
3.	Modasar	613	54.0	524	46.0	1137	30.2
4.	Khasta	441	55.4	355	44.6	796	21.1
	Total	2057	54.6	1710	45.4	3767	100

Regarding population of the Rajput in villages of the respondents, it is found that 521 (54.6%) men and 433 (45.4%) women live which make a total of 954 (25.3%) in Bhayla (*Taluka* Bavla), in Arnej (*Taluka* Dholka) total Rajput population is 880 (23.4%)-482 (54.8%) men and 398 (45.2%) women, in Modasar (*Taluka* Sanand)

total Rajput population is 1137 (30.2%)-613 (54.0%) men and 524 (46.0%) women and in Khasta (*Taluka* Dhandhuka) total Rajput population is 796 (21.1%)-441 (55.4%) men and 355 (44.6%) women. Total men in all the four villages is 2057 (54.6%)while 1710 (45.4%) women are found and total of these men and women make 3767 (100.0%) persons. The above Table No. 7.17 makes it clear that the population of women is 9.2% less in comparison with men. This shows inequality between male and female in the Rajput community and that the community is male-dominated in which sons are more important than daughters.

<p align="center">**Table: 124**</p>

7.18 Table showing reasons why they call themselves Rajput:

Sr. No.	Reasons of they call themselves Rajput	Number	%
1.	Brave, Fearless, Duty bound, Emotional, Thoughtful, Faithful to one's pledge, Kind, Self-confident, Full of self-respect, Living with pride	64	32.0
2.	Unique features, Due to Manners and Appearance	14	7.0
3.	Being Kshatriya, Hereditary reasons, Belonging to a high caste/class	61	30.5
4.	Protected the nation, religion and culture	13	6.5
5.	Born in the Rajput family line	17	8.5
6.	Unique history	08	4.0
7.	No information	23	11.5
	Total	200	100

The respondents and the community under study are from the *Karadiya* Rajput community, and therefore, when they are asked why they are called Rajput, it is found that 64 (32.0%) of them say they are brave, fearless, duty bound, emotional, thoughtful, living with dignity, generous, self-confident and those who keep their word, 14 (7.0%) respondents say they are as a community possessing certain qualities, life style and appearance of a distinct type, 61 (30.5%) say they descend from a high caste and hierarchy, 13 (6.5%) of them say that they protected the country, religion and culture, 17 (8.5%) of them say that they call them *Kshatriya* because they have

been born in the Rajput clan, 08 (4.0%) respondents say they call themselves because they have a distinct history. 23 (11.5%) respondents have given no information.

Table: 125

7.19   Table showing the respondents' opinion about the status of their community:

Sr. No.	Whether the Rajput Community is changing	Number	%
1.	Yes	184	92.0
2.	No	11	5.5
3.	No information	05	2.5
	Total	200	100

Out of 200 respondents, 184 (92.0%) of them believe that their distinct identity is changing day by day and according to 11 (5.5%) respondents, their identity is not changing. 05 (2.5%) respondents have given no information.

Table: 126

7.19.1   Table showing factors that cause change in the identity of the Rajput:

Sr. No.	Factors Responsible for Changes in the Community	Number	%
1.	Education	57	31.0 (28.5)
2.	Profession	38	20.7 (19.0)
3.	Modernization	52	28.3 (26.0)
4.	Migration	13	7.0 (6.5)
5.	Impact of Religion	24	13.0 (12.0)
6.	No information	05	(2.5)
7.	Not applicable	11	(5.5)
	Total	200	100

According to the respondents, the identity of the Rajput is changing day by day. Regarding the factors responsible for this change, 57 (31.0%/28.5%) respondents say it is education, 38 (20.7%/19.0%) say it is vocation, 52 (28.3%/26.0%) respondents

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say it is respondents say it is modernization, 13 (7.0%/6.5%) respondents say it is migration and 24 (13.0%/12.0%) respondents say it is the effect of religion while 11 (5.5%) respondents say their identity is not changing and therefore this question doesn't apply them. 05 (2.5%) respondents have given no information.

<div align="center">**Table: 127**</div>

7.20 Table showing fields in which change in the identity of the Rajput is visible:

Sr. No.	Fields in which Changes Have Taken Place	Number	%
1.	Economic field	75	37.5
2.	Social & Cultural Field	78	39.0
3.	Religious Field	34	17.0
4.	No information	13	6.5
	Total	200	100

When they are asked about the fields in which the identity of the Kshatriya community is changing, 75 (37.5%) respondents say that they find change in the economic field, 78 (39.0%) respondents find a change in the socio-cultural field and 34 (17.0%) respondents find a change in the religious field while 13 (6.5%) respondents have given no information.

<div align="center">**Table: 128**</div>

7.21 Table showing the respondents' opinion about change in the Rajput identity:

Sr. No.	Original Culture Should be Preserved	Number	%	Rajput Culture Should Change	Number	%
1.	Yes	155	77.5	Yes	27	13.5
2.	No	27	13.5	No	155	77.5
3.	No information	18	9.0	No information	18	9.0
	Total	200	100	Total	200	100

In order to find out and When they are asked whether the effects of factors like education, British education, urbanization, modernization, mass media and so on have brought change in the rural community and the caste covered in the study and also to find out whether the Rajput community should maintain their original culture or change it, 155 (77.5%) respondents say that the community should maintain its traditional structure. 27 (13.5%) respondents say that the Rajput community should adopt/accept new changes leaving original its form and structure while 18 (9.0%) have given no information. It can be concluded from the above opinions that majority of the respondents believe that the original culture of the community should be preserved even in the modern time and a small number of the respondents accept the idea of change in the identity of the Rajput community.

Moreover, it can be concluded from the above opinions that majority of the respondents, that is, 155 (77.5%) respondents believe that the original culture of the community should be preserved even in the modern time and a small number, that is 27 (13.5%) of the respondents accept the idea of change in the identity of the Rajput community. 18 (9.5%) respondents have given no opinion about this question. It is clear from the above responses that majority of the respondents believe that their community should not change even in the modern time.

Table: 129

7.21.1 Table showing reasons for preserving in the original culture of Rajput culture:

Sr. No.	Reasons for Preserving Original Rajput Culture	Number	%
1.	Necessary to follow the traditional customs	12	7.7 (6.0)
2.	Necessary to protect culture, religion and nation	22	14.2(11.0)
3.	To preserve *samskar*, family identity, religion and principles	05	3.2 (2.5)
4.	To preserve family pride, family line, community	03	1.9 (1.5)
5.	For identity and civilization	05	3.2 (2.5)
6.	To help and be kind to others	05	3.2 (2.5)
7.	To preserve culture	14	9.0(7.0)
8.	To preserve Rajput dharma because it is the best dharma, Rajput community lives with pride	03	1.9 (1.5)

9.	The Rajput are a community living with pride and dignity	08	5.2 (4.0)
10.	The Rajput must preserve their identity as the Rajput	03	1.9 (1.5)
11.	If original culture is reserved, the next generation would be inspired to maintain it	06	3.9 (3.0)
12.	Rajput culture should be preserved because it is unique, grand and incomparable	34	21.9(17.0)
13.	Patience, Bravery and courage are their unique qualities	06	3.9 (3.0)
14.	To preserve religious customs	03	1.9 (1.5)
15.	Objectives are great and which include and benevolence kindness	08	5.2 (4.0)
16.	The base of original *samskar* and culture should not change	04	2.6 (2.0)
17.	Rajput and their culture and are dedicated to these high Objectives	05	3.2 (2.5)
18.	Original culture should be maintained with modernity	05	3.2 (2.5)
19.	The Rajput have protected culture, and religion; they live for others	04	2.6 (2.0)
20.	No information	18	(9.0)
21.	Not applicable	27	(13.5)
	Total	200	100

Out of 200 respondents 155 (77.5%) of them have given their opinion that the original culture of the Rajput community should be preserved. In this context, 12 (7.7%/6.0%) of those respondents who are in favour of preserving the original culture give reasons like it is necessary to follow the traditions and customs, 22 (14.2%/11.0%) respondents say it is necessary to preserve the original culture in order to protect culture, religion, protection of the invaluable national heritage, to protect nation and so on, 05 (3.2%/2.5%) respondents want it as it is to protect family line, family and the community, 03 (1.9%/1.5%) respondents say it is necessary for identity and civilization, 05 (3.2%/2.5%) respondents say it is necessary for helping others, 05 (3.2%/2.5%) respondents say it is necessary for preserving culture, 14 (9.0%/7.0%) respondents say it is necessary for preserving the Rajput *Dharma* because it is the best *Dharma* and pride of the Rajput, 03 (1.9%/1.5%) respondents say it is necessary for the pride of the community, 08 (5.2%/4.0%) respondents say it is necessary because they believe that the Rajput should remain as the Rajput only, 03 (1.9%/1.5%)

respondents say it is necessary for the preservation of the ancient heritage as the next generation can understand the value of the old culture, 06 (3.9%/3.0%) respondents say it is necessary because the original culture of the Rajput is unique and incomparable heritage, 34 (21.9%/17.0%) respondents say it is necessary for keeping up the bravery and courage are the main characteristics of the Rajput, 06 (3.9%/3.0%) respondents say it is necessary for preserving the religious customs, 03 (1.9%/1.5%) respondents say it is necessary because the objectives of the culture like kindness and benevolence are the basic qualities and are great, 08 (5.2%/4.0%) respondents say it is necessary for not allowing any change in the basis of the culture, 04 (2.6%/2.0%) respondents say it is necessary because their culture stands for good objectives, 05 (3.2%/2.5%) respondents say it is necessary for the adjustment of modernity and the original culture, 05 (3.2%/2.5%) respondents say it is necessary for being Rajput because ancestors have the culture, religion and community by their blood, 04 (2.6%/2.0%) respondents believe that the Rajput live for others while 18 (9.0%) respondents have given no information. This is not applicable to the 27 (13.5%) respondents who say that the Rajput should change as per the need of the time.

Table: 130

7.21.2 Table showing reasons for change in the original culture of Rajput culture:

Sr. No.	Reasons for Changes in the Rajput Culture	Number	%
1.	Keeping pace with the time	02	7.4 (1.0)
2.	There is a change in the world due to modernization and urbanization	07	26.0 (3.5)
3.	Better qualities should be adopted	01	3.7 (0.5)
4.	There should be a change in the community	02	7.4 (1.0)
5.	To bring equality and create consciousness	03	11.1 (2.5)
6.	The Rajput should change because faults are found in the community	02	7.4 (1.0)
7.	Progress should be made by giving importance to education and justice	02	7.4 (1.0)
8.	Sons and daughters should be given freedom so	02	7.4 (1.0)

	that they can create their identity and make progress		
9.	Bad traditions and customs should be eradicated	03	11.1 (1.5)
10.	Happiness could be achieved if tuned to the changing time	01	3.7 (0.5)
11.	They should change by obeying Govt. laws and rules	01	3.7 (0.5)
12.	Obeying laws will save the Rajput from committing crimes because they are hot-tempered and enter into quarrels easily	01	3.7 (0.5)
13.	No information	18	(9.0)
14.	Not applicable	155	(77.5)
	Total	200	100

Out of the 200 respondents, 27 (13.5%) respondents say that the Rajput should change. In this context, 02 (7.4%/1.0%) of them say they should change as per the need of the time, 07 (26.0%/3.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change in accordance with the global changes due to urbanization and modernization, 01 (3.7%/0.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change in order to adopt good qualities, 02 (7.4%/1.0%) respondents say the Rajput should change in order to bring a change in the community, 03 (11.1%/1.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change in order to bring equality and arouse consciousness, 02 (7.4%/1.0%) respondents say the Rajput should change in order to eradicate bad qualities from the community, 02 (7.4%/1.0%) respondents say the Rajput should change by encouraging education and giving justice and aim at progress, 02 (7.4%/1.0%) respondents say the Rajput should change by giving permission to sons and daughters in order that they can create their own identity, 03 (11.1%/1.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change by eradicating bad customs and traditions, 01 (3.7%/0.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change by adapting the changes as per the need of the time which can bring happiness to community, 01 (3.7%/0.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change by following Government laws and rules and 01 (3.7%/0.5%) respondents say the Rajput should change by avoiding legal entanglements caused by hot-temperedness because they cause wastage of money,

time and energy. 18 (9.0%) respondents have given no information while this question is not applicable to the 155 (77.5%) respondents believe that their original culture should be preserved.

7.3 Traditional Leadership and Political Awareness:

Traditionally, the Rajput people of the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area inherited leadership. The chief of a village or community held the position till death and after his death, his eldest son inherited his father's position. Traditionally, a reputed benevolent elderly person held the leadership of the village or community. People accepted his verdict as if it were from God but today this tradition has broken and the respect for such a leadership has been decreasing. After the Independence, under the influence of different factors new democratic leadership, the constitution and structure of the community is developing. Young, educated officers on high positions, industrialists, contractors, lawyers, professors and wealthy persons have started taking leadership. These new leaders accept modern ideas and have dynamic mind. In the past, leadership was given in the rural areas on the basis of social restrictions, traditions, culture and so on but that tradition has changed today.

With the introduction of the *Panchayatiraj* System and with the emergence of political awareness, leadership or leaders are selected or elected in the democratic fashion. A number of leaders who take interest in politics and elections, especially young persons showing interest in politics of elections as compared to elderly persons are selected or elected as leaders. The political awareness is increasing in the Rajput community due to education, contacts, western education, democratic structure, media and so on. People are attracted to positions which they may get after elections. People take part in elections on the basis of the large number of members of the community. Awareness has come due to political news, too. The Rajput people take active part by canvassing in election meetings for different positions in Community Boards, Village Board (*Gram Panchayat*), *Taluka Panchayat*, District *Panchayat*, State Legislative Assembly and so on functioning in democratic pattern. Tendency to see and listen to the contestants in her/his election meetings keeping in view political parties, the present situation and so on has grown stronger. Moreover, if a candidate belonged to one's own community, people take active part and try to judge a candidate from other community by comparing the candidates from different angles. Due to social restrictions, traditions and as part of cultural restrictions women do not take active

part in political activities and therefore women's awareness and freedom in this regard are less than that of men.

In the Rajput community of this region under study, the level of supporters of different political parties is different. Today, people are becoming members of any political party, especially the educated and politically oriented young persons show inclination to become active members of political parties. There are still people who show interest in voting in elections. After the Independence until the *Bharatiya Janata* Party was not popular, Rajput people were supporters of the Indian National Congress but, today, the situation has totally changed. More and more people are found supporting the *Bharatiya Janata* Party. There is still a section of the community that supports the Indian National Congress.

People are serious about their right for voting and do use their votes in elections; they also become victims of temptations like alcohol, money and positions offered by candidates as part of political activities. Voting is sometimes done as suggested by elders in the families. Personal animosity, selfishness, ignorance also play a role in voting. A new tendency is found developing in the Rajput community to take interest in political matters and to vote for an educated, honest and a benevolent candidate.

7.4 Socio-political Position of the Rajput community in the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area:

Evidences in the Indian religious books and historical documents about the *Kshatriya* living in the geographical area of present *Bhal-Nalkantha* region are available. This area was once a barren region but as time passed, the region came either under the rule of a king or a *Thakur* or the British ruler from the time of the Ramayana and the *Mahabharat* till 1947 A.D. Many historical evidences to these changes are available as archaeological relics.

Since the Rajput people have enjoyed a unique religious cultural, economic political position in this region. Traditionally, they enjoyed a dominating position among all communities in this area. This dominating position, however, seems to have broken mostly due to democratic and constitutional laws, freedom to every citizen and so on in this community which lives in the rural area and is associated with agriculture. Even today, *Rajput* people enjoy the front position politically and socially in this area.

7.5 Changes in the Community during the British Rule:

Before the British rule in India, some of the internal and external factors affected institutes of that time and have brought changes. These changes, however, proved short-lived because of factors like processes maintaining constancy on the factors causing changes, social control and the impact of socialization.

During the British rule, however, several factors causing social changes developed. These factors included industrialization, urbanization, modern education, media, non-government organizations, freedom movement, legalization and so on. They caused long-lasting effects on the traditional institutions of communities in India. These effects began to cause changes in the very modern and liberal community institutions.

Some of these changes are listed below:

1) A section rejecting community discriminations (social inequality)arose in the society;

2) Inter-caste tradition of hierarchy of supporting some of the lower castes weakened;

3) Awareness developed in the communities;

4) The importance of birth as a decisive factor of the status of an individual decreased;

5) Traditional control of the Community *Panchayat* decreased;

6) Change in the hierarchical order of the caste system emerged;

7) The privileges of higher castes came to be eradicated;

8) Professional dynamism increased as it became the paradigm of social status;

9) Inter-caste marriages came to be legalized.

7.6 Changes in the Organization of Communities after the Independence:

Before the 18th century, the structure of community organization was very strict and harsh. The inter-relation between two castes was practiced only in accordance with the orthodox and traditional structure of the caste system. The profession or vocation of the caste could not be changed. Discrimination among castes was maintained strictly but speedy changes began in the traditional form of castes as new factors developed during the British rule. After the Independence, the constitutional ideals of individual freedom, democratic values, secularism and values of equality made the process of change in the caste system faster. Thus, changes emerged in the traditional

form of the institution of a caste but this institution maintained its existence strongly. At the same time, caste also entered the democratic politics of India. A dominating caste emerged as a new caste system and casteism grew stronger and began spreading as a negative factor affecting castes.

After the Independence, the monopoly of castes on the traditional vocations came to be eradicated due to factors like industrialization, constitutional ideals of individual freedom, democratic values, equality and so on. The traditional vocations of castes like the dyer, oil-miller, cobbler, weaver, and so on broke down. So, their new requirements emerged and they entered the vocations of other castes. Moreover, the members of every caste began to take up vocations convenient to them and so, the mutual dependence of one caste on another-a system called *jajmani* system broke down. As a result, the hierarchical structure of the caste system began to weaken. Awareness of castes began to develop due to the rising feeling of rejection of the inequality among castes.

In the whole of India, as the equal criminal and civil laws came to be implemented, many powers of the Caste *Panchayats* usurped by courts and gradually the hegemony of the Caste *Panchayats* began to weaken. As the fields of jobs and vocations opened, people from lower and poor castes got a chance to uplift their economic and vocational status. At the same time, castes also began to take their hierarchical status through culturization.

Thus, the effects of the above-stated factors directly influenced the caste system, the Village *Panchayat*, the Caste *Panchayat* and different political matters.

7.7 New Forms of Caste in the Present India:

Along with the change in the Indian caste system, castes not only maintained their basic elements noticeably but also disclosed new forms in social, economic and political life. Some of the features of the caste organization are given below.

7.7.1 Casteism:

After the independence, as a result of social changes, casteism emerged from the efforts to save the institution of caste from being shattered. Voting on the basis of caste, selection of candidates, leaflets about castes, conventions of castes, weddings within the caste, educational institutes, hospitals and maternity home for the caste, housing societies built on the basis of the caste, associations of castes, marriage halls,

libraries, distribution of books and note books to students of the caste, journal of the caste, scholarships and social organizations and so on show the concept of casteism.

7.7.2 Caste and Politics:

After the Independence of India, as the function of entrusting political power in the democratic system went to people, caste entered into every stage from selection of candidates for elections to the formation of cabinet ministers. Voting on the basis of caste and forming the political parties on the caste-line manifest the emergence of casteism in Indian democratic politics.

The effect of these factors is also found on the *Bhal-Nalkantha* region and the Rajput community living there.

7.7.3 Inter-caste conflicts:

The events of conflict between castes take place when the lower castes try to rise from their status and conflicts between two castes take place when the social, political or economic interests of these castes clash which affects the entire social system and even nationality. The population of other castes like the Jain merchants and Brahmins is limited as compared to the Rajput population in this area while the population of castes like the *Koli*, *Bharwad* (Shepherds) and *Harijan* communities is very high, so, the inter-caste political conflict of the Rajput people with the *Koli*, *Bharwad* and *Patel* community is found due to the large number of the *Koli* population.

7.7.4 Dominating Caste:

"In India before the Independence the caste which had got power was considered dominating which, after the Independence, became politically dominating due to the large number of voters being large in population in the democratic structure and governmental system. Due to large population the castes which had secured success began to become stronger also socially and economically. Thus, the status of a dominating caste came to be decided on the basis of number, wealth and power." **(8)**

Traditionally, the Rajput community in this region remained dominating; other castes like the *Koli* and *Bharwad* have also risen up to the level of dominating castes due to democratic system, education, awareness and so on.

7.8 Changes in the Traditional Position of the *Kshatriya* as a Dominating Community:

In the ancient India, the *Kshatriya*, as it has been mentioned in the ancient historical

books of India, ruled all over the world. From the time of the rise of Jesus (0001 A. D.) the states ruled by the *Kshatriya* were limited to the Indian subcontinent only. During the medieval period, with the rise of the Muslim rule, the states ruled by the *Kshatriya* came to an end in many parts of India and the Muslim rule came to be established. Thereafter, during the British rule the power of the *Kshatriya* decreased. Thus, from the first century A.D. till the time of the Independence of India, as the influence of the *Kshatriya* decreased in the political, geographical fields. Gradually, their influence in the social field also came to be limited.

7.9 Changes in the Position of the *Kshatriya* as a dominating Community after the Independence:

After the Independence, the newly-adopted Constitution of India came to be implemented as the highest guiding document for the entire country. The newly formed legal and political system was established in the country, a movement began to eradicate all inequalities of castes, race, class, region, religion and language. The power of the *Kshatriya* as a community holding power and as a dominating community decreased and the privileges of the as former ruling community came to an end. The influence of the traditional position of the *Kshatriya* coming down from the ancient time of kingship continued two to three decades after the Independence of India and then, it came to decrease. Still, it has been observed in the study that the influence of the *Kshatriya* in the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area as well as *Saurashtra* more than that of other communities. Analytical information of the influence of the *Kshatriya* in the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area and Saurashtra which maintained its hegemony in different fields show that it got spread but ultimately came to be eradicated eventually.

7.9.1 Influence of the *Kshatriya* in the Political Field:

In the newly-established democratic system in India after the Independence, the influence of the *Kshatriya* decreased as compared to what it was during the time of kingship. Many factors are responsible for this decline. For example, only the *Kshatriya* and the Muslim were the rulers during the time of kingship while in the democratic system after the Independence those leaders who were associated with the Freedom Movement were made the partners of power. In the Freedom Movement of India every caste had got a chance to contribute and every one of those castes became partner in power sharing at the local, state and national level.

After the Independence, there emerged a class having hatred for the *Kshatriya* in every non-*Kshatriya* caste because from the days of kingship in the Middle age till the first two decades prior to Independence , a section of the *Kshatriya* as a powerful community had tortured people of every community in the society. A class with a hatred for the *Kshatriya* emerged in the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area and Saurashtra. So, it became difficult for the *Kshatriya* to win elections and the political representation of the *Kshatriya* decreased. The influence of the *Kshatriya* decreased also because of the internal disunity as well as intra-community quarrels.

Moreover, after the Independence the political representation of the *Kshatriya* in comparison with other communities decreased at the national level. At the same time, their influence at the state level also decreased as compared to that of communities like Brahmins, *Baniya* (Merchants), the *Patel* and the *Koli*. The representation of the *Kshatriya* has got less than that of the *Dalits* and the *Harijans*. As the reservation system in the State Legislative Assembly came to be implemented. In the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area and in Saurashtra, the members of the *Kshatriya* community in the local *Panchayatiraj* organizations and in the government are in a countable number only.

7.9.2 Influence of the *Kshatriya* in the Economic Field:

After the Independence, the monopoly of the castes came to be eradicated as per the social laws of India and it became necessary for the members of different castes to find new vocations for earning livelihood. So, the tradition of one caste came to be adopted by other castes and in administration and defence which were the monopolized professions of the *Kshatriya*, many other castes entered. The *Kshatriya* began to work as farmers, traders of different items, do various jobs as craftsmen, as commission agents as well as enter several other vocations. Thus, the *Kshatriya* entered a number of new vocations. In the post-Independence period, almost every caste found difficulties in adjusting themselves economically and professionally because of inexperience. One class of the *Kshatriya* began to earn through anti-social activities using their influence as a caste. At the same time, in their profession they began to earn by using force. On one hand, a section emerged in the *Kshatriya* community that created monopoly and began to accumulate wealth and property using various tricks; on the other hand, another section began to earn by doing professions honestly. Thus, the two classes of the *Kshatriya* emerged: 1) a class earning money by

using the influence as a dominating caste and by dishonest and anti-social methods and 2) a class earning money honestly.

In the years after the Independence, the class in the *Kshatriya* community using dishonest means to earn money was very large. As time passed this class which used dishonest means became smaller due to several reasons and factors. The nature of their professional activities changed as it has been found in the study through fieldwork and questionnaires in interviews.

In the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area, several conclusions have been found during the research showing decrease in the *Kshatriya's* influence, dominance and bullying.

1) The non- *Kshatriya* castes have become aware of their rights as the citizens of India and have become socially competent;

2) The social influence of the *Kshatriya* decreased due to the right of equality as per the Constitutional provisions;

3) A section class of the *Kshatriya* has become rich by doing professions like agriculture, business and trading honestly and under their influence other sections of the *Kshatriya* community have also begun to grow rich;

4) The section showing rationality due to the spreading of education and the tendency of justice is increasing gradually;

5) The backing of the community to the section of bullying *Kshatriya* has decreased or has been eradicated;

6) The organizational activities to unite the community for development has become stronger; and,

7) In the present time, a class possessing and encouraging peace, rationality and logical mentality has increased.

7.9.3 Influence of the *Kshatriya* within the Community:

"Before the Independence, the *Kshatriya* community and their *Panchayat* worked for justice, welfare and development of the community and the *Kshatriya* as well as the society supported activities like giving justice, good administration and rule over the subject by kings. After the Independence the king's position was replaced by the democratic government. The position of the dominating *Kshatriya* was taken away by dominating persons in the society as there are dominating persons from any caste in the present time and the judiciary replaced the Community *Panchayat*." **(9)**

Beginning from the time after the Independence to the present, there was dominance of the *Kshatriya* in this region which has gradually been decreasing.

In this region, the influence of persons who are strong in the economic and political field in comparison with the dominating *Kshatriya* leaders is increasing. In the present time, as compared to a person from a higher caste, a person who is rich or holding an important social, governmental or political position is considered dominating.

Before the Independence, and for nearly two decades thereafter, family problems or those of groups were solved by the Community *Panchayats* or with the help of dominating *Kshatriya* leaders in the community. Almost all members of the community accepted decisions made by dominating *Kshatriya* leaders and the Community *Panchayat*. After the Independence, with passing of time their influence decreased and in the present time, their influence has decreased significantly or has come down to almost zero level. According to a *Kshatriya* office bearer or a dominating leader, the number has decreased even further down. Community *Panchayats* have now become involved in community development programs because their influence in solving legal problems and community issues has decreased significantly.

7.9.4 Influence of the *Kshatriya* on other Communities:

Before the Independence, the *Kshatriya* people were quite influential as a ruling community and their judgements were widely supported by large number of other communities. This has now decreased. It could be said that all these matters and the present study that there is a change in the status of the *Kshatriya* as an influential community. Their impact on the society and culture is decreasing in the present time, and still, the *Kshatriya* people have remained more influential the any other community. It is found from the study that in certain exceptional rural, *taluka* or urban areas the size of the *Kshatriya* population is smaller but they have been found still influential in those particular residential areas.

7.10 Conclusion:

In the *Bhal-Nalkantha* area, Village *Panchayats* or the Regional Community *Panchayats* of the *Karadiya* Rajput community have become weak in certain matters while they have become strong in several other matters. The form of Community *Panchayat* has developed as a universal organization. In the years before and after the

Independence, various social, political or economic problems which arose in families, villages or society due to factors like lack of education, influence of traditions, culture and taboos were solved by the leaders of the Community *Panchayat* in clusters or circle of villages. Today, however, people go to courts in some maters as the leaders of the older generation have died but before they go to courts they still try to solve problems with the help of the family, relatives and community leaders.

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