

## Modern Farming as an Agent of Change in Cooperative Farming in Rural Punjab, Pakistan

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### Abstract:

*Modern farming affects socio-cultural values and encourages capital intensive farming. Punjab is the biggest province of Pakistan having 67 % population living in the rural areas where kinship, cast and Biraderi have been particular complex contexts based on specific socio-cultural cooperation in the farming activities. There is no doubt that modernization of agriculture has been a successful, but only in the limited terms. However, the approach of modernization of agricultural research and development is inadequate particularly in heterogeneous environment of Pakistan where informal cooperation influences the farming practices. This research study focuses on the traditional value of cooperation in farming. This study deals with how modernization of agriculture is affecting the farming related socio-cultural local cooperative networks, exchange of labor among farming families, sharing of indigenous knowledge, seed, dairy products, animals and vegetables as well. Such cooperation occurs seasonally and occasionally among the farming families. The main goal of this study is to enhance productivity keeping without undermining the cooperative networks among the rural people in Punjab, Pakistan. The research was conducted for doctoral dissertation in 2018 in the rural Punjab, Pakistan.*

**Keyword:** Cooperative Networks, Family Farming, Rural Social Organization, Sustainable Agriculture

### Introduction

This study deals with the socio-cultural value of family and *Biraderi* cooperation in the farming. Socio-cultural values determine farming patterns. These patterns are carried out by the local, social and cultural institutions. Family, kinship and clans are socio-cultural intuitions in rural Punjab, Pakistan. Family and *Biraderi* labor have been working in terms of social capital in farming. The central institution of kinship in rural Punjab is *Biraderi* (Alvi, 1972). To understand the social organization of the Punjabi village, it is important to understand the division of the people into kin groups where the basic unit is *Biraderi*. *Biraderi* may be formed on the basis of common locality. So all the Zamindars and all the Kammiss of the village join together as a single *Biraderi*/family in one village (Eglar, 2010). Farming has been socio-cultural activity in rural Punjab as argued by Strange (2008) agriculture is not just an economic activity but it is a social activity as well. Social activities are performed within the social networks of socio-cultural institution.

In Pakistan, Family, kinship, clan (*Biraderi*), community (Villages), and class are the social institutions that form a bridge between individual and national society. They are the building blocks of social organization and anchors of the cultural system.

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The tribe or caste is losing influence over everyday life and social relations. Yet individuals remain deeply embedded in family and kin groups and sentiments nurtured in these relations are carried into friendships, social networks, and associations (Qadeer, 2006). The concept of privacy is more well-defined between *biraderis* than between families. For instance, houses of one *biraderi* are closer to each other while at a distance from those of other *biraderis* (Mughal, 2015b). This kind of spatial organisation facilitates exchange relations within *biraderis* on a day-to-day basis.

In the pursuit of sustainable agriculture, year of 2014 was declared by FAO as family farming year on the global level. Family cooperation in farming and family farming is linked with traditional social organization in Punjab, Pakistan which is an agriculture country. Agriculture is the life line of country's economy (Hanif, 2005). A segment of the population (about 67%) lives in rural areas. Rural people directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood (Baig and Khan 2006). Agriculture is a dominant force driving force of livelihood for the population (Baig and Strayquadine, 2011). Agriculture is the source of the livelihood of almost 44.7% of the total employ labor force in the country. Agriculture is the largest source of household income for 38 million Pakistanis, including 13 million (about 40%) of the poorest are living in the rural areas of the country (World bank, 2007).

Punjab is the biggest province of Pakistan having 67 % population living in the rural areas where kinship, cast and *Biraderi* are the socio-cultural capital for the agrarian activities. Social capital contributes to learning through interaction or participation in the practices of the community. Building social capital to enhance leaning depends on shared language, experience, trust and commitment to shared values (Kilpatrick, 1999). Human and social capital may interact to produce joint effect on productivity. When social capital interacts with human capital, the transfer of knowledge depends on the human capital of the recipient; the more you know, the more you will get benefit from others, knowledge (Greve, 2010). This interaction effect may create higher productivity (Huang, Brink, and Groot, 2009). According to one study, prior to industrialization of agriculture in Mexican community, family members carried out sowing, cultivation, wedding, harvesting, and other activities involved in the management of traditional agriculture system and community members organized into cooperative networks or mutual aid systems (Korsback, 1996). In rural Punjab, among relatives and *Biraderi* members, cooperation has been occurred in the seasons of harvesting and sowing the crops. More labor was required for sowing and harvesting the crops but sometimes, farmers cooperate with one another to irrigate the crops.

### Material and Methods

In the present study, multistage random sampling technique was used, because it was an appropriate technique for drawing sample from large population with limited time and cost. According to this technique, sampling was done in two stages. In the first stage, districts were selected. Union councils were selected in the second stage. This sample was selected by using multistage random sampling technique. Initially Punjab was divided into three zones i.e. Northern, Central and Southern. For the appropriate representation, one district from each zone was taken randomly. Three districts *Jelum* from Northern Punjab, *Sargodha* from Central Punjab and *Dera Ghazi Khan* from Southern Punjab) were selected randomly from all 36 districts of Punjab. The Sampling plan is as under in the following table.

## First Stage

	Jehlum	D.G.Khan	Sargodha	Total
<b>Population</b>	677419	1414724	1916838	4008981
<b>Tehsils</b>	3	2	3	8
<b>Percentage</b>	17%	36%	47%	100
<b>Sample</b>	75	165	210	450
Second Stage				
<b>Union Councils</b>	97	297	391	785
<b>Sampled Union Councils</b>	5	11	14	30
<b>Per Union Council Probability</b>	20=1	27=1	28=1	
<b>Per Unit Population</b>	15	15	15	

Source: Census 1998

### Review of literature

This study does not undermine the modernization of farming but its major goal is to enhance productivity without undermining the cooperative networks in the rural Punjab, Pakistan. Cooperation occurs when family, *Bieraderi* and community members mutually involve in farming practices and other socio-cultural occasions. In rural Punjab, cooperation also occurs when families, *Biraderis* exchange dairy products like *Dasi Ghee* (vernacular oil), *Makhan* (butter), *Lussi*, *Dahee* (yoghurt), milk, animal dung. So, exchange of labor, knowledge, seed, produce, local agriculture technology to cooperate with another among the families in farming practices that is the symbol of cultural life. Such sort of cooperation takes into place more within the kin groups. So, the social institution of kinship plays a vital role in farming practices. Industrial agriculture is affecting the local socio-cultural network of cooperation followed by change in the overall socio-cultural milieu of rural Punjab. While on the other hand, the group and joint farming in Europe, America and Scandinavian countries is being promoted. Although, there is a great similarities between joint venture framing, group farming and the farming in which *Biraderi* has been involved as social unite in rural Punjab.

Kinship means social relations based on blood ties and sometimes marriage bonds. All societies have kinship institutions. Historically, Pakistani society, including its regional and ethnic components, has had strong kinship structures. Kinship is the larger group surrounding a family with which its members are tied in bonds of mutual support, obligations, common identity, and endogamy. It is called *Biradari* (literal meaning brotherhood) in Punjab (Qadeer,2006). Agriculture is the pillar of social organization in rural Punjab where most of the people directly or indirectly work in agriculture. Farming determines the pattern of interaction among the farming community members in the villages. Mode of agriculture technology has changed

patterns of farming followed by changing the patterns of interaction among the relatives and *Biraderi* members in the villages of Punjab. The significant indicator of rural social organization is cooperation in farming. In the recent past, farming was playing a major role to make families and *Biraderis* gathered. There were cooperative networks among relatives and *Biraderi* members through which farming activities were performed. The role of kinship in farming was the significant factor for cooperation.

According to one study, prior to industrialization of agriculture in Mexican community, family members carried out sowing, cultivation, weeding, harvesting, and other activities involved in the management of traditional agriculture system and community members organized into cooperative networks or mutual aid systems (Korsback, 1996). In rural Punjab, among relatives and *Biraderi* members, cooperation occurs in the seasons of harvesting and sowing the crops. More labor is required for sowing and harvesting the crops but sometimes, farmers cooperate with one another to irrigate the crops. Harvester has minimized the labor requirements that have modified the patterns of cooperation.

In Mexican Society, a study is evidenced that fewer animals, however, means a reduction in the quantity of manure available to maintain fertility in the plot and an increased reliance on purchased, inorganic fertilizer. Another trend with serious implications is increasing the use of hybrid corn varieties all over Mexico, and the more recent introduction of genetically engineered seeds (Jacom, 2010). On the other hand in Cuban society at the end of the 1980s, Cuban agriculture was characterized by a high concentration of state-owned land (80% of total land area was in the state sector), high levels of mechanization (one tractor for every 125 ha of farming land), crop specialization, and high input usage (13 million tons diesel, 1.3 million tons fertilizers, US\$80 million in pesticides, and 1.6 million tons livestock feed concentrates applied per year) (Lage, 1992). It has been the cultural component of the rural Punjab that farmers used the animal manure in their fields. There was no need of chemical fertilizers. This study explains how social organization was retained by the animal manure. Farming families, *Biraderies* and villagers exchanged the animal manure with one another. This exchange of manure contributed in maintaining the social network among the farming communities in rural Punjab. The decline of animals decreased the manure led to weakening the social network followed by breakdown of the social organization.

The involvement of families in farming has been the socio-cultural tradition of rural Punjab. This tradition has been played a central role in the local cooperative networks of the village. The farmers did not show their interest to involve in the farming. If the farmers do not involve their children in the farming activities, family farming will not be possible in the village of Punjab. Moreover, the dream of intensive farming in rural Punjab will not work. Sociologists have referred to family farming as an important cultural symbol (Sinnema 2005 and Taylor, 1954), encompassing an influential set of values (Pfeffer 1989; Rohwert 1951).

Local farmers share indigenous knowledge and skills of farming with each other in the village of Punjab. It has been the cultural capital in the villages. The interaction among the farming community members is based on sharing the indigenous knowledge. Modern/industrial agriculture has affected significant role of indigenous knowledge. So, the sharing of indigenous knowledge mechanism among the farmers is no more in rural Punjab. Indigenous or folk knowledge refers to local people's knowledge (Bellon & Tyallor 1993). Farmers usually derive their knowledge from their long interaction with local agro-ecosystem (Altieri 1990; Barrios,

1994). Scientists, biologists, ecologists, ecological anthropologists and sociologists all share an interest in indigenous knowledge for scientific, social, or economic reasons (Norttonet, 1998). Indigenous knowledge can facilitate a dialogue of rural population and developing workers (Warren & Rajasekaran(1993). Therefore, indigenous soil knowledge is a knowledge –practice –belief complex Steiner 1998).

### Results and Discussion

The statistics shows the potential of yield production, national average of yield and gap in yield on national level in Pakistan.

Sr.NO	Crops	Potential yields	National Average	Yield Gap
1	Wheat	6.4	2.2	4.2
2	Rice	9.5	2.0	7.5
3	Maize	6.9	1.5	5.4
4	Sugarcane	160.0	46.0	114.0

Source:PSBP,2005

But the Statistical Book 2011 of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reveals that Pakistan is way behind in wheat, rice, sugarcane and pulses production tons in per hectare, both globally and regionally.

Ser.No	Yields	China	India	Bangladesh	Pakistan
1.	Wheat	4.7	2.8	2.4	2.6
2	Rice	6.5	3.3	4.2	3.1
3	Grains	5.2	2.5	2.3	2.2
4	Oil Crops	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3
5	Pulses	1.2	0.7	0.9	0.6
6	Roots &tuber	17.8	20.6	17.7	21.6
7	Sugarcane	65.7	66.1	43.8	52.4

Source. FAO Statistics 2015

Modernization of agriculture is affecting the local cooperative networks among the farming families. Local cooperative networks includes, farming families exchange labor, indigenous knowledge, seed, dairy products, animals and vegetables as well. Such cooperation occurs seasonally and occasionally within the farming families in the villages. Cooperation in farming is socio-cultural value that integrates the rural people. The interplay of human and social capital in agriculture determines the sustainability of agriculture. It is argued that to reestablish a more direct connection between those who grow the food and those who consume it, with a goal of reestablishing a culture of sustainability that takes into account the interactions between all components of the food system. Conversion occurs within a social, cultural, and economic context, and that context must support conversion to more sustainable systems (Stephen,2010).

The role of kinship for cooperation has been the major significant factor in rural agrarian social organization. Cooperation among the families and *Bieraderi* members has also been socio-cultural value of the social organization in rural Punjab. This mutual cooperation has been symbolized and manifested in agricultural activities. The inclusion of families in the local cooperatives network has been played a significant role to increase interest in farmers for farming activities. In the recent past, exchange of labor, animals, dairy products, indigenous sharing of agriculture knowledge and local transport like Donkey carts, bicycles, oxen carts in farming activities among the villagers were compatible with the cultural life of the rural people . Modernization of agriculture is affecting the socio-cultural value of family cooperation in farming activities which leads inefficient use of social and cultural capital for farming in the villages of Punjab.

The role of kinship as a social institution in farming is another indicator of social environment of the villages. Most of the farmers try their level best to involve the children in the farming activities. In rural Punjab, it has been the socio-cultural value of rural Punjab. Without the family member's involvement in farming practices, exchange of labor for cooperation among the families and *Biraderis* is no more. Mechanized industrial agriculture has played a key role decreasing human role in agriculture. The farmers in rural Punjab have detached their children from farming activities. The socio-cultural role of kin groups in farming determines the family farming in Punjab. In the family farms, time passes slowly and experience accumulates into individual and collective memories. In the family farms, farmer is good at storytelling, and these stories bind communities, giving meanings and direction to lives. Today, family farmers mourn the decline of rural communities, no one has time to talk any more, and many people in rural areas no longer know anything about farming (pretty, 2002). Carrying animals are considered the major component of farming in the rural areas. Dairy products are also used for family cooperation among *Biraderi* in the village. Exchange of dairy products among *Biraderi* and family have been culture of cooperation in rural Punjab. The family and *Biraderi* members give milk, *Makhan and Dessi* Oil to their relatives and *Biraderi* members who do not have animals. Modern agriculture technology reduces the role of animals that affects the culture of cooperation in terms of dairy. In the study area, it was identified that just 10 % respondents gave e milk to their relatives and 80.2 % respondents did not give milk to their family members but 9.8 % respondents were not having animals.

Sr.NO	Questions	Yes	No	Not Applicable
1	Do you give milk to your family/relatives	45(10%)	361 (80.2%)	44(9.8 %)
2	Do you give milk to your <i>Biraderi</i>	21(4.7%)	385(85.6%)	44(9.8%)
3	Do you give <i>Makhan</i> to your family relatives	53 (11.8 %)	354(78.7%)	44(9.8%)
4	Do you give <i>Makhan</i> to your <i>Biraderi</i>	26(5.8%)	381(84.7%)	44(9.8%)
5	Do you give <i>Dassi</i> Oil to your family or relatives	12(2.7%)	395(87.8%)	44(9.8%)
6	Do you give <i>Dasi</i> oil to your <i>Biraderi</i>	8(1.8%)	398(88.1%)	44(9.8%)

Source. Survey Data

Just 4.7 % respondents gave milk to the *Biraderi* and 85.6 % respondents did not give milk to their *Biraderi* members, 11.8 % respondents gave “*Makhan*” to their relatives and 78.7 % respondents did not “*Makkhan*” to their relatives . Just 5.8 % respondents gave *Makkhan* to their *Biraderi* and 84.7 % respondents did not give *Makkhan* to their *Biraderi* , only 2.7 % respondents gave “*Dassi* Oil” to their relatives and 87.8 % respondents did not give “*Dassi* Oil” to their relative and 1.8 % respondents gave “*Dassi* Oil” to their *Biraderi* and 88.2 % respondents did not give “*Dassi* Oil” to their *Biraderi* members. Exchange of fodder was also the culture of cooperation among farming families and *Biraderi* in rural Punjab, Pakistan. Those farming community members who do not have sufficient land in the village, they want to carry animals but they cannot not grow sufficient fodder animals. They cooperate gifting fodder to the other family farmers. The above statistics shows that the rural people were having modern facilities. The modernization is creating the distance among the farming families in the rural Punjab, Pakistan. According to the survey data, most of the farmers are having TVs, VCRs and computer facilities in their homes. Such things are diverting the minds of the farmers from farming. The farmers are having the dreams to be modernized leaving the farming fields. The culture of cooperation among the farming families is fading. The socio-cultural tradition of exchanging the dairy products, animals and indigenous technology of farming looks no more in the villages of rural Punjab, Pakistan.

Sr.NO	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you have Iron for press at your home?	419 (93.1%)	31 (6.9)
2	Do you have you electric fans?	420(93.3%)	30 (6.7 %)
3	Do you have sewing machine?	343 (76.2%)	107(23.8%)
4	Do you have washing machine?	314(69.8%)	136(30.2%)
5	Do you have TV?	356 (79.1%)	94 (20.9 %)
6	Do you have tape recorder?	28.(6.2%)	422(93.8%)
7	Do you have VCR?	31 (6.9%)	419(93.1%)
8	Do you have mobile?	417 (92.7%)	33 (7.3%)
9	Do you have computer?	40 (8.9%)	41 (91.1 %)
10	Do you have Air Cooler?	44 (9.8%)	406(90.2%)
11	Do you have Refrigerator?	101 (22.4%)	349(77.6%)
12	Do you have Microwave?	17 (3.8 %)	433(96.2%)
13	Do you have Air Conditioned?	11(2.4 %)	441(97.6%)
16	Do you have PTCL Phone?	11(2.4 %)	439(97.6%)
17	Do you have toilet facility?	422 (94.4%)	25(5.6%)

## Conclusion

In the rural Punjab, *Biraderi* is just like a family which is the considered the basic unit of social organization. Family and *Biraderi* has been the strong social and cultural capital for farming activities. Cooperation in farming activities among the farming families has been the socio-cultural values in the rural Punjab. Cooperation occurs when the farming families interact with each other in farming. Mechanization of agriculture minimizes the role of interactive



process among the family and *Biraderi* members in farming. Also modernization of agriculture curtails the role social and cultural capital in the study area. Cultural and social capital is used by the farming community as evidenced by the Scottish farming communities. In those communities, farmers exchange machinery, labor and skills of farming. Exchange of labor does not simply generate economic capital but It also has symbolic meanings through the practices and reciprocal social capital (social obligations) in the Scottish rural communities. Small to medium and low input farmers, social and cultural capital was more beneficial (Sutherland & Burton 2011).

Specifically, cooperation among family, *Biraderi* in farming activities has been source of interaction in the rural Punjab. Through the local cooperative networks, the *Biraderi* and family are mutually involved in farming practices and on other socio-cultural occasions. There are no formal networks in the villages. Even then, the farmers know their responsibility and do their job in the harvesting and sowing seasons. According to one study, before industrialization of agriculture in Mexican community, family members carried out sowing, cultivation, wedding, harvesting, and other activities involved in the management of traditional agriculture system and community members organized into cooperative networks or mutual aid systems (Korsback, 1996). In rural Punjab, the farmers exchange family labor, fodder of animals, dairy products and local agriculture technology among themselves. Such kind of cooperation occurs within the farming families and *Biraderis* in the villages. Kinship as social institution played a vital role in farming practices. Modernization of agriculture minimized the role of labor, animals and traditional farming technology in the agriculture. Farming related local cooperative networks and interaction among farming *Biraderi* also condensed. So, modern agriculture affected the local socio-cultural network of cooperation followed by change in the overall socio-cultural milieu of rural Punjab.

It is evidenced historically that farmers have been keeping relations with other farmers in the community when they work in the agriculture but with the change of mode of production in farming, the farmers also change the relationships. The relations are modified because of achieving better socioeconomic status that has taken more individualistic dimensions now instead of a competition between different *Biraderis* that was complicated by patronage, alliances, and divisions in rural social organization. Further, changes in the value and category of land from an agricultural property to a shop or factory have altered the nature of socioeconomic relationships. For instance, long-term patron–client relationships are now turned into short-term market-oriented relationships. Such an increasing occupational and economic diversification has a potential to deal with rural poverty in the times of rapid social change (Mughal 2015a).

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