

Dynamics of Patron-Client Relationship in Rural Bangladesh

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Abstract: Patron-client relationship is an inevitable issue in rural leadership and power structure in the third world. Bangladesh is no exception. Patron-client relationship is an unequal relationship between the two groups. Through material property, one group uses the other group for their own needs. The client relinquishes his self-esteem to patron for little benefit. It is only through the self-reliance of every individual that it is possible to eradicate this patron-client relationship. Willingly or unwillingly, one group(client) weakens itself financially and thus becomes gradually dependent. Then the patron-client relationship of the dependent person with the person owning the material property is created. In this way, inequality is created in the society. So such a bad relationship as patron-client has an impact on the formation of unequal society. Abuse of economic and political power in rural Bangladesh and illiteracy and prejudice are responsible for the patron-client relationship. Greed as human nature is one of the major factors in the creation of patron-client relationship. This paper aims to explore the dynamics of patron-client relationship in rural Bangladesh. Participant observation (Ethnography) and unstructured interviews have been used in this study. In addition, many people think that the desire to influence people is one of the factors in creating a patron-client relationship. Currently land, non-agricultural economy, political power, public and private development projects and cash (Economic solvency) in rural areas are the main elements in building patron-client relationships. So research on patron-client relationships is important for learning about rural society and politics in the third world.

Keywords: Patron-client Relationship, Rural Leadership, Power Structure, Dynamics.

1. Introduction

The mystique and variability of rural society and leadership in Bangladesh has attracted the attention of many sociologists and researchers. This study deals with the dynamics of patron-client relationship in rural Bangladesh. The emphasis here is on the patron-client relationship of rural Bangladesh and its changing nature. Various sociologists and researchers have discussed the nature of leadership and class dominance under the traditional rural social structure. There has also been a lot of research on contemporary changing leadership structures. In fact, the pattern of leadership within Bangladesh's agro-based rural economy and social structure is based on an exploitative patron-client relationship. Even in the face of changes in various environmental factors, this inhibitory relationship has changed its form at different times and still exists almost unhindered. All of the above researchers have found more or less the existence of this relationship at different times. Patron-client relations have developed in rural areas where land ownership is heavily concentrated in the hands of a relatively small and powerful group able to monopolize wealth, political power, education and the means of communication

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with the world external to the rural community. Communities in which landholdings are fairly evenly distributed tend to develop very few linkages of patron-clientage but are characterized, rather, by instrumental and reciprocal exchange relationships amongst equals, or what have been called colleague contracts (Hall, 1973 : P. 506).

The importance and necessity of rural leadership is likely to increase manifold under the proposed local government structure of the present government. Under this system, the chairmen of the Union Parishads will be the focus of all politics and administration and development activities at the village level through their mini-parliaments. Similarly, the importance and role of the village leaders who wield power from outside the formal power structure has increased in parallel. In other words, in this new and changed political and social context of the country, it is necessary to evaluate the rural leadership structure and other dependent sub-structures associated with it. The article in question is a small attempt to analyze the presence and nature of patron-client relationships in the rural leadership capacity structure. It needs to be mentioned that patron-client relationship is presented here in a simple structure of social economy. And the effect of its internal complexity on the ongoing interaction within the structure of rural society is included here. This personalized quality is a key reason as to why it remains difficult for poorer people in Bangladesh to build 'horizontal' relationships of solidarity among equals, such as through joining cooperatives or the community groups that both government and NGOs have tried to form at various times (Lewis, 2017: 1545 - 67).

This study has been conducted with the following objectives: i) the patterns of patron-client relationship in rural Bangladesh and ii) the changing nature of patron-client relationship in rural Bangladesh.

2. Theoretical Framework

The general definition of power is control over people and resources. The structural type of power is always associated with the socio-economic context of a particular country and time. "Political process is the shaping, distribution and exercise of power.....what men seek in their political negotiation is power (Mashreque,1985:147). In his search for the meaning of power within the framework of society, Weber saw that power is the possibility of a person exercising his or her own will despite resistance (Weber,1947:152). Power has logical and relational features (Barman,1988: 69). The practical explanation of power in this article is the degree and extent of the patronage of one person over another within a particular social, economic and political relationship.

Different thinkers have tried to explain patron-client relationship in different ways. Patron-client relationship as a one-sided friendship (Wolf,1966). James C. Scott has given perhaps the most acceptable definition of a patron-client relationship. According to him, in the case of mutual relations, the patron-client relationship can be defined as a special kind of bilateral bond, that is a mechanical friendship in which a person of high status receives help, support and care from a person of low status through his own influence with the apparent benefit and security of a person of low status (Scott, 1972). It can be explained from an exchange perspective. "A relationship involving an interchange of non-comparable goods and services between actors of unequal socio-economic rank." (Jahangir, 1982:88).Jahangir mentions that the issue of exchange on the basis of inequality is related to the Indian "Jajmani System (Reciprocal social and

economic arrangements between families of different castes within a village community in India)” (Jahangir, 1982 : 88-90). So when an unequal relationship is established between two parties that one party provides help, security, supplies, work. Shelter and facilities and the other party accepts it by providing kindness and support, then it can be said that patron-client relationship has been established between them.

The patron-client relationship between rural leaders and the general public is not an isolated incident. It is an integral part of rural culture. It is a mechanical relationship. It is a combination of domination and so-called loyalty. Rural leaders take on the role of patron in focusing on agricultural economy, non-agricultural economy, political power, public and private development projects. And patron dominates the client. He thinks he is ‘murubbi’ (Patron) and never admits that his relationship with the poor peasants is exploitative (Jahangir, 1979: 242).

This process creates a parochial culture and hinders the creation of a progressive culture. In this case, both the patron and the client are relatively trapped. When factions are active it is often the interests of the rich , which are at stake and their supporters, the poor and ‘small surplus’ peasants , rally behind their leader (Jansen, 1983: 151). It hinders the formation of participant culture in rural environment. Clients cannot make independent decisions in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. At the same time, patron cannot gradually become a modern and progressive leader. Bangladesh is no exception. This process leads to stagnation in overall development. Political power, public and private development projects are creating new types of patron-client relation. It exists in a different form. And the client is looking for new patron. Patron-client relationship is emerging in new forms as people are not trying to become self-reliant. As a result, patron-client relationship is not being completely eradicated. This tradition is based on economic dependence and binds the landless and the poor peasant to the rich peasant (Jahangir, 1979:2-3). A dyadic relationship entered into on the basis contributes to develop and maintain a many stranded patron-client relationship (Jansen, 1983: 173-180). Even for the laborers who are working on daily contracts and willing to work for most of the employers, the choice of employer is limited. (Jansen, 1983:191)

In South Asian Studies, we look at the type of analytical bifurcation of several traditional and customary leadership. Alan Beals saw two types of leadership in (India) Namhali village by survey of Mahishur². One of his creations originated from the government system and the other originated from the rural tradition-based social organization (Beals, 1969). On the other hand, Epstein noticed that there is a traditional type of leadership in the village where economic development has decreased and in the village where irrigation system has helped in significant economic development here are signs of fundamental political change. According to him, the panchayat members no longer need to become an elderly person of the group-rather the acquired leadership has occupied the place. On the contrary, there was no change in traditional politics of traditionally dependent villages. There the village panchayet³ is still formed with the elders of the clan and now Panchayet resolves the problems of villagers. Epstein analyzes the study, how old and new values are in the process of social change (Epstein, 1962). It also explains what has happened in the political and ritual ceremonial roles and what has changed in

² Namhali, Mahishur (area of India)

³ Panchayet (Indian local government system)

the principles of social organization. Thus, with a political and organizational change, Epstein established a positive correlation of economic change. He saw the economy as a determining driver in that case. Lewis mentioned that-

.....in the traditional pattern of leadership, the older men were both ceremonial and panchayat leaders. With the coming of education and outside employment however, middle aged educated people are being given opportunities by the older people to represent them official panchayats, school committees and deputations outside the village (Lewis, 1958: P. 130).

R. M. Stogdill thinks about leadership, Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement (Stogdill, 1974: P.144).

Many theorists and researchers expressed their views as a strong and strong relationship between leaders and followers. In this case, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner expressed strong opinion. They said- "Leadership is a relationship between leader and followers. A Complete picture of leadership can be developed only if we ask followers what they look for or admire in a leader (Kouzes and Posner, 1990: P. 25).

In the book of Public leadership (Bell, Hill and Wright, 1960: Pp. 1-27), the concept that has been found in the leadership class category is-

1. Positional or formal Leadership
2. Reputational or Nominal Leadership
3. Social Participation
4. Personal Influence or Opinion Leadership
5. Event Analysis or Decision making

Ahmed attempted to study the power structure in contemporary rural Bangladesh and thus he conducted a field work in a village named Bizna (pseudonym) of Comilla district in eastern Bangladesh. His study was devoted to provide some understanding of the changing pattern of power hierarchy in the context of social change in Bangladesh. He indicated a change in the power structure of the village which is that outcome of modern education by the villagers. Education began to be more powerful than the land-based power hierarchy in the village. Moreover, a good number of the educated young men went out to various places and, on their return they developed a spirit of defiance to the village elders. In this way the change in the power structure began to take shape (Ahmed, 1983). In the light of this study, modern and educated leadership can be explained.

Karim made a study on the leadership pattern in two Bangladeshi villages named Dhononjoyapara and Gopalhati located in the northern part of the country (Rajshahi District). His study directed a change in the institutions through which leaders can exert power due to government funded programs and projects run by the Union Parishad, gram sarkar, farmer's cooperatives and Rural social Service (RSS). He observed that although there appeared a change in the leadership pattern, the basic structure of leadership remains unchanged. His study revealed that two or more gothis (lineages) in a neighborhood formed a samaj (an informal village social organization and a traditional power domain). The leadership in the samaj was held by the persons who came from demographically stronger gothi and the persons who represented strong landowning

gosthis. The real political power of the pardhan (chief samaj leader) and paramanik (one of the samaj leaders) was exercised in setting disputes between members of the samaj through traditional and informal village courts bicher and salish (Karim, 1987). In the light of this study, young and educated leadership can be explained.

Rahman studied 60 unions of several districts in Bangladesh to identify the class character and to stress the background of Union Parishad (UP) leaders. He interviewed about 132 UP leaders during the early part of 1978 to show clearly the linkages that existed between the local level leaders and the central leaders who were in control of the state machinery. He considered the UP leaders as 'the landing ground "or national leadership via the bureaucrats'. In stressing the characteristics of the UP leaders, Rahman claimed that they were more close to the characteristics of so-called 'feudal leaders'. He showed that "the class that drives all its power from land-ownership and concomitantly grabs other surplus siphoned off unproductive activities" (Rahman, 1981). In the light of this study, dominant political position of rural leaders (Inclusion in the political party) can be explained.

Jahangir identified a "process of class differentiation, stimulated by new opportunities for the accumulation of capital, results in a process of polarization" (Jahangir, 1979). In the light of this study, the practice of share cropping and mortgage can be explained.

Geoffry Wood studied the political process and rural power structure in Comilla village. It showed that "the description of class formation and the emergence of dominant power groups correlated these processes with the indebtedness which abounded as the small peasant's land was gradually expropriated and so he was transformed into a sharecropper or a dependent laborer" (Wood, 1976). In the light of this study, mortgage practices can be explained.

The centralization of power in the leadership structure is evident. People having no leadership wield little or no power. So there is a correlation between leadership and power. As a matter of fact the elite and the ordinary masses are not homogenous in most cases in regard to socio-economic attributes. The leaders are distinguishable from ordinary villagers by numerical dominance, economic solvency, dominant political position, high influence and high level of participation in the decision making process.

Bangladesh is an agricultural society, ... In such a society, the distribution of rights in land is of enormous importance to the economic system within which production, distribution, exchange and consumption take place. The distribution of rights in land both helps to determine and reflects the structure of power in such a society (Jannuzi & Peach, 1982 : p. 1).

The status of powerful and powerless, and influential and ineffective people in the society has been analyzed through power theory. It may be mentioned that the ownership of wealth as an economic element alone is not a criterion for being a patron. There are many wealthy people in the society who have not become patron. Again, there are not wealthy but influential people who are occupying the place of patron in the society. Here therefore the patron-client relation has been analyzed through power theory. Simply put, the powerful and influential are patron, and those who do not have power and influence are clients. So, power theory is more effective in the case of patron-client relationship analysis. We are conscious of the fact that the size of the dominant and subordinated classes expanded in the 20th century and their composition, inter and intra-class relations

also increasingly became complex. But while discussing the domination-subordination syndrome the focus will be on the land controlling classes on the one side and the ordinary raiyats (cultivator), sharecroppers and landless labors, on the other; and it has been done with the assumption that the techniques of resource control and disciplining the depressed classes which the dominant classes had devised to keep them under control had continued in new forms even after the abolition of the permanent settlement (Islam, 1997 : P. 1).

Leadership can be defined on the basis of their position by identifying individuals holding important positions in rural institutions and internal organizations. The elected or nominated members of the Union Parishad represent this level of leadership. Successful people, successors or members of aristocratic families, chief and busybody have been practicing leadership in the village in hereditary and traditional ways. A kind of leadership is born out of ownership of the means of production, including capital, and involvement in rural economic and productive activities. Classically they are of elite level and generally dynamic in nature. Sometimes they are involved with different organizations. Leadership is practiced by engaging with the values ingrained in the society and by the socio-cultural influences. In rural areas of a particular time and environment, the emergence of a leader can lead to one or more specific issues.

There are four main approaches (techniques) in the identification of elites and leaders. These are the reputational, the positional, and social activity or the issue participation (Sing, 1988 :52). Some approaches, such as the reputational and positional approaches have been more in use than the others.

3. Methodology

a) Sampling

Data has been collected from the head of each family in the research area. However, in order to ensure factual data, in-depth discussions, group behaviors and historical data have been emphasized. I have been conducted preliminary survey in the research area and collected information on the number of families, numbers of members, age, education, gender, income, occupation, information of participation of political activities and political behavioral information etc. And I also know if the person is a voter. Data has been re-verified. The number of families giving opinions is 385. Purposive sampling is used in this research paper.

b) Data Collection Method

The questionnaire that has been used to gather data and opinions in the present study is that the questions are semi-structured and open in nature. There are two sources of data in this study :primary source and secondary source. In addition to asking a direct question, the observation method has been used in the study. As a research area, Basna⁴ village of

⁴ Basna village of Sanora union of Dhamrai upazila in Dhaka district (Union, Upazila- local government system of Bangladesh.)

4. The link between the source of rural power in Bangladesh and the patron-client relationship

There have been various studies on the source of rural power. Dahl has compiled a list of such powers. 1. Money and loans, 2. Control the way of action, 3. Control over the other's information, 4. Social position, 5. Knowledge and skills, 6. Popularity, dignity and charisma, 7. Legal, constitutional and official status, 8. National unity, 9. Suffrage. (Dahl, 1960:22).

In another study, the elements of leadership have been divided into several parts. Such as 1. Internal matters which belong to the respective village and individual, 2. Material matters (land, livestock etc.), 3. Object matter (heredity, kinship, family size and age etc.), 4. External issues (political communication, role of local Union Parishad chairman, influence of local zamindars, communication with Upazila level government officials and fertilizer dealership etc.) (Barman, 1988 :73-94). Some recent researchers have noticed some new elements of rural empowerment. These include the emergence of manpower, interest groups, political polarization in the villages, party solidarity, professional solidarity etc. ... Societies are organized in hierarchical systems of domination and subordination (www.sociology.org.uk).

There are some simple conclusions with the above seemingly complex picture of the versatility and various sources of power. For example, land ownership controls the flow of power in an agrarian rural society structure in this country. Landowners therefore enjoy monopoly power by cultivating surplus land by farmers and workers and gain loyalty to farmers. The comments of a study in this context are significant.-

...Land, the basic and the only source of production was under the control of 'Uchcha-Bangsha'⁵ house-holds. The fact enabled them to monopolize power in the village. Thus there was one to one equation between the basic means of production (i.e. land) and control and exercise of power....it was in fact the 'patron-client relationship'.

Secondly, the system of agricultural production and employment still exists in more villages. The decadent and seemingly weak legacy of feudalism that the villages of Bangladesh hold is essentially the birthplace of the patron-client relationship.

Thirdly, India was partitioned in 1947 and the zamindari system⁶ was abolished in 1950. And at the same time in 1793 a privileged feudal middle class was temporarily ousted as a result of the permanent settlement. But it was not a fundamental change in any sense because it only led to a change of power. And power is transferred to other beneficiary groups, including the non-agricultural elite. As a result, there has been no fundamental change in the relationship between patron-client. In this context, Jahangir said about the ineffectiveness of state intervention in rural reconstruction.

Here the state is the sources of all critical resources, but at the same time the exercise of state power is intermittent.In terms of rural areas, where resource is scarce, he who lives for politics gets from political activity material and an ideological gratification. Therefore the party in power of struggles for spoils....

⁵ High class in Bangladeshi rural society.

⁶ Permanent Land Revenue Settlement

5. The diversity of rural leadership and the spread of the patron-client relationship

There are various forms of patron-client in the rural power structure of Bangladesh. Jahangir's comment :The... dyadic ties involving friendship in which an individual or superior socio-economic status (patron) uses his influence and resources to provide protection or benefits are both, for a person of inferior status(client)who reciprocates by offering ... personal services to the patron does operate in the agrarian structure of Bangladesh(Jahangir, 1982). Attempts have been made at this stage to determine the various leadership types prevailing in the village and the nature of the patron-client within it by the following methods.

a) Formal rural leader

Legally, formal leaders practice leadership at the village level. For example , the members and chairmen of the Union Parishad are covered under it. M. Shamsur Rahman in a survey has shown that the main reasons for the villagers' support for the above formal leaders are taking economic advantage and gaining sympathy from the formal leaders for resolving disputes and recommendations to the officials (according to government rules , which is much mandatory) by the members and chairman (formal leader) regarding the receipt of loans etc. In the hope of getting this opportunity , the poor ,landless and marginal farmers representing the majority of the rural population try to satisfy and entertain the formal leaders. And because of this the formal village leaders receive support , help, care and courtesy from the common villagers through the wrapping instructions of the request during the election. As a result, the relationship between the rural formal leader and his followers is tied to a kind of unequal interdependence , which in turn is a manifestation of the patron-client relationship. The effects of political subordination are difficult to separate from cultural attributes that generally accompany multiple levels of political hierarchy (<http://WWW.socionauki.ru/journal/articles/130152>). This form of power is related to the way in which the state is organized in modern social systems (involving the ability to make laws, for example). If you can influence this process of law creation then you will be in a potentially powerful position. ... even though you may not directly exercise that power personally. "Political parties" are the organizational means to possess power ...that is organized to influence the way in which power is exercised..." (www.sociology.org.uk.Pp.1-18). Inference that political subordination is the cause of a custom requires evidence that the custom is selectively associated with political subordination rather than with other types of cultural complexity (<http://WWW.socionauki.ru/journal/articles/130152>). According to a former member of the Union Parishad (Council) in my research area, "The inequality of land ownership is the root cause of the patron-client relationship".

b) Informal / traditional rural leaders

In rural areas, Sardar(Headman), Matabbar (Busybody) and elders are the leaders of this level. In the village ,Sardars(Headman) , Matabbars (Busybody) are usually nominated by heredity and the eldest son of the family inherits them. Such leaders are associated with the aforesaid dignity and lineage-based leadership approach. Their key role lies in resolving interpersonal or inter-rural disputes. Such leaders represent traditional values. Notable among their features are that they are relatively older , more pious , conservative

or anti-change and less educated. They are recognized as Matabbars (Busybody) or Sardars (Headmen) on the basis of social and family status, wealth, age, personality, occupation and numerical strength. The amount of land in rural areas is considered as a source of financial and social status. Needless to say, most of the Matabbars (Busybody), Sardars (Headmen) or other traditional leaders are rich peasant or land lord. The land on the one hand ensures the financial security of the owner as well as provides for the surplus income to support others. In addition, with the opportunity of sharecropping, the landlord (patron) gets any of his personal work done by small, landless and marginal farmers (they represent the majority of the population in the village) in rural society. It can be said that, 'Land is the principal means of production in the village and therefore, ownership and control over land gives a person ample scope to exert his will on other' (Barman, 1988:73).

The temporary system of sharecropping in rural society not only discourages sharecroppers from protesting but also forces them to entertain the landlords, matabbars (busybody) and sardars (headman). Moreover, matabbars (busybody) and sardars (headman) have a special role to play in resolving inter-individual and inter-rural disputes. For this reason, in the hope of gaining some support and sympathy in the case of arbitration, the common people of the village accepted the dominance of the traditional leaders. Due to the above weakness of the villagers, they are forced to work outside the list of duties under the direction of the traditional rural leaders. Therefore, it can be said that the presence of patron-client relationship is also noticeable in the case of traditional type of rural leadership. In the network of relationships manifested in the exchange of favors and expressed in terms of reciprocal obligations, ...various dimensions can be found (Jahangir, 1982 : P. 100). ... Patron-client relations can be traced far back in history, it was only with the growth of feudalism ... that relationships of personal protection and subordination between Lord and peasant came to form a basis for social, economic and political organization (Hall, 1973 : p. 506).

... In rural areas where land ownership is heavily concentrated in the hands of a relatively small and powerful group able to monopolize wealth, political power, education and the means of communication with the world external to the rural community. Communities in which landholdings are fairly evenly distributed tend to develop very few linkages of patron-clientage but are characterized, rather, by instrumental and reciprocal exchange relationships amongst equals, or what have been called 'colleague contracts' (Foster, 1961 : Pp. 1173-1192). In history 'pure types' of domination are always found in combinations, but Weber insisted that clear concepts are needed to analyze such combinations in terms of their legal, traditional or charismatic element (Bendix, 1962: P. 296). Influential studies such as 'The Net Power Structure in Ten Villages' have tended to represent village-level power structures as closed, predatory and dominated by traditional elites (BRAC, 1982). According to an elderly and experienced person in my research area, "The emergence of modern, educated and agile leaders in the rural environment have led to a new type of patron-client relationship between rural leadership and urban leadership".

c) The modern economic leader

Modern economic leaders can be said to have been leaders in rural areas who have held various positions in local bodies and organizations involved in rural development and

have played an active role in rural development in addition to controlling all means of production with capital. Such leaders are president, vice-president, secretary, director or member of agricultural co-operative societies, deep tube well projects, work for food programs, rural works program and various local clubs and associations. Such leaders fall into the category of rural leadership social activities. Modern economic leaders have the skills to communicate with government and donor officials for a variety of manufacturing materials. The close relationship of modern economic leaders with officials is a social foundation of their leadership practice in rural society. Ordinary villagers are always in a bond of dependence with these leaders because of their control over certain materials of production. The rural people respect and support the modern economic leaders in order to avail various opportunities. The analysis of informality enables insight into the working of power structures beyond the surface level and makes visible 'interactions and negotiations far away from the transparent and accountable systems of modern government' (Mitlin, 2014: 3). Patronage as 'a pattern of relationships in which members of hierarchically arranged groups possess mutually recognized, not explicitly stipulated rights and obligations involving mutual aid and preferential treatment' (Breman, 1974: 18). According to an N.G.O. officer in my research area, "A new type of patron-client nexus has emerged with the emergence of the non-agricultural economy".

d) Opinion leader (Experienced rural leader)

Generally, the importance of the opinion of some elderly person on any rural issue is considered with respect. The key to such leadership is respect due to experience and age. In this case, the basis of power and support is social values. Disobeying the views or instructions of the local elders in the rural society is considered as a clear violation of social norms and customs. In this context, the following statement of S.M. Hafeez Zaidi is noteworthy. "The village leadership is still in the hands of the older generation in most of the villages of East Pakistan (Bangladesh). An educated young man should therefore, be very careful not to violate another social norm, namely respect of age" (Zaidi, 1970 : P. 9).

Patron-client relations are closely related to the social norms prevailing in the rural context of Bangladesh. Because according to the rules prevailing in the rural society, the younger ones are considered as subordinates of the elders. This kind of subordination plays a helpful role in shaping the subordinate mentality. However, in some cases, valuable advice from adults and attractive personalities create special appeal in the minds of young people. The patron-client relationship is directly effective in the case of formal leaders. However, in this case, although not so direct, its effectiveness cannot be denied. However, the effectiveness of patron-client relationship is similar to that of other types of leadership. The object of elite studies is, rather, to examine the structure of power in communities, ... in all communities influence is concentrated in the hands of a single cohesive Elite (Parry, 1969: p. 14). If this oligarchy is not rooted out and the long oppressed local poor not involved in the transfer of power, then conditions of the solution of the agricultural problem do not exist. Neither can the backwardness of the peasantry be overcome nor can the economic constraints on the economy as a whole be removed under these circumstances (Magdoff, 1978 : p. 4). According to a former Chairman of the Union Parishad (Council) in my research area, "A new type of patron-client relationship has been emerged due to the dominance of national politics."

6. Changes in rural leadership structure, contemporary leadership and patron-client relationship

Recent studies have found a new polarization of rural leadership in Bangladesh. The main reasons are : (a) The emergence of modern , educated and dynamic leadership instead of traditional heredity leadership, (b) Emergence of non-agricultural employment and production system, (c) The end of the relative monopoly of land ownership over the control of power structures,(d) Further external political influence and infiltration of party politics, (e) Public relations and the spread of the media, (f) The relationship of rural leaders with national politics, (g) Cash (Economic solvency) etc. Political subordination of a community may be expected to influence behavior of the individuals (Barry, 2003). As a result, a new kind of leadership has emerged in the rural power structure , and a study on its nature states that,“ The newly emerged land owners do not belong to the old landed aristocracy They would like to be identified as an entrepreneur belonging to white collar occupational groups having some background of modern education and a new style of life” (Bhuiyan,1990 : P : 74).But it is noteworthy that this temporary shift in power and leadership has not led to any fundamental change in patron-client relationships. In this regard, the study noted that,“.. It has simply taken a new form. Inspite of shift of a large number of village households from agrarian to non-agrarian occupations, quite a number of ... households belonging to the landless and sharecropper group are still under the control of newly emerged land owners” (Bhuiyan,1990 : P : 74).

Understanding this unfolding micro-politics on its own terms requires us to pay attention to the moral as well as to the instrumental dimensions of political patronage (Piliavsky, 2014: 1-35). This trend is consistent with Leonard et al.'s observation that there has been a general shift in the character of patronage leaderships in many societies away from local-based monopolies of power towards a situation where clients can benefit from growing competition between different potential patrons seeking influence, since it becomes possible for clients to exert more leverage within patronage relationships (Leonard et al., 2010:475-94). According to a former member of the Union Parishad (council), “ A new kind of patron-client relationship has been emerged through political subordination.”

7. Conclusion

The following points are clear from the above discussion :

- i) The pace of patron-client relations in agrarian class (pre- industrial) and social format is negative and exploitative. Various researchers have noticed the restraining nature of this relationship in the social structure.
- ii) The presence of the patron-client relationship at various junctures is noticeable in both traditional and modern changing leadership structures. Jahangir's statement
- iii) “In the network of relationships manifested in the exchange of favors and expressed in terms of reciprocal obligations , Various dimensions can be found”(Jahangir, 1982:100).
- iv) Despite the various sources and bases of rural leadership and power, land ownership is still the most important. Among other things, contemporary research has shown political, administrative, communication, manpower, work experience and public relations as the main foundations.

At this stage, however, it is important to verify the reality. Ineffectiveness of the state apparatus and public service, harassment, corruption, and segregation is a recognized issue. In this situation, due to lack of alternatives, the agricultural workers and landless class resort to the elite class through entertainment and take refuge in a kind of security and guardianship.

Many left-wing researchers have criticized such a confidence-based temporary solution, arguing that the seemingly positive dependence of the form prolongs the possibility of a proletarian revolution and thus protects the interests of the aristocracy. Without following any particular opinion or episode, it can be said that the patron-client relationship leads to dependence between the elite and the underprivileged, it is characteristically negative and based on a kind of unequal exchange system. This is clear from a Norwegian study of rural Bangladesh.

“The poor depend on the rich, in times of economic hardships, to borrow money from or to sharecrop in land. The rich depend on the poor as daily labor and to sharecrop their land and as support in questions of more political character. But in the long run all evidence shows that more people are even poorer than before and those that remain rich get wealthier” (Larsen and Richter, 1990 : P. 19).

Patron-client is deeply rooted in the rural society and class system of Bangladesh. It is nonsense to hope that its inequality and deterrent character will change overnight. However, it is almost certain that these exploitative relations operating within the rural power structure need to be fundamentally changed. To do that, far-reaching qualitative changes and reforms in land ownership and land layout structure are needed.

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