

Development And Displacement of Denizens in Narmada Valley

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Abstract: Development and displacement always go together and is the need of all the societies. However, the concept of development and its various ramifications have attracted attention of different sections of the society for different reasons. Post industrial revolution concept of development was initially restricted to the economic growth of the region in which industries were established and was seen as leading to growth of nation through resultant prosperity. But development at the cost of human welfare raises questions. In recent past, the social workers and people's organization have raised issues related to human suffering in the process of development. Human predicaments and sufferings become severe when as a result of developmental projects, an inhabitant groups are displaced and are forced to migrate from their natural habitat to an alien environment. In the absence of any effective monitoring of the affected societies such a developmentally induced migration may result in a disastrous displacement only. The present paper makes an effort to find out the processes and consequences of such a forced migration on tribal population due to construction of mega developmental project - "The Sardar Sarovar Project" in Narmada Valley. The affected tribal have been earning their livelihood subsistence depending on the local natural resources in the valley for centuries and have been using local means for their survival. Construction of "The Sardar Sarovar Project" has brought significant prosperity to the relatively affluent sections of the society using the water resources of the project, but not sufficient attention has been paid to help the displaced tribal to adjust to the new environment. Displaced tribal population has not been able to take the advantages of various Government schemes and therefore has landed into serious socio-economic and cultural problems. The displaced population of the area also has no social, political, or economic lobby at the state or national level to raise their demands for better quality of life. The present study makes an effort to find the impact of the developmental activities and forced migration on the displaced tribal migrants due to "Sardar Sarovar" Project. The study is based on an empirical research base on the data collected from the field survey of the area. The study indicates that the government has provided sufficient compensation to the displaced persons but insufficient social support- as a result the displaced population is not been able to make optimal use of the compensation money and in some cases the one time easy money drag them into bad habits also. Once the money is wasted affected people face a lot of sufferings. Although many efforts have been undertaken by the government to rehabilitate the affected families, but they are insufficient to mitigate their sufferings and help them to absorb socio-cultural shocks migrated people feel in alien surroundings. Their real vulnerability is located in socio-cultural alienation towards which the government has paid the least attention and has left them to face the vagaries of a new socio-cultural environment on their own. The study, therefore, suggests that keeping in view the low levels of literacy and the life skills of tribal population of our resource rich areas, the continued social support to the affected population after displacement should also be the essential part of the developmental planning. Governmental responsibility should not end after paying the monetary compensation. Good governance requires a continued monitoring and social support to the affected population even after the displacement of population due to development. Government should have a special cell in the ministry of social development to handle such cases on the permanent basis.

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I. Introduction

Development is a process of spatial change which is achieved by harnessing the natural resources of the earth surface including water resources. The surface water resource is exploited by constructing dams on the rivers for various purposes. These developmental activities augment the economic growth of the region. However, the socio-cultural aspects of human beings have not been entertained in the planning process and often have resulted into displacement. This human displacement has long term social, political, demographic, economic and environmental consequences on the affected population, particularly on the rural, tribal and poor communities. The dislocation of the affected from their ancestral habitats along with other repercussions leads to landlessness, homelessness, joblessness, loss of access to common property assets and disarticulation of social fabric. It also dismantles production system, and dislocates long established residential communities and settlements. The traditional life supporting informal social network becomes non-functional and local exchange

of items, labour linkages and self organized services may be wiped out. Thus, the consequences of development and displacement are diverse and complicated. The displaced population may be forced to resettle in an unfamiliar and unknown environment. Hence, the displacement becomes instrumental in annihilating interaction of lives and livelihood with nature and land, of the living entity with environment. Resultantly, it becomes very difficult for them to get adjusted and adapt to the different milieu and the living conditions of the resettled population further deteriorate when they are uneducated and unskilled which leads to the condition of unemployment, overcrowding of housing facilities and public amenities. All these result into disruption of subsistence systems which control the community and management of economic and ecological resources.

After independence, India has also adopted a policy of development through mega projects. But in recent decades, the policy has included the human aspects with the intervention of social workers and people's organizations. These agencies emphasized that the development should be achieved by including the social goals of the poor and affected communities. The studies related to displacement as a result of the construction of development projects mainly cover the compensation amount given to the displaced population, the economic conditions of displaced persons, governments' rehabilitation and resettlement programs. Less emphasis has been given to identify the consumption pattern of compensation money, the nature of choices made by the affected families in the process of resettlement, social changes and problems faced by the affected families that depend on non-market and common property resources (Newad) in the natural surroundings of the river system. Thus, to fulfill the above-mentioned gap, a modest attempt has been made to find out the patterns of compensation package given to the affected families in the present analysis. It has been proposed that there should be a people-oriented approach which should undertake the perspective of the project-affected people.

Study Area:

The Sardar Sarovar Project on river Narmada affected the population residing near bank of the river spreading in three riparian states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. These affected people are forced to move to different places. Among all the three states, Gujarat also gave an opportunity for resettlement to the displaced people from other two states. Hence, to study the nature of choices made in the process of selection of sites for resettlement and consumption pattern of compensation money of the displaced families from all the above mentioned three states, who opted to live at the same political entity i.e. Gujarat, have been taken into consideration for the present study.

Objectives:

The tribal communities are dependent on Newad (uphill area) for the use of common property resources (CPR) in the natural environment of the river system and forest ecology. These people fulfill their daily requirement through the exchange of items in kind and are not accustomed to cash transaction. Many earlier studies covered the level of compensation given by the government agencies to the affected population. However, the consumption patterns of compensation money and nature of choices given to these people have not been covered. The socio-cultural predicaments of forced displacement have not been examined to a great extent. It is felt that there should be a people-oriented approach to study the affected people by the project. Thus, to fulfill the above-mentioned gaps, the present study attempts to examine the following objectives which have been taken into consideration for their lives and livelihood.

1. To find out the level of compensation given to the affected population.
2. To identify the consumption pattern of money given to the displaced families by the government.
3. To examine the nature of choices made in the process of selection of sites for resettlement by the displaced communities.

Methodology:

The present research work is an empirical and descriptive study. The data is collected from the field through survey of the study area. To fulfill the objectives, the areas of submergence and resettlement have been identified. Gujarat has developed 235 sites to rehabilitate the SSP displacement families from all the riparian states which are spread over 17 different physiographic divisions. Out of these, ten resettlement sites have been selected through stratified random sampling method for generation of information. On the basis of the geographical setting of resettlement sites in the state, four sites have been taken from Vadodara Plain, three from Orsang-Heran Plain, one each from Mahi Plain, Narmada Gorge and Lower Narmada Valley.

Out of the total selected sites, four sites each from Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat have been selected that are resettled by the displaced families. Two sites have been selected where the displaced families from Maharashtra are resettled. Spot inquiry has been conducted in the sample villages which reveals that a good number of resettled families are not permanently residing at these resettlement sites. Hence, only 338 households have been found available at the time of survey and information has been collected from these households for the detailed analysis.

To find out the utilization patterns of compensation money, it has been broadly classified into three categories viz. essential, income generating and non-income generating use. To find out the factors affecting the choices in the selection process of resettlement sites, various economic, socio-cultural and geographical factors have been included. To identify the levels of socio-cultural shocks, the level of the access and use of natural resources is measured by asking relevant questions from the respondents. To study the relations of social aspect with environment, it is measured with the level of co-operation and conflict.

II. Results And Discussion

SSP is one of the biggest multi-purpose river projects in the country. It is constructed for generation of electricity and use of water for irrigation and drinking purposes in the western part of India. However, it has displaced more than 45,000 families from 192 villages of Madhya Pradesh, 33 of Maharashtra, and 19 of Gujarat. Sardar Sarovar Punarvasat Agency (SSPA) has developed 235 sites to rehabilitate the affected families in the state of Gujarat. The government gave compensation (monetary and fixed assets) and other facilities to the affected families. The various agencies such as NGOs, social activists and judiciary intervened from time to time for proper rehabilitation. However, the process of displacement and resettlement has resulted in demographic, economic, social and cultural changes in the area. On the other hand, distribution of the compensation has led to the creation of a new sense of thinking and behaviour.

Compensation Package:

Till the recommendation of the Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal (NWDT) Award, the compensation packages for the displaced and resettled used to be calculated predominantly in cash terms. It is believed that the cash compensation rarely reflected the true value of the assets because the land records have not been updated in some of the areas. A general consensus that evolved was to compensate the affected people with land-for-land packages for the first time in India in 1979, which was recommended by the NWDT. The tribunal recommended two hectares of agricultural land to maintain their standard of living. The government of Gujarat endorsed the recommendation and allotted two hectare of land agricultural land to the displaced families along with cash and other compensation package. The government gave Rs. 45000 cash to the families who did not receive the constructed house, Rs. 4500 for subsistence and maintenance allowance, resettlement grant of Rs. 750, grant in aid of Rs. 500, development allowance of Rs. 5000 to purchase productive assets, ex-gratia grant of Rs. 10000 and few others. The following section tries to find out the level of compensation received by the affected families resettled in Gujarat.

Table 1 show that the highest compensation per family was distributed in the village Junarapura (Rs. 41,469) whereas it was lowest in village Vejpur-1 (Rs. 27,736). The average size of compensation

Table: 1 Cash Compensation Given to Resettled People

Sr . no .	Resettlement Sites	Surveyed families	Families received compensation	Total cash compensation (Rs.)	Compensation per family (Rs.)
1	Dhefa	13	12	390500	32542
2	Golagamdi	22	16	560000	35000
3	Gora	5	4	145000	36250
4	Junarapura	16	16	663500	41469
5	Pansoli	73	67	2487700	37130
6	Parveta (Gather)	30	28	1082900	38675
7	Parveta (Manibeli)	104	93	3165600	34039
8	Vejpur -1	29	25	693400	27736
9	Vyara-1	32	18	543000	30167
10	Vyara-2	14	11	428500	38955
	Total	338	290	10160100	35035

Source: compiled from primary survey conducted during March-June 2009. received among the families surveyed was Rs. 35,035 per family. The families in Vyara-1, Parveta (Gather), Pansoli and Gora villages received more compensation than the average, whereas Vyara-1, Dhefa, Parveta (Manibeli) and Golagamdi received less compensation than the average. On the other hand, out of 338

household surveyed, 48 households reported that they have not received the compensation money due to various reasons such as being minor at the time of award, widow living with their children at that time and so on.

Table 2 shows state wise cash compensation given to the resettled families. Maximum cash has been given to the families displaced from Gujarat whereas the lowest to the families from Madhya Pradesh.

Table: 2 Compensation of Money to Resettled People by States

Sr. no	States	Families received compensation	Total cash compensation (Rs.)	Compensation per family (Rs.)
1	Madhya Pradesh	75	2459900	32799
2	Gujarat	111	4106100	36992
3	Maharashtra	104	3594100	34559
4	Total	290	10160100	35035

Source: compiled from survey data conducted during March-June 2009

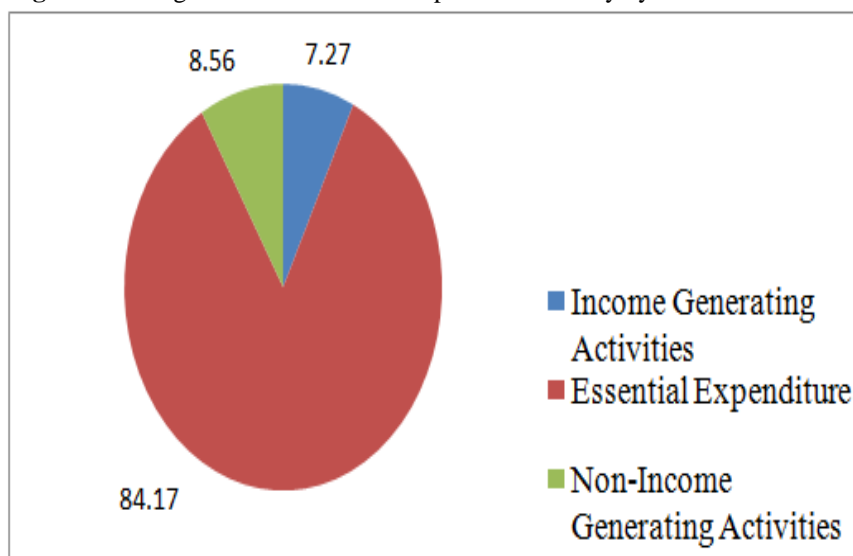
A success of resettlement strategy suggested by NWDT award depends on the pattern of utilization of the award money. If not utilized properly, the resettlement strategies will come under a lot of social and political criticism. Hence, the following section explains the manner in which the population has utilized the money awarded to them.

Utilization Pattern of Compensation:

The respondents have spent the compensation money in different ways. Some of them have invested most of it in income generating activities mainly in agriculture and related activities while others have used it in conspicuous consumption and on non-income generating items. The most vital expenditure that involved nearly 74 per cent of the compensation money was the construction of house which is essential for survival. The utilization behaviour of the resettled population is explained below.

The expenditure pattern of compensation money on three basic areas viz. income generating, essential expenditure and non income generating expenditure is shown in Fig. 1. It shows that 84 percent of the total compensation received has been utilized on essential expenditure i.e. the money spent on medicine and health care practices; on food, household goods and clothing; on education; on house construction; on transporting the household goods from old villages and so on. It is important to note that a meagre share (7.27 per cent) of compensation money has been used as an income generating investment i.e. to purchase agricultural equipment and implements; to establish household industry and small business investments such as opening of shops; levelling of agricultural land, purchase of seeds, developing irrigation facilities, saving in banks and so on. About 8.5 per cent has been spent on conspicuous consumption such as marriages and other social functions, on purchase of luxury items, on liquor, payment of old debts and on court cases.

Fig: 1 Percentage of Utilisation of Compensation Money by Resettled Families



Source: compiled from primary survey conducted during March-June 2009.

Table 3 elaborates the state wise variation of consumption pattern of money by the affected families. The table exhibits that the highest share of compensation money spent on essential expenditure and conspicuous consumption by the families displaced from Maharashtra and lowest from Madhya Pradesh. However, the families from Madhya Pradesh invested highest share in income generating investment whereas it is lowest for Maharashtra. It is interesting to note that the percentage share of conspicuous consumption is highest among the families of all the three states.

Table: 3 Percentage of Consumption of Money to Resettled People by States

Sr.	States	Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	Maharashtra	Total
	Families received compensation	75	111	104	290
1	Essential Expenditure	17.96	30.64	37.77	30.60
2	Income generating investment	40.92	26.72	15.96	25.90
3	Conspicuous consumption	41.12	42.65	46.27	43.50
4	Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: compiled from survey data conducted during March-June 2009

Thus, it appears that the resettlers by and large have used the compensation money quite judiciously in trying to establish their base in the new land and have not wasted it, as only a small part of it has been utilized for conspicuous consumption. Also, not much money was spent on income generating activities as the requirement of setting down was of overriding importance.

Pattern of Choices Given in Selection of the Resettlement Sites:

The NWDT award recommended the choices in the selection of resettlement sites to be made available to the displaced families. The resettlement agreement gave provision of choices to the each affected family in selection of resettlement sites. The World Bank also issued guidelines that the resettlers should be resettled in groups of their choice. Table 4 indicates that about 30 per cent families (100 households) responded that no choice had been given to them whereas more than 62 per cent of the families accepted that choices were offered to them. Out of the people who were given choices, above 64 per cent were those who were given 2 to 3 choices and the remaining were given 4 to 15 choices.

Table: 4 Number of Choices of Resettlement Sites

Sample Villages	No Choice	2 -3 Choices	4 -7 Choices	8 - 15 Choices	Response not given	Total
Golagamdi	3	8	10	0	1	22
Junarapura	3	9	4	0	0	16
Vejpur -1	16	10	1	0	2	29
Vyara-1	6	17	6	1	2	32
Dhefa	3	5	3	0	2	13
Gora	3	2	0	0	0	5
Pansoli	9	22	25	13	4	73
Parveta (Gather)	16	8	2	0	4	30
Parveta (Manibeli)	41	47	5	0	11	104
Vyara-2	0	9	3	2	0	14
Total	100	137	59	16	26	338

Source: compiled from survey data during March- June 2009

It has been observed that the families, who selected the land at the earlier stage, received good quality of land than the others. 30 per cent of the total surveyed families have selected the land at earlier stage and that is why majority (75 per cent) of them are satisfied with the quality of the land that is made available to them. However, in some cases, resettlers found that the plots of land allotted to them were unsuitable. The number of choices given to the families in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra is given in table 2. It is observed in all the surveyed villages that the authorities have identified the land and the resettlers have to choose from the very limited options being offered to them. Some families have settled at the resettlement sites with their social communities and had no choice but to accept whatever is being offered. Some people thought that if they do not take that land, they might not get anything because the authorities have no other land to offer. However, in some cases the displaced have been given the option to identify the land on their own, before it is purchased by the authorities.

Table 5 explains the distribution of families who were given choices to select the resettlement sites. The data indicates that 67 per cent families resettled from Madhya Pradesh to Gujarat responded to the given choices whereas 54 per cent families who responded to the given choices have been dislocated from Maharashtra and resettled in Gujarat. On the other hand, 25 per cent families from Gujarat have settled in Gujarat itself (lowest among 3 states) and they responded that no choices had been given to them.

Table: 5 Distribution of families Given Choices in Selection of Resettlement Sites

States	No choice	2 -3 Choices	4 -7 Choices	8 - 15 Choices	Total responses	Response not given	Total
Madhya Pradesh	28	46 (67.65)	21 (30.88)	1 (1.47)	68 (100)	5	101
Gujarat	33	44 (50.57)	30 (34.48)	13 (14.94)	87 (100)	11	131
Maharashtra	39	47 (82.46)	8 (14.04)	2 (3.50)	57 (100)	10	106
Total	100	137 (64.62)	59 (27.83)	16 (7.55)	212 (100)	26	338

Source: compiled from survey data during March- June 2009

Note: percentages are in parenthesis

It can be concluded that the highest choices to select one resettlement site for living have been given to Gujarat families and lowest to the families shifted from Madhya Pradesh. The maximum number of families displaced from Maharashtra to Gujarat received only 2 to 3 choices whereas families from Gujarat were lowest in this category.

Factors Responsible for the Selection of Resettlement Sites:

While selecting the sites for resettlement, certain factors influenced the family for their shift to new place of residence. The nature of these factors may be different in case of voluntary migration than that of forced migration as is seen in the present case. When population is given some choices to select the resettlement sites these factors play significant role in the selection procedure. There were 22 different factors identified belonging to economic, social-cultural and geographical aspects and the respondents were asked to respond to these. Economic factors such as employment in agriculture and non agricultural activities, availability of Gochar, availability of fuel and fodder and availability of infrastructural facilities (constructed government house, electricity, banks and loan facilities). Social factors include the variables like falia, relatives, caste or tribe, easy to accept by local people and so on. Lastly, geographical factors include aspects such as agricultural field lying in river command area, good quality of agricultural land, nearness of agricultural fields to house, nearness to urban area, good rail and road connectivity, nearness to old village, same geographic condition with old village and so on.

Table 6 reflects that the social and cultural factors have been the most dominant in the selection of resettlement sites by the displaced families, followed by geographical and economic factors. Here it is worth mentioning that resettlement is not a function of a single factor but it is a result of combination of two or more factors. The same is true when a single broad category of the factor is taken into consideration. For instance, if we see the impact of socio-cultural factors like “*resettled with other falia people, with relatives, with same caste people and so on*”—these are not responsible in isolation but combination of these is responsible for the selection of the resettlement site.

Table: 6 Factors Affecting for Selection of Sites (in percent)

Sample villages	Economic Factors	Socio-cultural Factors	Geographical Factors	Total
Dhefa	44.83	37.93	17.24	100
Golagamdi	27.56	45.31	26.77	100
Gora	17.07	39.02	43.90	100
Junarampura	35.34	43.10	21.55	100
Pansoli	29.24	43.08	27.68	100
Parveta (Gather)	22.98	40.99	36.02	100
Parveta (Manibeli)	22.75	49.91	27.34	100
Vejpur 1	27.97	38.81	33.22	100
Vyara 1	30.35	42.28	27.36	100
Vyara 2	18.18	51.52	30.30	100

Source: compiled from survey data during March- June 2009

People from different resettlement sites have given due consideration to social and cultural factors except for the people from Dhefa where economic factors have an edge over other factors. In Gora, geographic and economic factors have played important role in the selection of resettlement sites. A detailed study of the impact of social and cultural factors reveals that majority of the displaced persons preferred to resettle with other separated family members of same *falia* and along with the same community people.

Displacement and Socio-cultural Changes:

The study of socio-cultural change is important among the tribal people where all the activities are dominated by the social customs and rituals. The study area comprises about 98 per cent of tribal population of the total surveyed population. These people have faith in supernatural powers because of low level of education among them, belief in social customs, lack of awareness and financial constraints. It is observed that they leave the floor of their houses *kachcha* smeared with cowdung cakes and mud because of the socio-cultural reasons. These people believe that *Kuldev* and *Kuldevi* of the family walk on *kachcha* floor in the house.

The privacy of the individual family members has become obsolete as the room density in a household has decreased after resettlement. It was a practice in their ancestral land that the members of the society constructed a new hut for the newly married couple at nearby space available in fringe area. Resultantly, the family conflict and quarrel has increased. Among the civic amenities and sanitation facilities, the availability of drinking water, electricity and lavatory are the basic amenities. The tribal families used river and Kotar (small body of stored water in the river bed) water for drinking and households' chores but tap and hand pump water is being used after resettlement. Use of electricity for domestic consumption is studied. The government of Gujarat also made the provision of electric connection to all the resettled families free of cost but it has been disconnected due to non-submission of electric bills on time and only 68 per cent families have this connection in houses. However, it has increased manifold due to displacement. The provision of lavatory in the house was not socially acceptable to them. Hence, they used open space for defecation. The same trend is also observed at present place of residence.

The present study examined the celebration of festivals; the beliefs in Gods, Pirs and Gurus; the practice of dance and musical instruments at ceremonial and other occasions have been included. It is interesting to note that about 88 names of Gods, Pir and Guru have been listed at the time of field survey. These people also changed their Gods and places of worship. In the resettlement sites the people travel to chelawada (near Pawagarh) and Dev Mogra in Dediapara Taluka in Gujarat to offer animal sacrifice to pay the tribute to Baba dev (Hanuman) but in their old villages they offered these sacrifice at Dev Sthan.

It has been found that every tribal family used to worship a *Kuldev/Kuldevi* (family God/Goddess) in their submerged villages. The God was placed at the common area of the village boundary. The people of *falia* and village gathered there at the time of worship. Hence, they had a sense of association and belongingness with the village boundary. But after resettlement, these people brought the image of their *Kuldev/Kuldevi* with them and placed them in their home courtyards. Thus, a sense of unity and belongingness with village boundary has been obliterated in their new place of residences.

III. Conclusion

It can be summed up that the displaced families have made adjustment at new sites in spite of all these difficulties. The government, NGOs and social organisation have made efforts in the process of distribution of compensation money and other activities. In the initial period, they had used the compensation money judiciously for making the provisions of basic needs for survival. The expenditure pattern indicates that highest share of their income is utilised in household items (including food and clothing) and in agricultural activities (fertiliser, cultivation, irrigation etc). Results explain that education and entertainment is least important for them. However, a good share of income is devoted to perform the social and religious functions. Hence, the families have managed to sustain themselves.

About one-third displaced families responded that the choice has not been given to them in the process of selection of resettlement sites. Two to three sites were offered by the government agencies to the maximum number of families. It is pertinent to note that the highest choices to select resettlement site for living have been given to Gujarat families and lowest to the families shifted from Madhya Pradesh. The socio-cultural factors dominated over the economic and geographical factors in the selection of resettlement sites by the affected families in all the resettled villages except Dhefa where economic factors have an edge over other factors. In Gora, geographic and economic factors have played important role in the selection of resettlement sites. A detailed study of the impact of social and cultural factors reveals that majority of the displaced persons preferred to resettle with other separated family members of same *falia* and along with the same community people.

The social belief of the society has been neglected by the government agencies and people are hesitant to adapt to it. The privacy of the individual family members has become obsolete as the room density in a household has decreased after resettlement. The civic amenities and sanitation facilities have been marginally

adopted by the people. These people have reorganised their way of life in social celebration and worship. They have adopted the worshipping of Gods of plain area. However, a common place (village boundary) having been vanished, a sense of association and belongingness with the village boundary is obliterated in their new place of residences. Thus, it can be said socio-cultural change has a mixed response. In nutshell, the people are bound by the social and cultural aspects of the society than the others factors.

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