

**INDIVIDUALIZATION AMONG GURJARS IN AN  
URBAN VILLAGE IN DELHI**

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**INDIVIDUALIZATION AMONG GURJARS IN AN  
URBAN VILLAGE IN DELHI**

by

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*Submitted*

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**Doctor of Philosophy**

**to the**



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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled **Individualization Among Gurjars in an Urban Village in Delhi**, submitted by **Vishesh Pratap Gurjar**, to the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is a bona fide record of the research work done by him under my supervision. The contents of this thesis, in full or in parts, have not been submitted to any other Institute or University for the award of any degree or diploma.

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## Abstract

This research focuses on the process of Individualization among members of a caste group (Gurjars) in an urban village in Delhi. In the research, the process of individualization is understood as the growing separation of the individual from larger collective identities of caste and community, as they search for their new roles in the urbanising villages of Delhi. It also understands the change in individuals' experiences of the life of the community, as they become a part of the growing city that has engulfed the rural and agrarian settings in its fold.

My research helps in understanding the shape of transformation in Indian villages on account of rapid urbanization. It critically examines the importance of the urbanization process for bringing economic benefits without necessarily altering the social dynamics of these erstwhile villages. The research finds out that the village economy changes completely in tune with the nearby cities, however, socially the village identity reinvents itself through various practises like caste pride, place-making and youth culture.

The research also brings out the need to have a gendered understanding of urbanization, since it finds that the benefits of urbanization have been far more for men than women. There exists a huge gap in the liberties and freedom of men vis-à-vis women. The urbanization of villages has been at times constraining for women as the growing city imbues the community with mistrust which leads it to exercise more control over women's lives and freedom.

In studying the community's attempts for revival, the research also reflects on its interactions with politics, a resurgence of caste associations – although in a different form - and the role of social media in building and strengthening caste narratives and identities. The social media objectification of caste identities has shown that caste remains an important political variable in Indian democracy.

## सार

यह शोध दिल्ली के एक शहरी गांव में एक जाति समूह (गुर्जर) के सदस्यों के बीच वैयक्तिकरण की प्रक्रिया पर केंद्रित है। शोध में, वैयक्तिकरण की प्रक्रिया को जाति और समुदाय की बड़ी सामूहिक पहचान से व्यक्ति के बढ़ते अलगाव के रूप में समझा जाता है, क्योंकि वे दिल्ली के शहरीकरण गांवों में अपनी नई भूमिकाओं की खोज करते हैं। यह समुदाय के जीवन के बारे में व्यक्ति के अनुभवों में बदलाव को भी समझता है, क्योंकि वे बढ़ते शहर का हिस्सा बन जाते हैं जिसने ग्रामीण और कृषि सेटिंग्स को अपनी तह में ले लिया है। यह शोध तेजी से शहरीकरण के कारण भारतीय गांवों में परिवर्तन के आकार को समझने में मदद करता है। यह आर्थिक लाभ लाने के लिए शहरीकरण प्रक्रिया के महत्व की आलोचनात्मक रूप से जांच करता है, लेकिन इन पूर्ववर्ती गांवों की सामाजिक गतिशीलता को आवश्यक रूप से बदलने के बिना। शोध से पता चलता है कि गाँव की अर्थव्यवस्था आस-पास के शहरों के साथ पूरी तरह से बदल जाती है, हालाँकि, सामाजिक रूप से गाँव की पहचान जाति गौरव, जगह बनाने और युवा संस्कृति जैसी विभिन्न प्रथाओं के माध्यम से खुद को फिर से स्थापित करती है। यह शोध शहरीकरण की जेंडर समझ की आवश्यकता को भी सामने लाता है, क्योंकि यह पाया गया है कि शहरीकरण के लाभ महिलाओं की तुलना में पुरुषों के लिए कहीं अधिक हैं। महिलाओं की तुलना में पुरुषों की स्वतंत्रता में बहुत बड़ा अंतर है। वास्तव में, गांवों का शहरीकरण कई बार महिलाओं के लिए विवश रहा है क्योंकि बढ़ता हुआ शहर समुदाय को अविश्वास से भर देता है जिससे महिलाओं के जीवन और स्वतंत्रता पर

अधिक नियंत्रण हो जाता है। पुनरुत्थान के लिए समुदाय के प्रयासों का अध्ययन करने में, अनुसंधान राजनीति के साथ इसकी बातचीत, जाति संघों के पुनरुत्थान और कथा निर्माण और जाति पहचान को मजबूत करने में सोशल मीडिया की भूमिका को भी दर्शाता है। जातिगत पहचानों के सोशल मीडिया ऑब्जेक्टिफिकेशन ने दिखाया है कि भारतीय लोकतंत्र में जाति एक महत्वपूर्ण राजनीतिक चर बनी हुई है।

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## Abbreviation

DDA-	Delhi Development Authority
MCD-	Municipal corporation of Delhi
NDMC-	New Delhi Municipal corporation
CPWD-	Central Public Works Department
CSDS-	Centre for the study of Developing Societies
JJ Colony-	Jhuggi-Jhopri colony
INC -	Indian National Congress
DESU-	Delhi Electricity Supply Unit
OBCs-	Other Backward Castes
BJP-	Bhartiya Janta Party

# Map of Madanpur Khadar



Fig.1 Map of Madanpur Khadar (Source: Google Map)