

Study of Situation Analysis for South Asian Peasant and Hookah Smoking Group

Dr. Md. Shairul Mashreque*

Abstract

In recent years, patterns of global tobacco use among youth have changed substantially. Although cigarette use has decreased significantly, alternative forms of tobacco are becoming increasingly popular. Hookahs are water pipes that are used to smoke specially made tobacco that is usually flavored. In recent years, there has been an increase in hookah use around the world, most notably among youth and college students. Similar to cigarettes, hookah smoking delivers the addictive drug nicotine and it is at least as toxic as cigarette smoking. Hookah bars are emerging as an important consideration for smoke free air efforts in many communities. Anthropologists lay a good stress of importance on peasant societies providing a particularly astute analysis of peasant life to Bangladesh rural context. Here the peasant people gossip with hookah. They form groups of practicing hookah smoking. A better understanding of bidi and hookah use among youth is important for the development of future initiatives to prevent tobacco use.

Introduction

Anthropologists lay a good stress of importance on peasant societies providing a particularly astute analysis of peasant life. From the studies we have been given to understand that peasants are farmers. But even within a society that is largely rural with a high percentage of smallholding farmers, there is still substantial social diversity within local society. So there is occupational diversity within rural society in almost every part of China, and a "peasant society" consists of many people who are not themselves "peasants".

The concept of peasant has been defined simply. "A peasant is a smallholding farmer, producing crops for family consumption and for market exchange, using family labor throughout the farming cycle. Peasants live in villages; they engage in face-to-face relations with neighboring farmers; they possess a diverse range of cultural and religious beliefs and practices;

* Department of Public Administration, University of Chittagong, Chittagong, Bangladesh

they fall within a diverse range of social networks and local organizations. The definition of the peasant offered focuses on the occupational or material situation of the individual. It is not surprising, then, that materialist social theory has given particular emphasis to the category of "peasant society" as a potentially explanatory social category. Marxist analysis gives substantial importance to the situation of peasants and workers and other non-Marxist materialist thinkers have done so as well.

The phenomenon of existentialism in the arena of peasantry is the common experience of insecurity. Farmers are more vulnerable than most economic groups to the vagaries of weather, water, and soil. There is the issue of surplus extraction. Farmers are the most numerous group in most traditional societies, the state and other powerful agents in society have an interest in extracting part of the peasant's surplus. This occurs through rent, interest, and taxation. And it is a commonplace that the peasant's life is often held hostage to 'predatory surplus extraction'. Peasants are close to be bottom of the ladder when it comes to power, status, and influence -- so they are vulnerable to exploitation. These considerations suggest that there is in fact an important basis of group mobilization that is associated with one's status as "peasant".

Farmers share an interest in famine relief, drought assistance, and collective action against predatory taxation or rent increases; so their status as peasants may contribute to deliberate efforts aimed at the development of class consciousness and group identity formation. Peasant organizations may emerge that deliberately cultivate political action and consciousness around peasant issues. And this in turn suggests a more complicated answer to the primary question here: one's status as a peasant may not determine one's outlook on the social world or one's mentality; but the struggles associated with making a life within the context of rents, taxation, drought, and famine may lead to the forging of a peasant consciousness that does in fact influence political behavior and solidarity.

Peasant and Hookah Smoking

Peasants are organized into various social groups sharing emotions, pleasure and pains,. Their association with primary social groups like family is a pervasive phenomenon in south Asian villages.

Hookah, a type of water pipe that originated in the Middle East and India, facilitates charcoal-heated air through a tobacco mixture, then through a water-filled chamber and finally through a pipe that allows users to inhale

the vapor. It's typically smoked in groups - hookah bars and cafes are a mainstay in many cities - with the same mouthpiece passed from person to person. It doesn't taste or smell like cigarette smoke, but the common notion that the water used in a water pipe filters out harmful ingredients is false, research suggests.

Oscar Lewis (1990) on the basis of participant observation seemed to trace several factions as hookah smoking groups. He conceptualized peasant political behaviour from positive mindset defining factions as social and political groups formed in defense of their common interests. Each faction while guarding the frontier of its own interests would not like to encroach upon the boundary of others. They are not rival groups. As the villagers are gregarious they love to form association. They gossip in groups sitting together in courtyard sharing hookah. Oscar Lewis alluded to North Indian context in an endless search for village life. This is almost similar to Bangladesh rural context. Here the people gossip with hookah. They may form groups. But these groups are not factions. For smoking biri or sharing hookah there is no need to form groups. The villagers use hookah at home during leisure or use it outside in the paddy field while getting together. This is a common scenario in rural Bangladesh. In fact Lewis's identification of faction with hookah smoking groups seem confusing. We have seen in several occasions that villagers flock together talking to each other smoking like biri or hookah. Even then they cannot be identified as factions (Mashreque 1995).

Smoking in a typical peasant style has not evaporated even in the age of information. Hubble bubble continues to be a part of peasant social life. Using it in small or large gathering is a visible phenomenon in interpersonal relationship; hookah culture is by and large found among the working class in a peasant society. The well off or elite would like to smoke water pipe that releases smoke with fragrance.

Dangers of Hookah Smoking

Similar to cigarettes, hookah smoking delivers the addictive drug nicotine and it is at least as toxic as cigarette smoking. While many hookah smokers may consider this practice less harmful than smoking cigarettes, hookah smoking carries many of the same health risks as cigarettes.

Hookahs are water pipes that are used to smoke specially made tobacco that is usually flavored. They are also called a number of different names, including water pipe, narghile, argileh, shisha, hubble-bubble, and goza.

Hookah smoking is typically practiced in groups, with the same mouthpiece passed from person to person. In recent years, there has been an increase in hookah use around the world, most notably among youth and college students. The survey found that in 2014, about 23% of 12th grade students in the United States had used hookahs in the past year, up from 17% in 2010. In 2014, this rate was slightly higher among boys (25%) than girls (21%). CDC's National Youth Tobacco Survey found that from 2013 to 2014, hookah smoking roughly doubled for middle and high school students in the United States. Current hookah use among high school students rose from 5.2% (770,000) to 9.4% (1.3 million) and for middle school students from 1.1% (120,000) to 2.5% (280,000) over this period. Hookah smoke contains many of the same harmful toxins as cigarette smoke.'

According to a study published in the 2012 issue of CDC's Preventing Chronic Disease (PCD), many hookah smokers believe that smoking a hookah carries less risk of tobacco-related disease than cigarette smoking. However, hookah smoke contains many of the same harmful toxins as cigarette smoke and has been associated with lung cancer, respiratory illness, low birth weight, and periodontal disease. According to a report from the World Health Organization (WHO, 1980), a hookah smoking session may expose the smoker to more smoke over a longer period of time than occurs when smoking a cigarette. Also, due to the method of smoking-including frequency of puffing, depth of inhalation, and length of the smoking session-hookah smokers may absorb higher concentrations of the same toxins found in cigarette smoke.'

- 'The charcoal used to heat tobacco in the hookah increases the health risks by producing smoke that contains high levels of carbon monoxide, metals, and cancer-causing chemicals.
- A typical 1-hour-long hookah smoking session involves 200 puffs, while an average cigarette is 20 puffs. The volume of smoke inhaled during a typical hookah session is about 90,000 milliliters, compared with 500 to 600 milliliters inhaled when smoking a cigarette.
- Using a hookah to smoke tobacco poses a serious potential health hazard to smokers and others exposed to the emitted smoke.'

Awareness Building of Youth About the Dangers

'There has most notably been an increase in hookah use among youth and college students. According to a study published in PCD entitled Opportunities for Policy Interventions to Reduce Youth Hookah Smoking in

the United States, one way to reduce youth hookah use is by educating young people about the harmful health effects associated with hookah smoking. The study suggests requiring warning labels on tobacco products and advertisements. Health organizations echo these suggestions. The WHO's Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation (TobReg) urges consideration of the following public health initiatives to reduce hookah smoking and associated disease:-

- Education of health professionals, regulators, and the public at large is urgently needed about the risks of hookah smoking, including high potential levels of second-hand exposure among children, pregnant women, and others.
- Hookahs and hookah tobacco should be subjected to the same regulations as cigarettes and other tobacco products.
- Hookahs and hookah tobacco should include strong health warnings.
- Claims of harm reduction and safety should be prohibited.
- Misleading labeling, such as "contains 0 MG tar," which may imply safety, should be prohibited.
- Waterpipes should be included in comprehensive tobacco control efforts, including prevention strategies and cessation interventions.
- Hookahs should be prohibited in places consistent with bans on cigarette and other forms of tobacco smoking.'

Conclusion

Hookah is not a safer alternative to smoking cigarettes. Containing nicotine and harmful ingredients, hookah should be avoided, especially among non-smokers and individuals trying to quit. Hubble smoking bubble is an ingredient of smoking in rural areas. This is a pervasive phenomenon. Notwithstanding its popularity as a rural culture tobacco elements contained in both hookkah and water pipe is full of toxic elements. However indigenous knowledge is reflected in preparing hubble bubble and water pipe. Anthropological research in the element of participant observation is important to understand smoking behavior of the peasants. We cannot force the peasants to shun this longstanding habit.

References

Chayanov, A. V, 1966. *The Theory of Peasant Economy*. Edited by Daniel Thorner', B. Kerblay, and R. E. F. Smith. Homewood, III.: Irwin. A major

theoretical work and important synthesis of Russian research from the 1880s to the 1920s.

Desai, Akshayakumar R, 1953. '*Rural Sociology in India*'. 3d ed., rev. & enl. Bombay: Indian Society of Agricultural Economics.

Dore, Ronald P, 1959. '*Land Reform in Japan*'. London and New York: Oxford Univ. Press.

Duby, Georges, 1962. 'L'economie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'occident medieval, France, Angleterre', *Empire*, IXe-XVe siecles. Vol.2

Paris: Aubier, 1990. 'A good account of the peasantry in the medieval world; it reprints in French much source material and has an excellent bibliography'. Eicher, Carl; and Witt, Lawrence (editors) 1964, *Agriculture in Economic Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Fei, Hsiao-Tung, 1939. '1962 Peasant Life in China: A Field Study of Country Life in the Yangtze Valley'. London: Routledge'.

Firth, Raymond W, 1939. '*1965 Primitive Polynesian Economy*. 2d ed. Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press'.