

Abstract

The study aims to investigating the socio-economic transformation and political control under the British colonial rule in the Gujrat district (1849-1947). It argues that the political control affected the socio-economic transformation of the agrarian society of the district Gujrat during British colonial rule. Therefore, the different aspects of transformation had differential impact on local communities of the district under British rule. The district Gujrat had been area of strategic, geographical, political and economic significance throughout the recorded history especially during the British annexation of Punjab in 1849. This study focuses on the history of Gujrat through local historical approach with the theme of political and administrative control. It focuses on the socio-economic condition and political situation in Gujrat district at the time of British annexation, and covers the district through different ages. This study examines the process of socio-economic transformation which enforced through political control and administrative development. It also highlights the administrative factors behind the process of existing progress and transformation prospects that contributed in the economic developments. This study emphasizes the socio-economic development through broad colonial policy of collaboration and power politics of colonization. This research focuses on the British policy to run the local administration in which the theory of collaboration incorporated through the patron-client relationship. By using this theory, it provides details on the existing strength of collaborators for the British rule. It revealed substantial development occurred as two-sided process of change in the district. This process proved that collaboration was “a dynamic two-way process, rather than, as it is often portrayed, a top down, one way relationship.” Further, sheds light on different aspects of socio-economic change and the role of abundance of collaborators in transformation of the district under British rule. This study initiates the British policy and several circumstances that promoted the British to rely on the Muslim jagirdars for support and engage into power bargain with two actors that drove subsequent power politics for political structure. Power in rural areas of Gujrat was exercised by Muslim jagirdars and they also played role of active collaborators for British rule.