

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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Community studies made by the social scientists during the last 50 years provide a wide range of knowledge into the life and social structure of concerned countries. These studies were conducted to fill in the gap to provide the society in general and academic world in particular the nature of social system and social changes which are taking place in the contemporary world. Although like any other scholarly work, community studies received some criticism from the social scientists on some point of view or the other, it is a fact that these studies constitute valuable contribution to the social, Political, economic and religious life of the community concerned.

The pattern of community studies in India has a different focus. While scholars in other countries chose for investigation a small or big town, the scholars in India centered around villages.¹ This is natural because more than 70 percent of the population are distributed in villages.

It is a fact that a vast amount of literature is available on different types of community in villages in India. But there seems to be a gap in the knowledge regarding some of the backward communities, especially nomadic communities.

The present one is an attempt on such a community called Gosavi settled in Umbraj of Satara district. The study aims to know about their background living and economic conditions, cultural aspects, their political involvement and opinions

regarding certain social issues.

It is a descriptive study delimited by its research design and basically does not aim at diagnostic explanations. However, the findings as summarized in this chapter may serve as useful guidelines for further studies of nomadic communities, and may provide hypothesis for future studies.

6.1 DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES -

In the first place, it can be seen that a majority (82.66 %) of the respondents are males, whereas female constitute only to 17.34 % showing a male domination as head in the family.

The bulk of the respondents fall in the middle-aged group i.e. 49.34 % followed by younger generation (37.34 %) .

Regarding the sex composition of the respondents' family members, females outnumber males. The same is true in all the age categories. In general, large proportion of the respondents' family members are in the productive age as old age constitute only little above than 9 % . The rate of illiteracy among the Gosavis is deplorably low as only 22.66 % of the males are educated. Among the educated, nearly 60 % have only attained primary education. Those having reached college level or technical education constitute only to 20 % . As far as the distribution of the educational status of the respondents' family majority (68.27 %) fall in the illiterate category. The rate of illiteracy is more apparent among the females.

A greater proportion (68 %) of the males are married, while majority (9.34 %) among females are widow. It is notable

that remarriage is permissible for males, as 5.32 percent of the males have remarried. Most (70.66 %) of them live in joint families, and majority (59.33 %) have family size more than 4 members.

6.2. LIVING CONDITIONS -

The living condition is the main factor that reveals the status of living of the population. Housing denotes the status of life style. Our data disclose that an overwhelming majority (84.66 %) possess only kutchra houses with one (88 %) or two (61 %) rooms with minimum standards. The houses are mostly built of either mud or bricks (68 %).

Though they possess houses of their own they lack facilities and basic amenities like bathrooms, electricity, water connections and water closets. Most of the houses (56 %) are without electricity. Those possessing separate bathrooms constitute only to a negligible 49.34 % that too of poor quality, built of thatch, separate water connections are found only in 28 % of the houses. They fetch water from public taps. Most of them (97.34 %) lack water closets and they use open fields as toilets.

6.3 ECONOMIC ASPECT -

The level of economic equality and independence indicate the social status of the people in any society. Economic need compels poor people to join any kind of job.

As regards the possession of property of the respondents, they do not own any thing other than the house, that too in the land provided by the Government.

As far as the occupations the respondents are concerned, there is no uniformity in their choice of occupation. They venture into any work which fetches them income. Majority (34.66 %) of them pursue work for wages, while 31.44 % are engaged in small business like stove-repairing, umbrella repairing and collecting scrap. Some 6 % of them are engaged in fishing. A notable feature is that those who cannot get work, even, go for begging (21.34 %). However a small percentage (6.66 %) has entered into services. It is also found that their occupations change according to the seasons.

Since the respondents are involved in less prestigious jobs their total family income do not exceed more than Rs.1000/- per month in most (44.66 %) cases. Despite the fact, their income is less our data shows^s that a majority (80.66 %) have cultivated the habit of saving. It is also notable that these respondents save mostly either in Banks (51.24 %) or in Bhishi (43.8 %) . But due to their irregular and unsteady income most (54.54 %) of them save only between Rs.50-100 per month.

A great proportion of the respondents are found to be in debt and most of them have fallen prey to the money lenders, for exorbitant interest rates. This perhaps is to meet some urgent purpose like marriage or some other important functions.

6.4 CULTURAL ASPECTS -

Every society has its own culture and it plays a significant role in the life of the people. The same holds true as far as the Gosavis are also concerned. It is found that the two important festivals they celebrate on large scale are Holi

and Dasara. All the respondents disclosed that they celebrate festivals jointly with their relatives and community people indicating their cohesive nature.

Regarding their marriage system, there is tradition of giving bride-price to the bride's father. To understand their present outlook regarding acceptance of bride-price, they invariably opined that they accept bride-price. It is also found that these people accept only money and do not accept it in any other form.

Where a good majority (73.33 %) approve divorce, none seems to approve widow remarriage.

It is evident that these respondents lag behind in life and are leading a life within the circle of their own tradition.

The main means of entertainment of Gosavis are watching movies, chitchatting, and gambling.

6.5 POLITICAL LIFE -

As regards the political life of the respondents none of them belong to any specific political party. It is evident that their wandering nature has prevented them to be in any political party in any area, as disclosed by them.

Though all the respondents are aware of their voting right, they do not vote willingly as more than 70 percent have voted due to some influence in the recent election.

Except a negligible 0.68 % one has contested and has been member in the Gram-Panchayat. However this representation indicates the gradual change taking place and their interest in

uplifting their community.

6.6 OPINIONS -

Our data regarding the opinions of the respondents show that little change has taken place in their outlook.

Though a majority (55.24 %) have favourable opinion about education, still some (44.66 %) are ignorant of the benefit of education, showing the value of education has not percolated to a greater extent.

A vast majority (65 %) have opinioned that family planning is bad. Similarly majority of them have a negative opinion regarding doury system. It is also notable that all the respondents formed a negative opinion towards inter-caste marriages.

Though majority of them favour regarding services, (82%) majority oppose female's venturing into services.

The findings of the present study depicts that the living condition of the Gosavi community is not at all satisfactory. Many of the existing houses are in very poor condition and do not satisfy health, safety, convenience and socio-psychological standards. A large percentage of the existing dwelling units does not have satisfactory ventilation, water and sanitary facilities, sufficient space and privacy many are dilapidated and renovation for replacement is long overdue.

As the world Bank Paper rightly observes ' Housing has substantial social benefits including the welfare effects of shelter from the elements, sanitation facilities, services,

improved health and education and better access to income, earning opportunities can lead to higher productivity and earnings for low income families. It is thus for sound economic reasons that after food housing is typically the largest item of household expenditure for poor families and that they are willing to go to great lengths to obtain housing at locations with access to employment, even if this means incurring the risks of illegal squatting.²

However housing providing these socio-economic benefits, for this community is a far distant dream. They dwell in unsafe and insanitary settlements where the basic facilities are conspicuous by their absence or chronic inadequacy.

Occupations are integral parts of society and various occupations influence the social organization. The occupational structure in a society is largely reflective of its social organization.

According to Alba M. Edwards,

" The occupation of the people influence directly their lives, their customs, their institutions, indeed their members"³ The present study indicates that a large number of Gosavis are engaged in low paid occupations. These socially backward and economically poor sections possess very limited capacity to face the uncertainties of an unfamiliar cultural setting.

According to Arthur Salz⁴ " Occupation as an activity determines the social position of an individual. In general the socio-economic condition of their community is far below standard.

The findings also disclose that the respondents have more adherence towards their traditions.

The political participation of the respondents is not encouraging. Most of them show disinterest in political participation. However a gradual change is observed as some representation is made recently on behalf of their community in Gram-Panchayat.

Regarding the opinion of certain social issues most of them are still ignorant and stick to their traditional views.

In general, after 47 years of independence and despite the efforts by the Government to uplift the backward communities, the Gosavis are far behind on the path of development, especially, when compared with other sections of Indian Society.

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