

CHAPTER-VI

SOCIALISATION AND EDUCATION OF THE  
MENDHE DHANGARS

1. Introduction.
2. Parents and Children
3. Descripline and Authority
4. Education.

CHAPTER-VI

SOCIALISATION AND EDUCATION OF THE

MENDHE DHANGARS

1) Introduction :

'Socialisation' is the process by which man learns the ways of a given society or social group, so that he can function within it.

Most of the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka, are poor. So, after a certain period they give boiled rice to their children. The motherless child, who is considered to be dependent on milk, gets simply boiled rice and water if the parents are not economically well-off. There is no daily bath prescribed for the babies, it is completely dependent on habits of the mother.

Most of the male children live naked upto the age of 6/7 years. However, a few children may wear Khadi or coloured shirts and shorts. But they wear clothes on festive occasions. The boys above the age of 9/11 years help their parents in guarding the sheep and goats, and other things. The girls below the age of 9/10 years assist their mothers as well as their brothers and fathers in the same items. After completing the age of 13 or above, if she is married, she assists her mother-in-law in daily domestic

as well as agricultural chores. The boys pass their childhood in playing with their friends, of the same social and economic level. The illiteracy of their parents and their incapability to give them education makes them remain illiterate. Only 10% of the children of the Mendhe Dhangars go to school.

The actual social position of the Mendhe Dhangars may be gathered from the above. The members of the Mendhe Dhangar caste help one another not only in village affairs but also in their personal affairs. There are no separate wells and bathing ghats for the Mendhe Dhangars. All the Mendhe Dhangars of Hatkanangale Taluka, are allowed to enter into the temples and worship there. The Mendhe Dhangars of Hatkanangale Taluka, are mostly influenced by their god Biroba. Mendhe Dhangars in Ghunaki village are influenced by their god 'Mangoba' and in Pattankodoli village, Mendhe Dhangars influenced by their god 'Biroba'. The Mendhe Dhangars make offerings of brown coconuts, flowers, sweets and betel leaves to the deities. Lastly the Mendhe Dhangars sacrifice goats, sheep which are tended specially as sacrificial offerings.

The houses of the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka are small in comparison to these of other upper castes. Generally, the walls of the houses are not plastered but those who are somewhat of good economic condition keep their houses neat and clean.

All the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka, are non-vegetarians. The Mendhe Dhangar's economic condition is very low and their traditional occupation is not so profitable. That is why they cannot raise their social standard. During my investigations, I got only eleven families in the village of Pattankodoli and Ghunaki, which possess land. They have about eight acres of land. They have totally changed their traditional occupation. They have exclusively taken to cultivation. Their children are studying in school.

## 2) Parents and Children :

Generally, the father is more strict in the case of the Mendhe Dhangars. Mother is also strict in the case of female child. She is directly under the control of her mother. The grown-up girls also take care of their small sisters or brothers or brothers' children, when the mother works in the fields or in houses. When the mother is working her daughter or even the son has to look after the younger ones. The joint family is guided by the oldest male member of the family. The Mendhe Dhangar parents treat the youngsters well. If the grand fathers or grand mothers are alive, their control over the children or younger generation is only nominal. That is why in a joint family the responsibility to control the children directly or indirectly rests on the parents.

Among the Mendhe Dhangars it is also found that the male child is loved more by the members of the family than the female child, because the male child is essential to continue the generation. But some members of the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka, are of the opinion that both children are essential.

#### 4) Discipline and Authority :

Only a few families of the Mendhe Dhangars are literate and well-to-do and follow strict rules of regulations of discipline. Parents rarely punish their children for doing wrong.

There are certain causes, which are responsible for making the children weak in all respects. They are neither physically sound nor mentally alert. Following are the fundamental weaknesses which stand in the ways of the progress.

##### 1. Illiteracy :

Most of the people belonging to the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka, are illiterate. So they are unable to give proper training to their children. An illiterate parents can neither make future plans for his children, nor can he nourish them property. The Mendhe Dhangar people do not show keen interest in educating their children.

## 2. Property :

The Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka, are poor, they cannot fulfil their desires. Poverty is a frustrating and humbling factor. So, they cannot provide their children with balanced diet, i.e. milk, food, fruit and also fine clothes.

## 3. Environment :

Heredity and environment alike tend to keep the Mendhe Dhangars backward. Like education and economic condition environment also plays a vital part in shaping the personality.

It was really a matter of concern that out of 50 Mendhe Dhangars informants 40 were illiterate. Therefore, these are the main causes which are responsible for making their children weak in all aspects.

## 5) Education :

### Introduction :

Education is a process of socialisation. As a result of this process, the best is drawn out of the child. It prepares the young boys and girls for life. It is the process of giving to the body and soul all the perfection of which they are susceptible, as Plato has described. Mahatma Gandhi has defined education in the following words.

"By education I mean an alround drawing out of the best in child and man, body, mind and spirit."

Education, therefore, has a very important task to perform. On one hand it educates and prepares for life and on the other hand it trains the mind, body and spirit of young man, according to the objectives of the society.

Education is important for all but it is very important for rural people. If village people are properly educated the majority of the people of this country shall be properly educated. They shall be able to know, what is expected of them and what way, they can be useful members of the society. It is important for the Mendhe Dhangars because of the following factors :

- 1) Backwardness of the economic life.
- 2) To remove their superstitions.
- 3) For their progress and reconstruction.
- 4) To make the people human and to heighten their mental and social status.
- 5) To cultivate the idea of self-help.
- 6) To improve the life of the people economically, socially and morally.

The benefits to be derived from education are realised by the Mendhe Dhangars also, because they note that those who are educated are engaged in some service or gainful

occupation and are leading comfortable lives. They also realise that an educated person may also get a good position among his fellow villagers.

Despite their good feelings about education they are, however, forced not to educate their children. Generally because of wretched economic conditions they cannot send their children to schools. The Mendhe Dhangars of Hatkanangale Taluka are facing a number of problems and all problems are concentrated in their poverty.

If the Mendhe, Dhangar's children go to school, their 'Mendhe' work and agricultural work will suffer. If their children were put to school they would not be able to help their parents either in their traditional occupation or in doing similar chores to supplement the family income.

In the Pattankodoli and Ghunaki villages of the Hatkanangale Taluka, the following table shows that the literate and illiterate people out of 50 families :

Sr. No.		Male	Female	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Illiterate	43	64	27	15	149
2.	1 to 4th Std.	4	6	18	7	35
3.	5 to 7th Std.	11	4	5	2	22
4.	8 to 10th Std.	13	2	10	1	26
5.	11th to above	2	1	-	-	3
	Total :	73	77	60	25	235



The above table shows that most of the Mendhe Dhangars illiterate.

The Mendhe Dhangars are not in favour of female education. Informants listed the following four reasons for sending their male children and colleges.

- 1) To make them a better men.
- 2) For social and cultural adjustment.
- 3) To get employment.
- 4) For the progress of their caste.

However, some of the Mendhe Dhangars are in favour of giving primary education to their girls, just enough for them to be able to write letters, but they are opposed to higher education for the girls.