

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present work is outcome of rigorous field work. The work records and presents a new approach to the analysis of the social, economic, political, cultural and religions aspects of lives of the still unexplored Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka of Kolhapur District.

Dhangar community in the Maharashtra lives in the hilly area and has to do the business of tending the sheep, collecting fire wood, honey, berry etc. However, it is not forest areas. As the above activities of the Dhangar community, are not paying it sufficiently, it remained backward in all fields.

In Kolhapur District, Mendhe Dhangars live near about 200 villages. The Mendhe Dhangars of the Kolhapur District, do the business of tending the sheep and goats, while weaving and spinning wool is their traditional occupation. I have selected Hatkanangale Taluka for in depth study, which is in Kolhapur District. In Hatkanangale Taluka, the Mendhe Dhangars population is large and this area is quite backward economically, socially, politically, culturally and educationally.

There are number of problems of the Mendhe Dhangars. These and other issues regarding the problem of the Mendhe Dhangars have been illustrated in the light of the field data collected and analysed.

It is quite surprising, despite the repeated request made to the Commissions appointed by the State and Central Government, Dhangar community is not included in the list of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, to raise their standard and to make them settled.

Under its order No. O.B.C. 1467/M/Secretariate Extension House, Bombay-32 dated 13-10-1967, the Maharashtra Government declared the list of the backward castes and sub-caste. In 180 other backward castes and sub-castes as declared above the Dhangar community is also included. Now, the Dhangar community appeals to consider this seriously and to include Dhangar caste and all its sub-castes in the Scheduled Tribes.

This present study is an humble attempt to focus the attention of the readers to the current and grown-up problems relating to the Mendhe Dhangars. The main purpose of this comprehensive survey is to know the social, life, economic life, political life, religious life and other aspects of the Mendhe Dhangars. The present study is entitled as Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka - A Sociological Study, was undertaken by me as a part of the requirement for the degree of 'Master of Philosophy' of, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, with the specialisation in Sociology. The present study is confined to the Mendhe Dhangars in Hatkanangale Taluka of Kolhapur District.

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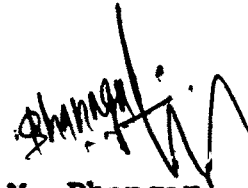
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