

CHAPTER FOUR

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DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FOUR  
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

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#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION:

The data collected from the sample of 100 respondents (Devdasis and Jogatas) through the medium of a structured interview schedule is being presented in a tabular form in this Chapter. The interpretation of this data is also being offered below each Table with the help of the background information collected through secondary sources.

#### 4.2 DATA TABULATION AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 4.1  
Sex-wise Classification of Respondents.

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Females (Devdasis)	83
Males (Jogatas)	15
Eunuchs (Jogatas pretending to be Devdasis)	2
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

The above Table shows that among the sample respondents, the percentage of female Devdasis (83%) is considerably more than that of the males (15%) or eunuchs (2%). It is thus clear that in majority of cases, women are the victims of the Devdasi tradition; though sometimes men also fall prey to it.

Table 4.2  
Caste-wise Classification of the Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Mahar (Scheduled Caste-SC)	53
Maratha	30
Matang (SC)	10
Gurav (Other Backward Castes-OBC)	2
Sutar (OBC)	1
Dhanagar (OBC)	1
Parit (OBC)	1
Khatik (SC)	1
Bhoi (Notified Tribe-NT)	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

It is seen from the above Table that in the sample, the respondents (both Devdasis and Jogatas) belonging to Mahar community (a Scheduled Caste) predominate with 53% share, followed by 30% Marathas and 10% (another Scheduled Caste). These three dominant groups are followed in lesser numbers by 2% Guravs, 1% each Bhoi, Sutar, Khatik, Dhanagar and Parit - a mix of Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Castes and Notified Tribes. Overall, 70% of the respondents belonged to the socially and economically backward castes.

It must be explained here that Marathas is not a backward community in Maharashtra. Still, it was found that a significant number of respondents belonged to it, because of certain specific reasons that are explained in later on.

Table 4.3  
Age-wise Classification of Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Upto 18 years	2
18 to 28 years	19
29 to 38 years	24
39 to 48 years	18
Above 48 years	37
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

The above Table classifies the respondents according to their age-groups. It is seen that 'above 48 years' age-group dominates (37%) in the sample, followed, more or less, by the same percentage (19% and 18%) of 18-28 years and 39-48 years age-groups.

One may actually discern a trend in these figures. The 'above 48-years' age-group had joined Devdasi tradition almost three decades ago. Since then considerable social awakening has occurred and the number of new girls joining the Devdasi tradition has certainly tapered off. The sudden jump in the age-group of 29-38 years could be attributed to the half-hearted effort about 10 years to eradicate the Devdasi tradition through monetary incentives. These respondents were lured into joining the Devdasi tradition in the first place because of the promised Government grant to abandon the tradition. But having once been branded as a Devdasi/Jogata, it was really difficult for them to leave it.

Table 4.4  
Occupation-wise Classification of Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Farming and Agricultural Labour	37
Begging Jogawa and Agri.Labour	25
Begging Jogawa	23
Vegetable Vending	4
Devotional Singing	3
Work for Devdasi Liberation Movement	1
No occupation	3
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

The above Table shows the occupation-wise classification of the respondents. Despite the vow taken to support oneself and his/her dependents through alms, it is not that all the respondents have remained true to it. Many of them are engaged in economically gainful activities. About 37% respondents are engaged in farming and agricultural labour. Another 25% follow dual occupation of begging as a Devdasi/Jogata and agricultural labour. However, 23% respondents are exclusively engaged in their avowed occupation of begging Jogawa. Four percent respondents are small scale vegetable vendors and 3% respondents earned enough through the singing of Goddess Yallamma's devotional songs. Another 3% being physically handicapped or aged, did not follow any occupation and one Devdasi had chosen Devdasi Liberation Movement as her occupation. Interestingly, and ironically, no respondent was

found to be working as 'domestic help', meaning that because of the reputation of Devdasis, no household dares employ them.

Table 4.5  
Annual Income-wise Classification of Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Rs. 5,000 to 10,000	81
Rs.10,000 to 20,000	10
Rs.20,000 to 30,000	3
Rs.30,000 to 40,000	1
Rs.40,000 & above	1
No Income	4
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 4.5 gives the annual income-wise classification of the respondents. It is seen that an overwhelming percentage (81%) respondents survive on the annual income of between Rs.5,000 and 10,000, i.e. below the poverty line. Their life indeed is very miserable. Another 10% earn between Rs.10,000 and 20,000 and can manage independent sustenance. The 3% respondents who have an annual income of Rs.20,000-30,000 earned it through vegetable vending business while 1 (1%) Devdasi earned more than Rs.40,000 annually through the singing of the Goddess Yallamma's devotional songs on festival days. Lastly, 4% respondents had no income at all, being aged and physically handicapped.

It is quite clear from the above Table that inspite of dedicating their life to the Goddess, the respondents could not improve their worldly lot.

Table 4.6  
Classification of Respondents according to the  
causes for becoming a Devdasi/Jogata

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Family Tradition	45
Family Pledge	25
Appearance of a 'Jat'	12
Physical Disability	11
Family Poverty	4
Chronic Diseases	3
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 4.6 above ranks the respondents according to their individual causes for becoming a Devdasi/Jogata. Family tradition (45%) has emerged as the largest cause. Family pledge of dedicating atleast one child to the Goddess Yallama had driven 25% respondents to Devdasi tradition, while 12% respondents were forced into becoming a Devdasi/Jogata because of an appearance of a 'Jat' in their hair. Another 11% respondents were physically handicapped and thought that adopting Devdasi tradition would 'authorize' them to beg for survival. Same was the line of thinking taken by 4% respondents who joined the tradition because of family poverty. Lastly, 3% respondents had joined in under the belief that dedicating themselves to the Goddess Yallamma would cure them of their chronic diseases. A more fuller explanation of these causes is being offered hereunder:

1. Family Tradition:

In the study area, many a family worships the Goddess Yallamma out of fear that if they deviate from the worship, the Goddess might set her curse on the family. Pledging atleast one child to the the Goddess from generation to generation is part of this fear and many households suffer from this tradition.

2. Family Pledge:

A family pledges a child to the Goddess to cure it of some sickness, to avert a misfortune or just to preserve family wealth. Little do they realize that the pledge is more cruel than a bloody human sacrifice.

3. Appearance of a 'Jat':

Appearance of a 'Jat' (greasy and hardened bunch of hair) is one of the contributory cause to sustain the Devdasi tradition. Appearance of a Jat is perceived as the summons of the Goddess, though it appears because of unkempt hair and unclean habits. In reality, it was found that some Devdasis had cut off their Jat, some had never had it while some others had purposefully cultivated it.

4. Physical Disability:

Physical disability is another cause that brings some individuals into Devdasi tradition. Particularly, a physically handicapped/mentally retarded child is turned into a Devdasi/Jogata by his family in the hope that the child would be able to maintain himself by begging Jogawa.

Sometimes, a Yallamma's devotee in his/her possessed trance declares that the physical/mental disability of a child





A BLIND DEVADASA WITH  
A ' PARADI '



A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED YOUNG DEVADASA  
WITH A BAG OF ' JOGAWA '

is due to the wrath of the Goddess and the child must be offered to the Goddess to appease her. The poor kid does not understand a thing, nonetheless, it is forced into Devdasi tradition. At other times, a mentally/physically retarded person from a rich land-holding family is forced into Devdasi tradition to deprive him of the family property. Because the ethics of the tradition dictate that a Devdasi or Jogata does not have property rights. Since he/she cannot be married off to the Goddess, his/her worldly offsprings are not legitimate heirs to his share in the ancestral property.

5. Family Poverty:

Rural poverty is another significant cause that helps to maintain Devdasi tradition. Awhile ago, begging 'Jogawa' in the name of the Goddess Yallamma used to be a socially sanctioned means of earning a livelihood. People gave alms out of Goddess Yallamma's fear and quite a few Devdasis/Jogatas were attracted towards this tradition because of the social sanction and the ease in begging.

6. Chronic Diseases:

Among illiterate and ignorant people, it used to be believed that skin-diseases (scabbies, eczema and leprosy) appeared because of the Goddess Yallamma's wrath. The sufferers therefore became Devdasis/Jogatas in the belief that if they dedicate their life to the Goddess, they might be cured.

This litany of the causes that produce Devdasis/Jogatas makes it amply clear that superstition and rural poverty among the socially and economically backward classes are the underlying causes for the continuation of the evil tradition.

Table 4.7  
Age-wise Appearance of 'Jat' in Female Devdasis

Age (in Years)	Number of Devdasis	Percentage Range
1 to 5	17	80.95
6 to 10	1	4.76
11 to 25	2	9.52
26 to 50	1	4.76
50 & above	nil	nil
<u>Total</u>	21	100.00

For preparing the above Table, 21 female Devdasis with 'Jat' were interviewed. It is seen that in the case of 17 (80.95%) Devdasis, the 'Jat' had made appearance when they were less than 5 years old; for 1 Devdasi each, the 'Jat' had appeared when they were between the age of 6-10 years and 26-50 years; and for 2 Devdasis, it had appeared when they were between the age of 11-25 years. Put differently, the Table shows that in the rural poor households, children, particularly girls are not much cared about. 'Jat' is the result of dirt getting into the hair and then hardening there. Unkempt hair soon develop a 'Jat' because of uncleanness. In some cases, childhood habits continue in adulthood also and a 'Jat' appears.

Even when a 'Jat' appears, instead of cutting it off promptly, superstition makes these people to interpret as the summons of the Goddess Yallamma and soon the girl/women is set on the road to Devdasi-hood.

Table 4.8  
Education-wise Classification of the Respondents

Particulars	Percentages
Illiterate	86
Upto Primary School	10
Secondary School	4
Higher Secondary School	nil
College	nil
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

The above Table shows that 86% respondents were totally illiterate, only 10% respondents had received primary education and another 4% upto secondary school level. None of them was educated upto higher secondary school or college level. It is quite obvious that education takes one away from superstition and more educated a person is, more vehemently he would resist the attempt to make him join the tradition. The proponents of the system, therefore, first ensure that their gullible victims do not even have a whiff of education.

Table 4.9 (on the following page) shows the different addictions among the respondents.

The Table reveals that majority of the respondents are addicted to Pan/Tobacco chewing while 3% were addicted to alcohol, 1% each to snuff and Beedi/Cigarette smoking. One male Jogata was found to have addicted to all the three vices. The reasons for the addiction were advanced as: frustration, bad company and imitation of others.

Table 4.9  
Addiction-wise Classification of the Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Pan/Tobacco Chewing	51
Alcohol	3
Snuff	1
Tobacco smoking	1
Tobacco & Alcohol Together	1
Unaddicted	43
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

Significantly, 43% respondents were not addicted to anything, these were females and though initiated into Devdasi tradition, were leading normal family life. They, of course, went begging Jogawa every Tuesday and Friday from five houses.

#### OBSEVANCE OF FASTS:

Devdasi tradition and observance of fasts are inseparable. About 93% respondents were found to observe fasts on every Tuesday and Friday by sheet habit, being the days dedicated to the Goddess Yallamma.

#### INITIATION WEDDING:

The Devdasi's ritual wedding to the Goddess Yallamma is called 'Zulawa' or 'Paat'. By tradition, the wedding takes place at the main shrine of the Goddess at Soundatti. It was revealed that about 86% respondents had spent between Rs.500 to 1000/- on this wedding and the rest between Rs.1000 to 4000/-. The major item of expenditure, of course, was the wedding clothes

and it was revealed that 63% respondents had raised this money through borrowings and 1% through selling their personal ornaments and jewellery. For the rest, the family had contributed this money.

#### MEDICAL TREATMENT IN SICKNESS:

During the survey, it was revealed that about 58% of respondents go to doctors for treatment of sickness. In their improved attitude, they do not believe that illness is the result of Goddess Yallamma's wrath. About 12% respondents believed in the doctor's treatment simultaneous with superstitious measures (holy ash, holy water, animal sacrifice, etc.), and 1% respondents depended exclusively on superstitious measures.

#### 'Possessed' Trance:

'Possessed' is a self-induced trance, in which a possessed Devdasi/Jogata maintains that he/she has no control over his utterances and hence, these are divine, particularly from the Goddess Yallamma. It was found that even today, about 10% female Devdasis regularly get 'possessed'. Another 3% used to be 'possessed' earlier but have given it up now. It may, therefore, be concluded that 90% respondents do not believe in the idea of being 'possessed' by a divine entity.

#### 'Jogawa' Begging:

Devdasis/Jogatas ritually go around begging the 'Jogawa', to which they are authorized by the tradition. But there are different motivations behind it. About 65% of them beg **Jogawa**

in fulfilment of their vow. The remaining 35% do not keep up the vow because of their better financial situation as also because of the contemptuous attitude of the society particularly towards Devdasi beggars.

Devdasi Wedding:

By tradition, male Jogatas and female Devdasis are supposed to be the spouse of the Goddess Yallamma. In spite of this divine alliance, many of them also tie the worldly knot by taking on a human spouse, for which permission is granted by the leading members of the Devdasi community.

Table 4.10  
Divine and Worldly Marriages of Respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Divine marriage with the Goddess	77
Inter-marriage between a male Jogata and female Devdasi	2
Male Jogata marrying a common woman	7
Female Devdasi marrying a common man	14
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

From the above Table, it is clear that majority of the male Jogatas and female Devdasis (77%) are satisfied with their divine marriage to the Goddess Yallamma and do not enter into a worldly alliance for the fear that it may invoke the wrath of the Goddess. Some Jogatas and Devdasis, however, inter-marry or even marry commonfolk. As these are treated as the 'second marriage', it is termed as 'Zulawa' or 'Paat' and are celebrated with much less pomp and gaiety than the original marriage with the Goddess.



Table 4.11  
Dress Code of Respondents

Particulars	Percentages		
	Males	Females	Eunuchs
Sari and Blouse	6	83,	2
Shirt and Trousers	7	nil	nil
Shirt and Dhoti	2	nil	nil
<u>Total</u>	15	83	2

It is seen that Sari and blouse is the common dress among female Devdasis. They also use jewellery and ornaments in addition to their traditional 'Darshan', and apply turmeric powder on the forehead, together with a 'Kunkum-tilak', symbolic of a surviving Hindu marriage. They also use earrings, bracelets and bangles.

Some Jogatas also wear sari and blouse, use cosmetics and wear jewellery and ornaments just like female Devdasis. They wear silver anklets ('Painjans'), nose-rings and nose-pieces. Some even dress quite fashionably as a woman, painstakingly remove moustache and beard. Facial cosmetics and nail varnishes complete the picture, but their over-acting as a woman is a dead give-away.

The male Jogatas who use normal male dress also tend to act and behave like a woman, inspite of maintaining their masculine appearance.

Table 4.12  
Offsprings of the Respondents

Particulars	With Children	Child-less	Percentage
Male Jogatas	8	7	15
Female Devdasis	52	31	83
Eunuchs	2	-	2
<u>Total:</u>	62	38	100

For a female Devdasi, it is immaterial to marry a worldly husband to beget children. In the sample, out of 83 Devdasis, 52 had conceived children, while 31 were as yet unconceived or barren. Out of 15 male Jogatas, 8 had fathered children while 7 were as yet childless. Interestingly, even eunuchs were found to have children. There are two possible explanations for this: either he became a eunuch after fathering children or his wife conceived children from other persons.

Table 4.13  
Classification of Respondents according to Spouse

Particulars	Spoused	Spouseless	Total	Percentage
Jogata (Male)	7	8	15	37.5
Devdasi (Female)	6	17	23	57.5
Eunuchs	2	-	-	5.0
<u>Total</u>	17	25	40	100.0

Among the respondents, 57.5% female Devdasis were unmarried (had not taken a worldly husband). These unattached Devdasis are exploited sexually and create children with unknown fathers. The child also uses mother's name, for

example, Ranjana Yallawwa Kamble. The story behind eunuch becoming a father, as stated earlier, is that his wife is used by others or he becomes a eunuch after begetting his children.

With this, we come to the end of the data profiling the respondents (male/eunuch Jogatas and female Devdasis). The picture that emerges is of human beings overwhelmed by an evil tradition and both exploited and rejected by the society. The sad part is that though many inside realize their own precarious situation and vileness of the Devdasi tradition, they also are desperate to mobilize new initiates into it for meeting their own petty ends.

It was against this background that back in 1980's many socially-aware individuals pressured the Government into initiating certain, though tentative, measures for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Devdasis. Accordingly, Government agencies/departments implemented a few schemes in this behalf. The following Tables take a review of the situation.

Table 4.14  
Beneficiaries of Devdasi Welfare/Rehabilitation Schemes  
among the respondents

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Beneficiaries	27
Applied for Benefits	15
Ignorant of Benefits	3
Stopped the Benefits	2
Non-Beneficiaries	52
<u>Total:</u>	100

Among the 100 respondents, 27 respondents were found to have been availing the benefits of Devdasi welfare/rehabilitation schemes promoted by the Government and implemented through some voluntary organizations. Another 15 had applied for the benefits and their cases were pending consideration. About 2% Devdasis who earlier were recipients of the benefits had stopped receiving them and about 3% Devdasis were not even aware of these welfare/rehabilitation schemes.

But a majority of the Devdasis were not benefitted from these welfare/rehabilitation schemes. The reason could be that their requests have been turned down on technical grounds or that the organizations have fallen short in their out reach.

These schemes are being described in brief one by one:

1. DEVDAASI MARRIAGE ASSISTANCE SCHEME:

The Devdasi Marriage Assistance Scheme allows a grant of Rs.10,000 each for her legal marriage so that she may have a happy married life and may live respectably. With this money, she may also run a small business after her legal marriage to earn an independent living. In the study area, during the period 1988 to 1991, only 2% Devdasis had taken this opportunity to settle down after their marriage. The researcher's personal investigation, however, brought out that many of these beneficiaries have remained superstitious as ever; they feel that the government grant had been the sole result of the Goddess Yallamma's blessing and they perform 'Jagran' (nightly worship of the Goddess which is a costly affair) to show their gratitude. They also visit Soundatti for

Yallamma's fair and waste much money on buying 'Pearawas' (a dress presented to other 'Jogatas' and 'Devdasis') Thus, this grant is not at all used for the purpose for which it is sanctioned. A few Devdasis indeed have, settled in their married life with the help of this grant. Some have invested the money into cattle and such other small scale businesses and are earning upto Rs.500/- out of it. In any case, it has not picked up as yet because:

1. it was introduced only six years earlier;
2. aged Devdasis cannot avail it; and
3. rejection of assistance applications is very high.

In another twist to the situation, some young men who married Devdasis in the hope of getting this grant have now deserted them because of the non-receipt of the grant. These women are again leading the same old Devdasi life.

#### THE DEVDASI PENSION SCHEME:

Devdasis have no stable source of income and it is essential to extend them economic support, which may attack the problem at its roots. Devdasi Liberation Organization had raised a demand for economic support to Devdasis from the Government during its 1990 agitation. The Devdasi Study Commission also suggested to the Government to sanction a special pension scheme providing minimum Rs.300/- per month to the Devdasis. Accordingly, the Devdasi Pension Scheme is under implementation, but till 1994, not a single Devdasi had received benefits under the scheme.

TRYSEM:

TRYSEM (Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment) is an effective scheme being implemented for helping to acquire economic independence by the unemployed youth in the rural areas. Under the scheme, rural youth are trained in different vocational courses like carpentry, blacksmithy, motor rewinding, scooter mechanics, electric wiring, radio and television repairs, electric fitting, etc. There are also special arrangements for special training to rural young women in courses like tailoring, sweater-knitting, bamboo-work, sericulture (silk production), etc. The financial responsibility for the scheme is divided between the State and the Central Government under the Integrated Rural Development Programme.

Devdasis also are eligible for these training opportunities. But from among the respondents, only 1 (1%) Devdasi was found to have availed training in tailoring and she now earns between Rs.250 to 500/- a month.

WESTERN MAHARASHTRA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S  
DEVDAZI TRAINING AND REHABILITATION CENTRE:

Since the beginning of their agitation in 1975, the Devdasi Liberation Organization was pressing for the rehabilitation of Devdasis through training them in economically gainful activities. In the year 1981-82, because of the budgetary support provided by the Government, the Western Maharashtra Development Corporation (WMDC - a Government of Maharashtra Undertaking) started a Devdasi Women Training and Rehabilita-



A REHABILITATED MARRIED DEVADASI WITH  
HER CHILDREN | A BENEFICIERY OF  
MARRIAGE SCHEME GOVT. OF MAHARASHTRA.



A PHOTOGRAPH OF DEVADASI ERADICATION  
AND REHABILITATION CENTRE,  
GADHINGLAJ, KOLHAPUR.





DEVADASI WORKING IN WORKSHOP OF  
W.M.D.C. 'S' DEVADASI REHABILITATION CENTRE,  
GADHINGLAJ. DIST. KOLHAPUR.

tion Centre at Gadkinglaj, District Kolhapur. Initially, 50 Devdasis were enrolled for training in sweater-making. In 1986, the WMDC handed over the centre to the Government's Social Welfare Department for running. But it still is popularly known as the WMDC's Centre for Devdasis. Presently, about 100 Devdasis are being trained in sweater-making, puppetry and silk production are being trained at this Centre.

A similar centre named 'Mata Ramabai Ambedkar Devdasi Training and Rehabilitation Centre', set up at the initiative of Shri. Namdeo Kanhe is also functioning at Gargoti in Bhudargad Taluka of Kolhapur District.

Both these centres provide work to Devdasis on contract basis and they can earn between Rs.200 and 1000 a month, by making sweaters, woollen dolls and decorative articles. But since many of them earn very meagre amounts, they continue to beg 'Jogawa' also to supplement their earnings. Also both these centres are being run on 'no-profit: no-loss' basis for the economic liberation of Devdasis and are doing commendable social reform work.

Of the 100 respondents, only 4 (4%) female Devdasis were found to have availed of the training facilities at the WMDC's training centre; and of these four, 3 could actually improve their economic situation. In any case, such training and rehabilitation effort has a very long way to go before it could make a significant contribution to the Devdasi eradication problem.

DEVDAASI CHILDREN HOSTEL:

The idea of a hostel at a Taluka place for Devdasis' school-going children was first mooted in the year 1981-82 and the Town Municipal Council of Gadhinglaj converted it into reality in 1986 with financial assistance from the Government of Maharashtra. The hostel is being run by a separate body 'Devdasi Niradhar Mukti Kendra' and is known as 'Devdasi Chhatra Vasatigraha'. Initially, 75 (60 boys and 15 girls) Devdasi children were admitted in the hostel in 1984-85. The Government had stipulated that the admission-mix must be 80% Devdasi children and 20% children from economically backward communities. However, the hostel finds it difficult to get 80% Devdasi children. Hence, only about 60-65% Devdasi children are admitted, the rest come from economically backward castes.

It was found that out of 100 respondents, only 2 (2%) Devdasis' children had availed of the hostel facility. The following were the causes that came out for the non-availing of the facility:

1. Devdasis feel particularly vulnerable if their children are absent from home. This is especially true in case of Devdasis without a legal husband and the children are their only support and protection. Keeping the children in the hostel, they feel, would increase their hardships;
2. Some Devdasis are maintained by their paramours and are paid enough to support their children also. Because of this easy availability of money, many Devdasi children fall victim to addiction and vices at quite early age and

do not want to trade this life for a disciplined regime in the hostel. These children are unwilling to undertake any hardwork including school education:

3. Some adolescent Devdasi children even act as touts for other Devdasis or can make money off their mother's visitors to spend it on themselves. Hostel life would put an end to all such activities.

On the whole, the experiment of hostel for Devdasi children is still having its teething problems and for making it successful, Devdasis themselves will have to be made aware of the benefits of education and a disciplined lifestyle.

#### SANJAY GANDHI NIRADHAR ANUDAN YOJANA:

The Scheme is supported by the Union Government and it aims at helping the orphans, aged, widows and handicapped. It was found that from among the respondents, 4% female Devdasis had taken benefit of this scheme. It was also found that with the scanty grant of Rs.100/- a month, that too received erratically, these beneficiaries continue to beg 'Joçawa'.

#### DEVDAZI HOUSING SCHEME:

The Government of India has implemented a housing scheme especially for the houseless such as nomadic tribes, scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, the orphans and the poor, etc.

From among the respondents, about 3% Devdasis were found to have obtained houses under this scheme, but still they have not improved their standard of living much. It was also found that the houses build by the Government contractors are of

inferior quality, not much durable and of single room type only.

KHANDI GRAMODYOG DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:

To give momentum to the village trade, the Government of India has inducted this Scheme. Generally, the beneficiaries of this scheme are rural craftsmen like carpenters, potters, cobblers, ropemakers (Matang), etc. The Government of Maharashtra sanctions them loans at low interest rate, but not enough number of Devdasis who belong to various beneficiary categories have taken any benefit from the scheme.

MISCELLANEOUS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS:

MAHATMA PHULE BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION was established for the economic upliftment of the backward classes. The Corporation aims to provide gainful employment to them by helping them set up small scale industries. The 'Mahar' community has benefitted significantly from this Corporation.

For the economic upliftment of the 'Matang' community, the Government has established 'ANNABHAU SATHE BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION' and for other scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the VASANTRAO NAIK BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

The Devdasis as belonging to these different backward communities are eligible to receive the benefits from these corporations. Among the respondents, 5% of the Devdasis had availed the benefits from several schemes of these Corporations and were earning between Rs.500 to 1000/-.

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA'S SOCIAL WELFARE SCHEMES  
FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND HANDICAPPED:

The Government of Maharashtra, through its Social Welfare Department, has enacted a social welfare scheme for women, children and handicapped in the year 1985. The scheme provides for the welfare of Devdasi women through self-employment. Under the scheme, an amount of Rs.500/- is paid to a Devdasi to start a self-employment activity, such as vegetable vending, household poultry keeping, etc.

During investigation, it was revealed that quite a few Devdasis had availed of the offer and launched their own small entrepreneurial ventures; but it was generally opined that the amount of Rs.500/- was rather meagre to begin any substantive activity.

With this, we come to the end of the investigation into the Devdasi welfare and rehabilitation activities of different governmental and voluntary organizations.

**4.3 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES:**

The following hypotheses were taken for testing through the data collected in the field survey.

1. Majority of the Devdasis belong to the backward and down-trodden classes of the society;
2. Devdasi welfare schemes formulated by the Government and voluntary organizations help to abolish the Devdasi tradition;



A HOSTEL FOR THE CHILDREN OF  
THE DEVADASI AT 'GADHINGLAJ'



A DEVADASI VENDING THE  
VEGETABLES.



3. Majority of the Devdasis have not received the benefits of the welfare schemes as implemented by the Government;
4. Voluntary organizations are doing effective work for the rehabilitation of the Devdasis in the study area.

Hypothesis 1:

The statistics presented in Table 4.2 clearly shows that majority of the Devdasis belong to the backward and downtrodden classes of the society. The present hypothesis thus stands accepted.

Hypothesis-2:

No clearly quantifiable statistics for testing this hypothesis could be collected. It was, however, observed that the various Devdasi welfare schemes and programmes being implemented by the voluntary organizations as well as Government agencies still have not reached majority of the Devdasi population, much less helped in its eradication. The hypothesis, therefore, stands rejected.

Hypothesis 3:

The interpretation offered at various places as well as the data in Table 4.14 shows that majority of the Devdasis have not received the benefits of the welfare schemes as implemented by the Government. The hypothesis, therefore, stands accepted.

Hypothesis 4:

This hypothesis is concerned with the rehabilitation work being done by the voluntary organizations. It was found that only three voluntary organizations were rather active in this behalf, but their effort is insufficient in view of the total Devdasi population in the study area. Still, their effort cannot be under-estimated. Hence, the hypothesis stands partly accepted.

The conclusions derived from the data analysed hereabove and the suggestions emanating therefrom are being presented in the following Chapter.

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