



A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF JATKARS AS AN IGNORED COMMUNITY OF MAHARASHTRA: A CASE STUDY OF WALWA TAHSIL OF SANGLI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Jatkars are part of society but generally different from the social cast structure. The study of this cast as nomadic tribe is meaningful. There is a necessity of study of Jatkars and their problems facing in their life. These people are aloof and have low standard of living, lack of place, houses. This community is not familiar of education. There is not any kind of government plans or policies to improve their standard of living. The study to understand the lifestyle, social diversity and the occupation structure, festivals, will significant contribution to social geography. Resolve their problems through awareness of education will be important tasks. Availability of Social amenities and facilities, banks are important aspects to focus. To study all these factors I have choose this tribe.

KEY WORDS-nomadic, community, scheduled

INTRODUCTION

India is a vast developing country making progress in science and technology. On the other side in India has still lot of superstitions, blind beliefs, traditions. The people from nomadic tribal category are still found in India. These tribes are backward, illiterate and exploited by upper caste people. Even today very less tribal people are recognized and scheduled in government records. Common people do also not know about their existence in the vicinity. They are depressed and ignored by society at large.

Potraj, Vasudev, Murali, Kadak-laxmi, Nandiwale, Banjara, Kudmude joshi, Vaidu, Paradhi, Ramoshi, Dhangar, Narand-jipsy, these are the major nomadic tribes found in Maharashtra. These tribal people are ignored for many centuries. These people are now wanted to uplift themselves and get their share in the development, they wants to transfer them, want to get their constitutional rights and since some of the tribes are started unite and rebellion.

Jatkars are important nomadic tribe, which are not got any kind of recognition as a tribe. They are originally belongs to Muslim minorities and familiarly known as Jatkars.

Jatkars are inclined to keeping distance from main stream. At present few families of this community are settled in Walwa village of Sangli district. Now they are waiting for social facilities and education. For livelihood they are involved in commercial activities related livestock, gymnastic and laboring activities.

OBJECTIVES:

The main objectives of the study are

- 1) To study social cultural aspects of the Jatkars community.
- 2) To study economical aspect of the Jatkars community.
- 3) To study problems facing by the Jatkars community.

- 4) To suggest remedies to overcome problems facing by the Jatkar community

STUDY REGION:

Walwa tahsil is located in between Sangli and Shirala. The absolute location of this tahsil is $74^{\circ} 09'9''$ East longitude to $74^{\circ}28'58''$ to east longitude. $16^{\circ}51'9''$ North latitude to $17^{\circ}10'55''$ North Latitude. Krishna River is flowing in the East of Walwa tahsil. Whole region has fertile soil and Sugarcane is the dominant crop. The population of the tahsil is 4, 55,138 according to 2011 census.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY:

The study based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through various methods such as interview, field visits, questionnaire etc. secondary data is collected from village “Gram-panchayat office” records.

Collected data is compiled, tabulated and processed for analysis different statistical techniques and cartographic methods are opted to analysis data. The primary statistical methods like mean, mean deviation and percentile are used.

DATA ANALYSIS

A. SOCIAL CONDITION:

Social and cultural attributes are always responsible for the progress of the society. Human resources are always get influenced by social conditions prevails in the society. Factors like age and sex structure, traditions, family type, a religion, literacy are responsible for the development of social condition. Following data reveals that how each of the factors is closely associated with the lifestyle of the individual and ultimately creation of social conditions.

1) FAMILY SIZE :

Table No. 1
FAMILY SIZE OF JATKAR COMMUNITY WALWA.

Sr. no.	Group of Members	No. of Families	No. of Family members	Percentage
1	0-4	09	26	15.03
2	5-8	15	90	52.02
3	9-12	06	57	32.95
Total		30	173	100.00

In general family size in this community is larger. 52.02 percent families belong to 5-8 members' family class, and remaining all 32.95 percent families are larger than this. It shows that this community is not aware of a family planning. It may be due to two reasons; like people inclined to keep united family and illiteracy in community

Plate no1- family size



2) HEAD OF THE FAMILY :

Generally in the rural areas of the state patriarchal tradition is dominated. In Jatkar community too this tradition is found. Out of 30 families 28 families have men as head of the family while only two families have women as head. (See Table no. 2)

Table no. 2
AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE (HEAD OF THE FAMILY)

Sr. no.	Age Group	Male	Female	Percentage
1	Below 30	11	-	36.67
2	31-35	07	-	23.33
3	36-65	08	01	30.00
4	66-70	02	-	6.67
5	Above 71	-	01	3.33
Total		28	02	100.00

Other important feature reveals that the majority heads of the family members are young and belongs to age below 35 years. They are about 60 .00 per cent. It means that old people are staying at home and young generation taking care of whole family. It shows the maturity and sense of responsibility among the young people. The absence of generation gap is striking feature in this community.

3) EDUCATION AND LITERACY:

This community is originally nomadic, but now they have settled in Walwa Tahsil for last 25 years. Majority members of the community are illiterate and not aware the importance of education. Few Childs are educated up to secondary level and nobody is attaining higher education. Female literacy is absolute none, it means that this people have traditional hold of blind beliefs and superstitions.

4) RELIGION AND CASTE:

Twenty five year ago Jatkar community migrated from Akola, Tal- Pathardi, and Dist- Ahmadnagar. They were settled in the Walwa village of Sangli district. This community belongs to Islamic religion. They are nomadic and roaming from one village to other village. The caste of the community said to be Jatkar. But in the records of census they are belongs to minorities and not consider tribe. They lives they are also recognized as 'Ounthawale' i.e. Camel owners or trades.

5) MARRIAGES:

Generally, in Jatkar community marriages taken place are in 15 to 22 years of age marriage ceremony is carried out for five days. They organize different programs on each of the day. They are against the dowry. They are in favor of remarriages but avoid much marriage. They spend 40 to 60 thousands rupees in marriage. All this features shows that though they are illiterate bind to tradition. They are liberal and inclined to progressive life. They are avoiding exploitation of families in the sake of dowry and bad beliefs.

6) RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS:

Jatkars community celebrates Bakri-Id, Ramjan-Id, Moharam and Id-e-Milad like Islamic religion festivals. They are also celebrates “Dashara” (Vijaya dashami). On that they are donated coconut against each of the family member. All the festivals are celebrated according to their economical capacities.

7) JAT PANCHAYAT:

In this community Jat panchayat is functioning. The senior member of the community is head of this panchayat. He is giving justice in the community offences and unfair activities. He has rights to decide punishment and fines in different trials. If individual is not satisfied with the verdict he can take legal advices or he can approach judicial machinery. But generally community members are follow the rules and decisions made in Jat panchayat.

B. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

1) OCCUPATION:

This community is involved in the trading activities of livestock. This activity is the basis of their livelihoods. During the year they purchase and sale more than 30 to 40 domestic animals. It includes mainly buffalos, cows and bullocks. They get 1000 rupees to 2000 rupees commission against each of the transaction. They are not interested in any other occupation. Many times they purchase animal and keep for few months and after making it healthy sale it in the market to earn certain profit. They travel across the region for this trading activity, mainly markets of Sangli, Miraj, Peth-Vadgaon, Islampur, Karad etc. All these markets places have Weekly Livestock markets. The cyclic natures of market days at these market places make them travel the entire region. They act as mediators in trading activities between farmers. Commercial activities related to the livestock are main occupation of the community. Simultaneously they go to other villages and do gymnastics for earning money and work as agricultural labour. In Ashta more people are involved in gymnastics and laboring occupation. This number is higher than the commercial activities related to livestock.

Plate no2- occupation-



2) CAPITAL

In this trading activity large amount of capital is not necessary because majority functioning is carried out on the weekly (hawala) promises basis. They are borrowing capital from big traders, rich people, and money lenders. They are not taking loans from banks or any other financial institutions. They save little from their earnings.

3) OTHER FACTORS

In Jatkars community all the members of the family are involved in the commercial activities as mention above. They are not interested in the formal education they are inclined towards the business oriented informal education. Hence it becomes a tradition that all the members are use to go to markets and learn the techniques and how to communicate with involving parties. They are familiar with the local people and they seem that these people are give respect to them. But on the contrary they are spends more money on the wines and abused materials. Hence they are saves little not bothering of future. They are lagging and bond to backward standard of livings.

PROBLEMS AND REMMIDIES:

1) Good Houses-

Jatkars are lacking of good houses. Since 25 years they are living in Tents (type of homes). They do not have own space to construct good houses. If they get some space from Grampanchayat, they can build their houses.

Plate no3- home types-



2) Primary Requirements-

Jatkars are lacking facilities such as a toilet, electricity and fresh water. Grampanchayat should provide common facilities in this community as they are domicile of the walwa tahsil.

3) Addiction-

Jatkars are still involved in bad habits and of addiction such as mava, gutkha, ganja, wine and datvan awareness about addiction is very important for this community. Social organization in the villages can drive such awareness programmed of tobacco products.

4) Big family size-



Jatkars have big size families. As per fieldwork 84.97% family members are have 5to8 member's one family. There is lack of knowledge of family planning. So it is important to educate them about family planning.

5) Education-

They have lack of education facilities. Few Childs are taking education Up to primary level. So necessary to create awareness about education facilities and make compulsion of education.

CONCLUSION:

Jatkars who belongs to Islamic religion, spend their life in poverty and roaming from long period. Last twenty five years they are living in Walwa Tahsil because Walwa region is very well developed in agriculture and agro based activities. Along with the agricultural development, transport facilities, markets are available to carry out economical activities. They travel in the region for carry out activities like gymnastic in market places.

Though they are stable in Walwa for long period but still they are in backward position in social and economical condition. Still they are trapped in addiction, poverty, lack of education, hygiene, dirtiness. All these happen due to illiteracy and lack of awareness about health.

The importance of the study will helps to know their problems and to suggest some solutions to resolve it.

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