

CHAPTER IV

PROFILE OF SCHEDULED CASTE

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter has concern with the analysis of profile of scheduled caste in Satara district. The problem of scheduled caste is one of the major national problems; scheduled caste is another name of the backward castes. Scheduled castes are known as the Dalit and Harijans. The term scheduled caste was introduced for the first time in the government of India Act 1935. The British government in the year 1936 listed these backward communities systematically in a particular schedule. Since then people called it scheduled caste. Constitution (article 341 (I)) also prescribe the list of scheduled castes for the purpose of upliftment of the people contained in the scheduled caste. Approximately there are 35 scheduled castes prevailing in satara district. Five major scheduled caste prevailing in the study region. These are Mang (Matang), Mahar, Holar, Chambhar, Dhor. All these caste were found scattered all over the study region scheduled caste had suffered neglected in society and socially, economically and politically backward and less awakened. They were at the same time deprived of all the essential opportunities in life and thus were kept away from the main stream of the society. Scheduled caste population was used by the higher caste for their economics and social prosperity and they have remained poor in the process. According to Dr. B.R.Ambedkar most of the scheduled caste people faced the problem of untouchables. They were not touched by high hindu caste people. Their touch was considered as pollution. Economically scheduled caste people are poorest among the poor. Untouchables were discriminated socially, politically, economically and culturally. There has been no much change in socio-economic status. It is the fact that, the study of consumption expenditure pattern of scheduled caste is considered as a fairly reliable index of socio-economic upliftment. It is necessary for social reconstruction, preparation of man power and rapid development and also essential for improvement in quality of social life. The consumption expenditure of scheduled caste in Satara district is of immense significance.

Indian society is largely pluralist in nature. Pluralist society is that society which has many ethnic, religious or cultural groups speaking a variety of languages. People living in India belong to many racial groups, abide by their own cultural norms follows the religion of their choice as a number of religions, caste co-exists in India and still live together.

The word 'caste' comes from the Spanish word 'casta', which means race or breed. The caste system as a form of social stratification is peculiar to India. The caste system is an integral part of traditional hindu social organization, although many of its features are found in other religious groups like Christians, Muslims and Shikhs. There is no single valid theory that could explain the origion of caste. Some scholars equate the caste system which the original old varna system, which classified individuals in four groups:

Brahmins: - religious preachers, scholars, teachers and the like.

Kshatriyas: - rulers, administrators and warriors.

Vaishyas: - money lenders, artisans, traders, and the like.

Shudras: - workers or labourers.

The Indian constitution (scheduled castes) order 1950 lists 1108 caste. The 2001 census states that 16.2% of the population belongs to scheduled castes. There are some factors responsible for growth of caste system in India.

- a) The influence of religion is the main factor for growth of caste system in India. The hindu caste system is looked upon as divine ordained institution. Beliefs in reincarnation and the doctrine of karma also have fostered the caste system in India.
- b) The static rural social structure of India strengthened the growth of caste system.
- c) Lack of education especially among the rural masses has contributed to the growth of caste system in India. Due to illiteracy people have become orthodox and they blindly accept the caste rules and restrictions.

- d) The existence of many races in India resulted in the formulation of strict law regarding discrimination, as each race made efforts to preserve its purity.
- e) The rulers did not enforce uniform customs of different groups of people, which in turn encouraged the caste system in India.
- f) The hereditary occupations of the people especially in rural areas kept alive the caste system in India.
- g) The desire to dominate of the upper caste especially, the Brahmins over the lower castes gave fillip to the growth of caste system in India.
- h) Other factors that contributed to the growth of caste system in India include the desire of Brahmins to keep them pure, ancestor worship, idea of exclusive family etc.

4.2 Origin of untouchability

The traditional explanation given by the hindu religions and legal texts, the shastras and the Manu smriti, placed the untouchables outside the four caste or varnas which fixed a man's status in which he was born according to divine ordination.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar examined the question of the origin of untouchability in his work, the untouchable who were they and why they become untouchables? He arrived at certain conclusions which were completely original although they may seem novel or even speculative to others.

To Ambedkar, the origin of untouchability was to be found in the primitive tribal society, somewhere in the process of the hindu society passing from the nomadic life to the life of a settled village community. Some group settled down with ownership of land while those who were still nomads were broken men according to Ambedkar. These stray men were made to live outside the village. These broken men gradually became the untouchables of India. Ambedkar rejected the theories of race and occupation for the origin untouchability in India, for the untouchables were not different racially from the Aryans or the Dravidians in view of the evidence based on the science of anthropometry and ethnology of India. According to Ambedkar, they were not

treated as untouchables just because they performed fifty occupations by the untouchables and the attendant uncleanness became pretext for those who were engaged in cleaner and superior jobs to treat them as untouchables.

As society became more complex the simple caste system became more rigid and orthodox. It changed to a system where person's caste was fixed for his lifetime dependent on his birth. The rigidity of the caste system fell heavily on the lowest caste, namely, the shudras and amongst them a further division was made into touchable and untouchable. The untouchables, in the main represented the class of people was condemned for life to the curse of untouchability, once they were born in a family of untouchables. It was a case of "Permanent Hereditary stain which nothing could cleanse."

The social system thus created a fifth class of people outside the four varna system called the asprusya- the untouchables members of which were only to do impure or unclean tasks. In the course of time this caste system developed an inhuman rigidity, under which certain communities were treated as defiled or impure whose members, the untouchables, supposedly caused pollution to ordinary hindus by touch or proximity. Hence they were excluded from the ordinary social and religious privileges of Hinduism.

The untouchable was subject to any indignities which would be abhorrent to any modern mind. The untouchable was born impure and treated as the lowest of the low while he lived. There was absolutely no way by which he could come out of the pale. His children were condemned to untouchability from their very birth: they were born as untouchables, lived as untouchables and died as untouchables. Religious knowledge was denied to him. He could not enter hindu temples. The priest would not officiate in the case of other caste, his attendance was essential. The untouchable was compelled to live in his separate quarters with others of his class, generally in the insanitary outskirts of villages. He could not use the village well by reason of his birth, he had to suffer indignity treating himself as one whose touch and shadow defiled the caste hindu and his environment. The untouchable thus was socially segregated, economically exploited and politically excluded from educational and growth opportunities.

India is a developing country. It has a responsibility to safeguard the rights of people as enshrined in the constitution, irrespective of consideration of caste, creed, colour or sex. It is the need of the day that the hindu scriptures be thrown open to all people of caste and sex so that they may have right understanding of their faith It may lead to the fall of the man-made caste system like a sand hill. When the boundaries of the world are vanishing and there is open mixing of people and ideas, there has to be a ready flow of crossovers among the people as in the past. The hindu society has to be well-knit for the good of the world.

The Buddhists discarded the Vedas to preach against caste system, kabir followed the same path of denouncing the hindu scriptures while opposing the caste system. A proper understanding of scriptures can remove the ignorance and illusion. Gandhi and Aurobindo favored varna system though opposed caste system. Swami Dayananda with authority on Vedas declared that Vedas do not mention about caste system and opposed caste system tooth and nail while defending the scriptures. There is nothing in the scriptures to justify the caste division, only the varna system exists as an integral part of the whole society. It is not the caste system at all.

Large majority people realize that the most oppressed people today called as sudra were really a grate adherent of Hinduism. In the Buddhist dominated era, they did not change their favour. During the terror rule of Islam for conversion, they did not convert and suffered from the rulers as well as from their own people who called them by abusive names such as shudra, chamar, Bhangi, Harijan. Achuta or untouchables and even today remain bracketed in scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. They had opportunity to convert and be saved from humiliations and insults but they preferred to stay as hindus and suffer as hindus.

It is high time we get rid of such abuses and grant same and equal right to these religious heroes as are enjoyed by the others in the hindu society. Are they not a part of the whole and is the whole an invalid one? No, we have to restore their dignity as in the vedic days. We have to treat them as a part of either Brahman class or as Khatriya class to which they really belong. The

ancestors of Raiyadas were chanvar kshatriyas and so are others. Restore them to their past glory and while doing so do not forget to undo what we have done by granting them the prevalent privileges intact for their growth without any restriction we have to do it. No one else can do it. Do it now and here for unity of hindu life and religion as we have a duty to rescue the present world from terror, chaos disbelief and confusion. It is only the hindu philosophy of unity in diversity that can bring relief to the confused masses of humanity today.

Caste system in India is not only the age-old and depth oriented socio-cultural phenomenon but it has also been working since the remote period as the symbol of Indian social system specifically characterized by hierarchical categories despite its diversified odd and anxieties. The agro-based economic pattern of India, a unique situation in the world perspective has been tied up with the different caste groups having traditional callings and because of this an unparallel caste and economic linkage has been set up witnessing an integrated whole in the stratified society. The socio-economic background of the Indian caste based rural society has been taken up by the social scientists to explore the pattern of working of Indian society through time and space.

4.3 Economics of caste system

A trained and professional political economist Dr. Ambedkar probed into various economic aspects of caste system and wrote at several places explaining how the caste system embodied a closely integrated and well-knit economic organization. Thus, caste formed the basis of the relations of production in as much as it gave the ownership of the means of production in the hands of the superior caste and physical labour to the shudras. In this process it not only did amount to a division of labour but also resulted into the division of labourers. Caste system thus made occupational arrangement fixed and permanent denying and mobility to an individual with respect to freedom of choosing one's way of earning livelihood. No other religious system in the world prescribed such rigid and permanent occupational distribution among various social groups, as did hindusm. To compound this rigidity, the caste based occupational distributions in a strict hierarchical order by ascribing greater prestige to high caste occupations (again in graded manner) and

attaching greater degree of stigma and pollution to the lower caste occupations.

Caste system embodied in as much as it in built distributional mechanism in as much as it gifted all privileges in terms of economic, social and political power and prestige to the upper castes mainly belonging to the so called first three varnas and punished the shudras with all sorts of liabilities, degradations, humiliation and contempt. Such highly unequal distributional arrangement was further given permanence by denying the shudras the right to education, again a unique feature of Hinduism.

4.4 Socio-economic profile of the scheduled caste:-

The socio-economic communities such as scheduled caste lies at the bottom of the social ladder are most likely to lack the capability to benefit them from the accelerated process of economic growth should be secured through economic development.

A) Social conditions

Scheduled castes were denied to drink water from any public well or to walk on the road in a broad daylight. Scheduled castes were forced to cook their food in broken earthen pots and wear dirty clothes. They were use to live in kuccha-mud houses on the outskirts of village. They were forced to take up only stigmatized menial jobs. They were socially outcastes, economical dependent, educationally backward and politically powerless.

The process of economic growth urbanization, industrialization, development of means of communications and transport, growing literacy and spread of higher education, implementation of the reservation policy and the resulting horizontal and vertical occupational mobility have been to a lesser or greater degree, instrumental in attacking the stigma of the untouchability and slackening the bondage of pernicious and hierarchical caste system.

B) Economic conditions

a) Access to land ownership/cultivation

Greater degrees of landlessness were found among the scheduled caste. Majority of scheduled caste were being cultivators of marginal and small part of land. Large population of scheduled caste depends upon wage-employment for their livelihood. Large no of scheduled caste were found landlessness as compared to ND (Non-Dalit).

b) Employment: its nature and sources

The scheduled caste families in rural area forced to work a agricultural labourers as also engage in other activities involving physical labour of insufficient access to land and other productive resources providing self employment. It is found that, the proportion of wage labour among the scheduled caste families were more than the general households in several states in India as well as the proportion of 'self employed' was at middle position as scheduled tribes.

Thus most of the scheduled caste households are engaged as a physical labour on daily-wage basis in the farm or non-farm sector. In the urban area scheduled caste households engaged as 'casual labour' in industry.

c) High incidence of unemployment

National sample survey states that; in rural areas the extent of unemployment is much greater among the scheduled caste that is Non-Dalits. The same condition found in urban areas.

d) Access to education, skill formation and occupational mobility

In a country such as India; where means of production are highly unequally distributed ,with an overwhelmingly large number of people owning only a few of them, importance of education as a source of employment and hence, that of livelihood becomes all the more important. Further, in the case of weaker section such as the scheduled caste remained socio-economically backward, the tragic importance of education can hardly be exaggerated.

e) Depressing level of living

The NSSO gives monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) "which servers as a proxy for household income and reflects the standard of

living of the members of a household to a large extent-lower the value of the household consumer expenditure, the poorer the member of household”.

Some of the NSS rounds indicate that the level of living of the social group is low. It is observed that a disparity in the level of living of the scheduled caste.

f) Mind-boggling incidence of poverty

Due to lack of access to land and other productive assets, as well as lack of marginal piece of land with insufficient inputs, lack of self-employment opportunities and high incidence of unemployment, low rate of literacy rate and lack of capacity to acquire higher education and high rate of casual labour all ultimately resulted in greater incidence of absolute poverty among the scheduled caste in both rural and urban areas.

4.5 Tahsil wise distribution of scheduled caste population in Satara District

Table 4.1 indicates that the tehsil wise distribution of schedule caste population. 10.76% scheduled caste population found in Satara district. Higher percent of distribution of scheduled caste population is found in Karad tehsil subsequently higher percentage of scheduled caste population is found in Satara and Phaltan. Lower percentage of scheduled caste population is found in Mahabaleshwar, Jaoli, Wai and Khandala tehsils. Subsequently medium percentage of scheduled caste population is found in Khatav, Man and Koregaon tahsils. It is indicate that percentage of distribution of scheduled caste population is higher in well developed, river basin region of central part of Satara District.

Table 4.1**Tahsil wise distribution scheduled caste population in Satara District**

Tahsil	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%	Proportion of SC population to total population
Mahabaleshwar	8218	2.5	4116	2.5	4102	2.5	11.28
Wai	18244	5.6	9061	5.6	9183	5.6	9.11
Khandala	12975	4.0	6557	4.0	6418	3.9	9.44
Phaltan	49586	15.3	25206	15.5	24380	15.0	14.47
Man	28357	8.7	14326	8.8	14031	8.6	12.57
Khatav	25888	8.0	12786	7.9	13102	8.1	9.40
Koregaon	22343	6.9	11175	6.9	11168	6.9	8.68
Satara	55627	17.2	27983	17.3	27644	17.1	11.06
Jaoli	7524	2.3	3697	2.2	3827	2.3	7.06
Patan	26035	8.0	12568	7.7	13467	8.3	8.69
Karad	68439	21.1	34228	21.1	34211	21.1	11.72
Total	323236	10.76	161703	50.02	161533	49.97	10.76

Source: Source: District socio-economic survey Satara 2013 pp no 173

(Census 2011)

4.6 Scheduled Caste population and growth rate in satara district

Table 4.2 indicate population and growth rate of scheduled caste in Satara District.

It is revealed that decadal growth rate and annual exponential growth rate of scheduled caste population is decreasing from 1961 to 1971, it again increased from the year 1971 to 1991 and again decreased from the year 1991 to 2001 and increased from the year 2001 to 2011.

Table 4.2**Scheduled Caste population and growth rate in satara district**

Census year	Rural /Urban	Total population	SC population	Decadal growth rate		Annual exponential growth rate	
				General	SC	General	SC
1961	Total	1430105	74875	21.68	-43.55	1.98	-5.56
	Rural	1271678	64069	25.29	-45.35	2.28	-5.86
	Urban	158427	10806	-1.19	-29.89	-0.12	-3.49
1971	Total	1727376	93103	20.79	24.34	1.91	2.20
	Rural	1500119	78700	17.96	22.84	1.67	2.08
	Urban	227257	14403	43.45	33.29	3.67	2.92
1981	Total	2038677	126602	18.02	35.98	1.67	3.12
	Rural	1772885	104570	18.18	32.87	1.68	2.88
	Urban	265792	22032	16.96	52.97	1.58	4.34
1991	Total	2451372	233014	20.24	84.05	1.86	6.29
	Rural	2135532	197345	20.46	88.72	1.88	6.56
	Urban	315840	35669	18.83	61.90	1.74	4.94
2001	Total	2808994	246110	14.59	5.62	1.37	0.55
	Rural	2410873	202017	12.89	2.37	1.22	0.23
	Urban	398121	44093	26.05	23.62	2.34	2.14
2011	Total	3003741	323236	6.93	31.34	0.67	2.76
	Rural	2433363	247575	0.93	22.55	0.09	2.05
	Urban	570378	75661	43.27	71.59	3.33	5.55

Source: District socio-economic survey Satara 2013 pp no 174 (Census 2011)

4.7 Literacy rate of Scheduled Caste population in Satara District

Table 4.3 indicate literacy rate of scheduled caste population in Satara district. It is found that 70.63% scheduled caste population is illiterate among that 38.64% male population and 31.98% female population is literate. It is indicate that literacy rate among female population is lower than male population.

Table 4.3**Literacy rate of Scheduled Caste population in Satara District**

Tahsil	SC population	%	Total Male literate	%	Total Female literate	%
Mahabaleshwar	6267	2.74	3391	2.71	2876	2.78
Wai	13473	5.90	7210	5.77	6263	6.05
Khandala	9803	4.29	5316	4.25	4487	4.34
Phaltan	33846	14.82	18825	15.06	15021	14.53
Man	18124	7.93	10271	8.22	7853	7.59
Khatav	17863	7.82	9754	7.80	8109	7.84
Koregaon	16040	7.02	8728	6.98	7312	7.07
Satara	41632	18.23	22427	17.95	19205	18.57
Jaoli	5580	2.44	3001	2.40	2579	2.49
Patan	17713	7.75	9719	7.77	7994	7.73
Karad	47963	21.00	26286	21.04	21677	20.96
Total	228304	70.63	124928	38.64	103376	31.98

Source: censusindia.gov.in 2011

4.8 Conclusion

High incidence poverty is prevailing among the scheduled caste population. Higher percent of distribution of scheduled caste population is found in Karad tehsil subsequently higher percentage of scheduled caste population is found in Satara and Phaltan. Lower percentage of scheduled caste population is found in Mahabaleshwar, Jaoli, Wai and Khandala tehsils. It is found that percentage of distribution of scheduled caste population is higher in well developed, river basin region of central part of Satara district as compare to other tehsil of Satara district. It is found that higher illiteracy is prevailing among female population.

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