CHAPTER IV

VAGHYA – MURLIS AND THEIR SOCIO – ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

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CHAPTER IV

VAGHYA – MURLIS AND THEIR SOCIO – ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In India, for the upliftment of depressed people, efforts have been made in various fields. To acquaint with their problems and to get them out of rut, it is needed to reach their society through social action. To understand and to enlighten them is a great task. Basically the evaluation of their needs, especially, economic, is quite pertinent. The study of socio-economic problems of depressed people, probably, helps to understand them. The social transformation and educational transformation need to move together for the betterment of depressed people (Awachat Anil – 1983)

Vaghya-Murali community is the live film of depressed people. It is neglected by the society. Vaghya-Muralis are main recipients of all religious functions whose family God is Lord Khandoba. Society takes interest in them and their art only before a religious function and forgets them latter. It is necessary to understand the afflictions of this community to make efforts to remove them and incorporate the community in society. It is expected that the society take lead in this respect. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to study the main religious function, the Jagaran ceremony, the Vaghya-Murali community and their socio-economic problems.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

The importance of the study lies in the fact that major work is based on the primary data. Researcher has collected data personally by visiting Jejuri at the time of fairs where most of the respondents (Vaghya-Muralis) come to take Darshan of lord Khandoba. She met Vaghya-Muralis, who reside in Jejuri and a few at resident places in Sangli, Satara and Kolhapur districts. Methodology consisted of various characteristics and the changes made as per the need during the investigation stages.
For the collection of data random sampling method is used. The sample survey of forty seven Vaghyas and forty three Muralis was made to know their views.

To conduct a sample survey, a schedule was prepared. It included name, area, background, views on Jagaran ceremony, behaviour of the people with Vaghya-Murali community, expectation of Vaghya-Muralis, socio-economic background etc. The Schedule was tested with five Vaghyas and five Muralis at Kolhapur and around. The required modifications were made and final Schedule was prepared. (Appendix-I)

The Schedules were filled up by Vaghya-Muralis, their group leaders, contractor Vaghya-Muralis and other contractors. The interviews of the social workers in this field, learned personalities in Jejuri Devasthan Committee, Chairman, Vice-chairwoman of state level organization of Vaghya-Muralis etc. were taken to understand the factual conditions.

The collected information was then tabulated, analysed and conclusions have been drawn.

The secondary data has been collected from relevant Published, unpublished materials from various sources.

4.3 JAGARAN CEREMONY - A RELIGIOUS FUNCTION

The Jagaran ceremony is the main religious function of the people whose lord Khandoba is family God. Jagaran means establishing a representative image of God Khandoba in a ‘Makhar’ of five sugarcane sticks and singing songs of Khandoba with musical instruments like Tun Tune (Twang-Twang), Ghol and Khanjiri by a group of Vaghya-Muralis to praise God Khandoba. It is also referred to as loknatya or vidhinatya (Dhere Aruna – 2000).

Jagaran is a cultural activity. It is performed in front of god Khandoba after the marriage function of a girl or boy. It is supposed that any Marriage ceremony or Munj is incomplete without performing Jagaran. Vaghya-Muralis are conductors of this function. They are supposed to be children of lord Khandoba. The people take blessings of them as god’s mediator.

The chief of the family invites Vaghya-Muralis to perform the Jagaran ceremony. A group leader of Vaghya-Muralis accepts the invitation of the house-holder. He gives the requirements of Jagaran activity and the list of materials required. It includes five coconuts, red cloth, coconut kemel, seven dateplums, seven
Vaghya-Murli and Jagaran Ceremony

Plate 4.1
turmeric pieces, seven fruits, flower garlands, Bhandara (Turmeric powder), groundnut oil, seven almonds, seven betel nuts, Nāgveli leaves, copper cake, Kumkum, pink powder. Image of Khandoba (Tak), Silver cart, Divati (Torch), Budhali (circular oil pot) etc.

On the day of Jagaran, in the morning, Tali of Khandoba is lifted and people (or family chief) comes out of the village towards direction of Jejuri and God Khandoba is worshiped. Then ‘Kotamba’ is worshipped. Kotamba is supposed to be representation of the earth. It is the pot of Vaghya to make an offering to God Khandoba. At this time, Vaghya sings a song which requests god to give prosperity to them without making any sound from musical instruments.

Vaghya-Muralis prepare a ‘Makhar’ of five sugarcane sticks. In a ‘Makhar, Quadrangle of new cloth is made. On it, wheat, rice, bhandara and kumkum is spread in Quadrangle shape. It is named as ‘Gadi Bharane (to fill up a throne). On this throne, a silver image of god Khandoba is mounted. Two pots with full of water are kept aside and coconut is kept on each of them with Nagaveli leaves. One pot is of lord Khandoba and second one is of Mhalsadevi. The lord Khandoba is worshipped by Vaghya-Muralis and the chief of the family. Then onwards, Divati Burning, worshipping Kotamba, pot filling, Lungar breaking (cutting), lifting Tali and Uttar puja activities are performed.

The group of Jagaran activity, consists of actors as Vaghya and Muralis. One of them, mostly, Vaghya is leader. He sings a song and other members of the group perform Natya (Drama) related to the song. The number of Vaghyaas and Muralis in a group is, generally, seven and four. It varies as per availability of Vaghyaas and Muralis. But the presence of Vaghya and Murali, both, for the function is quite necessary.

The leader (Vaghya) takes Khanjiri, a musical instrument, in his hand. He has a bag of tiger skin having turmeric powder (Bhandara). Murali and chief Vaghya stand at the middle and behind them other companions stand. They have musical instruments like Tun Tun (Twan Twang) Duf (A sort of tambourine), Dimadi, Cymbal, Ghol etc. in their hands.

Jagaran starts by throwing Bhandara and roaring ‘yelkot’ ‘yelkot’ Jai Malhar and Changbhaia in the name of lord Khandoba. Vaghyaas and Muralis begin to dance. While Performing Jagaran, Muralis and Vaghyaas dance and singing songs to grace the Jagaran ceremony. All the songs are mostly full
of love (shrungar pradhan) and presentation is also similar to it. Bhandara (Turmeric powder) is thrown frequently on a Makhar. It is favourite item of lord Khandoba hence it has great significance in the Jagaran. The Jagaran begins about 10 p.m. and ends about 4 a.m. next day. Divatya (Divati holder) pours groundnut oil in Divati throughout night. The dialogue between Vaghyya-Muralis creates great interest in the Jagaran ceremony. They create jokes on each other especially many jokes are made on Divatya.

Jagaran has two parts. In the first part; Vaghyas and Muralis sing welcome songs and pray first to Ganapati and then to lord Khandoba. They invite gods and goddesses from different places for the Jagaran ceremony. They request to lord Khandoba from Naldurg, Satara, Pali, Nimgaon, Shegudi etc to attend the Jagaran ceremony. A special invitation is given to Lord Mahadev. Finally, they call on all gods and goddesses for Jagaran ceremony to bless devotees.

The second part of the Jagaran ceremony consists of songs on different gods. The songs are especially on lord Khandoba, shri Shankar, Mhalsa and Banai, the co-wife of lord Khandoba. The songs are based on love, anger and quarrel between Mhalsa and Banu. Mhalsa and Banu have tremendous jealousy of each other and quarrel frequently. The quarrel between Mhalsa and Banu is narrated by the Vaghyas with great interest. The songs are also sung on incarnation of lord Khandoba. Demon assassination, request of Mhalsa to Khandoba, Khandoba-Mhalsa marriage ceremony, Khandoba-Banu marriage ceremony, Mani-Malla-Khandoba war etc. These songs, mostly, structured by the Vaghyas namely, Mahipat-khan, surdas, Mukindraj Bapu, Dhondee, Gyance, Shankar, Balkrishna, Haibati, Gangaram, Sahadu, lala powar, Shankar, Damniker, Vadujuva, Nagpushkar etc. All these Vaghyas were from different parts of Maharashtra. Through these songs, they had narrated rural life and rural culture. These songs have especially the social and cultural references of that period.

Jagaran ceremony also includes, presentation of stories from Ramayan, Mahabharat and Puranas. The stories of Shravanbal, Dasharath Raja, Droupadi Vastraharan etc are presented in Jagaran ceremony. In these stories, dialogues are prepared by the Vaghyas on their own. Many times, exaggeration is made by them to grace the function. Different incidents like Khandoba eating ten quintal food, stone conversion in to sticks
Kulachar: After Marriage Ceremony

Plate 4.2
that are narrated by them. But the main purpose behind it is to entertain the people.

At the end of the Jagaran ceremony, Lungar Breaking is performed. Lungar is a circular chain having a few links in it. Each link is named after different gods. Vaghya breaks this chain in the first effort praising lord Khandoba alongside. Finally, Uttar puja of lord Khandoba is performed and Jagaran ceremony is over.

The Jagaran activity resembles to Tamasha (Drama or Loknatya) in Maharashtra. It seems that Tamasha has taken many themes from the Jagaran, activity.

4.4 VAGHYAS AND MURALIS

Vaghyas and Muralis are the main worshippers of lord Khandoba. The origin of the tradition of offering children to god reaches back to 10th century (Gaikwad-2005). The girls offered to lord Khandoba are called Muralis and boys offered called as Vaghyas. When a person has no child or has a very short life, he makes a vow to lord Khandoba to bless and give him a child. If lord Khandoba blesses him, he offers the first child to worship lord Khandoba. Then this boy becomes Vaghya or the girl becomes Murali. This custom of dedicating boys or girls to lord Khandoba prevails mainly among Kunbis, Dhanagar, Twelve Balutedars, Banjari, Mahar etc. The other Hindu sub-castes of similar standing also have this custom. In Maharashtra, many families in whom Khandoba is the family God have the tradition to offer one child in four children to lord Khandoba. They are known as ‘Khanadani Vaghya’ or Murali. Some times, married women also become Muralis leaving their husbands and even children. These women plead that God Khandoba had come in their dreams and told them that they are wives of lord Khandoba and not of men.

The Vaghyas and Muralis assume themselves to be ‘Nath Panthi’. It is said that the origin of Vaghya-Muralis is Mhasavad in Satara district of Maharashtra. There, they are recognized as ‘Nath Panthi’ or ‘Nath Pujari’. They have a dignified position in the village. Annual fair is held in the month of kartik (Nov-Dec.). Vaghyas have the first honour of carrying the palkhi of lord Khandoba. They also have the first honour of Puja. In the fair, they play with Uvar and Cimbal before Palkhi procession. In the night, they visit the house of the villagers. Each householder offers them food, Gulal and some honorarium.
Vaghyas and Muralis are supposed to be Khandoba's disciples. They only worship lord Khandoba everywhere. The main occupation is to perform Jagaran ceremony. The dress of Vaghyas is usual but wears a bag of tiger skin. The dress of Muralis is like kunabi women who mark their brows with turmeric powder. Muralis wear a necklace of nine cowrie shells. Vaghyas and Muralis live in groups. They go for 'Vari' (rounds) on foot to collect grain. A few Vaghya-Muralis reside at Jejuri while the other wander all over Maharashtra in groups of three or four. But every Vaghya or Murali visits Jejuri at least once in three years.

4.5 INITIATION CEREMONY OF GIRLS AND BOYS

4.5.1 Girls to be married to lord Khandoba are between one and twelve years of age. These are brought to Jejuri, some times in the month of chaitra (March-April). Parents bring materials for the ceremony, namely turmeric powder, dry coconut kelim, flower garlands, nosegays, a robe and bodice, a turban and sash, milk, curd sugar, butter, honey and flowers. They go to the temple with a gurav priest and a band of Vaghya musicians. At the temple, the girl is bathed, the lord Khandoba is rubbed with turmeric powder and rest of the turmeric powder is rubbed on the girl. The girl is dressed in a new robe and bodice, green glass bangles and mundavalya (flowered marriage ornament) tied to her brow. The god is worshipped. The turban and sash are presented to him. Gurav takes gatha (Necklace) of nine cowire shells and fastens it around the girl’s neck, referred as gatha phodne (breaking the cowire necklace). Gurav is paid Rs. 100 to 300 as price of gatha. The girl stands to the left of the god. Guests throw turmeric powder over them and say, Elkot Ghe (Take Yelkot, Take Ylkot) and marriage ceremony is over. Her parents pay Rs. 150 to 300 each to Vaghya and Muralis who are present for the ceremony. Girl’s Parents give a feast to the Vaghyas and Muralis, in their house and celebrate the marriage function.

When a Murali comes of age, her parents find a patron who pays her Rs. 2000 to 5000 as per capacity. Half the money of that goes to Vaghya-Murali community, spends for caste vessels and feasts. Remaining amount is used to purchase essential things for her household. She goes to the Maruti temple in a village and prays for blessings. She, then, lives with her patron.
4.5.2 The boy to be dedicated to lord Khandoba is brought to Jejuri on any day of chaitra (April-May) by his parents. The boy's father purchase turmeric powder, coco-kemel, coconut, milk, curd, honey, sugar, flowers garlands, nosegay, sandle paste, turban and sash. Gurav priest brings the boy to the temple. Vaghvies and Muralis accompany them. Gurav bathes and worships the god, offering him turban, sash and Rs. 100 to 200 in cash. He marks the boy's forehead with turmeric powder and sprinkles over his head, fastens deer or tiger skin wallet round his neck. The wallet is hung from a black woodem sting. Gurav priest throws turmeric powder and dry coco kemel thrice over his head and repeating twice the words Yelkot Ghe (Take Yelkot). Every one present there showers turmeric powder on god and the ceremony is over. The Gurav is paid Rs. 100 as his fee and Rs. 200 as the price of the wallet, Each of the Vaghvies and Muralis guest is presented with Rs. 50 to 150. Then parents return home, cook food, offer it Khandoba in their house and a feast is held.

4.5.3 BAL MURALI

When the girl is offered to god Khandoba immediately after her birth (10 to 15 days), it is reffered to as ‘Balmurali’. These girls stay up to 10 to 12 years in their parent's house. Then they are offered to any Vaghya who is their 'Guru' and the Balmurali goes with him. Then onwards, she serves Lord Khandoba as per tradition. Such Balmuralis can come to their parent's house for three days once in a year. The convention is that the girl could not stay more than three days in a year. Many parents feel, it should be increased but do not dare to cross the limits of the tradition.

4.6 TYPES OF VAGHYAS AND MURALIS

There are six types of Vaghyas and Muralis. These are –

- Khanadani
- Sanyashi (unmarried)
- HouseVaghe
- Navashye
- Havashye
- Gavashye
In many families, traditionally one child is offered to lord Khandoba in each generation. Such vaghyas and Muralis are called Khandani. They have a larger status in their community. Sanyashi vaghes remain unmarried throughout their life. House Vaghes are married people. Navashye are girls or boys offered to god Khandoba for some vow. Their parents have promised to offer one child to lord Khandoba either son or daughter. Havashye vages are person’s those who have accepted to become a vaghe on their own. They have the singing art and wish to serve god. They perform Jagaran very nicely. Gavasye are an illegitimate child of Vaghya and Murali. Some persons become Vaghya or Murali artificially to get money. All these types of Vaghyas and Muralis, mostly do not keep relation with each other. They keep relation only in their category. Sanyasi vaghe assume a separate status from all other categories.

Vaghya-Muralis are in themselves supposed to be a separate society. Vaghes, generally, marry in their father’s caste. Khanadani vaghe will try to marry kanadani murali. But there is no objection to the intermarriages of Vaghya or Muralis. Many times, the Vaghya and Murali live together without marriage but their children face difficulty while marrying.

Muralis, who are already married to lord Khandoba, do not marry again but they have children. These children do not get honour in the community. Many times, they face difficulties in their marriage and live alone throughout life.

But the peculiarity of Vaghya-Murali community is that they do not live alone or travel alone. They live and go to Jagaran ceremonies in groups. The group consists of 4 to 11 Vaghyas and Muralis. The number may vary but both Vaghya and Murali must be present for the Jagaran ceremony. In the absence of either Vaghya or Murali, the Jagaran function can not be performed.

4.7 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY WORK

An analysis is made to understand the real condition and the socio-economic condition of the Vaghya-Murali community. The evaluation is made of Jagaran ceremony, the behaviour of the people with the Vaghyas and Muralis and expectations of Vaghya – Muralis from the society.
Jagaran ceremony is a compulsory activity for the devotees whose family God is lord Khandoba. The details of activities of Jagaran are given below:

**TABLE NO 4.1: JAGARAN CEREMONY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>NATURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jagaran</td>
<td>Regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Honorarium</td>
<td>Rs. 500 to 1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Per Jagaran per head</td>
<td>Rs. 100 to 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>honorarium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Distance from residence</td>
<td>Up to 100 kms. Sometimes more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Food served</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Songs in Jagaran</td>
<td>Songs related to lord Khandoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Disputes with the people</td>
<td>Occurs many times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Work in Tafa</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by Author 2007-2008.

It is indicated that the Jagaran activity is carried regularly to pray lord Khandoba. For each function, Vaghya-Muralis get an honorarium ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1500. Each person gets Rs. 100 to Rs. 300/- per function. They travel for the function to nearby villages up to 100 kms or some times even more. At the place of function, the provision of food is made by the house holder for Vaghya-Muralis. In the Jagaran ceremony the devotional songs are mostly related to lord Khandoba. Sometimes, disputes occur between the listeners and Vaghya-Muralis. There is, mostly, a separate group of Vaghya-Muralis. But many a times, they also work in other groups namely Tafas.

**DISCUSSION**

The tradition of performing Jagaran ceremony before lord Khandoba is dates back to the 10th Century. Vaghya-Murali community wants to preserve the tradition for future also. They feel that this is the wish of lord Khandoba. It has been carried on from generation to generation and now it is not possible to stop it. At present, Jagaran ceremony is the main business of Vaghya-Muralis. They get an honorarium for this work. They don't have
any other source of income. But this business goes on merely for 4 to 5 months of during the marriage season. In the remaining period they are jobless. In those free days, they go for vari to near by villages or do some business.

In the Jagaran ceremony the devotional songs of lord Khandoba sung by the Vaghya-Muralis. But people expect different songs of cinemas from them. For that, people are ready to pay extra money to them. Sometimes, many people drink wine and come to listen Jagaran. To avoid disturbance in the function, unwillingly, they fulfill their demands by singing songs from movies. It reduces sacredness of the function.

Recently, the rich people, like Bagayatdar, intend to celebrate Jagaran widely to show their wealth. They spend more money for the Jagaran ceremony but ignore to pay sufficient honorarium to Vaghya-Muralis. Even they avoid to pay the settled honorarium.

The amount of honorarium is not fixed. Transport charges are not given to them. They do not complain because always they are in dire need of money. The house holder makes provision for dinner for Vaghya-Muralis. The food is good but they can not enjoy it because they have to do Jagaran throughout night.

Jagaran is purely a religious function. It is performed after the marriages whose family god is lord Khandoba. Vaghyas and Muralis pray to Lord Khandoba for the better future life to newly married couple and for the whole family. In this function it is expected to sing devotional songs related to lord Khandoba. It is supposed that this function is quite necessary after the marriage ceremony. Many times dispute occurs at the time of Jagaran ceremony because of demand of other songs from Vaghya Muralis. But Khanadani Vaghe refuse to sing other songs as it is against tradition which cause disputes between them.

Recently, Jagaran has become a business activity. The contractors, those who are not related to Vaghya-Murali community, do the Jagaran as an occupation. They keep Vaghya-Muralis in their group. The group owner travels to near by areas, finds marriage functions, meets the house owner and takes the invitation of Jagaran from the house holders by deciding honorarium. After completing the Jagaran ceremony he collects honorarium from the house holder. He pays the Vaghyas and Muralis a fixed honorarium and the remaining amount is kept by him. Actually, in such cases, amount given to Vaghya and Muralis is very less. But there is no alternative to them.
It is also observed that many Vaghyas do this business. They have their own team of Vaghyas and Muralis. They provide the group of Vaghyas-Muralis to devotees as per their demand for Jagaran. The group owner collects honorarium from the devotees. He keeps a major share with him and the remaining is distributed to the Vaghyas-Muralis. Though the amount is less, they can not complain as they are obliged by the group owner who helps them to meet their needs in the off season.

Many groups (Tafes) are such that Vaghya and Muralis of different areas come together and form a group. They find the marriage ceremony in their areas and fix the honorarium. After completing the Jagaran ceremony, the honorarium is distributed equally amongst them.

There is a competition between these different groups, as a result, the honorarium amount is reduced and income of all of them reduced substantially.

Vaghya-Muralis are best actors. They have maintained this art. It creates love and affection in the minds of the people. They want to retain this art and accept the probable changes in Jagaran. Jagaran can be treated as ‘Kirtan’. It should not be more than three hours. The honorarium should be substantial. Each should get at least five hundred rupees per night. The standard of Jagaran ceremony needs to be maintained. The songs in Jagaran should be devotional, only on God Khandoba and legends from Ramayan, Mahabharat etc. Vulgar songs must be avoided by the Vaghyas-Muralis. The organization of Vaghyas-Muralis should take this responsibility and certain rules and regulations for the Jagaran ceremony should be made. These rules and regulations should be followed by the Vaghyas-Muralis strictly.

Vaghya and Muralis should accept membership of the organization. To avoid further complications, at the time of Jagaran ceremony, the organization should inform the devotees to follow the rules and regulations. It helps to increase the standard of Jagaran art. Actually, through Jagaran, Vaghya-Muralis entertain the people. Therefore, they should be treated as artists and accordingly get honoured.

In Maharashtra, the Jagaran activity can be used to canvass the govt schemes to the people. It can be done by giving special training to selected Vaghya-Muralis. Govt. of Maharashtra should pay some honorarium to them. Of course, it will also help to increase the socio-economic status of Vaghya-Muralis.
4.7.2 BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN

The study of behavioural pattern of the people, Vaghyas and Muralis will help to understand viewpoint of the people about Vaghya-Muralis, behaviour of the people with Vaghya-Murali, behaviour of the Vaghyas and Muralis with the people and behaviour of the group (Tafa) leader with the Vaghya-Muralis. The views of Vaghyas and Muralis are judged as per satisfaction level and put in the following table.

**TABLE 4.2 : BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Behavioural Pattern</th>
<th>Satisfactory (%)</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>View point of the people about Vaghya-Murali.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Behaviour of the people with community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With Vaghyas</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With Muralis</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Behavior of the Muralis with the people.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Behaviour of the Vaghyas with the people.</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Behaviour of the contractors with Vaghya-Muralis.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by Author 2007-2008.

It is revealed that the view point of the people about Vaghya-Muralis is satisfactory. It is noted that the satisfactory view point of the people regarding Vaghya-Muralis is 80 percent and unsatisfactory is 20 percent. Behavior of the people with the Vaghya-Muralis community is of utmost significance. It is observed that 70 percent of Vaghyas opined that behavior of the people is satisfactory, but 30 percent have remarked dissatisfaction. While among Muralis, about 35 percent feel satisfactory and 65 percent feel unsatisfactory regarding the behaviour of the people with them. About Muralis, 62 percent of the people of this community opined that behaviour of the
Muralis with the people is satisfactory. While 38 percent people opined that the behaviour of the Muralis with the people is unsatisfactory. But it is seen that behaviour of the Vaghyas, with the people is about 95 percent satisfactory. While, only 5 percent people from this community showed dissatisfaction. The contractors in the community, about 63 percent people of the community showed satisfaction. While 37 percent people showed dissatisfaction regarding the behaviour of the contractors with the Vaghya-Muralis.

DISCUSSION

In this study behavioral pattern of the people, Vaghyas and Muralis are assessed. These are opinions of the Vaghya-Muralis through their viewpoint. It is opined that viewpoint of the people about Vaghya-Muralis is satisfactory. They feel that Vaghya-Muralis are children of God and must be honoured. But a few of the Vaghya-Muralis showed dissatisfaction. They feel that Vaghya-Muralis are honoured prior to Jagaran ceremony and neglected later.

The views of the Vaghya-Muralis, regarding the behaviour of the people with Vaghya-Muralis represent different opinion. Vaghyas are satisfactory, while a few Vaghyas have showed negative opinion regarding the behaviour of the people with them. According to them, people think that Vaghya-Muralis are doing Jagaran function for monetary gain only. But in reality they are honestly carrying on their Jobs. That is, first they do Jagaran for lord Khandoba and then to earn money.

The opinion of Muralis is quite different about the views of the people. Satisfaction was showed very less by Muralis. While dissatisfaction was showed by a large number of Muralis. They feel that, mostly, the views of the people about Muralis are biased. The behaviour of the people is impolite with Muralis. The people expect vulgar songs in the Jagaran and do misbehavior with the Muralis. Therefore, the Muralis are not satisfied but openly they are unable to defend themselves from the people.

Behavior of the Muralis with the people is of great importance. In general, Muralis showed satisfaction but considerable number showed dissatisfaction about the behaviour. Regarding this, views of Vaghya and also a few people are considered. It affects the whole system. It is known by discussion that a few Muralis also behave impolitely at the time of Jagaran.
Some times sexual presentation causes misbehavior by the listeners and reduces the sacredness of the function. But all agree that the sacredness of Jagaran ceremony must be kept.

Behavior of the Vaghyas with the people is satisfactory. But a few of them are not satisfactory because the people behave impolitely with Muralis. But they can not defend strongly, therefore, they showed dissatisfaction.

Behavior of the Vaghya or Murali contractor or any other contractor who does the Jagaran activity as an occupation is assessed. The Vaghya-Muralis showed satisfaction and a few showed dissatisfaction about their behavior. It is seen that the contractors, provide money to them in their need during the off season. It helps in the time of need.

The researcher’s observation regarding the behavioural pattern appeared a little bit different. The views given by the Vaghya-Muralis were given under pressure and in some places due to obligation. The viewpoint of some people is not clear about community, especially, Muralis. Many times, the behavior of the Muralis becomes a cause for change in the viewpoint of the people. It is told by a few Muralis that many Vaghyas also misbehave with the Muralis. But over all behavioural pattern is found satisfactory. In general, viewpoint of the people about the Vaghya-Muralis need to be improved. The researcher is of the view point that the condition of the Vaghya-Muralis needs to be improved.

4.7.3 EXPECTATION OF VAGHYA-MURALIS

In the study, an evaluation is made about expectation of Vaghya-Muralis in their life. Their views are more important to assess the situation. Their views and expectations about Jagaran activity, Vari continuation, services in other field, work on agricultural farm, business in other fields, work in Rojgar Hami Yojana of Govt. of Maharashtra, Need of state level organization of Vaghya-Muralis and their views about marital status in community are noted by asking various questions and put in the table below.
TABLE 4.3 : EXPECTATION OF VAGHYA-MURALIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Expect to carry Jagaran as business</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vari continuation</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Service in other fields</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Work on agricultural farm</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Work in Rojagar Hami Yojana</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Own Business in different fields</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Need of Vaghya-Murali organization</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by Author 2007-2008.

It is indicated that about 83 percent Vaghya-Muralis expect to carry the Jagaran activity as main business while 17 percent Vaghya Muralis do not want to keep Jagaran activity as main business. About 95 percent Vaghya-Muralis want to continue the vari tradition while 5 percent of them want to shift to some other business. About 75% percent persons expect services in other fields while 25 percent people expect to stay in work of Jagaran. About 20 percent people accepted to work on agricultural farm but 80 percent people rejected to work on agricultural farm. Work in Rojagar Hami Yojana (RHY) of State Govt. only 27 percent people accepted while 73 percent people rejected to work in Rojagar Hami Yojana. About 65 percent persons accepted to do their own business while 35 percent persons did not agree to do their own business. About 86 percent Vaghya-Muralis felt that there is need of an organization for them while 14 percent Vaghya Muralis rejected the need of an organization. The marital status is the burning problem in this community. About 92 percent people said that marriages should be increased in the community. While 8 percent people do not agree with this.

DISCUSSION

It is observed that the expectation of Vaghyas and Muralis regarding various aspects are different. They expect that Jagaran activity should be carried as it is the prime activity for their
survival. It can be shaped as business activity to earn more. Most of the respondents agree to keep continuation of vari as it is part of the religious activity. It helps to increase contacts with the devotees. It also increases the income of Vaghya-Muralis, but a few disagree. They expect services in the other fields but this opportunity should be given to their children. They opined that their children should not enter their business. The respondents do not agree to work on agricultural farm and work provided by the Maharashtra Government under Rojagar Hami Yojana. Because they do not want to take physical strain as they have habit of wandering and not working. They expect more earning through vari. The young respondents accept to do some business if capital is provided to them. They expect some training before starting the business. They also agree to do some business in village and cottage industries. Many respondents opined that there is need of organization for their security. They can put their demands through organization. But a few disagree, especially, those who are in better economic position and doing Jagaran as side business. About marital status, large number of respondents agreed to accept the idea of marriages. They feel that their social status will increase.

Researcher observes that the views given by Vaghya-Muralis are from the heart and deeply and sincerely expect the govt. of Maharashtra should do something for them. Researcher also feels that other NGO’S and social workers should participate and support strongly to solve their problems.

4.8 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND DEMANDS OF VAGHYA-MURALIS

The study of Vaghya-Muralis revealed their reality. It can be representative study for all other, similar depressed people in the society. The tradition of offering children to lord Khandoba as Vaghya’s and Muralis is deeply rooted in Hindu religion since long back. In this, mostly, people from backward class and other backward classes who are below poverty line are included. They do not have sufficient earning. Therefore, the Vaghya-Muralis are tempted to do some unusual works which create socio-economic problems.
TABLE 4.4: SOCIO–ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF VAGHYA-MURALIS

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Dishonour at vari time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Increase in begging attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Biased view-point of the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Indecent behaviour of the Muralis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Indecent behaviour of people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Commercialization of traditions and customs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mental strain on Vaghya-Muralis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Interrelation between Vaghya and Muralis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Uncertain income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Non availability of land for houses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Unemployment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by Author 2007-2008.

DISSCUSSION

4.8.1 SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Table 4.4 represented the Socio-economic problems of Vaghya-Muralis. The overall picture of the Vaghya-Murali community is not satisfactory. The standard of living is very low. It is hardly found that people of this community are above poverty line. People do not pay sufficient honorarium of religious functions. Therefore overall income is inadequate and results in the low standard of living. Vari is an integral part of the tradition in the off season. Every Vaghya or Murali goes for vari to some families whose lord Khandoba is family God. In old days people used to offer grains to them respectfully. They suppose that the offering grain to Vaghya-Muralis meant offering grains to the God. But now Vaghya-Muralis treated as beggars and are dishonoured by the people. The Vaghya-Muralis do not have any other alternative because of poor economy. They bear the dishonour and collect grain from the devotees. It becomes a cause of increasingly begging attitude.

Biased view of the people about Vaghya-Muralis, especially, about the muralis hampered a lot. The view point of the people is always skeptical. Some people suppose that Muralis are prostitutes. They behave indecently with them. Especially, at
the time of Jagaran ceremony this attitude of the people is apparent.

Indecent behaviour of Muralis reduces the cultural environment of Jagaran ceremony. In Jagaran, many Muralis do indecent behaviour. It tempts to tilt people to behave in that way, cerates commotion in the ceremony and sacredness of the function is reduced. It is opined by a few Vaghyas that such women are not Muralis. These are from low cultural community like Davari, Dombari etc. having little art of dancing and singing. The groupleader accepts them and pays very less honorarium. Many khandani Vaghyas opined that true Muralis don’t behave indecently. It is quite pertinent to put a ban on such women and not allow them to join the Jagaran ceremony.

Now, commercialization of tradition and customs has taken place. Attitude of Vaghya-Muralis has changed. They do pooja and Jagaran commercially for monetary gain. Vaghya-Muralis have made their groups (Tafe). They take contracts and perform Jagaran ceremony according to honorarium for one hour to six hours. They pay remuneration to assigned Vaghyas and Muralis as decided but it is not adequate for needs and hence they are always in need of money. This becomes the cause to create mental strain on them. It is also observed that many Vaghya-Muralis have become habituated with this and take the situation lightly.

Negligence of the society and relatives is deeply humiliating. It is observed that people of this community are neglected by their relatives who are outside the community. They do not invite them for family functions. They feel that it is below dignity.

Interrelation between Vaghya and Muralis is criticized largely by the people. It is supposed that Vaghyas and Muralis are children of God. The relation between them is of brother and sister. But they behave like wife and husband. People know this interrelation between them which is the cause of dishonour to them.

4.8.2 ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The study revealed very weak financial position of the Vaghya-Muralis. The yearly income of Vaghya-Muralis is uncertain. The source of income is the Jagarn ceremony and other religious functions. They get very less honorarium. The yearly income is about Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 10,000 which is not sufficient for
the year. They expect that the honorarium for Jagaran should be increased.

Non availability of land for houses is a great problem for them. Most of them don't have their own houses. They expect their inclusion in the schemes like Rajiv Gandhi Gram Nivara, Indira Avas yojana etc.

The Vaghya-Muralis do not have agricultural land. They demand agricultural land to practice. But it is observed that very few persons from the community intend to work on agricultural fields.

The lack of finance is the cause of illiteracy in the children of Vaghya-Murali community. A few persons have taken education on their own. They rarely send their children to schools. Many of them who were found eager to send their children to school were unable to do so due to weak economy. They expect help from the Govt. of Maharashtra in the form of seats in backward class hostels and scholarship. Primarily, the children of Vaghya Muralis should be mentally prepared to take education. For that they should come out from their community environment and mix with the society. Their education, probably, will help to improve economy and their quality of life.

In Vaghya-Murali community, a few people are educated but they do not have jobs. A few are employed in the private sector but payments are very less which range from two thousand to four thousand rupees per month. They expect secured jobs in Govt. offices, Banks etc.

4.8.3 DEMANDS OF VAGHYA – MURALIS

In the year 1998, on 27th June, on behalf of govt. of Maharashtra, Deodasi conference was arranged in Kolhapur. In this meet the demands for Deodasis were put before Govt. of Maharashtra. It also included demands of Vaghya-Muralis. The main demand was that Vaghya-Muralis should be treated as Deodas and Deodasis. This demand was partially accepted by the govt. of Maharashtra and treated Muralis as Deodasis. The govt. has started giving aid (Anudan) and facilities to Muralis. But Vaghyas do not get aid and facilities. The demands of Vaghyas continue. For this purpose, the late MLA, shri Ratnappa Kumbhar had also made constant efforts to get concessions for Vaghya-Muralis. Recently shri Gopal Chavan organizer of the Vaghya-Murali community, has made great efforts for the same cause.
Vaghya-Muralis are dispersed throughout Maharashtra, especially in southern Maharashtra. The number is very less and not united as they are from different castes.

Therefore, they can not make demands collectively. Shri Gopal Chavan and a few other social workers, recently, established an organization under the banner Maharashtra Rajya Vaghya-Murali organization and Registration was made in Kolhapur in the year 1992. The main organizer was shri Gopal Chavan. He took lead and arranged the first Vaghya-Murali convention in Kolhapur. Second Vaghya-Murali convention (Adhivetion) was held in the year in Dec. 1996 at Kolhapur and third convention was held in Kolhapur on 15th Dec. 2007. The intensive discussions took place. The guidance of the social workers was taken and shape was given to their demands. The demands of the Vaghya-Muralis are as below.

1. Vaghya-Murali should get honour in the society.
2. Devotees of lord Khandoba should take the responsibility of Vaghya-Muralis as they need them for religious purpose.
3. Muralis are considred as deodasis, similarly Vaghyas should be considered as deodas and get similar facilities.
4. Vaghya-Murali community should be treated as a backward class community and get facilities accordingly.
5. Reservation for children’s education and jobs in services as backward class.
6. Pension scheme should be implemented for Vaghya-Muralis.
7. Gharkul Yojana should be implemented for them.
8. Survey of Vaghya-Muralis should be conducted by the year 2011 and included in population census separately.

These demands are frequently put before the govt. of Maharashtra by the Maharashtra Rajya Vaghya-Murali sanghatana, Researcher feels that the demands regarding reservation in jobs, free educational facilities, Gharkul yojana and survey of the Vaghya-Muralis are very genuine. Survey can be possibly done along with the general population survey to be held in 2011 A.D.

4.9 RESEARCHER'S OPINION

The study of Vaghya-Murali community appears that strong efforts are necessary for the upliftment of the Vaghya-Muralis as well as similar depressed people in the society. It is felt
Vaghya-Murli Parishand and Interviews

Plate 4.3
that the tradition of offering children to lord Khandoba is simply based on blind faith of the people and hence difficult to eradicate. The law of banning the tradition is in existence but not implemented strictly. The tradition continues in Jejuri and other destinations of lord Khandoba.

Vaghya-Muralis are used honourably at the time of religious function but other time they are neglected. The attitude of the people about Vaghya-Muralis is biased. People consider Muralies as prostitutes. They behave indecently with the Muralis. Muralis are also equally responsible. Vaghya and Muralis are supposed as brothers and sisters of each other. But they behave like husband and wife. It is observed by the people and ultimately many people are tempted to behave indecently with the Muralis.

The economic condition of Vaghya-Muralis is very weak. They do not have other source of income for survival except Jagaran ceremony. They get very limited honorarium at the functions. In totality the earning is not sufficient for the year. At present condition, they do not have any other alternative to improve their economy. Researcher feels that this traditional work should be continued as religious activity and they should try for other alternatives for their survival.

They are ignorant about education. Majority of them are illiterate. A few of them are literate but very exceptionally are highly educated. Researcher feels that the children of Vaghya-Murali must get education. Firstly, primary education needs to be strengthened. There is a need to create awareness about education. It is necessary to provide facilities to them for education. A talent in them is to be found out and trained. This talent can be utilized in their community for education as well as to create awareness in them. Such trained persons in their community will do this job more efficiently than the other people.

Vaghya-Murali population is not measured separately hence difficult to make some planning for them. The population can be measured at the destinations of lord Khandoba. Every Vaghya or Murali visits at least one destination of Lord Khandoba every year and Jejuri in a three years. It is also possible to handover, this responsibility to Devasthan Committee of each destination.

There are many artists in the Vaghya-Murali community. But they are dispersed. These folk artists should be brought together and form an institution like a Natyasantha or 'Tamasha
Mandal'. These artists can be utilized to create awareness in the community and this can be a source of income to them.

These are the observations and feelings of the researcher during the investigation.
REFERENCES


