

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study is to examine the social structure and change among Kulals in Dakshina Kannada. The findings of this study are based on the data collected from 300 respondents belonging to Kulal community in Bantwal, Benthangady and Mangalore. The study shows the changes that have taken place in the pattern of occupational differentiation, its causes and consequences. The study also focused on the social institutions of Kulals, family, marriage and the system of inheritance. An attempt has also been made to deal with their economic organization, educational status and the influence of reservation on the community. Another objective of this study is to observe the present condition of pottery, the caste-occupation of Kulals. It further goes through the problems and prospects of pottery in Dakshina Kannada. This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study.

The general development that is taking place in the country has failed to bring about changes among all sections of society. There is a wide gap between the haves and have-nots. Even today a large majority of them are leading a miserable life. The fruits of development have not reached equally to all sections of people. To ameliorate the conditions of weaker sections of society, the government of India has initiated certain measures like reserving certain percentage of seats in education and employment and enacting the anti-untouchability Act. Because of these we come across a few changes in the socio-economic conditions of Kulals of Dakshina Kannada. However, the occupational mobility is the observable

phenomenon among Kulals and corresponding social mobility among them. Social mobility among Kulals is manifested in terms of changes in family, marriage, religion and leadership structure as well as their relations with other castes.

Caste and the joint family, the cornerstones of the old Indian society have been disturbed and shaken because of the rise of non-traditional occupations in Indian society. Urbanization, industrialization, modern education, migration and other factors have given rise to a change in traditional occupations. In pre-industrial society, there were lesser opportunities for such changes as the social and cultural limits of man for several reasons. But industrial urbanism, with its technology and new ideology, has broken all barriers and has accelerated the pace of mobility.

The data shows that small and nuclear families are gradually taking the place of joint families among Kulals. Their attachment to their lineage (Kutumba) is also declining. They have also adopted the Kinship terms of Kannada and English Language to designate the different relations.

There is also a change in the endogamous character of Kulals. The data shows that 85 per cent of the respondents opposed the inter-caste and inter-religious marriages, while 10 per cent favor the inter-caste marriages. In an informal discussion, majority of respondents' children favor the inter-caste marriages. Thus, in endogamy, a declining trend is visible as much as a considerable number of respondents' children are prepared to welcome the idea of inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. The practice of dowry was also observed due to the impact of upper caste people. Bunt community, the dominant caste of Dakshina Kannada influences much

upon the social practices of other lower castes. The amount of dowry varies according to the economic, educational and social status of the bridegroom's family.

Each family and clan has its own festivals and rituals. Kulals practice all the festivals and rituals of Hindus. Like most of the Hindus, the Kulals also give importance to all the rites like birth rite, puberty rite, marriage, death rite etcetera. Each rite has its own lengthy performance, which is functional in nature. Such a function brings the people of the village or in its limited sense the fellow kinsmen at one place, at one time. This has a positive impact on the community.

The people of studied taluks have strong religious practices and beliefs. Kulals have the common religious beliefs and practices with other Hindus. Regarding the religious aspects, they worship all the deities associated with their traditions and customs pertaining to their caste on all occasions. The potter-Kulals worship also the implements of their profession such as Kiln (Large furnace for burning pots), chakra (wheel) and Kolu (stick with which they turn the wheel). The worship of Bhutas is common among them. They construct 'Bhutastano's (Devil's room) and keep the sword, sickle and the bell of Bhutas on a wooden cot at the Bhutastano. The worship of Bhutas is performed in different ways such as offering Bali (sacrifices), offering Agel or Parva (food), Kolo (deity dance) etcetera. Their family god (kuladevaru) is Venkataramana of Tirupathi.

Worship of animals and trees is also common among Kulals. The worship of cows and bullocks (Govu-Pooja) is universal among Kulals. They also worship Tulasi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*) and Aswatha tree.

(*ficus bengalensis*) The Nagaradhana (cobra cult) is more widespread in Dakshina Kannada than in any other district in South India. In fact every village has several Nagakallus (Cobra stones). These are stones with the image of a cobra carved on them. In addition, every village has at least a Nagabano or sacred grove with cobra stones installed in it.

An analysis of relationship of Kulals to others is also made. A large proportion of the respondents had good relationships with their neighbors and this trend is higher among their children. In other words, it was found that the children tended to have a good neighborly atmosphere. Although very few respondents had unhealthy relationships with their neighbors, in their children's generation, it had been reported to be 'good'. This is also an indication of positive change. Contrary to this observation, there is another opinion that the better-educated and well-placed persons utilize the facilities to the education of their children. There is also a uniform pattern of utilization of the different other facilities. This indicates the uniform awareness and access to facilities by all the sections of Kulals. Ninety per cent of the respondents felt that their children would not have the same kind of obstacles in their career development, which they themselves had faced.

The importance of education is assessed in the third chapter. Though the government is providing the facilities like scholarships, freeships, books, hostels, reservation in admission etcetera, it was found that mainly the urban based Kulals had availed most of these facilities. This has been because of their access to information in towns and cities and having educated parents. About 60 per cent Kulals had to study inspite of the family background, which was discouraging their education. The

educational experience of some of the respondents was bitter due to the discrimination meted out by their teachers and administrators. Kulals bound to be discriminated because of their social and economic backwardness. The educational status of Kulals in Dakshina Kannada is not much better when compared to the other caste groups. The educational data of the respondents reveal that 36.33 per cent of the respondents were illiterate. Among the literate 38 per cent have studied up to primary school, had the ability of reading and writing in the regional language. Similarly, 14.33 per cent have studied up to highschool level, nine per cent of them have completed their graduation. Three respondents i.e. only one per cent among them were post graduates and one respondent (0.33 per cent) each had technical education and other training respectively, whereas two persons (0.67 per cent) did not give any response. The second chapter reveals the educational position of the respondents' parents and grand parents. It is seen that 72 per cent of the respondents' fathers and 86 per cent of mothers were illiterate. Similarly, 14.33 per cent of their fathers and 11 per cent mothers had education up to primary school level. Whereas nine per cent of the fathers and three per cent of the respondents' mothers had studied up to the level of highschool whereas only four per cent of their fathers were graduates. None of them has had the technical education. If we look at the educational levels of grand parents, we find that 93.67 per cent of the grand fathers and 97.67 of the grand mothers were illiterate. However, 4.33 per cent of the grand fathers and 2.33 per cent of grand mothers had education up to primary level whereas only six grand fathers (i.e. 2 per cent) had studied up to highschool level.

The problem of drop-outs among the Kulals has also been observed. Regarding the reasons for their drop-outs 30 per cent of the respondents attributed poverty as a major factor and 15 per cent of the children are lacking the interest in education. Thirty-five per cent of the respondents themselves did not consider education as essential in brightening the future of their children. Twenty per cent of the respondents opined that their children refused to go to schools either because they had failed or due to the influence of their friends. Eventhough 70 per cent of the respondents aspired to provide higher education to their children, remaining 30 per cent have traditional attitude towards their children attending colleges. More than 65 per cent of the children between the age group of 7 and 11 years were going to schools. From the above data, it may be inferred that the respondents with a lower educational background are generally not very certain about their children's education. Of those who have attained higher levels of education, their occupational preferences are for technical, professional, administrative, commercial or any other occupation of non-manual skill.

One more important change among Kulals is that they have shown immense interest in educating their offspring. Previously they were showing disinterest towards women education. The girls after puberty were not allowed to attend schools. But today they are sending their daughters to schools or colleges even after puberty. The extent to illiteracy has continued to decline from one generation to another. It is interesting to note that a few people are showing interest towards adult education also. Mangalore, being the most important education center in this region, has

attracted a large number of people to the city and in this way it has encouraged social mobility

An analysis of the occupational structure reveals that 40 per cent of the Kulals are engaged in agriculture. Majority of them are also engaged in manual works. Only a small number of people are engaged in pottery and business. However, very few Kulals in Dakshina Kannada are employed in public sector.

A restriction on occupational choice had been an important feature of Indian caste system. The Kulals in the past had impure occupations and thus had the lower rank in the caste hierarchy. After Independence, a good number of changes have been observed in their vocational structure. The policy of reservation was also complemented by facilities like relaxation in the minimum educational requirement in recruitment, relaxation of age limits and experience and providing training, loans for self-employment etcetera.

Income is also a determinant of mobility. Higher the social class, occupation or income of the parent, the more likely is the child to go through higher education and then into the higher occupational groups. The overall impression created is that the concentration of Kulals on business, agriculture and self-employment has been increased. They have abandoned their caste occupation to substantiate their earnings.

Economically most of the Kulals are poor in Dakshina Kannada. The data presented in the Table 2.5 proves that 29.33 per cent of the respondents are in the income group of Rs 1001 and Rs 1500 per month. Twenty six per cent are in the category of Rs 1501 to Rs 2000 per month.

and 20.33 per cent are earning Rs 2501 and above per month. Whereas 13.33 per cent of the respondents earn below Rs 1000 and 11 per cent of them were in the income category of Rs 2001 and 2500. Even though the Kulals are not much better financially, socially their place seems to be much better. They lead an organized life. To bring out the relationship between income and literacy, the literate engaging themselves in better occupational areas, earn higher income than the illiterate.

There has been a remarkable inter-generational mobility. The effect of education is seen in the field of employment and income, in marriage, family and other aspects of life. There is a near perfect fit between one's educational qualification and his employment. All the illiterates are employed in unskilled jobs. Just as better-education leads to better employment, better employment yields greater income. Educated persons are also able to get the job faster and utilize the government facilities in employment career. With the rise in education, family has tended to become nuclear in size. Similarly, there is a decrease in the number of children and rise in the age at marriage. The social status of a family too has changed as envisaged by educated Kulals themselves. With the education, the number of persons saving money and the amount saved is also found higher. Finally, it is seen that higher the education of parents, greater the ambitions regarding the future career of children.

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the traditional occupations, agricultural system and ruralism. But with the growth of new administrative and industrial occupations, urban trends have spread up to remote villages and have vastly affected the attitudes and aspirations of the people.

In the fourth chapter occupational mobility among Kulals has been analysed by comparing the individuals' occupation with those of their traditional occupations over a period of four generations. The generations taken for analysis are - respondents' grandfather (G₁), respondents' father (G₂), respondents' generation (G₃) and respondents' children (G₄). The data reveals that there is no evidence to indicate any perceivable resistance or occupational rigidity among Kulals. In the first generation, people practiced those occupations, which were practiced by their parents that may either be their traditional or non-traditional occupations. The percentage of deviation from caste occupations has increased from two per cent in Father's generation (II generation) to 14 per cent in respondents' generation (III generation) and still increased to 28 per cent in children's generation (IV generation). The overall deviation from parental occupation was over three per cent in grand father's generation, five per cent in father's time, about 30 per cent during respondent's generation and about 48 per cent in the employed son's generation.

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The chapter on pottery examined the existing condition of pottery, problems and prospects of pottery in Dakshina Kannada etcetera. There is a remarkable intergenerational occupational mobility between respondents and their parents. In majority of the cases the respondent is the first one in two or three generations to have held an employment in the government or related departments. Thus, it ought to have meant a major change in the social and economic conditions of life for them.

There have been several indicators of improved social status. These are evident, for instance from the amicable social relationships they enjoy with their colleagues at the place of work and with the neighbours in the place of residence. Many respondents felt that social discriminations have been reduced owing to their employment status. They are now able to mix well with others and enjoy the respect, which they were not receiving earlier. All these are to be seen as instances of individual status mobility due to their employment. Those at a higher level of employment were able to utilise many facilities such as promotion to higher positions, residential quarters etc. Social mobility, as we have assumed has been affected, by multiple factors. Various types of forces such as industrial urbanism, political liberalism and the revolutionary changes bring about social or occupational mobility in the system of transportation and communication. It is observed that education is one of the major determinants of occupational mobility among the Kulals in Dakshina Kannada.

Migration is also one of the channels of social and occupational mobility in all the countries. Among Kulals of Dakshina Kannada in the respondents' generation, 30 per cent had migrated from the place of their origin looking for jobs. Among their children, 10.56 per cent each are

employed in nearby taluks and villages and 11.65 per cent are working outside the state. Seventy per cent of them had migrated to the cities in search of jobs, whereas 20 per cent of them left their native place for college education and higher studies. The observation of the income levels of the migrants before and after migration shows that definitely they have improved their annual income which is especially more significant among the Kulals who have migrated out of the state. This initiative has been taken by Kulals due to the venture of a few people to take up new occupations of higher income.

It is an observable fact that urbanization not only opens the door of caste free occupations but also alters the social values and psychological state of the people. Modernization, as a linked process to urbanization, provides modern tools and techniques for the traditional guilds. The overall view of the respondents shows that agriculturists are giving up the traditional things and going in for the modern sophisticated methods and modern pursuits like mechanical plough, improved variety seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Even the potter Kulals have started using modern wheels and other materials for their production.

The route of urbanization is industrialization. Among Kulals of Chelairu village near Surathkal, high rate of mobility has taken place after the establishment of MRPL (Mangalore Refineries and Petrochemicals Limited). Therefore, the twin factors urbanization and industrialization have undermined the rigidity of caste and Jajmani system.

Finally, it may be concluded that for the last three generations a lot of change has been brought about by upward mobility. The younger

generation shows interest in participating in political affairs of the Village Panchayats, Zilla Parishads, and City Corporations etcetera

The difference occurs to some, if not all, through their participation in Kulala Associations. These associations bring about changes through protests, confrontations and conflict. Though 40 per cent of Kulals take part in these associations, educated and employed Kulals by virtue of their education and position take little more interest by becoming office bearers. Most of the Associations are functioning well. Legal counseling, social welfare and campaigns to spread awareness are the main functions of these associations. A proper understanding and co-operation between the different Kulal associations in the district is found to exist. The caste council is playing its role only in rural areas. In the urban areas, caste associations are helping Kulals by linking the members of the caste within a region. They are organizing conferences to discuss discrimination suffered, reform of customs and the establishment of benefits such as scholarships and hostels (dormitories) for their student members.

The views of respondents about the reservation in education, employment and politics were sought. An overwhelming majority of them were in favor of changing the present reservation system. They argued that the state government should shift the Kulals from category II (A) to category I. According to them, Kulals cannot compete with other castes because of the number of castes included in the present category (i.e. II A). It is thus clear from the foregoing observation that we can come across several changes in the social and economic life of Kulals, one of the backward castes in the state as well as in the district.