RESULTS
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For the purpose of the present study, fourteen respondents were selected through the purposive sampling technique. Five hypotheses were developed to give a general direction to the study. The hypotheses were as follows:

1. Changes in occupation, from a 'defiling' occupation to a 'clean' occupation is an important agent of social mobility.

2. Educational achievements lead to better chances of obtaining better occupational positions and hence help in upward mobility of the Jatavs.

3. With Political participation, exposure to mass media, scientific outlook, new ideologies, urbanization, and Sanskritization, enhance social mobility.

4. In spite of giving up their traditional occupation of tanning, the upper castes hold the Jatavs in contempt and do not like to associate with them socially.

5. Conversion to Buddhism has enhanced the status of the Jatavs in the caste hierarchy.

All the hypotheses were partially supported by the data.

Hypothesis (1) was supported partially. Those Jatavs, who had given up their traditional occupations, felt that they had improved their status in society. This is a debatable point for they had not, in reality been accepted as members of an upper caste. Their mobility was restricted to economic gains only and they enjoyed respectability from their compatriots as well as from their colleagues at work.

Hypothesis (2) was also partially supported. The selected respondents were educated at least up to class ten. Almost all of them had secured government...
jobs barring a few who were employed privately. But all respondents did not become socially mobile. That is, they did not ascend the ladder of the caste hierarchy.

Hypothesis (3) was not really supported by the data. Only very few respondents participated actively in politics and their participation in mass media was limited to television news. Not many of them read newspapers. Apart from this, almost all of them seemed to have 'de-sanskritised by giving up their belief in the gotra system. Instead, they were more interested in western styles of life and through mass media communication imbibed these western values. It appears that while they became more acceptable to a particular 'class' of people who were westernized, they did not gain access to high caste positions.

Hypothesis (4) was almost fully supported by the results of the data. Almost all the respondents felt that even though they had given up their traditional defiling occupation of leather work, the upper castes continued to hold them in contempt to a certain extent. They however, clarified that at their place of work they had cordial relationships with their upper caste colleagues, but at the social level, they were rarely invited to their homes and almost never to their religious melas.

Hypothesis (5) was not supported by the data. Many of the respondents had converted to Buddhism but this did not affect their status in the caste hierarchy. Instead, they were called neo - Buddhists and they were then again set apart from the 'real and original' Buddhists. Even conversion to Christianity did not elevate their caste status. As convertee continued to
Factors of Social Mobility

Factors that enhance or bring about deterioration in the position of the Jatav community, was correlated with education. Almost all respondents emphasized the importance of education as the strongest factor that opens the doors of development in the Jatav community. Some respondents felt that different factors like hard work, entry into prestigious occupations etc, were important.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

The results of the cases studied showed that the forefathers of most of the respondents believed in the Hindu religion. They worshiped various gods and goddesses of Hindu religion, such as, lord Shiva, Laxmi, Ganesh, Devi Durga, Nagarcot wali Mata, Jaharvir etc. Most of the respondents also followed the Hinduism, they celebrated some important festivals such as Holi, Deepawali, Dashera, Rakhi, Mahashivratri etc. but generally ignored festivals of less importance, perhaps because of lack of time at their disposal. Their other family members, especially wife and daughter worshipped went to the temple to offer ‘Jal’(water) to god. They observed fast on Mondays, Thursdays, and on poornamasi (full moon’s night).
The male respondents did not go to the temple. They, however, read religious epics like Gita, Mahabharata, and they imparted religious and moral education to their children.

It is also found that while some of the respondents had converted to Buddhism and others had faith in Lord Buddha but they continued to consider themselves as Jatavs or Hindus. They followed Buddhism in their own way and celebrated Buddha Poornima and went to Buddha vihar once a year, and when they could not go, they celebrate the occasion at home. Few of the respondents also believed in what they termed as "humanism." (By this they perhaps meant to give equal importance to human values of justice and equality as well as to all religious beliefs.) These respondents used to worship various Gods and Goddess such as Lord Shiva, Devi Durga along with the lord Buddha and Dr. B.R Ambedkar, few of them had intense faith in Buddhism and they were trying to spread the values of Buddhism. These respondents would read Buddhist literature and they were great followers of Dr. B.R Ambedkar. These respondents taught Buddha’s teachings to their children and grand children.

The foregoing results show that religious feelings are not only deeply engrained, but the respondents consciously try to inculcate moral and religious values in their children.

**Relations with other castes**

It was observed that a majority of the respondents maintained formal relations with persons of other castes. They visited the houses of other castes as the latter invited the respondents on various occasions such as...
Katha of Bhagwan Satyanarayan, marriage and birthday parties etc. But they did not go to melas organized by the other castes as they were not invited due to stigma of untouchability. Some respondents felt that they are members of Indian society and not of the Hindu society, which was based on the caste system and from where untouchability originated. Some respondents, who were economically not sound, felt uneasy in the company of other castes, especially Brahmins. On the other hand, few respondents had very cordial relations with their upper caste colleagues at their place of work. Some of them maintained informal friendly relations with persons of other castes and communities, such as Muslims and Sikhs alike. Unlike some of their compatriots they attend melas of other castes when they were invited - on seldom occasions. It appears that those Jatavs who held high cadre positions and were in the high salary bracket were more amenable to establishing contacts with other castes as well as with upper castes. These respondents also appeared to have accommodated themselves well with the changing society. They had given up their traditional attire and have taken to wearing western style dresses. They have taken full advantage of the new technology available today. Some of the respondents own motor cars, mobile phones now, along with other consumer goods. They have also learned to speak the English language and have become conscious towards their changing environment and are trying to update themselves on all matters that concern their status. The members of the other caste are now also taking interest in this 'new' 'class' of Jatavs, and, maintain informal, friendly relations with them.
Reservation and Govt. Employment

On the issue of reservation and government occupation, almost all of the respondents said that both support Jatav community and without these two Jatav community would not have been able to make progress to the level that they have made today. They said that without reservation, a major section of Jatav community will find it very difficult to get government jobs. On the other hand few of them said that reservation in its initial stage was of great help to scheduled castes as people of downtrodden communities were not well educated, but now a days they have gained higher education and are conscious enough to move towards education of their children, so reservation policy in modern times is less desired and should be discontinued.

Conversion

On the issue of conversion, respondents have similar statement that it cannot solve the problems of Jatav community and they should not go for it and face the problems instead. Almost all respondents said that conversion to another faith was more effective and advisable. Some fifty or sixty years ago, when the condition of scheduled castes was miserable and pathetic, they had no right to raise their voice against social hierarchy and stigma of untouchability, but now they have constitutional rights against the practice of untouchability. On the other hand it is found that wherever exploited people, particularly scheduled castes, and specifically Jatav community, convert to another religion, like Buddhism they are able to get rid of exploitation of dominant upper castes. They support the conversion of faith towards the Buddhism. According to them it is the only religion which preaches equality in society and emphasizes true humanity. Dr B.R.
Ambedkar also converted to Buddhism. It is therefore necessary for Jatavs to convert as well and follow the path of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

**Untouchability**

Almost all of the respondents felt that untouchability is still prevalent in our society. It is more visible in villages than urban areas. However it is generally accepted that untouchability is practiced in lower sections of the society and people of higher class do not think much about it.

The respondents felt that untouchability exists even today in urban areas. A major section of the respondents considered leather occupation as a profitable one and at par with other occupations. However people of Jatav community do not want to indulge in this occupation because of the stigma of being called “Chamars” by higher caste people.

It was seen through participant and non participant observation that majority of the respondents who indulged themselves into the leather occupation, did not pursue tanning, cutting, and dyeing. They only sold and purchased leather goods for the purpose of enhancing their business.

**Political Participation**

The case studies show that almost all respondents cast their vote in favour of BSP (Bahujan Samaj Party); on the other hand few of them cast their vote in favour of BJP and other parties, some of them are active workers of BSP.

Almost all respondents were of the opinion that a scheduled caste person should be elected to the post of a chief minister and/or Prime minister. He/she will manage the state/country as competently and efficiently as any
other caste person. They saw it as a weapon for improving the pitiable condition of downtrodden communities.

Educated persons are fully conscious towards provision for protection of scheduled castes and laws for removal of untouchability. The untouchability (offences) Act 1955, outlaws all the imposition of disabilities on the ground of untouchability in virtually all fields of activity except home life, private religious ceremony and private employment.

The constitution of India includes several articles which are meant for the abolition of all sorts of disabilities.

It is found that almost all respondents cited Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as their role model and few of them pay great respects to other celebrities such as Vivekananda, Jyotiba Phule etc. It is also a fact that following of Ambedkarism is limited to older generation only. The new generation though shows great respect for Dr. Ambedkar but does not follow Ambedkarism.

**Privatization of Education**

On the issue of privatization of education almost all of the respondents agreed that privatization will not be beneficial for the poor sections of society as heavy fees are charged by private schools/college, and cannot be afforded by the poor in general and by scheduled castes in particular. Only the creamy layer can send their children to these private school/colleges.

**Higher education and career for women**

Almost all respondents have positive attitude about higher education and employment for women. However in practice lower class hardly educates their girls. Though middle class has been providing education to their girls
but after completion of the gradation of girl, parent's first attempt is to arrange partner for her.

Higher class, which belongs to high status, wants that their daughter should be an I.A.S, P.C.S, doctor and engineer. It is observed from society that persons who have consciousness towards changing environment of our society motivate their daughters for higher education and career. It is also noticed that daughters who have got education through convent /public schools are inclined to enter the job market. These daughters are highly conscious about changing position of women in the society, human rights, family and marriage life. She is a more career oriented. It is also a fact that a working woman supports the family in addition to her housewifely duties.

Fewer educated middle class parents motivate the girl to be a career oriented.

Almost all respondents felt that education is the strongest factor affecting social mobility.

**CHANGES**

It is found from case studies and through participant and non-participant observations, that several changes have taken place within the Jatav community of Aligarh city. The important change is that only few people now indulge themselves in leather business. Ninety nine percent of these communities now pursue different non traditional occupations. Lower caste members are working in different factories like lock, iron, die-casting and brass etc. On the other hand, middle and upper 'class' members of the Jatav community have been recruited to different government jobs. Now a days they have been able to uplift their living standard, and have been able to acquire a higher social standing and to command respect from other castes.
They are competing with people of other castes and have been successful in achieving their goals. They have qualified as engineers, doctors, judges, lawyers, civil servants, etc. These positions were the stronghold of the upper castes and entry to these coveted positions was blatantly denied to the lower castes even thirty years after India gained independence and was declared a democratic State. Most of the people of the Jatav community worship Lord Buddha. They have given up their belief in superstitions and are trying hard to educate themselves. Most of them have their own community schools and colleges to impart education to those who cannot afford public schooling. Jatavs have become conscious about health, hygiene and cleanliness.

This is not borne out in the case studies. The respondents said that about 7 to 10% of the community have improved their lot. Majorities are still lagging behind.

What recommendations come from the study for improving the condition of Jatavs and doing away with the social vices of caste discrimination?